

# Special Olympics Europe Eurasia Regional Youth Leadership Summit REPORT



**SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
LEAD TO INCLUDE  
2020**



**LANE GLOBAL YOUTH  
LEADERSHIP**

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# A MESSAGE FROM DAVID EVANGELISTA

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It was indeed an honor for Special Olympics Europe Eurasia to host the European Youth Leadership Summit 2020 from 31st January to 4th February in Östersund, Sweden.

On behalf of all of us, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our delegations from Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Denmark, Iceland, Germany, Romania and Hungary for your participation, enthusiasm and vital input throughout the summit. More importantly, a sincere thanks for your ongoing commitment to creating and sustaining inclusive environments on the sports field, in your schools and in your communities. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to our partners: Lane Global Youth Leadership, Kantar, Microsoft and the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union who made our summit possible.

Finally, I would like to add a special thanks to Special Olympics Sweden, Mid Sweden University, and the local schools of Östersund, Gymnasium Wargentin and Storsjögymnasiet, for providing invaluable support. It was inspiring for me to see Special Olympics Youth Leaders from across Europe connecting with the young people of Östersund, and joining our focused effort to bring forth a truly Unified Generation.

While the European Youth Leadership Summit 2020 is now over, its impact is only just beginning. Future national and local Youth Leadership Summits and Youth Innovation Projects were planned and prepared during this summit, and our Special Olympics Europe Eurasia team looks forward to working alongside all of us as support. Through these projects, European Youth Summit participants will spread the message of inclusion across local communities, nations and the wider Europe Eurasia region. The aim is ambitious yet simple: we are working to create a future where there is a place for everyone- of all abilities. Our Youth Summit participants are living proof that if you can impact the life of just one person in your community, you can and are making a profound difference.

With gratitude,

David Evangelista  
President & Managing Director  
Special Olympics Europe Eurasia







# A MESSAGE FROM EVENT EMCEES

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Hosting the 2020 European Youth Leadership Summit together with Mr. Ian Harper, a brilliant leader, was truly an honor and experience of a lifetime.

I was privileged to be able to work with such wonderful and inspirational people. I wish we could [#PlayUnified](#) together right now. I admire the skills of the Youth Leaders to [#InnovateforInclusion](#). I can't wait to see and hear about their projects in action!

Trust yourself. Be yourself. Every single one of us is more than ready to [#LeadtoInclude](#)!

Be happy!

*Anni Lindeman,*  
Youth Leader, Special Olympics Finland

It was an amazing experience to co-host the Youth Summit, everything, from the meetings to games to planning to work with Youth Leaders, was awesome.

Youth Leaders, build projects that you are passionate about to succeed!

As a Sargent Shriver International Global Messenger, I would also want to see you in the future train more Youth Leaders. I want to support you as much as possible!

*Ian Harper,*

Sargent Shriver International Global Messenger







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# FOCUS OF THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS EUROPE EURASIA REGION

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## **Youth leading the development of Unified Sports®**

Incorporating the Unified Sports coaching theme into the Youth Leadership Summit is a core part of the Special Olympics Europe Eurasia strategy. It aims to create an alliance between youth activation, youth leadership and Unified Sports development. The involvement of young people is important for growth as Unified Schools and Youth Unified Sports develop in the Region.

Most of the Youth Leaders at the Summit have a Unified Sports background. Combining leadership skills with sports skills makes sure that youth are prepared to serve as role models, experts, influencers and coaches.

## **Easy language**

Inclusion is key to all Special Olympics activities. This applies across all levels of the organization, starting on the sports field and going far beyond.

A key aspect of inclusion is to engage everyone in a meaningful way. To support this principle, European “easy-to-read ” standards (Inclusion Europe, 2016) were applied at the European Youth Leadership Summit. This includes session design, materials, presentation outlines, and this report.

## **The Summit evaluation included questions regarding “easy language”**



of participants felt included in the sessions



of participants understood the purpose of the sessions



# DAY 1: 1 FEBRUARY



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# OPENING CEREMONY

At the Opening Ceremony, participants learned how to take action through the Lead to Include Project, and how together, they can create an inclusive and tolerant world by building a Unified Generation.

**Isak Langfors** and **Olle Ekman**, Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Sweden, welcomed all participants to their home country, Sweden. They shared their experience from being part of the 2019 Special Olympics Global Youth Leadership Summit and how their friendship is shaping the future of inclusion in their community.

**Marie Ohlsson**, Senior Lecturer Mid Sweden University, welcomed all delegations and wished them well in having valuable discussions at the University campus.

**David Evangelista**, Regional President and Managing Director of Special Olympics Europe Eurasia, welcomed everyone on behalf of the Special Olympics Europe Eurasia Region. He set the stage for the upcoming days of the Summit by sharing personal words of inspiration.

Then, participants listened to **Anna Kraik**, a local Sami singer. She shared the power of traditional *joiking* with the audience. She described *joiking* as "taking over where the words can't describe."







# YOUTH LEADERSHIP IN SPECIAL OLYMPICS

After the Opening Ceremony, participants heard an update on Special Olympics Youth Leadership and Unified Sports engagement at global and Regional levels. This was led by **Kaitlyn Hamrick**, Special Olympics International, and **Sabine Menke**, Special Olympics Europe Eurasia. Following the global and Regional updates, Youth Leaders from Lithuania and Finland shared their experience with inclusion in their community.

After learning about the impact of Special Olympics around the world, delegations prepared for team building activities and shared inclusive experiences in their countries, led by **Jenni Häkkinen**, Special Olympics Europe Eurasia.

In the afternoon, participants participated in a Youth Leadership training session, led by **Elsa Havas**, Special Olympics Europe Eurasia, and **Julius Kramer**, World Scout Committee. This session covered how to identify leadership skills in one's self and others, and how to be an inclusive leader of today.

To finish the day, participants gathered at the Opening Ceremony of the Special Olympics Sweden Invitational Games to celebrate more than 300 athletes from 20 countries competing in seven winter sports.





# DAY 2: 2 FEBRUARY



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# POWER OF UNIFIED SPORTS THEORY SESSION

This session was split into two parts.

**Tamara Medarts** and **Valerie Geluykens**, Unified basketball experts from Belgium, explained the three models of Unified Sports and the core component of the Principle of Meaningful Involvement:

## The Principle of Meaningful Involvement

- The most important principle in Unified Sports
- It means that every player on your team has a valuable role
- Emphasizes personal talent and skills

**Tamara** shared her journey from being a Special Olympics athlete to a Unified basketball player to an officially licensed basketball coach. Through her experience, Tamara:

learned to **interact with others**,  
which is not always easy

learned to **be patient** and  
understand that everyone is  
different

accepted **her limitations**

learned to **ask for help**

gained more **self-esteem**







# POWER OF UNIFIED SPORTS® PRACTICAL SESSION

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During this session, Youth Leaders had hands-on training to learn what it is to be a great coach and to understand how to ensure the meaningful involvement of all players.

## Steen Houman

**Central Board Member of International Floorball Federation and Chair Special Olympics Floorball Sport Resource Team**

Introduced Unified Floorball to the group and focused on how to teach a new sport.



## Guillermo Calvo

**iCoach Kids**

Focused on teaching Basketball skills through fun exercises where participants learned through playing.

## Tamara Medarts and Valerie Geluykens

**Unified Basketball Coaches**

Focused on team-building in a Unified basketball setting. Made sure everyone's abilities were considered so that all players were involved in a meaningful way.







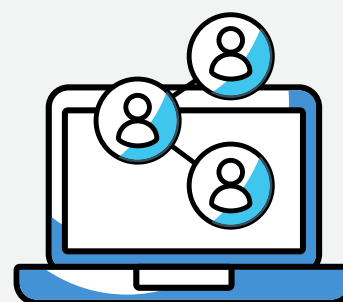
# POWER OF INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

How to use social media as a tool to spread inclusion, led by **Jamie Behymer**,  
Special Olympics International.

## DEVELOP A PERSONAL BRAND

This is the public's perception of you

- What are you passionate about?
- What purpose drives you?
- How are you different?
- What's your core message?



## SOCIAL MEDIA GOALS

Have a clear meaning

Keep it simple

Show the moment of truth

Empower our fans

Stir emotions

Show - don't tell



## HASHTAGS

### General Purpose

#PlayUnified

#ChooseToInclude

### Youth Summits

#LeadToInclude

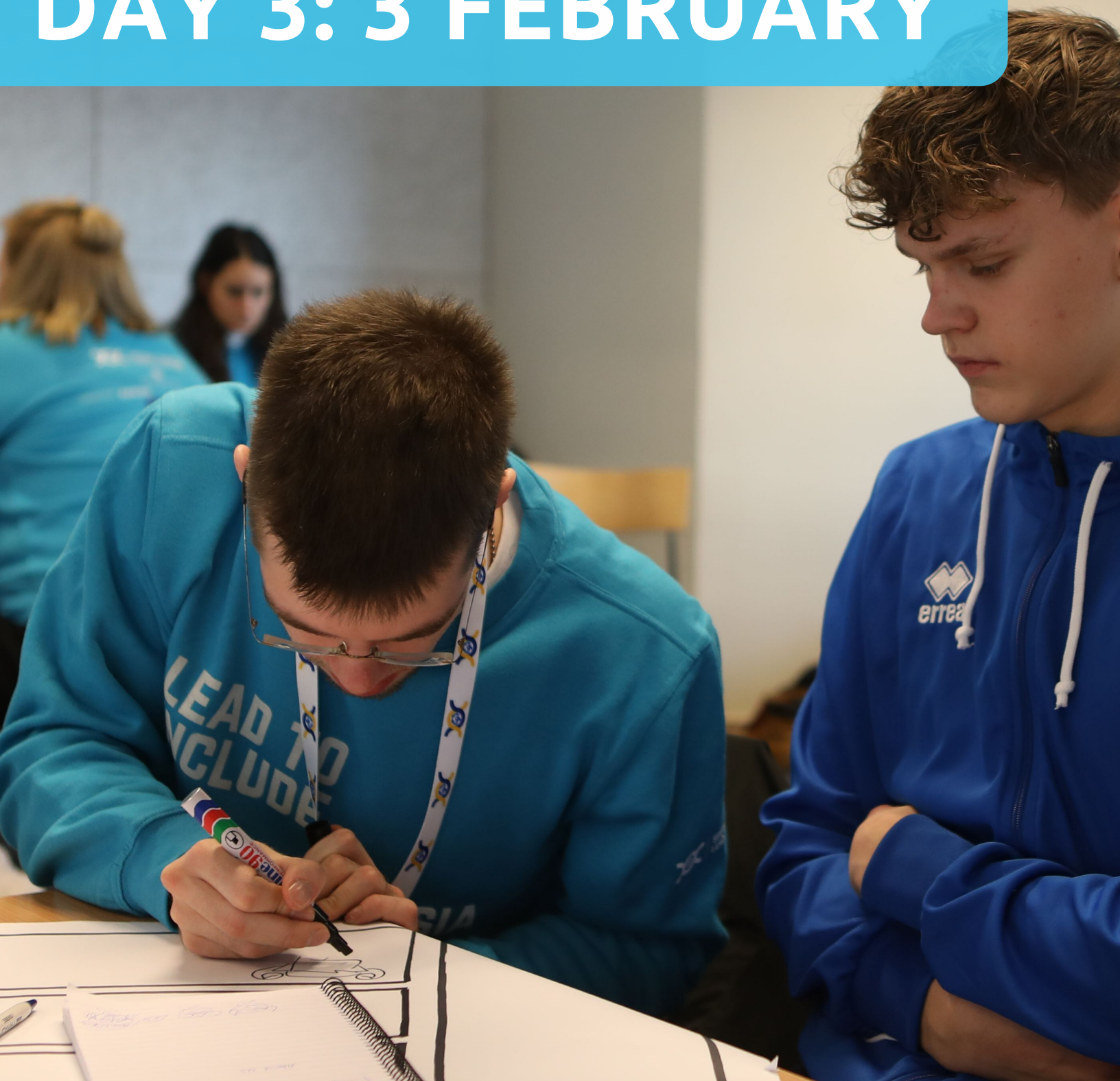
### Youth Innovation Projects

#InnovateforInclusion

“ You have the power to inspire others on a global scale. ”



# DAY 3: 3 FEBRUARY



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# YOUTH LEADERSHIP IMPACT AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Summit delegates met students from two local Unified Schools, **Jämtlands Gymnasium Wargentín** and **Storsjögymnasiet**. They saw the positive impact of working together in the local community through Unified Sports activities. The local students also joined in celebrating a successful Summit at the cultural night that concluded the event.



Special Olympics **Youth Innovation Projects** provide young people with and without intellectual disabilities the financial support they need to implement projects for inclusion in their community.

Participants learned about this grant program, developed a project plan and prepared to apply for the funding.



Two **Swedish Youth Leaders** presented a project they led to create an inclusive environment in their community. They organized a football day that connected local community partners with three special education schools. Their project was supported by Special Olympics Youth Innovation Grants.







# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

**Delegations showed how they are planning to make a difference in their communities**



## Special Olympics Germany

Antonia Brand  
Stephanie Berthold  
Bettina Lehmann

### THE PROBLEM

In Germany, there are Special Olympics Youth Leaders in all regions, but not everyone knows each other. Most are only connected through social media.

### PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The youth camp will be planned for a weekend during the summer. Participants will engage in a variety of nature related opportunities that demonstrate the power of Youth Leadership.

### PROJECT GOAL

To host a youth camp once a year where participants disconnect from technology and explore team building activities in an outdoor setting.

### THE IMPACT

After attending the youth camp, Youth Leaders will be motivated to stay engaged with Special Olympics.





# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

**Delegations showed how they are planning to make a difference in their communities**



## Special Olympics Finland

Laura Hamdi  
Teemu Salmenaho  
Milla Haglund

### THE PROBLEM

In Finland, there are not enough activities in rural areas, specifically in northern and eastern Finland.

### PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The project will bring Unified Sports activities to mainstream sport clubs and provide new opportunities for inclusion across Finland.

### PROJECT GOAL

To expand Unified Sports opportunities to smaller cities in Finland and host Finland's first National Youth Leadership Summit.

### THE IMPACT

There will be a greater number of Unified Sports activities offered across the country and inclusion in local community sport clubs.





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# YOUTH INNOVATION GRANTS

As a legacy of the European Youth Leadership Summit, Youth Leaders will lead Youth Innovation Projects in nine Special Olympics Programs within the Europe Eurasia Region.



## Europe Eurasia Youth Innovation Grant outreach:

**64**

PROJECTS  
FUNDED

**30**

PROGRAMS  
REPRESENTED

**115**

YOUTH PROJECT  
LEADERS

## Global Youth Innovation Grant outreach:

**333**

PROJECTS  
FUNDED

**109**

PROGRAMS  
REPRESENTED

**597**

YOUTH PROJECT  
LEADERS



A photograph of a group of young people, likely students, at a summit. In the center, a young woman with short brown hair and glasses is smiling broadly. To her right, another young woman with long brown hair is also smiling. They are wearing blue sweatshirts. The woman on the right has text on her sweatshirt that reads "LEAD TO INCLUSION EUROPE". A semi-transparent blue banner is overlaid at the bottom of the image, containing the title in white text.

# IMPACT OF THE YOUTH SUMMIT





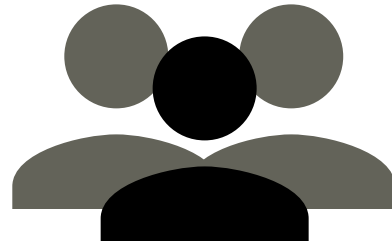
**SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
LEAD TO INCLUDE**

# **OUTREACH FROM THE EUROPEAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT**

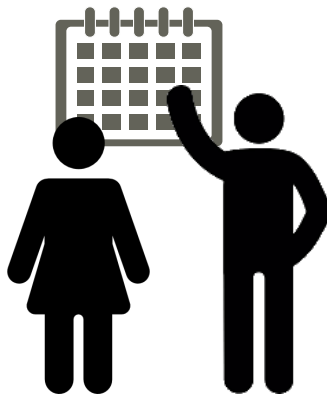
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**24 Youth Leaders with  
and without ID trained**



**11 Adult Mentors trained**



**21 Youth Leaders involved in  
planning process**



**11 Sponsors, Partners and VIPs  
Engaged**



**9 Programs involved in Youth  
Summit**



**34 local students involved in  
Youth Summit**





# EVALUATION

## EUROPEAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

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97%

of participants were **satisfied** with opportunities to **collaborate and network** with other Youth Leaders around their Region

91%

of participants were **satisfied** with **Unified Sports** sessions and activities

97%

of participants feel they **learned skills** that they can **use in other areas** of their life

OVERALL 97%

of participants were **satisfied** with their overall Youth Leadership Summit experience





# SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT



Special Olympics Finland is in Östersund.

4 February at 15:36 · 🌐

Laura ja Teemu viettivät Millan kanssa viikonlopun Östersundissa Ruotsissa Special Olympics Europe-Eurasia Youth Leadership Summitissa. Viikonlopun aikana he oppivat paljon uutta Special Olympicsin toiminnasta. Se on paljon muutakin kuin vain urheilutoimintaa. Se on inklusion edistämistä urheilun välityksellä.

Eilen he pääsivät myös suunnittelemaan omaa projektiansa, jonka tarkoituksena on viedä SO:n sanomaa eteen päin omassa maassaan. Jännittynein, mutta innostunein fiiliksin he jäivät odottamaan, mitä kaikkea upeaa tulevaisuus voikaan tuoda tullessaan!

#LeadToInclude #UnifiedGeneration #PlayUnified



Eriolümpia Eesti Ühendus/ Special Olympics Estonia added

16 new photos to the album Noorteliidrite seminar Roots.

7 February at 16:17 · 🌐

31. jaanuarist 4. veebruarini osalevad Eriolümpia noorteliidrid Inge Maiberg, Kristjan Kruk ja Merli Ilves Roots, Östersundis noorteliidrite foorumil.

#sweden2020 #playunified #leadtoinclude @EUErasmusPlusProgramme

See Translation



Special Olympics Europe Eurasia

2 February at 22:31 · 🌐

So much discussion, learning & laughter here at the Special Olympics European Youth Leadership Summit in Östersund, Sweden with 24 amazing Youth Leaders from nine countries! #LeadToInclude



Special Olympics Romania

Yesterday at 09:00 · 🌐

Summitul European al Tinerilor Lideri Special Olympics din Suedia (2020 European Youth Leadership Summit), de la Östersund s-a încheiat. Ce au invatat cei trei lideri din partea Special Olympics Romania, puteti citi aici: <https://bit.ly/2Hb3VGq>

#PlayUnified #ChooseToInclude #LearnUnified #LeadToInclude #InnovateForInclusion

See Translation







# GUEST SPEAKER HIGHLIGHTS

The European Youth Leadership Summit would not have been possible without the support of **Lane Global Youth Leadership, Kantar, Microsoft, and the European Union.** On-site, **Anna Kråik**, representatives from **Mid Sweden University, iCoachKids, World Scout Committee, Jämtlands Gymnasium Wargentin** and **Storsjögymnasiet** played a large role in support Youth Summit activities.



"Our engagement in Special Olympics is to gain knowledge, to help people become more physically active, and be involved in sports. If we do it together, I think we can find a solution."

**Marie Ohlsson, Mid Sweden University**



"My experience at the Summit was eye-opening and refreshing. Really great to see so many young leaders with such a passion and great ideas. "

**Guillermo Calvo, iCoach Kids**



"The room was filled with compassion and courage. The Young Leaders of the Summit embody exactly the type of leadership that our world desperately needs. Both Special Olympics and the Scout Movement contribute to the development of young people worldwide. Our work is more relevant today than ever before."

**Julius Kramer, World Scout Committee**





**SPECIAL OLYMPICS**  
**LEAD TO INCLUDE**

# GUEST SPEAKER HIGHLIGHTS



"I am sure all participants will make a strong impact in their communities. Unified Floorball can take a role in this. It's easy to play; it is healthy; it brings joy to people; it makes them socialize. Those factors support the development of any person, in particular children and youth."

**Steen Houtman, Central Board Member of International Floorball Federation  
and Chair Special Olympics Floorball Sport Resource Team**



"We were so inspired by the Unified Sports and Youth Leadership Workshop. We want to do more Unified!"

**Teacher, Jämtlands Gymnasium Wargentin**



"The Opening Ceremony was very professional as well as entertaining! Young Leaders must have felt so valued, welcomed and important. It was an absolute pleasure to be part of the Youth Summit!"

**Anna Kråk, Sami Singer**





# PARTICIPANTS REFLECTIONS

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## How was your Summit experience?



"It was a good experience because I learned more about Special Olympics, how to be a better leader, and also about myself. The diversity of topics was really well chosen."

**Antonia, Youth Leader**  
**Special Olympics Germany**

## Did you learn something new about being a coach?

"A good coach will not always use all of the best players in the first line, but will mix players so every player can have a chance."

**Jonas, Youth Leader**  
**Special Olympics Denmark**



## What is the Principle of Meaningful Involvement?



"I think it is about seeing all the players, not just the good ones but also those who aren't as good. You should be a coach for everyone, not just some of them."

**Olle, Youth Leader**  
**Special Olympics Sweden**





# DELEGATE CONCLUSIONS

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## What can you do to make the world more inclusive for all?

“We can show by example, by being who we are in our normal lives, in our schools, in our workplaces and by telling our friends about it. Tell everybody what we are doing.”

Laura, Youth Leader  
Special Olympics Finland



## What is your dream for inclusion?

“I wish everyone to have the same possibilities for sports, education, and possibilities for work. To have the same same position in society. No matter what happens, everyone should have the same rights and possibilities.”

Arijus, Youth Leader  
Special Olympics Lithuania





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