

## WORLD GYMNAESTRADA

The first international gymnastics festival recorded, which involved 7,399 participants from 12 nations, was organised in Stockholm in 1939 to mark the centenary of the death of the Swedish gymnastics expert, Pehr-Henrik Ling. The idea of a world gymnastics festival was taken up and developed further by a Dutchman, Johan Heinrich Francois Sommer. On his suggestion, the Federation Internationale de Gymnastique included the World Gymnaestrada in its official program, with the first event being held in Rotterdam in 1953.

The name Gymnaestrada is an artificial word with a multiple significance: "gymna" alludes to "gymnastics", while "strada" is for "street". This symbolises one of the fundamental concepts of Gymnaestrada - to bring out into the open new insights and the development of General Gymnastics.









The Gymnaestrada is held over seven (7) days and usually during the month of July. Group performances can involve teams of 10 or more members for indoor displays while at least 150 members are required for large outdoor performances. With the passage of the decades, both the substance and the programme of Gymnaestrada events changed noticeably. These changes have been in response to developments in the field of gymnastics as well as in the various national federations.

The World Gymnaestrada includes the following program events:

- Opening Ceremony
- Group performances
- Large-group performances (A & B)
- National Presentations by countries (ie: National Evenings)
- FIG Gala
- Instructors' Forum
- Social activities for active participants
- Closing Ceremony

Entry to a World Gymnaestrada can only be made through a member National Federation of the Federation Internationale de Gymnastique. Countries indicate their interest to participate in a World Gymnaestrada at least two years prior to the event.

The World Gymnaestrada has developed an astonishing dynamism of its own. Both the number of participating countries and the number of performers from member federations are increasing continuously, as detailed below:

| Year | Location                | Participation Numbers | Event Logo   |
|------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1953 | Rotterdam / Netherlands | 5,000                 |     |
| 1957 | Zagreb / Croatien       | 6,000                 |     |
| 1961 | Stuttgart / Germany     | 10,000                |    |
| 1965 | Vienna / Austria        | 15,600                |    |
| 1969 | Basle / Switzerland     | 9,600                 |   |
| 1975 | Berlin / Germany        | 10,500                |   |
| 1982 | Zurich / Switzerland    | 14,200                |  |
| 1987 | Herning / Denmark       | 17,300                |  |

|      |                          |   |        |  |
|------|--------------------------|---|--------|--|
| 1991 | Amsterdam<br>Netherlands | / | 18,400 |    |
| 1995 | Berlin / Germany         |   | 19,200 |    |
| 1999 | Goteborg<br>Sweden       | / | 20,800 |     |
| 2003 | Lisbon / Portugal        |   | 25,000 |    |
| 2007 | Dornbirn<br>Austria      | / | 22,000 |  |