

# Polish competitors at the 13th Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022<sup>1</sup>

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Number of Polish representatives participating in the 13th Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022

**The 13th Paralympic Winter Games in Beijing were attended by the Polish team of 11 participants (3 women and 8 men). They were accompanied by 4 guides. There were also 6 debutants among the competitors.**

From 4 to 13 March 2022, the Polish team took part for the 12th time in the Paralympic Winter Games, held in Beijing, which had also previously hosted the 24th Olympic Winter Games. As during the Olympic Games, the Paralympics began and ended at the National Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest. The motto of this year's Paralympic Games was "Together for a Shared Future".

During the Beijing Games, athletes competed in six Paralympic disciplines – Para Biathlon, Wheelchair Curling, Para Cross Country Skiing, Para Alpine Skiing, Para Ice Hockey and Para Snowboard, in which 78 competitions were held (including 39 men's, 35 women's and 4 mixed). Our athletes competed in Para Cross Country Skiing, Para Biathlon, Para Alpine Skiing and Para Snowboard.

564 athletes from 46 countries competed at the Paralympic Winter Games in China. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the International Paralympic Committee announced the exclusion of the Russian and Belarusian teams from the competition. A total of 83 competitors were registered for the Games from these two countries.

The Polish team consisted of 11 people (3 women and 8 men), accompanied by 4 guides. The most experienced Games participant in the Polish team was Andrzej Szczęsny, who participated in the Paralympics for the fourth time (previously in Turin in 2006, Vancouver in 2010 and in Sochi in 2014). Witold Skupień and Igor Sikorski can also boast of having competed in Paralympics before (in Sochi in 2014 and in Pyongyang in 2018). For Monika Kukla, Aneta Górską, Krzysztof Plewa, Wojciech Taraba, Paweł Gil and Paweł Nowicki it was an Olympic debut.

Of all the competitors, only Igor Sikorski can boast an Olympic medal. He won bronze four years ago in Pyongyang in the giant slalom sitting event.

The oldest Polish representative was Piotr Garbowski (48 years old), and the youngest competitors were Aneta Górską and Paweł Nowicki – 21 years old.

At the 13th Paralympic Winter Games in Beijing, the Polish team did not win any medals

<sup>1</sup> Compiled from materials available at the websites of the Ministry of Sport and Tourism <https://www.gov.pl/web/sport>, the Polish Paralympic Committee <https://paralympic.org.pl> and the International Paralympic Committee <https://www.paralympic.org/beijing-2022>.

At the Opening Ceremony the Polish team was led by a flag bearer – Andrzej Szczęsny (Para Alpine Skiing) and at the Closing Ceremony by one of the debutants – Aneta Górska (Para Biathlon and Para Cross Country Skiing).

At the 13th Paralympic Winter Games in Beijing the Polish team did not win any medal. During nine days of competition, the Poles finished eight times in the top, scoring eight, which gives the competitors the right to use sports scholarships for the next 18 months. The highest places (fifth) were achieved by Iweta Faron in Para Biathlon (6 km sprint) and Witold Skupień in Para Cross Country Skiing (20 km run in classic style). The sixth place went to Piotr Garbowski with Jakub Twardowski in Para Cross Country Skiing (20 km in classic style) and the participants in the 4x2.5 km mixed relay in Para Cross Country Skiing – Iweta Faron and Witold Skupień. Seventh place went to Piotr Garbowski with his guide in Para Cross Country Skiing (sprint) and Paweł Gil with his guide Michał Lańda in Para Biathlon (long run). The last scoring places went to Aneta Górska with guide Catherine Spierenburg in Para Biathlon (6 km run) and Iweta Faron in Para Cross Country Skiing - medium run.

So far, medal achievements of Polish athletes with disabilities at the Winter Paralympic Games has reached 45 medals, including 11 gold, 6 silver and 28 bronze ones

**Table 1. Participation of Polish competitors in the 13th Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022**

Specification	Number of events		Participation of Polish competitors <sup>a</sup>
	total	of which with participation of Polish competitors	
Total	78	34	17
of which:			
Para Biathlon	18	10	6
Para Alpine Skiing	30	6	2
Para Cross Country Skiing	20	16	8
Para Snowboard	8	2	1

a Competitors may be listed more than once if they performed in more than one event.

At the 13th Paralympic Winter Games, Poland was not included in the medal classification. In the previous Paralympic Games in Pyongyang in 2018, the Polish team finished 25th, winning one bronze medal. At that time, Polish competitors competed in Para Alpine and Para Cross Country Skiing, Para Biathlon and Para Snowboard. In the history of the Paralympic Winter Games, Poland's highest position, 9th, was achieved at the 1984 Paralympic Games in Innsbruck, where the Poles won 13 medals, including 3 gold ones.

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