

Minor communication event 3. Special Olympics Slovakia is a role model for many countries

In days 19. – 20.4.2022 our country was visited for the first time by one of the highest representatives of the Special Olympics organization - David Evangelista, President for Europe, and Eurasia.

Special Olympics Slovakia (SOS) within the framework of activities for athletes with intellectual disability during the last five years has been very positively visible also abroad and this expansion has not been stopped even by the coronavirus pandemic.

The SOS regularly report on the achievements of our athletes at domestic and international events, bringing together athletes with and without intellectual disadvantages. *"I am excited and grateful for the work of the entire team here in Slovakia, for the innovative progress of the whole organization and for raising the profile of Special Olympics. It's not just about expanding the number of sports in which you organize training and competitions, but we appreciate the work with youth, working with athletes with multiple disabilities and children in the program MATP and Young Athletes. Last but not least, there are also projects focused on inclusion, healthy lifestyles and the distribution of sports equipment and training plans to Special Schools,"* summarized **David Evangelista, President of Special Olympics for Europe and Eurasia.** *"I often emphasize the importance of the Special Olympics concept, especially for families who are told at the birth of their child that your child will not be able to walk, talk, or be of any value to society. Special Olympics Slovakia is responsible in your country for the fact that many of these predictions have not come true. And parents are enjoying their children's sports achievements, and they have found their place in life in this way too."*

The program of the SOEE President David Evangelista was full of appointments with different state represents however, the most emotional meeting was within the **Family Health Forum** (19.4.2022, Bratislava) with Slovak and Ukrainian athletes and their families.

Family Health Forum is part of the project **Inclusion through sport for children with developmental disabilities** is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Regional Cooperation.

The evening with 30 participants was held in the spirit of solidarity and mutual support. The event was full of discussions on education, inclusion, and health care for people with intellectual disadvantages.

"We closed the serious topics with a party. Our goal is to look optimistically to the future, to seek better options and opportunities for sports and healthy lifestyle and to bring innovation to the Special Olympics, and to apply everything for the betterment of the lives of families of children with intellectual disability," **says Eva Gažová National Director.**

During the FHF event David Evangelista handed over the award **Innovator of Inclusion** to the Unified Youth couple Linda Gažová (16) and Filip Graňo (25) with ID. The Unified Youth couple was awarded by Special Olympics for creating an inclusive experience in their community and committing to serve as a leader of the Unified Generation.

The *Inclusion Through Sports for Children with Developmental Disabilities* project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Regional Cooperation.

Project implemented by



With support of partners:



Special
Olympics



Special
Olympics

Bosnia and Herzegovina



Special
Olympics

Iceland



Special
Olympics

Lithuania



Special
Olympics

Montenegro



Special
Olympics

Romania



Special
Olympics

Slovakia



Akadémia Výchovného Športu
in Agreement Partnership in Bratislava

Iceland
Liechtenstein
Norway grants

Norway
grants

The President David Evangelista, Special Olympics President for Europe, and Asia concluded his trip in Slovakia with these words: "I will keep my fingers crossed for the event to succeed. Slovakia is a small country, but thanks to the work of Special Olympics Slovakia you have long been a role model and inspiration for other countries. Everything you do, just keep doing it because it works."

Contact person:

Veronika Sedláčková, Project Manager

+421 905 925 695

sedlackova@specialolympics.sk

The *Inclusion Through Sports for Children with Developmental Disabilities* project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Regional Cooperation.

Project implemented by



With support of partners:



Special
Olympics



Special
Olympics
Bosnia and Herzegovina



Special
Olympics
Iceland



Special
Olympics
Lithuania



Special
Olympics
Montenegro



Special
Olympics
Romania



Special
Olympics
Slovakia

