



Special Olympics European Symposium 'Community Integration through Sport'

**Warsaw University of Life and Science,
Nowoursynowska 166 Street, Building 37
Third Floor, Plenary Room**

September 19th 2010 10:00-16:30

Introduction

Young people with and without intellectual disability are one of the main target groups for Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia's current focus activities for community integration programs. During the Symposium the Special Olympics Youth Unified Sports® program will be highlighted as a model to promote the social integration of young people with intellectual disability in their local community. Special Olympics Unified Sports is a Special Olympics initiative that provides opportunities for sportsmen with and without intellectual disabilities to play on integrated sport teams.

The University of Ulster/Belfast in Northern Ireland conducted an evaluation study on the impact of Unified Sports participation on community integration of youths aged 12-25 in five European countries in 2009/2010. The results of the study will be presented at the Symposium.

This study will open the discussion about integration of young people with and without intellectual disability in the community. The value of sport in community integration will be reflected in context with other activities and initiatives.

The aims of the European Symposium are to collect, share and discuss current information on the status of community integration of young people with intellectual disabilities in Europe with a focus on the role of sports and to identify best practices for improving community integration and ensuring equality of opportunity.

The symposium is organized by the Warsaw 2010 Special Olympics European Summer Games Organizing Committee in cooperation with Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia (SOEE).

The 2010 Special Olympics European Summer Games will be attended by 1,500 athletes from 57 countries who will compete in nine disciplines between September 18 and 23.

The Symposium is generously supported by the Polish National Disabled Persons Rehabilitation Fund. It is organized under the patronage of: Mrs Jolanta Fedak, Minister of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Poland and the International Sport and Culture Association.



Sunday, 19 September

9:30-10:00 Symposium registration

Location: Warsaw University of Life and Science, building 37, third floor, - hall

10:00-11:30 Plenary Session

Location: Warsaw University of Life and Science, building 37, third floor – plenary room

10:00-10:15 Words of welcome

Mateusz Marzec, Special Olympics Poland Athlete Ambassador

High Representative of Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Poland

Timothy P. Shriver, Ph.D., Chairman & CEO Special Olympics International

Mary Davis, Managing Director SOEE

10:15-10:20 Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between SOEE and the University of Ulster/Belfast

10:20-10:30 Sabine Menke, Senior Manager Youth Education & Unified Sports SOEE

Introduction: Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia Youth Unified Sports® Program

Special Olympics Youth Unified Sports is a mechanism for promoting community integration through sport. Unified Sports is a Special Olympics initiative that provides opportunities for sportsmen with intellectual disabilities (called athletes) and without intellectual disabilities (called partners) to play on integrated sport teams. The purpose of Unified sports is to experience inclusion as each player is ensured of playing a valued role on the team, socialize with peers, form friendships, and participate in activities in their communities. Since 2004 Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia has focused on developing Youth Unified Sports activities in local communities involving regular, mainstream and inclusive schools and sport clubs. Youth Unified Sports currently involves 15,000 young players -about equally split into players with and without intellectual disability- aged 12-25 in 25 countries in Europe/Eurasia.



10:30-10:45 Bart Oojen, Policy Officer at the European Commission

The EU perspective on Community Integration through sport

The European Union promotes the active inclusion and full participation of disabled people in society. This approach is also at the core of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. The recognition of the potential of sport as a means for fostering community integration and well-being for disabled people is relatively recent. The potential of sport is promising especially on changing community perceptions on disabled persons: By focusing attention on abilities and moving disability into the background a different kind of interaction could be reached. Sports contribution to build self-confidence and to develop social and physical skills should not be underestimated as well. Since there is more evidence that sport can be an effective tool for social integration, organisations have increasingly taken initiatives to use its potential like Special Olympics. In the framework of the Preparatory Actions the European Commission supports the Youth Unified Sports project because of its innovative character and clear objectives. By monitoring this and other projects the Commission will get more information under which conditions strategies could be successful, so that future EU actions could be defined in the framework of the new EU sport agenda.

10:45-11:00 Jacob Schouenborg, Secretary General, International Sport And Culture Association

Integration through sport: Success factors and evidence

I consider the main characteristics of sport as tool for creating integration in Europe:

1. The interventions and activities are mainly planned and implemented at a local level without an overall strategy or policy.
2. The interventions and outcomes are often described through “good practices” more than evidence based research.
3. Civil society organisations (sport associations, clubs, etc.) with its voluntary based structures and commitments are often the settings, where the intercultural interventions are implemented.
4. Focal points of the interventions are “challenge oriented” (social inclusion or anti-racism), and “target group” oriented.
5. The “intercultural learning dimension” is mainly based on non-formal and informal learning settings and processes.

Presenting the background for the above claims, I will proceed to discuss what is needed in the future in integration through sport initiatives and policies in Europe. I will consider the role of private and governmental organizations on local, national and international level, and touch upon the potential position of the Special Olympics in this regard.



11:00-11:15 Sonia Parayre, Deputy Executive Secretary, Enlarged Agreement of Sport, Council of Europe

Integration of people with disabilities through and in Sport: the Council of Europe perspective

It has been estimated that, on average, 10 per cent of the world population have a disability. For the nearly 800 million population of the 47 Council of Europe member States, that would mean some 80 million persons with disabilities. Despite the progress made in recent years in numerous areas, many people with disabilities in Europe today are still faced with barriers to equal opportunities and full participation in the life of the community. Experience has shown that sport is one of the few domains that can transmit and embody shared values and codes of conduct across frontiers. Health, social integration, fair play and tolerance can be passed on in and through good practices in sport. Through its initiatives and actions for the past 50 years, the Council of Europe underlines that sport has the ability to strengthen human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The paper aims at presenting the action of the Council of Europe in promoting social cohesion and the integration of people with disabilities in Europe, focusing in particular on the role of sport to fulfil this objective.

11:15-11:30 Prof Roy McConkey University of Ulster

‘Unified Gives Us a Chance’: An evaluation of Special Olympics Youth Unified Sports® Program in Europe/Eurasia, An Introduction

People with intellectual disabilities are amongst the most marginalised in many societies around the world. This is evident at political, economic and social levels and the lived experience of social exclusion experienced by many people with intellectual disabilities presents a challenge to the International Human Rights agenda, which promotes:

“the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity” (United Nations 2006).

The reasons for this exclusion are many as modern research has identified but equally initiatives such as the Unified Sports® Program of Special Olympics may go some way to challenging the barriers to inclusion faced by many people with intellectual disabilities. This has been the focus of a recent study, which evaluated the impact of Youth Unified Sports® in relation to promoting social inclusion as well as the development of social capital within local communities. These concepts will be examined in this paper along with the proposal in which social inclusion occurs in partnership with the growth of social capital in order for the former to develop and remain sustainable. A subsequent paper will focus on the methods and outcomes of the evaluation in order to provide a more detailed account of the ways in which Unified Sports achieves its aims.

11:30 -11:45 Networking coffee break



11:45-12:45 Professor Roy McConkey, Dr Sandra Dowling, Dr David Hassan, University of Ulster, Dr Florian Pochstein, University of Kiel/Germany, Dr Maciej Wilski, University of Physical Education in Poznan, Poland

‘Unified Gives Us a Chance’: An evaluation of Special Olympics Youth Unified Sports® Program in Europe/Eurasia, Findings

The University of Ulster in Northern Ireland carried out an evaluation of Special Olympics Youth Unified Sports® Program during a 15 month period in 2009-2010. Unified Sports provides the opportunity for young people with (athletes) and without (partners) intellectual disabilities to play, train and compete on the same sports teams; of which football and basketball are the most common. This growing program aims to enable athletes to develop their sporting skills as well as to offer a platform for young athletes to socialize with peers and have the opportunity to develop new friendships, to experience inclusion and to take part in the life of their community. The project spanned five countries: namely Poland, Serbia, Ukraine, Hungary and Germany. Partnerships with academics in each participating country were forged to assist with data gathering, as were close working relationships with key Special Olympics personnel. The research was qualitative in approach and extensive in range, as data was collected from over 220 stakeholders including athletes, partners, parents, coaches and representatives of the local community. This presentation will provide a detailed account of the project’s methodology and describe the core findings in terms of the personal development of the players and the key features that promoted social inclusion. We will discuss the workability of such a methodology within a particular participating country (Poland) and will hear thoughts on the relevance of the findings from the perspective of our German partner. Finally the presentation will detail the conclusions of the study and highlight recommendations for the further expansion of Unified Sports.

12:45-13:00 Dr Dorota Wiszejko-Wierzbicka, Institute of Educational Research in Warsaw, Piotr Mencina, National Director Special Olympics Poland

Inclusion and education

Nowadays, one of the most important issues faced by many educational systems around the world is educational exclusion. Educational exclusion situations change according to the social, cultural, economical and political contexts of each country. The opposite process of exclusion is the idea of inclusion. What does inclusion mean within the educational context? It is a process of including people with special educational needs (as disabled or minority ethnic groups) to the mainstream education. The inclusion issue raises tension between the desire to respond more effectively to particular identified needs and a reluctance to segregate children with special educational needs and treat them as ‘special’ in all respects. To build an open civil society means to prepare all its members to participate and be a part of it. It is the real educational challenge of today. How to respond to this challenge? The *Index for Inclusion* is a resource to support the implementation of the idea of inclusion into school environment. It is a set of materials which guide teachers, students and their parents toward the collaborative relationships and improvements in the learning and teaching environment accessible to all.



13:00 – 14:00 Networking luncheon

14:00 – 15:30 Breakout sessions (each delegate decides to choose one session)

Break out session # 1

Theme: The role of schools and education in community integration

Moderators: Dr Sandra Dowling, Dr Dorota Wiszejko-Wierzbicka

Break out session #2

Theme: The role of sports and clubs and other community organizations and networks for community integration

Moderators: Prof. Andrzej Kosmol, Dr David Hassan

Break out session #3:

Theme: The role of family and friends in community integration

Moderators: Prof. Roy McConkey, Dr Maciej Wilski

For each session:

- Introduction by moderator
- Ideas and case studies presented and discussed by participants
- Moderator summary
- Highlights of all sessions will be included in a report distributed later in 2010

15:30 – 15:45 Networking coffee break

15:45 – 16:15 Reports from discussions
Summary of key issues by moderators

16:15 – 16:30 Closing remarks, Sabine Menke,
Senior Manager Youth Education & Unified Sports SOEE



Biographies

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Poland

Jolanta Fedak – Minister of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Poland.

She graduated from University of Wrocław and obtained a degree in political science. She also completed postgraduate studies in the field of Administration and Educational Management. Since 1990s she has been cooperating with PSL (Polish People's Party). Now she is one of four Vice-chairmen of the Chief Executive Committee of PSL. Her political career started in Zielona Góra where she was leading the PSL Office. From the very beginning she worked in a close cooperation with the former Speaker of the Sejm – Józef Zych. Since 1998 she performed the role of the Deputy Marshal of the lubuskie voivodeship responsible for social issues – education, culture and art. Since 2001 she was the vice Voivode of the lubuskie voivodeship. Afterwards she was the gmina secretary in Krosno Odrzańskie. In 2006 she became a member of the lubuskie voivodeship board.

Jarosław Duda - Secretary of State in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Poland, Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People.

Master of Arts in Sociology. Since 2007 he is the Senator during the seventh term of the Senate of the Republic of Poland. In the years 2005-2007 he was the Deputy during the fifth term of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and Vice Chairman of the Social Policy Committee of the Sejm. Between 2001-2005 he performed the role of the Deputy during the fourth term of the Sejm, Councillor of the Voivodeship Council (Sejmik) of Lower Silesia (Dolnośląskie), Director of the City Administration for Residential and Nursing Homes in Wrocław. In years 1999-2001 he was Vice President of the Board of the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (PFRON). Since 1999 he has been Counselor of the Voivodeship Council (Sejmik) of Lower Silesia (Dolnośląskie), Chairman of the Social Policy and Family Committee, Member of the Social Policy, Health and Family Committee, Member of the Tourism Development, Recreation and Sport Committee.



Special Olympics Leadership

Timothy P. Shriver, Ph.D. is a social leader, an educator, activist, film producer, and business entrepreneur. He is the Chairman & CEO of Special Olympics, and in that capacity he serves nearly 3 million Special Olympics athletes and their families in 180 countries. He has helped transform Special Olympics into a movement that focuses on acceptance, inclusion, and respect for individuals with intellectual disabilities in all corners of the globe. He has worked with the leaders of China to launch a thriving program in their country and supported their efforts to bring the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games to Shanghai. He has begun programs in developing or war-torn countries such as Afghanistan, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Iraq. Shriver has also created exciting new initiatives that enhance the quality of life for millions of people with intellectual disabilities through programs in athlete leadership, cross-cultural research, health initiatives, education, and family support. He has pursued initiatives in music, film, and television to help raise funds and awareness for the movement. Before joining Special Olympics, Shriver served in various roles including educator, counselor, author, and speaker bringing issues to the forefront such as substance abuse, violence, dropout rates and teen pregnancy. He worked with the New Haven Public Schools' Social Development Project, and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), the leading research organization in the U.S. in the field of social and emotional learning. Shriver currently chairs CASEL. Shriver earned his undergraduate degree from Yale University, a Master's degree in Religion and Religious Education from Catholic University, and a Doctorate in Education from the University of Connecticut. He and his wife, Linda Potter, reside in the Washington, D.C. area with their five children.

Mary Davis is Managing Director of Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia. She is the former CEO of Special Olympics Ireland and prior to that she served as Chief Executive Officer for the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games. Currently she serves on many committees and boards, established a number of voluntary organisations and was appointed by the Prime Minister in Ireland as Chair of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship. Mary has recently been appointed chair of the advisory committee to implement the recommendations of the Taskforce. She also chairs the North South Consultative Forum on behalf of the Irish Government. In November 2004 she was appointed by President Mary McAleese to serve on the Council of State for Ireland. She has received Honorary Doctorates from the National University of Ireland, Dublin City University, University of Limerick and an Honorary Fellowship of the faculty of Nursing & Midwifery at the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland.

Mateusz Marzec is Special Olympics Poland Athlete Ambassador. He lives in Kędzierzyn-Koźle. He took part in preparing the Special Olympics Poland Ambassadors Calendar with well known personalities of Polish sport, film and entertainment industry who are Ambassadors of the 2010 European Summer Games. He trains swimming, tennis, football and hockey. He won a gold medal in swimming at The Special Olympics World Summer Games in Dublin, Ireland in 2003. He is a great fan of volleyball, he is a member of the Fan Club ZAKSA Kędzierzyn-Koźle. He likes hiking and collecting souvenirs from places he travels to.



Key note speakers

Bart Ooijen (54) is policy officer at the European Commission. In the sport unit he is responsible for Sport and Education, Social Inclusion and Equal Opportunities in and through sport. Before entering the Commission he was working for the National Youth Council and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport in the Netherlands. His interest for the development of sport has been inspired by his own experience as a local athlete, volleyball trainer and his work in sport projects in Africa. In 1989 he graduated at the Free University in Amsterdam in Physical Education and Sport. He was active in different local and national sport organisations. He lives in Brussels with his wife and two children.

Mrs **Sonia Parayre** is a French lawyer presently working in Strasbourg as Deputy Executive Secretary of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport. Among her activities, she is responsible for coordinating a pan-European program promoting diversity and fighting against discrimination in and through sport. This program will cover all grounds of discrimination listed in human rights treaty, i.e. discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, etc. Sonia Parayre joined the Council of Europe in 2000. She has lectured in several Universities in Europe and has written articles in international law and human rights.

Jacob Schouenborg is a master of political science with specialization in public and civil society organisations. His international and communication profile is focusing on sport, culture, children and youth. This is reflected in his previous employments as Head of Section and Private Secretary to the Minister in the Danish Ministry of Culture as well as Project Manager and presently Secretary General in International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA), where he amongst others is responsible for overall Strategic Management and Project Portfolio Development.

Piotr Mencina is the National Director of Special Olympics Poland and oversees the National Office. He has been involved in a Special Olympics movement since 1991. He is the Master of Science and Professional Tennis Coach. Piotr Mencina is experienced in various business and social activities. Leadership in action, development of people creating organisations and journalism are most common to him. As a guest lecturer Piotr is leading workshops and lecturers for various publics, like a government, science and business organisations. Constantly works as a personal development coach of some media, business and political opinion leaders. Piotr is also a Member of the Polish Association of Local Media and an Establishing Member of the Polish Association of NLP in Psychotherapy.

Dorota Wiszejko-Wierzbicka – a doctor of psychology; research manager at the Institute of Educational Research in Warsaw and at the association Special Olympics Poland. Her interests include psycho-social mechanism of inclusion through education processes.



University of Ulster

Professor Roy McConkey has worked in the field of intellectual disability for over 30 years and has authored, co-authored and edited over 15 books of which a major theme has been innovative community-based services for persons with intellectual disabilities. In addition he has published over 100 book chapters and research papers in international learned journals. Latterly these have focused on social inclusion and cross-cultural research. He has held research grants in excess of £ 500,000 and over the years has managed the work of various research assistants and associates. In the UK and Ireland he has undertaken over 20 evaluations of statutory and non-statutory intellectual disability services.

Dr Sandra Dowling is a Research Consultant to the University of Ulster and the Project Manager of the Youth Unified Sports evaluation. She has worked in research in intellectual disability and in child health since 2000 both in London and more recently in her native Northern Ireland where she recently completed her PhD study, which considered issues of identity in young people with Acquired Brain Injury. Sandra is a member of the International Advisory Board of the Journal of Intellectual Disability (JOID). She has particular expertise in qualitative research methodologies and is an experienced fieldworker both in home and international settings.

Dr David Hassan is a Senior Lecturer in Sport at the University of Ulster. In January 2004 he was installed as Academic Editor of *Sport in Society*, an international, peer-reviewed journal published by Taylor and Francis Ltd. Latterly, he was appointed as Series Editor (with Dr A Edwards) of '*Foundations in Sport Management*', a Routledge series examining this important and expanding academic field of study. In 2006, he was awarded a Distinguished Research Fellowship by the University in recognition of his outstanding contribution to research. In 2008 he was invited to become an International Scholar with the International Football Institute.

Polish Honorary Symposium Committee

Professor Stanisław Kowalik is head of the Department for Physical Culture of People with Disabilities at the Institute of Rehabilitation in the University of Physical Education in Poznan. He graduated in psychology and sociology. His main scientific interests include challenges for people with disabilities. He is the author of around 200 scientific publications.

Andrzej Kosmol is associate professor and Head of the Department of Theory and Methods of Movement Teaching in the Faculty for Rehabilitation at the University of Physical Education in Warsaw. He is president of the Polish Scientific Association of Adapted Physical Activity (PTN-AAF) and Master Class Coach. His main research area of interest is sport training process in individuals with disabilities.



Professor Anna Izabela Brzezińska is a psychologist working at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and at The Warsaw School of Social Sciences and Humanities). She is a member of The Committee on Psychological Sciences in the Polish Academy of Sciences and the author of many books and articles in the field of psychology. She was the Scientific Director of the Nation-wide Study of the Situation, Needs and Prospects of People with Disabilities in Poland

Research Partners 2010 Youth Unified Impact Study

Dr Florian Pochstein is a scientific assistant at the Institute for Sport and Sports Sciences at the Christian-Albrechts-University in Kiel/Germany. His research topics amongst others are intellectual disability and sport, health psychology and competitive sports for people with disabilities. He is assistant of the Scientific Advisory Board Special Olympics Germany and head of education and training in the German Special Olympics Region of Schleswig-Holstein. He has particular expertise in quantitative research methodologies.

Fadilj Eminović is working at the Belgrade University in the Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation at the Department for People with Motor Skill Disorders. Since 2006 he has been engaged by the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Policy to review and evaluate project applications submitted by social organizations and associations. He is member of the Presidency Section of Somathopeth of Serbia. Fadilj Eminović is also a member of the reviewer and editorial board in various international scientific journals. He published over 100 scientific papers in journals and at conferences in the country and abroad.

Dr Maciej Wilski is a psychologist and research worker at the Department for Physical Culture of People with Disabilities at the Institute of Rehabilitation in the University of Physical Education in Poznan. He has a Ph.D. in physical culture sciences (Ph.D. dissertation: Personal and social predictors of self-care in persons with myocardial infarction) and experience in social sciences (M.A. in psychology; M.A. in physiotherapy). He has also experience in teaching physical culture of the disabled, psychology, sport psychology and rehabilitation psychology and 6 years experience in cooperation with associations, organizations and institutions working for people with intellectual disability.

Joanna Styczeń is the Special Olympics Poland Organizational Development & New Initiatives Director and Non Sport Director at the 2010 Special Olympics European Summer Games Fund. She has worked for Special Olympics Poland since 1998, starting in Poznan where she studied PR, political sciences and social work. In her work she focuses on changing attitudes, educational programs, inclusion and the development of all non sports programs.

Anna Nadolska is a physiotherapist and assistant in the Department for Physical Culture of People with Disabilities at the Institute of Rehabilitation in the University of Physical Education in Poznan. Scientific interests are concentrated on the perception of ecosystem recourses of people with intellectual disability, among them mainly conditions for sport activities. Before she was a coach for Speedskating and Roller skating in the Regional Department Special Olympics Wielkopolskie- Poznań,



nowadays. She is also national clinical coordinator of the Special Olympics Poland Fit Feet Program.

Eugeniy Goncharenko, 25, from Kyiv, Ukraine. In 2006 he graduated from the National University of Physical Education and Sports of Ukraine (Olympic and Professional Sports Department). In 2009 he graduated from a postgraduate course. He has been a Special Olympics Ukraine volunteer since 2005.

Anita Virányi is an assistant lecturer at the Hungarian Eötvös Loránd University Bárczi Gusztáv, Faculty of Special Education. She holds a BA degree in Special Education of Children with Learning Disabilities and a BA degree in Special Education of Physically Handicapped Children as well as an MA degree in Special Education in both fields. She is particularly interested in motor skill development of children with mild intellectual disability. Currently she is a PhD student focusing on new educational possibilities for children with learning disabilities as members of the Digital Generation. Anita Virányi takes part in research and studies regarding the cooperation of higher education and disadvantaged regions in educational services for all students.

Master of Ceremony

Sabine Menke (formerly Brecklinghaus) from Germany has been the Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia Senior Manager for Youth Education & Unified Sports since March 2003. In 2002 Sabine Menke graduated with a Master in Sport Sciences from the German Sport University Cologne. She completed a postgraduate master studies in 2005, an Executive Master in Sport Organization Management (MEMOS) at the University of Lyon 1/France with support of the International Olympic Committee and Olympic Solidarity. Ms Menke was involved in Special Olympics Germany as a volunteer from 1993 until 2003. She has a coach license from the German Football Federation (DFB); her main field of volunteering was in coaching women's football and organizing football events.

The Symposium is held under the patronage of:

Mrs Jolanta Fedak,
Minister of Labour and Social Policy in Poland

and the International Sport and
Culture Association



Ministry of Labour and Social Policy



The Symposium is generously supported by the National Disabled Persons Rehabilitation Fund.

