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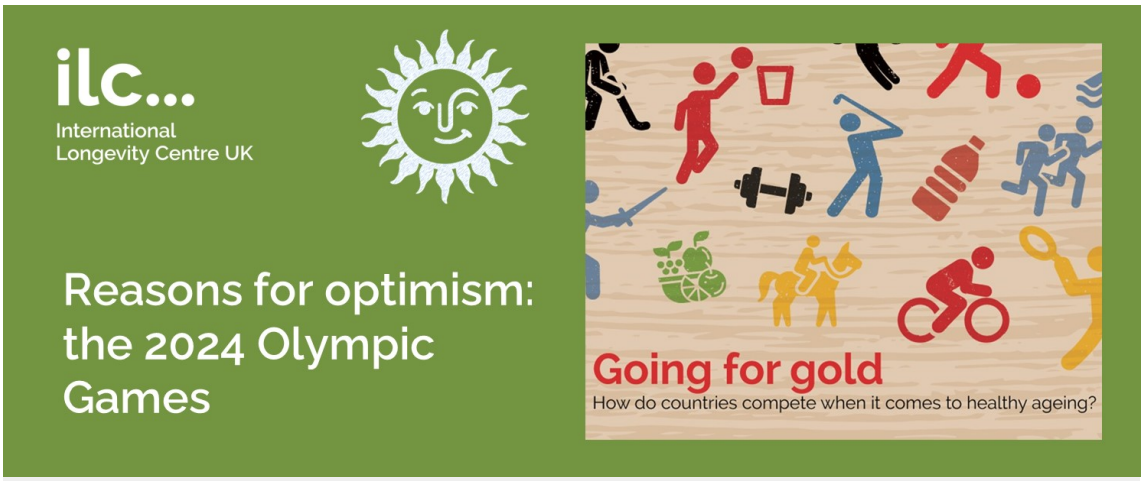
International Longevity Centre UK

Latest news

ILC Friday three

- Reasons for optimism - the Olympic Games 2024
- New government - will this mean a new deal for ageing?
- Going beyond borders - inside Sardinia's Blue Zone

Reasons for optimism - the 2024 Olympic Games



As the votes are counted across the UK and France and exhausted candidates limp off on their summer break, we look forward to heartwarming stories of competitor prowess and perseverance during the 2024 Olympics in Paris.

It has been 100 years since Paris last hosted the Olympics. Much has changed, but the feats of endeavour remain much the same. Other than swimmer-turned-Tarzan Johnny Weissmuller, the biggest names at Paris 1924 were the "Flying Finns" Paavo Nurmi and Ville Ritola – both still hold the records for the most athletics medals won at a single Games. Nurmi won five athletics golds, and Ritola came away with six athletics medals (four golds and two silvers).

While only one in 22 competitors in 1924 were women compared to equal numbers due to compete in 2024, there was a similar age range with athletes in their teens and their 60s. However, unlike today, this age span was not seen in a single discipline. In 2024, Britain's 15- and 16-year-old skateboarders, Sky Brown and Lola Tambling, will compete alongside their teammate Andy Macdonald, who is 50.

This year, there's more than 10,500 athletes competing and only 300 gold medals up for grabs, so only a few will be able to call themselves Olympic champions when the Games end. However, we're teaming up with ILC-France and the ILC Europe Network to add a few more medal winners to the list.

Our Going for gold project supported by 2024 Olympic sponsor Sanofi, has produced its very own Olympic-styled "Healthy Ageing Medal Table" ranking countries and territories across eight different healthy ageing categories relating to healthy life expectancy, immunisation and physical activity. Using findings from the ILC's Healthy Ageing and Prevention Index, as well as existing data from the OECD, UN, the World Bank and WHO, we will be awarding gold, silver and bronze medals to those that perform best when it comes to healthy ageing at an awards ceremony in Paris on 16 July.

Recipients of these awards include esteemed diplomats and Paris-based ambassadors from the medal-winning countries. During the event, ILC will also be joined by high-level speakers including:

- Dubravka Šuica, European Commission Vice-President, Democracy and Demography
- David Mazerot, CEO, L'Appart Fitness
- Kai Troll, CEO, EuropeActive

With 24 medals up for grabs, ILC have already identified some interesting medallists. While all will be revealed on 16 July, ILC finds that:

- A country that has competed at the Commonwealth Games, but never at the Olympics, wins a gold and a bronze medal.
- Another country that wins a gold medal has never won a medal at the Summer Olympics despite participating since 1920.
- One country with a gold medal has a population of 1,600, while another has a population of 126 million.

We'll reveal all in two weeks' time, on the Friday after our awards ceremony. In the meantime, there are still one or two places left, so if you happen to be in Paris, do let us know via the button below to join us at the spectacular Maison du Danemark on the Champs-Élysées.

AN EVENT FULL OF OPTIMISM

A new government - will this mean a new deal for ageing?



New government – will this mean a new deal for ageing?

We now know the results of the UK General Election, and are clear on what we want to see happen to ensure longer, happier, more active lives. While the bold descisions needed will take leadership, political consensus will help drive change. So today, we will be sending out messages of congratulations to new MPs across all parties as well as the following key messages.

We are living longer, but in much poorer health. But we can turn this around, with policies that might be described as a "nanny state on steroids" and immediate commitment of 6% investment in preventative health interventions.

We are living longer but working less. But we can change this by supporting those who want to work to do so through flexibility-by-default, alongside investment in skills and workplace health.

The share of wealth held by younger people has collapsed. But we can avoid undermining the intergenerational contract by reducing poverty from the start of life and supporting younger people with a "leg-up" to adulthood.

Older people are underspending and too many are forced out of work too soon. But we can maximise the longevity dividend by making public spaces and the retail environment work for all ages ensuring our towns and high streets thrive not just survive.

We need a coherent national strategy and leadership to support long lives for the future tying demographic change in with the other megatrends of our time: climate change and AI.

For more on what needs to change, watch David Sinclair's video here and Arunima Himawan's post here. If you are able to share our key messages with the politicians in your area, and our route map for long lives, please do.

READ MORE

Going Beyond Borders - Exploring Sardinia's Blue Zones

Italy is combating Sardinia's ageing population, by encouraging migrants to repopulate empty villages and offering financial incentives for young families. So, are these solutions sustainable as we look to the future? Beyond Borders: A Vanishing World



Will you be jetting off to a sun-drenched location for your holidays this summer? Somewhere like Icaria in Greece, or Nicoya in Costa Rica? Esther McNamara, ILC's Senior Health Policy Lead, travelled to Sardinia, Italy earlier this year to participate in a documentary about so-called 'Blue Zones': places that are home to a large number of older people, particularly centenarians.

The first episode of the documentary speaks to Sardinia's sheep farmers and centenarians to understand what demographic change and globalisation mean for the island. ILC contributes to the second episode, exploring how these small communities (and larger cities) will need to adapt now that fewer people remain; most younger people leave to find work and start families elsewhere. The island of Sardinia is therefore offering incentives for young families to move there, and is encouraging migrants to repopulate empty villages.

On her return Esther shared the following reflections on the experience:

"It was wonderful to visit Sardinia, experience the food and slower pace of life, and to share ILC's work through this documentary. I couldn't help feeling that the current fascination with Blue Zones that we see in the UK and USA comes from an inherent conflict: we want to live longer lives, but most of us wouldn't choose the lifestyle that seems to enable this. Life for many Sardinians in this documentary is about manual labour, small interdependent social networks, predictability, and routine. Coming back to London, most people here would not swap the conveniences and endless entertainment of a big city for a quieter and more interdependent life in a small rural community.

With jobs few and far between, and even fewer opportunities to progress in a career, life is simply not sustainable even for people who would stay in Sardinia. For Blue Zones to remain populated, we need to think creatively and boldly about how to meet people's needs in these rural communities. For instance, the island of Sardinia is beautiful and quiet; with more opportunities for remote work than ever, why aren't digital nomads flocking there to work from their laptops?"

WATCH HERE

During July and August we will be sending this newsletter out every fortnight rather than weekly. Your next Friday three will arrive on 19 July 2024.

To keep up-to-date with ILC events throughout the year, please continue to check our website on a regular basis.

If you are interested in learning more about our Partners Programme, please click here.

Please follow us on social media via the links below for our latest news and event updates.



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