International Olympic Committee

FACTSHEET

Hosting the Youth Olympic Games

December 2023

Integrating education and culture in a festive atmosphere, the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) create meaningful change by delivering long-lasting social, sports, sustainability, and other benefits for local, regional and national communities, especially for younger generations.

At a glance – the YOG[1]

- 190+ countries exposed to the YOG via local and national media
- Between 130 and 200 million unique TV viewers on average
- 2,700 broadcast hours
- 700+ million social impressions
- Association with the Olympic rings, that have 90 per cent global brand awareness - one of the most recognised symbols in sport

Summer YOG[1]

- Up to 4,000 athletes aged 15-18
- 206 National Olympic Committees (NOCs)
- Up to 35 sports, 12-14 days
- 400,000 to 1 million spectators[2]
- 250,000 participants in sports initiation programmes
- 5,000 to 10,000 volunteers
- 400+ employees

Winter YOG[1]

- Up to 1,900 athletes aged 15-18
- 79 NOCs, 7 sports, 10-14 days
- 300,000 to 700,000 spectators[2]
- 65,000 participants in sports initiation programmes
- 2,000 to 5,000 volunteers
- 80+ employees

Youth at the core. With the champions of tomorrow. An event for the youth, by the youth, with the youth.

- The DNA of the Youth Olympic Games

Social benefits

The primary goal for the hosts of the YOG is to organise high-level sports competitions, while maximising opportunities to educate and engage with young athletes and local youth, inspiring them to play an active role in their communities.

Hosts are encouraged to develop engagement and legacy programmes targeting young people and their families in the lead-up to, during and after the YOG. These cover a wide range of activities such as sports initiations, school activities, concerts, art performances and mass events.

Previous editions have supported youth empowerment and social development, in line with local priorities such as education, social inclusion, gender equality, protection from harassment and abuse, and tackling poverty. Young people are included in decision-making processes and leadership and volunteer positions, which enables them to develop skills, confidence and experience.

In addition to local communities, a strong vision for the YOG can inspire millions of young people internationally and be a showcase to the world.

[1] Figures are based on previous editions of the Summer and Winter YOG and may vary in future. The number of athletes and sports is flexible and depends on each YOG edition.

[2] 20 to 40 per cent from outside the host city/region

The IOC Young Leaders programme was inspired by the Youth Olympic Games and has impacted more than 30,000 lives, through 141 sport-based projects in 66 countries.

The IOC Young Reporter Programme, launched on the occasion of Singapore 2010, provides a cross-platform journalist-training programme and on-the-job experience during the YOG, to journalism students or those who have recently started their journalism careers, from all around the world.

Examples of social benefits of hosting the Youth Olympic Games	
Active communities	**Buenos Aires 2018** The Games were a decisive factor for Buenos Aires to accelerate its *Ciudad Activa* programme, making physical activity projects available to citizens, improving sporting facilities and promoting healthy, active lifestyles.
Skills and confidence	**Lausanne 2020** More than 100 young people were trained by a local academy to deliver the sports presentation during the competitions.
Education	**Buenos Aires 2018** 175,000 children took part in programmes to promote sport and the Olympic values, and 220,000 attended the Games. **Lausanne 2020** 80,000 children, representing 80 per cent of regional schools, took part in pre-Games activities and attended events.
Youth empowerment	**Gangwon 2024** 3,030 people from across five continents entered the IOC competition to design one side of the medal for Gangwon 2024, with the youngest entrant aged 7. For all YOG editions, young people are engaged to design YOG-related properties such as medals, the cauldron, or the visual identity, allowing them to develop professional skills and experience.
Social inclusion	**Buenos Aires 2018** The first gender-equal Olympic event in terms of athlete participation, with 2,000 female and 2,000 male competitors.
Volunteer experience	**Innsbruck 2012** A volunteer network rooted in the legacy of the Olympic Winter Games, bolstered by hosting the YOG, continues to serve at major sports and cultural events in the Tirol region. **Buenos Aires 2018** 7,090 volunteers participated. **Lausanne 2020** The Games were supported by 4,170 volunteers.
Inspiring young leaders	**Lillehammer 2016** The Games aimed to increase the involvement of young people in the sports industry across Norway. More than 200 Norwegians aged 15 to 18 took part in the Lillehammer 2016 Young Leaders Programme. Many have gone on to work in leadership positions in sports clubs and associations.
Cultural experiences	**Lausanne 2020** 300 cultural and sports events were organised alongside the competitions for the *Lausanne en Jeux* festival. 65,000 people took part in sports initiations; and there were 30,200 visits to the Olympic Museum.

Sports benefits

For most young athletes, the YOG present the highest level of competition for their age group.

For the hosts, the YOG offer an opportunity to reinforce elite and grassroot sports development programmes and experience in organising major events.

The YOG are centred on a "Compete, Learn & Share" philosophy. They strive to reach and engage young athletes to learn about and become ambassadors for the Olympic values, explore different cultures, improve training methods and performance, and play an active role in their communities.

The athletes' experience is at the heart of the YOG. The event provides young elite athletes with opportunities to enhance their long-term athletic development and access future employment both inside and outside the sporting arena.

The YOG are also an opportunity to inform and educate the athletes' entourage members about ethical principles and motivate them to act in the best interests of young athletes; and to inspire local youth and their communities to participate in sport and physical activities and remain connected to organised sport.

Hosting the YOG enables a host city, host region and host country to gain valuable event delivery experience, by improving local skills and setting the ground for other future successes.

Youth Olympic Games – a springboard to the Olympic Games	
Beijing 2022	**Tokyo 2020**
341 athletes had previously participated in the YOG:	708 athletes had previously participated in the YOG:
103 at Innsbruck 2012	207 at Singapore 2010
155 at Lillehammer 2016	1 at Innsbruck 2012
83 at Lausanne 2020	303 at Nanjing 2014
	197 at Buenos Aires 2018
A total of 62 medals won (26 gold)	A total of 170 medals won (55 gold)

Innovations

The YOG act as an incubator for new ideas; and hosts have tested a number of innovations that have been successfully adopted for other competitions, including the Olympic Games.

Future hosts will be able to benefit from the ongoing work of the IOC's new Games Optimisation Group, which is exploring opportunities to foster sustainable Games and enhance Games delivery by identifying what expertise can be leveraged, and where new technologies and ideas can be implemented.

Previous YOG editions have tested new sports and disciplines, such as BMX freestyle, 3x3 basketball, breaking, kitesurfing, beach handball, ski mountaineering, ski-cross and more – many of which have now been integrated into the Olympic Games. Innovation at the YOG goes beyond sport, and the versatility of the event also provides a valuable platform to explore and implement advances in various facets of broadcast operations, technology, event delivery, spectator experience and youth engagement. This helps the Olympic Movement to make the event more valuable to young people, but also to develop streamlined and more effective working approaches.

Examples of innovations trialled at the Youth Olympic Games	
Singapore 2010	A significant milestone in terms of broadcasting. All live sports coverage was produced in high definition (HD). The world feed, encompassing all live sports. was distributed globally via satellite for the first time. A dedicated YOG Channel was established, featuring live sports broadcast and highlights packages.
Innsbruck 2012	Fields of play were opened to school competitions.
Nanjing 2014	Exhibition sports such as wushu, climbing, roller sports and skateboarding were organised as part of the Nanjing Sports Lab, merging competitions and a festival at the same location to improve spectator experience. This was a precursor to Buenos Aires 2018 and Tokyo 2020

	and will be implemented for Paris 2024. For the first time, there was a digital torch relay, and a proof of concept for Virtual Reality (VR).
Lillehammer 2016	The YOG's first cultural festival offered concerts, exhibitions and the showcasing of sports such as ice-climbing, parkour, telemark and ice stock sport.
Buenos Aires 2018	This was the first time any Olympic Opening Ceremony has been held in the streets of a city and free to the general public to attend, away from a traditional stadium. This was so successful, a similar concept will be adopted at Paris 2024, with no admission fee for most spectators. BMX freestyle, kitesurfing, beach handball, sport climbing and breaking were all tested for the first time on an Olympic programme. Most of the 241 events in 32 disciplines took place in four parks around the city of Buenos Aires, while the sports competition was combined with cultural, recreational and educational activities. The Youth Olympic Park hosted 50 per cent of sports. Olympic Broadcasting Services (OBS) did remote video production from the International Broadcast Centre (IBC) for the first time.
Lausanne 2020	The structure of the sports programme was adapted, and ski mountaineering was introduced. For the first time, public transport was the only option proposed to the NOCs. A similar system will be used at Milano Cortina 2026.
	Athletes attended in two waves, enabling a record-breaking number of competitors for a Winter YOG edition. Staged in Switzerland and France, this was the first Olympic YOG winter event to be organised across two countries. OBS distributed live content via cloud for the first time. This has now become one of the most widely used methods for distributing content around the world.
Gangwon 2024	For the first time in history, there will be a virtual Olympic presence in the metaverse. OBS will implement various innovations in the field of broadcasting. 5G technology will be used for live streaming from autonomous cameras, helping to make the process of creating content more efficient and faster. In addition, a Virtual TV mobile unit will be developed, instead of using dedicated broadcast hardware. This will help to reduce costs and increase flexibility.
Dakar 2026	An eight-day *Dakar en Jeux* festival in 2022 served as a starting point for Senegal's annual four-year countdown to be Africa's first country to host an Olympic sports event. Wushu will be introduced as an Olympic sport for the first time, alongside the new discipline of baseball 5.

Sustainable approach

Hosts are invited to leverage the unique platform provided by the YOG to engage the world's youth and to reflect and promote their interests and concerns around sustainability.

As one of the five themes of Olympic Agenda 2020+5, the IOC's roadmap for the future, sustainability needs to be addressed by all potential YOG hosts from the beginning of their project. This is understood to cover the environment, gender equality, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding and mental health, and human and child rights.

For the YOG to fulfil their mission to be truly sustainable, the Games vision and plan must align with existing long-term socio-economic development plans and strategies for youth and sports. Furthermore, in line with reforms to make hosting and organising Olympic Games more cost-efficient, climate-friendly and better suited to the local context, only existing and temporary venues may be used. Hosts are invited to consider innovative alternatives to new venues, including venues outside the host city, region or country, if no suitable local facility exists.

The IOC requests hosts to implement eco-friendly practices such as reducing resource consumption and waste, protecting biodiversity and using public transport.

Examples of sustainability benefits of hosting the Youth Olympic Games	
Event delivery standards	**Lillehammer 2016** The Games received the first Norwegian ISO certification as a sustainable event (ISO 2012:1)
Promotion of eco-friendly practices	**Lausanne 2020** Among the initiatives trialled were the use of public transport and existing facilities with appropriate capacities; a reduction in overlay; an Olympic torch with no gas and powered only by a renewable fuel; and natural venues such as the frozen lake in St Moritz for speed skating.
Long-term venue use	**Lausanne 2020** The Youth Olympic Village, built to serve long-term residential needs, now serves as housing for over 2,000 students.
Improved sports facilities in line with long-term plans	**Lausanne 2020** New ski lift structures were developed in resorts such as Les Diablerets and the snowpark in Leysin was renovated.

Economic benefits

Hosting the YOG raises the profile of the host, attracting investment and visitors, and boosting local skills while using local suppliers and event operators.

Examples of economic benefits of hosting the Youth Olympic Games	
Global exposure for host city/ region	**Lausanne 2020** 191 countries were exposed to the YOG through national or regional media.
Increased tourism	**Singapore 2010** The YOG attracted 400,000 visitors, 31,000 of whom came from other countries. International visitors spent an estimated USD 68.1m.
Added economic value	**Singapore 2010** Benefits with a value estimated at USD 41.9m were added to the national economy through international visits. Contracts worth USD 260m were awarded to local businesses. **Lillehammer 2016** A surplus of USD 2.4m was generated and re-invested into the sports system, including the Lillehammer Legacy Centre, which continues to train young people for future careers in sport.
Worldwide engagement	**Lausanne 2020** During 13 days of competition, there were over 3 million users on Olympic digital platforms, and 715 million social impressions.

Improved workforce skills and experience	**Lausanne 2020** The snowpark has since hosted various international events, operated by the local community with expertise from the YOG.
Acceleration of and alignment with long-term socio-economic development plans	**Dakar 2026** The Games align with the "Plan for an Emerging Senegal", the national strategy for economic and social development.

Sources

Dakar 2026: IOC website
Gangwon 2024: IOC website
Lausanne 2020 : Official Report and article
Buenos Aires 2018: Official Report and Legacy website
Lillehammer 2016: Official Report
Singapore 2010: Games Impact Study

For further information, please see the following factsheets:
Youth Olympic Games Facts and Figures
Electing Olympic hosts

Or contact:
The Olympic Studies Centre
studies.centre@olympic.org