



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

FACTSHEET

OLYMPIC WINTER PROGRAMME

UPDATE – FEBRUARY 2008

History

According to the Olympic Charter, "*Only those sports which are practised on snow or ice are considered as winter sports*" (Olympic Charter 2007, Rule 6, paragraph 2). As such, they may therefore be included in the programme of the Olympic Winter Games.

The programme of the Olympic Winter Games has developed over a long period of time, with some sports or disciplines disappearing and others being added. Some, such as curling, which was an Olympic event in 1924, have recently returned. Others, including ski jumping and figure skating, have barely changed and remain part of the programme. Figure skating is the only sport which has always been open to women while, in contrast, ski jumping and Nordic combined are still men-only events. All other disciplines are open to both men and women and the IOC is doing its utmost to promote women's participation in the Games.

The programme of the early editions was something of a "mix-and-match" between the disciplines practised by the Scandinavians and those of the Anglo-Saxon and Alpine countries. After the Second World War, the programme became more structured and the events were standardised. Winter sports competitions became well established in the landscape of competitive sport. Between 1964 and 1984, the number of events in the Winter Games programme remained relatively stable, with five events added in six editions. Since the Sarajevo Games, the programme has almost doubled in size, with the introduction of new sports, as well as the addition of new distances and "skating" style in cross-country skiing. It is interesting to note that two sports formed part of the Summer Games prior to the inaugural Winter Games in 1924: ice hockey was introduced for the first time at the Antwerp Summer Games in April 1920, while figure skating is the oldest winter discipline in the Olympic programme, having

featured in the Summer Games in London in 1908 and Antwerp in 1920.

Key dates for the Winter Games programme

- 1924:** first Olympic Winter Games in Chamonix.
- 1936:** introduction of Alpine skiing at the Games in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.
- 1952:** first women's cross-country skiing event in Oslo.
- 1960:** speed skating increases from 4 to 8 events when it is opened to women. The biathlon is included in the Games, while for the only time ever, bobsleigh is excluded from the programme due to insufficient entries.
- 1964:** the luge is introduced at the Games in Innsbruck.
- 1988:** Alpine skiing increases from 6 to 10 events with the addition of the super giant slalom and combined. Team sports are introduced in Nordic combined and ski jumping.
- 1992:** short-track speed skating and freestyle skiing are added to the Olympic programme, while the biathlon is opened to women at the Albertville Games.
- 1998:** snowboarding is included in the Nagano Games, while the curling event is reintroduced 74 years after its first official appearance at the Chamonix Games.
- 2002:** the skeleton returns permanently to the programme in Salt Lake City, having been included in the Saint Moritz editions of 1928 and 1948, when there was a specific track for this discipline.
- 2006:** four new events are included in the Turin Games for both men and women in snowboarding (snowboard cross), biathlon (mass start) and speed skating (team pursuit). Cross country (team sprint).

The International Olympic Committee is determined to continue ensuring that the Winter Games are a showcase that is representative of the winter sports practised across the world.



There is limited room for change, since new sports that require expensive infrastructures cannot be added. This limit has been imposed so that the number of potential host cities is not excessively restricted.

See table A.

The programme in Turin

Between 1924 and 2006, the Olympic Winter Games programme has grown considerably. Whereas 16 medals were awarded in six sports at the first edition in Chamonix, the 2006 Winter Games in Turin comprised 84 events in seven sports. The disciplines in which the athletes compete can be divided into four main categories: sled, ice, Alpine and Nordic disciplines.

Compared to the Salt Lake City Games in 2002, eight new events were included in the 2006 Winter Games programme, three for men and three for women. These eight additional gold medals were awarded in snowboarding, biathlon, cross country skiing, and speed skating. In snowboarding, the snowboard cross is an event in which athletes have to follow a course comprising several sections with moguls, jumps and banked corners. The route is marked with gates which show the athletes where to go and where the obstacles are. In speed skating, the new event was the team pursuit. Following the same principle as track cycling, two teams of three athletes skate simultaneously. The team members take turns and the first to finish win the race. Turin was also host to the first ever Olympic biathlon mass start event. In this new, very spectacular event, the biathletes compete face to face, with no need for a stopwatch, since the first to finish wins the gold medal.

See table B.

Preparation of the Olympic programme

Nowadays, the Olympic Games programme is reviewed and amended, if necessary, after each edition. This task is entrusted to the Olympic Programme Commission, which comprises IOC members and representatives of the NOCs, IFs and athletes. The Commission analyses the Olympic winter programme / February 2008

programme of sports, disciplines and events included in the Olympic Games. It draws up a series of recommendations on the principles and structure of the Olympic Summer and Winter Games programmes. The Commission gives advice to the IOC Executive Board and submits reports to the IOC session, which decides whether or not sports should be included. For disciplines and events, the Executive Board takes the equivalent decisions. The Olympic Programme Commission also determines how many athletes should compete in each sport at the Games (the quotas), but the Executive Board has the responsibility to validate these choices.

Nevertheless, the inclusion of sports is still regulated by a number of conditions, which are set out in Rule 46 of the Olympic Charter under the heading "*Programme of the Olympic Games*". The difference in meaning between the terms sport, discipline and event is not always well understood. The table below explains these terms and the conditions under which they may be included in the Olympic programme. Olympic sports must also be governed by IOC recognised IFs. To be accepted, they must comply with the World Anti-Doping Code. Sports, disciplines and events which do not adopt the Code may only be included in the Games programme if they have a certain Olympic tradition and solely at the discretion of the IOC.

International Winter Sports Federations

Seven winter sports federations govern the disciplines included in the programme of the Olympic Winter Games. They are all members of the Association of the International Olympic Winter Sports Federations (AIOWF). The oldest is the International Skating Union, since figure skating was first included in the Summer Games programme. **See table C.**



Table A: Programme of the disciplines

	1924	1928	1932	1936	1948	1952	1956	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980	1984	1988	1992	1994	1998	2002	2006
Alpine skiing	-	-	-	2	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	10	10	10	10	10	10
Snowboarding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	6
Freestyle skiing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	4	4	4
Luge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Bobsleigh	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	-	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3
Skeleton	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Biathlon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	6	6	6	8	10
Cross-country skiing	2	2	2	3	3	4	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	10	10	10	12	12
Ski jumping	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
Nordic combined	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3
Short-track speed skating	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	6	6	8	8
Figure skating	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Ice hockey	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
Curling	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2
Speed skating	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	8	8	8	8	9	9	9	10	10	10	10	10	12
Military patrol	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	16	14	14	17	22	22	24	27	34	35	35	37	38	39	46	57	61	68	78	84

Discipline with women's events X

Table B: The programme in Turin

Discipline family	Disciplines	Number of men's events	Number of women's events	Number of mixed events
Sled	Bobsleigh	2	1	-
	Luge	1	1	1
	Skeleton	1	1	-
Ice	Speed skating	6	6	-
	Short-track speed skating	4	4	-
	Figure skating	1	1	2
	Curling	1	1	-
	Ice hockey	1	1	-
Nordic	Biathlon	5	5	-
	Cross-country skiing	6	6	-
	Ski jumping	3	-	-
	Nordic combined	3	-	-
Alpine	Alpine skiing	2	2	-
	Snowboarding	3	3	-
	Freestyle skiing	5	5	-
Total	15 disciplines	44	37	3



Table C: International Winter Sports Federations

Abbreviation	English Name	Year established	Number of affiliated NFs	Location of HQ
I.B.U.	International Biathlon Union	1993	62	Austria
F.I.B.T.	International Bobsleigh and Tobogganing Federation	1923	60	Switzerland
W.C.F.	World Curling Federation	1966	45	Great Britain
I.I.H.F.	International Ice Hockey Federation	1908	63	Switzerland
F.I.L.	International Luge Federation	1957	49	Austria
I.S.U.	International Skating Union	1892	77	Switzerland
F.I.S.	International Ski Federation	1924	102	Switzerland

IMPRINT

OLYMPIC PROGRAMME

February 2008

A publication of the

For further information, please contact



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

Château de Vidy,
1007 Lausanne,
Switzerland

IOC Information Centre
Tel. +41 21 621 63 18
Fax +41 21 621 67 18
Infocentre@olympic.org