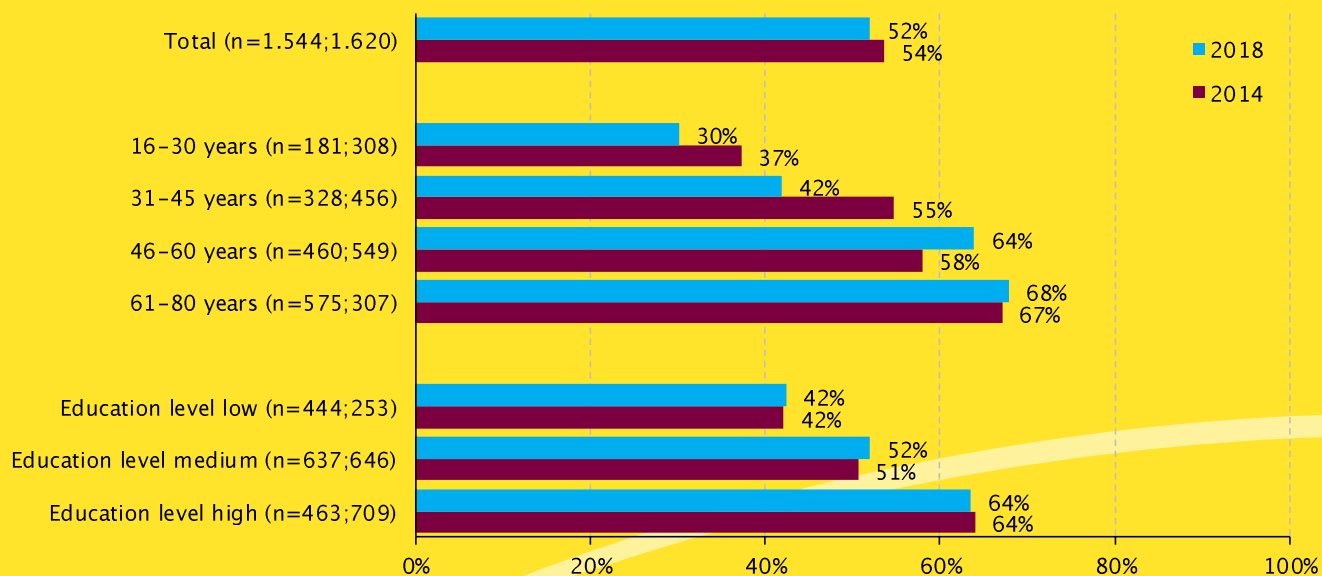


Figure 1 Awareness olympism in 2014 and 2018, Dutch population 16-80 years (in percentages)*



*Measured by the question: "Are you aware of the olympic ideology, also called olympism, even if it is only by name?". The first n within the labels refers to 2018, the second one to 2014.

Source: Nationaal SportOnderzoek (NSO), 2014 & 2018. Edited by: The Mulier Institute.

Promoting olympism is objective of IOC

The promotion of the olympic ideology (olympism) is an important task for the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the National Olympic Committees (NOC's). Operating under the auspices of the IOC, the International Olympic Academy (IOA) also functions as an olympism-promoting organization, together with the National Olympic Academies (NOA's).

There is increased attention for the promotion of olympism in the IOC's strategic policy, the 2020 Agenda. This is also a priority in the Netherlands: in 2019, the sports umbrella organization NOC*NSF developed a new policy with the aim to intensify the promotion of the philosophy or ideology of olympism both within and outside the sports sector.

These developments require insight in the degree to which the Dutch population is aware of the ideology of olympism and their associations of central values. Is there a relation between awareness of the olympic ideology, support for organizing the Games in the Netherlands, and attitude towards the IOC?

More than half of the Dutch aware of olympism

More than half of the Dutch adult population (52%) is aware of the olympic ideology, even if only by name. These and most other findings described below are similar to what was reported in 2014 (figure 1).^a

Although awareness barely reaches one third (30%) among 16-30 year olds, it is more than twice as high among 61-80 year olds (68%). Research conducted among the Dutch population after the 2016 Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games shows that older adults follow the Games in the media more often than youth.^b It is possible that the following of the Games positively contributes to awareness of olympism.

Approximately 4 out of 10 people with a lower education level are aware of the olympic ideology (42%) versus almost two thirds of highly educated people (64%).

63 percent of men en 41 percent of women are aware of olympism. The proportions are similar for sport participants (53%) and non-participants (50%; not in figure).

Figure 2 Associations with olympism in 2018, Dutch population 16-80 years aware of the Olympic ideology (n=890)*



*Measured by the question: "Which words do spontaneously come to mind for you when thinking about the Olympic ideology (olympism)?" The size of the words refers to the frequency in which the words are mentioned: the bigger, the higher the frequency. The respondents were asked for an association in words, but some formed a sentence. The notion "Participating is more important than winning" (and similar sentences) were re-coded to the word 'Participate'.

Source: Nationaal SportOnderzoek (NSO), 2018. Edited by: The Mulier Institute.

Participation, sportsmanship and togetherness

Since 2012, the IOC distinguishes three aspects of olympism: excellence, friendship and respect. Which words are spontaneously associated with the ideology by Dutch people who are aware of olympism?

The words most frequently mentioned are 'participation', 'sportsmanship', and 'togetherness', or related words. Of the three aspects the IOC distinguishes, 'friendship' is mentioned most often and 'excellence' least often. Interestingly, the associations with olympism are largely positive, even though 'doping' is also mentioned.

An international, independent study from 2018, commissioned by the IOC, showed that the promotion of peace through sport is seen as the most important task for the IOC. This research also highlighted that 'worldwide' and 'diversity' are the values most often associated with the olympic rings (not olympism).⁶

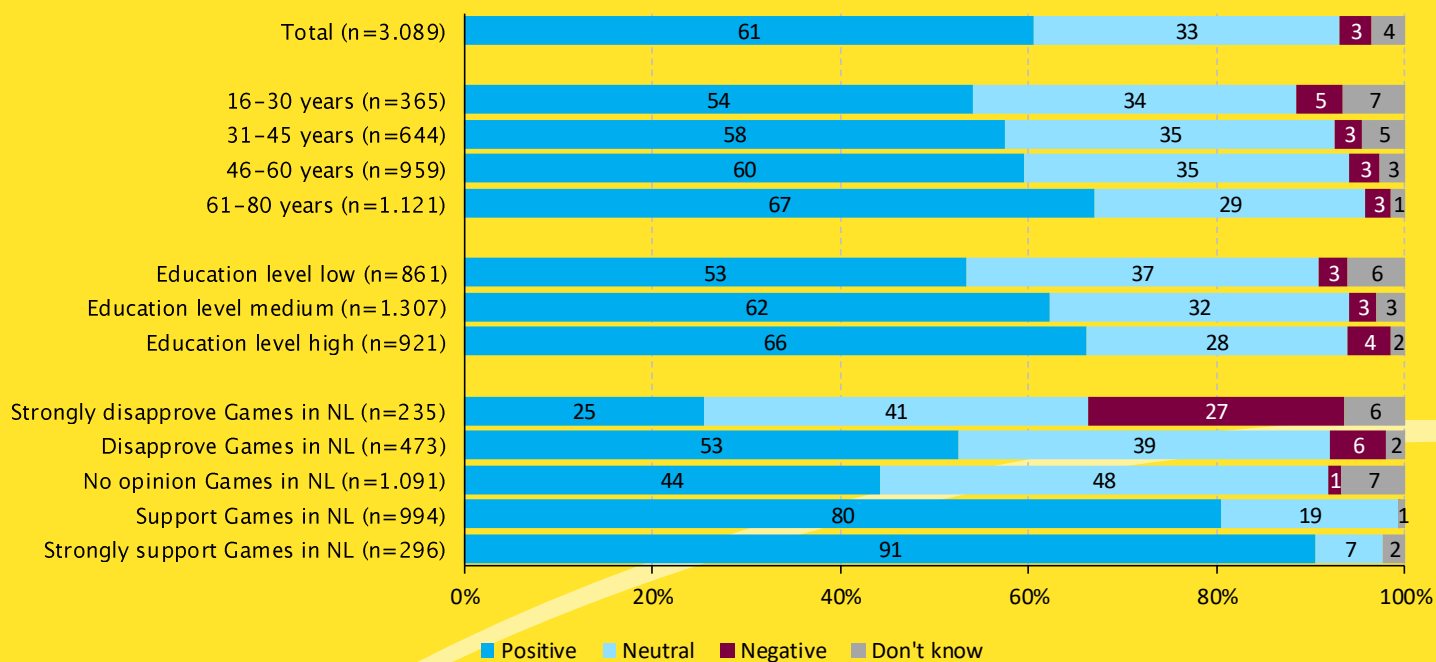
6 out of 10 positive about Games in general

6 out of ten Dutch adults view the Olympic Games (the Paralympic Games and paralympic values were not included in this study) positively. One third is neutral and 3 percent is negative (figure 3). These proportions are similar to those reported in 2014.

Young people are less often positive about the Games than older adults. More than half of 16-30 year olds (54%) and approximately two thirds (68%) of 61-80 year olds, view the Games positively.

There appears to be a strong relationship between the attitude towards the Games in general, and the support for the organization of the mega-event in the Netherlands. Among those who strongly oppose the idea of the Games in the Netherlands, one quarter is positive about the event in general, whereas 9 out of 10 people are positive about the event in the group that strongly supports the idea of the Games in the Netherlands (figure 3).

Figure 3 Attitude towards the Games in general in 2018, Dutch population 16-80 years (in percentages)



Source: Nationaal SportOnderzoek (NSO), 2018. Edited by: The Mulier Institute.

People aware of the olympic ideology view the Olympic Games significantly more positive than those unaware with the ideology (73%-46%; not in figure). This does not mean that awareness with olympism leads to a positive view of the Games, the opposite can also be the case.

4 out of 10 support the Games in the Netherlands

The support for the organization of the Games in the Netherlands - measured by means of the question that the IOC dictates for conducting public opinion polling - is 43 percent. 36 percent is neutral about this and 21 percent disapproves the organization of the Games in the Netherlands (not in figure). There is a slight growth in support of the organization of the Games in the Netherlands compared to 2014.

More division in attitude towards IOC

There is a stronger distinction in attitude towards the IOC than towards the Games: approximately 1 out of 5 Dutch people (19%) is positive, and a smaller proportion is negative (15%). More than half have a neutral view (figure 4).

The differences in age group and level of education are relatively small (figure 4).

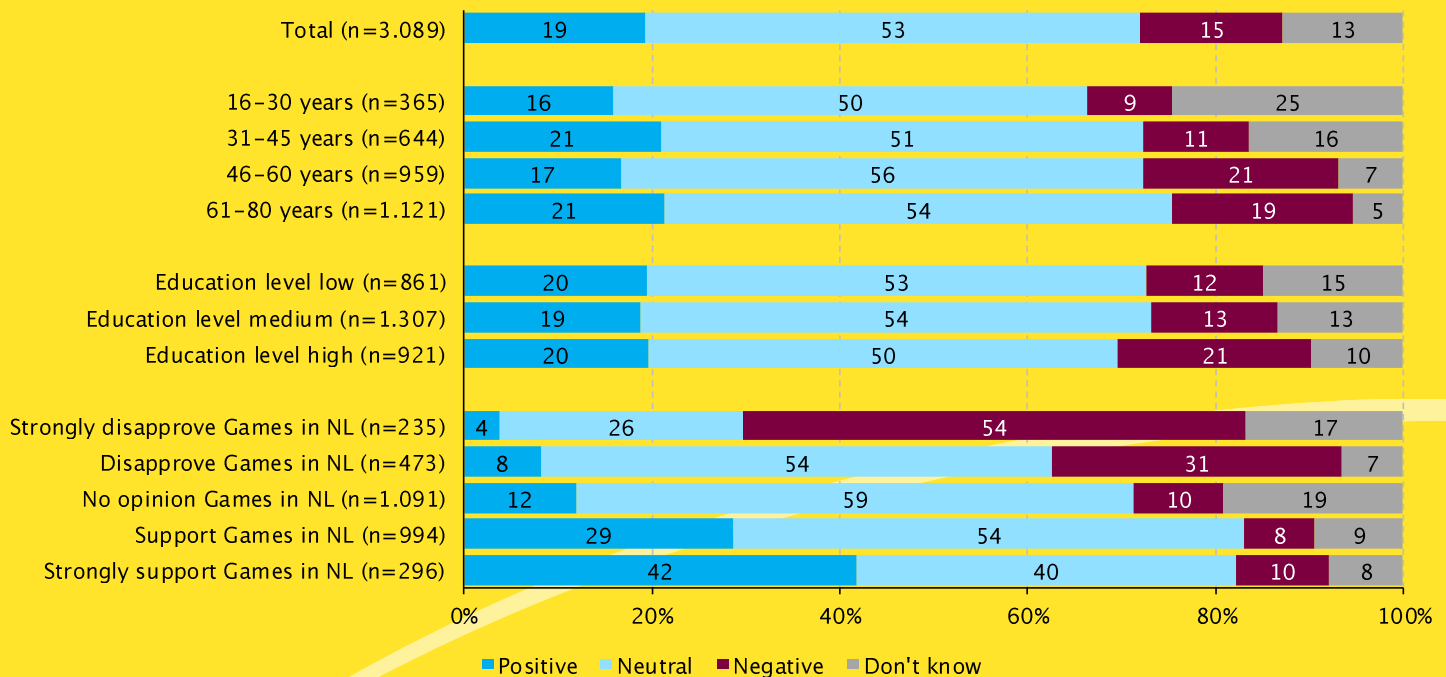
Similar to the attitude towards the Games, people aware of the olympic ideology are more positive about the IOC than people unaware of the ideology (24%-12%, not in figure).

From association to implementation of values

The number of bids for the Games is decreasing and anti-Olympic Games protests are increasingly common. Between 2013 and 2018, local populations executed successful opposition in fourteen cities with olympic ambitions.^d

Such growing countermovements are in contrast with the increase in the sponsor income of the IOC which increased from 96 million US dollars in 1985/1988 (Calgary, Seoul) to more than 1 billion US dollars in 2013/2016 (Sochi, Rio de Janeiro).^e The IOC is apparently more capable to persuade commercial businesses than (potential) host cities.

Figure 4 Attitude towards the IOC in general in 2018, Dutch population 16-80 years (in percentages)



Source: Nationaal SportOnderzoek (NSO), 2018. Edited by: The Mulier Institute.

The Games and the IOC could benefit from further implementation of the olympic values. This may also positively effect the number of cities that submit a bid for the event, as well as the local support for the Games.

Conclusion

More than half of the Dutch are aware of the olympic ideology and spontaneous associations are largely positive, featuring 'participation', 'sportsmanship' and 'togetherness'. Of the three main values of olympism as identified by the IOC, 'friendship' is mentioned most often and 'excellence' least often.

People who are aware of the olympic ideology view both the Olympic Games and the IOC significantly more positive than those who are unaware.

The support for the organization of the Games in the Netherlands is 43 percent (36% is neutral and 21% is negative). That support is slightly higher than in 2014.

Methodology

This factsheet is based on data from the 2014 and 2018 National Sport Study. The results are representative of the adult Dutch population. MarketResponse (2014) en GfK (2018) conducted the field research. Also, the Olympic Value Scale was applied in 2018 (split-run approach). These results will be published later in 2019.

Notes

Click on the underlined sources to open.

^a Hover, P. & Werff, H. van der (2014). *Olympisme 2014. Ter gelegenheid van Olympic Day 2014*. Utrecht: Mulier Instituut.

^b Hover, P. & Breedveld, K. (eds.) (2018). *The story of Rio 2016. De maatschappelijke betekenis van de Olympische en Paralympische Spelen 2016*. Utrecht/Nieuwegein: Mulier Instituut/Arko Sports Media.

^c IOC (2019). *Independent research conducted on behalf of the IOC demonstrates global strength of the Olympic values*. Accessed at 30 April 2019 via <https://www.olympic.org/news/independent-research-conducted-on-behalf-of-the-ioc-demonstrates-global-strength-of-the-olympic-values>.

^d Lauermaann & Pauschinger (2019). *Protest and the Games: What comes next?* Accessed at 29 April 2019, via https://playthegame.org/news/comments/2019/079_protest-and-the-games-what-comes-next/.

^e IOC (2019). *Olympic Marketing Fact File 2019 edition*. Lausanne: IOC.