



Antwerp 2014 Public Relations Guidelines & Toolkit for National Programmes

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Special Olympics





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i. **Template Press Releases & Media Alerts**

TEMPLATE PRESS RELEASE FOR GENERAL ANTWERP 2014 ANNOUNCEMENT

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Contact:

{Name}

{Telephone}

{Email}

**MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND ATHLETES TO COMPETE IN THE 2014 SPECIAL OLYMPICS
EUROPEAN SUMMER GAMES**

Antwerp, Belgium prepares to host the Games from September 9 - 20

{Date}-{City, Country}: The Olympics city of Antwerp, Belgium will welcome more than 2,000 Special Olympics athletes coming from 58 countries, when it hosts the 2014 Special Olympics European Summer Games from September 9 - 20.

These inspirational athletes will compete in ten sports: Swimming, Artistic Gymnastics, Athletics, Motor Activity Training, Badminton, Table Tennis, Bocce, Football, Unified Basketball, Judo and Cycling.

Special Olympics **[Country]** expects to send up to **[number]** athletes to participate in this international event recognised by the International Olympic Committee.

The delegations will travel from all corners of Europe and Central Asia including Iceland, Portugal, Norway, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Germany as well as Turkey, Russia, Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic.

The Games will bring together celebrities, sports stars, dignitaries and sponsors as well as hundreds of family members, coaches and volunteers, to promote respect, acceptance and inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities through sports.

[Quote from National Programme Director] e.g.

According to **[name & title]**: "Special Olympics **[Country]** is really looking forward to Antwerp 2014. "A Great Performance Deserves a Great Audience" is the theme of the Games and we are calling on Europe to celebrate the abilities of our Special Olympians.

The Special Olympics movement is about working together to create a world where every person, regardless of their ability or disability, is accepted, welcomed and valued – a world of inclusion and mutual respect, without bias or prejudice"

The 2014 European Games will officially begin when the cauldron is lit on September 13th at the Opening Ceremony in Koning Boudewijn Stadion, Brussels by the 'Flame of Hope' which will have been carried by European Police Officers from Greece across 50 Belgium cities and towns before arriving in Brussels. Some other Special Olympics activities taking place around the European Games will be a Host Town Programme (where athletes visiting from other countries will acclimatise in Belgium communities ahead of the Games), a Scientific Congress, a Family Forum, a Youth Summit and a Healthy Athlete Programme, providing free health screening to all athletes.



For more information on the Games visit www.SO2014.com.

ENDS

About Special Olympics [Country] - Insert here information on your programme

E.g.

About Special Olympics

Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives through the power of sport by empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all, and fostering communities of understanding and respect worldwide. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the Special Olympics movement has grown from a few hundred athletes to 4.2 million athletes in 170 countries worldwide, providing year-round sports training, athletic competition and related programs. Special Olympics takes place daily, changing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities all over the world. Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy and friendship. Visit Special Olympics at www.specialolympics.org. Engage with us on: Twitter [@specialolympics](https://twitter.com/specialolympics); fb.com/specialolympics; youtube.com/specialolympicshq, and specialolympicsblog.wordpress.com

TEMPLATE PRESS RELEASE FOR ANNOUCEMENT OF DELEGATION

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Contact:

{Name}

{Telephone}

{Email}

ATHLETES SELECTED TO REPRESENT {COUNTRY} IN THE 2014 SPECIAL OLYMPICS EUROPEAN SUMMER GAMES

Antwerp, Belgium prepares to host the Games from September 09 - 20

[Date] – [City, Country]: The **[Nationality]** delegation that will compete in the upcoming 2014 Special Olympics, has been selected.

The Special Olympics **[Country]**, made up of **[number]** athletes with intellectual disabilities, will join delegations from 57 other countries from across Europe and Central Asia in Antwerp, Belgium for one week of competitions taking place from September 09 - 20.

Special Olympics athletes of all ability levels will compete in ten sports, the **[Country]** delegation will participate in **[list name of sports your national programme will compete in]**.

[Quote from National Programme Director] e.g.

According to **[name & title]**: “The European Games are a wonderful opportunity to showcase the Special Olympics movement and to witness and celebrate the abilities, courage and accomplishments of people with intellectual disabilities. Our athletes will be training hard to make their country proud when they travel to Belgium and we thank everyone **[e.g. list sponsors]** for their fantastic support”.



[List the cities/communities from where the athletes come from]. For example: A total of # athletes will represent [city], # athletes will represent [city], # from [city] and # from [city]. **[If the team is relatively small, you can list the names of the athletes and the names of the towns/regions where they are from].**

A total of 2,000 Special Olympics and 1000 coaches are expected to compete in the 2014 Special Olympics European Games. They will be supported by 4,000 volunteers, 300 officials, 300 medical staff and 2,500 family members.

For more information on the Games visit www.SO2014.com.

About Special Olympics {Country}

Insert here information on your programme.

E.g.

About Special Olympics

Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives through the power of sport by empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all, and fostering communities of understanding and respect worldwide. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the Special Olympics movement has grown from a few hundred athletes to 4.2 million athletes in 170 countries worldwide, providing year-round sports training, athletic competition and related programs. Special Olympics takes place daily, changing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities all over the world. Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy and friendship. Visit Special Olympics at www.specialolympics.org. Engage with us on: Twitter [@specialolympics](https://twitter.com/specialolympics); fb.com/specialolympics; youtube.com/specialolympicshq, and specialolympicsblog.wordpress.com



TEMPLATE PRESS RELEASE ON ATHLETES PREPARING FOR 2014 SPECIAL OLYMPICS EUROPEAN GAMES

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Contact:

{Name}

{Telephone}

{Email}

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES PREPARE FOR 2014 EUROPEAN GAMES

Antwerp, Belgium prepares to host the 2014 Special Olympics European Games from September 09 - 20

[Date] – [Country]: [number] athletes from Special Olympics **[Country]** are attending their final training sessions this week before travelling to Antwerp, Belgium to represent **[Country]** in the 2014 Special Olympics European Games taking place from September 09 – 20. Athletes from Special Olympics **[Country]** will compete in **[name sports]**.

Antwerp will welcome a total 2,000 athletes from 58 countries across Europe and Central Asia who will compete in a total of nine sports. This is the first time the European Games are being hosted in Antwerp, Belgium.

Director of Special Olympics **[Country]**, **[name]**, spoke about the team's preparations: "Our athletes are very excited to travel to Antwerp and to represent their country. They have been training really hard and are looking forward to collecting some new medals and make new friends. The European Games are a wonderful opportunity to showcase the Special Olympics movement and to celebrate the abilities and accomplishments of people with intellectual disabilities".

The theme of the Games, 'A Great Performance Deserves a Great Audience', calls on celebrities, sport leaders, dignitaries and fans to all join together to support the Special Olympics movement. Through sport we can promote a better world where every person regardless of their ability or disability, is accepted, welcomed and valued – a word of inclusion and mutual respect, without bias or prejudice.

1000 coaches, 4,000 volunteers, 300 officials, 300 medical staff and 2,500 family members are also expected to support the athletes during the competitions. The 2014 European Games will officially begin when the cauldron is lit on September 13th at the Opening Ceremony in Koning Goudewijin Stadion, Brussels by the 'Flame of Hope' which will have been carried by European Police Officers from Greece across 50 Belgium towns and cities before arriving in Brussels. Some other Special Olympics activities taking place around the 2014 European Games will be a Host Town Programme (where athletes visiting from other countries will acclimatise in Belgium communities ahead of the Games), a Scientific Congress, a Family Forum, a Youth Summit and a Healthy Athlete Programme, providing free health screening to all athletes.

For more information on the 2014 Special Olympics European Games visit

www.SO2014.com.



ENDS

Insert boiler plate on Special Olympics {Country}

E.g.

About Special Olympics

Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives through the power of sport by empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all, and fostering communities of understanding and respect worldwide. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the Special Olympics movement has grown from a few hundred athletes to 4.2 million athletes in 170 countries worldwide, providing year-round sports training, athletic competition and related programs. Special Olympics takes place daily, changing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities all over the world. Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy and friendship. Visit Special Olympics at www.specialolympics.org. Engage with us on: Twitter [@specialolympics](https://twitter.com/specialolympics); fb.com/specialolympics; youtube.com/specialolympichq, and specialolympicsblog.wordpress.com

TEMPLATE MEDIA ALERT FOR DELEGATION SEND OFF

MEDIA ALERT

[#] Special Olympics [Country] athletes are about to depart to compete in the 2014 Special Olympics European Games

- What:** Special Olympics [**Programme**] will celebrate a party/ will send off our [**number**] athletes who will travel to Antwerp, Belgium to represent [country] in the 2014 Special Olympics European Games from September 09 – 20.
- When:** [**Time and date of event and when it concludes**]
- Where:** [**Location, including the name and address of the venue**]
- Who:** [**Include name of athletes, dignitaries and guests of honour if any, Director of National Programme, Sponsors etc.**]

About the 2014 Special Olympics European Games:

A total of 2,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities and 1000 coaches are expected to compete in the 2014 Special Olympics European Games. The athletes, of all ability levels, will compete in ten sporting disciplines. They will be supported by 4,000 volunteers, 300 officials, 300 medical staff and 2,500 family members.

For more information on the Games visit www.SO2014.com

Contact:

{Name}

{Telephone}

{Email}

About Special Olympics [Country]



ii. ANTWERP FACT SHEET

VISION: Through the common language of sports, the Special Olympics European Games aim to encourage people without intellectual disabilities to break down barriers and forge new friendships to help build a more welcoming and inclusive society for us all.

DATE AND PLACE: 09 – 20 September 2014, ANTWERP, BELGIUM
Host Town Program 09 -13 September; 50 cities will host delegations
Torch Run: 09 - 13 September, Greece; Poland; 450kms through Belgium
Opening Ceremony 13 September, Palais 12, Heysel, Brussels
Closing Ceremony 20 September, Sportpaleis, Antwerp

PARTICIPANTS: 58 National Programs
2000 athletes and 1000 coaches
4000 volunteers, 300 officials, 300 medical personnel
2500 family members

SPORTS: Swimming, Gymnastics, Athletics, Badminton, Football, Basketball (Unified), Bocce, Judo, Cycling, Table Tennis (Unified)

Demonstration Sport: Motor Activity Training Program, Antwerp Expo
16-18 September

NON-SPORT PROGRAMS:

Olympics Village 14-19 September, Steenplein, Antwerp
Healthy Athletes Program 14-19 September, Antwerp Expo
EU Youth Activation Summit 12-17 September, various locations
Young Athletes Demonstration 15 September, Antwerp Expo
Family Symposium 15-16 September, Antwerp Expo & Ramada Plaza
Scientific Congress 15 September, Hilton Antwerp
Art of the Heart 2-19 September, SD Worx, Antwerp

SPORTS VENUES:

Wezenberg: Swimming
Den Uyt, Mol: Athletics, Gymnastics
Het Rooi, Berchem: Football, Basketball
Balendijk, Lommel: Cycling,
Antwerp Expo: Badminton, Judo, Bocce, Table Tennis, MATP

ACCOMMODATION:

GOC HQ

De 'Kempense Meren' in Mol
Special Olympics European Games 2014
Brouwersvliet 5
2000 ANTWERP
+32 3 201 73 82
info@so2014.com



Special Olympics Mission and Fast Facts

Mission

To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community. With sports at the core, Special Olympics has grown to be a movement that is not just about the largest disability population in the world, but about all of us. Sports is a universal language which unites people on and off the field of play, cutting across lines of race, ethnicity, education level, social status and economic background. The Special Olympics vision is a world where every person, regardless of their ability or disability, is accepted, welcomed and valued – where each individual can contribute to the strength and goodness of his or her family, community and country. We are a movement through which the power of sport transforms the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and also unites all people by fostering community-building and civil society.

Through work in sports, health education and community building, Special Olympics is addressing inactivity, injustice, intolerance and social isolation by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities which leads to a more welcoming and inclusive society. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the Special Olympics movement has grown from a few hundred athletes to more than 4.2 million athletes in 170 countries. With the support of more than one million coaches and volunteers, Special Olympics is able to deliver 32 Olympic-type sports and more than 70,000 competitions throughout the year.

Special Olympics Fast Facts:

- *Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver*
- *More than 4.2 million athletes and over 1 million coaches and volunteers*
- *More than 200 programs in over 170 countries*
- *Over 33 Olympic-type sports*
- *A global leader in the area of intellectual disabilities*
- *Sports opportunities for all ability levels*
- *Divisioning for equitable competition*
- *Recognition of all participants*



iii. PR Resources

2014 SPECIAL OLYMPICS EUROPEAN SUMMER GAMES TALKING POINTS

- The 2014 Special Olympics European Summer Games will be the largest sporting event for athletes with intellectual disabilities when from September 09 – 20, 2,000 athletes will gather from 58 countries to compete, supported by a league of volunteers, family members and spectators.
- The European Games are a wonderful opportunity to showcase the Special Olympics movement on an international stage and to celebrate the abilities and accomplishments of people with intellectual disabilities.
- The theme of Antwerp 2014 is 'A Great Performance Deserves a Great Audience' as the Games call on European communities to come together in support of the Special Olympics movement and its promotion through sports of a better world, where every person regardless of their ability or disability, is accepted, welcomed and valued – a word of inclusion and mutual respect, without bias or prejudice.
- Special Olympics believes in the power of SPORT to transform lives. Through sports, Special Olympics athletes improve their physical fitness and motor skills and gain self-confidence. They exhibit courage and enthusiasm and build lasting friendships. These life skills enhance their ability to live normal productive lives, go to school, hold a job, get married.
- Though Special Olympics happens every day in communities around the world, national, regional and World Games are very important as they provide a platform for the movement. Games transform communities by inspiring people to open their minds, to accept and include people with intellectual disabilities, celebrating difference among all people....recognising and respecting the similarities we all share.
- The Host Town programme is a perfect example of this. Two weeks before the Games, the visiting athletes will acclimatise in 50 'Host Towns'/communities across the country.



- The Law Enforcement Torch Run which takes place one week ahead of the Games, with the 'Flame of Hope' being lit in Greece and then travelling across 50 host towns before arriving in Antwerp, also helps to raise awareness and inspire inclusion in communities.
- 40,000 spectators are expected to attend competitions that will take place in Antwerp's principal sport facilities and media coverage will be provided by RTV and ORB.
- Special Olympics is recognised by the International Olympic Committee. A historic agreement was signed in 1988 in which the IOC officially endorsed and recognised Special Olympics.
- Special Olympics should not be confused with Paralympics, which provides elite level sports competition for multi-disabled groups.
- Special Olympics competitions are not about the 'fastest', 'strongest' or 'most skilled'. They are about every athlete trying to reach their full potential. The Special Olympics athlete quote is 'Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt'. Athletes remind us of the true meaning of sports.

What is Special Olympics?

- Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives by promoting understanding, acceptance and inclusion between people with and without intellectual disabilities.
- Through year-round sports training and athletic competition and other related programming for more than 4.3 million children and adults with intellectual disabilities in more than 170 countries, Special Olympics has created a model community that celebrates people's diverse gifts.
- Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship.
- According to the World Health Organisation, up to 3% of the World's population have an intellectual disability - that equates to 200 million people, representing the largest disability population in the world.



Who is eligible to participate in Special Olympics?

- To be eligible to participate in Special Olympics, you must be at least eight years old and identified by an agency or professional as having one of the following conditions: intellectual disabilities, cognitive delays as measured by formal assessment, or significant learning or vocational problems due to cognitive delay that require or have required specially designed instruction. The Special Olympics Young Athletes™ program was created for children with intellectual disabilities ages two through seven.

How are national teams selected to compete in international or multinational competitions?

- Firstly an athlete must be training for a minimum of eight weeks in an organised training programme in the sport or sports in which he or she entered for higher level competition, in order to advance.
- Advancement criteria are used for selecting athletes to compete at European and World Games. In addition, an athlete must have placed first, second or third at the lower level of competition in the same sport in order to advance to international or multinational competition in a given sport.
- Other criteria does exist for different situation and in some circumstances athlete can be chosen by random selection from among all division winners.

Can individuals with profound disabilities participate in Special Olympics?

- Yes, through Special Olympics Motor Activities Training Program (MATP), developed by physical educators, physical therapists and recreation therapists. MATP emphasizes training and participation rather than competition. There will be a MATP during the 2014 European Games in Antwerp.

What is divisioning?

- In Special Olympics competitions, athletes of all ability levels are encouraged to participate, and every athlete is recognized for his or her performance. Through a process called divisioning, Special Olympics competitions are structured so that athletes compete with other athletes of similar ability in equitable divisions.

What is intellectual disability?

- Intellectual disability means lower development abilities and intellectual functioning and sometimes resulting in difficulty with social interaction.



- Intellectual disability manifests itself before the age of 18; Intellectual disability is characterised by lower than average intellectual functioning (IQ is below 70-75) with two or more limited adaptive skills such as: communication, self-care, home living, social skills, leisure, health and safety, self-direction, functional academics, community use and work.

How do you refer to people with intellectual disabilities?

- Special Olympics uses standard terminology that is more acceptable to our athletes. We use “people-first language”.

Two examples:

1. Refer to individuals, persons or people with intellectual disabilities, rather than “intellectually disabled people” or “the intellectual disabled” and
2. People have intellectual disabilities. Do not use are “suffering from”, “afflicted with” or “a victim of” intellectual disabilities. A language guide is available on [www.specialolympics.org: http://resources.specialolympics.org/2013-resources.aspx](http://resources.specialolympics.org/2013-resources.aspx)

The following terms are not appropriate to use:

- retarded person
- handicapped person
- not normal person
- special care child
- invalid

STORIES ABOUT SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Any story, article or profile needs to show what Special Olympics can mean to athletes and their families; or volunteers and coaches; and also, if at all possible, to their communities.

1. The main key to the best story is: BEFORE AND AFTER.

What was the athlete’s experience (confidence, skills, friendships, etc.) before joining Special Olympics?

How did his or her life (confidence, skills, friendships, etc.) change thereafter?

There are many, many questions we can ask athletes and volunteers, but those are the essential ones. As a basic guide, here are some others:



Typical questions to ask an athlete:

- How long have you been involved in Special Olympics? What sports do you train in – and what's your favourite?
- What has Special Olympics meant to you? How did it change you?
- What's been your proudest moment?

Typical questions to ask a family member, volunteer or coach:

- What inspired you to get involved with Special Olympics?
- What changes have you seen in the athletes? What changes have you seen in yourself or in other supporters?
- Talk about your most memorable moment.
- What do you say to people about Special Olympics? Why should they support Special Olympics?

Another key to a great story is context: how are people with intellectual disabilities treated/viewed in your country? How has does Special Olympics work to improve attitudes and build unity/community?

3. Lastly, just one or two photos can make a good story ... a great story.



iv. VISUAL MATERIALS

Official Logo

The Games Organising Committee for the 2014 Special Olympics European Summer Games grants permission to all of the 58 National Programmes in SOEE for full use of the Antwerp 2014 logo for promotion of the Games. The logo can be used on websites, advertising, newsletters and other promotional material.

You can download the Games logo at resources.specialolympics.org/Antwerp2014-resources or please contact Maureen Rabbitt mrabbitt@specialolympics.org to receive high resolution files of the Games logo in different colour variations and formats.

Special permission needs to be granted from the GOC if a sponsor is requesting to use the Antwerp 2014 logo or if you are printing the Antwerp 2014 logo alongside a sponsor logo. Please contact directly Zehra Sayin – zehra.sayin@specialolympics.be for permission.

The National Programmes can use their National Programme logo alongside the Antwerp 2014 logo in all promotional material (website, brochures etc). The National Programme logo should be placed near the Antwerp 2014 logo and the logos should be of similar size.

Online Banner & Email Signature

Online banners in English and French are available on the official Games website:
www.so2014.com

Social Media Updates

The hashtag of the Games is #SO2014

Follow updates about the Games in French and Dutch on SO Belgium's facebook and twitter accounts.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SpecialOlympics.be>

twitter: @SOBelgium

Follow updates about the Games in English on SOEE facebook and twitter pages:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SOEuropeEurasia>

twitter: @SpecOlympicsEU

Photography

Daily photography from the Games will be available on a ftp and flickr site for National Programmes to access. Details to follow.

Daily photography will also be available on the SOEE flickr page:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/specialolympicsee/sets/>



Videos

A promotional video of Warsaw 2014 is available to view on www.SO2014.com.
10 video stories of athletes competing in the Games, (English, French & Dutch subtitles) are available to view on SO Belgium youtube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/SpecialOlympicsBE/videos>

All videos are available to download at resources.specialolympics.org/Antwerp2014-resources or please contact Maureen Rabbitt – mrabbitt@specialolympics.org if you require a copy of this video.

Sample Tweets for NP campaign

Team Italy is ready to compete @SpecialOlympics 2014 European Games #SO2014
(upload photo of team)

Crowds turn out at airport to send Team Ireland off to @SpecialOlympics European Games #SO2014 (post photo of team at airport)

A great performance deserves a great audience. Support Team France @SpecialOlympics

European Games in Antwerp #SO2014 (link to press release or Games website)

Team XXX wins first medal of #SO2014 Games. Congrats to (athlete name) who won gold/silver/bronze in (sport)

Show your support to Team NL & join us at X airport to welcome our @SpecialOlympics heroes home #SO2014

For any further queries or comments please contact the SOEE Communications team:

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