



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

FACTSHEET

THE YOG SPORTS PROGRAMME

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INTRODUCTION

The Youth Olympic Games (YOG) are the **ultimate multi-sporting event**, inviting the world's best young athletes aged between 15 and 18 years to compete, learn and share every four years in both Summer and Winter editions. The YOG are a **celebration of sport, youth diversity** and the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect. The YOG also exemplify the fundamental principles of Olympism by emphasising the **cultural and educational dimensions** of sport through a 'Compete, Learn & Share' experience that targets not only young elite athletes, but also their coaches and parents and the local youth of the Host Country. The Youth Olympic Games provide a **powerful platform** to encourage the development of sports and life skills that are relevant for athletes and other young people in general, such as nutrition, healthy lifestyles, sustainability, the fight against harassment and abuse, doping and illegal betting and how to act as a **role model in one's community**.

The YOG are centred on a 'Compete, Learn & Share' experience that is delivered in a purpose driven sports festival format. It strives to reach and engage as many young people as possible by integrating sport with fun and exciting educational and cultural activities in **an urban setting**, which is where the majority of the world's youth now resides.

The specific nature of the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) is to be used as an incubator for innovation for the International Sports Federations (IF). They can therefore innovate and develop their sports through the YOG and **propose new events and formats of competition** (e.g. international mixed teams, changing distances, introducing new disciplines). The sports programme of the YOG can also vary from a city to another depending on the venues and infrastructures available.

The IFs are responsible for the **technical aspects of their sports**, qualification criteria and defining the age groups of the participants.



The age groups depend on the sports and **disciplines** in which the athletes compete. The athletes must be 15, 16, 17 or 18 years old on 31 December in the year of the Games. **These groups are defined in collaboration with the relevant IF responsible for the sport**. For example, in Lausanne 2020, the age group defined for Ice Hockey is the athletes born between the 1st January 2004 and the 31st December 2005 (those who are 15 or 16 years old).

The qualification criteria for the young athletes are prepared by the IFs in collaboration with the IOC. For each discipline, a specific qualification pathway is developed that can comprise of world and continental junior championships as well as junior world rankings, to allow the athletes to qualify for the YOG. Just like for the Olympic Games, **universality is a key element** for the success of the YOG, with the participation of a maximum number of NOCs. There were 206 at the YOG Buenos Aires 2018 and 71 at the YOG Lillehammer 2016. The principle of the YOG is that all NOCs take part with at least one man and one woman across the YOG. In Buenos Aires, 4000 athletes competed and 1880 are in Lausanne this January 2020.

Venues: No new permanent facility should be built for the sole purpose of hosting YOG events;



- the use of existing facilities should be **realistic and consider affordability** in terms of the efficiency of the overall operational footprint, impact on direct and indirect operating costs and the contribution to the overall YOG experience;
- utilisation of facilities with small to moderate capacities and/or affordable temporary solutions that support delivery of a multi-faceted YOG experience is prioritised;
- hosting events **outside of traditional self-contained venues** and/or in urban environments that showcase local youth-specific locations or landmarks is actively considered;
- the use of **temporary solutions** should be realistic and affordable (fit for purpose), with due consideration of options for simplified solutions that are appealing to young people;
- facility planning should support the **concept of sustainable development** as it applies to the Olympic Movement in general and to events infrastructure, including the use of temporary facilities.



Athlete training: during the YOG training facilities must be available **before, during and after competitions** in order to promote the development of the athletes and provide opportunities to train to support the period of stay principle. The training venues should be located as close as possible to the NOC team delegation accommodation solutions to reduce travel times for athletes.

SPORTING INNOVATIONS SINGAPORE 2010

In 2010, the sports programme matched that of the London 2012 Olympic Games, with the same sports. **As the YOG are open for innovations**, some events were different from those on the programme of the Olympic Games. Basketball, for example, was played in a 3x3 format with teams playing against each other on one half-court. One of the main distinctions in the YOG programme, however, is the number of mixed gender teams or international team events which allows athletes from different NOCs to compete together under the Olympic Flag. The aim is to encourage exchange and to get to know others.

INNSBRUCK 2012

As with the Summer YOG, the **events of the Winter YOG differ** from those of the Olympic Winter Games. In Innsbruck, for example, an ice hockey skills challenge was included. Mixed gender and/or mixed NOC team events took place in biathlon, curling, luge, ice skating, and skiing. The combination of cross-country skiing and biathlon was organised as a mixed gender team relay event. Several events were also seen for the first time on an Olympic programme, such as women's ski jumping, ski half-pipe and snowboard slopestyle.

NANJING 2014

New events made their debut, such as the basketball dunk contest and shoot-out, hockey 5s, the canoe sprint and the athletics 8x100m relay. Golf and rugby sevens were also on the programme, as they were also part of the Games of the Olympiad in Rio in 2016.

LILLEHAMMER 2016

The programme of the 2nd Winter YOG was based on the seven sports on the programme of the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games. Twelve **exciting new medal events** made their debut in Lillehammer such as monobob in bobsleigh, ski slopestyle in freestyle skiing, cross-country cross



free in cross-country skiing, Nordic mixed team NH/3 x 3.3km and team ski-snowboard cross.



BUENOS AIRES 2018

Four new sports made their debut on the Olympic stage: sport climbing, dance sport, karate and roller sports. They joined the 28 other sports that featured at the previous edition of the YOG in Nanjing in 2014. The inclusion of these new sports on the YOG programme, not to mention the appearance of new events and competition formats such as BMX freestyle, kiteboarding, futsal and beach handball, serves to highlight the role of the YOG as an event where the innovations of the Olympic Movement can be put to the test. The programme of the YOG 2018 has 239 events (114 men, 103 women and 20 mixed and 2 open).

LAUSANNE 2020

The Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 sees the inclusion of a new sport, Ski mountaineering, and new disciplines: amongst these innovations are the introduction for the first time of a mixed-NOC 3x3 ice hockey tournament; a women's doubles event in luge; and the introduction of the women's Nordic Combined. For all the new sports and events, existing venues are used.

The event programme means full gender balance for the first time at a Winter Olympic event, with the highest number of women's events and women ever competing at the Winter YOG.

Lausanne 2020 is pioneering with a two-wave stay of athletes, providing an opportunity to optimise the number of athletes within the maximum sports quotas, while avoiding increased costs to the Hosts. The total number of athletes is 1,880. [Learn more about the Sports Programme Lausanne 2020](#)

DAKAR 2022

Innovation and an ongoing focus on youth sport have been paramount for the athlete competition programme from the outset of the Youth Olympic Games. Dakar 2022 will see inclusion of all the youth-focused sports proposed by Paris 2024: breaking, surfing, sport climbing and skateboarding. Highly popular youth-focused sports seen at previous YOG will continue for 2022, while new events will also make their debut, such as beach wrestling, and the sport of karate will continue its YOG journey. [Learn more about the Sports Programme Dakar 2022](#)

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