



THE SPORTS POLITICAL POWER INDEX 2019 - 2021

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The Sports Political Power Index

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BACKGROUND

The 2021 publication is the fifth edition of the National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark's (NOC Denmark) Sports Political Power Index, which was published in 2013, 2015, 2017 and again in 2019. It ranks the political influence that nations have in the field of sports. Like the 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019 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 for the comparison of international influence, allowing NOC Denmark to measure the results of its international advocacy work, as outlined in the NOC's international strategy from 2013.

It was later decided to continue the 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 by using this link <https://www.dif.dk/idraetten-i-tal/magtbarometer>

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Sports Political Power Index for the NOC Denmark is to:

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

METHODOLOGY

NOC Denmark strives to ensure that the findings in the current edition of the Sports Political Power Index is comparable to the 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019 reports. Therefore, the same methodology has been applied both to the collection of data and the calculation of individual country scores.

Below is a description of the international sports federations that have been selected for inclusion in the index. After that, a definition of executive committees and what the criteria are for the counting of members. Lastly, the background for weighting and its application is 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 62 federations in NOC Denmark are members of
- International and European federations representing an Olympic sport at the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Congress
- Members of the Association of IOC Recognised International Sport Federation (ARISF)
- IOC, the European Olympic Committee (EOC) and the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC).

The idea for the index arose from the interest of the NOC Denmark and its 62 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 also constitute 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 largest 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, all representing sports organized in the Danish NOC, are included in the index, but are not on the Olympic programme, nor are they members of ARISF: International Powerlifting Federation, World Minigolf Sport Federation, World Darts Federation and World Association of Kickboxing Organizations. Although their presence is reason for methodical reservations about the report's relevance to other countries, they have nevertheless been included because Danish sports politicians can be elected to their executive boards.

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 exist due to the lack of clarity in the rules of some federations.

Data for this addition reflects on the last month of 2021, which is being compared to September and October in 2019, September and October 2017, August to October in 2015 and May to July in 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 sports, 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

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Methodological considerations

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 federations in terms of 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, federations with a high economic turnover are weighted higher than federations with a small economic turnover.
3. Due to the assumption that more media interest indicates greater power, federations which are creating a lot of media interest are weighted higher than federations, which are only receiving little interest from the medias
4. Federations which are representing many active members are weighted higher than federations, which are organising less members
5. Federations which have a greater political impact, when they are organising their competitions are weighted higher than federations, which is creating none or little political interest on their championships and activities..

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 country'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 at that time were difficult to follow in 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021, primarily due to two circumstances:

- The number of members in some federations' executive committee has changed. World Karate Federation, for example, now has four additional executive board members.
- The structure of the Olympic sports program changes, and the number and structure of the Olympic Federations change accordingly.

Conclusions based on changes that occurred between previous reports and the present one should not be drawn based on few points won or lost, but the above-mentioned circumstances should be kept in mind.

RESULTS

The study is divided into two main tracks that form 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

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 is requested, please contact the authors.

DENMARK

In 2019 Denmark saw a slight drop in international and European posts, from 34 in 2017 to 29. This did not materialize in a corresponding drop in the relative ranking however, because the profile and weighting of the roles, among other, has increased in total. The drop in total positions in 2019, has continued for this 2021 Index with now only 22 international and European posts. This time the decrease in number of posts did also correspond in terms of ranking, where Denmark is now no. 14 in the European ranking, and no. 27 in the international ranking. There are many reasons for this, but one of the main reasons is the loss of one out of 2 IOC members. Despite Denmark dropping in points for the second edition in a row, the Danish position in the European and international organizations is higher today, than it was in the first power index of 2013. From 2013-2021 Denmark is in the top 20 countries that have had the highest overall increase in points in points this period on an international level; Also, of the Scandinavian countries Denmark has registered the largest gain as well.

Denmark's European and international ranking

	European rank (+/-)	Total points (+/-)	Total positions (+/-)	International rank (+/-)	International points (+/-)
Denmark	14 (+4)	90 (-16)	22 (-7)	27 (+6)	56 (-8)

Type of position	No. 2021	No. 2019	Change (+/-)
Members of the International Olympic Committee	1	2	-1
ANOC Executive Committee Members	0	1	-1
Presidents of international Olympic federations	1	2	-1
Members of Executive Committee of international Olympic federations	4	4	-
Members of the Executive Committee of the European Olympic Committee	0	1	-1
Members of the Executive Committee of UEFA	1	1	-
Members of Executive Committee of European Olympic federations	10	11	-1
Members of Executive Committee of International Non-Olympic Federations	5	9	-4
Members of Executive Committees of European Non-Olympic Federations	0	0	-

THE EUROPEAN POWER INDEX

The European Power Index is based on the of roles in both European and international federations, when calculating each nations ranking.

Top positions

Despite France and Italy having dropped in total points, they remain in 1st (France) and 2nd (Italy) place in the European power index. In the top 5, only Germany has managed to not drop in terms of total points. It is worth noticing, that there has been no change in the top 5 between 2019 and 2021.

Both the United Kingdom and Italy has decreased in points between the first Power Index in 2013 and this one. With only a small loss of points in this Power Index, it seems like the United Kingdom has managed to stop their loss of points only taking a small decrease between 2019-2021, while Italy is still dropping points. Russia continues to lose points, where it is worth noticing, that the data for this index was collected before the recent sanctions on Russia.

Largest growth in Europe

The country with the largest points gain is Poland who has gained 25 points since 2019. This gain is the main reason behind the fact, that Poland has jumped 5 positions, from 15th to 10th position. Greece has the second largest growth with a gain of 24 points. Other countries who have gained a lot are Bulgaria, Croatia, Austria, Malta, Hungary Romania, and Belarus.

Notable losses in points

The two countries in the top 20, who have decreased the most in points, are Switzerland and Russia. Switzerland has lost 32 points since 2019, which is a drop at 20,5%. Overall, Switzerland has lost 75 points since the first European Power Index in 2013 and are still dropping a lot of points. Russia has lost 19 points since 2019, which is a loss of 8,2%. It can be difficult to point out precisely why Russia has decreased this number of points, but this may be because of the political turmoil over the state sponsored doping scheme and its sanctions by the international sports community. Therefore it will be interesting looking into what might follow with the new sanctions on Russia.

Another country who has lost points is The UK with a drop of 6 points. That is not a lot with 260 points overall, and especially not looking at the overall drop The UK has had, since the 2013 Index (-35 points.). The overall drop from The UK since 2013 may be because they hosted the 2012 Olympic games in London. It is not unusual that a country is gaining a lot of points before hosting a big event like the Olympic Games and drop the points afterwards. Despite this it is important to stop the drop again, which it may look like, the UK has succeeded with now, where they have only decreased 6 points between 2019 and 2021.

It is also worth noticing that both Denmark and Norway have dropped 4 and 3 positions, respectively, since 2019. Interestingly, Norway gained a member of the IOC and a member of the EOC executive committee, resulting in a gain of 11 points. Despite gaining these important positions, Norway still lost 3 points in total, because of losing ground in other sports like cycling, handball, and swimming, where they have lost executive committee representation.

Comparison of the representation of European countries in international and European federations

	Country	Points in 2021 edition	+/- Since 2019 (points)	+/- Since 2017 (points)	+/- Since 2015 (points)	+/- Since 2013 (points)
1	France	287	-12	39	2	25
2	Italy	266	-17	7	-23	-42
3	United Kingdom	260	-6	8	-28	-35
4	Germany	247	4	2	-32	-9
5	Russia	213	-10	-39	-30	-34
6	Spain	160	-10	-21	-63	-70
7	Netherlands	137	-2	-3	-8	2
8	Sweden	126	-1	-2	-6	-8
9	Switzerland	124	-32	-28	-45	-75
10	Greece	104	24	28	15	27
11	Turkey	99	8	-2	-47	-9
12	Finland	93	9	8	20	13
13	Hungary	92	11	0	16	8
14	Denmark	90	-16	-21	-6	7
15	Poland	85	25	13	9	3
16	Norway	83	-3	-11	-2	1
17	Austria	82	12	10	26	1
18	Czech Republic	81	2	15	12	1
19	Belgium	75	-	-14	-43	-31
-	Romania	75	11	24	37	26

Long-term perspective in Europe

The long-term perspective is based on the development from the 2013 European Power Index until today. The countries who have had the best development in this period are Greece (+27), Romania (+26), France and Belarus (+25), Bulgaria (+23) and Croatia (+23). This is worth noticing because there has been a general trend and move in the European power index in this period. Many eastern European countries like Romania, Belarus, Bulgaria, and Croatia has had a great development over the years. At a short-term perspective (2019-2021) Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Georgia all went up in points. Only Russia took a big drop in points among the east European countries where Serbia lost 2 points, but in total eastern Europe went up again in this European Power Index. Therefore this trend seems to continue.

THE INTERNATIONAL POWER INDEX

The International Power Index makes use of the same weighting system as the European Power Index, except that the ranking only includes roles in international federations and not European, when calculating each country's ranking.

The United States still in 1st place

The United States is still ranked as number one in the International Power Index and keeps this position despite dropping 27 points since the 2019 Index. This represents the second largest drop of points among all countries in this period. This is noteworthy as the US is hosting the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 2028. Therefore, the US could have been expected to at least maintain their number of points and positions until the Games in 2028. France comes in on second place, but there is still a big gap between The United States and France. The gap between 2nd and 5th position is much smaller.

Largest growth

Three countries stand out compared to the 2019 index in having gained the most: China (+34 points), Australia (+30 points) and Japan (+28 points). China has had the biggest gain in points overall, which is noteworthy because of the drop experienced in the 2019 as well as the 2017 Index. This signals that China has turned things around on the international Olympic stage after the 2019 Index. This turnaround may stem from the fact that China hosted the Winter Olympics in 2022. Therefore, it will be interesting to follow if China starts to drop points, after the Winter Olympics 2022 is over. Australia has managed to improve on their increase from the 2019- and the 2017 Index. In 2017 Australia was no. 9 in the International Power Index. In 2019 they climbed to 5th place, and in this edition, they have managed to further rise to 3rd place. In total, Australia has improved their power and representation with 54 points between 2017 and 2021, which is the largest gain in points of any country in this period. Australia's

growth is also important towards the 2032 Olympic games in Brisbane. Other countries who have improved and worth noticing are countries like Japan, Croatia, and Poland.

Notable loses in points

Among the countries having lost the most points between 2019 and 2021 Switzerland (-28) and The United States (-27) comes out, as the countries who has lost the largest among of points. Both Switzerland and The United States has lost a lot of points in every Power Index, but while The United States is in a secure situation as number one, with a big gap to number two, Switzerland are now outside the top 10 and a shared number 12. Therefor Switzerland must look at some possibilities to turn things around.

Countries like Thailand (-24 points), Canada (-22 points) and Germany (-21 points) have also lost many points. This have not cost Canada in the positions, but Germany has lost 2 positions in the ranking to China and Japan. Looking into the German loss of power, this is not a long-term problem. From 2013-2021 they have lost 4 points in total, but it is worth noticing in the future.

There are more changes in this top 5 than in the European while It has still much of the same. But for number 6-10 there have been a lot of changes: China, Australia and Japan have had very impressive growth, and have changed some positions. This is both due to their growth and the decrease that Germany, Russia, and Canada have experienced. This is also opening a door for New Zealand who are closing in on the top 10.

Outside the top

Looking outside the top-10, Greece is the country to notice. They have managed to place themselves as number 22, which is 11 positions higher than in 2019. Other countries, with a similarly positive progress are Czech Republic, Turkey, Mexico, and Morocco, having all climbed 5-6 positions since 2019. A country like Nigeria has managed to put themselves on the map with a gain of 17 points from 24 in 2019 to 41 in 2021. This is a growth of 70,8%, which is impressive and can be inspiring for other countries.

Nations like Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have been mentioned several times over the last years regarding large international sporting events. Recently, the FIFA World Cup in Qatar has been discussed and criticized because of documented human rights abuses and widespread corruption allegations.

In this Power Index Qatar scores 51 points and is close to the top 30. Qatar's power measured in points has not changed a lot in the Power Index over the years, where they in the 2019 Index had 53 points and 52 points in 2013. Saudi Arabia scores 8 points in the 2021 Power Index, which is a drop of 4 points since 2013. The United Arab Emirates stand at 48 points and are closing in on the top-30, too, compared to 2013 with just 28 points in total.

	Country	Points in 2021 edition	+/- Since 2019 (points)	+/- Since 2017 (points)	+/- Since 2015 (points)	+/- Since 2013 (points)
1	United States	264	-27	-25	-45	-39
2	France	219	4	37	8	22
3	Australia	198	30	54	48	22
4	United Kingdom	191	-4	16	6	-17
5	Italy	190	7	5	-6	-20
6	Japan	181	28	28	48	81
7	China	165	34	24	-1	18
8	Germany	153	-21	-20	-32	-4
9	Russia	142	-15	-43	-41	-41
10	Canada	129	-22	-22	-55	-3
11	Spain	114	-16	-28	-61	-67
12	New Zealand	101	10	-11	3	7
-	Switzerland	101	-28	-18	-44	-76
14	Egypt	91	4		-6	-10
15	Netherlands	78	-14	-18	-10	6
-	Sweden	78		-10	-10	-16
17	South Korea	76	-2		-40	-46
18	Argentina	74	-10	-18	24	-5
-	Finland	74	2	4	24	8
20	South Africa	73	9	11	31	25
21	India	69	8	13	21	35
22	Greece	64	16	22	12	22
23	Brazil	63	-12	-6	-20	-18
24	Mexico	62	8	-2	-22	-14
-	Norway	62	2	-2	12	10
26	Czech Republic	58	8	18	22	22
-	Turkey	58	8	2	-31	-9
28	Denmark	56	-8	-6	8	16
29	Hungary	55	2	-8	3	-11
-	Morocco	55	7	-5	7	21

Long-term perspective

Looking at a long-term perspective from 2013-2021, Japan is the country with the largest increase in points (+81) between 2013 and 2021. The country with the second biggest growth in points is India with an increase of 35 points. The countries which have decreased the most in points is Switzerland (-76), Spain (-67) Russia (-41) and the United States (-39)

CONCLUSION

- Denmark has both decreased in points and positions this time, in the European- and the International Power Index. In the 2019 Power Index Denmark also had a drop in points, but not in position. This drop in points, both in 2019 and in 2021 can therefore explain, why Denmark has decreased a significant number of positions in both the European [-4] the in the international [-6].
- It is problematic to conclude on the position of Russia because data was collected before the sanctions that followed its invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Russia has decreased both in points and positions even before those sanctions, which may be because of the political turmoil over the state sponsored doping scheme and the sanctions by the international sports community related to this.
- Having gained 34 points since the 2019 Power Index, China managed to gain a lot of power in the buildup to the Winter Olympic Games in Beijing.
- Looking back at the 2015 and 2017 index, Australia is the country who has gained the largest number of points between then and 2021.
- The United States has managed to keep its position as number one on the International Power Index but has decreased points since 2013. It should be a priority for The United States to keep this position until the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.
- Looking at Europe it is worth noticing, that the eastern European countries like Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, and Serbia all managed to gain in points since the 2019. This is a general trend in Europe, that the eastern European countries has managed to gain power while the western European countries have lost points and positions since the beginning of data collection in 2013.