

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly, held every two years, is the supreme governing body of EPC. All members are entitled to send delegates to the assembly.

The last General Assembly has taken place from the 2-3rd of October 2015 in Lisbon, Portugal.

11TH EPC General ASSEMBLY AND CONFERENCE, LISBON, PORTUGAL

Hosted by the Portugal Paralympic Committee in Lisbon, the European Paralympic Family gathered on the 2nd and 3rd of October 2015 for its 11th General Assembly and Conference.

John Petersson, President of the EPC, was pleased being able to welcome representatives from 29 National Paralympic Committees, four European branches of international para-sports federations, and a variety of national and international guest organizations.

The biennial gathering of the European Paralympic family was divided into two parts, a both informing and engaging Conference Day, and the General Assembly, the supreme governing body of EPC that is held every two years.

Click to read a full review of the Event here: [epc_onthemove2015_review-web.pdf](#)



IRELAND'S HOSTING OF EPC GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CONFERENCE COMES TO SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION

After a wonderfully informative and lively Conference at the Crowne Hotel-Northwood in Dublin yesterday, the European Paralympic Committee ended their time as the guests of Paralympics Ireland with the important General Assembly today. In the absence of the outgoing secretary general Luca Pancelli from Italy, Paralympics Ireland CEO Liam Harbison was appointed to chair the meeting.

Just as was the case yesterday, there was a robust and lengthy discussion on a range of topics including the report of EPC president John Petersson, EPC accounts and a range of motions. In particular, there was a keen debate on the concerns of many European nations on the recent production of the Rio 2016 Athletics Event Programme, which is affecting many nations and athletes greatly.

Evgeny Bukharov gave a detailed progress report on behalf of the organizing committee of the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Games.

Constitutional Motions carried by the members included the removal of the positions of secretary general in favor of a new vice-president and the removal of the technical officer in favor of a further member at large position.

There were a number of key elections with three members of the executive board stepping down: secretary general Luca Pancelli (Italy), athletes' representative Marketa Sidkova and Lithuanian NPC president Vytautas Kvietkauskas.

EPC president, John Petersson (Denmark) was re-elected unopposed, as were vice-president, Ratko Kovacic (Croatia) and treasurer, Craig Corscadden (GBR).

There were six candidates for the five positions of the member at large. Following a ballot, the five individuals elected to the executive board were: Petra Huber (Austria), Samuel Rosko (Slovakia), Mikhail Terentiev (RUS), Denis Jaekan (BEL) and Geoff Smedley (INAS).

In his closing remarks, EPC president, John Petersson thanked Paralympics Ireland for the great job they had done in hosting the General Assembly and Conference, giving the event his seal of approval by declaring it the "best ever".



LIVELY DEBATE AT EUROPEAN PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE CONFERENCE IN DUBLIN

With the successful opening to the 10th European Paralympic Committee General Assembly and Conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel-Northwood in Dublin today, Paralympics Ireland has shown a similar ability to operate at the highest echelons of the administration sphere within the Paralympic movement.

There was plenty of lively discussion at today's Conference, as the different stakeholders around Europe made presentations revolving around five key areas. Sports policy, sports development, co-operation, gender equality and youth development were the main issues debated by more than 100 delegates from the 49 member nations, with RTÉ's Darren Frehill keeping proceedings running smoothly. A host of dignitaries were in attendance, including EPC president John Petersson, International Paralympic Committee president Sir Philip Craven, European Olympic Committee president Pat Hickey, Paralympics Ireland president James Gradwell, and CEO of the Irish Sports Council, John Treacy.

EPC president John Petersson – himself a winner of 15 Paralympic medals for Denmark in the swimming pool – declared that while the Paralympic movement was about athletes and the Games, it also had a major role to play in the areas of social awareness and equal opportunities. Despite the success of the "magnificent" Paralympic Games in London last year that had increased awareness markedly, there were still many challenges facing the movement given its limited resources.

These, said Petersson, revolved around sourcing more and better-educated staff, enhancing infrastructure and attracting improved financial and structural support. With that in mind, the focus would be on mainstreaming– the integration and inclusion of athletes with disability into a mainstream sport, and making facilities accessible to people with impairments was the key to that. "We need to be a provider of sporting opportunity and a sport political stakeholder," said the EPC president as he concluded with his goal for the future. Much has changed globally and in Ireland since Paralympics Ireland hosted the EPC General Assembly and Conference for the first time 12 years ago. Paralympics Ireland chief executive, Liam Harbison said that while it was important to

celebrate the successes, the time had come to look to the future and build on the momentum. "For anyone involved it was an amazing journey... a stunning production for Paralympic sport. It's something we'll never forget" said Harbison.

Ireland has traveled from winning four medals at the 2004 Athens Paralympics and finishing 60th on the medal table, to a position of 19th, courtesy of 15 medals (including eight golds) in London last year. While there is a clear legacy of this success, as evidenced by a talent search event in UCD that was attended by 400 new athletes, Paralympics Ireland faces many challenges in the coming years according to its CEO. These involve securing sustainable resources, addressing the blockages on the athlete pathway in some sports, addressing the restructured event list for Rio 2016 that has led to events that earned gold medals for Michael McKillop and Jason Smyth being dropped, securing acceptable levels of broadcast coverage and addressing the country's lack of international influence. Later on, there were numerous presentations surrounding policy and planning for the future. Tim Maher captured the attention of the international audience with his presentation on wheelchair curling, a sport he invented in 1998 and which is growing in popularity on an annual basis.

European Cooperation

A key element of the day's proceedings was the signing of a memorandum of understanding by the EPC and EOC presidents. This represents a ground-breaking formal commitment from the two organizations that they will work together for the development of sport in Europe, particularly at youth level. Before this landmark moment, Pat Hickey reasserted EOC's commitment to Paralympics, youth participation and education, gender equality and social inclusion via sport. Advancements in terms of gender equality are very well illustrated in Ireland by the fact that eight of the nation's 15 medals in London came from women, in comparison to none from four years previously. CEO of Sport For Business, Rob Hartnett argued that female sport deserved parity of esteem with their male counterparts and that this was happening belatedly, mirroring the parity of esteem being awarded to Paralympic athletes compared to their able-bodied counterparts. This was beginning to attract increasing commercial interest and big brands would do so on an increasing basis in the coming years, he predicted. Much of this is as a result of specific work by EPC and the Women In Sport Committee led by Petra Huber. She revealed that there

is still much work to be done in terms of increasing female representation at the executive level and amongst the athletes, while how female athletes are portrayed must also be addressed.

The Brighton Declaration

With that in mind, there was a very important progression as Petra Huber, EPC president John Petersson and EPC board member Denis Jaeken signed the Brighton Declaration, which has as its overriding aim, the goal of developing a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of the sport. The Conference concluded with a discussion on Youth Games development, with EPC treasurer, Craig Carscadden maintained that a balance had to be found in terms of catering for elite athletes and providing a more holistic approach. "There's got to be an element of competition, with pathways, but also an element of education and cultural experience", Mr. Carscadden said.

The picture below: Pat Hickey and John Petersson



PARALYMPIC IRELAND TO HOST 2013 EPC GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND
CONFERENCE IN DUBLIN

Minister Ring welcomes EPC members to the Gathering

May 9, 2013

The European Paralympic Committee, based in Vienna, today confirmed that Paralympics Ireland have been awarded the hosting of the 2013 European Paralympic Committee General Assembly and Conference to be held in Dublin on the 4th and 5th of October.

This viennial event will be attended by delegates from over 40 countries in Europe and it will be one of the principle Paralympic gatherings worldwide this year. With elections to the Executive Board due to take place, this year's event has added interest.

Paralympics Ireland pitched the bid as their contribution to the Gathering 2013. Welcoming the announcement, Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport, Mr. Michael Ring T.D. stated: "As minister for Tourism and Sport I am delighted that the 2013 European Paralympic Committee General Assembly & Conference will be held in Dublin in October"

"It will be a great honor for Paralympics Ireland and indeed for Irish Sport as a whole to host such a prestigious event and I would like to congratulate Paralympics Ireland on bringing the 2013 European Paralympic Committee General Assembly & Conference to Ireland."

"I am confident that delegates attending this event will be pleased with the quality of infrastructure and services available here in Ireland. I wish all participants a very successful General Assembly and Conference."

President of the European Paralympic Committee, Mr. John Petersson from Denmark commented: "The members of the European Paralympic Committee are looking forward to gathering in Dublin for this important EPC General Assembly and Conference. The election of the Executive Board at the General Assembly is sure to be of interest to all members as is the conference programme currently



being finalized. With the close proximity to the IPC General Assembly in November, the Dublin gathering provides a very timely opportunity for the European members to discuss key issues affecting the movement and bring a unified regional approach to Athens in November. Finally, I'd like to express our thanks to Paralympics Ireland for hosting the event. The plans for the event put in place by Paralympics Ireland are of the highest quality and will guarantee a very enjoyable few days in Dublin for all delegates."

In a new venture for Paralympics Ireland, President James Gradwell highlighted the growth of the host organization: "Our organization has grown hugely over the last few years culminating in an incredible London 2012 Paralympics Games for Paralympics Ireland. We are delighted to be hosting our European colleagues in Dublin so soon after London and look forward to producing the best ever EPC GA and Conference. I'd particularly like to thank our CEO Liam Harbison on being the driving force in bringing this event to Ireland and the great assistance received from EPC Treasurer Craig Carscadden."

the picture below: James Gradwell (President, Paralympics Ireland), Craig Carscadden (Treasurer, EPC)

