

Benefits of Bidding and Hosting the Olympic Games: Istanbul 2020

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Abstract

Ever since the inception of the first Modern Games of Olympiads the idea of hosting Games of Olympiads has been an attractive idea for both the developed and the developing nations alike. Candidate cities or nations have pursued a very tight, and in times bitter bidding races to host the Games in their nations. The literature suggests that overall only a handful of the nations that hosted the Games have made tangible profits by hosting the Games. An overwhelming number of the host cities such as 1976 Montreal Games, and 2004 Athens Games to mention a few, significantly have lost millions of dollars in revenues, and put their nations and the hosting city budgets into a long term financial dept. The remaining question is why these countries on both isles have been committing themselves to rather a very expensive organization? What would be the perceived tangible and the intangible values of Olympic Games (OG) to the host city or nation? The magnificent city of Istanbul, (bid unsuccessfully for 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012 Games), is still in pursuit of hosting the 2020 Summer Olympic and Paralympics Games. Regardless of previous failed bidding experiences it is foreseeable that the city of Istanbul can win a successful bid and host the Games. The purpose of this study therefore is to explore the potential tangible and the intangible benefits of OG to the city of Istanbul and to the country of Turkiye (Turkey) in an indirect way.

Key Words: *Olympic Games, Istanbul, Olympic Host City, Olympic Legacy, Tangible and Intangible Benefits,*

In 13 August 2011, Istanbul, one of the most mystical and multi-culture cities in the world, once again, has announced her interest in hosting OG. Turkish Prime Minister formally announced Istanbul's bid to host the 2020 Olympiads and expressed 'unequivocal confidence that city would be successful in its fifth attempt to Stage the Games'. Following Prime Minister's announce the Olympic Organizing Committee of Istanbul 2020 Games (OOCIG) took preliminary formal steps in bidding process to host the 2020 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games in Istanbul.

* *Phase 1*; known as the Candidature Acceptance Procedure, focuses on a technical review and the cities' ability to host the Olympic Games in 2020. Cities are required to answer a questionnaire, and their answers are studied by the IOC. At the end of this first phase, the IOC EB selects the cities that will become Candidate Cities and therefore move on to *Phase 2* (www.olympic.org).

The magnificent Turkish city of Istanbul will be competing with Baku (Azerbaijan), Doha (Qatar), Madrid (Spain), Rome (Italy) and Tokyo (Japan) all have formally declared and filed their bidding petitions to host the XXXII Olympiad in 2020. These six Applicant Cities will now proceed to Phase 1* of the IOC's two-step procedure, which will lead to the election of the 2020 host city in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 7 September 2013 (www.olympic.org).

The Summer Olympic Games is at the top of the mega-events list regarding the attendance of visitors, and athletes, and the interest of media and sponsorships and the physical requirements. Cities from around the world compete furiously to host the Olympic Games because of the "potential prestige and financial benefits they offer. Yet the costs of hosting can be daunting" (Woods, 2011; 163). The Olympic Games have become ostentatious of mega events with unprecedented scale of global media attractions. Events associated with the Olympiads have become an incredible source of great business, entertainment, occupation and life style. Consequently the competition to host Games is a challenging task. The bidding city that recognizes the challenges and prepares itself will be prevailing. Those that fail to identify the business and political perspectives of Games, and get stuck on the philosophical rhetoric only generally fail to host the Games.

The power and influence of Olympic Games goes beyond the Olympic rhetoric and sport competition. Investigative journalist Jennings very rightly asks the question "Why is capital so keen on sport? His inquiry exhibits the hard of the value of sporting that is: sport is as old as human culture is. Through sports human cultures have trained themselves for both entertainment and war. When we watch sport we are more than spectators we are part of the capitalistic process. We are consumers, "we're so open to suggestions. And that's how big capitalism likes

us to be (Jennings, 2011). The Games of Olympiads have become the mega events of commercialized sport and it is extremely pricy process for a country to commit itself to host them and become a host city or country. 2008 Beijing Games, for instance, cost China more than \$43 billion. NBC paid a pricy \$2 billion dollars to have the rights to broadcast the Games. The responsibilities and the obligations are almost impossible tasks to overcome. Organizational failure is unacceptable and can bankrupt the city both financially (tangibly) and psychologically (intangibly). 1976 Montreal Games, 1980 Moscow Games and 2004 Athens Games are good examples of the Olympic organizational failures. How would than the host cities turn the corner and make profits from hosting the Games? What would be the role of the host city to have successful Games? According to the Olympic Charter, ultimate financial responsibilities fall on the shoulders of the host city. Hence the Olympic Charter clearly defines roles and the responsibilities of the host city which are;

- to encourage and support measures protecting the health of athletes
- to encourage and support a responsible concern for environmental issues
- to promote sustainable development in sport and require that the Olympic Games are held accordingly
- to encourage and support the development of sport for all
- to lead the fight against doping in sport
- to encourage and support initiatives blending sport with culture and education, and most importantly, to promote a positive legacy from the Olympic Games for future host cities

and host countries (Olympic Charter, 2007). All of these important elements can be very costly and the host city cannot avoid the financial and managerial responsibilities.

The Bidding for the Games

In November 12, 2011, IOC in Lausanne, Switzerland organized a conference aiming to provide an insight education and a guidelines process for all Olympic bidding cities, National Olympic Committees and city/government authorities who are interested in bidding for the Olympic Games and Youth Olympic Games. The additional purpose of this conference was also to educate the interested parties about ‘the benefits of bidding for and organizing the Olympic Games and also what they should be doing before deciding to put forward a bidding petition.’ During the two- days long conference titled ‘The Bidding for the Games Conference’ the following topics were discussed,

- benefits of staging the Games
- importance of developing a long term vision and fixing objectives
- advantages of submitting an early bid
- how to ensure a successful bidding
- pointing to and developing an understandable and clearly defined Olympic Games legacy (IOC, 2011)

According to the conference notes and the IOC the benefits of hosting Olympic Games to the both hosting city and the host country are worthy for the expenses that would be required for to

host the Games. Concurring with IOC the OECD also provides guidelines about how to put forward a successfully bidding petition with citing the potential benefits of hosting Olympiads for the host city and the country. Local Development Benefits from Staging Global Events (2008) set out by the OECD Conceptual Framework provides a complete analysis based on experiences from over 30 cities and nations. In broad terms, the following benefits were listed but, of course, are not guaranteed, from the hosting of global events. The rapport also used cautionary terms about potential risk factors associated to various human and natural causes. Benefits may be characterized as "primary" and "secondary" to indicate the time frame within which they occur, rather than overall significance. Primary benefits may well overlap temporally with secondary benefits if they are longer-term in nature.

Primary Benefits

1. Alignment of the event with sector and business growth strategies in the city or nation. The requirements of the event can be used to catalyze existing development and growth strategies, either at sector, business or city level.
2. Private-public investment partnerships. Increased co-operation, in the form of partnerships, between the private and public sector are increasingly seen as a key means by which to achieve development goals. The costs and benefits often associated with global events present ideal opportunities for public-private investment partnerships that can serve wider urban development goals.
3. Image and identity impacts attracting increased population, investment, or trade. The media exposure associated with a global event provides an ideal opportunity for the promotion of

a city brand or identity. In an increasingly urban world, the need to differentiate is ever-greater and opportunities to embed a city's unique assets in the "international imagination" are valuable.

4. Structural expansion of visitor economy and supply chain development and expansion. Visitors coming to the city for the event will contribute to a more buoyant visitor economy; with money they spend causing a multiplier effect on incomes throughout related supply chains.

5. Environmental impacts, both in built and natural environments. Both the built and the natural environment can greatly benefit from the investment and strategic planning involved in hosting a global event.

Secondary Benefits

1. Post event usages of improved land and buildings. Events may require land and buildings for specific purposes, but their use after the event is only restricted by practicalities and the imagination of the designers and planners.

2. Connectivity and infrastructure legacies. Transport links and other infrastructures constructed for the event are one of the most visible lasting legacies for a host city and can have real impacts on social inclusion if targeted at previously excluded groups.

3. Labor market impacts and social/economic inclusion. Hosting a global event stimulates significant temporary employment to prepare for such a large undertaking but can also generate long term employment if the event is used to expand business sectors and implement structural change to the local economy.

4. Secondary impacts in the property market. Property prices are very likely to be affected in parts of a city where construction is focused for a particular event.
5. Global positioning, events strategy going forwards, and project management capability. Hosting, or even bidding for, an event dramatically increases the capabilities of the city authorities to manage similar projects in the future and makes vital steps towards furthering an events strategy and achieving development goals (OECD LEED Programme, 2009).

Why does a city bid to host the Olympic Games?

Every Olympic host city dreams about accomplishing at least three things.

1. Provide the best possible conditions for the competing athletes.
2. Stage a top standard Olympics with distinctive features that create memorable impressions of the host city and its culture that will reverberate throughout the world.
3. Bequeath a legacy to the host community and country that will benefit their inhabitants for many years to come (WHO, 2010). There are various reasons justifying the choice to bid for mega events. Usually such motives are related to the possible positive impact of the event on the city/country. The phenomenon of bidding to host sports mega events has become part of many cities/countries development policies. Many regions now are considering to host and organize 'mega' sports events as a way of ensuring their sustainable development and the bidding for such mega events acts as a mean to push the vehicle of this development faster and more efficiently. Hosting a large scale sporting

event such as Olympic Games can lead to economical, societal and urban development impacts, such as attraction of local or foreign investments that can boost country/city's economy by activating the inputs of various sectors such as tourism, and creates jobs and business opportunities, promoting sport in a nation, driving social changes, urban renewal, etc. These obvious and many other hidden reasons are the driving forces behind the decisions of the members of the organizing committee to put forward a bidding petition for hosting the Olympic Games. Some of the obvious reasons are promoting of the bidding city/country, developing a training, research center for future usage, and regeneration of urban infrastructure and general overall improvement of the city (FIFA Master, 2011 p:18). According to Erten, there are four main motivations behind the aspiration of cities in Olympic hosting. They are:

1. building an international image
2. increasing and restructuring economic activity
3. generating urban regeneration/revitalization project
4. building sports and general infrastructure (Erten, 2008).

Preus (2006) collected the event structure under six category which are infrastructure, knowledge (skill development, and education), image, emotions, network and culture that are also related to transportation, sport, tourism and environmental protection. (ORC, 2011). Through knowledge (skill development and education) the host city/nation aims to gain a working experience and or knowhow to stage similar in nature sporting or entertainment events. A good example is that Beijing Olympics prompted educationalists to develop new curriculum resources to focus on the

socio-cultural elements such, the moral and ethical aspects of sport, culture, history, and social dimensions of traditional and contemporary Chinese culture. According to Preus (2006) major sporting events have tremendous symbolic significance and form, the reposition or solidity the image of city, religion and country. Michael Payne, former IOC Marketing and Broadcast Director, indicated that “if you take the Olympics, there is unwritten rule to move it around the world so that’s why it’s unusual to have consecutive games in the same continent. The Olympic brand has developed because of its global recognition. Sidney and Barcelona, for instance, contributed to the Olympic image, and London might very well repeat the process too. Each one is taking the Olympics as a core product and value proposition and adding its own magic, identity and national, cultural DNA, which helps to enrich the whole brand (Rines interview, 2007). Emotions, network and culture these elements all serve for the common purpose that is to develop an Olympic legacy that will last as long as the nation or the city will stay on the map or in the memories.

What is Olympic Legacy Planning?

Olympic Legacy is a concept that has gained importance over the past few decades. Today no event, whatever its size and complexity can avoid a vision of its legacy. The Olympic Games integrate this concept from the early stages of the bid phase, encouraging the bid cities to develop a unique vision for the legacy of their Games. Throughout the lifecycle of the OCOG ending up with its dissolution, Legacy aspects are considered and part of the decision making process. The IOC monitors the legacy vision, its management and the post-Games effectiveness of it. (IOC, 2011). Hence Legacy has come to prominence in Olympic discourse in recent years because of the capacity the term offers in managing tensions between Olympic dreams (or

promises) and municipal-financial realities. Olympic “legacy” offers bridges between two potentially divergent narratives setting the practical accountancy (and financial and political accountability) of city planning, against the ‘creative’ accounting that underpins Olympic dreams and its promises. In this sense ‘hard’ and ‘soft’, ‘tangible’ and ‘intangible’ legacies accrue over time. Indeed, the time span for evaluation should reflect the complexity of this process. (MacRury & Poynter, 2009). Legacy has been defined in terms of tangible and intangible “structures” that remain after the event staging the Olympic Games is certainly a defining moment that leaves a number of legacy outcomes for host city and country. There are also some dangers in defining such long term goals primarily as Olympic "legacy". It is important to articulate clearly whether or how hosting the Olympics would induce such radical changes in policy impact and performance, housing patterns, in school performance, or labor market participation. It is not clear that the Olympics can be accurately seen as a key driver of such changes, but rather that such changes would be the impact of improved and better implemented policies resulting from a desire to optimize the benefits of the Olympic Games. The Games are the opportunity, but not the driver. It may be important to stress out that such goals are inspired by the Olympics but are not the direct consequences of hosting the Olympics (OECD LEED Programme, 2010).

It is however worthy to point out that like human personality and the complexities countries and cities too have complex structures from governing to its demographics and to the geographical set ups etc. All of the mega sporting events within a major city are bound to be subject to complex arrangements. Despite the size, the prestige and the popularity of the Olympic Games, few studies concretely report whether or not the Games benefit host city/country. Most of the

existing studies suggest that there is a big difference between report of the organizing committees and the local government reports. For example, in Barcelona (1992), the Spanish government was reportedly left a \$6.1 billion depth despite the organizing committee reporting a profit of \$3 million. In Nagano (1998), the Olympic committee showed \$28 million profit but various government groups were left with \$11 billion in depth. Some other Games do not differentiate either, such as Albertville (1992), which reportedly lost \$57 million and Atlanta (1996) and Sidney (2000), who both reported breaking even (Burton, R. & O'Reilly N.2009). The Olympics may lead to both tangible and intangible values from job opportunities to the psychic benefits such as the beautification of the city etc. Still the government and the IOC studies or reports reach little consensus especially regarding with the tangible benefits. Tucker (2006) measured the size and shape of the "Olympic effect" with a series of time-period dummies and a fixed-effects model. He examined all Summer Games from 1984 to 2004 in the first panel study of employment surrounding the Olympics. He found evidence of a significant employment increase lasting in general from 6 years before the Olympics to 1 year after the Games, with a marginally significant boost lasting up to 8 years afterward. This study also pointed out that higher Olympic expenditures are negatively correlated with the size of the Olympic effect, and that the employment impact of the Olympics may be larger in wealthier countries. Yet, studies commissioned by OECD reported that "The Olympics will provide *only* a temporary employment boost in employment and stakeholders are rightly focusing on how to develop a longer-term set of interventions which increase employment participation rates overall beyond what is already being done (OECD LEED Programme, 2010). While there is a lack of consensus regarding the Tangible benefits, both the government studies and the IOC reports

agree on the Intangible benefits of the Games on the city/government. London 2012 therefore is aiming and preparing a far-reaching Strategic Regeneration Framework focused on the concept of "convergence" between the boroughs and Greater London areas in a range of Tangible and Intangible measures. The London 2012 document is well argued and impressive. The level of ambition is appropriate and long term. It is important to note that the boroughs are making considerable progress on improving educational attainment levels but ensuring the longevity of the advances remains a "whole of government" challenge (OECD LEED Programme, 2010).

What would be the Legacy of Games of Istanbul? The legacy has been defined as the term of tangible and intangible "structures" that remain after the events (Olympic Review, 65-8). Legacy planning is an important component of any Olympic project. The IOC is very public about underlying the importance of Games' legacy and demands that the host city will define and deliver a legacy plan that is achievable. Istanbul is an ancient city with modern face and represents the values of both East and the West. Due to its geographical location Istanbul is a natural cultural center for religions of Islam, Christianity and the Judaism. Istanbul can develop and propose a legacy plan that nicely addresses and nourishes city's rich culture and diversity. Thanks to the technology in communications and transportations currently we are much more globalized and leaving closer to each other than we were before. However, historically for too long our societies have suffered from the divisions of ideology, religion, and the race a few to mention. Istanbul legacy plan can include and promote the globalization of cultures and humanity. The governance framework for Istanbul 2020 could run a legacy plan focusing on global understanding of cultures which could be 'transformative momentum.' However the success of this goal depends very much on achieving an effective balance between commercial

and social goals simultaneously. The unique elements of culture and the capital should be carefully handled relating to the role of Istanbul being a cultural center for both eastern and western ideologies and religions.

There is a clear need to estimate the intangible benefits of hosting Games in Istanbul. The accurate estimate of how much the Turkish people or the resistances of Istanbul are 'willing to pay (WTP)' in monetary donations or 'willingness to volunteer (WTV)', should the games be hosted in Istanbul? Olympic Games are expensive organizations and according to Olympic charter the ultimate financial responsibility falls on the host city or host nation. For instance the cost of hosting games for Greece was a hefty tag: 2004 Athens Games were originally calculated to be around 5.9 billion dollars but at the end the final cost of the Athens Games for the Greek government was almost 15 billion dollars. The cost of 2008 Beijing Games to China was about 80 billion dollars (OECD LEED Programme, 2010). Therefore in order to prepare a successful bidding proposal the Istanbul 2020 organizing committee should make a careful cost and benefit estimation. To obtain such a successful cost and benefit estimation report Istanbul 2020 Organizing committee must study the following question very carefully.

- If Istanbul awarded to be a host city how would Istanbul and Turkiye finance the Games without being choked financially?
- What do city (local government) and the tax payers get in return for their financial commitments?
- Which of the values are more important in retrospect, the tangible or intangible?
- Which kind of data would Istanbul 2020 Organizing Committee be using as evidence to convince the selection committee members to award the Games to Istanbul?

It is almost logical to assume that it would be very unlikely for IOC to select another American Continent city following 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games. Therefore it would be logical to think that the Games might be going back to EU or Asia. Istanbul should make a strong estimation that it is going to be competing and bidding against an EU based city or Tokyo from Asian continent.

Istanbul's bidding success partially depends on the support that it will receive both from citizens of Istanbul and the government of Turkey. The IOC expects and looks for a very strong commitment from both the city residents and the government. In the eye of the IOC the government is the ultimate financial guarantor for successful completion of the Games. The fact is that a good number of diverse cities across the globe continually bid to host the Games. This time both the city of Istanbul and the Turkish government make sure that they are capable of meeting the challenges ahead and ready to host the Games successfully

It is widely expected that the residences of Olympic Games hosting city would show strong and significant support for hosting Games in their city. It would be a valuable advice to the OCOG that they start to educate the public for the potential value that the games would add to the Istanbul city citizens. City should make concrete effort to encourage citizens to participate in sports and make facilities available for public participations in sport. Turkish citizen should be confident and trusting the government and the city of Istanbul for their effort on bidding process, and extend their support for the Olympic Games coming home.

On the contrary of Istanbul's last unsuccessful bidding periods this time Istanbul has certain advantages that it can utilize during the bidding presentation. Renewing its infrastructure in conceivably all fields, Istanbul has been applauded loud for its successful hosting of international

organizations, such as the Champions League Football Final Match, Formula 1, Moto GP, and the Red Bull Air Race. Being expected to host several global sports, cultural events, and convention until 2010, the city will host the UEFA Final Cup, World Water Forum, IMF World Bank Congress in 2009, the European Culture Capital, World Basketball Championship and METREX (European Metropolitan Regions and Fields Network) Grand Congress. The greatest goal for Istanbul, which plans to host the IAAF World Indoor Championships in Athletics - Istanbul, Turkey 2012, is to host the Olympics in 2020 (www.ibb.gov.tr/sites). Another advantage is that Turkish government has constituted some special Olympic laws aiming the bidding process. These special "Olympic laws" provide funding and empowering the Istanbul Olympic bidding Committee (IOBC) with the authority to carry out its game plan. The Olympic law enabled and authorized the Istanbul Olympic Bidding Committee to carry out all necessary facets of the bidding and the Olympic Games organizational processes. It recognizes the ultimate authority of the IOC in all Olympic matters, establishing a critical balance in the composition of the IOBC. The law states that Istanbul shall bid for the Olympic Games until it is successful (FIFA Master, 2011p; 23).

Summary

The Olympic Games have become ostentatious of mega events with unprecedented scale of global media attractions. Events associated with the Olympiads have become an incredible source of great business, entertainment, occupation and life style. The relationship between the governance model and the achievement of legacy outcomes is complex and any provisional conclusions must acknowledge that the evidence available is not consistently captured by host cities using comparable data sets over consistent periods of time. Olympic Games candidate cities and elected host cities should include in their legacy plans specific actions and efforts aiming to enhance the sustainability of this emotional link. This long term and sustainability approach is particular important to ensure that the younger generations will continue benefiting from the post-Olympic tangible and intangible outcomes (IOC, 2010). However, the overriding conclusion is that local benefits only accrue if the event is both well run in its own terms, and if it has a clear local benefit plan which is followed with skill and conviction. This is not easy to do, especially as the preparation for, and hosting of, the event is always a considerable task that distracts from the effort to win local benefits. It should also be observed that hosting international events is only one means to achieve local benefits, and not the primary one. ... Events are expensive and there may be better ways to use the resources. Because events tend to leverage investment from national governments and from private sponsors they can be especially attractive to cities that lack their own investment tools. Events provide a pretext for external investment that might not otherwise exist. But this does not mean that the investment comes free or without opportunity costs (OECD LEED Programme, 2010).

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