



Audience for the 2024 Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games

In France, seven out of ten people aged 15 and over watched at least one Olympic Games event and six out of ten watched at least one Paralympic Games event. Men, people with the highest level of education attainment, as well as young people (15-24 years old) and seniors (70 years old and over) represented the largest number of people who followed the Games on a very regular basis, as did, logically, those people participating in a sports or physical activities or those who regularly watch televised sporting events. However, nearly three in ten people who do not usually follow any major sporting event watched the 2024 Paris Games regularly or every day.

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A large part of the French population was captivated by the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, bringing together the most hard core of sports fans, as well as, to some extent, a scattering of people who are normally much less interested in sporting events. This is what is highlighted by the survey carried out by INJEP [box "Method", p. 3] carried out among around 4,000 people in September 2024, as part of the evaluation of the socio-economic impact of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Excluding the opening and closing ceremonies ["Focus on", p. 2], 69% of people aged 15 and over said that they followed the Olympic Games events, and 59% followed the Paralympic Games events, whether on television, as

spectators at an event venue¹, or by going to a *fan-zone* [table 1, p. 2].

Screens were preferred for following the Games

The media (television, digital platforms, radio) were undeniably the most popular ways to experience the events: 96% of the public (i.e. people having declared at least one of the three viewing methods for the competitions, excluding the opening and closing ceremonies) used this viewing method for the Olympic events and 95% for the Paralympic events. This can be explained on the one hand by the flexibility of viewing environments (at home, with friends or in public places) and on the other hand by the daily coverage of this sporting event by subscription-free public channels. This meant that viewers were able to follow the events at their own pace and as they preferred.

One in ten people attended a competition on site

Although screens made it possible to reach a large audience, some people opted for full immersion by attending the events as spectators directly at the events sites, with or without a ticket, with certain events such as road cycling or triathlon being partially accessible without a ticket.



The survey on the 2024 Paris Games

As part of the socio-economic impact assessment of the 2024 Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games, the INJEP conducted a survey aiming at knowing the different ways the French experienced the Games and collecting their opinion on sports, particularly women's sport and parasport. This survey took place in two waves, before the Games (23 April to 16 May) then after the Games (9 September to 30 September). The two waves were carried out using a constant methodology, each making it possible to question 4,500 individuals (different people from one wave to the next) aged 15 and over, online in mainland France and by telephone in French overseas



Torch relay route, ceremonies and celebratory areas, other ways to follow the 2024 Paris Games

Beyond the competitions, the 2024 Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games were marked by unifying events that perpetuated the Olympic spirit via symbolic moments. The passing of the Olympic flame was, for example, followed by 55% of those aged 15 and over, while the journey made by the Paralympic flame was followed by 35% of them.

In the same vein, the opening and closing ceremonies elicited significant interest. For the Olympic Games, these ceremonies brought together a respective 53% and 45% of people aged 15 and over residing in France (mainland and overseas territories), while the opening ceremony of the Paralympic Games was followed by 43% and the closing ceremony by 38% of them. Participation rates at ceremony sites vary from 5% to 7%, depending on the ceremony. Finally, 40% indicate having followed, as spectators or television viewers, at least one opening ceremony of previous Olympic Games, which is the case for 53% of those aged 15 and over for the 2024 Paris Games.

Although it was more limited, participation in the Games within celebratory areas (excluding *fan-zones*), which welcomed the public on the sidelines of the events, allowed 12% of those aged 15 and over to immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the Games, enabling them to follow the competitions and/or experience a special unifying moment via concerts, shows and other activities.



Viewing modes of the 2024 Paris Games for ages 15 and over

	Olym.	Para.
Followed the Games events	69%	59%
<i>Via media (television, digital platforms, radio)</i>	96%	95%
<i>Via event locations</i>	8%	6%
<i>Via fan-zones</i>	4%	4%

Field: all people aged 15 and over residing in France.

Source: Survey on 'the experience of the Paris 2024 Games and sporting values seen by the French' in 2024, INJEP, ministry responsible for sports, 2024.

Reading note: 96% of those aged 15 and over who declared having followed the Olympic Games events did so through traditional media (television, including via digital platforms, radio). Several answers were possible, the sum of the categories is therefore greater than 100.

In total, according to the Paris 2024 ticketing data, 12.1 million tickets were sold, mainly to French residents (62% of Olympic tickets and 91% of Paralympic

tickets), therefore proving a high level of national participation. Apart from commercial ticketing, the State and the host communities distributed

free tickets *via* a charity programme, directly to the public (schools, etc.) or to associations, notably sports federations. 15% of ticket holders say they received at least one of their tickets free of charge from a local authority or association.

In total, 8% of those aged 15 and over say they physically attended the Olympic Games at event sites, and 6% during the Paralympic Games. Some of the spectators for the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games are the same people: among those who attended the Olympic Games events, two out of five also went to the Paralympic Games sites, and vice versa since more than half (55%) of the spectators who were present at the Paralympic Games sites had already attended Olympic Games events. The proportion of residents of Ile-de-France (Paris region) is more than twice as big as the national proportion among people who attended competitions on sites: 18% say they had been spectators of the Olympic Games, 14% of the Paralympic Games. Ultimately, almost one in four Ile-de-France residents aged 15 and over (24%) say they have attended one of the Games events (Olympics or Paralympics), compared to an average of one in ten French people (11%).

The *fan-zones*, designed specifically to allow the public to follow the events live in a shared atmosphere, attracted a smaller share of the Games audience: only 4% of spectators of the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games experienced the Games in this way.

More in-depth viewing of events during the Olympic Games than the Paralympic Games

The French were able to follow the Games events in several ways at the same time and at varying frequency. To take this into account, a score measuring public investment, ranging from 1 (did not follow at all) to 4 (followed in-depth), was established, by combining the viewing mode and the frequency [**"Method" box**]. Enthusiasm was keener for the Olympic Games, attracting a more "committed" audience than the Paralympics.

Indeed, 27% of the Olympic Games audience followed intensively by watching the events on television every day and several times a day, or by attending

two or more competitions, compared to 16% of the Paralympic Games audience [table 2]. 29% of the Olympic Games audience and 25% of the Paralympic Games audience had a viewing that was categorised as “sustained”. This may be a category of audience that is interested in the events as a whole but without the intense daily rhythm of real Games “enthusiasts”. 17% of the Paralympic Games audience and 13% of the Olympic Games audience only watched the events on television a few times, or even just once, indicating a “not very intense” viewing. The differences in viewing intensity between the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games relate, to a certain extent, to the period over which the Paralympic Games took place, in September, a potentially less favourable period due to the start of the school year and the end of the summer holiday. Two thirds of those aged 15 and over followed both events with the same degree of intensity. Nearly half of the people who followed the Olympic Games intensively also maintained this intensity for the Paralympic Games, reflecting a certain loyalty for both events. Finally, only one in ten Olympic Games “enthusiasts”, i.e. those who followed the events “intensively”, did not follow the Olympic Games at all.

Retired people, young people, men or the highly qualified were more inclined to watch the Olympic Games

The Olympic Games audience that was the most committed in terms of viewing the events has a profile that is notable for its age, gender and level of education. Indeed, almost two thirds (63%) of young people aged 15-24 followed the Olympic Games in an “intensive” (22%) or “sustained” (41%) manner, compared to 56% on average. Those aged 70 and over are also relatively more likely to have followed the Olympic Games in an “intensive” (33%) or “sustained” (25%) manner. “Intensive” viewing of the Olympic Games is also significantly more marked among men (35%, compared to 20% for women). Conversely, women are proportionately more likely not to have followed the Olympic Games at all or very little (52% compared to 36% of men). Furthermore, the most highly

qualified people demonstrated higher levels of commitment to the Olympic Games: 32% of graduates with a Bachelor’s degree or higher followed the events “intensively”, compared to 22% for holders of a secondary school certificate (brevet) or less. This demonstrates the fact that the most advantaged social backgrounds are also those who devote the most time to sport during their leisure time [1, 2].



method

A score to measure the viewing of the Games

To summarise the different combinations of viewing methods, a score over four levels was established and calculated on the one hand for the Olympic Games and on the other hand for the Paralympic Games. The score combines the mode as well as the viewing frequency, and presents the following four viewing levels:

- Level 1 – No viewing: neither spectator (event or *fan-zones*) nor television viewer;
- Level 2 – Low-intensity viewing: people who watched the Games on television just once or occasionally;
- Level 3 – Sustained viewing: people who watched the Games on television either once a day each day, or regularly but not every day, or who watched the Games only occasionally but nevertheless went to a *fan-zone*; and people who have been spectators on site once and who have gone to a *fan-zone*
- Level 4 – Intensive viewing: people who have either watched the Games on television several times a day each day, or have been spectators at a competition venue at least twice.



table

Distribution of the 4 levels of viewing intensity according to sex, age and sports participation

	No viewing		Low-intensity		Sustained viewing		Intensive viewing	
	Olym.	Para.	Olym.	Para.	Olym.	Para.	Olym.	Para.
Sex								
Male	25%	36%	11%	16%	29%	28%	35%	20%
Female	36%	45%	16%	19%	28%	23%	20%	13%
Age								
15 to 24 years	21%	32%	16%	22%	41%	33%	22%	12%
25 to 39 years	33%	44%	14%	18%	30%	26%	23%	12%
40 to 59 years	34%	45%	12%	15%	26%	24%	28%	16%
60 to 69 years	35%	40%	13%	18%	24%	22%	28%	19%
70 years and older	28%	36%	13%	16%	25%	24%	33%	23%
Sports participation								
No participation	45%	54%	13%	15%	22%	17%	20%	14%
Occasional participation	22%	27%	17%	24%	36%	30%	25%	19%
Regular participation	22%	34%	12%	17%	32%	31%	34%	18%
Altogether	31%	41%	13%	17%	29%	25%	27%	16%

Scope: all people aged 15 and over residing in France.

Source: Survey on 'the experience of the Paris 2024 Games and sporting values seen by the French' in 2024, INJEP, ministry responsible for sports, 2024.

Reading note: 20% of men aged 15 and over followed the Paralympic Games competitions “closely”. See the “Method” box for the definition of viewing intensity levels.

Similarities between the Olympic Games audience and the Paralympic Games audience

Young people's enthusiasm for the Games is also observed for the Paralympic events: almost half of 15 to 24-year-olds (45%) followed them closely (“sustained” or “intensive” viewing), compared to 41% on average. On the other hand, those aged

70 and over also showed above-average interest in following the event: 47% of them followed the Paralympic Games closely. Furthermore, almost half of the men (48%) followed the Paralympic Games closely, compared to 36% of the women. This gap is, however, slightly reduced compared to the Olympic Games where it reached 16 points. Again, more women than men have not followed the Paralympic Games at all (45% compared to 36% of men).

People with disabilities report having intensively followed the Paralympic Games, significantly more than the average (24%, or +8 points), a phenomenon already observed for the Olympic Games (30%, or +3 points).

Higher viewing levels of the Games among residents of Ile-de-France

Residents of Ile-de-France are slightly more likely to have “intensively” followed the Olympics Games (31% compared to 27% for the national average) and the Paralympic Games (18% compared to 16%)². Among the Ile-de-France audience attending Olympic Games events, 24% attended as spectators (compared to 12% nationally), which can be explained by close proximity to the major competition events, 94% followed the competitions on television (compared to the national average of 96%), and 9% took advantage of the *fan-zones* (compared to 4% on average). The strong attraction of the Olympic Games for Ile-de-France residents is also reflected in ticketing data. Almost half of the Olympic Games tickets (47%) and a large majority of the Paralympic Games tickets (71%) sold were purchased

by people residing in Ile-de-France. Although they are geographically further away, people living in the DROMs (French overseas departments) display relatively high “intensive” viewing rates for the Olympic Games (32%, or 5 points above the average) and higher than those observed in other regions outside Ile-de-France (26%).

Those who take part in sports were widely represented among the audiences of the Games

Whether they participate in a physical or sporting activity on a regular (34%) or occasional (25%) basis, sports participants followed the Olympics more “intensively” than people who do not participate in any physical or sporting activity. Non-participants in sport appear to be an audience that is more removed from the Games compared to regular or occasional sportspeople: only 22% followed the Olympics in a “sustained” way, and 13% followed them a little. The gap is even more significant when we consider the proportion of people who did not follow the Games at all, with a gap of 23 points between non-participants in sports and those who participate on a regular basis for the Olympic Games, and 20 points for the Paralympic Games. This clear link between participating in sport and an interest in events – and beyond that for other “cultural sporting events” (following sports news, sports video games, etc.) – is observed even outside the Olympic and Paralympic Games [2].

A section of the public that is unfamiliar with sports broadcasting followed the Games

People who regularly watch sporting events on television also followed the Games, with strong similarities in terms of viewing intensities³: 80% of those aged 15 and over who followed at least one sporting event in the last twelve months watched the Olympic Games on television every day or almost every day. The same is true for parasport: 73% of people aged 15 and over who declare having followed at least one parasport event during the year followed the Paralympic Games on television almost daily. Although it is usually very limited, television broadcasting of parasport competitions was exceptionally increased during the 2024 Paris Games, which facilitated access to this type of event. This global event also reaches a wider audience of people who are usually disinterested in sports broadcasts on television. Nearly three in ten people declaring that they had not watched any major sporting events (such as the Tour de France, Roland Garros, etc.) over the past year nevertheless watched the 2024 Paris Games regularly or every day (29% for the Olympic Games, 27% for the Paralympic Games).

1. It was possible to attend certain events without a ticket: for example road cycling, triathlon, marathon or sailing for the Olympic Games and road para-cycling, paratriathlon and paramarathon for the Paralympic Games.

2. For a detailed analysis of all the ways in which residents of Ile-de-France followed the 2024 Paris Games, see the study carried out by Institut Paris Région based on the same survey: F. Michelot, L. Thévenot, “Paris 2024 Games: Ile-de-France residents at the heart of a historic event”, Quick note, January 2025.

3. We use the viewing frequency of the Olympic Games and of the Paralympic Games, which refers to all viewing methods combined, therefore we put forward the hypothesis here that the viewing frequency declared by the respondents reflects the frequency of the “on television” viewing mode (which is the largely dominant viewing mode).



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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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