



Special Olympics 2015 Reach Report Talking Points

By the Numbers

(Please note: the following numbers are based on a 2015 census of Special Olympics Programs.)

In 2015 we expanded our reach to more than 5.3 million athletes and Unified partners – a new global record!

- However, this represents a small fraction (as little as 2%) of the total worldwide population with intellectual disabilities.
- More than 84% of Special Olympics athletes live in countries outside of North America.
- 33% of athletes are aged 22 years and older
- 63.9% of athletes are aged 8-21 years of age
- 3.1% of athletes are aged 2-7 years of age
- Africa reported the highest athlete growth rate for the fourth consecutive year, adding 28,000 athletes in 2015 alone.
- Compared to 2014, the Middle East/North Africa Region has demonstrated positive growth rate, in spite of the continuously challenging environment in the Region.

COMPETITIONS – The movement held **108,388 sporting competitions** in 2015.

- Competitions averaged 297 every day; 12 every hour. These events range from local competition or sports tournaments to Regional or World Games.
- In traditional sports, athletics has been ranked as the most popular sport in six regions around the world. Football (soccer) was ranked as the most popular sport in Europe Eurasia.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED SPORTS - Unified Sports expanded to **1.2 million teammates** in 2015!

- This included 1,276,565 total teammates (619,254 athletes; 657,311 partners) in 2015. There was an increase of nearly 50% over 2014.
- There was a nearly 20% increase in the number of Unified partners among ages 12-25.
- Participation in Unified Sports has grown 124% over the last five years.



- **There were a total of 12,864 Unified Competitions across all regions in 2015**
*(**Note: The number in parentheses is the number of Programs per region supporting Unified Sports):*

Africa Total (21)	1,972
Asia Pacific Total (26)	1,231
East Asia Total (6)	154
Europe Total (58)	1,669
Latin America Total (20)	1,547
MENA Total (15)	748
North America Total (71)	5,543

- According to the 2015 Reach Report, the top two most popular Unified Sports worldwide are athletics and football (soccer).
- Football (soccer) is ranked as the most popular Unified Sport in five regions (Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe Eurasia, Latin America and Middle East/North Africa). Athletics is ranked as the most popular Unified Sport in East Asia and basketball is ranked as the most popular Unified Sport in North America.
- Out of our 220 Programs, 200 Programs offer Unified Sports. Six of 7 regions have 90% or above their Programs conducting Unified Sports, while Special Olympics North America had the largest increase, adding 8 Programs in 2015.
- For the last three years, ESPN has invested more than \$3 million and strategically used its multi-platform assets and marketing expertise to expand Unified Sports globally.
- Special Olympics is committed to increase Unified Sports participation with youth worldwide, with the goal of having 10,000 unified schools by the year 2020.
- For the Unified Sports Models, 80% of the Programs conducted the Competitive Model of Unified Sports followed by 70% conducted Unified Recreation and 50% conducted Unified Player Development. The increase in the number of new Programs reporting Unified Recreation (+22 Programs) and Player Development models (+23 Programs) far exceeded the increase in the number of Programs reporting the Competitive Model of Unified Sports (+4).
- When reviewing Unified Sports competition during the 2015 Special Olympics World Summer Games:



- Unified Sports competitions were conducted in 13 different sports, featuring competitors from 91 delegations with 1,487 Unified teammates

VOLUNTEERS – The movement is driven by our volunteers, with more than **1 million** providing their time and expertise in 2015.

- 424,922 coaches (Increase of over 48,000 coaches from 2014-2015)
- 315,201 youth volunteers (increase of over 14,000 volunteers from 2014-2015) (12-25 years of age)
- 97,000 law enforcement officers
- 19,119 health care professionals

PROGRAMS – Special Olympics has **220 National and State Programs**.

SUPPORT – For fiscal year 2014, revenue and in-kind contributions reported for Special Olympics totaled nearly \$470 million.

BOILERPLATE –

Special Olympics is a global movement that unleashes the human spirit through the transformative power and joy of sports, every day around the world. We empower people with intellectual disabilities to become accepted and valued members of their communities, which leads to a more respectful and inclusive society for all. Using sports as the catalyst and programming around health and education, Special Olympics is fighting inactivity, injustice and intolerance. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the Special Olympics movement has grown to more than 5.3 million athletes and Unified partners in 169 countries. With the support of more than 1 million coaches and volunteers, Special Olympics delivers 32 Olympic-type sports and over 108,000 games and competitions throughout the year. Special Olympics is supported by many individuals, foundations and partners. To see a full list of partners click [here](#). Engage with us on: Twitter@specialolympics, fb.com/specialolympics, youtube.com/specialolympicshq, Instagram.com/specialolympics and specialolympicsblog.wordpress.com.