

# FACT SHEET



## The Largest Sports and Humanitarian Event in the World in 2019 Takes Place in Abu Dhabi

14 – 21 March, 2019 | 7,500 athletes | 192 nations | 24 sports

Meet The Determined™ in the vibrant, innovative city of Abu Dhabi as 7,500 inspiring Special Olympics athletes from across the globe arrive in the United Arab Emirates to participate in the most unified Games ever held

### SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD GAMES ABU DHABI 2019

**Play unified to live unified:** Abu Dhabi is planning the most unified World Games in the 50-year history of Special Olympics. People with intellectual disabilities will be involved in all facets of the Games, ensuring every spectator, guest, and fan benefits from a more inclusive, interactive experience with Special Olympics athletes.

Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019 is an integral part of local, national and regional plans to expand opportunities for people of determination in line with Abu Dhabi and the UAE's shared vision of a unified and inclusive society.

### FACTS AND FIGURES



Athletes: 7,500



Volunteers: 20,000



Coaches: 3,000



Honored Guests: 3,000



Officials: 1,500



Families: 6,000



Nations: 192+



Spectators: 500,000

## 24 SPORTING EVENTS



## VENUES

### Abu Dhabi:

- Dhabi National Exhibition Centre
- Zayed Sports City
- Yas Marina Circuit
- Abu Dhabi Yacht and Sailing Club
- Khalifa International Bowling Centre
- Yas Links Abu Dhabi Golf Club
- Al Forsan Resort
- Corniche Beach

### Dubai:

- **Hamdan Sports Complex**
- **Dubai Police Club Stadium**

**50 years of Special Olympics:** Special Olympics is a global movement of people creating a new world of inclusion, where every single person is accepted and welcomed, regardless of ability or disability. In 1968, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, sister of former President John F Kennedy founded Special Olympics. She had a sister with intellectual disabilities and wanted to see

change in society. She saw the power of sport had to offer as a catalyst of change. World Games Abu Dhabi 2019 will mark the culmination of 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, and the beginning of the next fifty years of the inclusion movement.

- Today, there are 4.9 million athletes with intellectual disabilities involved in Special Olympics worldwide
- 1.2 million people take part in Special Olympics Unified Sports® worldwide, bringing together people with intellectual disabilities and those without

**World Games:** Special Olympics World Games take place every two years and alternate between summer and winter. Austria hosted the Winter Games in 2017, and Abu Dhabi will now host the Summer Games from 14-21 March 2019. This will be the first time the World Games takes place in the Middle East and North Africa region.

## MORE THAN JUST SPORT

**Host Town:** The largest cultural exchange program to be organized in the Middle East, Host Town will take place nationwide across the UAE in the days preceding the World Games. All seven emirates will host delegations from around the world, giving athletes, coaches, and families a warm, hospitable welcome. Each emirate will provide delegations with an experience of Emirati culture and traditions, including educational, cultural and sports activities.

**Law Enforcement Torch Run®:** In the days leading up to the Games, the Special Olympics 'Flame of Hope' will tour all seven emirates of the UAE before completing its journey in Abu Dhabi, arriving at the Opening Ceremony for the World Games. A Special Olympics tradition since 1981, law enforcement officers carry the flame, which symbolizes courage and celebration of diversity uniting communities around the globe.

**Healthy Athletes:** Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® is a Special Olympics program that provides free health examinations for all the international athletes competing in the World Games. For many of the athletes from developing countries, it is the first, most comprehensive health examination they have ever received. The Healthy Athletes® program runs throughout the Games with examinations conducted by volunteer medical professionals.

## LEGACY

The impact of these Games will not end with its Closing Ceremony. The Local Organizing Committee for Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019 is focused on developing a strong and long-lasting legacy for the Games that promotes inclusion beyond 2019.

The UAE has made inclusivity a priority within National Vision 2021. The term 'people of determination' was introduced in 2017 by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, as part of a new National Strategy for Empowering People with Disabilities. A wide range of initiatives to support people of determination have been implemented in the UAE at a local and federal level.

The Games will serve as a milestone marking the expansion of this national commitment to inclusion – in education, employment, healthcare, and social justice. They will also serve as the platform for a public education campaign to increase understanding, tolerance, and inclusion throughout the nation and the region.

## GET INVOLVED

Playing a part in Special Olympics World Games – through volunteering, contributing, sponsoring, attending the events and cheering on the athletes – will give you a real understanding of the value of inclusion, and the joyful, inspiring memories you take away will stay with you forever.

### Be a Volunteer

More than 20,000 volunteers will be needed to conduct the World Games successfully. If you speak a foreign language, have a special skill that can help us, or simply want to help the athletes and their families have the best possible experience, visit [www.abudhabi2019.org](http://www.abudhabi2019.org) to find out how to sign up.

### Become a Sponsor

Many of the most respected and socially responsible companies in the nation, region, and the world – businesses large and small – are becoming sponsors of the 2019 World Games. To find out how you can join the team, contact [partners@abudhabi2019.org](mailto:partners@abudhabi2019.org).

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[www.abudhabi2019.org](http://www.abudhabi2019.org)

## GET IN TOUCH

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