

Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026 – Participation Principles

From 31 October – 13 November 2026 Dakar, Senegal will host the 4th edition of the Summer Youth Olympic Games. To participate in the YOG, athletes will have to respect and comply with the Olympic Charter as well as with the rules of the relevant International Federation (IF) and their National Olympic Committee (NOC).

All entries for participation shall be managed directly by the IOC in collaboration with the respective NOCs, IFs and Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee to ensure that the quotas are attributed in accordance with the principles and the athlete quota is not exceeded.

The YOG Participation Principles serve to ensure that the following six (6) pillars remain the focus for athlete participation and quota allocation in all sports on the competition programme of the YOG:

- Universality
- Continental representation
- Strong African representation
- Host country representation
- Athlete performance
- Gender equality

Key principles

1. Ensure the opportunity for participation of athletes from the territories of 206 NOCs + Refugee Olympic Team (EOR) with a minimum of one (1) male and one (1) female in their delegation, where possible.
2. There shall not be more than one (1) quota per NOC per event.
3. Representation of all 54 African NOCs shall be prioritised by the IOC in their allocation of quota places. Where possible, all African NOCs will have a minimum representation with two (2) male and two (2) female athletes.
4. There shall be continental and host country representation, where possible, across each sport and discipline.
5. There shall not be any qualification events organised by the IFs to avoid YOG-specific travel and cost for the athletes, NFs or NOCs.
6. The IFs shall establish minimum sporting and eligibility criteria for participation in their respective events at the YOG. This may include participation and results in national, continental and/or international events to verify these criteria.
7. The maximum age for participants will be 17 years old at the time of the Games, including up to the Closing Ceremony, with the minimum age requirements per discipline aligned with the IF regulations and approved by the IOC.
8. The IOC shall prioritise allocation of quota places to athletes on an NOC and/or IF development pathway and those athletes participating in youth competitions.
9. The NOCs have the exclusive authority for the selection of their respective athletes at the YOG, ensuring they fulfill the age requirements and eligibility criteria set by the respective IFs.
10. The IOC shall ensure the allocation of equal number of quota places for women and men across the disciplines.