



# THE SPORTS POLITICAL POWER INDEX 2015-2017

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### **BACKGROUND**

The 2017 publication is the third edition of the National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark's (NOC Denmark) Sports Political Power Index, which first appeared in 2013 and again in 2015. It ranks the political influence that nations have in the field of sport. Like the 2013 and 2015 reports, NOC Denmark has again registered the executive committee members of 118 international and European sports federations. This was originally done in 2013 to provide a baseline on international influence, allowing NOC Denmark to measure the results of its international advocacy work, as outlined in its 2013 international strategy.

As the 2013 Sports Political Power Index received a highly positive response, it was decided to continue its publication on a bi-annual basis. After the baseline was published in October 2013, a digital and interactive version followed using Tableau, data analysis software that provides a digital approach to counting positions and calculating points using automatic weighting. Countries can use the digital version available on the NOC Denmark website to check their ranking.

## **PURPOSE**

The four main purposes of the Sports Political Power Index for NOC Denmark are to:

- 1.** Provide an overview of its position in international sports politics and the ability to assess its relative strengths compared to other countries
- 2.** Identify nations that hold the greatest political influence on sports in the international arena, to improve NOC Denmark's decision making and to identify countries that would be advantageous to form alliances with
- 3.** Improve and strengthen NOC Denmark's position when engaging in discussions on how to seek international influence in sports
- 4.** Identify changes in the balance of sports political power between nations

## **METHODOLOGY**

NOC Denmark strives to ensure that the findings in the current edition of the Sports Political Power Index can be compared to the 2013 and 2015 reports. As a result, the same methodology has been applied to data collection and calculating individual country scores.

Below is a description of which international sports federations are selected for inclusion, in addition to how executive committees are defined and what the criteria are for counting members. Lastly, the background for weighting and how it is applied are also explained.

## **WHICH INTERNATIONAL FEDERATIONS ARE INCLUDED?**

The Sports Political Power Index measures the international influence of countries based on their positions in 118 associations and organisations using the following criteria:

- International and European federations that the 61 federations in NOC Denmark are members of
- International and European federations representing an Olympic sport at the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Congress in September 2013
- Members of the Association of IOC Recognised International Sport Federation (ARISF)
- IOC, the European Olympic Committees (EOC) and the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC)

This index grew out of the interest of NOC Denmark and its 61 national sports federations, but every effort has been made to avoid a Denmark-centric approach. Every Olympic sport is represented, as are all members of ARISF, which represents 34 sports and has achieved a sustained dialogue with the IOC through membership. Their members are also a meaningful representation of the major international sports.

In addition to international sports federations, the index also includes IOC members and the executive boards of the IOC, EOC and ANOC. The Olympic Games are by far the biggest sporting event, which is why the IOC plays a defining role in shaping the framework for international sports activities, including funding, media exposure and political impact. Consequently, the IOC is included in this index despite its lack of a federal structure.

The following international federations representing sports organised in the Danish NOC are included but are not on the Olympic programme or a member of ARISF: International Powerlifting Federation, World Minigolf Sport Federation, World Darts Federation and World Association of Kickboxing Organizations.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARDS**

Executive boards hold the basic power in international and European federations, making them a relevant factor when measuring a country's political power in sports. This report lists the nationality of board members and weights their influence, as explained below. The two criteria used to select them were that they had to be: 1) a member of the executive board or highest governing body of the federation and 2) entitled to vote in said body.

IOC members are assumed to have the ability to influence international sports policy, and their nationalities are listed in the ranking. Likewise, the nationality of executive board members and the 119 presidents are also shown.

Most of the boards selected for the federations concerned are denoted as *executive boards* or *executive committees*. When official documents on a federation's website do not clearly state this information, e.g. if honorary members or the secretary general is entitled to vote, some of the federations have been contacted. Minor deviations may be due to the lack of clarity in the rules of

some federations. These criteria led to the inclusion of 1,673 people in the ranking. The data collection took place in September and October 2017 and from August to October 2015 for the second report and from May to July 2013 for the first report.

## WEIGHTING OF INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCE BASED ON INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION

To create a realistic picture of the relative power of a country in international sport, this report recognises that having an IOC member is of greater value than having an executive board member in a small European sports federation. To produce a relevant ranking of the influence of countries, the Sports Political Power Index operates with a weighting scale for international positions, but the exact weighting will always be open to judgment. A more accurate assessment requires qualitative studies of all international federations and an analysis of their supposed influence as indicated by the international representation.

However, in preparing this study, NOC Denmark decided to use the following weighting system to analyse the data collected.

**Table 1. Weighting of positions in international sports\***

Position	Weighting (1-10)
President of the IOC	Factor 10
Member of the IOC Executive Board	Factor 2
President of an international Olympic federation	Factor 8
President of the EOC	Factor 7
Member of the IOC	Factor 6
Member of an international Olympic federation	Factor 6
Member of the EOC	Factor 5
President of an Olympic European federation	Factor 5
President of a non-Olympic international federation	Factor 4
Member of an Olympic European federation	Factor 3
Member of a non-Olympic international federation	Factor 2
President of a non-Olympic European federation	Factor 2
Member of a non-Olympic European federation	Factor 1
President of ANOC	Factor 7
Member of ANOC	Factor 6
President of FIFA	Factor 9
Member of FIFA	Factor 7
President of UEFA	Factor 6
Member of UEFA	Factor 4

\*See list of abbreviations at the back of the report.

The following criteria were applied to the weighting process:

1. Due to the assumption that federations with Olympic status have more power than non-Olympic ones regarding funding and media exposure, the former are weighted higher
2. Due to the assumption that the greater the economic turnover, the more the influence gained, international federations are weighted higher than European federations
3. Due to the assumption that media-related interest is greater in international federations than European ones, and that more media interest indicates greater power, international federations are weighted higher
4. As international federations represent more active members than European federations, the former are weighted higher
5. Due to the assumption that international federations have a greater political impact than European ones, the former are weighted higher

Readers are encouraged to actively debate the weighting, which should not be seen as infallible but rather as a tool that allows the estimation of a nation's power, providing a quantitative basis to qualify the discussion of political power in sports.

## **METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

A precise repetition of the data collection process used in 2013 was complicated by the fact that the rules applied then were difficult to follow in 2015 and 2017, primarily due to two circumstances:

- The number of executive committee members in some federations has changed; for example, the World Karate Federation now has four additional executive board members
- The International Golf Federation and World Rugby are now Olympic federations

Conclusions based on changes that occurred between the 2013 report and the present one should not be drawn based on a few points won or lost, though the above circumstances should be kept in mind.

## **RESULTS**

The study is divided into three main tracks that comprise a comparison of the:



- European nations represented in the 118 European and international federations (including IOC, EOC and ANOC)
- Representation of nations in international federations (including IOC and ANOC) – not the European federations
- Representation of nations in the role of secretary generals in international federations

In other words, as only European nations are represented in European federations, points from European federations can only be used to compare European nations. When compared with non-European nations, only points from international positions are used.

Below are the results divided into thematic sections. If more data are needed please contact the authors.

## DENMARK

In 2017 Denmark had 34 European and international posts and 111 points, compared to 28 and 96, respectively, in 2015, advancing two positions in the European ranking and four in the international ranking. The 34 European and international posts comprise:

- 2 presidents of an international Olympic federation
- 2 IOC members
- 3 executive committee members of international Olympic federations
- 13 executive committee members of Olympic European federations
- 8 executive committee members of non-Olympic international federations
- 5 executive committee members of non-Olympic European federations
- 1 executive committee member of the EOC

*Table 2. Denmark's European and international ranking*

	European rank (+/-)	Total points (+/-)	Total posts	International rank (+/-)	International points (+/-)
Denmark	10 (+2)	111 (+15)	24	24 (+4)	62 (+14)

## THE EUROPEAN POWER INDEX

The same five countries: Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom (UK), France and Germany still dominate the top-five spots in the 2017 edition of the European Power Index, just as they did in 2015. Russia, however, has leapt from fifth place to a joint second place with the UK, while France went from third to fourth and Germany from fourth to fifth. Fourteen points divide first and fifth place, which is more than in 2015 (10 points). The gap to enter the top five has widened from 20 points between fifth and sixth place in 2015 to 64 in 2017.

Four of the top five nations have all seen a decline in points (Italy, the UK, France and Germany), which is also the case for other traditionally powerful Western European countries. This might be explained by a shift of power away from Europe towards emerging nations in Asia, Latin America and, to some extent, Africa. This trend, however, might also be explained by an shift developing in Europe, where 11 out of the 18 European countries that have increased their score are former Eastern Bloc countries.

*Table 3. Comparison of the representation of European countries in international and European federations 2015- 2017*

	Country	Points (+/-)	European rank +/-	Points per capita in mill.
1	Italy	259 (-30)	0	4.3
2	United Kingdom	252 (-36)	0	3.8
2	Russia	252 (+9)	+2	1.7
4	France	248 (-37)	-1	3.7
5	Germany	245 (-34)	-1	3.0
6	Spain	181 (-42)	0	3.9
7	Switzerland	152 (-17)	0	18.0
8	Netherlands	140 (-5)	+1	8.2
9	Sweden	128 (-4)	+1	12.7
10	Denmark	110 (+15)	+2	19.3
11	Turkey	101 (-45)	-3	1.3
12	Norway	94 (+9)	+2	17.8
13	Hungary	92 (+13)	+2	9.4
14	Belgium	89 (-29)	-3	7.8
15	Finland	85 (+12)	+1	15.4
16	Greece	76 (-13)	-3	7.0
17	Austria	72 (+16)	+3	8.2
17	Poland	72 (-4)	-2	1.8

<b>19</b>	<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>66 [-3]</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>6.2</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Slovenia</b>	<b>61 [+14]</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>29.5</b>

Now that the Sports Political Power Index has been compiled for the third time, it is possible to draw some long-term conclusions based on the data. The changes that have occurred in the ranking among the top 20 nations paint a clear picture, with the top two (Italy and the UK) holding on to their ranking despite a large drop in points. The countries that have experienced the greatest increase in points are: Slovenia, Greece, Denmark, Russia and Norway, while the Czech Republic, Poland, Belgium and Turkey experienced the largest drop. From 2013 to 2017 Denmark (+28), Belarus (+20) and Montenegro (+13) saw the largest growth in points, while Montenegro (+433%), Georgia (+400%) and Belarus (+143%) experienced the largest percentage in growth.

**Table 4. Comparison of the representation of European countries in international and European federations 2013- 2017**

	<b>Country</b>	<b>Points (+/-)</b>	<b>European rank +/-</b>	<b>Points per capita in mill.</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>259 [-49]</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4..3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>252 [-43]</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3.8</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Russia</b>	<b>252 [+5]</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>248 [-14]</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>245 [-11]</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>181 [-49]</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Switzerland</b>	<b>152 [-47]</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18.0</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Netherlands</b>	<b>140 [+5]</b>	<b>+1</b>	<b>8.2</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>128 [-6]</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12.7</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>110 [+28]</b>	<b>+3</b>	<b>19.3</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>101 [-7]</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Norway</b>	<b>94 [+12]</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>17.8</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Hungary</b>	<b>92 [+5]</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>9.4</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Belgium</b>	<b>89 [-17]</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>7.8</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Finland</b>	<b>85 [+5]</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>15.4</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>76 [-1]</b>	<b>+3</b>	<b>7.0</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Austria</b>	<b>72 [-9]</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>8.2</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>72 [-12]</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>66 [-14]</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>6.2</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Slovenia</b>	<b>61 [+12]</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>29.5</b>

## THE INTERNATIONAL POWER INDEX

The International Power Index uses the same weighting system as the European Power Index, except that the ranking only includes roles in international federations when calculating each nation's ranking. Still ranked first in the world, the USA is losing points compared to 2015 (-20 points) and 2013 (-14 points). Interestingly, despite the political turmoil Russia faced in 2016 and 2017, it still managed to improve its position compared to 2015 (+5) and 2013 (+3). At the same time, Japan moved up five positions compared to 2015 and seven compared to 2013. It will be interesting to see if Japan has been able to continue this trend when the 2019 report is published, and if it will be able to close the gap at the top of the international ranking. Japan is also among the countries that have raised their total number of points (+20) the most since 2015, surpassed only by Argentina (+42 points), and tied with Finland (+20 points).

**Table 5. Comparison of the representation of all countries in international federations 2015-2017**

	Country	Points (+/-)	Rank +/-
1	United States	289 (-20)	0
2	Italy	185 (-11)	+2
2	Russia	185 (+2)	+5
4	France	182 (-29)	-2
5	United Kingdom	175 (-25)	-2
6	Germany	173 (-12)	-1
7	Japan	153 (+20)	+5
8	Canada	151 (-33)	-3
9	Australia	144 (-6)	+1
10	Spain	142 (-41)	-2
11	China	141 (-25)	-2
12	Switzerland	119 (-26)	-1
13	New Zealand	112 (+14)	+1
14	Netherlands	96 (+8)	+3
15	South Korea	93 (-23)	-2
16	Argentina	92 (+42)	+9
17	Egypt	91 (-6)	-2
18	Sweden	88 (0)	-1
19	Finland	70 (+20)	+6

20	Brazil	69 (-14)	+1
21	Mexico	64 (-20)	-1
21	Norway	64 (+14)	+4
23	Hungary	63 (+11)	0
24	Belgium	62 (-25)	-4
24	Denmark	62 (+14)	+4
26	Morocco	60 (+12)	+2
26	South Africa	60 (+18)	+9

An examination of the ranking and long-term trends from 2013-2017 shows that Morocco (+15) and Denmark (+12) are the two countries toward the top of the ranking that have risen the most. Again, Japan stands out as one of the high jumpers, having scored the highest point increase (+53) since 2013, followed by Columbia (+31).

**Table 6. Comparison of representation of all countries in international federations 2013-2017**

	Country	Points (+/-)	Rank +/-
1	United States	289 (-14)	0
2	Italy	185 (-25)	0
2	Russia	185 (+2)	+3
4	France	182 (-15)	0
5	United Kingdom	175 (-33)	-2
6	Germany	173 (+16)	+3
7	Japan	153 (+53)	+7
8	Canada	151 (+19)	+3
9	Australia	144 (-32)	-1
10	Spain	142 (-47)	-4
11	China	141 (-6)	-1
12	Switzerland	119 (-58)	-5
13	New Zealand	112 (+18)	+2
14	Netherlands	96 (+24)	+6
15	South Korea	93 (-29)	-3
16	Argentina	92 (+15)	+1
17	Egypt	91 (+10)	-4
18	Sweden	88 (-6)	-3
19	Finland	70 (+4)	+3

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<b>20</b>	<b>Brazil</b>	<b>69 (-12)</b>	<b>-3</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>Mexico</b>	<b>64 (-28)</b>	<b>-2</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>Norway</b>	<b>64 (+12)</b>	<b>+6</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>Hungary</b>	<b>63 (-3)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>Belgium</b>	<b>62 (-9)</b>	<b>-2</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>62 (+22)</b>	<b>+12</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>Morocco</b>	<b>60 (+26)</b>	<b>+15</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>South Africa</b>	<b>60 (+12)</b>	<b>+9</b>

## SECRETARY GENERALS

A new feature of the 2017 report is the inclusion of data on the nationality of secretary generals in international federations, but the data is shown separately to allow continued comparison of the other data with previous reports. Their nationalities are included below in the effort to improve understanding of the influence countries have internationally. It is the experience of NOC Denmark that secretary generals naturally have a tremendous amount of influence.

**Table 7. Nationality of secretary generals in international federations**

No. of secretary generals per country	Country of origin
9	United Kingdom, United States
7	France, Switzerland
6	Germany
3	Australia, Belgium, Sweden
2	Austria, China, Japan, Spain
1	Argentina, Brazil, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Libya, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates

An analysis of the data clearly shows that English-speaking countries dominate the post of secretary general, with the United Kingdom and the United States with nine posts each, Australia with three and New Zealand with one, for a total of 22 out of 79 posts. The data show that having English, French or German as a first language is a tremendous advantage. Sweden is the only country where none of these languages is a first language, that has more than two secretary generals.



## CONCLUSIONS

- Denmark continues to maintain a strong political position in sports in absolute terms and in relation to the size of its population. Denmark's focus on Danish leaders winning international influence is paying off, with Denmark yet again advancing in European and international rankings. Despite improvements since the 2013 report, Denmark remains highly dependent on European posts. An emphasis on winning more posts in international sports outside Europe still appears to be necessary.
- Despite the political turmoil Russia has faced in recent years, it is the only top county to see its score increase since this last report. Its involvement in a major doping scandal does not seem to have significantly put Russian candidates at a disadvantage in elections.
- Having gained 53 points in the international power ranking, Japan's strategy seems to be perfectly timed up to Tokyo 2020, giving it an ideal opportunity to significantly influence major decisions leading up to its hosting of the Olympic Games.
- In Europe the balance of power is slowly moving from Western Europe to Central and Eastern Europe, as evidenced by the fact that 11 out of the 18 European countries that have increased their score are former Eastern Bloc countries.
- The United Kingdom and the United States dominate secretary general posts, with 18 between them. English-speaking countries account for 22 out of 79 secretary generals.
- The chance of becoming a secretary general in an international federation appears to be significantly higher if your first language is English, French or German.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ANOC: Association of National Olympic Committees

ARISF: Association of IOC Recognised International Sports Federations

EOC: The European Olympic Committees

FIFA: International Football Federation

IOC: International Olympic Committee

NOC: National Olympic Committee

UEFA: European Football Federation