

Mega Events, Urban Transformations and Social Citizenship

**A Multi-Disciplinary Analysis
for An Epistemological Foresight**

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5 The Evolution of Olympic Games Governance

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Introduction

The Summer and Winter Olympic Games, together with the football World Cup and World Expos, are the world's largest regular events. They can help create an urban and regional identity and, in some cases, put the host city (or country for the World Cup) on the world's geopolitical or tourism map. Staging these events requires collaboration between innumerable public and private organizations and the commitment of substantial human and financial resources. Hence, the local committee responsible for an event's logistical organization is just one among many stakeholders—including residents, participants/visitors, governments of all types and levels, local and international sports organizations and national and multinational corporations—who come together to co-create the event (Grohs et al. 2019).

This chapter focuses on the governance of the Summer and Winter Olympic Games, which have evolved considerably since the events were first created in 1896 and 1924, respectively. Some of the most notable changes have occurred since the turn of the 21st century, although they are not necessarily visible on the surface. In fact, the ever-increasing involvement of national and regional governments, local residents, civic groups and public opinion, athletes, broadcasters, and domestic and international sponsors has greatly changed the role of the Olympic system's classic stakeholders (Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott 2008; Chappelet 2020).

The following review of Olympic Games governance combines analyses of documents relating to previous editions of the Games with the author's detailed knowledge of the management of the Olympic System, acquired during more than forty years' involvement with the Olympics in various capacities. It begins by describing the growth of the modern Olympic Games during the 20th century and the concomitant changes in the way they were governed by their primary stakeholders. Section two shows how the 1996 Centennial Olympics, hosted by Atlanta (United States), revealed the weaknesses of the governance system the International Olympic Committee (IOC) had developed over the previous century, especially in terms of supervising Olympic Games organizing committees (OCOGs). Section three

presents the governance reforms introduced to overcome these weaknesses during subsequent Olympic Games, starting with Sydney 2000. The conclusion shows that the postponement of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics for a year has accelerated the adoption of the type of collaborative approach to governance that will be needed for future editions of the Games.

The huge growth of the modern Olympics

Because today's Olympic Games are a global festival and one of the world's biggest media events, it would be easy to imagine that this has always been the case. In fact, according to Barbara Keys (2006:90), it was not until the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics that the Games (and sport) became a worldwide phenomenon and began attracting people's attention across the globe. The first government to truly capitalize on this was the Nazi regime in Germany, which invested massively in the 1936 Berlin Olympics despite opposing the city's bid before coming to power (the IOC attributed the Olympics to Berlin in 1931; Hitler became chancellor in 1933).

Indeed, the media had paid little attention to the first Olympic Games of the modern era, held in Athens in 1896 and organized locally at the request of the committee France's Baron Pierre de Coubertin had founded in 1894: the IOC. Despite its input in organizing the 1896 Olympics, the IOC did not want to be directly involved in staging future editions, preferring to limit its role to choosing an Olympic host city every four years. As Coubertin noted on several occasions (e.g., Coubertin 1908:588), the IOC's members should be seen as "trustees of the Olympic ideal" and of the Games, in the same way, that the Henley Stewards oversee the Henley Royal Regatta, a rowing meet on the Thames near London that has been held every year since 1839. The IOC gradually asserted its control over the Olympic Games by deciding not only which cities would host the event but also which sports and disciplines would be included and which countries would be eligible to take part. It did this by recognizing the international sports federations (IFs) that were being formed at the turn of the 20th century, initially to endorse international competitions and to provide harmonized global rules for their sports and disciplines, and national Olympic committees (NOCs), which were created to choose and send a team to the Games (the first editions of the Games had accepted entries from individual athletes).

The 1932 Los Angeles Olympics involved 37 countries (or NOCs), represented by 1,334 athletes who competed in 14 sports governed by the same number of IFs (www.olympic.org/los-angeles-1932 and Gueorguiev 1995). All the components of the Olympic protocol (flag, oath, village, ceremonies, Olympic podium) had been established, including the Olympic flame, which was lit at the top of the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, although the flame relay from Olympia was not inaugurated until the 1936 Games. The event was financed entirely by ticket sales and a few sponsors (including the local bakery Helms, which continued making an "Olympic bread" until

the 1950s) and did not receive any subsidies from either the federal or state governments (Keys 2006:71). The President of the United States did not want to open the Games, as it had become traditional for national leaders to do, preferring to send his vice-president, who stayed in LA for only three days (Keys:105).

Between the world wars, the IOC confined itself to designating host cities and recognizing NOCs and IFs while imposing a strict Olympic protocol and rules for staging the Games. The most stringent of these rules concerned amateurism: all athletes who received any form of remuneration for their sporting activities before the Games were forbidden from competing in the Olympics. For example, the French Athletics Federation banned their star middle-distance runner Jules Ladoumègue from competing in Los Angeles in 1932 because he had been paid to take part in some earlier races. Amateurism remained a major concern for the IOC until the 1970s, alongside the question of whether to admit the "two Germanys," "two Koreas" and "two Chinas" to the Games after World War II and the issue of Apartheid in South Africa. As the IOC embraced this emerging geopolitical role, it continued to leave the organization of "its" Games to a local committee, which was given a relatively free hand except when it came to Olympic protocol, amateurism, the sports to include and the countries eligible to take part. Competition rules were delegated to the IFs and selecting athletes was the responsibility of the NOCs.

After World War II, national governments began providing host cities with greater support. Defeated countries saw hosting the Games as a way of reclaiming a place in the "concert of nations," as Germany had done in 1936 after World War I. Thus, helped by the Cold War politics of the time, Italy (Rome 1960), Japan (Tokyo 1964), and Germany (Munich 1972) entered successful bids to obtain the Games. For other countries, including Mexico (Mexico City 1968), South Korea (Seoul 1988), and China (Beijing 2008), staging the Olympics was a way of placing themselves at the front of the geopolitical stage. In other countries, Olympic bids were motivated, at least partially, by long-frustrated regional aspirations. This was the case for Quebec (Montreal 1976) and Catalonia (Barcelona 1992). In contrast, bids to host the post-war Winter Games tended to be prompted more by local considerations, such as promoting an area's winter tourism potential in an increasingly competitive skiing market, rather than by geopolitical ambitions (e.g., Sapporo 1972, Calgary 1988).

But staging the Games was becoming ever-more expensive for host cities, regions, and countries due to the desire to build more impressive facilities and urban infrastructure than the previous host city. Following the huge deficit recorded by Montreal in 1976 (which the Province of Quebec took thirty years to repay, without help from the Canadian government), the IOC's members took fright at the idea of being held personally liable for potential Games losses. To prevent such an eventuality, in 1978 the IOC adopted a rule whereby the governments of host countries had to support

the local OCOG. Thus Rule 2 of the “Conditions for Candidate Cities” in the IOC’s compendium of Olympic rules, newly baptized the “Olympic Charter,” states: “every candidature must be supported by the government of the country in which the city is located in order to achieve total co-operation” (1978 Olympic Charter, IOC 1978).

This rule was not a problem for Moscow in 1980, because the Soviet government covered all the costs, details of which have never come to light. However, it was a different matter in other countries, where taxpayers vote in elections. For example, the IOC attributed the following Olympics (1984) to Los Angeles, which had been the only candidate, but the contract it signed with the city excluded any subsidy or financial responsibility on the part of the city council or any commitment from the State of California or the federal government. The task of organizing these Games was attributed to a “private committee” (the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, LAOOC), which had to raise the necessary funding. Apart from a few temporary facilities, the LAOOC used existing sports venues throughout southern California, including the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, which had been the 1932 Olympic stadium and which was given a decorative façade for the 1984 Games. The Olympic village was housed in student dormitories the LAOOC rented from two local universities. By also minimizing operating costs, the LAOOC managed to make a profit of more than US\$230 million, thereby reviving other cities’ interest in bidding for the Games (Wilson 2004).

Six candidates bid to host the Centennial Games in 1996: Athens (Greece), Atlanta (United States), Belgrade (Yugoslavia), Manchester (UK), Melbourne (Australia), and Toronto (Canada). When the IOC made its choice in 1990, its members elected Atlanta, Georgia’s state capital and the home of Coca-Cola, ahead of Athens, which had hoped to celebrate the centenary where the modern Olympics had begun in 1896. Atlanta 1996 would be a turning point in the organization and governance of the Games, which, until then, had been primarily entrusted to an OCOG under the IOC’s rather benign supervision.

The turning point of the centennial games

In February 1987, Atlanta lawyer William Porter (“Billy”) Payne brought together a group of friends to create the Georgia Amateur Athletics Foundation (GAAF) and draw up a bid to host the Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta. Fourteen months later, the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) chose Atlanta as America’s candidate for the Games and the GAAF set up the Atlanta Organizing Committee (AOC)—although the Games had not yet been awarded to Atlanta—chaired by Andrew J. Young, a former Atlanta mayor and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Billy Payne was the CEO.

However, “the State of Georgia’s constitution prohibited the city of Atlanta from accepting certain IOC obligations” (ACOG 1997:18), most

notably the clause in the Host City Contract on providing an unlimited deficit guarantee for the host city. Georgia's state legislature (Georgia General Assembly) circumvented this problem by creating the Metropolitan Atlanta Olympic Games Authority (MAOGA), which initially consisted of Atlanta's mayor, the president of Atlanta City Council (legislature), and three people appointed by the mayor. Created the year before the IOC vote, the MAOGA signed a tripartite agreement with the AOC and the city, in which it took on the city's Olympic obligations. These obligations would then be transferred to the future organizing committee if Atlanta was attributed the Games. The MAOGA was also responsible for reviewing contracts in excess of US\$250,000 awarded by the organizing committee and was supposed to (but did not) pay for and build the Olympic stadium. After obtaining the IOC's approval for this arrangement, the AOC was able to submit the city's bid to the vote by IOC members, held in September 1990. Despite strong competition from five other cities (see above), Atlanta was attributed the Games, beating Athens by 51 votes to 35 in the final round of voting.

As soon as the Games had been attributed, the AOC was replaced by the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG), set up as a private, not-for-profit corporation under U.S. law (ACOG 1997:2-27). Its executive board was chaired by Andrew Young and Robert M. Holder, a prominent businessman, and civic leader. The CEO was Billy Payne. ACOG was the organizing committee for the Games and took all important decisions relating to staging the event. In 1996, its board had 36 members, including, as required by the Olympic Charter, the United States (two) IOC members, the president and the general secretary of the USOC, and a representative appointed by the host city. The mayor of Atlanta was not on the board, even though ACOG made decisions that affected the city.

The IOC supervised ACOG's operations via a "Coordination Commission," set up following the adoption of rule 41.3.1 of the Olympic Charter in 1993, which recognized the need "to improve the cooperation between, on the one hand, the OGOG and, on the other hand, the IOC, the IFs, and the NOCs" by establishing "a Coordination Commission to manage the working relationship between such parties." Rule 41.3.2 went on to stipulate that: "in the case of a dispute between the OCOG and the Coordination Commission, the IOC Executive Board shall make the final decision."

The first such commission, set up in 1993, had twelve members, drawn from the IOC, IFs, and NOCs. Like all IOC commissions, its members were appointed by the IOC's president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, who chose Richard Pound, Canada's IOC member and one of Samaranch's right-hand men, as the commission chairman and the IOC's Sports Director as vice-chairman. The commission, which was advised by experts in a variety of fields, met every six months.

There were no public disputes during the organization phase, but relations between the city and ACOG were tense (Lacoss 2010), even though

the mayor's Office of Olympic Coordination, created under the terms of the tripartite agreement between the AOC, the MAOGA, and the city (ACOG 1997:19), did its best to smooth relations. One of ACOG's primary concerns was balancing its budget because, under the tripartite agreement, it, rather than the city, was responsible for any deficit. Hence, it did everything it could to cut costs on services such as transportation, accommodation, and processing results. The media felt the impact of these savings and were not slow to report their negative impressions when the Games began. Other groups of Games "clients" were also affected: some athletes did not get to their competitions on time because of transportation problems, press agencies had to enter results manually because of data processing problems, officials were stopped by the police on routes where they were supposed to have priority and bus drivers who did not know the city got lost. These problems took the Games to the brink of a logistical disaster but, after the first few days, the situation gradually improved.

However, two other incidents also tarnished the Centennial Games: one involving marketing and advertising rights, the other involving Games security.

On arriving in Atlanta a few days before the Games opened, the IOC discovered that the city had rented sections of many downtown streets to vendors of tacky souvenirs and many other types of merchandise. Official sponsors (both domestic and international) were horrified: Olympic rules prevented them from advertising at Olympic venues and, although they were supposed to have exclusive rights to associate themselves with the Olympics, the city's streets were occupied by businesses, some of which were direct competitors. The city had created these locations as a way of earning some direct income from the Games, but this put ACOG and the IOC in difficult positions with, respectively, domestic and international sponsors (10 multinationals, each of which had paid several million dollars to join The Olympic Partners (TOP) program, then run by the head of the Coordination Commission). According to an IOC official, "the city was ambushing itself," referring to the practice of ambush marketing, which associates a product, individual, or company with a sports event without paying for the rights to do so (Payne 2006: Chapter 6). In addition, some major American companies, such as Nike and DHL, had placed adverts and pavilions in strategic places around the city in order to give the impression that they were associated with the Games, even though they were not official sponsors.

Security arrangements came under scrutiny towards the end of the Games when a homemade bomb exploded in Centennial Olympic Park. Built as an urban regeneration project in downtown Atlanta, the park was the site of several sponsors' pavilions and a gathering place for visitors to the Games, who came to watch the events on a large screen in the shadow of a statue of Coubertin. The explosion, which killed one person directly plus a photographer running to the scene, who died of a heart attack, highlighted the inadequacy of security at the park, where, in order to save money, ACOG had

not imposed the same controls as at the competition venues. The morning following the explosion, unarmed soldiers wearing t-shirts rather than their usual uniforms were posted in town and at all the Olympic venues after being rushed in by the federal government to prevent other possible attacks. The subsequent investigation showed that the bomb had been placed by a lone individual who was arrested and tried a few years later.

Although ACOG balanced its accounts (ACOG 1997:222) without any direct subsidies from the city or the State of Georgia, a report by the U.S. Congress's General Accounting (now Accountability) Office (GAO) concluded that the Games had indirectly cost the city of Atlanta and other local governments US\$234 million and the federal government US\$193 million (in 2001 dollars, GAO 2001:15). In contrast, Los Angeles 1984 had cost the local and regional governments nothing and federal taxpayers just US\$78 million (again in 2001 dollars), mostly for Games security and temporary facilities (GAO 2001:12). How much Atlanta in 1996 cost the State of Georgia was still not known when the GAO published its report. Thus, ACOG's claim that it had repeated Los Angeles' feat and staged the Games without costing taxpayers anything was not entirely true, as the GAO's analysis showed that ACOG had covered only 82% of the total cost of the Games (GAO 2001:16) and that the remaining 18% had come from the above-mentioned federal and city contributions. Atlanta 1996 had come close to being a public relations fiasco for the IOC, which learned lessons it would apply to the governance of future editions of the Games and the way it supervised OCOGs.

Governance of the Olympic games in the 21st century

As of Sydney 2000, the IOC strengthened the role of its Coordination Commission by regularly sending members of the IOC administration (Sports Department, renamed the Olympic Games Department in 2002) and experts to future host cities in order to prepare Commission meetings, monitor preparations, and check the OCOG's statements between the twice-yearly Commission visits. This new system ensured closer and more effective supervision of the organization process, even without having a permanent representative of the IOC administration on-site—an idea that had been proposed but abandoned.

Because providing efficient and reliable transportation is a key factor in staging a successful Olympics, the IOC appointed an expert to closely monitor not only the transportation systems of host cities but also the proposals drawn up by candidate cities. For example, the transportation plan for Sydney 2000 was tested a year before the Games during a national event that attracted large crowds. The IOC also began requiring all candidate cities to provide a detailed transportation plan covering all modes of transport.

The IOC's solution for combatting ambush marketing, which had occurred in Atlanta 1996 and which was a great threat to Olympic sponsorship

revenues, was to strongly encourage host countries to pass temporary laws controlling advertising during the Games. All countries hosting the summer Olympics since Sydney 2000 have passed such "Olympic laws" to strictly control advertising space, regulate the types of slogans that can be used and ban the use of the Olympic rings (except by official sponsors) (Ferrand et al., 2012). However, these laws are often criticized for going much further than needed and for being extended into other domains in order, for example, to relax planning procedures, especially for temporary facilities, or to provide preferential tax arrangements.

Also since Sydney 2000, responsibility for building permanent Olympic facilities has often been given to a specially created public agency or body, rather than to the OCOG. Examples include the Olympic Coordinating Authority (OCA, Sydney 2000), Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA, London 2012), Agenzia per lo svolgimento dei XX Giochi olimpici invernali (Turin 2006), Olimpstroï (Sochi 2014), Autoridade Pública Olímpica (Rio 2016) and Société de Livraison des Installations Olympiques (SOLIDEO, Paris 2024). Separating responsibilities in this way allows the OCOG to focus on strictly organizational tasks. Moreover, it means that a separate budget, controlled by the city authorities and regional and national governments, can be drawn up for the investments needed to build permanent facilities.

SOLIDEO, for example, is a public body led by the mayor of Paris that reports to two French ministries. Its board's thirty-eight members include nineteen (central) government representatives, twelve local authority representatives, the presidents of the OCOG and the NOC, and other prominent figures. The mayor of Saint-Denis, home to the Olympic stadium and an Olympic swimming pool, and the president of Seine-Saint-Denis *départementale* council play important roles in this body.

In the case of Sydney 2000, the State of New South Wales (not Australia's federal government) had accepted financial responsibility for the Games and was therefore attentive to potential overspending. Worried that the event would incur a large deficit, seven months before the Games opened, the State government took the drastic step of removing responsibility for organizing the Games from the OCOG (Sydney Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games, SOCOG, a public agency) and transferring it to the OCA, over which it had total control. Ten of the OCA's most senior executives immediately moved into SOCOG's headquarters and began reviewing its operating plans for the Games, including all the contracts it had awarded (Stavropoulos 2000). This review led the State government to create two more public agencies, in addition to the OCA and SOCOG, to manage transportation (Olympic Road and Transport Authority, ORTA) and security (Olympic Security and Command Center, OSCC). Like SOCOG and the OCA, these two bodies were supervised by New South Wales' Olympic Games Minister, Michael Knight (Chappelet 2000). Although the Australian Olympic Committee continued to be an influential voice in organizing the Games, it gave up its right to veto SOCOG decisions on sporting issues

when it exchanged its share in any Games profits for a guaranteed payment of AU\$100 million. Thus, the Sydney Games became almost a public affair, in contrast to Atlanta four years earlier.

Generally, the regional or national government's minister for sport takes responsibility for coordinating the different ministerial departments involved in organizing the Games. For Beijing 2008, this role was given to Xi Jinping, then vice-president of the People's Republic of China and who would later become the country's strongman (president, general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, etc). For Paris 2024, the task of coordinating government bodies is performed by a senior civil servant with the title of *délégué interministériel* who is assisted by *délégués ministériels* in major areas, such as education, culture, and health. The first *délégué interministériel* was Jean Castex, who later became France's prime minister.

Coordinating the innumerable public and private bodies within the host city, region, and country that contribute to producing the Games is a vital and increasingly complex task. The British government addressed this issue by creating an "Olympic Board" to coordinate the actions of all stakeholders involved in staging London 2012. It was chaired jointly by the Secretary of State (Minister) for Culture, Media and Sport and the Mayor of London, as head of the Greater London Authority (GLA). Its members included the presidents of the British Olympic Association (BOA), Olympic Delivery Authority, and London Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) (Theodoraki 2007:152). Only LOCOG, the BOA, and GLA had contractual obligations toward the IOC through the Host City Contract.

Theodoraki (2007: Chapter 6) provides many other examples of host territory governments becoming deeply involved in organizing the Games, thereby limiting the local organizing committee's power. In fact, it has become almost impossible to stage the Olympic Games without substantial government support, because they require input from the army, the police, the secret services, health services, and other bodies that are the responsibility of the host (national or regional) governments. For instance, the host country foreign ministry is deeply involved in the Olympic preparations because of many diplomatic issues: submission of an Olympic truce resolution to the general assembly of the United Nations one year before the Games, delivery of various permits for foreign vessels, lifting of visa requirements for holders of an Olympic identity card issued by the OCOG and the IOC, etc. This Olympic identity card constitutes a temporary "urban citizenship." It gives its holder the right to enter the host country and stay in it for three months. It has been abused by some holders (athletes, support personnel, etc.) who wished to immigrate to the host country.

The IOC is well aware of this and, for the last twenty years, has required candidate cities to provide governmental guarantees on an ever-wider range of issues. Public funds and services are thus used to considerably support the staging of the Games. Although these guarantees are included in Host City Contracts, with any disputes subject to arbitration by the Court of

Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne (Switzerland), they largely depend on the goodwill of the local, regional and national host governments concerned, which cannot be coerced by a nonprofit organization based in Switzerland (the IOC). According to the Olympic Charter (IOC 2020a Rule 36), the only sanction the IOC can impose is to take the Games away from the host city. It appears that the IOC secretly threatened Athens with this sanction in 2001 in order to get the Greek authorities to accelerate preparations for the 2004 Games (Associated Press 2004), but this sanction has never been applied because it would be very difficult to move the Games a few years before they are due to take place.

Conclusion: The postponement of Tokyo 2020

This chapter shows that OCOGs and the IOC are no longer solely responsible for the governance of the Olympic Games, as had been the case until the Centennial Games. Today, the host city's government, which must obtain strong support from the regional and, most importantly, national governments, has become a key partner in Olympic Games governance. As a result, many of the OCOG's traditional and all-encompassing tasks are now assigned to other public bodies and agencies (in particular for security, transportation, entry into the country, health matters, and intellectual property). One consequence of this is the need to set up mechanisms to coordinate all these public, private, and even commercial (sponsors and broadcasters) organizations, and a collaborative form of governance must be adopted. After the Rio Games in 2016, for instance, Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the IOC, the OCOG, and the Japanese government set up a joint "four-party working group" to identify potential cost savings for the Games (NN 2020).

In March 2020, when questions were being asked about whether the Tokyo Olympics should go ahead despite the global COVID-19 pandemic, the IOC could not make the decision on its own, even if it was convinced early on that postponement was necessary. In the end, the decision to postpone the Games was made during a telephone conversation between the IOC's president and Japan's prime minister, who spoke alongside Tokyo's governor the subsequent press releases stressed that it was a joint decision (IOC 2020b). In fact, the IOC had been under a lot of pressure from numerous stakeholders (some NOCs, athletes, and IFs) and was quickly convinced that the Games had to be postponed. But the Japanese government was slower and had to come to an agreement with Tokyo Metropolitan (regional) Government and the Tokyo Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (TOCOG). The huge sums Tokyo and Japan had invested in the Games, their global impact on Japan's brand and the innumerable contracts that the IOC had signed with international broadcasters and sponsors, and that TOCOG had signed with domestic sponsors and contractors, precluded a unilateral decision, as it could have been contested in the courts and led to endless litigation.

To manage the postponement, the IOC and TOCOG set up their own operational task forces (“Here we Go” and “New Launch”), as well as a more strategic “Joint Steering Committee” composed of the president of the Coordination Commission (IOC member), the Olympic Games Executive Director (member of the IOC administration) and TOCOG’s president and CEO. These last two members kept in close contact with the Japanese government and Tokyo’s metropolitan authorities through the New Launch task force. The Joint Steering Committee’s goal was to resolve the innumerable issues the postponement would raise and to ensure all decisions were taken collectively. This latter point was essential in order to avoid the sort of criticism the IOC had aroused in October 2019 when it unilaterally announced its decision to move the men’s and women’s marathons and walking events from Tokyo to Sapporo (further north) to avoid the extreme heat in the Japanese capital in August (Kyodo News 2019). To avoid such a situation, the “Olympic law” adopted by Italy for the Milan-Cortina 2026 Winter Games establishes a “joint Olympic Council” made up of fifteen representatives of the various Games stakeholders.

Following on the heels of greater local, regional and national government involvement is the need to involve local residents, civic groups, and public opinion via a participatory approach that could be termed “Olympic social citizenship,” which would require further research. This is of immediate importance for the Tokyo Olympics, as opinion polls conducted in the middle of 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic showed that a quarter of Tokyo’s residents no longer wanted the Games to take place in their city. However, it will also be essential for future host cities to adopt this type of participative and collaborative approach in order to improve the public’s perception of the Olympic Games and, more importantly, make sure that the Olympics benefit its host territory, population, and all other stakeholders.

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