



QUALIFICATION SYSTEM – XXV OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES – MILANO CORTINA 2026

INTERNATIONAL ICE HOCKEY FEDERATION (IIHF)

ICE HOCKEY

A. EVENTS (2)

Men's events (1)	Women's events (1)
12-team tournament	10-team tournament

B. QUOTA PLACES

1. Total quota places for discipline:

	Quota places	Host country quota places	Total
Men	275 (11 teams)	25 (1 team)	300 (12 teams)
Women	207 (9 teams)	23 (1 team)	230 (10 teams)
Total	482 (20 teams)	48 (2 teams)	530 (22 teams)

2. Maximum number of athletes per National Olympic Committee (NOC):

	Quota places per NOC
Men	25 (1 team)
Women	23 (1 team)
Total	48 (2 teams)

3. Type of allocation of quota places:

The quota place is allocated to the NOC. The selection of athletes for its allocated quota places is at the discretion of the NOC subject to the eligibility requirements.

C. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY



Compliance with the Olympic Charter and other relevant rules

All athletes must respect and comply with the provisions of the Olympic Charter currently in force, including but not limited to Rule 41 (Nationality of Competitors) and Rule 43 (World Anti-Doping Code and the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of Manipulation of Competitions).

Only those athletes who respect and comply with the Olympic Charter, the World Anti-Doping Code and the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions, including the conditions of participation established by the IOC, plus the rules of IIHF, may participate in the Olympic Games Milano Cortina 2026.

Age requirements

All male athletes participating in the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 must fulfil the age requirements as stated in bylaw [11.2.1 of the IIHF Statutes and Bylaws](#).

The following players are eligible to play:

- players born on or before **31 December 2008** (no waiver needed)
- players born on or between **01 January 2009 and 31 December 2010** may participate if they have a signed under-age waiver as stipulated in Bylaw 10.6.2 , and are not otherwise refused entry by the Directorate.

All female athletes participating in the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 must fulfil the age requirements as stated in bylaw [14.2.1 of the IIHF Statutes and Bylaws](#).

The following players are eligible to play:

- players born on or before **31 December 2008** (no waiver needed)
- players born on or between **01 January 2009 and 31 December 2010** may participate if they have a signed under-age waiver as stipulated in Bylaw 10.6.2 , and are not otherwise refused entry by the Directorate.

Additional IF eligibility criteria

All athletes participating in the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 must fulfil the requirements of Bylaw [4. Player Eligibility Rules for Participation in IIHF Championships and Olympic Competitions of the IIHF Statutes and Bylaws](#).

D. QUALIFICATION PATHWAY

QUOTA PLACES

Men/Women

Number of quota places

Qualification events



<p>D.1: Men: 225 (9 teams)</p>	<p>2023 IIHF World Ranking – Direct entry</p> <p>The eight (8) highest ranked men’s teams from the 2023 IIHF Men’s World Ranking (determined immediately following completion of the 2023 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Finland/Latvia from May 12-28 2023) and the host country, will be automatically qualified for the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 competition.</p> <p>If the host country is ranked in the top eight (8) of the 2023 IIHF Men’s World Ranking, the 9th ranked men’s team will be allocated a quota place.</p>
<p>D.2: Men: 75 (3 teams)</p>	<p>Qualification Tournaments</p> <p>The Qualification Tournaments will be seeded using the 2023 IIHF Men’s World Ranking of entered nations. The top three (3) teams from the Final Olympic Qualification Tournament will qualify for the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 competition</p> <p>D.2.1 Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 1 (09-12 November 2023)</p> <p>The Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 1 is for nations ranked 36 and lower. The top three (3) teams qualify for the Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 2.</p> <p>D.2.2 Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 2 (14-17 December 2023)</p> <p>The Olympic Pre-Qualification Tournament Round 2 is for nations ranked between 27 and 35 and the three (3) qualifiers from the Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 1.</p> <p>If there are nations who decline to participate, the next highest-ranked nation(s) from D.2.1 will be invited to compete. This process will be repeated until 12 teams are secured.</p> <p>The top three (3) teams qualify for the Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 3.</p> <p>D.2.3 Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 3 (08-11 February 2024)</p> <p>The Olympic Pre-Qualification Tournament Round 3 is for nations ranked between 18 and 26 and the three (3) qualifiers from the Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 2.</p> <p>If there are nations who decline to participate, the next highest-ranked nation(s) from D.2.2 will be invited to compete. This process will be repeated until 12 teams are secured.</p> <p>The top three (3) teams qualify for the Final Olympic Qualification Tournament.</p>



	<p>D.2.4 Final Olympic Qualification Tournament (29 August–01 September 2024)</p> <p>The Final Olympic Qualification Tournament is for nations ranked between 9 (or 10th if the host country is ranked in the top eight (8) best teams in 2023 IIHF Men’s World Ranking) and 17 plus three (3) qualifiers from the Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 3.</p>
<p>D.3: Women: 161 (7 teams)</p>	<p>2024 IIHF World Ranking – Direct entry</p> <p>The six (6) highest ranked women’s teams from the 2024 IIHF Women’s World Ranking (determined immediately following completion of the 2024 IIHF Ice Hockey Women’s World Championship in USA) and the host country, will be automatically qualified for the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 competition. If the host country is ranked in the top six (6) of the 2024 IIHF Women’s World Ranking, the 7th ranked women’s team will be allocated a quota place.</p>
<p>D.4: Women: 69 (3 teams)</p>	<p>Qualification Tournaments</p> <p>The Qualification Tournaments will be seeded using the 2024 IIHF Women’s World Ranking of entered nations. The top three (3) teams from the Final Olympic Qualification Tournament will qualify for the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 competition.</p> <p>D.4.1 Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 1 (07-10. November 2024)</p> <p>The Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 1 is for nations ranked 25th and lower who have expressed interest to participate.</p> <p>The top team from the tournament qualify for the Olympic Pre-Qualification Tournament Round 2.</p> <p>D.4.2 Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 2 (12-15 December 2024)</p> <p>The Olympic Pre-Qualification Tournament Round 2 is for nations ranked between 16th and 24th and the qualified team from the Olympic Pre-Qualification Tournament Round 1. If there are nations who decline to participate, the next highest-ranked nation(s) from D.4.1 will be invited to compete. This process will be repeated until 12 teams are secured.</p> <p>The top three (3) teams from the tournament qualify for the Final Olympic Qualification Tournament.</p> <p>D.4.3 Final Olympic Qualification Tournaments (06 – 09 February 2025)</p> <p>The Final Olympic Qualification Tournaments are for nations ranked between 7th (or 8th if the host country is ranked in the top six (6) best teams in 2024 IIHF</p>



	Women's World Ranking) and 15th plus three (3) qualifiers from the Olympic Qualification Tournaments Round 2.
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HOST COUNTRY PLACES

The Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) as the host country has been granted automatic entry for one (1) men's team and one (1) women's team and will be positioned in the Men and Women according to the 2025 IIHF World Ranking.)

The Host Country will automatically qualify 25 (1 team) male and 23 (1 team) female athletes in the men's and women's event on the condition that the athletes meet the eligibility requirements described under section C of this document.

E. CONFIRMATION PROCESS FOR QUOTA PLACES

CONFIRMATION OF QUOTA PLACES

Immediately after the 2023 IIHF Ice Hockey Men's World Championship, IIHF will publish the IIHF Men's World Ranking on its website (<http://www.iihf.com/>) and inform the respective NOCs of their allocated quota places. The NOCs will then have until 16 June 2023 to confirm if they wish to use these quota places, as detailed in paragraph **G. Qualification Timeline**.

Immediately after the 2024 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship, IIHF will publish the IIHF Women's World Ranking on its website (<http://www.iihf.com/>) and inform the respective NOCs of their allocated quota places. The NOCs will then have until 10 May 2025 to confirm if they wish to use these quota places, as detailed in paragraph **G. Qualification Timeline**.

The IIHF will publish the results of the event within 10 days after the event on its website (<http://www.iihf.com/>).

The IIHF will confirm in writing to the NOCs within two (2) weeks after the last day of each event, or ranking, the quota places they have been allocated. The NOCs will then have two (2) weeks to confirm to the IIHF if they wish to use these quota places, as detailed in section G. Qualification Timeline.

For qualifying events which conclude during the last two (2) weeks of the qualification period, or similarly for events taking place during the last two (2) weeks of the qualification period, notification of acceptance/rejection of allocated quota places by NOCs shall be limited to forty-eight (48) hours in order to maximise the potential for reallocation of any unused quota places.



CONFIRMATION OF HOST COUNTRY PLACES

The Host Country must confirm in writing to the IIHF by 16 June 2023 (men) and 21 June 2024 (women) the use of its Host Country Places.

F. REALLOCATION OF UNUSED QUOTA PLACES

REALLOCATION OF UNUSED QUOTA PLACES

If any team allocated quota place is not confirmed by the NOC by the confirmation of quota place deadline or if the quota place(s) is/are declined by the NOC, the quota place(s) will be reallocated to the next highest ranked NOC from the Final Olympic Qualification Tournament. This process will be repeated until all quota places are filled.

REALLOCATION OF UNUSED HOST COUNTRY PLACES

If the Host Country declines its Host Country place, the quota place will be reallocated to the next highest ranked NOC from the Final Olympic Qualification Tournament. This process will be repeated until the quota place is filled.

G. QUALIFICATION TIMELINE

Date	Milestone
17 April 2023	Member National Associations wishing to enter the 2026 Olympic Winter Games Men's Competition must submit their completed and signed Team Entry Form Application to the IIHF Office
12-28 May 2023	2023 IIHF Ice Hockey Men's World Championship, FIN/LAT
2 June 2023	Publication of 2023 IIHF Men's World Ranking and the IIHF to inform qualified NOCs/NFs of their allocated quota places
16 June 2023	Deadline for NOCs (Men's teams) to confirm use of allocated quota places
09-12 November 2023	Men's Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 1
14-17 December 2023	Men's Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 2
08-11 February 2024	Men's Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 3
15 April 2024	Member National Associations wishing to enter the 2026 Olympic Winter Games Women's Competition must submit their completed and signed Team Entry Form Application to the IIHF Office
March/April 2024	2024 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship, USA



26 April 2024	Publication of 2024 IIHF Women's World Ranking and the IIHF to inform qualified NOCs/NFs of their allocated quota places
10 May 2024	Deadline for NOCs (Women's teams) to confirm use of allocated quota places
29 August – 01 September 2024	Men's Final Olympic Qualification Tournament
01 September 2024	Publication of qualified Men's teams from the Qualification Tournaments and the IIHF to inform NOCs/NFs of their allocated quota places
16 September 2024	Deadline for NOCs (Men's teams) to confirm use of quota places
23 September 2024	IIHF to reallocate all unused quota places
07-10 November 2024	Women's Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 1
12-15 December 2024	Women's Olympic Qualification Tournament Round 2
06 – 09 February 2025	Women's Final Olympic Qualification Tournament
09 February 2025	Publication of qualified Women's teams from the Qualification Tournaments and the IIHF to inform NOCs/NFs of their allocated quota places
24 February 2025	Deadline for NOCs (Women's teams) to confirm use of quota places
10 March 2025	IIHF to reallocate all unused quota places
26 January 2026	Milano Cortina 2026 Sport Entries deadline
6 – 22 February 2026	Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026

* To Be Determined