Looking forward to The World Games 2021 in Birmingham, USA

theworldgames.org
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports &amp; Disciplines</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWG in Numbers</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Coverage</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foreword

The World Games are coming home. 40 years after the premiere in Santa Clara, California, in 1981, the USA will once again host our multi-sport event. We are looking forward to the southern hospitality in Birmingham, Alabama.

In 2021 we are not celebrating an anniversary alone. We are also setting an example for the future. For the first time we will have para sports in our programme. Wheelchair Rugby is represented as invitational sports. What is important to us is that they are an integrated part of the ten days of competition. The World Games thus represent the diversity of sport in every respect and once again our quality will be raised to the next level. In the decades since the premiere we have achieved a lot. 15 sports were on the programme in Santa Clara. There will be 30 in Birmingham. In 1981, only the local TV stations reported on the competitions. In 2021, as in 2017 the competitions can be seen worldwide. My thanks go to our member federations, the host cities and many other partners such as the IOC. Together we have been able to make this progress possible. I would like to refer to our new claim: “We are The World Games.” Above all, however, my thanks go to the athletes. Their outstanding achievements and enthusiasm characterise this multi-sport event. The World Games are the athletes’ games. We are proud of this attitude. Right now we are on our way to prepare the centre-stage for the athletes once again.

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FROM 15 TO 25 JULY 2021 WHEN WE CELEBRATE THE ELEVENTH EDITION OF THE WORLD GAMES IN BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA.

José Perurena
IWGA President
Where the world will be **won**.

**Principles**

The World Games take place every four years in the year following the Olympic Summer Games. Within ten competition days, they showcase 30+ sports. About 3,600 athletes from more than 100 countries strive for gold in around 200 medal events. The organizer is the International World Games Association (IWGA), founded in 1980.

Four principles characterize The World Games:

1. **Simply the best**
   
   Only the top athletes or teams in every sport or discipline qualify for participation and may compete in their sport. In general, the eight best athletes or the eight respectively best teams in a sport are allowed to “go for gold” in The World Games. This ensures top-level competitions right from the start.

2. **The Athletes’ Games**
   
   The athletes take center stage. The World Games are their games, giving them the opportunity to perform at the highest level in their sports and disciplines. For many athletes there is no higher goal to achieve in their career than to be The World Games Champion.

3. **The IFs run the show**
   
   The International World Games Association in cooperation with the Host City set the stage for the multi-sport event. The competitions themselves are organized by the International Federations. In contrast to other sports events, the national sports authorities do not nominate the participating athletes. The qualification is also done by the International Federations.

4. **Using existing venues**
   
   The Host City is encouraged to use existing sport infrastructure for the event. This means that the investment required to renovate or adjust the venues to the needs of the specific sports is manageable. It avoids creating white elephants, venues which are no longer in use after the event. On the contrary, this practice makes it more feasible to use infrastructure in a sustainable way.
History

The origins of The World Games go back to the founding meeting on 21 May 1980. Some international Sports Federations decided to pursue the idea of a multi-sport event—not in competition with the Olympic Games, but as a complement to them.

The games in Lahti, Finland marked an important milestone on the way to a top-class international multi-sport event. After that 5th edition the cooperation with the IOC was established. Since then The World Games have been held under the patronage of the IOC. The IWGA itself is recognized by the IOC. Another benchmark was reached in 2005. In Duisburg the athletes’ parade was by nations for the first time, as they entered the stadium for the Opening Ceremony, preceded by their national flags. After taking place in Asia for the first time in 2001, The World Games 2013 in Cali made their debut on the South American continent. In 2016, the IOC and the IWGA agreed in a Memorandum of Understanding on closer cooperation for the future. In 2017, the broadcasts by the Olympic Channel made it possible to follow the competitions on screen worldwide and took a new level with regards to awareness for the sports fans. In 2021, The World Games will return where it all began: to the USA. After exactly 40 years, Birmingham Alabama is the host city of the sixteenth edition of The World Games.
**The World Games** were a wonderful experience. It’s different to the World Championships. It’s a multi-sport event and you represent your country. Winning the Gold Medal made a dream come true.

Reza Alipourshenazandifar (IRI)

"The World Games celebrate the diversity of sports."

That’s how IOC President Thomas Bach praised the 10th edition of the multi-sport event in 2017 in Wroclaw.

This also and especially applies to the sports and disciplines in the programme, which are normally less in the limelight. The fascination of a multi-sport event also puts them in the spotlight. The World Games 2021 programme includes 30 sports. In addition, there are four invitational sports, selected by the Organizing Committee in Birmingham. Under the umbrella of The World Games, traditional sports such as Boules Sports, Tug of War or Sumo find their place, as do newer sports such as Roller Sports, Sport Climbing or Wakeboarding. It is crucial to present the diversity of sport together and at the same outstanding level.

There is one rule that must be observed: Disciplines that are held at The World Games must not be on the programme of the Olympic Games. A series of disciplines, performed at The World Games in the past, are now in the Olympics. The World Games can be described as a springboard to the Olympics.
REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

3,600 Athletes will take part in The World Games 2021. The guidelines provide for an almost balanced distribution of female and male athletes.

100+ Nations will send their representatives to the 11th edition of The World Games in 2021.

2M Spectators Since the beginning of the new millennium two million spectators have watched the competitions of The World Games live and on site.

1,300 Media representatives covered The World Games 2017 in Wroclaw, Poland.

THE WORLD GAMES
WROCŁAW 2017
Media coverage

In 2017 sport fans all over the world could watch the competitions of the event. Since 1981 the media coverage of the multi-sport event has increased. There were 300 media representatives covering the premiere. In 2017 in Wroclaw 1,357 accredited media personnel spread the news about the event all over the world. 26 TV broadcasters aired nearly 2,000 hours of content.

Moreover: The Olympic Channel showed live coverage of TWG 2017. The coverage generated 279,000 plays of 158 videos. It was the first time that sport fans all over the world could watch the competitions of the event. Part of the media strategy is the development of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to raise the interest of sport fans.

Broadcast time by region

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<tr>
<th>Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>11:00:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1375:38:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa &amp; Middle East</td>
<td>196:40:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia/Pacific</td>
<td>335:35:07</td>
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26 TV broadcasters aired nearly 2,000 hours of content.
You can’t raise the bar all by yourself

**IOC/NOC**

A Memorandum of Understanding, signed in 2016, establishes the partnership between the International World Games Association and the International Olympic Committee. It underlines the closer cooperation which was set out in the Olympic Agenda 2020. The IOC agrees to grant patronage to Organising Committees of The World Games and to provide technical assistance. As part of this agreement the IOC encourages the National Olympic Committees to support The World Games.

**Swiss Timing/Tissot**

Swiss Timing has been the official timing and result service provider of The World Games. The Swiss company, experienced in serving the Olympics and The Commonwealth Games, provides TV Graphics for live broadcasting and highlight shows. Swiss Timing also takes care of the accreditation system and services for The World Games. The cooperation with Swiss Timing began with the 7th edition of The World Games in Duisburg, Germany.

**FICS**

The International Federation of Sports Chiropractic (FICS) provides care off the field, preparing athletes in order that they can perform at their best.

The chiropractors provide support to the IWGA, the Birmingham Organising Committee and the volunteers involved in the event as well. They have worked with The World Games since 2005, when Duisburg in Germany hosted the Games. At TWG 2017 there were 40 sports chiropractors from 13 different nations. They took care of any athlete who asked for their service. And they did it free of charge, as volunteers.

**Olympic Channel**

The good cooperation between the Olympic Channel and The World Games is an important part of the legacy of The World Games 2017 in Wroclaw, Poland.

During his opening speech at SportAccord 2018 in Bangkok, IOC President Thomas Bach explicitly mentioned this success for the Olympic Channel and described the cooperation as a best-practice example. In this spirit, the two partners are now working on successfully presenting the eleventh edition of TWG in 2021 – to a huge worldwide audience.