

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

25 JULY 2012

LONDON OLYMPICS 2012: WHAT BRITAIN THINKS

Interest in the Games: up since March, on 51% interest

51% are interested in this summer's London Olympics compared to 44% who expressed an interest in March

- Currently 46% are not interested in the Olympic Games this summer, putting the 'not interested' number below the majority that existed in March (53%)
- At 41%, interest in the London Paralympics this summer has grown from our previous poll which showed only 34% interest
- Though still failing to interest the majority of our respondents, what was once 62% saying they weren't interested in the Paralympics is now down to 56%

With just days to go until the London Olympics begin, our polls show that the percentage of the British public saying they're interested in the events has grown to over half, up from a figure of only two in five earlier in the year.

Interest in the Paralympics has also gained momentum with a poll from March showing only a third were interested, compared to two in five who say they are now.

Success or failure? 53% say will be success, 27% neither, 10% failure

Despite being hit by problems in recent weeks – such as clashing industrial action, pessimism about public transport capacity, and G4S security failures – our poll shows the majority of the British public feels the 2012 London Olympics will be a success.

One in ten however, feels that the Games will be 'a failure', and over a quarter said it would be neither.

- 53% think the 2012 Olympics Games in London will be a success
- 27% think the 2012 Olympics Games in London will be neither a success nor a failure
- 10% think the Games will be a failure
- 10% don't know

London in comparison to previous Games: 49% say will be better than Athens, 30% better than Beijing, 27% than Sydney

The British public isn't clear whether the London events will be better than those of previous years, with significant numbers expecting the London Games to be fairly similar in quality to those gone by.

- 49% think the London Games will be better than the 2004 Athens Olympics, 6% think the Athens games will be better, 23% think there won't be much difference
- 30% think the London games will be better than the 2008 Beijing Games, 21% think the Beijing Games will have been better, 30% think there won't be much difference

- 27% think the London Games will be better than the Sydney Games, 18% say the Sydney Games will win out, 34% say there will be not much difference between the two

Lighting the flame: Sir Steve Redgrave strong favourite to light London Flame as 26% of Britons interested in Olympics pick him

Sir Steve Redgrave is far and away the interested public's favourite to light the Olympic torch at the Games Opening Ceremony in London this Friday, shows our poll, taking double the share of next-favourite David Beckham and far ahead of third-favourite Daley Thompson.

- 26% of respondents who profess an interest in the Olympic games would like to see Steve Redgrave light the torch at the Games Opening Ceremony
- 13% chose David Beckham, putting him next-favourite
- 9% thought Daley Thompson should be the athlete for the job
- While Dame Kelly Holmes was fourth in line on 5%
- Sir Chris Hoy – who will actually be carrying the Union Jack during the Team GB athletes' procession – was picked by 4%
- And a mention should go to former Olympic runner and current London Organising Committee (LOCOG) champion Lord Sebastian Coe, who was chosen for the torch job by 3%

Britons' favourite Olympic sports

- **Athletics, swimming, track cycling, diving and rowing Britons' top five favourite Olympic sports**
- **When it comes to the events respondents themselves would most like to compete in, however, football comes third to the favourites, swimming and athletics**

And when we asked which sports Britons interested in the Games would most like to see added to the Olympic summer programme, squash, netball and rugby sevens made the cut, coming in as first, second and third choice respectively.

- Athletics (72%), swimming (46%), track cycling (30%), diving (26%) and rowing (25%) were Britons' top five favourite Olympic sports, taking everything into account, and asking only respondents who said they were interested in the Games
- Somewhat conversely, athletics (21%), swimming (6%), football (7%), tennis (6%) and shooting (4%) were interested Britons' top chosen sports, if they were able to compete in an Olympic event
- When we asked interested Britons which sports they'd like to see added to the summer Olympic programme, the most popular sport was squash (32%), followed by netball (30%), rugby sevens (23%), karate (22%) and bowling (16%), while golf (12%), water-skiing (12%), polo (10%) and snooker (10%) also garnered respectable percentages (as did the tug-of-war, on 8%).

Pre-Olympic strikes: 64% Britons say Home Office workers' plan to strike tomorrow 'unacceptable'

Home office workers going on strike tomorrow – a day before the London Olympics officially begin lack backing from the majority of the British public, with almost two thirds labelling their industrial action unacceptable, our poll shows.

Around a quarter will support the strike before the Olympics, however, despite potential disruption.

- 64% say Home Office staff going on strike the day before the Olympics is unacceptable
- 24% believe that it is acceptable for Home Office staff to strike at this time
- 11% aren't sure

Legacy: A healthier Britain post-Games?

Despite doubts associated with the legacy of the London Olympics, more than half of the British public believe that London 2012 will ensure better sporting facilities in the capital, and just over a third think it will encourage a healthier, more active Britain, our poll shows.

- 53% agree that 'bringing the Olympic Games to London will ensure that the capital has much better sports facilities not just for the Games themselves but for years afterwards
- 28% disagree that the Olympics will ensure better sporting facilities in future
- 47% do not believe the Olympic Games will encourage a healthier, more sporty nation
- 34% think that bringing the Olympic Games to London will encourage more British people to take up sport and so improve the health of the nation

[Click here to view the full survey results](#)

- ENDS-

Enquiries:

Joe Twyman, Director of Political and Social Research

T: +44(0)20 7012 6000

E: joe.twyman@yougov.com

Twitter: [@joetwyman](https://twitter.com/joetwyman)

Giovanna Clark, PR Executive

T: +44(0)20 7012 6069

E: giovanna.clark@yougov.com

About YouGov

YouGov is an international, full service market research agency offering added value consultancy, qualitative research, field and tab services, syndicated products such as the daily brand perception tracker BrandIndex and social media analysis tool SoMA, fast turnaround omnibus and comprehensive market intelligence reports. YouGov's sector specialist teams serve financial, media, technology and telecoms, FMCG and public sector markets.

YouGov is considered a pioneer of online market research and has a panel of 2.5 million people worldwide, including over 350,000 people in the UK representing all ages, socio-economic groups and other demographic types.

As the most quoted market research agency in the UK, YouGov has a well-documented and published track record illustrating the accuracy of its survey methods.

For further information visit yougov.co.uk