
Media release

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A clear majority of the Swiss population supports its candidacy for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games 2038

A representative study carried out by the gfs.bern research institute showed that 61% of the Swiss population supports its candidacy for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games 2038. The study was commissioned by the Switzerland 2038 association and was conducted under the leadership of political scientist Lukas Golder.

61% would vote “Yes”

Within this 61%, 33% strongly backed the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games being held in Switzerland and 28% were somewhat in favour of them. On the other side, 21% of the respondents were totally against the Winter Games and 13% were somewhat dismissive of them. Just 4% of respondents were undecided.

This result shows that a clear majority are supportive of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games being held in Switzerland. At the same time, it also reveals that part of the population has not yet made a definitive decision and their opinions depend on what form the country's candidacy will take. Only 24% of those surveyed believed that Switzerland should not attempt to host the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

Ruth Wipfli Steinegger, Co-President of Switzerland 2038:

“It is a strong indicator that a clear majority of the Swiss people support the candidacy. We want to live up to this trust by formulating a responsible and credible plan.”

Graphic on voting behaviour for Switzerland 2038: www.datawrapper.de/_/DmrQu/
(embed code under “Embed”)

Candidacy receives a great deal of attention among the population

Three quarters of the respondents stated that they had heard of the Games potentially being held in Switzerland. This means that the topic is already on people's minds and has entered public discourse many years before a potential staging of the Games.

A large number of people know that the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games are being planned to be held decentrally and are set to take place in various locations around Switzerland. However, some of the other crucial points of the candidacy, such as the financial aspects and the fact that the Games will rely on the existing infrastructure, are not yet as well known among the population.

The study also shows that there is a great deal of interest in elite and professional winter sports, with 77% of the respondents having followed the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Game 2026 in Milano Cortina.

Strong arguments backing the candidacy

The study confirms that the main arguments for the country to put itself forward as a candidate are widely supported by the Swiss population. A very large majority (79%) is confident that Switzerland possesses the necessary infrastructure and a capable mobility network to successfully host a major international event. Likewise, the decentralised staging is considered a strength, as it would build on the existing structures and experiences with international events (74% agreement).

Some 70% of the respondents also believe that the Games would create social added value. The Games are perceived as an opportunity to improve cohesion within Switzerland and bring the different language regions closer together.

The argument that it would support the promotion of young talented athletes is also being very well received. A strong majority of 74% of those surveyed are of the view that the Olympic and Paralympic Games could motivate young athletes. Some 20% even stated that this is the main reason for them for Switzerland to host the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

Several elements of all of the arguments in favour that are set out in the study are consistent with the feedback received during the consultation procedure conducted by the Swiss federal government, e.g. with respect to the infrastructure, societal benefits and the promotion of sport.

Frédéric Favre, CEO of Switzerland 2038:

"Switzerland has everything it needs to organise a sustainable and uniting Winter Games. By holding the Games across the country, we will make use of existing infrastructures and the local expertise to ensure that the country gets behind a national project that will bring people together from different regions and language backgrounds."

Graphic on the supporting arguments for Olympic candidacy: www.datawrapper.de/EmGuY/
(embed code under “Embed”)

Criticisms provide impetus for the candidacy

In addition to the approval of the public, the study also clearly demonstrates the reservations the Swiss people have surrounding the Games. These centre on key issues that shaped previous Olympic candidacies. The difference today is that previous bids were planned in separate regions, whereas the current candidacy is the first time a Games held throughout the whole of Switzerland has been proposed.

Just over half of the respondents (57%) are anxious about the financial risks and potential deficits that the public sector would ultimately have to bear. The Switzerland 2038 association takes these concerns very seriously and has therefore been looking to implement a model from the very outset in which private funding will cover 82% of the costs to hold the Games. The public sector would also not be responsible for any potential deficit – this would be taken care of by the private sector.

Lenka Kölliker, Co-President of Switzerland 2038:

“As the CHF 200 million deficit guarantees are not to be provided by the public sector, we are seeking private funding. We are feeling strong support from the business community and are delighted that we may already achieve this goal in the next few months.”

There are also doubts as to whether the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games can be held sustainably in relation to climate change (53%). The country’s excellent transport network, particularly the public transport network, and the clear intention to only use existing infrastructure for the Games – and not to build – makes Switzerland ideally prepared to host the Winter Games in the most sustainable manner possible.

Furthermore, a minority of respondents (47%) see the decentralised model as critical, particularly in view of the question of whether the Olympic spirit will be maintained if this approach is taken. After attending the first decentralised Games to be held in history in Milano Cortina, the Switzerland 2038 association recognised this challenge and is incorporating the insights it gained into the planning process.

Generally speaking, the sense of scepticism is not directed towards Switzerland as a host venue or the concept drawn up for the candidacy. Instead, the reservations mirror the general developments and questions of financing and sustainability, which Switzerland 2038 considers as being legitimate.

Conclusion

The Switzerland 2038 association considers the findings from the study as being validation of the approach it has taken. The findings also provide valuable insights that can be utilised in the further planning of the candidacy. Working together with partners from the worlds of sport, culture, business and society, Switzerland 2038 is on track to lay the foundations for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, which will benefit the whole country.

[Final report of the study](#)

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Information for editorial teams

On 29 November 2023, the IOC decided to enter into a “privileged dialogue” phase with Switzerland as regards the organisation of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games 2038. This status means that Switzerland has until the end of 2027 to explore the issues discussed above in detail and exclusively enter into a “targeted dialogue” for the Games in 2038.

The Switzerland 2038 association was founded to manage the country’s bid and to organise the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games 2038 in Switzerland, should the bid be successful. The national Olympic winter sports associations (SWISSCURLING, Swiss Ice Hockey Federation, Swiss Ice Skating, Swiss Sliding and Swiss-Ski), Swiss Olympic and Swiss Paralympic are members of the association and are represented on the Board. The association is jointly presided by Lenka Kölliker, President of SWISS CURLING, and Ruth Wipfli Steinegger, Vice President of Swiss Olympic. Frédéric Favre, former member of the Valais cantonal council, manages the association’s day-to-day operations.