

OLYMPISM AND THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT





WHAT IS OLYMPISM?

A philosophy of life.

An ideal: the combination of sport, culture and education.

Olympic values.

Olympic symbol and other identifying elements.



THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT: **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

The structure of the Olympic Movement: the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the National Olympic Committees (NOCs), the International Sports Federations (IFs) and the Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOGs).



ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE GAMES

Actions on various fronts 365 days a year: Sport for All, development through sport; equal opportunities; education and culture; sport for peace, the environment and sustainable development; protecting the health of athletes; combating illegal sports betting.



HISTORICAL MILESTONES

Creation of the IOC in 1894 of Pierre de Coubertin.

The eight presidents over a century.

The IOC headquarters.



WHAT IS OLYMPISM?

Olympism is a **philosophy of life** which places **sport at the service of humanity**. This philosophy is based on the interaction of the qualities of the **body, will and mind**. Olympism is expressed through actions which link **sport** to **culture** and **education**.

This philosophy is an essential element of the Olympic Movement and the celebration of the Games. It is also what makes them unique.

The pursuit of this ideal and the other "fundamental principles of Olympism" [set out in the Olympic Charter] gives rise to a series of values, which are applicable both on the field of play and in everyday life.

The IOC has identified the following three Olympic values:

Excellence In the Olympic ideal, this value refers to giving one's best, on the field of play or in life, without measuring oneself with others, but above all aiming at reaching one's personal objectives with determination in the effort. It is not only about winning, but mainly about participating, making progress against personal goals, striving to be and to do our best in our daily lives and benefiting from the combination of a strong body, will and mind.

Friendship Men and women are at the centre of the Olympic Movement's focus encouraging the links and mutual understanding between people. This value broadly refers to building a peaceful and better world through solidarity, team spirit, joy and optimism in sport.

The Olympic Games inspire humanity to overcome political, economic, gender, racial or religious differences and forge friendships in spite of those differences. The athletes express this value by forming life-long bonds with their team-mates, as well as their opponents.

Respect In the Olympic ideal, this value represents the ethical principle that should inspire all who participate in the Olympic programmes. It includes respect for oneself and one's body, respect for one another, for rules and for the environment. It thus refers to the fair play that each athlete has to display in sport, as well as avoiding doping.

1. OG London 2012. Athletics, 5000m Men – Qualifications. Mohamed FARAH (GBR) 1st congratulates René Herrera (PHI) at the end of the race. © 2012 / International Olympic Committee (IOC) / FURLONG, Christopher

© The Olympic Museun

It was also Pierre de Coubertin who had the idea of an Olympic flag. He presented the rings and the flag in June 1914 in Paris, at the Olympic Congress. But as the First World War prevented the Games from being celebrated as planned in Berlin in 1916, it was not until 1920 at the Games in Antwerp that the flag with its five rings was flown in an Olympic stadium for the first time.



These values are powerfully conveyed at the time of the Olympic Games. However, between editions of the Games, the Olympic Movement continues to be spread through the ongoing work of the members of the Olympic family.

WHAT IS OLYMPISM?

The values and meaning of Olympism are expressed by the **Olympic symbol** (the five rings) and other identifying Olympic elements (the flame, the torch relay, the motto, the maxim, the anthem and the oaths). These make it possible to transmit a message simply and directly. They give the Olympic Movement and the Games their own identity.

It was Baron Pierre de Coubertin who revived the Games. Born in 1863, he devoted his life to the reform of education and youth in France. Fascinated by the English education system, which included sport in the teaching programme (a new idea at the time), he sought to convince his contemporaries in France that sport could be beneficial for young people. Not everyone shared this view, and so Coubertin looked for a way to make people change their views. That was when he had an idea: to revive the Olympic Games.

While this was not the first attempt to revive the Games. Coubertin brought a modern and international dimension and succeeded in re-establishing them. But for him, the Games were not an end in themselves. Rather they were part of a much broader project: education through sport.

THE OLYMPIC SYMBOL: THE FIVE RINGS

A very powerful symbol, the five rings are the **visual representation** of Olympism. It was Pierre de Coubertin himself who designed the symbol. The **five rings** represent the five continents. They are interlinked to show the universality of Olympism and how athletes from all over the world come together for the Olympic Games. On the Olympic flag, the rings appear against a white background. Combined in this way, the six colours of the flag (blue, yellow, black, green, red and white) represent all the nations. It is therefore not the case that each of the colours is associated with a particular continent. Today, the symbol is one of the most widely recognised in the world. Its use is subject to very strict rules enacted by the IOC. It is important to note that there is just one Olympic symbol. For the other identifying elements described below, other terms are needed.

1. © 2002 /Getty Images News and Sport





OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE OLYMPIC IDENTITY:

The flame and torch relay

(see "The Olympic flame and the Torch Relay"].

With the flag, the Olympic flame and torch relay are the most well-known elements of the Games.

At the modern Games, the Olympic flame is an expression of the positive values that human beings have always associated with the symbolism of fire.

The flame is lit at Olympia in Greece, recalling the Ancient Greek roots of the Olympic Games and also emphasising the link between the ancient and modern Games.

From Olympia, the flame is carried to the city hosting the Games by thousands of torchbearers. Wherever it goes, the flame announces the Olympic Games and transmits a message of peace and friendship to all those it meets along the way. It also promotes the culture and natural riches of the regions through which it passes.

The flame recalls the ancient Olympic Games, during which a sacred fire burnt on the altar of Zeus. However, the symbolism of the relay is linked not to these Games but to the torch races, or lampadedromia, held in Athens in honour of the gods associated with fire.

At the modern Olympic Games, a flame was lit for the first time in the stadium at Amsterdam, in 1928. For its part, the torch relay was not introduced until the 1936 Games in Berlin.

The motto and maxim

A motto is a phrase or a few words expressing a way of life or a code of conduct. The Olympic motto is composed of three Latin words: CITIUS-ALTIUS-FORTIUS, which mean

FASTER - HIGHER - STRONGER

These three words encourage the athletes to give their best when they compete. To better understand the motto, we can compare it with the **Olympic maxim**:

The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not winning but taking part;

the essential thing in life is not conquering but fighting well.

Taken together, the Olympic motto and maxim represent an ideal which Coubertin believed in and promoted as an important lesson for life learned from taking part in a sports activity and the Olympic Games. Giving one's

1. The Olympic Flame is passed between torches © Getty Images



best and striving for personal excellence form a laudable goal. This is a lesson which still holds true today, not just for athletes but for every one of us.

The three Latin words became the Olympic motto in 1894, when the IOC was created. Pierre de Coubertin proposed the motto, which he had borrowed from his friend **Henri Didon**, a Dominican priest who taught his pupils sport near Paris.

The idea for the maxim came later, following a sermon given by the Bishop of Pennsylvania, **Ethelbert Talbot**, during the 1908 Games in London.

The anthem and oaths

The Olympic anthem and the oaths (taken by an athlete, a referee and a coach) are part of the official protocol of the Olympic Games opening ceremonies. Those who take them are nationals of the host country, and they hold a corner of the Olympic flag as they say the words.

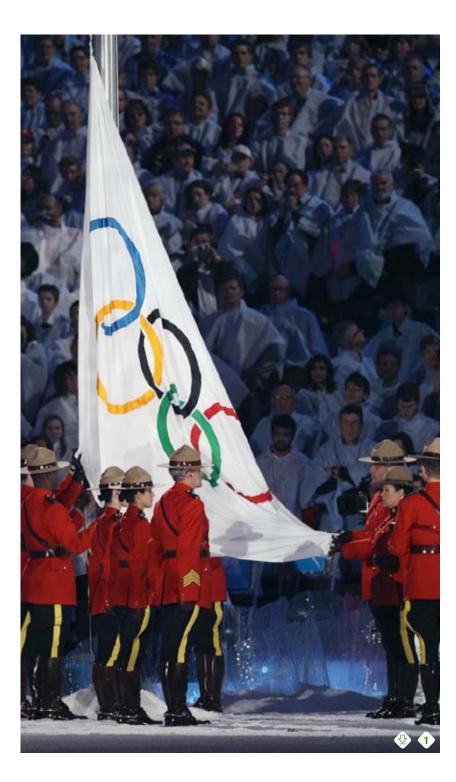
The **Olympic anthem** was composed by Spiros Samaras (music) and Kostis Palamas (words). Although played for the first time in 1896, at the first modern Games in Athens, it became the IOC's official anthem only in 1958.

Like the athletes at the ancient Games, today's Olympic **athletes** take an **oath**. The words of this oath were written by Pierre de Coubertin, and it was spoken for the first time at the 1920 Games in Antwerp. The **referees'** oath first featured at the Opening Ceremony of the Games in 1972, while the **coaches' oath** was introduced at the 2012 Games in London.

It is important to note that the oaths have been **modified over the years** to reflect the changing nature of sports competition. For example, the reference to doping was added to the athletes' oath at the 2000 Games in Sydney.

- 1. OG Los Angeles 1984, Opening Ceremony – Track and field athlete Edwin Moses is taking the oath in the name of all athletes.
- © 1984 / Los Angeles Times (entitled parties) GALVEZ, José





THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT: HOW DOES IT WORK?

Olympism is spread thanks to and by the Olympic Movement. At its head is **the IOC**, which is the supreme authority governing it. The following diagram shows how the Olympic Movement is structured:



1. OG Vancouver 2010, Closing Ceremony, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police lowers the Olympic flag. © 2010 / International Olympic Committee (IOC) / FURLONG, Christopher



The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is the supreme authority of the Olympic Movement. It holds the rights to the Olympic Games, the Olympic symbol (the five rings) and the other identifying elements of the Olympic Movement.

The IOC's main decisions (including choosing the host cities of the Games, the composition of the sports programme and electing new members) are taken during **Sessions**, the IOC's general assemblies, which are held yearly and bring together all the **115** IOC **members**. These members represent the IOC and the Olympic Movement on a volunteer basis in their countries. They are not their countries' delegates within the IOC.

The **IOC President** represents the IOC and presides over all its activities. He or she is elected in a secret ballot by the Session. In the past there were no limits, but today each President is limited to an eight-year term, and may be re-elected once for a further four-year term of office.

The **IOC** administration is placed under the responsibility of a director general, who manages it under the President's authority. Around 500 people currently work at the IOC headquarters in Lausanne, in Switzerland.

- The National Olympic Committees (NOCs) are the representatives of Olympism around the world. There are currently 204 of them:
- 53 NOCs in Africa
- 41 NOCs in America
- 44 NOCs in Asia
- 49 NOCs in Europe
- 17 NOCs in Oceania

The NOCs carry out many different functions in their respective countries, from the development of sport at all levels, to the creation of educational programmes, to the ongoing training of sports administrators. They are also responsible for **sending a delegation of athletes** to the Olympic Games and, since 2010, to the Youth Olympic Games.

The NOCs ensure that all the programmes carried out at a national level conform to the principles of the Olympic Charter.

The International Federations (IFs) are the experts in Olympic sports. Each IF governs its sport at a global level. It ensures the promotion and development of the sport and the development of the athletes who practise it, at all levels. 1. OG London 2012, Opening Ceremony – Lighting of the Olympic cauldron. © 2012 / International Olympic Committee (IOC) / HUET, John During the Olympic Games, the IFs are responsible for the practical organisation of the sports events on the programme. All the technical aspects of a sport are their responsibility: the rules, equipment, venues, judging, etc.

THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT: HOW DOES IT WORK?

Here are some examples of Olympic federations:

Summer sports

- International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF)
- International Gymnastics Federation (FIG)
- International Cycling Union (UCI)

Winter sports

- International Ski Federation (FIS)
- International Skating Union (ISU)
- International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF)
- The Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOGs) are responsible for the practical organisation of the Games. The OCOG's task is enormous. From the moment when the city is selected to host the Games, there are only seven years left to put in place all the necessary arrangements.

Based on the plans proposed in its Candidature File, the Organising Committee must create or update the competition venues, stadiums, training halls and the Olympic Village as well as provide all of the organisational infrastructure necessary for the smooth running of the Games. To do this, the OCOGs work closely with the IFs. It also has to put in place an efficient transport system and medical services for everyone, from athletes to spectators.

Another of the OCOG's missions is to create a **cultural programme**. Concerts, plays, ballets and exhibitions held leading up to and during the Olympic Games make them different from most other sports events.

During the Games, the OCOG benefits greatly from the assistance of thousands of volunteers who contribute to the success of the Games. The OCOG recruits, then trains people from the host country and also from abroad. The volunteers' activities vary widely: from transporting athletes to hospitality and administration, to give just a few examples. The talents and experience of each individual are taken into account when allocating jobs.

After the Games, the final task of the OCOG is to compile the Official Report of the Games.

The OCOG's challenge in figures! At the 2012 Olympic Games in London (Great Britain), LOCOG had to manage:

- around 10,500 athletes
- 70,000 accredited volunteers
- more than 20,000 press and other media representatives
- over 6,000 accredited staff





People often think that the IOC is responsible for organising the Olympic Games. In fact, the IOC has more of a supervisor's role, entrusting the organisation of the Games to the elected host city and the NOC of the country in which the Games will take place.

LIFECYCLE OF AN OCOG:

Candidature phase Cities submit their bid files. The IOC studies these and, at a Session, elects the city which will organise the Games.

Planning and preparation phase

THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT: HOW DOES IT WORK?

Once the city is elected, its OCOG begins planning and preparing for the Games: everything has to be ready for the day of the opening, and there is plenty to do!

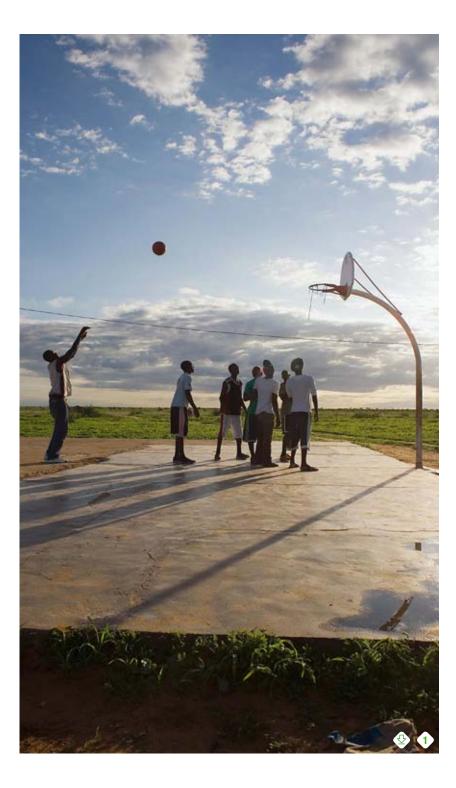
Length: 2.5 weeks

Date of the games The city hosts thousands of athletes, journalists and spectators. The whole world

Post-games dissolution The OCCOG

writes a report on the Games and concludes its activities before being dissolved a year after the Games.

1. OG Vancouver 2010. volonteers prepare the slope for the Snowboard Cross women event. © 2010 / International Olympic Committee (IOC) / KASAPOGLU, Mine



ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE GAMES

The mission of the IOC is to not only ensure the celebration of the Olympic Games, but to also promote Olympism around the world, promote sport in society as well as support sports organisations.

To achieve these objectives, a number of programmes are put in place, covering the protection of athletes' health, equality between men and women, ensuring that athletes from all over the world can train in good conditions and participate in the Games, promoting peace, education and culture, etc.

PROMOTION OF REGULAR SPORTS ACTIVITY AROUND THE WORLD

The **Sport for All** movement seeks to encourage the regular practice of sport by all people in society, regardless of sex, age, social background or economic status.

The IOC's **Sport for All Commissio**n was created in 1983. Its mission is to support initiatives and projects around the world. Each year, it offers **financial and moral support** to sport for all events organised by the NOCs on the five continents. These events cover a wide range of activities, and the main selection criterion is that they are open to everyone. To date, more than 165 NOCs have benefited from the programme.

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPORT

To help build a better world through sport, the IOC devises programmes which offer concrete answers to social inequalities and poverty.

The International Relations Commission supports numerous projects in cooperation with organisations specialising in humanitarian aid and development, as well as the NOCs.

An example of the IOC's work in this area is the "Giving is Winning" solidarity campaign organised in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) during the Summer Olympic Games. The members of the Olympic Movement are invited to donate clothing and sports equipment, which the UNHCR then distributes in various refugee camps around the world. Almost 100,000 items of clothing were collected during the 2012 Games in London alone.

1. Sports and development.
© International Olympic
Committee (IOC) / JUILLIART,
Richard

In Paris in 1900, 22 women out of 997 athletes (1.6%) competed in 2 sports: tennis and golf. In London in 2012, around 45% of the athletes were women.

What the Charter says about women...

"Today, the IOC's role 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" (Olympic Charter, Rule 2, paragraph 7)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR POOR AND RICH, WOMEN AND MEN

The Olympic Solidarity Commission and the Women and Sport Commission both work towards achieving greater equality in the world of sport.

Olympic Solidarity makes sure that all athletes have the same chance of participating in the Games. It gives scholarships to athletes so that they can access high-level sports facilities, benefit from a specialised coach or receive the appropriate medical back-up. The Commission also gives money to improve the sports infrastructure in various countries and to train sports leaders and coaches.

The **Women and Sport** Commission, which works for gender equality, was created in **1995** and became fully engaged in 2004.

Its goal is twofold:

- to make access to sport in general and the Olympic Games easier for female athletes;
- to increase the number of women in sports administration and management, by offering regional seminars to female sports administrators, coaches, technical officials and journalists focused on leadership, competences and management and by granting scholarships to young female athletes and coaches.

Since 1996, a **World conference on women and sport** has been organized every four years to analyse the progress made in the field as well as recommend new strategies and commitments.

Since 2000, six IOC "Women and Sport" trophies (one per continent, and one at world level) have been awarded every year to a person or institution for their remarkable contribution to the development of women's participation in sport or in the administrative structures of sport.

In 2004, the world trophy was awarded to the FIFA Women's World Cup; in 2006 to the Argentinean tennis player Gabriela Sabatini; and in 2012 to the Brazilian sports and education centre and programme Bradesco.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE THROUGH SPORT

Pierre de Coubertin believed that sport contributed to the harmonious and well-balanced development of the body, personality and mind. As such, interaction between sport, education and culture is encouraged by the **Commission for Culture and Olympic Education**. Its aims are to promote Olympism and Olympic ideals throughout the world and reinforce cooperation with educational institutions and NOCs with projects especially targeting young people. Through Olympic education, they should maintain

Women in the IOC

In 1981, the first woman was elected as an IOC member. In 2012, 21 women were active IOC members out of 106 (19.8%).

© The Olympic Museum

The Olympic Truce

The tradition of the Olympic Truce was established in Ancient Greece in the 9th century BC by three kings, who signed a peace treaty for the duration of the ancient Olympic Games, to guarantee safe travel and peaceful games for the athletes and the spectators.

Nowadays, the Olympic Truce is symbolised by the dove of peace, with the traditional Olympic flame in the background. It represents the IOC's ideals and its ambition to build a peaceful and better world through sport.

their interest in sport and physical activity.

In collaboration with the NOCs, the Commission organises various activities which aim to create synergies between the sports world and different areas of artistic activity such as literature, painting, sculpture and theatre. The arts festival, or cultural programme, offered during the Olympic Games is examined and approved by the Commission.

To help combat the global problem of the increasing lack of physical activity among young people and in line with the Olympic Movement's mission to promote education and development through sport the IOC launched a new **Youth Strategy in 2012**. This wide-ranging programme spans advocacy, education and activation. The aim is to help create a positive change in society, with more active and fulfilled young people.

SPORT FOR PEACE

Taking into account the global context of sport and the Olympic Games, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) decided to revive the tradition of the Olympic Truce in order to preserve, to the possible extent, the interests of the athletes and sport in general and to encourage the search for peaceful and diplomatic solutions to the conflicts in the world.

To carry out this mission, the IOC created in 2000 the International Olympic Truce Foundation (IOTF) to contribute to the search for diplomatic and non-violent solutions to conflicts and spread the idea that sport and peace are a win-win solution

To achieve its objectives, the IOTF has set up the International Olympic Truce Centre (IOTC), based in Athens, which is responsible for the implementation of projects related to the promotion of culture of peace through sport and the Olympic ideal throughout the world.

In addition, together with the United Nations, the IOC organizes an "International Forum on Sport and Peace", where NOCs, International Federations, NGOs, other international organizations and researchers speak about this subject. Several "Sport and Peace" projects have been initiated in collaboration with the United Nations, OCOGs, NOCs and other international organizations worldwide.

THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Since the early 1990s, the IOC has been working to promote sustainable development.

The main role of the IOC **Sport and Environment Commission**, created in **1995**, is to advise the Olympic Movement on policy in the areas of environmental protection and sustainable development. It also ensures

© The Olympic Museum

that the Olympic Games are held in conditions which respect the environment. The aim is to reduce or even eliminate environmental risks, in order to leave a positive Games' legacy for the host city, region and country.

To achieve (and sometimes even exceed) the IOC's objectives in these areas, the OCOGs often employ the services of sustainable development advisers.

PROTECTION OF ATHLETES' HEALTH

The Olympic Movement takes its responsibility to protect the rights, health and well-being of athletes very seriously. The **Medical and Scientific Commission** was originally created to deal with its main priority, the fight against doping; but this today is taken care of by the **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)**. The IOC's educational mission also includes **preventive** efforts to inform both elite and amateur athletes of the disastrous health consequences of doping. The Commission's other main goal is to support sports medicine, biomechanics, sporting physiology and nutrition research designed to protect the health of the athlete.

COMBATING ILLEGAL AND IRREGULAR SPORTS BETTING

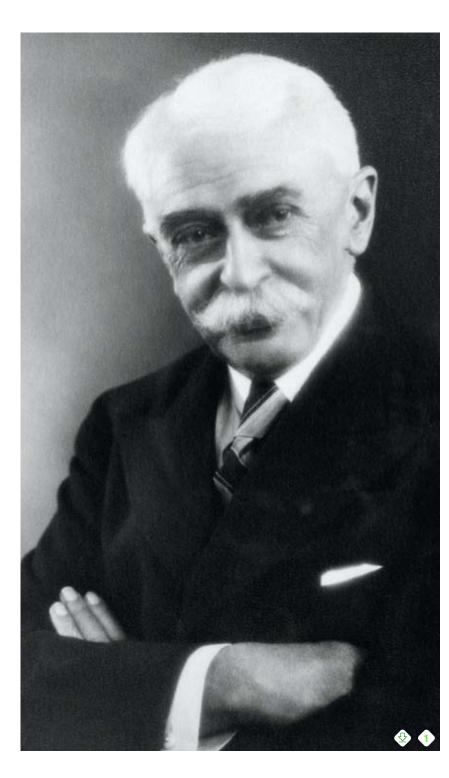
After doping, the sports movement is now facing a **new threat** to its integrity: **cheating linked to sports betting**.

To monitor sports betting on the Olympic competitions, since the 2008 Games in Beijing, the IOC has used an **alerts system** developed in cooperation with the main betting operators and various national online gambling regulators. In the area of education, the IOC has run informative and preventive **awareness programmes** for the athletes since the 2010 Youth Olympic Games in Singapore.

The IOC also encourages governments to pass legislation to enable them to combat effectively any manipulation of sports competitions and thereby help safeguard the integrity of sport.

Some examples of sustainable initiatives at the Games:

- Nagano 1998: The volunteers' uniforms were made using recycling materials.
- Athens 2004: By the end of the Games, more than a million bushes, 290,000 trees and 11 million shrubs had been planted in Athens.
- Vancouver 2010: The roof of the speed skating oval in Richmond was built using wood from trees infected by pine beetles, so that no healthy trees were cut down. Rainwater was also harvested and used for the toilets.
- London 2012: Sustainability was one of the key aspects of the London 2012 bid. Its sustainability plan was based on five key areas: climate change, waste, biodiversity, integration and a healthy lifestyle.



HISTORICAL MILESTONES

A HISTORIC DATE

The IOC was founded in Paris on 23 June 1894, by Baron Pierre de Coubertin. To commemorate this date, the IOC decided in 1948 to introduce an Olympic Day, a sort of "birthday" of the Olympic Movement. Originally celebrated by just nine countries, Olympic Day is now an event held all over the world. In many countries, the celebrations take the form of fun runs.

EIGHT PRESIDENTS IN OVER A CENTURY OF OLYMPISM

Contrary to popular belief, Pierre de Coubertin was not the first IOC President! The IOC's original idea was that the country in which the Games were to be held should also provide the President. It was thus a Greek (Demetrius Vikelas) who was chosen to be the first IOC President until the first Games in Athens in 1896. The idea was guickly abandoned, however, and Pierre de Coubertin not only became the second IOC President, but carried on in the role for nearly 30 years, from 1896 to 1925.

To date, the IOC has had eight presidents. The current president is Jacques Rogge.

Names of the Presidents

- Demetrius Vikelas (Greece), 1894 1896
- Pierre de Coubertin (France,) 1896 1925
- Henri de Baillet-Latour (Belgium), 1925-1942
- J. Sigfrid Edström (Sweden), 1946 1952
- Avery Brundage (USA), 1952 1972
- Lord Killanin (Ireland), 1972 1980
- Juan Antonio Samaranch (Spain), 1980 2001
- Jacques Rogge (Belgium), 2001 2013

THE IOC IN LAUSANNE

Although the city of Lausanne has never hosted the Games, it has been the headquarters of the IOC since 1915. It was Coubertin who chose this city, in the midst of the First World War.

After having occupied various buildings in Lausanne, the IOC headquarters finally found their definitive home at the Château de Vidy in 1968. This is where the President's office is situated.

In recognition of the long history that unites the IOC and Lausanne, the city received the title of Olympic Capital in 1993.

ACTIVITIES

Feel the Olympic spirit! Put together a file made up of examples from sports or situations from everyday life which illustrate the Olympic values of friendship, respect and excellence.

Next, add in some of your own sports experiences – were there times where you would have liked to act differently, or would have liked others to behave differently?

Imagine that a city/town in your country is bidding to host the Olympic Games. Why would it be the ideal place for the Olympic competitions? List the existing sports facilities. What would need to be constructed? Create a mini-candidature file including the strong points of your region.

Do a press study on the IOC. Read the newspapers for one month and collect all the articles mentioning a member of the Olympic family (the IOC, an IF, an NOC, an OCOG, etc.). Write a review, commenting on the news.

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Authors

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Services

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