



ACTIVE CITIES INDEX

Providing evidence to help cities
unlock their sporting potential

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FOREWORD



Globally, our great major cities are the beating heart of sporting life. Equally, whether it's hosting the Olympics or investing in community clubs, sport is a key ingredient to a vibrant and vital city.

The new Portas Active Cities Index aims to help cities harness the power of sport. In this inaugural report, we take an innovative and holistic lens that looks beyond traditional event dollars, but considers policy, delivery and infrastructure; we go beyond quantity to assess quality and fit; and throughout, we have taken a data-driven approach to provide the cities with a baseline for action.

Congratulations to our friends in Stockholm for topping this year's list, ahead of Paris and Auckland! We look forward to working with all the cities to build out this index over the coming years. We hope the Portas Active Cities Index provides cities with a platform for learning, sharing, and friendly competition to make every city a great global sporting city.

Asahi Takano

Partner, Global Head of Public Sector Practice



The inaugural Active Cities Index reveals relative performance of cities across infrastructure, events and policy. This study provides an objective assessment of sports delivery in a landscape of sparse data. We look forward to expanding the Index to cover additional cities and additional components of sports delivery, such as participation rates.

Patrick Raupach

Associate Partner, Public Sector Practice Leader

About Portas

We are the leading global strategy consultancy dedicated to sport and physical activity. Our mission is to help our clients harness the power of sport and physical activity for the benefit of all. For nearly 20 years we have served leaders and decision makers across the sports sector, including federations, license holders, clubs, corporates, charities and governments.

OVERVIEW

The Active Cities Index is a data-driven global benchmarking report to assess sports delivery across cities around the world.

► Importance of Sport

Sport has the power to deliver significant economic, social and health outcomes across mass participation, elite performance and hosting sports events. To secure these benefits, cities need to effectively deliver sports policy relevant to their local context.

► Current Challenges

Policy-makers often lack evidence to take action on sports delivery. There is a relative lack of comparable data and benchmarks available, with minimal sharing of data and best practices. Furthermore, there is no standard approach to measurement of the impact of sport.



Why the Index

The Active Cities Index provides for the first time an empirical, data-based solution across multiple dimensions, allowing cities to gauge their sporting position relative to others, and enabling them to engage and learn best practices to elevate the impact of sport for their citizens.



OVERVIEW

The Measurement Framework covers 3 Key Components

Active Cities Index



Infrastructure

Assessment of sports facility provision, given importance of access to facilities to sports participation



Events

Assessment of event hosting, given role of events in activating mass participation and elite performance, as well as securing economic benefits



Policy

Assessment of lifecycle of sports strategy, given the importance of effective planning and implementation to successful sports delivery

25 cities have been selected for the initial Active Cities Index

Cities were selected based on their size, history of hosting major events and geographical spread across the world



Continent	City
Asia	Tokyo, Beijing, Hong Kong, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Mumbai, Doha, Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Jeddah
South America	Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro
Africa	Rabat
North America	New York City, Los Angeles
Europe	Prague, London, Stockholm, Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam, Madrid, Rome
Australasia	Auckland, Sydney

RESULTS

Stockholm secures **gold** in the inaugural Active Cities Index

TOP 10 CITIES

Rank	City	Score
1	Stockholm	7.9
2	Paris	7.8
3	Auckland	7.7
4	London	7.4
5	Sydney	7.4
6	Amsterdam	7.2
7	Doha	7.0
8	Berlin	6.9
9	Singapore	6.7
10	Madrid	6.7



METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

Each city was scored out of 10 in each category of infrastructure, events and policy before taking an average score across all categories.

Note: Cities without a published sports policy scored 0 for policy and thus may not feature in the Top 10. Should your city have a non-public sports policy, please share with the Active Cities Index team and it will be assessed for the 2024 edition.

SUMMARY

Stockholm comes out top of the inaugural Active Cities Index, scoring highly across Infrastructure (1st), Events (11th) and Policy (5th). It is a particular outlier in Infrastructure, scoring 0.5 more than the next highest scoring city.

Paris secures second place, with consistently high placings across all three of Infrastructure (6th), Events (1st) and Policy (7th). Sports delivery has been a clear priority for the city in the run-up to the 2024 Olympics as set out in the city's sport policy to **"use the 2024 Olympics to transform the city, minds and hearts more in favour of sport"**.

Auckland comes a close 3rd, with high placings in Infrastructure (2nd) and Policy (2nd) but placing further down the rankings for Events (19th). The lower ranking for Events may reflect Auckland's vision of **"Aucklanders: more active, more often"**, a clear emphasis on mass participation ahead of other sporting outcomes.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Why Infrastructure?

Studies of sports participation often show access to facilities being a **significant barrier to activity**, e.g., *23% of individuals surveyed in 10 South-east Asian cities cited lack of facilities as a barrier to sports participation*¹. Provision of sports facilities is thus required to enable mass participation in most sporting activities and capture the associated **economic, social and health impacts** for a city.

TOP 5 CITIES

Rank	City	Score
1	Stockholm	8.9
2	Auckland	8.4
3	Sydney	7.7
4	Amsterdam	7.0
5	Prague	6.4



METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

We used Google Maps to search and identify sports facilities in each of the benchmarked cities, based on 14 core facility typologies. The ranking metric is then calculated by counting total facilities per 1,000 people.

We acknowledge that this method may not capture all sports facilities within a city, but is an indicator of provision, further methodology details in the appendix.

MAIN FINDINGS

Stockholm tops the infrastructure rankings, providing 0.75 facilities per 1,000 residents, closely followed by Auckland and Sydney. In line with the average across benchmarked cities (50%), **53% of Stockholm sports facilities are health and fitness gyms**.

Health and fitness gyms effectively address demand for fitness activities, which is typically a popular activity for city residents – *in 2022, 52% of adults in Auckland*², *46% of adults in London participated in conducted fitness activities*³. Provision for team sports is more difficult to provide for in city environments, which is reflected by **only 4% of all facilities across the benchmarks being sports pitches**.

SUCCESS FACTORS

In addition to a high density of facilities per resident, there are three key success factors for cities to optimise the provision of sports facilities in a city



ACCESSIBILITY

Ensuring all residents can easily go to sports facilities within proximity of their home and workplace



SUITABILITY

Ensuring sports facilities address sport-specific demand by residents to maximise usage and activity levels



INTEGRATION

Ensuring that planning of sports facilities is integrated with other city priorities, e.g., education, transport

¹ASEAN Survey on Sports Participation 2021 Measuring Sports' Contribution to Socio-Economic Development in 10 Cities; ²Active New Zealand 2022 – Auckland, Individual workout using equipment; ³Active Lives Adult Survey Nov 21-22 – London, Fitness Activities

EVENTS

Why Events?

The successful delivery of a major event portfolio creates regular occasions to provide **economic, social and health impacts** for a city. In addition to these societal impacts, events can inspire increased **mass participation**, provide **volunteering opportunities** and inspire pride by showcasing **local and national talent**.

TOP 5 CITIES

Rank	City	Score
1	Paris	8.7
2	Doha	7.3
3	London	7.3
4	Berlin	7.2
5	Rome	7.0



METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

We identified the hosts on 100+ major sports events between 2018-24, scoring each event by multiplying a recency factor by a prestige factor to evaluate each city's event portfolio.

Our set of events primarily includes World Championships in Olympic sports, major multi-sport games and high-profile major event series (e.g., Formula 1). More details can be found in the appendix.

MAIN FINDINGS

Paris tops the rankings having attracted a broad portfolio of major events ahead of the pinnacle Summer Olympics & Paralympics in 2024. The defining characteristic of Paris' portfolio is its status as home for multiple major tours, including **ATP Masters 1000 and French Open** (Tennis), **Diamond League** (Athletics) and the **Tour de France** (Cycling).

Relative to recent hosts, Tokyo, and upcoming hosts, Paris, Los Angeles ranks poorly (23rd) for its event portfolio, hosting 1 event (2023 US Open, Golf) in our sample between 2018-24. However, with **12 Major League franchises**, the city has considerable expertise in hosting sports fixtures ahead of the 2028 Olympics. We expect to see Los Angeles **diversify its event portfolio by 2028** to build excitement in Olympic sports.

SUCCESS FACTORS

Beyond attracting a prestigious portfolio of events, there are four key success factors for cities to enable events delivery to positively contribute to a city



FINANCIAL EXCELLENCE

Ensuring events are financially prudent, delivering positive RoI for cities, regardless of scale



TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE

Ensuring events are run smoothly, delivering high-quality fan and athlete experiences



SPORTING EXCELLENCE

Ensuring events exhibit inspirational sporting performance, by drawing elite athletes



STRATEGIC EXCELLENCE

Ensuring events can deliver short- and long-run impact through detailed legacy planning

POLICY

Why Policy?

The effective articulation of a sports policy and the installation of processes to track progress in meeting objectives enables **more focused decision-making by policy-makers**. Understanding which cities develop better policy documents can enable other cities to design more efficient policies and deliver greater impact through sport.

TOP 5 CITIES

Rank	City	Score
1	Amsterdam	9.5
2	Singapore	9.3
3	Auckland	9.3
4	London	9.0
5	Stockholm	8.8



METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

We have assessed publicly available city-specific sports policies across **content, implementation and impact**.

Additional details on the sub-components can be found in the appendix. As noted on p. 6, if your city has a non-public sports policy, please share with the Active Cities Index team and it will be assessed for the 2024 edition.

MAIN FINDINGS

Amsterdam tops the ranking with Singapore and Auckland close behind. All three perform strongly across the three assessment areas of **Policy Content, Policy Implementation and Policy Impact**.

One consistent **area of weakness** across the 25 cities was the use of **data within policy-making**. Only 7 of the cities detailed clear data collection processes as part of their policy while 14 showed evidence of using data to drive decision-making.

This contrasts with the consistent articulation of objectives across most cities, however the pitfall for cities might be that **only 6 defined deadlines** for their initiatives.

IMPLICATIONS

1

There is an opportunity for cities to learn from leading cities on **data-driven policymaking**, e.g., Singapore, to enhance the efficacy of sports policy-making

2

Cities should seek to clearly articulate their objectives regarding sports policy to enable them to **monitor progress in a timely manner** and prioritise specific initiatives to meet targets

3

Many cities could benefit from a **greater sharing of sports policy documents** to understand gaps and opportunities from each other and enhance the impact of sport in cities globally

CASE STUDY: LONDON

Placing fourth in the inaugural Active Cities Index, London has long been recognised as a leading sporting city



INFRASTRUCTURE: Collaborative, localised approach to maximising accessibility to sports facilities

Key Features

Localisation: Facility planning is devolved to local councils within London, enabling focused interventions to address local needs

Public-private partnerships (PPP): Local multi-sport centres are typically run through PPPs, supporting the affordable provision of sport for communities while limiting strain on public sector budgets

Schools: Nearly 200 school facilities in London receive funding to open their facilities up to the public, increasing the accessibility of sport to London residents



EVENTS: Strategic positioning in the events calendar, enabled by world-class event infrastructure

Key Features

Regular tour destination: London has established appointments in the global sports calendar by welcoming annual major events, e.g., Wimbledon, London Marathon

Major event infrastructure: Home to six 40,000+ stadia* in addition to leading sport-specific venues, London is well-placed as a host city without needing new infrastructure

Strategic focus: Defined strategic objective to welcome major sports events, using an assessment framework to identify maximal impact



POLICY: Data-led, integrated policy-making with differentiated governance structures

Key Features

Mass Participation Governance: Presence of a dedicated charity, London Sport, with a sole focus on community sport

Data-led initiatives: Interventions focus on target groups identified through data analysis, made possible due to comprehensive, annual data capture on sports participation

Integrated: The Greater London Authority directly maps the impact of sport on other city priorities, enabling a holistic sport delivery approach



CASE STUDY: SINGAPORE

Singapore has recently emerged as a sporting hub in South-east Asia but there remains scope to further enhance the impact of sport across the city



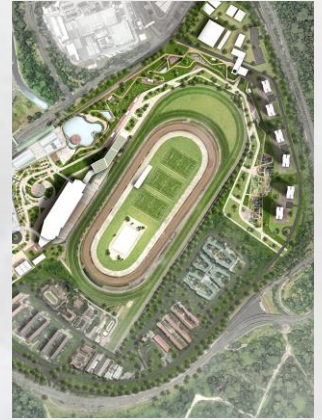
INFRASTRUCTURE: Long-term planning of affordable sports facilities, increasingly integrated with other community provision

Key Features

Masterplanning: Data-led masterplan in place for city-wide, neighbourhood and local sports facilities, prioritising access for all residents within 10 minutes' walk of their homes

Affordable provision: Central ownership and operation 20 multi-sport centres ensures affordable access to sport facilities

Integrated hubs: Major new sports facilities have been designed together with other community facilities, such as food courts, polyclinics and retail shops



EVENTS: Control of major event precinct could enable growth in major event portfolio in coming years

Key Features

Public ownership of event precinct: Following the recent government takeover of the Singapore Sports Hub, the city is well-placed to directly curate an events portfolio aligned to its objectives

Limited global event profile: Relatively small portfolio of global events despite success of Formula 1 GP

Volunteering culture: Dedicated volunteerism movement, Team Nila, ensures a strong supply of volunteers ready for major events, and provides them regular training and development opportunities



POLICY: People-first, data-driven sports policy executed by committing large workforce to sport

Key Features

Data and Insights: Extensive annual collection of sports participation data is used to inform and drive sports policy and shared with private sector to support sector-wide decision-making

Public Engagement: Sports policy defined through extensive public consultation with over 60,000 individuals, ensuring the policy is designed to meet residents' needs

Workforce: To enable delivery of sports policy across the city, Sport Singapore employs ~1,100 individuals, committing significant resources to execute effectively



APPENDIX: METHODOLOGY

INFRASTRUCTURE

We have searched online maps' tools for sports facilities across each of the 25 cities. We defined search terms and filtered the results only to include priority sport facility typologies consistent across all cities, given potential variability in data availabilities. Facility numbers per city were standardised, considering city size and population.

EVENTS

We have assessed the major events portfolio of each city by focusing on which global events have been hosted in the past five years and planned for the future. Weightings were given to different tiers of events and in what years events were hosted. Event numbers per city were standardised, considering city size and population.

POLICY

We have assessed city sport policies developed in recent years across the 25 cities across three factors: (i) Content: Clarity of objectives and initiatives; (ii) Implementation: Extent to which operational enablers are in place and (iii) Impact: Extent to whether initiatives have been achieved.

APPENDIX: FULL RANKINGS

Complete rankings across all 25 benchmarked cities

Rank	City	Score
1	Stockholm	7.9
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4	London	7.4
5	Sydney	7.4
6	Amsterdam	7.2
7	Doha	7.0
8	Berlin	6.9
9	Singapore	6.7
10	Madrid	6.7
11	Tokyo	6.7
12	Beijing	6.2
13	Hong Kong	6.1
14	Kuala Lumpur	5.8
15	Abu Dhabi	5.8
16	Rome	4.4
17	Prague	3.9
18	New York City	3.8
19	Rabat	3.8
20	Rio de Janeiro	3.7
21	Riyadh	3.6
22	Los Angeles	3.6
23	São Paulo	3.6
24	Jeddah	3.6
25	Mumbai	3.3

CONTACT US

For further enquiries, please get in touch with one of our Public Sector Practice leaders



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