





ECA

EUROPEAN
CANOE ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

SPORT PROGRAM



SPORT PROGRAM

(Paracanoe)



PRESENT OUR DISCIPLINE

- History
- Main evolutions
- Definition



INTRODUCTION

History of Paracanoe

Paracanoe is the canoeing discipline for athletes with an impairment and races are contested by two types of boat, kayak (K) and va'a (V).

Both kayak and va'a have three different classes of event for men and women, depending on the classification of the athlete's impairment, in KL1, KL2 and KL3 for kayak and in VL1, VL2 and VL3 for va'a. At international level all paracanoe races are individual events and competed at a distance of 200m.

The discipline featured with exhibition status under the name paddleability at the 2009 Canoe Sprint World Championships in Dartmouth and was given official status as paracanoe at the following year's edition in Poznan in 2010. In 2010, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) announced that the paracanoe would make its debut at the Paralympic Games in 2016 in Rio de Janeiro. There were six medal events at the Games (three men, three women), all in the kayak category.

In 2020 in Tokyo Va'a has made its Paralympic debut with three medal events - two for men, one for women - taking to nine races overall on the paracanoe programme, and in 2024 in Paris there will one more Va'a event for women.

The first ECA European Paracanoe Championship was held in Zagreb in 2012. Since then, it was organized integrated every year together with the able-bodied athletes, except the years of the European Games.

INTRODUCTION

Paracanoe at the European Championships

Participant countries			
2019	2021	2022	2023
ARM		ARM	ARM
AUT	AUT	AUT	AUT
BLR	BLR		
		CYP	
			DEN
ESP	ESP	ESP	ESP
FRA	FRA	FRA	FRA
GBR	GER	GBR	GBR
GER		GER	GER
HUN	HUN	HUN	HUN
IRL	IRL	IRL	
ISR	ISR	ISR	ISR
ITA	ITA	ITA	ITA
POL	POL	POL	POL
POR	POR	POR	POR
RUS	RUS		
SRB		SRB	
		SWE	
UKR	UKR	UKR	UKR
16	13	16	13

INTRODUCTION

Paracanoe at the European Championships

Countries, which participate ECH in sprint, but not in Paracanoe	
BEL	CRO
BUL	LAT
CZE	LTU
DEN	NED
GRE	SLO
SVK	EST
FIN	MDA

INTRODUCTION

Paracanoe at the European Championships

Gender	Events	Number of boats / events			
		2019	2021	2022	2023
Men	KL3 200m	13	15	9	11
	KL2 200m	10	6	10	12
	KL1 200m	10	9	9	6
	VL3 200m	18	12	12	8
	VL2 200m	12	11	8	9
	VL1 200m	2	1	1	4
Women	KL3 200m	10	6	6	9
	KL2 200m	10	8	9	6
	KL1 200m	6	5	6	3
	VL3 200m	5	5	7	5
	VL2 200m	4	3	4	3
	VL1 200m	1	2	3	2



THE DIAGNOSTIC OF THE DISCIPLINE

SWOT ANALYSIS

- STRENGTHS
- WEAKNESSES
- OPPORTUNITIES
- THREATS

DIAGNOSTIC

Areas of reflections

- Important evolution in the discipline
- Analyse our European championship
- competition venues
- Organizing countries
- Judges and officials
- The calendar
- The economic model of organizing events
- The hosting fees of the events
- The television and streaming broadcast - production, audience -
- The contractualization between the ECA and the organizer
- Gender equity
- The specifications of the events
- The event attribution process
- The link with other disciplines – calendar, multisports events -
- The competition program
- The discipline's training tools for coaches, judges, organizers and volunteers
- The link with the ICF
- The link with the member federations
- The material used
- The impact of global warming on the discipline
- The link with leisure practices
- etc

STRENGTHS

- **Paralympic discipline**
- **Para ECH integrated with the Sprint ECH**
- Good cooperation with the ECA Sprint TD
- Well organised competitions
- Paracanoe at the Multisport ECH in 2022 and Szeged 2024
- Well organised and experienced ITOs and classifiers

WEAKNESSES

- The number of competitors is low
- The number of countries/events is low
- Only 200 meters distance in Para
- Not always clear, maybe not really fair classification system
- Not enough Paracanoe events in the TV broadcast (not always)

OPPORTUNITIES

- More countries involved in the Paracanoe in Europe by active promotion during national events by ECA
- Help and support for the new countries
- Development program (maybe with ICF)
- Support the classifier education
- Erasmus+ grants (Freedom on Water)
- New distance (500 meters and marathon),
- New categories – Open events (other impairments)
- More exact and cleared classification's system

THREATS

- Financial budget of the Para is lower than in sprint in most of countries,
- Classification issues



THE MAIN AXIS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISCIPLINE

HOW DEVELOP GLOBALLY THE DISCIPLINE

?

DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOP GLOBALLY OUR DISCIPLINES

OUR PRIORITIES

- Increase the number of participating countries and athletes at the ECH
- Wake up the „sleeping“ countries, increasing the number of participants
- Increase the number of events, new distances in which the athletes can compete
- New categories – Open events (other impairments)
- Showcase paracanoe through more effective media and social media opportunities

ACTIONS

- Wake up the „sleeping“ countries, increasing the number of participants
 - we should contact the national federations at the ECA level, offering cooperation and help for starting the Paracanoe
 - Contact with the national clubs
 - promotion video about the Paracanoe
 - travelling paracanoe expert
 - offering them necessary tools and equipment to get started, boats that are not used by other nations and professional assistance
 - offering them sport experts, a coach or classifier, a specialist invited by the ECA for this task.
- 500 meter's races at the ECH
- Paracanoe at the marathon ECH
- Open para events at the sprint and marathon ECH for other impairments
- K2 / V2 Mixed race (para athlete with sprint athlete of the other gender) and or pursuit races with all classifications (KL1-3; VL1-3)

Our strengths
example

- Some strong nations on which we can rely to develop the discipline
- xx

Our Weaknesses
example

- Few budget allocated by the national federations for the disciplines
- Number of federation
- xx

Areas of reflection

- Number of nations / athletes / ITO / in the European championships
- The organization of the discipline in the national federations: number of nations, , clubs, athletes, national events, geographical analysis
- Obstacles to the development of activity within clubs, federations, ECA, ICF
- The budget allocated by the national federations to the discipline
- The tools for judges, officials, referees, volunteers, organizers
- The link with the other disciplines
- The economic model of the discipline
- ...

GUIDELINES

- Develop the number of nation represented in our championships, number of athletes, ITO, Officials, referees.
- Develop the discipline within our national federations – program of local, national competitions, national championships
- Promote our discipline – communication –
- Reinforce the link between the member of the community members of the discipline



EVENTS AND CALENDAR

**HOW IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR
EVENTS AND CALENDARS ?**

EVENTS AND CALENDAR

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR EVENTS AND CALENDAR

OUR PRIORITIES

- The date of Paracanoe ECH
- Paracanoe in the program of the whole competition
- Economical participation at the events
- xx

ACTIONS

- Do not organise too close to other ICF events
- The Paracanoe races should be between the sprint races in the heats and in the finals too
- The ceremonies of Paracanoe should be held between the sprint ceremonies
 - Both in the TV broadcast, in the Live TV broadcast
- There are only few Paracanoe races, so the Paracanoe program should be three-four days
- Do not be empty day before the classification and the races
- xx

Our strengths
example

- Skills of the technical delegates
- xx

Our Weaknesses
example

- Lack of organizers
- xx

Areas of reflection

- The calendar – number of events, locations - planification
- The link with the other disciplines and ICF calendar.- Optimization of the calendar
- The bidding process
- The hosting fees and the economic model of our events
- How cut costs and increase revenues
- The quality of the events
- The evaluation of the events – reports
- The program of the competitions
- Innovating program and paddle sports of tomorrow
- The broadcasting and streaming of the events
- The sponsors and partners
- Link with recreational activities

GUIDELINES

- Consolidate our presence at the Olympic, Paralympic and European Game and the major international events
- Consolidate our international leadership in terms of our results
- Aim for excellence in the organization and media coverage of our events - European Championships - Continental Qualifications and generate more revenues from our events
- Develop the number of nations and athletes in our competitions
- Strengthen cooperation between nations, transborder cooperation
- Reinforce the accessibility of our competitions for people with disabilities and develop the paracanoe
- Define a clear and transparent application and event allocation process that better associates the technical delegates and the authorities.
- Develop events and activities that generate partnerships and revenue.
- Reduce the impact of our competitions on our environment and biodiversity by gradually introducing sustainable development criteria into the awarding of our events.
- Participate in the development of e-sport
- Build the paddle sports of tomorrow
- Develop the cooperation with the other disciplines – eg multisport events -



VENUES & EQUIPMENTS

**HOW IMPROVE THE QUALITY, DIVERSITY,
OF OUR VENUES?**

VENUES & EQUIPMENTS

DEVELOP THE PLACES TO PADDLE FOR OUR DISCIPLINE

Our strengths

example

- Natural and artificial venues
- xx

Our Weaknesses

example

- Few venues to host our events
- The global warming and its impact on our venues
- xx

Areas of reflection

- The location of the venues in Europe
- The quality of the venue
- Label the venue according to its quality -- e.g.: 1 to 5 stars –
- The support by ECA to the national projects
- How to develop new venues
- How accompany the federation in the creation of new venues
- Assist the federation for the construction of new venues
- The specifications for the venues to host a championship
- Etc.

OUR PRIORITIES

- All places of the events should be reachable, usable for all para athletes
- xx

ACTIONS

- It is necessary to discuss with the applicants of competition's organizing committee the global accessibility of the venue what has to be checked by the ECA Technical Delegate
- xx

GUIDELINES

- Increase the number of sites and nations capable of hosting European championships
- Define an infrastructure and equipment plan and implement a support policy: political, technical, legal for project leaders - Project assistance on opportunity studies -
- Identify and promote the venues
- Improve the quality of the venues
- Define specifications for the sites hosting our championships
- Carry out a map of the sites hosting our championships
- Take global warming and environmental protection issues into account for our competition venues and the organization of our competitions
- Support the projects of national federations
- Facilitate the cooperation between nation – share the venues and organizations -



**ATHLETES-JUDGES-REFEREES-OFFICIALS-COACHES-
VOLUNTERS- ORGANIZERS**

**HOW IMPROVE THE NUMBER, THE SKILLS
OF OUR ACTIVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS?**

**HOW VALORIZE AND PROMOTE OUR
COMMUNITY MEMBERS?**

ATHLETES-JUDGES-REFEREES-OFFICIALS-COACHES-VOLUNTERS- ORGANIZERS

Our strengths
example

- Nations with good organizers
- Many judges
- xx

Our Weaknesses
example

- The number of official
- xx

Areas of reflection

- The courses for our coaches, referees, judges, organizers
- The observer program in the organization of our competitions
- European judges committee
- How to show recognition to our community members
- How to improve the skills of our community members?
- The link with ICF programs – eg TIP – clothing line for the officials, judges, volunteers, organizers
- How to confort the link between the members of our community
- Training tools for our stakeholders – eg europaddle pass –
- The ITO'S nomination
- Athletes ambassadors
- ...

THE JUDGES-REFEREES-OFFICIALS-COACHES-ATHLETES –VOLUNTERS - ORGANIZERS - AT THE CENTER OF OUR PROJECTS

OUR PRIORITIES

- To have an ECA Paracanoe classifier team
- Education of coaches

ACTIONS

- Should organize Paracanoe classifier training (together with ICF) with ECA financial support
 - At the ECA events don't be overseas classifiers
- Support the education of coaches and clubs in delivering paracanoe/ disability participation in less represented regions
- To ask the opinions of the most important stakeholders about the development of Paracanoe (athletes, coaches, classifiers, officials)

GUIDELINES

- Improve the skills and knowledge of our judges, coaches, athletes, organizers and volunteers
- Promote the stakeholders of our community – medal ceremony, recognitions –
- Develop the cooperation between the nations for the athletes for high performance and development – training camps / competitions / Talent Identification Program –
- Identify our community members and reinforce the links between the members of our community

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RULES & REGULATIONS

**WHAT DO WE NEED TO KEEP, CHANGE,
ADAPT IN A SHORT, MEDIUM, LONG
TERM, WHY AND HOW?**

RULES & REGULATIONS

IMPROVE OUR RULES AND REGULATIONS

OUR PRIORITIES

- More clear and exact classification system
- Change the rule of medal ceremonies

ACTIONS

- Support the European experts who are making research in this subject
- To be recognised as an official European Championships each event in each discipline has to fulfil minimum participation of 5 nations.
 - Less then 5 nations, at the Prizegiving Ceremoy the athletes will not get medals, there is no anthem.
 - **Proposal:** In this case the athlete get the medal. It is important for them, it is not their fault, if there is no enough participants.

Our strengths
example

- The link with ICF rules
- xx

...

Our Weaknesses
example

- the adaptation of certain rules to the specificities of the European continent
- lack of innovation strategy
- ..

Areas of reflection

- Carry out an assessment of our rules
- what developments to consider for the discipline in the short, medium, long term
- what strategy to change the rules if necessary
- How make our discipline more attractive
- How to create the conditions to be more innovative
- ;;;

GUIDELINES

- Identify what to keep, what needs to be changed, what needs to evolve
- Identify the changes to be made in the short term, medium term and long term
- Associate the national federations and their committees in the reflection
- Propose a strategy to change the rules
- The calendar – march 2025 -

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MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE ECA

**HOW TO IMPROVE OUR ORGANIZATION
AND ADAPT IT TO WHAT WE PLAN TO
DO?**

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE ECA

Our strengths
Example

- Skills of the technical delegates
- xx

Our Weaknesses
Example

- Insufficient number of technical delegates
- xx

Areas of reflection

- The duties of the chairman and the technical delegates members of the committee
- The link with: ICF committees / the other committees / The board
- The organisation and the functioning of the committees
- The communication
- The relations with the other federations, the national committees and the chairman of the disciplines of the national federations

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMITTEE

OUR PRIORITIES

- Contracted Paracanoe expert by the ECA
- Opinion of the main stakeholders

ACTIONS

- Must a Contracted Paracanoe expert (Para TD or/with a working group member) who travels between the ECA countries and promotes the Paracanoe, keeps in touch with the National Federations, helps to start and develop the Paracanoe in local level. She/he is a consultant.
 - Visit the national paracanoe regattas, training camps
- Representation of athletes in the working groups and in the committees

GUIDELINES

- A more shared governance, gender equity, transparency eg: publication of the reports –
- A structured organization – roles and missions defined -
- An organization and functioning mindful on its economic impact on member federations and organizers.
- An organization and functioning mindful of the impact of its activities on the environment, biodiversity and global warming
- A modern administration



ACTION PLANNING

HOW TO PLAN OUR ACTIONS 2025-2028?

ACTION PLANNING

2025

- Wake up the „sleeping“ countries, increasing the number of participants - active promotion for paracanoe during national sprint events in the „sleeping“ countries
- Paracanoe at the marathon ECH
- Review the program of Paracanoe ECH
- Paracanoe in the TV broadcast, in the Live TV broadcast
- Organize Paracanoe classifier training (together with ICF) with ECA financial support
- At the ECA events don't be overseas classifiers

2026

- The date of Paracanoe ECH
- 500 meter's races at the ECH
- Rule change:
Now Less than 5 nations, at the Prizegiving Ceremony the athletes will not get medals, there is no anthem.
Proposal: In this case the athlete get the medal. It is important for them, it is not their fault, if there is no enough participants.
- Education of the coaches and classifiers together ICF
- Inclusive training camps in the „sleeping countries“ – including other disabilities
- ECA Paracanoe conference
- Representation of athletes in the working groups and in the ECA committees

2027

- The European Paracanoe Championships should be a qualification event to Paralympic Games
- Contracted Paracanoe who travels between the ECA countries and promotes the Paracanoe, keeps in touch with the National Federations, helps to start and develop the Paracanoe in local level. She/he is a consultant.

2028

- Summary of the results achieved
- Developing a plan for the next period

