



- Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia (SOEE) is Europe's largest sport programme of year-round sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.
- Here are some fast facts on SOEE:
  - More than **500,000** athletes
  - Encompassing national programmes in **58** countries
  - **31** Olympic-type summer & winter sports
  - Almost **3,500** competitions a year
  - More than **60,000** volunteers
  - As many as **30,000** coaches
  - More than **21,000** family members
- There are approximately **26.5** million people with an intellectual disability in the Europe/Eurasia region.
- Through its work, SOEE assists 58 National Programmes to become better known, better funded and more successful in both expanding and improving sports opportunities and other initiatives for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- Initiatives include Healthy Athletes®, Athlete Leadership, Family Support Network, Young Athletes, Global Football and SO Get Into It®.
- SOEE is also involved in creating regional competition opportunities and assisting with the planning and organisation of such events as the European Games, Law Enforcement Torch Run, Unified Sports®, the Africa Project, European Football Week and European Basketball Week.
- Special Olympics and **Paralympics** are two separate organisations based upon how we hold competitions and how we division our athletes. Special Olympics provide year-round sports training and competitions for all ability levels. Paralympics provides elite level sports competition for multi-disabled groups including physical and deaf.



- The European Games take place every four years. The 2010 Special Olympics European Games will be hosted in Warsaw, Poland.
- In June 2003 Ireland hosted the first Special Olympics World Summer Games to be held outside of the United States. It was the largest sporting event in 2003, capturing the hearts and imagination of the Irish people.
- Athens, Greece will host the 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games from June 25<sup>th</sup> to July 4<sup>th</sup>. 7,000 athletes from more than 180 countries will compete supported by 3,000 coaches and officials, 25,000 volunteers and 40,000 family members as well as thousands of spectators.

#### **SO INTERNATIONAL**

- SOEE is part of the Special Olympics family that works with **3.1** million athletes across the world supported by **750,000** volunteers and **3** million family members.
- The movement was established in the United States in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, sister of John F. Kennedy, former President of the USA.
- Special Olympics organises more than **30,000** sports competitions world-wide each year. It depends on the support of more than **750,000** volunteers and more than **300,000** coaches worldwide.
- The SO movement transforms communities by inspiring people to open their minds, to accept and include people with intellectual disabilities, celebrating differences among all people....recognising and respecting the similarities we all share.

For more information visit:

[www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org)

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