



NOTE TO EDITORS: The regular (Sunday) scheduling of this story is being delayed by a day to permit concurrent release of the results in all participating countries.

The Gallup Poll

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In International Poll

Olympics Seen as Improving Relations Between Participating Nations

By George Gallup, Jr. and Alec Gallup

PRINCETON, N.J. — Although the 1980 and 1984 Summer Olympics were disrupted by political tensions between the superpowers, the overwhelming consensus in the United States and eight other Western bloc nations is that the Olympics do more to improve relations between the participating countries than to exacerbate them. In many nations this belief is underscored by a sharp decline since 1984 in public support for a permanent Olympics site in Greece, a proposal often advanced as a partial solution to the Games' politicization.

In the U.S., 55% think the Olympics generally enhance relations between the countries taking part rather than make them worse (3%) or not affect them much (40%).

Not surprisingly, the South Koreans, hosts of the 1988 Summer Games that begin Saturday, are most inclined to see the Olympics as a positive force in international relations (82%). Majorities in Spain (71%), Uruguay (68%), Turkey (67%), Mexico (66%) and Australia (58%) also ascribe to this view. Only in Great Britain and West Germany do pluralities feel the Games have relatively little impact on relations between the participants. The proportion saying the Olympics generally worsen international relations does not exceed 6% in any country.

Permanent Site in Greece

The American boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics and the Soviet Union's withdrawal from the 1984 Los Angeles Games heightened demands for reform, including the proposal — endorsed by Presidents Carter and Reagan — for a permanent home for the Olympics in Greece, where the ancient games and several of the early "modern" Olympics were held.

This proposal currently has relatively little public appeal in any of the nations surveyed, with large majorities preferring that the Games continue to move from country to country every four years.

A closer division of opinion on this issue was found in 1984, after the Soviet Union's announcement that it would boycott the Los Angeles Olympics. At that time, 54% of Americans favored rotating the location while 37% backed a permanent site. Today, moving the Games around is preferred by a lopsided 82% to 11% margin.

Great Britain has experienced the most abrupt shift in attitudes, from 52%-41% in favor of a permanent site in 1984 to the present vote of 69%-22% against this proposal. In contrast, the views of the Uruguayans, South Koreans and Turks are about the same today as they were four years ago.

Americans Low on Awareness

Substantially fewer Americans (58%) than Australians (87%), Britons (81%), West Germans (81%), or Mexicans (65%) correctly name South Korea as the site of this year's Summer Olympics. Only the Turks (53%) and Uruguayans (45%) lag behind the Americans in this regard.

Aside from the host nation of South Korea, where 86% are either "very interested" or "interested" in the Olympics, excitement runs highest in Australia (78%) and Great Britain (68%). Belying their lack of knowledge about the Games' locale, Americans rank fourth in interest (61%), followed by the Spanish (58%), Uruguayans (57%), Germans (56%), Mexicans (54%), and Turks (40%).

Following are the questions and key findings:

On the whole, do you think the Olympic Games generally improve relations between the countries taking part, make relations worse, or don't make much difference?

Relations between Participating Nations

	Improve them	Worsen them	No difference
	%	%	%
South Korea	82	6	2
Spain	71	2	19
Uruguay	68	2	21
Turkey	67	1	16
Mexico	66	3	23
Australia	58	4	35
UNITED STATES	55	3	40
Great Britain	43	5	48
West Germany	39	3	45

NOTE: "No opinion" omitted.

Which would you prefer for future Summer Olympic Games — a permanent site to be established in Greece, or that the Olympic Games continue to move from country to country?

Preferred Site for Future Olympics

	Perma- nent site %	Move around %	No opinion %
Australia			
1988	23	73	4
1984	41	53	6
Great Britain			
1988	22	69	9
1984	52	41	7
West Germany			
1988	17	67	16
1984	37	61	2
United States			
1988	11	82	7
1984	37	54	9
Uruguay			
1988	7	82	11
1984	10	79	11
South Korea			
1988	5	94	1
1984	9	87	4
Turkey			
1988	2	79	20
1984	2	95	3
Mexico			
1988	7	85	8
Spain			
1988	6	86	7

NOTE: Some totals do not add to 100% due to rounding. Question not asked in Mexico and Spain in 1984.

Can you tell me in which country the Summer Olympic Games are being held this year?

Awareness of 1988 Games' Location
(Percent naming South Korea or Seoul)

Australia	87%
Great Britain	81
West Germany	81
Mexico	65
UNITED STATES	58
Turkey	53
Uruguay	45

NOTE: Question not asked in South Korea and Spain.

In general, how interested are you in the Olympic Games?

Interest in Olympic Games

	Very interested %	Interested %	Not very, not at all %
South Korea	61	25	15
Australia	31	47	22
Great Britain	28	40	31
UNITED STATES	24	37	39
Mexico	18	36	43
Spain	14	44	40
West Germany	14	42	38
Uruguay	10	47	43
Turkey	8	32	60

NOTE: "No opinion" omitted.

The U.S. results are based on telephone interviews with 1,000 adults, 18 and older, conducted in scientifically selected localities across the nation July 1-7. For results based on samples of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 4 percentage points in either direction.

The international samples range in size from 658 interviews (in Spain) to 2,573 (in Mexico), with an average of 1,253 interviews per country. The surveys were conducted in June, July and August by affiliates of Gallup International Research Institute (GIRI).

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls. *This report conforms to the standards of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.*