



INTERNATIONAL  
OLYMPIC  
COMMITTEE

# FACTSHEET WOMEN IN THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT

UPDATE – June 2016

## MISSION

The IOC is committed to gender equality in sport. 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.

## 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 of the reviver of the modern Games, 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 44 per cent of the participants at the 2012 Games in London, compared with 23 per cent at the Games in 1984 in Los Angeles 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.

Also, since 1991, all new sports wishing to be included on the Olympic programme must feature women’s events

## INTRODUCTION OF WOMEN – SPORTS

YEAR	SPORTS
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

\* 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) within their structures by the end of 2005. This objective was not achieved in a certain number of NOCs. Twenty-seven NOCs (of 135 who participated in the IOC survey) have 30 per cent or more women on their Executive Board. 62 NOCs have less than 20% women on their Executive Boards and 10 NOCs still have no women on their Executive Board.

However, a first objective (having at least 10% of women in decision-making positions by December 2000) was met by more than 61% of NOCs and 52% of IFs.

The IOC is nevertheless aware that such an objective can be attained only in successive stages. A number of 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 Norwegian Pirjo Haeggman were co-opted as IOC members in 1981. As of May 2014, 24 women are active IOC members out of 106 (around 22.6%). Four women are honorary members.

In 1990, for the first time in the history of the IOC, a woman was elected on to the Executive Board (Flor Isava Fonseca), 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 from Morocco was elected as a member of the IOC Executive Board in 2008 and IOC Vice-President in July 2012. . In 2013, four women (26.6%) are members of the IOC Executive Board: Nawal El Moutawakel, Gunilla Lindberg, Claudia Bokel and Anita L. DeFrantz

More and more women are chairing IOC commissions, such as the Coordination Commissions for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Winter Youth Olympic Games in 2016 in Lillehammer, as well as the Women and Sport Commission and Athletes' Commission.

## **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, 11 NOCs are headed

by female presidents. A further 30 females served as secretaries general and several more as vice-presidents, deputy secretaries general, treasurers and deputy treasurers in the executive committees of the 204 NOCs.

The International Sports Federations (IFs) are making more effort to increase the number of women on their decision-making bodies. IOC-Recognised Federations are leading the way, with around 26 per cent of their executive boards made up of women, while Winter and Summer IFs' governing bodies are made up of around 17 per cent women

## **THE IOC WOMEN AND 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 Anita L. DeFrantz, the Working Group became a full Commission in 2004, and advises the IOC President and the Executive Board on which policies to adopt in order to increase female participation in sport at all levels.

## **INFORMATION SEMINARS**

Through its Commission, the IOC has put in place a programme of regional and continental seminars for female administrators, coaches, officials, athletes or sports journalists involved in the national or international sports movement.

## **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.

## WORLD CONFERENCE

Every four years, the IOC organises a world conference on women and sport, where the primary objective is to analyse the progress made in this field within the Olympic Movement and to define a prioritised plan of action to improve and increase the participation of women in sport.

The fifth edition was held in Los Angeles, USA, in February 2012 with over 700 delegates from 121 countries in attendance.

The delegates unanimously approved “The Los Angeles Declaration”, a series of recommendations aimed at promoting gender equality in sport and using sport as a tool to improve the lives of women around the world.

The Declaration focused on two main themes:

- The need to bring more women into management and leadership roles
- The need to increase collaboration and partnerships, especially with UN organisations, to promote gender equality.

[Read the Los Angeles Declaration here](#)

## WOMEN AND SPORT TROPHY

Every year 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.

The New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC) made history at the 2015 IOC Women in Sport Awards ceremony, when it won the IOC World Trophy. The New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC) is leading by example in its efforts to

promote women in sport, with strong female representation on its board, within senior management and on its Olympic Games team. The five continental trophies were awarded as follows

- IOC Trophy for Africa: Mervat Hassan (Egypt)
- IOC Trophy for the Americas: Sara Rosario (Puerto Rico)
- IOC Trophy for Asia: Cheikha Hayat Bint Abdulaziz Al-Khalifa (Bahrain)
- IOC Trophy for Europe: Stavroula Kozompoli (Greece)
- IOC Trophy for Oceania: Cathy Freeman (Australia)

In 2014 The World Trophy was awarded to Meriem Cherni Mizouni of Tunisia, a pioneer of women’s and girls’ sport in her country. The five continental trophies were awarded to:

- IOC Trophy for Africa: Aya Mahmoud Medany (Egypt)
- IOC Trophy for the Americas: Nancy Hogshead-Makar (USA)
- IOC Trophy for Asia: Cheikha Naïma Al-Sabah (Kuwait)
- IOC Trophy for Europe: Anastasia Davydova (Russia)
- IOC Trophy for Oceania: Siân Mulholland (Australia)

The winners of the 2013 Women and Sport Awards were recognised for their roles in getting more women involved in sport as athletes, administrators, leaders and as members of the media.

Qatari Ahlam Salem Mubarak Al Mana, a pioneer for women’s and girls’ sports rights in her country, was presented with the 2013 World Trophy, while the five continental trophies were awarded as follows:

- IOC Trophy for Africa: Dr Djènè Saran Camara (Guinea)
- IOC Trophy for the Americas: Marlene Bjornsrud (USA)
- IOC Trophy for Asia: Boossaba Yodbangtoey (Thailand)
- IOC Trophy for Europe: Ona Baboniene (Lithuania)
- IOC Trophy for Oceania: Catherine Alice Wong (Fiji)



**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	~1120	40.3

\*: including mixed 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



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<b>1992</b>	19	86	257	33.5	2,704	28.8
<b>1996</b>	21	97	271	35.8	3,512	34.0
<b>2000</b>	25	120	300	40	4,069	38.2
<b>2004</b>	26	125	301	41.5	4,329	40.7
<b>2008</b>	26	127	302	42.1	4,637	42.4
<b>2012</b>	26	140	302	46.4	4,676	44.2
<b>2016</b>	28	145	306	47.4	~4700	~45

\*: including mixed events

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