

**Special  
Olympics**  
Ireland



**40 YEARS**  
1978 - 2018

**2018 ANNUAL REVIEW**

**TRANSFORMING  
LIVES THROUGH  
SPORT**





**Special Olympics**  
Ireland

## 2018 - Ireland Games return to Dublin as Special Olympics Ireland celebrate 40th anniversary



In 2018, after sixteen years, the Ireland Games returned to Dublin. Memories of the 2003 World Games were re-lived for many as countless new relationships and partnerships were established. 1,559 athletes competed across 13 different sports. The regional teams prepared diligently and their hard work paid off handsomely in terms of sporting performances. The Games began with the Law Enforcement Torch Run which ultimately arrived into the Opening Ceremony at Tallaght Stadium where President Michael D. Higgins gave an impassioned address, recognising the 40th anniversary and delighted all in attendance. Three days of Games followed, with the Sport Ireland National Sports Campus as the hub for many activities. Many dignitaries, sports stars and celebrities joined numerous families and fans to support the athletes. During the Games, an extensive Healthy Athlete Programme was offered where participants could avail of seven different disciplines, including a new Strong Minds Programme. 41% of athletes attended the Healthy Athlete Programme over the Games.

Selections of the team to represent SO Ireland for the 2019 World Summer Games in Abu Dhabi took place in July, with 91 athletes and 39 supporting management team and coaches selected. Detailed plans and training schedules were agreed and, in March 2019, Team Ireland went on to achieve greatness and lifted the spirit of the entire country.

Our five regions held numerous league events, development days and other competition events during 2018 to ensure that those athletes not participating in the Ireland Games had ample opportunity to develop and demonstrate their skills.

At year-end, Special Olympics had 313 affiliated clubs and 7,812 registered athletes. 17 new clubs successfully completed the Club Recognition programme and received their well-deserved award.

In October, the first All-Ireland Athlete Leadership Forum took place.

75 athletes and their mentors attended from the five regions at which there were many engaging and educational activities. During the event, Andrew Byrne was elected by his peers as the new athlete representative on the Board.

A major highlight in 2018 was the progress of the Young Athletes™ programme. The Ireland Games included a Young Athletes Festival which offered two different sessions: the first was a Young Athletes Demonstration, provided by coaches and Young Athletes who had participated in the pilot scheme and the second was a Young Athletes “Come and Try” session. Both events proved to be very popular. By year end, 121 Young Athletes had registered and there is a healthy pipeline of interest from new families for further growth and expansion across all regions.

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, Sport NI, and Pobal. Huge gratitude is due to our long-term partner, eir, and to Gala, Johnson & Johnson Group, the JP McManus Foundation and the Iris O’Brien Foundation for the year-on-year support and commitment that each gives to Special Olympics. During 2018 a new agreement was formalised with Kerry Group who are supporting four countries across Europe. Microsoft, DELL/EMC, Ulster Bank, Bank of America and many more organisations provided incredible support too.

The Board and staff remain really focused on driving good governance and on improving standards. During the year, there was a real emphasis on GDPR, improving safeguarding standards in view of the introduction of Children First Legislation, initiating the process of re-vetting club volunteers and improving financial reporting by adopting the Charities SORP and implementing the Financial Reporting Standard 102.

I would like to thank our committed and skilled staff. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to each and every one of our volunteers, which includes my fellow Board members and Patrons, who so generously donate their expertise, time and energy for the benefit of our athletes. My final words, as always, are to congratulate and thank our athletes on their dedication to their sport, their incredible achievements and for the inspiration they give to all involved in the Special Olympics Programme.



Brendan Whelan,  
Chairman

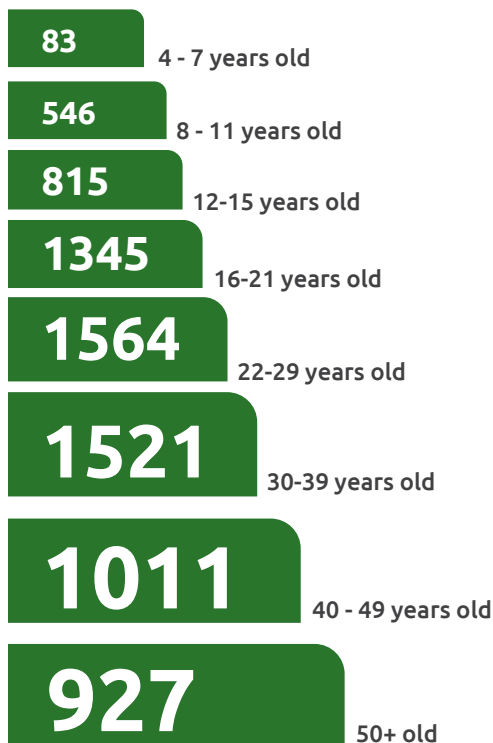
# 40 YEARS OF SPORT

In 2018, Special Olympics Ireland celebrated 40 years of providing sports training, health and development opportunities to children and adults with an intellectual disability across Ireland. Our athletes are at the centre of everything we do and we were delighted to introduce the new Young Athletes™ programme.

# 521

## NEW ATHLETES

HOW OLD ARE OUR ATHLETES?

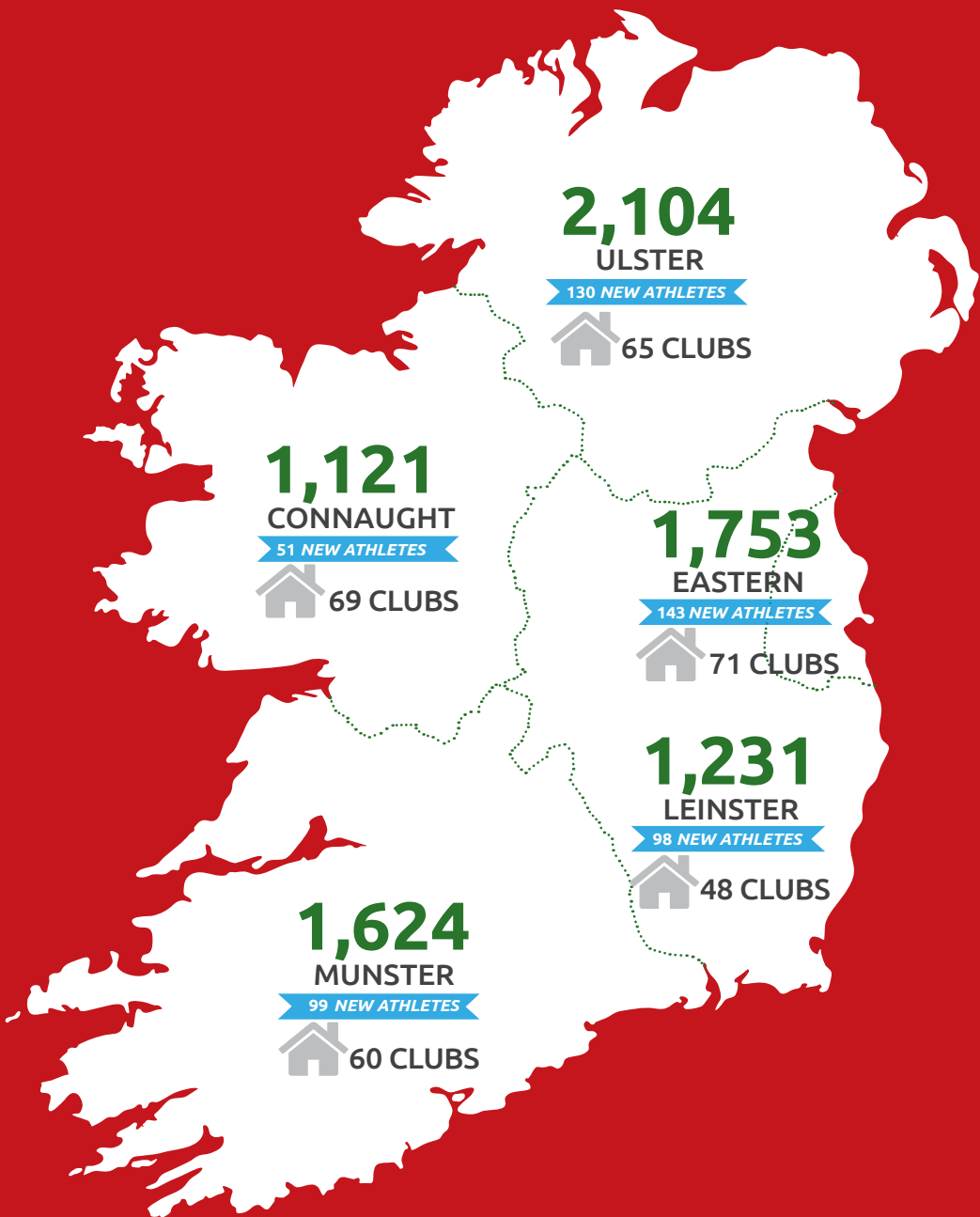


**64%** MALE  
**36%** FEMALE



**YEAR-ROUND**  
sports training and  
athletic competition

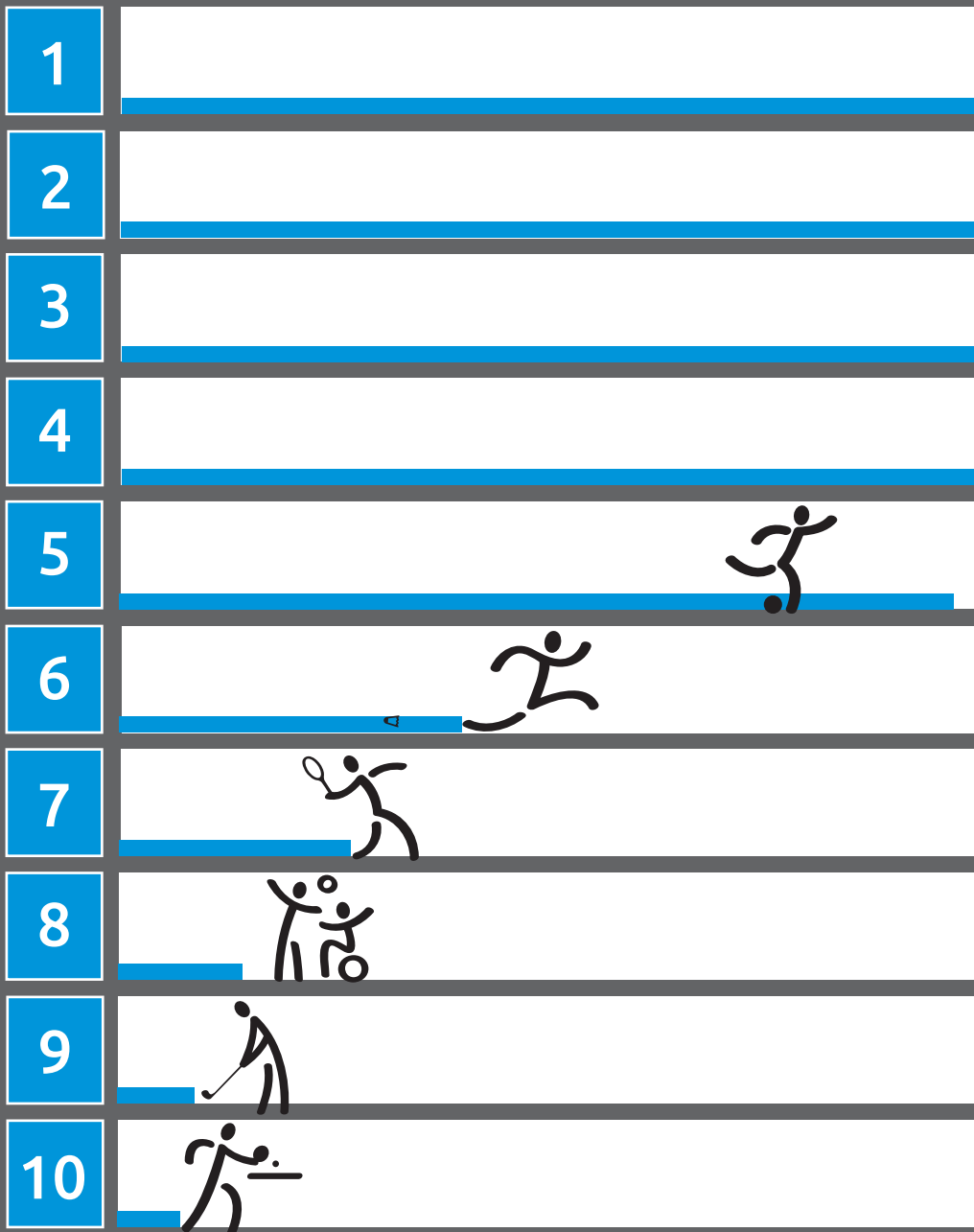
# NUMBER OF ATHLETES AND CLUBS BY REGION



Please note: Total number of athletes reported here is 7,833. Actual number is 7,812. 21 athletes are registered in more than one region.

# WE HAVE 26 SPORTS LEAGUES IN 10 SPORTS

In addition to the planned competition which takes place throughout the programme, including the 2018 Special Olympics Ireland Games in which 1,559 athletes took part in, 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.





674 **bocce**  
athletes



637 **basketball**  
athletes



606 **swimming**  
athletes



586 **bowling**  
athletes



416 **football**  
athletes

260 **athletics**  
athletes

87 **badminton**  
athletes

47 **Motor Activities Training Programme**  
athletes

40 **golf**  
athletes

30 **table tennis**  
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. 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**”







## Training courses provided in 2018

### Ireland Games Specific Training :

- Games Organising Committee Training
- Manual Handling Training
- Venue Management Team Training
- Volunteer Role Specific Training
- Autism in Sport (Cara)

### Board Induction Training

### Bocce Officials Online Course

### Bocce Coach - Level 1

### Coach Education run through NGB's

### Club Management Team Training

### Club Safeguarding Officer Training

### Coaching Children (Young Athletes™)

### Disability Inclusion Training (Cara)

### Floorball Official - Introduction

### Golf Leader

### Governance for Board Members

### Health Promotion Training

### ID Module - Athlete Health

### ID Module - Communication

### ID Module - Introduction to Intellectual Disability

### Officials, Judges and Umpire Courses run through NGB's

### Safeguarding 1/Code of Ethics Training - Basic

### Safeguarding 2/Club Children's Officer - CCO

### Assistant Coach

### - Introduction to Coaching Practices

### Volunteer Induction

### Volunteer Management Training



## COMMITTED TO GOOD GOVERNANCE PRACTICES



### **We are committed to**

- ✓ Governance Code for the Community
- ✓ Voluntary and Charitable Sectors
- ✓ Standards in Fundraising Practice
- ✓ Anti-Doping Compliance Guidelines
- ✓ Safeguarding
- ✓ Access NI Code of Practice
- ✓ Charities Governance Code
- ✓ GDPR Compliant



Annual audited accounts  
can be found on:

*[specialolympics.ie](https://specialolympics.ie)*

# SUPPORTING CLUBS IN THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

"2018 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)



## 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

# VOLUNTEERS ARE VITAL

June 2018, saw 2,000 volunteers taking up positions for the Ireland Games across 11 competition venues, 3 accommodation venues, the Opening Ceremony venue and a number of support venues. Up to 100 of those volunteers held Games Organising Committee positions which saw them engaged in planning roles for up to 6 months before the Ireland Games commenced. 1,109 Ireland Games Volunteers were new registrants and many have decided to continue volunteering with Special Olympics at a regional level.

# 6,573

volunteers active in 2018



# 1,920

new volunteers recruited

***“The people of Ireland are one of the most generous and many organisations could not operate if it weren't for that generosity.”***

Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh,  
Patron of Special Olympics Ireland and legendary GAA comentator.



## Special Olympics Young Athletes™



**PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY**



### HUGE GROWTH IN 2018



Number of Young Athletes™

# 121

Number of Young Athletes™ Clubs

# 15

Huge growth was reported in our new Young Athletes™ programme following the successful piloting of the programme and the hosting of the first ever Young Athletes™ Festival during the Ireland Games in the Sport Ireland National Indoor Arena.

We have strategic plans for the growth and development of this programme across Ireland.

# WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

€1,266,756

Sports Competition

17%

€473,316

Sports Training and Development

6%

€922,236

Fundraising and Sponsorship

13%

€2,701,855

Games

37%

€677,687

Clubs Programme

9%

€794,862

Value-in-kind

11%

€249,232

Health Programme

3%

€288,190

Special Projects

4%

## It's all about sport

The Special Olympics Ireland Games took place in Dublin, for the first time in 16 years. 1,559 Special Olympics athletes from all corners of Ireland will participate in the 4-day residential Games in 13 sports competitions and a Motor Activities Training Programme.

### Ireland Games Fast Facts

FAMILIES & SPECTATORS

3,500

HEALTH SCREENINGS

655

MEDALS & PARTICIPATION

RIBBONS AWARDED

2,755

SPORTS

14

VOLUNTEERS

2,000

VENUES

12

ATHLETES

1,559



*"I have often spoken, as President of Ireland, about the importance of becoming active citizens willing to make our own unique contribution to the shaping of a shared future and a re-imagined Ireland that celebrates all our possibilities."*

President Michael D. Higgins  
officially opened the  
2018 Ireland Games at the  
Opening Ceremony in  
Tallaght Stadium on June 14th.



# WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

## CORE FUNDING

received from governments in both jurisdictions



Our committed supporters include:



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

In addition we received significant support from the following for the 2018 Ireland Games Campaign:

- Ulster Bank, €125,000 • Microsoft, €60,000 • Bank of America Merrill Lynch, €50,000
- Dublin City Council, €50,000 • South Dublin County Council, €50,000
- Fingal County Council, €50,000 • Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, €50,000

*Thank you!*

**€502k**

was raised through our 2018 Annual Collection Day

Many fundraising events took place across the country:

- ✓ 40th Anniversary Ball
- ✓ Schools Torch Run
- ✓ Cops 'N Donuts
- ✓ Polar Plunge
- ✓ 5 Peaks Challenge
- ✓ Official Charity Partner Status For Events

**Supported by the Law Enforcement Torch Run**

**€795k**

Free products and services donated as Value-in-Kind



## Facebook



**51,982**  
likes in 2018



**155,400**  
Facebook video  
Views in 2018

# €2.18 Million

**Article Value (press and broadcast) total in 2018**

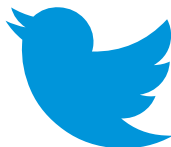
Source: Kantar

## Our top tweet

And this sums up the last 4 AMAZING days.  
4Days, 100% given, Medals won, Friends made,  
experiences = amazing  
**#IrelandGames #playyourpart**

**20k impressions**  
**654 engagements**

**138 likes**  
**154 retweets**



**13,978**  
 followers

**3,687**  
 followers

## 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 -



**Special  
Olympics**  
Ireland



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

## **2016 - 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)**

Special Olympics Ireland  
Sport Ireland National Sports Campus  
Snugborough Road  
Blanchardstown  
Dublin 15  
D48 PC63