

Allianz SE

# Press

## Allianz backs disabled sport

At the suggestion of the German Federal President Horst Köhler, the Allianz Group is backing disabled athletes in their preparations for the Beijing Paralympics.

Allianz Group  
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The Beijing Paralympic Games take place in summer 2008 and involve more than 4,000 athletes, making them the world's second largest sporting event after the Olympic Games. The interest of the media and the public has now too been piqued by this contest of athletes with disabilities.

On this day, Friday October 20, 2006, in the presence of Federal President Horst Köhler, who originally suggested the partnership, Gerhard Rupprecht, board member of Allianz SE and Karl-Gerhard Eick, deputy chairman of Deutsche Telekom AG, signed a partnership agreement in Bonn with the German National Paralympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee.



Left to right: Sir Philip Craven (IPC), Karl Hermann Haack (DBS), Gerhard Rupprecht (Allianz) and Karl-Gerhard Eick (Telekom) signing the agreement

### Supporting top and young athletes

The main aim of the partnership is to promote the paralympic movement and to provide financial support enabling the athletes in the German Paralympics Top Team to train for the Beijing Games. Thanks to this support, top athletes in employment will be able to cut their working hours by up to 50 percent and their employers will receive financial compensation.

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Allianz also wants to use this opportunity to work together with its partners and promote the rights of disabled persons to be fully included in society. It hopes its support will help the paralympic movement to grow and encourage more people with disabilities to take up sport.

For this reason, the partnership has also developed an Educational Program to support young athletes, and is running paralympic and disability awareness days at schools to promote integration and improve young people's understanding of disability in a fun and playful environment.



German President Horst Köhler (right): "Paralympic athletes are role models and perfect ambassadors"

### Ability, trust and the right partners

If all goes to plan, then an Allianz employee will also be on the team traveling to Beijing in two years' time: 20-year-old Christina Ziegler, who is doing an apprenticeship in Business Information Systems with Allianz in Stuttgart, already holds three world records in breaststroke. "This young lady has taken charge of her own destiny, is making sure she receives good professional training, and on top of that is also a top-performing athlete," declared Gerhard Rupprecht.

He then went on to explain that, "the prerequisites for top athletes are ability and being able to perform well under competitive pressure. Just as important are believing in your own ability, being able to rely on others and receiving support from partners. Allianz, too, has only achieved success as an international financial services provider because its ability and competitiveness have allowed it to stand firm and because it has built trust by addressing the needs of each individual customer."

Federal President Köhler added that, "The paralympic athletes symbolize power, endurance and assertiveness, which makes them role models and perfect ambassadors. I am delighted that Allianz and Deutsche Telekom realize this potential."