



Press release

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Paris 2024 is taking action for a wider, more inclusive representation of sport through emojis

Emojis have become a universal language. By launching an initiative to add Paralympic sports to the emoji dictionary to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Paris 2024 is taking action to foster a more inclusive representation of sport and raise the profile of the Paralympic Games throughout the world. The proposal is backed by the International Paralympic Committee, the French Paralympic and Sports Committee and many Paralympic and Olympic athletes from France and around the world.



A revolution in the way sport is represented

For many years now, emojis have become ever-more conscious of diversity. From a full spectrum of skin and hair colour to people with disabilities, these small emoticons – now an integral part of how we communicate day-to-day – increasingly reflect modern society.

However, there is one fight still to face – the representation of diversity in sport. Paris 2024 strongly believes that sport is an exceptional driver of inclusion, self-acceptance and recognition of difference. Sport isn't



only for people of any one particular physique, and some of the world's greatest champions live with disabilities.

It is time we start to include them in the way we as a society represent sport.

Widespread mobilisation among world-class athletes

That is why Paris 2024 has decided to build on the series of initiatives it has already undertaken and launch a campaign backed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the French Paralympic and Sports Committee (CPSF) to add Paralympic sports to the emoji dictionary.

These efforts further substantiate Paris 2024's desire to treat the Paralympic Games with the same driving ambition as the Olympic Games, as it did when it became the first organising committee to choose a single emblem for both competitions.

A great many champions were keen to support the initiative, including French Paralympic athletes Marie-Amélie Le Fur (athletics), Michaël Jérémiasz (wheelchair tennis), Théo Curin (swimming) and Yvan Wouandji (football 5-a-side); Paralympians from around the world Marlou Van Rhijn (athletics, Netherlands), Angélica Bernal (wheelchair tennis, Colombia), Husnah Kukundakwe (swimming, Uganda) and Silvio Velo (football 5-a-side, Argentina); as well as French Olympic athletes Alain Bernard (swimming) Gwladys Épangue (taekwondo) and Gévrise Émane (judo), who all wished to sign up as ambassadors to the campaign.

Everyone can make a difference by supporting the initiative, using the hashtag **#ParaEmojis2024** on social media.

Emojis depicting Paralympic sports will help give them greater visibility and the recognition they deserve. We hope they will spark curiosity and encourage people, millennials in particular, to learn more about these disciplines.

Marie-Amélie Le Fur, President of the French Paralympic and Sports Committee: *"I am delighted Paris 2024 is launching this fantastic initiative. Emojis reflect society and have become a universal language, used by millions of people. Just like sport pictograms, parasport emojis will soon enjoy their own digital identity, which in itself is a stamp of recognition and inclusion that has a much bigger impact than you might think!"*

Michaël Jérémiasz: *"Disability and sport are not mutually exclusive. Disabled sportspeople like myself just want to play sport like anyone else. So, introducing emojis for parasports gives rightful recognition to all the men and women involved in these sports. It's a great opportunity to further present different as normal. I hope this campaign will attract widespread support."*

Théo Curin: *"I am really proud to be involved with this initiative. My generation use emojis as a normal way of communicating. It is important to feel represented, valued and recognised in this way, not only for myself as an athlete, but also for all disabled people who enjoy sports."*

Yvan Wouandji: *"This inclusive initiative helps to improve recognition and raise the profile of the Paralympic Games among sport lovers. At every edition of the Games, we witness a genuine interest in Paralympic athletes"*



and their performance. We need to harness such initiatives to nurture this momentum and make the Paris 2024 Paralympics absolutely unforgettable!”

Alain Bernard: “As an athlete, I really admire the performances and careers of Paralympians. I’m getting involved with the initiative to help them gain the recognition they deserve and just basic equality with other sports. There’s no distinction when it comes to sporting excellence.”

Gwladys Épangue: “Whether you’re talking about the Olympics or the Paralympics, the most important thing about the Games is sporting excellence and human achievement.”

Gévrise Émane: “We want a more inclusive society, and more inclusive sport, because as athletes, we are all striving to achieve excellence! We all want to shine at the Games!”

Husnah Kukundakwe: “The introduction of Paralympic sport emojis really drive inclusion of parasports into the public domain. They will ease communication and expression by Para athletes about a particular parasport without having to explain them in too much detail.”

Angélica Bernal: “I would love to have Paralympic emojis! People use emojis to communicate nowadays and I think this initiative Paris 2024 is leading is very important for raising awareness of Paralympic sports, especially wheelchair tennis. It would be a big leap forward and super cool!”

Silvio Velo: “It would be very important to have emojis to promote Paralympic sports. People use emojis to communicate and this would be a step forward. I fully support Paris 2024 in this initiative.”

For information:

- There are currently nearly 3,000 emojis, and new symbols are added each year.
- A non-profit private corporation, the Unicode consortium, decides on the adoption of new emojis. The consortium is made up of representatives from major tech companies, engineers, linguists and public-sector representatives who come together four times a year.
- Before Paris 2024, the Spanish Paralympic Committee had already launched a campaign to get emojis for Paralympic sports in the dictionary. It received considerable support (400,000 signatures and the involvement of athletes), but ultimately led to nothing.
- **Paris 2024 will not officially submit its proposal to the Unicode Consortium until April 2021. The proposal will cover all Paralympic sports.**



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About Paris 2024

The Organising Committee for the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Paris 2024) has the task of planning for, organising, financing and delivering the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris in 2024 in accordance with the host city contract signed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the French National Olympic and Sports Committee (CNOSF) and the City of Paris.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games are the leading sports event in the world and have a unique media impact, bringing together some 10,500 Olympic and 4,350 Paralympic athletes respectively representing 206 and 182 delegations from five continents. The Games are followed by over 13 million spectators and 4 billion viewers around the world through more than 100,000 hours of TV coverage, and their impact as a global event of great sporting, economic and cultural importance is unparalleled.

Founded in January 2018, Paris 2024 is headed by Tony Estanguet, a three-time Olympic champion and IOC member. It is administered by an Executive Board (EB) that brings together all the project's founding members: CNOSF, the City of Paris, the state, the Île-de-France Region, CPSF, the Greater Paris Metropolitan Area, the Seine-Saint-Denis Departmental Council and representatives of the local authorities involved in the Games.

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