Facts & Figures
Things to know

SPECIAL OLYMPICS
WORLD WINTER GAMES AUSTRIA 2017
March 14 to 25, 2017

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WORLD WINTER GAMES
AUSTRIA 2017
Graz | Schladming | Ramsau | Styria

Heartbeat for the world
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GENERAL INFORMATION

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Special Olympics is the biggest international sport movement for people with intellectual disabilities. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, U.S.-based Special Olympics (SO) can be found in more than 170 countries around the globe today. Over 4.5 million athletes seize the wide range of training and competition opportunities. Special Olympics Austria, as it exists in its present form, was founded in 1993. Back then the World Winter Games took place outside of the U.S. for the very first time. The honorary president of Special Olympics Austria is Arnold Schwarzenegger.

“Heartbeat for the world” – Following that motto, the Special Olympics World Winter Games take place from 14th to 21st of March, 2017 in Graz, Schladming and Ramsau.

Austria 2017 Ambassadors

A multitude of famous personalities support the World Winter Games personally – and they are becoming more every day: MANFRED BAUMANN, WINTER GAMES PERSONALITY 2011, JAMES COTTRIALL, BERNHARD EISEL, GERHARD MISCHER, ANNA VEITH, LEO WINDTNER...

CHRISTOPH SUMANN, MICHAEL TRITSCHER, AUGUST SCHMÖLZER, TRIXI SCHUBA, AXEL NAGLICH, PAUL PIZZERA, CONNY HÜTTER, FRANZ KLAMMER, HANS KNAUSS, PHILIPP HANSA, LEO HILLINGER, MARCEL HIRSCHER, FELIX GOTTWALD, RENATE GÖTSCHL, more every day:

Winter Games personally – and they are becoming more every day: MANFRED BAUMANN, WINTER GAMES PERSONALITY 2011, JAMES COTTRIALL, BERNHARD EISEL, GERHARD MISCHER, ANNA VEITH, LEO WINDTNER...


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PROGRAMS:

HOST TOWN PROGRAM:

Prior to the Special Olympics World Winter Games 2017, Austrian regions, cities and towns host the participating delegations over a three-day period (March 14 – 16). Introductory activities will allow the athletes to gain interesting and unique insights into the culture, traditions and the way of living of Austria.

HEALTHY ATHLETES PROGRAM (Messe Graz):

„Special Olympics Healthy Athletes®“ is the largest international and public health program for people with intellectual disabilities. The program offers free medical check-ups as well as useful equipment such as eye glasses, sunglasses or hearing aids.

SCHOOL PROGRAM „Cool School“:

Schools all over Austria have the unique opportunity to become part of the biggest sporting event of 2017 and visit the World Winter Games live! Besides various projects carried out at schools, we introduced the greatest fan club mission of all time: “Mission 3000”. We are searching for a fan club for every participating athlete; a fan club that supports an athlete before and during the Games.

FAMILY PROGRAM:

Programs for the athletes’ families are an important part of the Special Olympics. Family members who travel to Austria with the athletes are provided with a variety of opportunities. Specific activities will allow them to exchange experiences and increase solidarity. For example, the family members can immerse themselves in the history of Austria by taking the “Imperial Austria” tour prior to the Games.

TORCH RUN – „The Flame of Hope“ (FINAL LEG):

The Law Enforcement Torch Run is an especially memorable experience for both torch bearers and spectators. After the Olympic Flame is ignited on March 2, 2017 in Athens, Greece, it will embark on its journey to finally arrive in Austria, the host country – ten days before the World Winter Games begin.

The „Flame of Hope“ on its way through Austria

80 international law enforcement officers, 10 national law enforcement officers, 10 international Special Olympic athletes as well as many police cadets from Austria will carry the Olympic flame through Austria. Starting on March 9th in Bregenz, they will continue their ten-day journey through 50 different cities and towns, crossing all 9 Austrian states. The Olympic Flame will be cheered and celebrated by the residents of each city or town. The highlight of the Law Enforcement Torch Run will be the ignition of the Olympic Flame on March 18, 2017 during the opening ceremony in the Planai Stadium in Schladming.

FINALE

The Olympic flame on its way through Austria

Special Olympics World Winter Games Austria 2017

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(Photos are available for download and free of charge)