

**Special  
Olympics**  
Ireland



**4**  **YEARS**  
1978 - 2018

**2017 ANNUAL REVIEW**

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**TRANSFORMING  
LIVES THROUGH  
SPORT FOR 40 YEARS**



# 2017 WAS AN INCREDIBLE YEAR FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS IRELAND



Firstly, I would like to begin by saying that I am honoured and delighted to have been chosen by the Board to be Chairman at this exciting time for the organisation and to thank my predecessor Terry Buckley for his stewardship and on-going support to Special Olympics.

**2**017 was an incredible year with many sporting and organisational highlights. 26 athletes from Ireland competed in the World Winter Games in Austria accompanied by a management team made up of 11 volunteers and one staff member, as Head of Delegation. A further 90 Special Olympics Ireland volunteers supported the running of the very successful Winter Games in addition to raising vital funds for the programme. We are all very proud of Team Ireland's achievements and the role all our volunteers played to enhance the Games.

Our five regions held numerous advancement Area and Regional competition events during 2017, as athletes competed with a dream to progress to the Special Olympics Ireland Games that will take place in Dublin from 14th-17th June 2018. Selections for the 1,600 available places at the Ireland Games were made and offered to athletes during June and July of 2017. The early support we have received for these Games from volunteers, sponsors, family members and various other stakeholders has been nothing but phenomenal.

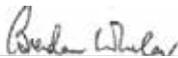
Our many funding partners and sponsors continue to demonstrate wonderful loyalty and support. It is not possible to mention them all here but a special thanks must go to Sport Ireland, Pobal and Sport NI, to our long-term partner, Gala, Aer Lingus, Johnson & Johnson Group, the JP McManus Foundation and the Iris O'Brien Foundation for their year-on-year support and commitment to Special Olympics.

A major highlight in 2017 was the completion of a Young Athletes™ pilot programme which is a play programme for children from 4-7 years of age. The pilot was run over a six month period and proved to be very successful. Work has begun in earnest to roll this out on a wider scale and this will remain a focus for the organisation during the remainder of the 2020 strategy and beyond. Both eir and Pobal have provided critical start-up funding for this initiative.

At the end of 2017, Special Olympics had 320 affiliated clubs and 8,319 registered athletes. During the year a Club Recognition Programme was launched with 5 clubs successful in achieving the award. In total, 140 clubs offered a Health Promotion Programme in 2017. The dedication of the club volunteers, coaches, family members and athletes is reflected in the ever increasing standards and achievements of all the athletes who are increasingly developing a broad range of skills and improved health and well-being.

The Board and staff remain very focused on good Governance and driving improving standards. During the year the organisation invested in a number of new systems including a new Procurement Management System and a new Financial System. This has enabled Special Olympics Ireland to adopt the Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice). This has necessitated a restatement of 2016 financial results so that they may be compared logically with the 2017 results. From a financial perspective, 2017 was very satisfactory and better than budgeted. The organisation is well placed to continue upwards and onwards in delivering on our 2020 strategy.

I would like to thank our committed and skilled staff, my fellow Board members and our patrons who are always so supportive and finally a very special thanks to each and every one of the 6,870 volunteers who so generously donated their expertise, time and energy for the benefit of our inspirational athletes. My final words are to thank and congratulate our athletes for all that they do to make Special Olympics so special.



Brendan Whelan,  
Chairman

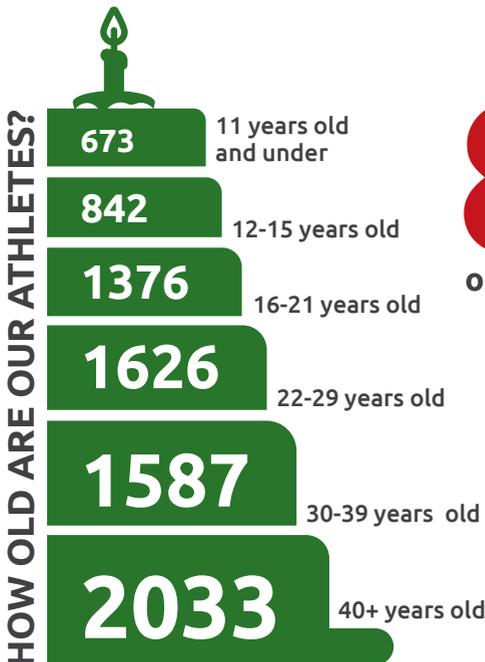
Team Ireland return home to Dublin Airport after a successful campaign at the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria.



# IT'S ALL ABOUT SPORT

The mission of Special Olympics Ireland is "to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with an intellectual disability, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendships with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community."

# 476 NEW ATHLETES



# 81%



of athletes have at least one registered family member



YEAR-ROUND sports training and athletic competition



62%  
MALE

38%  
FEMALE

# ATHLETES IN THE PROGRAMME

**1,957**

**ULSTER**

**178 NEW ATHLETES**

**1,227**

**CONNAUGHT**

**49 NEW ATHLETES**

**1,783**

**EASTERN**

**77 NEW ATHLETES**

**1,443**

**LEINSTER**

**87 NEW ATHLETES**

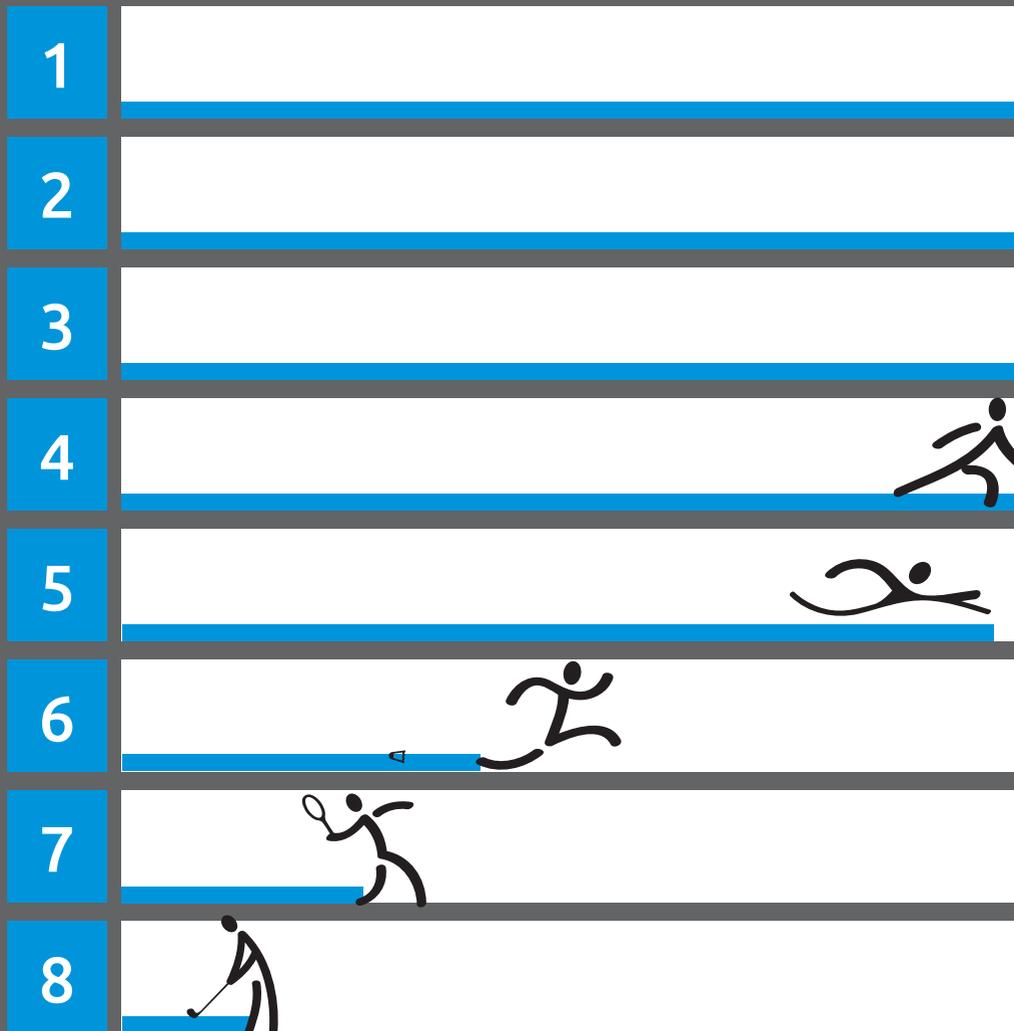
**1,909**

**MUNSTER**

**85 NEW ATHLETES**

# WE HAVE 16 SPORTS LEAGUES IN 8 SPORTS

In addition to the planned competition which takes place throughout the programme, sports leagues have also been established. Managed by teams of volunteers, these leagues provide additional opportunities for athletes to grow and develop their skills in a competitive environment.





599 **bowling**  
athletes



875 **football**  
athletes



814 **basketball**  
athletes



495 **bocce**  
athletes

293 **aquatics**  
athletes

214 **athletics**  
athletes

78 **badminton**  
athletes

49 **golf**  
athletes

# CONSTANTLY DEVELOPING, CONSTANTLY IMPROVING

A high quality coach education programme is paramount to Special Olympics Ireland. Special Olympics athletes, similar to any athlete, deserve to be coached by qualified coaches in their chosen sport. Minimum standards are established for coaches throughout the programme and coaches are encouraged to maintain and upskill their coaching levels as outlined by the relevant National Governing Body of Sport.



“There are **no shortcuts**  
to life’s greatest **achievements**”





- ✓ Special Olympics Induction
- ✓ Safeguarding 1/Code of Ethics Basic Awareness
- ✓ Safeguarding 2/Club Safeguarding Officer
- ✓ Health Promotion Facilitator Training
- ✓ Event Management Training
- ✓ Competition and Event Management
- ✓ Athlete Leadership Mentor Training
- ✓ Code of Ethics and Good Practice Workshop for Athletes
- ✓ Club Management Team Training
- ✓ Assistant Coach - Introduction to Coaching Practices
- ✓ Board Induction Training
- ✓ Club Quality Award Train the Trainer
- ✓ Bocce Coach Level 1
- ✓ Bocce Officials Training
- ✓ Floorball Coach Introduction

# COMMITTED TO GOOD GOVERNANCE PRACTICES

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- ✓ We are committed to
- ✓ Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary and Charitable Sectors
- ✓ Standards in Fundraising Practice
- ✓ Anti-Doping Compliance Guidelines
- ✓ Code of Ethics
- ✓ Access NI Code of Practice
- ✓ GDPR Compliance



Annual audited accounts can be found on: [specialolympics.ie](http://specialolympics.ie)

# SUPPORTING CLUBS IN THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

"2017 was as rewarding as any year that has gone before for Special Olympics Ireland. Athletes demonstrated courage, experienced joy and shared long lasting friendships every day. What is most remarkable though, is just how far Special Olympics reaches to transform lives through sport. The quality of life was improved for athletes and their families across the whole island. At that foundation, are the clubs." (Matt English, CEO)

**210**   
community based clubs

 **24**  
special schools

**83**   
service providers

**317**  
total clubs

 **133** clubs engaged in health and wellbeing promotion



## Focus on health and wellbeing

- ✓ We want to provide athletes with the tools and knowledge to make healthier choices for everyday health and wellbeing
- ✓ Health and wellbeing initiatives make health information more accessible
- ✓ Empowering athletes to stay healthy and perform to the best of their ability



1,561

new volunteers recruited, vetted and trained in 2017



6,910

volunteers active in 2017

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”

- HELEN KELLER -

### Age of active volunteers



## VOLUNTEERS ARE VITAL

Special Olympics Ireland would not exist today without the time, energy, commitment and enthusiasm of volunteers. In 2017, in communities all over the island of Ireland, thousands of individuals took time from their busy schedules to help change the lives of people with intellectual disabilities.

# WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

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**€1,260,250**  
**Sports Programmes**  
23%

**€1,162,851**  
**Sports Training and Development**  
21%

**€800,248**  
**Fundraising and Sponsorship**  
14%

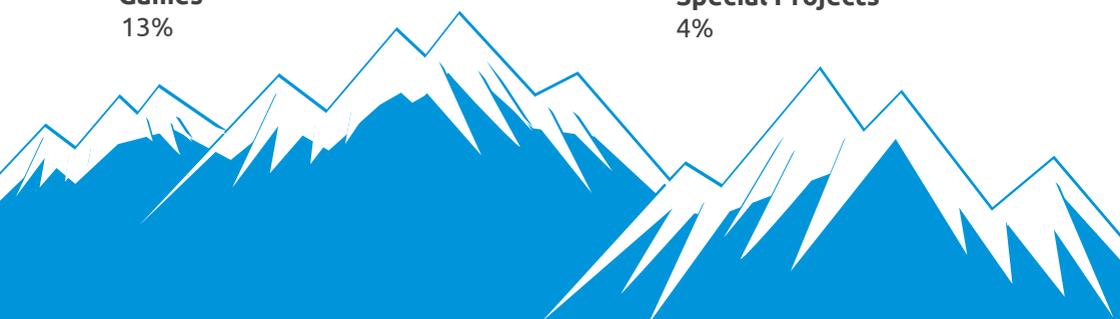
**€734,261**  
**Games**  
13%

**€552,529**  
**Clubs Programme**  
10%

**€526,642**  
**Value-in-kind**  
9%

**€294,425**  
**Health Programme**  
5%

**€266,197**  
**Special Projects**  
4%



## It's all about sport

Special Olympics Ireland were delighted to send our largest ever delegation to a Winter Games. 26 athletes supported by a coach and management team of 12 plus 90 volunteers travelled to the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria in March. The team competed in Floorball and Alpine Skiing. Team Ireland returned with 2 gold, 3 silver and 3 bronze medals along with many participation ribbons and personal bests.



**Alpine Skiing**



**Floorball**

# WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

## CORE FUNDING

received from governments in both jurisdictions



Successful partnerships were enjoyed with:



- ✓ Department of Social Protection/CE Scheme
- ✓ eir
- ✓ Gala Retail
- ✓ Health Service Executive
- ✓ Iris O'Brien Foundation
- ✓ Johnson & Johnson
- ✓ JP McManus Benevolent Fund
- ✓ Pobal

*Thank you!*

€527k

was raised through our 2017 Annual Collection Day

Many fundraising events took place across the country:

- ✓ Golf Classics
  - ✓ Cops 'N Donuts
  - ✓ Polar Plunge
  - ✓ 5 Peaks Challenge
  - ✓ Official Charity Partner Status For Events
- Supported by the Law Enforcement Torch Run

**OUR SUPPORTERS ARE COMMITTED AND LOYAL**

It is through the continued kindness of our volunteers and donors that we are aided in our mission of growing and developing our programme, so that the needs of all our athletes, and the athletes of the future, continue to be met. Your effort ensures that we can continue to provide the services our athletes deserve.

€527k

Free products and services donated as Value-in-Kind from various sources



## Facebook



**47,388**

likes in 2016



**729,400**

Facebook video Views in 2017

**€4.25 Million** 

Article Value (press and broadcast) total in 2017

Source: Kantar

## Our top tweet

"The Special Olympics Ireland Games are coming! June 14th to 17th put it in your diary, #PlayYourPart at irelandgames.ie today"

**36,465 impressions**  
**451 engagements**

**195 likes**  
**201 retweets**



**13,500**

 followers

**1,908**

 followers

**75,656**

watch time minutes on youtube

## TELLING OUR STORY

Storytelling is a hugely important tool for Special Olympics as it helps us promote the many great achievements of our athletes, their families, volunteers and supporters. Special Olympics Ireland embraces all forms of media. We strive to utilise all available platforms including traditional media and the ever expanding digital spectrum, to help spread Special Olympics message.

“Let me win,  
but if I cannot win,  
let me be brave in  
the attempt”

- ATHLETE OATH -



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1978 - 2018

## 2020 STRATEGY

*To drive and support a quality year-round sports programme that is embedded in local communities, resourced by vibrant and strong leaders and offers health and well-being opportunities to athletes with an intellectual disability from four years of age upwards.*

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

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