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**THE PARTICIPATION OF SMALL STATES AT THE SUMMER OLYMPIC  
GAMES**

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# THE PARTICIPATION OF SMALL STATES AT THE SUMMER OLYMPIC GAMES

Kevin Joseph Azzopardi\*

## 1. Introduction

Despite having gone through a marathon 18 days full of events against all odds due to the pandemic, the glamour of the Summer Olympic Games lived on as the entire world got together in a true show of force and unity with athletes battling it out to the least shot, millimetre and point to return back home as Olympic heroes.

The starting lists and medals' table have, as in previous editions, served as an ideal platform for the traditional powerhouses in world sport to further demonstrate their dominance with a few surprises making the headlines from time to time.

Ever since the inaugural edition of the Games for the Small States of Europe (GSSE) held in 1985 in San Marino, this biannual event became a benchmark for the participating countries to gauge their progress against other similar countries whose population is less than 1 million inhabitants.

As per Table 1, if the same model were to be applied across the globe at Olympic level, 48 countries would fit in the bill for such a comparative exercise with Cyprus' population, one of the founding members of the GSSE, now increasing to 1.2 million.

**Table 1: Population in 2020**

AFRICA		AMERICAS		ASIA	
Cape Verde	555,987	Antigua & Barbuda	97,929	Bhutan	771,608
Comoros	869,601	Aruba	106,766	Brunei Darussalam	437,479
Djibouti	988,000	Bahamas	393,244	Maldives	540,544
Eswatini	1,060,164	Barbados	287,375	OCEANIA	
Sao Tome Principe	219,159	Belize	397,628	American Samoa	55,191
Seychelles	98,347	Bermuda	62,278	Cook Islands	17,564
EUROPE		British Virgin Islands	30,231	Fiji	896,445
Andorra	77,265	Cayman Islands	65,722	Guam	168,775
Cyprus*	1,207,359	Dominica	71,986	Kiribati	119,449
Iceland	341,243	Grenada	112,523	Marshall Islands	59,190
Liechtenstein	38,128	Guyana	786,552	Micronesia	548,914
Luxembourg	625,978	Saint Kitts and Nevis	53,199	Nauru	10,824
Malta	441,543	Saint Lucia	183,627	Palau	18,094
Monaco	39,242	St Vincent & Grenadines	110,940	Samoa	198,414
Montenegro	628,066	Suriname	586,632	Solomon Islands	686,884
San Marino	33,931	US Virgin Islands	104,425	Tonga	105,695
				Tuvalu	11,792
				Vanuatu	307,145

\* includes Northern Cyprus

Source: [www.worldometers.info](http://www.worldometers.info)

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A historical overview of the participation of small states at the Summer Olympic Games, as illustrated in Table 2 including number of Olympic appearances, shows that it was the European nations that ventured forward first with Iceland having made their debut in London 1908 followed by Luxembourg (Stockholm 1912) and Monaco (Antwerp 1920). Guyana was the America's first small state to appear at the Olympics in 1948 in London while Fiji followed as Oceania's first small state representative in 1956 in Melbourne. Over the last half a century, Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland, made its Olympic debut at Munich 1972 thus making it as African's first small state while Bhutan was Asia's maiden small state through its first Olympic participation in 1984 in Los Angeles.

**Table 2: Olympic Debut and number of Olympic appearances**

AFRICA		AMERICAS		ASIA	
Cape Verde	1996 - 7	Antigua and Barbuda	1976 - 11	Bhutan	1984 - 10
Comoros	1996 - 7	Aruba	1988 - 9	Brunei	1996 - 6
Djibouti	1984 - 9	Bahamas	1952 - 17	Maldives	1988 - 9
Eswatini	1972 - 11	Barbados	1968 - 13	OCEANIA	
Sao Tome and	1996 - 7	Belize	1968 - 13	American Samoa	1988 - 9
Seychelles	1980 - 10	Bermuda	1936 - 19	Cook Islands	1988 - 9
EUROPE		British Virgin Islands	1984 - 10	Fiji	1956 - 15
Andorra	1976 - 12	Cayman Islands	1976 - 11	Guam	1988 - 9
Cyprus	1980 - 11	Dominica	1996 - 7	Kiribati	2004 - 5
Iceland	1908 - 22	Grenada	1984 - 10	Marshall Islands	2008 - 4
Liechtenstein	1936 - 18	Guyana	1948 - 18	Micronesia	2000 - 6
Luxembourg	1912 - 24	Saint Kitts and Nevis	1996 - 7	Nauru	1996 - 7
Malta	1928 - 17	Saint Lucia	1996 - 7	Palau	2000 - 6
Monaco	1920 - 21	St Vincent & Grenadines	1988 - 9	Samoa	1984 - 10
Montenegro	2008 - 4	Suriname	1968 - 13	Solomon Islands	1984 - 10
San Marino	1960 - 15	US Virgin Islands	1968 - 13	Tonga	1984 - 10
				Tuvalu	2008 - 4
				Vanuatu	1988 - 9

Source : <https://olympics.com/tokyo-2020>

## 2. Which small states have won an Olympic medal to date?

Prior to Tokyo 2020, as indicated in Table 3, only 15 out of these 48 small nations together had managed to gather a total of 35 Olympic medals gained over a span of more than a century, certainly a statistic that in itself spells out the gulf in sporting level between the world's top nations, including the most populous and those at the bottom quarter of such a table. The rest are still awaiting their first bite at an Olympic triumph of any colour.

Bahamas has the honour of having won most medals, a total of 14 (6 gold, 2 silver, 6 bronze) with twelve of them won in Athletics. The next most successful small state is Iceland having won 2 silver and 2 bronze medals in athletics, judo and most interestingly in handball during the men's competition in 2008 held in Beijing.

**Table 3: Previous Olympic Success**

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Sport Disciplines
<b>AFRICA</b>				
Djibouti	0	0	1	Athletics
Cyprus	0	1	0	Sailing
Iceland	0	2	2	Athletics, Handball, Judo
Luxembourg	1	1	0	Athletics, Weightlifting
Montenegro	0	1	0	Handball
<b>AMERICAS</b>				
Bahamas	6	2	6	Athletics, Sailing
Barbados	0	0	1	Athletics
Bermuda	0	0	1	Boxing
Netherlands	0	1	0	Sailing
Grenada	1	1	0	Athletics
Guyana	0	0	1	Boxing
Suriname	1	0	1	Swimming
US Virgin Islands	0	1	0	Sailing
<b>OCEANIA</b>				
Fiji	1	0	0	Rugby Sevens
Samoa	0	1	0	Weightlifting
Tonga	0	1	0	Boxing

Source : <https://olympics.com/tokyo-2020>

Interestingly Grenada's gold and silver medal were won in athletics while Suriname's same quota was achieved in swimming. Luxembourg managed a gold in athletics and a silver in weightlifting while Fiji's sole Olympic medal – a gold one – was obtained by the men's rugby 7s team in Rio de Janeiro 2016.

The only Olympic medal that has been won by both Cyprus and the US Virgin Islands – a silver – has been derived in sailing while Samoa and Tonga boast of the same record in weightlifting and boxing respectively. Likewise, Montenegro grabbed their only silver to date thanks to women's handball national team in London 2012.

Djibouti and Barbados won their sole bronze medal in athletics while Bermuda and Guyana matched the same accomplishment in boxing.

An additional silver medal was won by the Netherlands Antilles at Seoul 1988 in sailing yet its National Olympic Committee is nowadays defunct following the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles in 2011.

Prior to the Tokyo Games, with a population of 62, 278 persons, Bermuda is the smallest state to have ever won an Olympic medal.

Overall, the new millennium has brought upon some of the best overall showings by small states. In Sydney 2000 three countries (Barbados, Bahamas and Iceland) shared two gold and three bronze medals while in London 2012 two golds and two silvers were won by four countries, namely Bahamas, Cyprus, Grenada and Montenegro. During the last Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 three small states won two golds, a silver and a bronze medal (Bahamas, Fiji and Grenada).

### 3. Returning home as Olympic heroes

Needless to state that such a rare breed of winners is considered as heroes in their homeland as they are regarded as having an extraordinary talent through which they managed to beat the big guns and put their small state on the international sporting map, hence national pride and honour are very high.

On his return to Barbados after his Olympic bronze medal-winning performance in the 100m. dash at Sydney 2000, Obadele Thompson was greeted by thousands of well-wishers who lined the streets as his motorcade travelled from the airport to the Barbados Government headquarters, where the former Prime Minister, Owen Arthur, conferred on him the title of Ambassador and Special Envoy for Youth. Thompson was awarded the country's fourth highest award, the Barbados Service Star Award, for his outstanding contribution to sports (1997), the Barbados Minister's Award for Sports (2004), and was three times named the Barbados National Sports Personality of the year (1994, 1996, and 2000).

Five years earlier, in 1995, Barbadian soca band, Krosfyah, released the song Obadele praising Thompson's outstanding achievements. Lead singer, Edwin Yearwood, won the 1995 Pic-O-De-Crop Calypso Monaco singing this tune which became highly popular throughout in the Caribbean region and with the Caribbean diaspora.

Thompson has been involved with the Barbados Special Olympics and featured in an advertising campaign against drug abuse for the United Nations Drug Control Programme. He also filmed a television commercial for UNICEF's "The Rights of Children" to draw attention to the treatment and rights of children. An asthmatic since three years old, Thompson participated in the 2001 World Asthma Day and filmed a television commercial based on his experience as a lifelong asthmatic.

On 6 August 2012, Kirani James won the 400 metres Olympic gold in a time of 43.94, a national record, earning Grenada its first ever Olympic medal and becoming the first non-US runner to break the 44-second mark. James described his win as "a huge step for our country in terms of stepping up to the plate in track and field, just going out there and putting us on the map."

Earlier on, after having won the second 400 metres semi-final, he exchanged name tags with double-amputee runner Oscar Pistorius as a sign of respect for him.

His domestic reception proved to be a euphoric one. Thousands lined the streets in preparation of his return, and he was greeted with an emphatic and vociferous national pride. Also upon his arrival the Prime Minister Tillman Thomas announced James would be bequeathed government bonds totalling up to 500,000 Eastern Caribbean Dollars, a commemorative stamp be crafted in his honour, a new stadium be named for him, and that he would be appointed as tourism ambassador. James also claimed the bronze medal in the same event four years later in Rio de Janeiro.

At the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea, Suriname's Anthony Nesty edged American favourite Matt Biondi by one one-hundredth of a second to win the 100-metre butterfly; he finished the event in 53.00 seconds and Biondi in 53.01. Nesty is the only Olympic medal winner from Suriname and after winning his Olympic gold medal, he was unbeaten in the 100-metre butterfly event for three years.

Nesty's victory in Seoul was a momentous social and political event for Afro-Caribbeans. The Suriname government commemorated his gold-medal performance on a stamp and on gold and silver coins. A 25-guilders bank note portraying an illustration of a butterfly swimmer was printed in his honour. Surinam Airways named one of its planes after Nesty and the indoor stadium in the capital Paramaribo was renamed for him. Four years later in Barcelona Nesty went on to win the bronze medal in the same event.

Similarly, after claiming the silver medal in the Men's Laser sailing competition, the Republic of Cyprus went on to honour Pavlos Kontides through the issue of a commemorative stamp.

In Melbourne 1956 Iceland's Vilhjálmur Einarsson set a new Olympic Record by jumping 16.26 m. in the triple jump, only to be surpassed by Brazil's Adhemar da Silva in the same competition. This was the most unexpected result of the Olympics that year and his silver medal was Iceland's first ever Olympic medal.

Vilhjálmur was also a headmaster of three schools: Héraðsskólinn in Laugarvatn, Reykholtsskóli in Reykholt, and Menntaskólinn in Egilsstaðir, where he later worked as a part-time mathematics teacher. He also was a painter, specializing in landscape painting, and his work has been on display in several art galleries in Iceland.

His son Einar Vilhjálmsson later represented Iceland in the men's javelin throw at three Olympics (1984, 1988 and 1992).

The absolute high point of Luxembourg's Josy Barthel's career was the 1952 Olympics held in Helsinki, where he surprised the crowd and himself by winning the 1500 m with a very strong finish. He also participated at the 1956 Summer Olympics, after which he retired from running. He was also Luxembourg champion in 800 m and 1500 m from 1946 to 1956.

In 1962 Barthel became the President of the Luxembourg Athletics Federation, then from 1973 to 1977 he was the President of the Luxembourgish Olympic and Sporting Committee. He was also member of the Luxembourg government from 1977 to 1984.

The national stadium of Luxembourg, home to the Luxembourg national football team, was named Stade Josy Barthel in his honour. The Lycée Technique Josy Barthel in Mamer also bears his name.

Ele Opeloge represented Samoa at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, competing in the over 75kg category. She was also her country's flagbearer during the Games' opening ceremony.

Opeloge finished fourth in her event, narrowly missing out on a bronze medal. She lifted 269 kg, matching her personal best, while Mariya Grabovetskaya of Kazakhstan lifted 270 kg to finish third. In August 2016, the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) reported in the IOC reanalysis of the 2008 Beijing Olympics that the silver and bronze medallists - Olha Korobka of Ukraine, and Mariya Grabovetskaya - failed retests of their doping samples. The IWF later reallocated medals accordingly, elevating Opeloge to become the silver medallist and also the first-ever Olympic medallist from Samoa.

Opeloge is a celebrity in Samoa, where children approach her in the supermarket for autographs.

Fiji earned its first ever Olympic medal at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, a gold in Men's Rugby Sevens. As a result, the winning team broke out in a victory song that drew considerable online attention and Fiji declared a national holiday for the win.

Sir Durward Randolph Knowles was a sailor and Olympic champion from the Bahamas. He won the gold medal in the Star class at the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo, together with Cecil Cooke. He won the bronze medal in the same class at the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne. He is one of only five athletes who have competed in the Olympics over a span of 40 years.

Knowles was knighted in 1996. In 1997, he was awarded The Bahamas' Order of Merit. In 2014, the second Legend-class patrol boat of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force was commissioned as HMBS

Durward Knowles. In May 2016, following the death of Sándor Tarics, he became the oldest living Olympic champion. He turned 100 in November 2017 and died on 24 February 2018.

After winning the bronze medal in the triple jump during the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Frank Rutherford is considered as the Olympic pioneer in the Bahamas because he was the first to win medals at the Olympic and World Championship levels. He is considered the Father of Track and Field in the Bahamas.

In May 2003, Rutherford was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for excellence in athletics.

Apart from both sailing medals and Rutherford's medal, Bahamas managed a further 13 medals in track and field making the small Caribbean nation the most successful small state in Olympic history.

The women's 4x100m. relay team composed of Debbie Ferguson, Eldece Clarke-Lewis, Chandra Sturup, Savatheda Fynes and Pauline Davis-Thompson won silver in Atlanta 1996 and gold four years later in Sydney. During the same Games in 2000 Davis-Thompson also won the 200 metres final yet this was only conferred to her nine years later following the disqualification of Marion Jones who admitted making use of performance enhancing drugs.

Debbie Ferguson also won the bronze medal in the 200 metres during the 2004 Olympics in Athens.

If the women's relay team was successful twice, the men's 4x400m. managed to double the dose as over a span of five Olympiads they managed to win four medals; bronze at Sydney 2000 and Rio De Janeiro 2016, silver at Beijing 2008 and gold at London 2012. Interestingly, sprinter Chris Brown is the only member to have formed part of all four teams. On 22 August 2012, the Bahamian government named a street in his honour in his hometown of Wemyss Bight, Eleuthera.

Michael Mathieu formed part of three of the teams with the exception being in Sydney. Other top Bahamian athletes included Tonique Williams-Darling who won the 400 metres final in Athens 2004, Shaunar Miller who repeated the same feat in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 and Leevan Sands who won the men's triple jump bronze medal in Beijing in 2008.

#### **4. The organisation of international sporting events by small states**

In terms of organisation of international multi-sport events, it's mostly nations from Europe and Oceania that have been through such an experience with the staging of the Games for the Small States of Europe, the Pacific Games, the Pacific Mini Games and the Micronesian Games.

In Europe most countries have had the opportunity of organising the Games of the Small States of Europe (GSSE) twice; Monaco (1987, 2007), Cyprus (1989, 2009), Andorra (1991, 2005), Malta (1993, 2003), Luxembourg (1995, 2013), Iceland (1997, 2015) and Liechtenstein (1999, 2011). San Marino have organised the Games for a record three times in 1985, 2001 and 2017. To date, Montenegro have played host once in 2019 following their debut at the Games a decade before. Malta is due as the next host country in 2023.

Similarly, the Pacific Games, formerly known as the South Pacific Games, have been organised by three different small states, namely Fiji (1963, 1979, 2003), Guam (1975, 1999) and Samoa (1983, 2007, 2019). The Solomon Islands are due to host the next edition in 2023.

Cook Islands (1985, 2009), Vanuatu (1993, 2017) have organised the Pacific Mini Games twice while the same event was organised once by the Solomon Islands (1981), Tonga (1989), American Samoa (1997) and Palau (2005). The latter are due to host the Games again in 2025.

Palau also hosted the Micronesian Games in 1998 and 2010 as did Guam in 1994. The Marshall Islands are set to be the next hosts in 2022.

Brunei have organised the Southeast Asian Games in 1999 and are scheduled to do so again in 2027.

Apart from these five international games, all small states nowadays participate in their respective continental or regional sporting manifestations such as the Pan American Games, Central American and Caribbean Games, Central American Games, European Games, Mediterranean Games, African Games, Asian Games, South Asian Games as well as the Commonwealth Games.

Yet, when it comes to the Olympic Games, many a times these 48 small states opt to send a token contingent as automatic qualification through pre-established norms is often beyond reach and hence National Olympic Committees (NOCs) rely on the principle of universality and the Tripartite Commission Invitation Places, both strategies intentionally devised by the International Olympic Committee to ensure participation by all countries around the world represented by the five rings on the Olympic flag, each of which depicts at least one colour from every national flag.

## **5. What does the qualification process entail?**

Qualification systems are the rules established by International Federations, in consultation with the International Olympic Committee, which consist of rules, procedures and criteria for participation in the competitions of the Olympic Games. They are established to give a fair and equal opportunity for the best athletes in the world to participate in the Olympic Games, as well as to ensure universal representation. Universality, as specified in the Olympic Charter, is a fundamental aspect of the Olympic Games.

The principle of universality is reflected in the qualification systems through the continental representation of athletes and teams. The IOC also seeks to provide additional opportunities with the allocation of Tripartite Commission Invitation Places through the Olympic Games Tripartite Commission for the Olympic Games. This commission is formed by a representative from the International Olympic Committee, the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) and the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF).

The objective of the Commission is to manage the allocation procedure for Invitation Places offering the opportunity to NOCs, which have traditionally sent small delegations to the Olympic Games, to be represented at the next edition of the Games. A further objective of the Commission is to contribute to enhancing and reflecting universality by selecting athletes from such NOCs, which have not been able to qualify, so that they may have an opportunity to be invited to compete in sports and disciplines for which Invitation Places have been reserved.

The allocation of Invitation Places is concluded with each NOC and International Federation (IF) individually with the Commission approving the final allocation.

The allocation of Invitation Places is the responsibility of the Commission. The Commission has full authority to take decisions regarding the allocation of Invitation Places. All decisions taken by the Commission in relation to the governing regulations or to the allocation of Invitation Places are final. Any dispute relating to any application or interpretation of any Commission decision may be resolved solely by the IOC Executive Board, whose decision shall be final.

Invitation Places are quota places which have been reserved within the total athletes' quota for the concerned sport/discipline and for which the allocation process is managed by the Commission, instead of by the relevant IF. Two types of Invitation Places are thus made available within this process.



These are Invitation Places allocated directly within the athletes' quota and Invitation Places confirmed through the reallocation process of unused quota places.

The unqualified entries/universality places in Athletics and Swimming are not managed by the Commission as these places are allocated by the International Amateur of Athletics Federations (IAAF) and the Federation Internationale de Natation (FINA) respectively. In fact, it is no surprise that in Tokyo 40 small states took part in athletics while 36 small states were represented in swimming.

A total of 104 places in 16 individual sports were available for allocation to all eligible NOCs. The number of Invitation Places to be allocated to an eligible NOC, if any, remains at the full discretion of the Commission, depending on the availability of places, NOC and athlete eligibility, as well as the allocation criteria for Invitation Places.

The Commission reviews all applications received from eligible NOCs with the support of the International Federation and the final allocation of Invitation Places will be made in relation to the end of the qualification period of each sport in agreement with each concerned International Federation. The Invitation Places will need to be approved by the Commission before the allocation can be confirmed to the NOCs.

All Invitation Places that cannot be allocated to eligible NOCs will be returned to the relevant International Federations for reallocation according to the principles defined in their qualification systems.

At the completion of the qualification events, NOCs must confirm whether they accept or decline the qualification places they obtain through the qualification events. A number of unused qualification places or unused host country places (if any) may be reallocated as Invitation Places to athletes from eligible NOCs fulfilling the eligibility requirements of the given sport/discipline. Such reallocations may concern either Unused Qualification Places or Unused Host Country Places.

The Commission reviews all applications received from eligible NOCs and establish a priority list of athletes to whom any Unused Qualification Places or Unused Host Country Places could be reallocated.

In agreement with each concerned International Federation, the Invitation Places must be approved by the Commission before any allocation of Invitation Places can be confirmed to the NOCs.

## **6. Facts and figures ahead of Tokyo 2020**

Invitation Places are not allocated to NOCs with an average of more than eight athletes in individual sports/disciplines at the last two editions of the Olympic Games (London 2012 and Rio de Janeiro 2016). Due to this regulation seven small states, namely Bahamas, Barbados, Cyprus, Iceland, Luxembourg, Cook Islands and Fiji were not eligible to apply for any Invitation Places.

As Invitation Places are available only in individual sports, the following team sports are not included in the calculation of NOC delegation sizes: Basketball (including 3x3 Basketball), Football, Handball, Hockey, Rugby, Volleyball (incl. Beach Volleyball) and Waterpolo. The qualification process in this entire list together with baseball and softball is so rigorous that out of a possible 246 final spots, only 4 teams from small states managed to qualify for Tokyo 2020. These included the men's and women's Rugby 7s national team from Fiji as well as the men's waterpolo national team from Montenegro and their female handball compatriots.

These four teams, in fact, reflect upon the fact that at Tokyo 2020 both nations had the largest contingent out of all 48 small states with Montenegro having 34 athletes and Fiji having 32. These

were followed by Bahamas (16), Cyprus (15) and Luxembourg (12). All remaining contingents from small states fielded less than 10 athletes with the majority having five or less.

As illustrated in Table 4, the smallest contingents were formed of two athletes. From the Americas, Bermuda fielded one rower and one triathlete while Dominica and St. Kitts and Nevis were represented by a gender equal duo in athletics. Asian small state Brunei nominated one athlete and one swimmer while Andorra was represented in athletics and canoe slalom.

Out of the Oceania nations Marshall Islands had one male and one female swimmer while Tuvalu replicated the same formula yet in athletics. Nauru fielded one athlete and one weightlifter.

Apart from the 6 team sports listed above, there was a list of 14 disciplines in which small states were not represented at Tokyo 2020. This list included all five new disciplines, namely BMX freestyle, karate, skateboarding, sport climbing and surfing.

Though having Tripartite Invitation Places available, no small state participated in BMX racing, cycling mountain racing, fencing and modern pentathlon. On the other hand, small states availed themselves of such an opportunity in archery, artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, badminton, boxing, canoe sprint, judo, rowing, sailing, shooting, table tennis, triathlon and weightlifting.

Individual disciplines that were strictly based on qualification included diving, golf, marathon swimming, tennis and trampoline gymnastics. This also meant that small states did not feature in any of these disciplines.

The athletes proposed by their respective NOCs must have international competition experience in one of the sports/disciplines offering Invitation Places, an adequate sporting technical level and have shown willingness to qualify for the Olympic Games by participating in the relevant qualifying events.

It is important to note that there are minimum eligibility requirements for athletes in each sport/discipline, including for those applying for, or receiving, Invitation Places. These requirements are defined in the qualification system of each sport/discipline concerned. The level of each athlete will be assessed by the Commission in collaboration with the respective International Federation.

The main criteria for the allocation of Invitation Places include NOC priority and preferences, the International Federation priority based on the assessment of the athletes' technical level and sporting merit during the qualification period and the International Olympic Committee priority based on various principles in relation to the objectives of the Commission including Universality (by allowing more NOCs to participate in a given sport), continental balance, gender balance, NOC and athlete eligibility, technical level to compete safely and with dignity (based on the IF's assessment) and Olympic scholarships for athletes provided by Olympic Solidarity.

The above-mentioned criteria are taken into consideration by the Commission altogether, without any pre-established order of priority or preference. The IOC, ANOC and ASOIF do their utmost to satisfy as many requests as possible, however, as the number of applications is generally higher than the number of Invitation Places available, not all eligible NOCs may be awarded an Invitation Place.

At Tokyo 2020, these 48 countries, mostly hailing from the Americas and Oceania, fielded 286 athletes, a mere 2.45% of the gross total of 11656 athletes competing at the Games. Male athletes (158) were slightly higher than their female counterparts (128).

**Table 4: Performance in Tokyo 2020**

Country	Female	Male	Total	Sport Disciplines
<b>AFRICA</b>				
Cape Verde	3	3	6	Athletics, Boxing, Judo, Rhythmic Gymnastics,
Comoros	1	2	3	Athletics, Judo
Djibouti	1	3	4	Athletics, Judo, Swimming
Eswatini	1	3	4	Athletics, Boxing, Swimming
Sao Tome and Principe	1	2	3	Athletics, Canoe Sprint
Seychelles	1	4	5	Athletics, Judo, Sailing, Swimming
<b>EUROPE</b>				
Andorra	1	1	2	Athletics, Canoe Slalom
Cyprus	6	9	15	Artistic Gymnastics, Athletics, Cycling Road, Sailing,
Iceland	1	3	4	Athletics, Shooting, Swimming
Liechtenstein	3	2	5	Artistic Swimming, Judo, Swimming
Luxembourg	4	8	12	Archery, Athletics, Cycling Road, Equestrian,
Malta	4	2	6	Athletics, Badminton, Shooting, Swimming,
Monaco	3	3	6	Athletics, Judo, Rowing, Swimming, Table Tennis
Montenegro	18	16	34	Athletics, Handball, Judo, Sailing, Shooting, Swimming,
San Marino	2	3	5	Judo, Swimming, Shooting, Wrestling
<b>AMERICAS</b>				
Antigua and Barbuda	3	3	6	Athletics, Boxing, Sailing, Swimming
Aruba	1	2	3	Shooting, Swimming
Bahamas	10	6	16	Athletics, Swimming
Barbados	4	4	8	Athletics, Swimming
Belize	1	2	3	Athletics, Canoe Sprint
Bermuda	1	1	2	Rowing, Triathlon
British Virgin Islands	2	1	3	Athletics, Swimming
Cayman Islands	3	2	5	Artistic Gymnastics, Athletics, Swimming
Dominica	1	1	2	Athletics
Grenada	2	4	6	Athletics, Swimming
Guyana	4	3	7	Athletics, Boxing, Swimming, Table Tennis
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1	1	2	Athletics
Saint Lucia	3	2	5	Athletics, Sailing, Swimming
St Vincent & Grenadines	2	1	3	Athletics, Swimming
Suriname	0	3	3	Badminton, Cycling Track, Swimming
US Virgin Islands	1	3	4	Archery, Athletics, Swimming
<b>ASIA</b>				
Bhutan	2	2	4	Archery, Judo, Shooting, Swimming
Brunei Darussalam	0	2	2	Athletics, Swimming
Maldives	2	2	4	Athletics, Badminton, Swimming
<b>OCEANIA</b>				
American Samoa	1	5	6	Athletics, Sailing, Swimming, Weightlifting
Cook Islands	3	3	6	Athletics, Canoe Slalom, Canoe Sprint, Swimming
Fiji	16	16	32	Athletics, Judo, Rugby Sevens, Sailing, Swimming,
Guam	3	2	5	Athletics, Judo, Swimming, Wrestling
Kiribati	1	2	3	Athletics, Judo, Weightlifting
Marshall Islands	1	1	2	Swimming
Micronesia	1	2	3	Athletics, Swimming
Nauru	1	1	2	Athletics, Weightlifting
Palau	1	2	3	Athletics, Swimming
Samoa	1	7	8	Athletics, Boxing, Canoe Sprint, Judo, Sailing
Solomon Islands	2	1	3	Athletics, Swimming, Weightlifting
Tonga	3	3	6	Athletics, Swimming, Taekwondo, Weightlifting
Tuvalu	1	1	2	Athletics
Vanuatu	0	3	3	Judo, Rowing, Table Tennis

Source : <https://olympics.com/tokyo-2020>

When one breaks down the list of 286 athletes from small states and reducing the members of the four national teams from Fiji and Montenegro (a total of 59 athletes – 20.6%), one realises that less than 100 managed to reach Tokyo through the actual qualification process rather than by virtue of the Tripartite Invitation places or the principle of universality.

From the remaining 227 athletes, 86 athletes landed in Tokyo thanks to the principle of universality adopted in athletics (34) and swimming (52). None managed to win a medal. An additional 40 athletes and 14 swimmers obtained the necessary minimum qualifying standards.

Athletes from small states participating in disciplines other than team sports and athletics and swimming amounted to 87. From these 34 managed to obtain an invitation place through the Tripartite Commission while the remaining 53 achieved the necessary criteria during the qualification stages.

## **7. Bahamas win two gold medals in athletics**

In the athletic events held at the Olympic Stadium 61 athletes from small states participated in track events while 13 featured in field events.

In the men's 100 metre dash, that typically included no less than 16 sprinters from small states with all five direct qualifiers coming from the Americas, namely Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cayman Islands and St. Kitts and Nevis with the latter achieving the best result through Jason Rogers who finished 17<sup>th</sup> out of 79 sprinters. Among the wild card entrants, Guyana's Emanuel Archibald left a good impression finishing in 48<sup>th</sup> place.

Eswatini's Sibusiso Matsenjwa raised a few eyebrows in the men's 200 metres as the African wild card entrant managed to notch the 11<sup>th</sup> position out of 50 entrants.

The Caribbean dominance was once again clear in the men's 400 metre race as the four qualifiers out of 48 participants hailed from Bahamas (2), Barbados and Grenada. This was undoubtedly the most successful single event for small states as 25-year old Steven Gardiner (Bahamas) won the gold medal and 28-year old Kirani James (Grenada) managed the bronze following his gold medal success in London 2012 and his silver medal in Rio de Janeiro 2016.

Alex Beddoes, representing Cook Islands through the principle of universality placed 36<sup>th</sup> from 48 runners in the men's 800 metres to record the best result from four entries from small states while in the men's 1500 metres Luxembourg's Charles Grethen made it to the final placing 12<sup>th</sup> out of a starting line-up of 48 runners.

Cypriot qualifier Milan Trajkovic managed 23<sup>rd</sup> place from 42 runners in the men's 110 metres hurdles while Kyron McMaster from the British Virgin Islands, in Tokyo after obtaining the necessary qualifying standard, came agonisingly close to a podium finish yet he finished in fourth place among 36 runners.

Another highly encouraging result was achieved by Lindon Victor (Grenada) in the men's decathlon event who finished seventh from 23 entrants.

In the women's track events, as was the case with the men's events, the 100 metre race attracted the highest rate of participation with three direct qualifiers and seven sprinters benefitting from the principle of universality clause. Landing in Tokyo as an outright qualifier, Tynia Gaither from Bahamas placed 21<sup>st</sup> from 72 athletes while from those who did not qualify directly, Joella Lloyd from Antigua and Barbuda left the best impression placing 44<sup>th</sup>.

The Bahamian pair participating in the women's 200 metres, Anthonique Strachan and Shaunae Miller-Uibo left a very good impression placing 11<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> respectively out of a field of 42 runners. In Miller Uibo's case this was certainly a prelude to her 400 metres gold medal success, as the 27-year old sprinter claimed her country's second gold medal of the Games. Barbados' Sada Williams just missed out on the final, finishing ninth from a total of 46 runners.

Shafiqua Maloney (St. Vincent and the Grenadines) and D'Jamila Tavares (Sao Tome and Principe) were the only small state flag bearers in the women's 800 metres placing 41<sup>st</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> out of 46 runners after having arrived in Tokyo via the principle of universality clause.

In the women's 1500 metres Souhra Ali Mohamed from Djibouti did not manage to finish the race while in the women's marathon Sharon Firisua from the Solomon Islands finished 72<sup>nd</sup> from 88<sup>th</sup> runners. Both athletes had not qualified directly in their respective event.

In the women's hurdles events it was the Caribbean nations that once again provided some satisfaction as in the 100 metre race Devynne Charlton (Bahamas) finished sixth followed by compatriot Pedrya Seymour who classified 22<sup>nd</sup> from a starting list of 41 runners. In the 400 metre event Tia-Adana Belle from Barbados ended her commitments in 22<sup>nd</sup> place from 40 runners.

Unfortunately, in the women's 4x400 metres relay, Bahamas did not manage to finish the race.

Participation in field events was very limited with those participating having won the right to do so after achieving qualification. The sole wild card entrant was Icelandic Gudni Valur Gudnason in the men's discus event who finished last from a 32-strong starting line-up. The same event witnessed the participation of three other throwers from small states, namely Apostolos Parelis (Cyprus – 16<sup>th</sup>), Alex Rose (Samoa – 18<sup>th</sup>) and Danijel Furtula (Montenegro – 24<sup>th</sup>).

In the men's shot put event, Luxembourg's Bob Bertemes ended his commitments in 21<sup>st</sup> place among 31 athletes while Anderson Peters from Grenada finished 15<sup>th</sup> from 32 participants in the men's javelin competition.

In the women's high jump Montenegro's Marija Vukovic made it to the final where she finished ninth while Santa Lucia's Levern Spencer was eliminated in the qualifying phase where she ended in 22<sup>nd</sup> place. A total of 31 jumpers participated.

Other creditable results were achieved by Chantel Malone (British Virgin Islands) in the women's long jump finishing 12<sup>th</sup> from 30 athletes and Thea Lafond (Dominica) in the women's triple jump classifying 12<sup>th</sup> from 34 athletes.

## **8. No medal joy for small states in swimming**

The swimming events held at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre witnessed the participation of 66 swimmers from small states. 24 entry times were within the qualification standard while the rest participated thanks to the principle of universality.

Qualifier Brett Fraser representing Cayman Islands was the fastest in the men's 50 metre freestyle finishing 33<sup>rd</sup> amongst 73 swimmers closely followed by Renzo Tjion-A-Joe (Suriname) who ended 36<sup>th</sup> and Nikolas Antoniou from Cyprus, who was the top wild card entrant, after dashing to the 45<sup>th</sup> place.

The men's 100 metre freestyle race was the one in which most swimmers from small states participated with twelve entries including two direct qualifiers among which Aruba's Mikel Schreuders finished in 30<sup>th</sup> place from 71 swimmers. Among the 10 swimmers participating through the principle of universality clause, Malta's Andrew Chetcuti was the fastest and ended 49<sup>th</sup>.

Aruba, Barbados and Cook Islands were represented in the men's 200 metre freestyle thanks to direct qualification with Barbados' Alex Sobers claiming the best result when ending his commitments in 29<sup>th</sup> place from a starting list of 39 swimmers.

Contrastingly, in the men's 400 metre freestyle results were not so encouraging as this time Sobers ended 34<sup>th</sup> out of 36 while Wesley Tikiariki Roberts (Cook Islands) could only finish in the 30<sup>th</sup> place. Similarly, Monaco's Theo Druenne found the going tough in the men's 1500 metres and completed his commitments in 28<sup>th</sup> place from 29.

Qualifier Izaak Bastian (Bahamas) recorded the best result in the men's 100 metre breaststroke when finishing 40<sup>th</sup> out of 49 participants with another four wild card entrants languishing in the bottom places.

In the men's 200 metres breaststroke Iceland's Anton McKee finished 24<sup>th</sup> out of 40 while Simon Bachmann (Seychelles) found the going very tough in the men's 200 metres butterfly and ended his commitments in the last position among the 38 participants.

Likewise, Luxembourg's Raphael Stacchiotti, Christoph Meier (Liechtenstein) and Tasi Limtiaco (Micronesia) endured an uphill struggle in the men's 200 metres Individual Medley after finishing 42<sup>nd</sup>, 44<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> respectively from a starting list of 45 swimmers.

The same Meier maintained the penultimate position in the men's 400 metres Individual Medley among a starting line-up of 29 swimmers.

The women's 50 metre freestyle event was the one that attracted the highest amount of registrations – 12 in total. The only two qualifiers, Julie Meynen (Luxembourg) and Kalia Antoniou (Cyprus) lived up to expectations and placed 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> respectively from a starting list of 83 swimmers. Among the universal entrants, Elinah Phillip from the British Virgin Islands was fastest and ended in 34<sup>th</sup> place.

In the women's 100 metre freestyle, once again Antoniou and Meynen achieved the best results among the 52 participants, finishing 29<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> respectively. Iceland's Snaefridur Sol Jorunnardottir finished 34<sup>th</sup>.

Joanna Evans (Bahamas) placed 18<sup>th</sup> out of 29 in the women's 200 metres freestyle while in the 400 metre freestyle she ended 13<sup>th</sup> from 26 entrants. In the same race fellow qualifier Julia Hassler (Liechtenstein) placed 12<sup>th</sup> while wild card entrant from Malta Sasha Gatt swam to 22<sup>nd</sup> place.

The same Hassler registered other respectable results in the 800 metres and 1500 metres finishing 15<sup>th</sup> from 31 and 16<sup>th</sup> from 33 respectively.

In the women's 100 metres Backstroke Danielle Titus from Barbados registered the best placing by placing 37<sup>th</sup> among 43 participants while Seychelles Felicity Passon found the going very tough in the women's 200 metres backstroke finishing 26<sup>th</sup> from 27 swimmers.

Among all six wild card entries in the women's 100 metre breaststroke, Tilali Scanlan from American Samoa led the way when clocking in 32<sup>nd</sup> place among 47 swimmers.

## **9. Qualifiers prove their worth in individual events**

Rather dismal results were obtained in the archery events held at the Yumenoshima Park as all three participants were eliminated in the first round without recording a single victory. These included qualifiers Karma (Bhutan) in the Women's Individual event and Jeff Henckels (Luxembourg) in the

Men's Individual event that also featured the participation of Nicholas D'Amour (US Virgin Islands) who benefitted from an invitation place awarded by the Tripartite Commission.

In the Canoe Slalom events held at the Kassai Rinkai Park small states were represented by two women, namely Monica Doria Vilarrubla (Andorra) and Jane Nicholas (Cook Islands). The former achieved the better results finishing 16<sup>th</sup> out of 27 in the kayak event and 11<sup>th</sup> out of 22 participants in the canoe event. Both had qualified directly to the Games.

The same was the case with the four cyclists who participated in the road races - departing from Musashinonomoni Park Fuchi and finishing at the Fuji International Speedway - one from Cyprus and three from Luxembourg. The best results were recorded by Kevin Geniets in the Men's Road Race who finished a creditable 37<sup>th</sup> place from 128 cyclists and fellow compatriot Christine Majerus who ended her commitments in the Women's Road Race in 20<sup>th</sup> place from 67 entrants.

14 judokas from small states competed at the Nippon Budokan with seven of them having qualified directly and another landing in Tokyo thanks to an invitation place offered by the Tripartite Commission. Among the qualifiers the best results were obtained by Aden-Alexandre Houssein (Djibouti) and Sandrine Billiet (Cape Verde) who both registered a victory in their respective category (Men -73kg) and (Women - 63 kg) and were eliminated in the last 16. Wild card entrant Cedric Bessi from Monaco, competing in the Men -73kg., also scored one victory and was eliminated in the same round. The other 11 contestants were eliminated outright following their first encounter.

In the rowing events held at the Sea Forest Waterway, wild card entrant Quentin Antognelli from Monaco fared better than qualifier Dara Alizadeh (Bermuda) in the Men's Single Skulls when placing 15<sup>th</sup> from 31 participants. Alizadeh finished 18<sup>th</sup> while Vanuatu's Riilio Rii, who also benefitted from a Tripartite Commission invitation place, ended his commitments in 30<sup>th</sup> place.

Tonga was the sole small state at the taekwondo events held at the Makuhari Messe. Both Malia Paseka (Women -67kg.) and Pita Taufatofua (Men +80kg.) finished seventh among 16 participants in their respective category.

Undoubtedly, one of the victories that made the headlines in Tokyo was qualifier Flora Duffy's sensational win in the triathlon women's individual event to give Bermuda its first ever Olympic gold medal. 33-year old Duffy managed to beat all other 53 competitors to bag home a famous win that put the spotlight on the small Caribbean island with a population of 62,000 inhabitants. In the men's individual event Stefan Zachaus from Luxembourg, a Tripartite Commission invitation place beneficiary, ended in 44<sup>th</sup> place among 51 participants.

The Ariake Gymnastics Centre was the venue for the Artistic Gymnastics competitions where Cyprus' Marios Georgiou had won the right to participate at the Games yet only managed to finish 55<sup>th</sup> out of 66 entrants in the Men's All Round event. Raegan Ruddy (Cayman Islands), who was awarded a wild card to participate in the Women's All Round event, could only manage to wrap up her commitments in 80<sup>th</sup> place from 85 participants.

Three small state badminton players managed to secure themselves a place at Mushashino Forest Sport Plaza thanks to an invitation place awarded by the Tripartite Commission yet unfortunately none of them managed a victory. Matthew Abela (Malta) took part in the Men's Singles and was eliminated in the group stage. His match against fellow wild card entrant Soren Opti from Suriname was cancelled as the latter tested positive for COVID-19. In the Women's Singles Fathimath Nabaaha Abdul Razzaq (Maldives) was also eliminated at the first stage of the competition.

## 10. San Marino shoots off to Olympic history

At Camp Asaka, Olympic history was created as San Marino became the country with the smallest population to ever win an Olympic medal and in the case of shooting it was not only one, but two medals!

33-year old qualifier Alessandra Perilli put her name down in the history books when she claimed the bronze medal in the Women's trap event out of 26 shooters and then teamed up with 38 year old Gian Marco Berti in the Trap Mixed Team to gain the silver medal in a closely contested final against Spain which San Marino only lost at the eleventh hour after missing out on a crucial shoot off. Yet, simultaneously, the Sammarinese pair knew that their nation's dream Olympics had written another memorable chapter. A total of 16 teams participated in this event.

In the Men's Trap Berti finished 18<sup>th</sup> from 29 shooters while in the same event Cypriot qualifier Andreas Makri finished in the penultimate position.

Fellow compatriot qualifiers Andri Eleftheriou and Dimitris Konstantinou took part in the Men's Skeet and Men's Skeet competitions respectively with the former achieving 7<sup>th</sup> place among 29 contestants and the latter finishing 12<sup>th</sup> out of 30 shooters. Yet, the best result for the Cypriots in shooting was obtained in the same event by Georgios Achilleos who placed ninth.

Among those participating thanks to the invitation places offered by the Tripartite Commission, Malta's Eleanor Bezzina ended 26<sup>th</sup> from 53 contestants in the Women's 10m. Air Pistol event while Montenegro's Jelena Pantovic finished last.

In the corresponding male event, Asegir Sigurgeirsson from Iceland ended his commitments in 28<sup>th</sup> place from 36 entrants while in the Women's 10m. Air Rifle event Lenchu Kunzang (Bhutan) finished 43<sup>rd</sup> among 50 participants.

## 11. Fiji underlines dominance in Rugby Sevens

At the Yoyogi National Gymnasium, Montenegro's women national team started off their commitments in the 12-team event with a fine win against Angola followed by back-to-back defeats at the hands of Japan and Norway. Yet, in the following match they defeated South Korea. A result that meant that despite losing their final group match against the Netherlands, they still made it through to the quarter finals where they crossed swords against the team representing the Russian Olympic Committee. Though putting on a good show, the Montenegrins were eliminated.

Meanwhile, their male waterpolo compatriots were heavily involved in the waterpolo competition played out at the Tokyo Tatsumi International Swimming Centre. Montenegro started off their commitments with a solid win against Australia followed by two consecutive defeats against Spain and Croatia. The Montenegrins bounced back to defeat Kazakhstan and though they lost their final group match against Serbia, they still made it to the quarter finals where they met Greece and were ultimately eliminated. In the 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> place play off matches Montenegro suffered two further defeats against Croatia and Italy to ultimately end up in eighth place from 12 teams.

At the Tokyo Stadium, it was great joy for Fiji in the Rugby Sevens competitions as the Pacific Islanders claimed a gold and bronze medal in the men's and women's events respectively.

Buoyed by their gold medal success five years ago in Rio de Janeiro, the men's team were all out to prove that their success was no fluke and, in fact, stormed off to a great start by winning all three group matches against Japan, Canada and Great Britain. After beating Australia in the quarter finals,



they went on to edge Argentina in the semi-finals and ultimately defeated New Zealand in a closely contested final to end up as worthy winners of the event.

The women's national team started its group stage commitments with a loss against France but then made amends by winning their remaining two matches against Canada and Brazil to make it to the quarter finals where they met Australia. A great performance against the Aussies saw them through with New Zealand up next in the semi-finals. This time the Kiwis had the better of the Fijians who ultimately had to settle for bronze after beating Great Britain in the third place play off.

## 12. Of close shaves and struggling performances

In the sailing events held at Enoshima Cyprus' Pavlos Kontides came agonisingly close to another podium finish following his silver medal in London 2012 yet this time finished in fourth place in the Men's One Person Dinghy Laser event. Two other qualifiers in the event, Eroni Leilua (Samoa) and Rodney Govinden (Seychelles) finished 32<sup>nd</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> respectively. On the other hand, wild entrants Milivoj Dukic (Montenegro) and Luc Chevrier (Santa Lucia) finished 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> respectively.

Another creditable Cypriot result was achieved by Andreas Cariolou in the men's windsurfer RSX event when he finished 12<sup>th</sup> from 25 sailors while in the corresponding female event Natasa Lappa ended her commitments in 21<sup>st</sup> place among 27 participants.

Qualifiers Adrian Hoesch and Tyler Justus Paige from American Samoa could only finish 18<sup>th</sup> out of 19 sailors in the Men's Two Persons Dinghy 470 event while in the women's one-person dinghy – laser radial event wild card entrant Stephanie Devaux Lovell from Santa Lucia achieved the best result when finishing 28<sup>th</sup> from 44 entrants, faring better than Fiji's direct qualifier Sophia Frances Morgan (42<sup>nd</sup>) and fellow Tripartite Commission beneficiary Jalese Gordon from Antigua and Barbuda (43<sup>rd</sup>).

Six weightlifters from small states took part in the competitions held at the Tokyo International Forum. Wild card entrant Kuinini Juanita Mechteld Manumua from Tonga achieved the best result when finishing eighth from 14 contestants in the Women's +87kg. event while in the women's 76kg. event Nauru's Nancy Genzel Abouke placed tenth from 13 participants.

In the table tennis event organised at the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium, a total of six players from five small states participants, five female and one male, the latter being Vanuatu's Yoshua Shing who was eliminated in the first round of the men's singles event.

In the women's singles event, Monaco's Xiaoxin Yang lasted most as she was eliminated in the third round while Luxembourg's Xia Lian Ni bowed out in the second round. Guyana's Chelsea Edghill – the sole wild card entrant – was eliminated in the first round.

The sole small state representative at the rhythmic gymnastics competitions held at the Ariake Gymnastics Centre was Marcia Alves Lopes from Cape Verde who undoubtedly found the going in the Women's Individual All Around event very tough and finished last among 26 participants.

Similarly, Liechtenstein's Lara Meching and Marluce Schierscher were the sole small state participants in the Artistic Swimming events held at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre. Yet, their result was slightly better as when taking part in the duet event, they classified 17<sup>th</sup> out of 22 pairs.

At the Kokugikan Arena six boxers from five small states participated in the various boxing events. The best results were achieved by qualifier Ato Leau Plodzicki-Faoagali (Samoa) and Daniel David Varela de Pina (Cape Verde) who were both eliminated in the second round in the Men's Heavy (81-91kg.) and Men's Fly (48-52kg.) respectively. No female boxers from small states participated.

At the canoe sprint events held at the Sea Forest Waterway, small state representatives found the going very tough indeed. Suffice it to say that the best results were only achieved by ranking among the bottom four classified participants in different categories.

Qualifier Tuva'a Clifton from Samoa participated in the Men's Kayak Single 200 metres and finished 22<sup>nd</sup> among 25 starters while Amado Cruz (Belize) finished 23<sup>rd</sup> after being awarded an invitation place by the Tripartite Commission.

In the corresponding female event, qualifier Anne Cairns, representing Samoa, finished 31<sup>st</sup> from 34 participants while in the Men's Canoe Single 1000 metres qualifier Buly de Conceicao Triste from Sao Tome and Principe finished 30<sup>th</sup> from 33 contestants while Cruz was in action again in the Men's Kayak Single 1000 metres and finished 25<sup>th</sup> from 27 entrants. All remaining 12 entries from small states saw the participants classify in the penultimate and last positions of their respective category.

At the Izo Velodrome, Shizuoka qualifier Jair Tjon En Fa from Suriname was the only participant from a small state in the cycling track events. After finishing 13<sup>th</sup> from 30 cyclists in the Men's Sprint event, he performed gallantly in the Men's Keirin event to the extent that he made it to the final from among 30 participants yet ultimately had to content himself with fourth place following a string of very solid performances.

In the equestrian events held at Central Breakwater, Luxembourg was the only small state to have its flag on display after Nicolas Wagner Ehlinger managed to qualify for the dressage individual event where out of 59 riders he finished 25<sup>th</sup>.

In the wrestling events held at the Makuhari Messe the Sammarinese wild dream continued to chalk up more drama as in the Men's Freestyle 86kg. 24 year old qualifier Myles Nazem Amine managed to claim the bronze medal.

Guam's Rckaela Maree Ramos Aquino also managed to qualify in the Women's Freestyle 53kg. but was eliminated in the first round and classified in 14<sup>th</sup> place from 16 contestants.

### 13. Small states set a new record Olympic medal winning tally

Beyond any doubt this was the best showing ever by small states to the effect that five countries (Bahamas, Bermuda, Fiji, Grenada and San Marino) notched their names on the medals' table and between them shared a total of nine medals (4 gold, 1 silver, 4 bronze), as indicated in Table 5. Two records that supersede any previous edition of the Olympic Games from a small states' perspective.

**Table 5: Medal Winners - Tokyo 2020**

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Sport Discipline
<b>EUROPE</b>				
San Marino	0	1	2	Shooting, Wrestling
<b>AMERICAS</b>				
Bahamas	2	0	0	Athletics
Bermuda	1	0	0	Triathlon
Grenada	0	0	1	Athletics
<b>OCEANIA</b>				
Fiji	1	0	1	Rugby Sevens

Source: <https://olympics.com/tokyo-2020>

Fourth place finishes were also achieved by the British Virgin Islands (athletics), Cyprus (sailing) and Suriname (cycling track).

Furthermore, the following nations achieved a top ten status, namely: Bahamas (athletics – women's 200 metres and women's 100 metres hurdles), Montenegro (athletics – women's high jump, women's handball, men's water polo), Grenada (athletics – men's decathlon), Tonga (taekwondo – women's - 67kg., men's +80kg., weightlifting – women's +87kg.), Cyprus (shooting – men's skeet) and Nauru (weightlifting – women's 76kg.).

Though nine medals out of a grand total of may represent a quasi-negligible percentage to small states achieving thus far is a positive yardstick in itself.

After 101 years of Olympic participation, Monaco remains the smallest state with the longest wait to yet achieve its first Olympic medal followed by Malta (93 years) and Liechtenstein (85 years).

In an international sporting arena typical of David vs Goliath such results will certainly continue to motivate athletes hailing from small states that if talent is nurtured in the correct manner through substantial financial investment, scholarships and appropriate support by all stakeholders such a positive trend may continue to persist and increase its rate of growth.

The limitations in having a low population and restricted land area are to be turned into an opportunity to realise sporting potential in a manner through which small state inhabitants do not feel inferior to foreign opponents. Regular international participation will certainly help in continue to bridge the gap as future athletes continue to dream to make their small state proud and earn the plaudits of national heroes.