



2023

RANKING OF SPORTS CITIES

bcw



One year before the Summer Olympic Games, Paris tops the BCW 2023 Ranking of Sports Cities

In search of the city with the strongest association to sport, the sports practice of the leading global communications agency BCW is delighted to present its 2023 Ranking of Sport Cities. For the first time, this annual ranking lists the top 100 cities, an addition of 50 cities, from around the world that are perceived to be most associated with sport.

The ranking is based on the views of International Federations (IFs) and sports industry experts, combined with an analysis of the association between sport and a city in the digital space.

One year before the Summer Olympic Games, Paris jumps to the top of the ranking, just ahead of Los Angeles, the 2028 host. London secures its position in the top three, while New York sits at fourth place. Manchester joins the top five cities club. Last year's winner, Tokyo, drops seven ranks.

Strong links to the Olympics, FIFA, or major sports pro leagues remain one of the most successful strategies for cities to establish themselves as prestigious sports destinations, fueling their reputation on the global stage. It is a reputation that takes time to build and needs to be nurtured well in advance of hosting major events.

So, to what extent did this impact the perceived association of a city to sport? Our 2023 Ranking of Sports Cities has the answer!

Switzerland, July 2023



Lars Haue-Pedersen
Managing Director
BCW Global Sports Practice



RESULTS

Of the 2023 Ranking of Sports Cities

| 2023 | CITY | 22' | 21' |
|------|-------------------|-----|-----|
| 1 | Paris (FRA) | 2 | 5 |
| 2 | Los Angeles (USA) | 4 | 3 |
| 3 | London (GBR) | 3 | 2 |
| 4 | New York (USA) | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | Manchester (GBR) | 8 | 7 |
| 6 | Madrid (ESP) | 6 | 10 |
| 7 | Barcelona (ESP) | 7 | 4 |
| 8 | Tokyo (JPN) | 1 | 9 |
| 9 | Lausanne (SUI) | 9 | 6 |
| 10 | Budapest (HUN) | 13 | 18 |
| 11 | Doha (QAT) | 19 | 32 |
| 12 | Milan (ITA) | 12 | 15 |
| 13 | Munich (GER) | 11 | 8 |
| 14 | Chicago (USA) | 21 | 13 |
| 15 | Brisbane (AUS) | - | - |
| 16 | Miami (USA) | - | - |
| 17 | Washington (USA) | - | - |
| 18 | Mexico City (MEX) | - | - |
| 19 | Dubai (UAE) | 30 | 23 |
| 20 | Liverpool (GBR) | - | - |
| 21 | Abu Dhabi (UAE) | 25 | - |
| 22 | Boston (USA) | 20 | 19 |
| 23 | Melbourne (AUS) | 10 | 11 |
| 24 | Beijing (CHN) | 14 | 14 |
| 25 | Rome (ITA) | 15 | 21 |

| 2023 | CITY | 22' | 21' |
|------|---------------------|-----|-----|
| 26 | Berlin (GER) | 17 | 12 |
| 27 | Toronto (CAN) | 16 | 20 |
| 28 | Las Vegas (USA) | - | - |
| 29 | Baku (AZE) | 32 | 47 |
| 30 | Glasgow (GBR) | 23 | 26 |
| 31 | Houston (USA) | - | - |
| 32 | Philadelphia (USA) | - | - |
| 33 | Birmingham (GBR) | 34 | - |
| 34 | Dallas (USA) | 24 | 22 |
| 35 | Atlanta (USA) | 18 | 25 |
| 36 | Singapore (SIN) | 43 | 41 |
| 37 | Copenhagen (DEN) | 35 | 42 |
| 38 | Edmonton (CAN) | 41 | 33 |
| 39 | Detroit (USA) | - | - |
| 40 | Amsterdam (NED) | 29 | 39 |
| 41 | Chengdu (CHN) | - | - |
| 42 | Tampere (FIN) | - | - |
| 43 | Montreal (CAN) | 28 | 24 |
| 44 | Sydney (AUS) | 22 | 16 |
| 45 | Vancouver (CAN) | 31 | 17 |
| 46 | Belgrade (SRB) | - | - |
| 47 | Denver (USA) | - | - |
| 48 | Turin (ITA) | 33 | 38 |
| 49 | Cleveland (USA) | - | - |
| 50 | San Francisco (USA) | 36 | 28 |

RESULTS - CONT'D

Of the 2023 Ranking of Sports Cities

| 2023 | CITY | 22' | 21' | 2023 | CITY | 22' | 21' |
|------|-------------------------|-----|-----|------|--------------------|-----|-----|
| 51 | Hamburg (GER) | - | - | 76 | Dakar (SEN) | - | - |
| 52 | Istanbul (TUR) | 27 | 40 | 77 | Buenos Aires (ARG) | 39 | 44 |
| 53 | Innsbruck (AUT) | - | - | 78 | Helsinki (FIN) | - | - |
| 54 | Colorado Springs (USA) | - | - | 79 | Cairo (EGY) | - | - |
| 55 | Shanghai (CHN) | - | - | 80 | Pyeongchang (KOR) | 47 | 37 |
| 56 | Indianapolis (USA) | 46 | 29 | 81 | Guangzhou (CHN) | - | - |
| 57 | Athens (GRC) | - | - | 82 | Antalya (TUR) | - | - |
| 58 | Oslo (NOR) | - | - | 83 | Lisbon (POR) | - | - |
| 59 | Marseille (FRA) | 48 | 46 | 84 | Cali (COL) | - | - |
| 60 | Gothenburg (SWE) | - | - | 85 | Ottawa (CAN) | - | - |
| 61 | Hong Kong (HKG) | - | - | 86 | Gold Coast (AUS) | 26 | 35 |
| 62 | Cape Town (RSA) | - | - | 87 | Kuala Lumpur (MYS) | - | - |
| 63 | Salt Lake City (USA) | 38 | 30 | 88 | New Delhi (IND) | - | - |
| 64 | Stockholm (SWE) | 37 | 34 | 89 | Sapporo (JPN) | - | - |
| 65 | Riyadh (KSA) | - | - | 90 | Lagos (NGR) | - | - |
| 66 | Auckland (NZL) | - | - | 91 | Jakarta (INA) | - | - |
| 67 | Jeddah (KSA) | 49 | - | 92 | Guadalajara (MEX) | - | - |
| 68 | Mumbai (IND) | - | - | 93 | Bangkok (THA) | - | - |
| 69 | Lima (PER) | - | - | 94 | Rotterdam (NED) | - | - |
| 70 | Lillehammer (NOR) | - | - | 95 | Johannesburg (RSA) | - | - |
| 71 | Zurich (SUI) | - | - | 96 | Hangzhou (CHN) | - | - |
| 72 | Seoul (KOR) | 44 | 43 | 97 | Kigali (RWA) | - | - |
| 73 | Santiago de Chile (CHL) | - | - | 98 | Aarhus (DEN) | - | - |
| 74 | Rio de Janeiro (BRA) | 45 | 27 | 99 | Tallinn (EST) | - | - |
| 75 | Calgary (CAN) | 42 | 31 | 100 | Gwangju (KOR) | - | - |

With each edition of the Ranking, the five lowest ranked cities drop off the list and the top five non-listed cities named by the survey respondents are added. New cities that will be added to the 2024 edition of the Ranking are:

Cortina d'Ampezzo (ITA)

Warsaw (POL)

Quebec City (CAN)

Rabat (MAR)

Edinburgh (GBR)



KEY LEARNINGS

From the results of the 2023 Ranking of Sports Cities

1 THE BIG BRAND CONNECTION

Forging partnerships with sports giants is the ultimate game-changer. By aligning themselves with renowned brands such as the Olympics, FIFA, and major professional leagues, cities have a powerful platform to captivate the world's attention and build their reputation as prestigious sports cities.

Paris (Rank 1), Los Angeles (Rank 2), London (Rank 3), and Tokyo (Rank 8) are recent or upcoming hosts of the Olympic Games. Cities like New York (Rank 4), home to the iconic Yankees, and Manchester (Rank 5) with its renowned football clubs, exemplify how strong sports franchises can fuel a city's position as an internationally perceived strong sports city.

Renowned sports brands possess the ability to create a magnetic pull. They not only contribute to a city's sporting heritage but also become an integral part of its cultural fabric, igniting pride and enthusiasm among residents and attracting visitors from far and wide.

2 WINNING THE GAME BEFORE IT BEGINS

The path to victory lies in the ability of cities to seize the moment before major events, rather than after. The anticipation, excitement, and preparation leading up to the event are crucial in capturing the world's attention and establishing a city's prominence.

Paris ranks first in the 2023 Sports Cities Ranking despite not yet hosting the Olympic Games. Similarly, Brisbane's impressive debut in 15th position demonstrates the value of being included in the top rankings a remarkable nine years before the Games are scheduled to take place.

However, maintaining a prominent position requires continuous effort and innovation, as exemplified by Tokyo's drop of seven ranks within a year or Rio de Janeiro which now ranks 74. To keep the magic of hosting major events alive, cities need to actively evolve and adapt their hosting strategies in order to identify what comes next.

3 IT'S A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT

Building a reputation as a top sports city isn't a sprint; it's a marathon. The cities that reign supreme in the rankings are those that embarked on this journey long ago, integrating sports into their strategies and culture. There are no quick fixes or shortcuts to success.

Only a handful of relatively new players in the game rank in the top 25 cities. Doha (Rank 11), Dubai (Rank 19), and Abu Dhabi (Rank 21) have managed to establish themselves in a relatively short period of time. What sets them apart? They possess strong ambitions to host major international events and have been vocal in demonstrating their readiness and capability to make their mark in the world of sports.



METHODOLOGY

Of the 2023 Ranking of Sports Cities

The 2023 Ranking of Sports Cities ranks the top 100 cities that are most strongly associated with sport from around the world based on a combination of perception-based analysis and in-depth quantitative analysis.

More precisely, it focuses on the views of International Federation Presidents, Secretaries General, sports industry experts (such as Heads of Events) and more than 300 sports media representatives from around the world.

In addition, an in-depth analysis of the association between sport and a city in the digital space was conducted using the social media analytics tool Brandwatch. The analysis consists of the total number of mentions of the word “sport” associated with the name of the city on social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, as well as Reddit, blogs and websites. The search terms used in the analysis are in French, Spanish and German, in addition to English, for the spelling of the term “sport” and the cities’ names.

With the intention to illustrate the undeniable power and importance of being digitally present, the results of the digital analysis (0.50) were weighted higher compared to the opinions of International Sports Federations (0.25) and media representatives (0.25).

With the new edition of the ranking now including 100 cities, the five lowest ranked cities drop off the list, and the five top - named cities mentioned by survey respondents that are not on the list are added.

What’s new?

The ranking now includes 100 cities instead of 50. The selection of the 50 new cities was based on the events they recently hosted and the input of a panel of experts.

Instead of three, the five lowest-ranked cities have been removed from the list, and in their place, five new cities have been added based on survey responses.

No Russian / Belarusian cities have been included in the ranking.

About BCW

BCW is the global communications agency built to move people. BCW partners with clients in the B2B, consumer, corporate, crisis management, healthcare, public affairs, purpose and technology sectors to set strategic direction for all communications and create powerful and unexpected ideas that earn attention. Through an “earned-plus” offer - earned media plus paid media, creative technology, data, AI and an expanding suite of innovative capabilities - BCW moves people with power and precision to move its clients forward. BCW is a part of WPP (NYSE: WPP), a creative transformation company. For more information, visit www.bcw-global.com.

Based on extensive experiences, BCW Sports Practice launches BCW Eventus™, a tool designed for attracting, activating and assessing sporting events - and therefore supporting cities in moving up to the next level.

For more information

Should you have any questions, please contact us:



Stefany Chatelain-Cardenas
Senior Account Executive BCW
- Switzerland

stefany.cardenas@bcw-global.com

Office: +41 21 313 23 00

www.bcw-sport.com

