



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

FACTSHEET WOMEN IN THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT

UPDATE – October 2018

MISSION

Sport is one of the most powerful platforms for promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls. As the leader of the Olympic Movement, the IOC has an important responsibility to take action when it comes to gender equality – a basic human right of profound importance and a Fundamental Principle of the Olympic Charter. The [Olympic Charter](#) states that one of the roles of the IOC is “to encourage and support the promotion of women in sport at all levels and in all structures, with a view to implementing the principle of equality of men and women” (Rule 2, paragraph 7). Its commitment extends well beyond its efforts to increase women’s participation in the Olympic Games. The IOC also recognises that gender equality is a critical component of effective sports administration and continues to support the promotion of women and girls in sport at all levels and structures.

Great progress has been made in promoting gender equality in terms of balancing the total number of athletes participating at the Games, offering leadership development, advocacy and awareness campaigns, and more recently appointing more women to leadership roles within the administration and governance.

Many Olympic Movement stakeholders have also implemented significant gender equality initiatives so that girls and women around the world are being given greater access and the opportunity to participate in sport.

Olympic Agenda 2020, the strategic roadmap for the Olympic Movement, reaffirmed the commitment and priority of gender balance, and the IOC Gender Equality Review Project with its 25 recommendations launched in March 2018 is a tangible outcome of this commitment. With an emphasis on taking action, the aim of the Project is to provide a solutions-based approach to achieving gender equality on and off the field of play, sooner, rather than later.

WOMEN IN THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Women first took part in the Olympic Games in Paris in 1900, four years after the first Olympic Games of the modern era in Athens. Despite the reticence Pierre de Coubertin, 22 women out of a total of 997 athletes competed in just five sports: tennis, sailing, croquet, equestrian and golf. But only golf and tennis had events for women only. Female participation has increased steadily since then, with women accounting for more than 45 per cent of the participants at the 2016 Games in Rio, compared with 23 per cent at the Games in 1984 and just over 13 per cent at the 1964 Games in Tokyo. In the last 20 years, the IOC has also increased the number of women’s events on the Olympic programme, in cooperation with the International Federations (IFs) and the Organising Committees. With the addition of women’s boxing, the 2012 Olympic Games in London were the first in which women competed in every sport on the Olympic programme.

At the Olympic Games in Rio in 2016, a new record of participation for women was reached with 45% female participation (5,176 women out of 11,444 athletes). Tokyo 2020 is predicted to be the most gender equal yet with female participation of 48.8% expected. Also, since 1991, all new sports wishing to be included on the Olympic programme must feature women’s events

GENDER EQUALITY AT THE YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES

The 3rd Summer Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires have truly blazed a trail with equal numbers of women and men (2,000 women and 2,000 men) competing on the Olympic stage for the first time. But this is not the only achievement, mixed-gender events have featured at the YOG since the inaugural event in Singapore in 2010. Some have now been introduced to the Olympic programme. So, while men and women compete separately in some combined team events, in several others they go head-to-head in direct competition.



INTRODUCTION OF WOMEN SPORTS

Year	Sports or disciplines
1900	Tennis, Golf
1904	Archery
1908	Tennis*, Skating
1912	Aquatics
1924	Fencing
1928	Athletics, Gymnastics
1936	Skiing
1948	Canoe
1952	Equestrian
1964	Volleyball, Luge
1976	Rowing, Basketball, Handball
1980	Hockey
1984	Shooting, Cycling
1988	Tennis*, Table Tennis, Sailing
1992	Badminton, Judo, Biathlon
1996	Football, Softball
1998	Curling, Ice Hockey
2000	Weightlifting, Modern Pentathlon, Taekwondo, Triathlon
2002	Bobsleigh
2004	Wrestling
2012	Boxing
2016	Golf*, Rugby
2018	Baseball/softball, karate, skateboard, sports climbing and surfing

* Sports which were re-introduced within the Olympic Programme.

WOMEN IN SPORTS ADMINISTRATION

While the participation of women in physical activities and the Olympic Games has steadily increased, the percentage of women in governing and administrative bodies of the Olympic Movement has remained low.

OBJECTIVES

To remedy this situation, the IOC set the following objectives: The NOCs, IFs, National Federations and sporting bodies belonging to the Olympic Movement must set the objective of reserving at least 20% of decision-making positions for women (particularly in all executive and legislative bodies). The IOC is nevertheless aware that such an objective can be attained only in successive stages. Several NOCs and IFs have already shown their willingness to work on achieving parity between men and women.

WOMEN IN THE IOC

The first two women, the Venezuelan Flor Isava-Fonseca and Finnish Pirjo Haeggman were co-opted as IOC members in 1981. As of October 2018, 32 women are active IOC members out of 102. Three women are honorary members. In 1990, for the first time in the history of the IOC, a woman, Flor Isava Fonseca, was elected to the IOC Executive Board (EB) and in 1997, another woman, Anita DeFrantz, became an IOC Vice-President (1997-2001). In 2004 Gunilla Lindberg was also elected as IOC Vice-President. Olympic champion Nawal El Moutawakel was elected as a member of the EB in 2008 and IOC Vice-President in July 2012. In 2018, four women (26.6%) are members of the Executive Board: Anita L. DeFrantz (vice-president), Gunilla Lindberg, Nicole Hoevertz and Kirsty Coventry.

More and more women are chairing IOC commissions. In 2018 it is the case for the following commissions: Women in Sport Commission, Athletes' Commission, Coordination for the 3rd Summer Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires 2018, Coordination for the 3rd Winter Youth Olympic Games 2020 Lausanne, IOC Members election. Women occupy now 30 more commission positions than last year, reflecting the IOC's commitment to improve gender equality throughout all levels of sport. In total, 42.7 per cent of the positions across the 26 IOC commissions will now be held by women – a historic high. This represents an increase of 16.8 per cent in female participation compared to 2017 and an improvement of 98 per cent since 2013.

WOMEN IN NOCS AND IFS

Women are increasingly taking leading roles within NOCs, albeit at a slower pace than female athletes are being accommodated on the competition field. Actually, 17 NOCs are headed by female presidents. A further 36 females served as secretaries general and several more as vice-presidents, deputy secretaries general, treasurers and deputy treasurers in the executive committees of the 206 NOCs. The International Sports Federations (IFs) are making efforts as well to increase the number of women on their decision-making bodies but progress is slow. There are two female



Presidents of Summer and Winter IFs and six Secretary Generals out of 35.

THE IOC WOMEN IN SPORT COMMISSION

Created in 1995, the IOC's Women and Sport Working Group served as a consultative body composed of representatives of the three constituent bodies of the Olympic Movement (the IOC, IFs and NOCs), plus an athlete representative and independent members. Chaired by Lydia Nsekera, the Working Group became a full Commission in 2004, and advises the IOC President and the EB on which policies to adopt in order to increase female participation in sport at all levels.

GENDER EQUALITY REVIEW PROJECT

In March 2017, at the joint initiative of the IOC Women in Sport and Athletes' Commissions, the IOC launched the Gender Equality Review Project with a mandate to "push gender equality globally" with "action-oriented recommendations for change". An 11-member IOC Gender Equality Working Group was established. Chaired by Marisol Casado of Spain, and including IOC Members, representatives of NOCS and of IFs from every continent, it was tasked with undertaking a comprehensive review of the state of gender equality throughout the Olympic Movement under five distinct themes: Sport, Governance, Portrayal, Funding and Human Resources. The findings of this review which were endorsed by the IOC Executive Board in February 2018, have resulted in 25 action-oriented recommendations. Each recommendation has specific actions and deadlines. The IOC is leading the implementation of all recommendations with support from IFs and NOCs. In order to truly achieve equal access and participation for women in all areas of sport, it is crucial that the Olympic Movement implements all 25 recommendations. The [IOC Gender Equality Review Project](#) is available online.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR WOMEN

The IOC has been able to address the need to further develop educational and training

programmes targeting women in sport. With this, the IOC aims to enable women to take leadership positions in the administrative structures of NOCs and National Sports Federations.

OLYMPIC SOLIDARITY PROGRAMMES

Olympic Solidarity offers a series of assistance programmes for athletes, young hopefuls, coaches and sports managers, and these benefit a growing number of women. Furthermore, a special "Women and Sport" programme was created to help more particularly the NOCs of developing countries to put in place other types of projects in the field of women and sport, such as research, national seminars or participation in meetings. This programme also serves to finance the NOCs' participation in the IOC's regional seminars.

WOMEN AND SPORT TROPHY

Every year since 2000, the [IOC "Women and Sport"](#) trophy is awarded to a person or an institution/organisation for their remarkable contribution to the development, encouragement and reinforcement of women's participation in sport and physical activity or in the administrative structures of sport. In 2018, the The Turkish Eczacıbaşı Sports Club received the IOC World Trophy. The five continental trophies were awarded as follows:

- IOC Trophy for Africa: Ms Rachel Muthoga (Kenya);
- IOC Trophy for the Americas: Ms Chandra Crawford (Canada);
- IOC Trophy for Asia: Ms Samar Nassar (Jordan);
- IOC Trophy for Europe: Ms Daina Gudzineviciute (Lithuania);
- IOC Trophy for Oceania: Ms Lauren Jackson (Australia).

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Table A: Women's participation in the Olympic Winter Games

Year	Sports	Women's Events*	Total events	% of women's events	Women participants	% of women participants
1924	1	2	16	12.5	11	4.3
1928	1	2	14	14.3	26	5.6
1932	1	2	14	14.3	21	8.3
1936	2	3	17	17.6	80	12
1948	2	5	22	22.7	77	11.5
1952	2	6	22	27.3	109	15.7
1956	2	7	24	29.2	134	17
1960	2	11	27	40.7	144	21.5
1964	3	14	34	41.2	199	18.3
1968	3	14	35	40.0	211	18.2
1972	3	14	35	40.0	205	20.5
1976	3	15	37	40.5	231	20.6
1980	3	15	38	39.5	232	21.7
1984	3	16	39	41.0	274	21.5
1988	3	19	46	41.3	301	21.2
1992	4	26	57	45.6	488	27.1
1994	4	28	61	45.9	522	30
1998	6	32	68	47.1	787	36.2
2002	7	37	78	47.4	886	36.9
2006	7	40	84	47.6	960	38.2
2010	7	41	86	47.7	1,044	40.7
2014	7	49	98	50.0	1,121	40.3
2018	7	53	102	52%	1,169	41

*: including mixed and open events

Table B: Women's participation in the Games of the Olympiad

Year	Sports	Women's Events*	Total events	% of women's events	Women participants	% of women participants
1900	2	2	95	2.1	22	2.2
1904	1	3	95	3.1	6	0.9
1908	2	4	110	3.6	37	1.8
1912	2	5	102	4.9	48	2.0
1920	2	8	156	5.1	63	2.4
1924	3	10	126	7.9	135	4.4
1928	4	14	109	12.8	277	9.6
1932	3	14	117	12.0	126	9
1936	4	15	129	11.6	331	8.3
1948	5	19	136	14.0	390	9.5
1952	6	25	149	16.8	519	10.5
1956	6	26	151	17.2	376	13.3
1960	6	29	150	19.3	611	11.4
1964	7	33	163	20.2	678	13.2
1968	7	39	172	22.7	781	14.2
1972	8	43	195	22.1	1,059	14.6
1976	11	49	198	24.7	1,260	20.7
1980	12	50	203	24.6	1,115	21.5
1984	14	62	221	28.1	1,566	23
1988	17	72	237	30.4	2,194	26.1
1992	19	86	257	33.5	2,704	28.8
1996	21	97	271	35.8	3,512	34.0
2000	25	120	300	40	4,069	38.2
2004	26	125	301	41.5	4,329	40.7
2008	26	127	302	42.1	4,637	42.4
2012	26	140	302	46.4	4,676	44.2
2016	28	145	306	47.4	5,059	45

*: including mixed events