

World Olympic Body Clears Russian Athletes to Compete in Paris as Neutrals

By [AFP](#)

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Russia's Olympic team at the Beijing 2022 Olympics. **Jae C. Hong / AP / TASS**

Olympic officials on Friday announced that Russian and Belarusian athletes will be able to compete at next year's Paris Games as neutrals and outside of team events, but only if they have not actively supported Moscow's war against Ukraine.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) said only eight athletes from Russia and three from Belarus currently qualify as neutral athletes.

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The IOC's executive board "decided that Individual Neutral Athletes who have qualified through the existing qualification systems of the International Federations on the field of play will be declared eligible to compete at the Olympic Games Paris 2024."

However, "teams of athletes with... Russian or Belarusian passport[s]," will not be able to compete, nor will those who "actively support the war" in Ukraine, as well as "athletes who are contracted to the Russian or Belarusian militar[ies] or national security agencies."

In addition, "no flag, anthem, colors or any other identifications whatsoever of Russia or Belarus will be displayed at the Olympic Games Paris 2024 in any official venue or any official function."

Officials from the two countries would not be invited to next year's event.

Athletes from Russia and Belarus have been barred from a number of international sporting events since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine last year.

However, some of these restrictions have been gradually eased, allowing athletes from both countries to return to competition under varying conditions.

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