

No one wants to host the Olympic Games ... ! Really?

The History of the Bid for the Olympic Games

By Volker Kluge

Two candidates are competing for the 2026 Winter Olympics – Milan-Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy and Stockholm-Åre, Sweden. These Candidate Cities will use 80% existing or temporary venues, compared to 60% by the candidates for the 2018 and 2022 Winter Games. These are the first Candidature Files submitted since Olympic Agenda 2020/The New Standard was approved by the IOC Session in PyeongChang. The IOC will elect the Olympic Host City at its 134th Session in Lausanne on 24th June 2018.



Milano-Cortina d' Ampezzo and Stockholm-Åre compete for the XXVth Olympic Winter Games in 2026. Both already have Olympic experience. Stockholm hosted the 1912 Summer Games, Cortina hosted the 1956 Winter Games.

On 23rd June 1894 an international congress in Paris, called by Pierre de Coubertin, resolved to revive the Olympic Games. As in Ancient Greece, they were to take place at an interval of four years, but in contrast to their ancient models, in modern attire and held in a different country each time. To direct the Games, Coubertin established an 'international committee', which in 1901 took the official name International Olympic Committee (IOC).

In his memoirs, Coubertin described with relish that the congress had followed him almost without contradiction.¹ But on one point he was defeated. It was his intention to begin the Olympic Games of the modern era in the first year of the 20th century in Paris. The premiere was advanced by four years and awarded to Athens for 1896.

The Games as attachments to exhibitions

After Athens, Coubertin returned to his original strategy. As he could expect no support from the French government, he wished for financial reasons to couple the Games of 1900 with the Paris World Exhibition taking place the same year.

Their organising committee, however, planned its own national and international sports events, so that Coubertin had no alternative but to capitulate. The Olympic competitions were integrated into the World's Fair programme, in the confusion of which they disappeared. The IOC did not appear at any time.

Despite this disappointment, Coubertin did not lose direction. It was agreed that the third Olympics in 1904 would take place in the 'New World' – in the United States. When the IOC met for the first time after four years in 1901, it was agreed that Chicago would host the Games, as long as its representatives promised to assume the travel costs of the foreign teams.

But US President William McKinley, who had taken over as a patron, fell victim to an assassination. His successor was Theodore Roosevelt, who supported the wish of St. Louis to hold the Games during the World's Fair. This was celebrated in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase through Consul Bonaparte.²

Coubertin, who was friendly with Roosevelt, had no choice but to agree. However, he was represented by two IOC Members, while he travelled to the Wagner Festival in Bayreuth.

How much Coubertin's influence had weakened was shown in 1906, when the Greeks, against his will, carried out their plan to hold Olympic Games in Athens halfway through an Olympiad. That was not enough: after the eruption of Vesuvius in April 1906, Rome, which Coubertin had expected to hold the 1908 Games, gave back the right to hold them.³

Fortunately, London was ready. The Olympic Games were again attached to an exhibition, the Franco-British Exhibition, but this time sport profited from it. The exhibition management even had a stadium built and took on a large part of the organising costs.

The 'Swedish-Germanic period'

After these turbulent early years, the IOC was open to Berlin hosting the Olympic Games, and the German member Dr. Willibald Gebhardt made several attempts. But each time he had to withdraw his offer, as there was no stadium. Now his successors that their eyes on hosting the Games of 1912, which Stockholm was also interested in.

Berlin's chances were good, since the decision was to be taken at the 1909 IOC Session in Berlin. Unfortunately, the President of the German Imperial Committee for Olympic Games, Count von der Asseburg, died just before that, so that Berlin lost the greatest promoter of the stadium project.⁴

Nothing was left for Count von Wartensleben, now the only German IOC Member, than to admit that there would be no stadium by 1912. His colleagues gave him consolatory applause, and awarded the Games to Stockholm, where at the end of 1910 the building of a stadium commenced.⁵ In this stadium, the first well-organised Games took place, and due to the clement weather went into history as the 'Sunshine Games'.

During the Berlin Session, Coubertin had made a speech in which he compared the Olympic Games with the Thirty Years' War, which historians were accustomed to divide into periods with names of whichever countries dominated. According to Coubertin, Olympic history began with the French period, followed by a British period.

Coubertin witnessed the start of a new period, which he described as "Swedish-Germanic", from which he hoped for three things which were previously missing: The spirit of the Games was not 'pure' and, second, the forms not artistic enough. Thirdly, there was for him a lack of discipline and order, which he regarded as best represented by the Germans.⁶

Coubertin was to be proved right. After 1912, the Games for 1916 had been allocated to Berlin, and the German Stadium was erected there in only 200 working days with Prussian punctuality. The Olympic dream ended when on 28th June 1914 the shots of Sarajevo were fired, signalling the start of the First World War.

Antwerp was the first candidate with a bid book

Two weeks earlier, the 20th anniversary of the IOC was celebrated at an Olympic Congress in Paris. Budapest and Antwerp used the opportunity to announce their ambitions for the Games of 1920. The Belgians handed over a 109-page brochure in which they presented their Olympic plans.⁷

A bid book was at that time something completely new. Until then it had been customary that an IOC Member praised the advantages of his city in a short



"Will we have the VIIth Olympiad in Antwerp in 1920?" was the title of Antwerp's first bid book, which was part of the city's application to the 1914 Olympic Congress in Paris.

Collection Sportmonium, Hofstade



address. If there were several applicants as in 1912, besides Berlin, Budapest and Alexandria showing interest, the rivals withdrew early to save face. Votes were unthinkable.

A farewell coup d'état

Coubertin had volunteered for military service immediately after the outbreak of war. The 51-year-old was charged with visiting schools to awaken patriotic feelings in French youth.

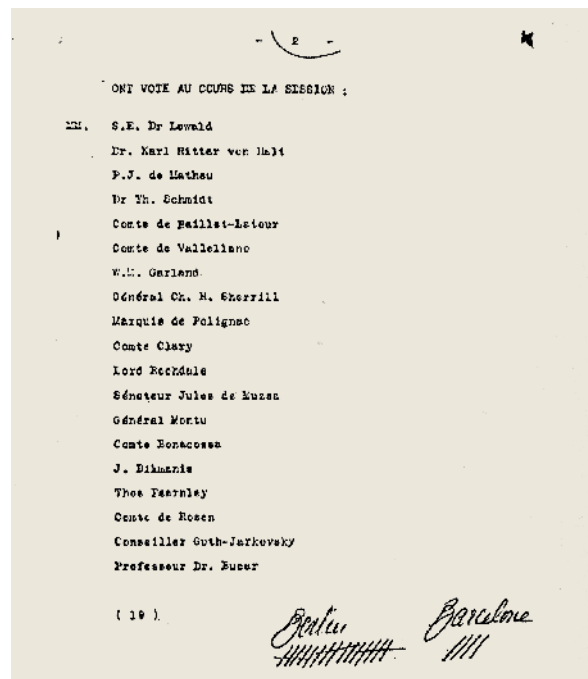
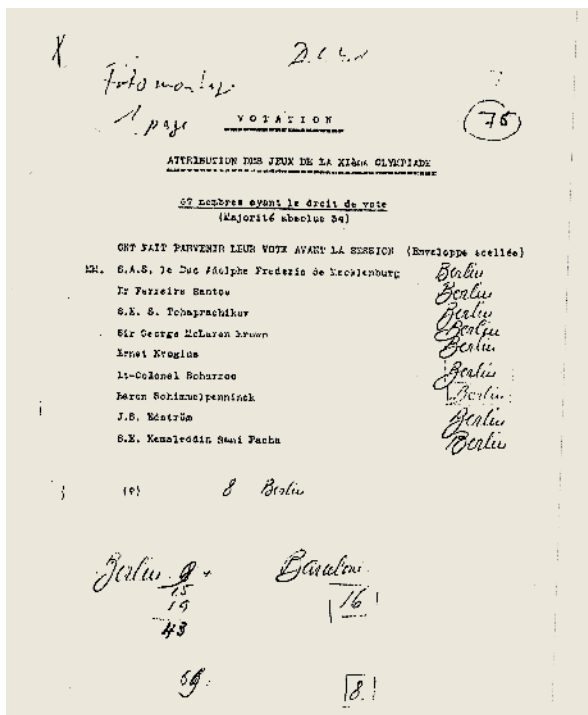
At the same time he received tempting offers to hold the 1916 Games in America, Sweden and the Netherlands. Coubertin, however, did not want to endanger the unity of the Olympic Movement. Instead, he kept to the ancient tradition: "An Olympiad may fail to be celebrated; its number remains."

Coubertin's travels led him, in October 1914, to Lyon where Mayor Herriot showed the stadium that was under construction and asked if his city would have favourable prospects for holding the Games of 1920 or 1924. Coubertin was intelligent enough not to answer with 'No'. He even had Herriot sign a contract in which Lyon bound itself to postpone its plans until 1924, in case Antwerp upheld its application for 1920.⁸

Despite the four terrible years of war, under which Belgium in particular had suffered, Antwerp was prepared to hold the Games of 1920. They did not turn out as splendid as those of 1912, but were nonetheless successful.

The City Council of Berlin used the Olympic Congress of 1930 to present the delegates with the book *Sports Capital of Germany*. The decision was to have been taken in 1931 at the IOC Session of Barcelona, which also bid for the 1936 Games. The Session was terminated prematurely because of the Spanish Revolution. The missing IOC Members were able to vote by mail. The result fell in Berlin's favour with a clear majority: 43 votes for and 16 against.

Photos: IOC Archives/OSC



Paris, and for that reason, he cautiously enquired as to whether the city of Los Angeles, in which the Memorial Colosseum was being built for 1932, could host the Games earlier.

Under Coubertin's successor, the Belgian Count de Baillet-Latour, the independent Winter Games were developed. The exclusive right to hold them was linked to the award of the Summer Games, provided that the host countries had the territorial possibilities available for holding competitions on snow and ice.

The latter did not apply to the Netherlands or Great Britain, which is why St. Moritz hosted Winter Games twice, in 1928 and 1948. In the new version of the Olympic rules this coupling was cancelled.

Olympic Games as a 'national issue'

One year after Coubertin's coup, in 1922, some IOC Members had demanded that, in the future, no candidatures should be accepted without detailed plans for the event and explanations of financial guarantees. However, these arrangements were missing in the rules.

Not until the Olympic Charter of 1930 was it stated that the allocation should be made at least three years before the event. The length of the Games, which in 1928 in Amsterdam had dragged out from the middle of May until mid-August, was reduced to 16 days.

The economic upturn in the second half of the 1920s resulted in an increasing interest in sporting events, to which the new mass media also contributed. In advance of the Olympic Congress of 1930 no fewer than 11 cities announced their interest in applying for the Games of 1936. Among them were the two German metropolises Berlin and Frankfurt.¹¹

Lyon would have been next, but Coubertin, who in 1915 had moved the IOC HQ to Lausanne, had once again changed his plans. In a circular letter from 17th March 1921, he informed the IOC Members that he intended to resign after the Games of 1924. As a "last wish" he asked that these Olympic Games, 30 years after their reintroduction, should be held in his home city of Paris and the Games of 1928 in Amsterdam.

This was a skilful move, with which Coubertin intended to counter the danger of splitting up the Olympic Idea through Regional Games, Workers' Olympiads, and Women's World Games.

As he did so, he was certain that this wish would not be granted, since enthusiasm was limited, but for the first time a vote was demanded in the IOC, and it produced 11 'Yes' votes, 4 'No' and 4 abstentions.⁹ Colonel Montu of Italy left in a fury. At the last moment he had brought Rome into the reckoning.

In his memoirs, Coubertin later wrote of a 'coup d'état'.¹⁰ In fact, however, he had no real confidence in



In 1949, at Hotel Excelsior in Rome, some pictures and models were sufficient to convince the IOC Members of Cortina's candidacy for the 1956 Winter Olympics. The IOC had previously awarded the 1944 Games to this resort in the Italian Dolomites. War forced their cancellation.

Photo: IOC Archives/OSC

After that, Theodor Lewald received a letter from the angry Cologne Lord Mayor, Konrad Adenauer, who insinuated, not altogether unfairly, to the President of the German Imperial Committee for Physical Education, that his city was being deliberately ignored.¹² Lewald justified himself with the "previous right" of Berlin because of the cancelled Games of 1916.¹³

As early as 1925, directly after Germany's return to the Olympic family, from which it had had been voluntarily excluded in 1917, Lewald enquired of Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann whether it was in the "interest of the Reich" if Berlin were once again to be a candidate for the Games.¹⁴ When that was approved, the Olympic Congress became the ideal platform to present Berlin.

The Sports Capital of Germany – so ran the title of the second of all Olympic application documents. Even the world economic crisis did not allow this intention to fail; indeed, the chances even improved. The only other candidate left was Barcelona, the host of the 1931 Session where the decision would be made.

A few days before, the revolution broke out in Spain. The few IOC Members left early after they had agreed on a choice by correspondence. It turned out clearly in favour of Berlin by 46 to 16 votes. Less than eight months later, Hitler came to power. It was Lewald who made Hitler aware of the positive propaganda value of the Games of 1936.¹⁵

Germany was not the only fascist state that wanted to present itself as an "island of peace". Japan and Italy also took this line. Two Japanese IOC Members were presented to Mussolini in 1935 to persuade him to withdraw the candidature of Rome for 1940.¹⁶ As a quid pro quo, they promised to support Italy for 1944.

The IOC, in which pro-Fascist members had gained influence, awarded in 1936 the next Games to Tokyo and Sapporo. When the Japanese returned the right to host the Games two years later due to their war with China, Helsinki was entrusted with the Summer Games. With an adventurous switch, the 1940 Winter Games returned less than three months before the beginning of the Second World War to Garmisch-Partenkirchen, where they had been held in 1936.

At the vote on the Games of 1944, Rome did lose out to London, but Cortina was honoured with the Winter Games.¹⁷ Obviously, due to the Second World War, neither the Games of 1940 nor those of 1944 could be celebrated.

The International Federations demand the right to speak

The post-war period began with a stocktaking. Germany, and this time Japan, were put on the punishment bench. The other allies of Hitler were considered rehabilitated.

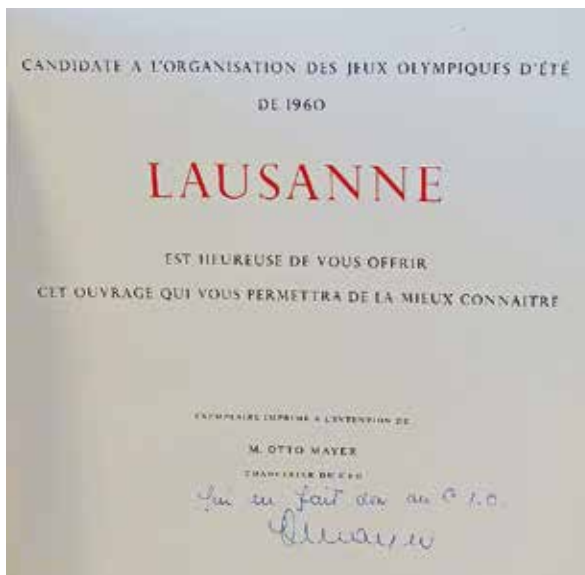
London was able to restart the preparations interrupted by the war, this time for 1948. It was a pure formality that other cities applied. Four out of five candidates came from the USA, of which three – Minneapolis, Detroit and Chicago – in 1947, together with Los Angeles and Philadelphia, competed against Helsinki for the Games of 1952 and lost spectacularly.

The race for the Winter Games was won by Oslo ahead of Cortina. Lake Placid received one vote – probably from IOC Vice-President Avery Brundage, who was the sole representative of the city.

For the next vote in 1949, when the decision was made for 1956, nine applicants stepped up, of which six were US cities. Together they received nine votes in the first

A bid book signed by IOC Chancellor, Otto Mayer at the Olympic Studies Centre recalls that Lausanne applied for the 1960 Summer Games. The city was defeated in the third round by Rome.

Photo: Volker Kluge



round – of 41 possible. At the banquet which followed, where Melbourne and Cortina celebrated as victors, an elegantly dressed young man stole a bulging briefcase from an IOC Member. It had been thought he was a member of the Australian delegation.¹⁸ At that time, safety was not taken very seriously.

At last the IOC realised that the times were past when people could agree in small circles on the next Olympic city. There had to be rules, to which written applications signed by the mayors had to be presented to the IOC at least five years prior to the beginning of the Games.¹⁹ In addition, it was specified that only one candidature per country could be handed in, and that the NOCs were responsible to select among several interested cities the one with the best prospects.

For the first time, the applicant cities had to complete a questionnaire to convey to the IOC Members a rough idea of what conditions were to be expected. How naïve it still was is demonstrated by the seventh question: “Have you studied the Official Reports of the last Games and are you ready to ensure the success of future Games?”²⁰

All applicants had the chance to expand on the advantages of their city within a 45-minute time limit, but the expressiveness of the lectures rarely went beyond the content of the thin brochures distributed to the IOC Members. Questions were postponed to the next morning. New, however, was the ruling that a candidate city if selected had to pay 100,000 Swiss francs to the IOC, which was invariably financially weak.²¹

At the start of the 1960s, and the beginning of the TV era, applications became more professional. Instead of coloured slides, some cities showed short films as well, and they tried to beguile the IOC Members, which occasionally created annoyance. At the 1963 Session in Baden-Baden, the IOC unanimously followed the recommendation of a sub-commission that, at the next Winter Games in Innsbruck, no more cocktail

parties should take place.²² The cities were forbidden to distribute gifts and use diplomatic channels. Scarcely any of the applicants kept to that.

An expression of increasing self-awareness was the fact that in 1959 in Munich, the International Sports Federations were requested by IOC President Brundage to take part in the presentations, and to express their views on the technical conditions of the applicants.

Before the allocation of the Summer Games of 1972, they were permitted to undertake a ranking by points. The ranking was almost identical with the later voting result: Munich 11 points, Montreal 9, Detroit 9, Madrid 7.²³

A stronger right to speak was demanded by rowing President Thomas Keller before the start of the IOC Session of 1970. Additionally, he explained that the Summer Sports Federations “by reason of insufficient knowledge” saw themselves not in a position to decide which candidate from a technical point of view would be most suitable to hold the Games of 1976.²⁴ For the future, he demanded detailed information at least six months before the choice and the right of all federations to undertake local checks periodically. The costs of these visits should be borne by the candidate cities.

Montreal and Denver had a chilling effect

The 1970s brought new challenges. An early taste of this emerged when the vote for the Winter Games of 1972, in which the Canadian settlement of Banff, whose application had been rated best by the Winter Sport Federations, lost to Sapporo. Many IOC Members reported that they had received hundreds of protest letters in

IOC President, Avery Brundage together with the mayor of Munich, Hans-Jochen Vogel and the German NOC President Willi Daume, with the model of the Olympic Stadium. At this stage the plans did not include a tented roof.

Photo: Volker Kluge Archive





Atlanta's 1996 bid presentation comprised five volumes and helped win the 'Centennial Games'.

which environmentalists spoke out against the Games taking place in a national park. Montreal, which was also a candidate for the Summer Games and saw its chances reduced by Banff, also had a part in the campaign against the other Canadian candidate.

With his supposition that the Munich Games would cost up to two billion marks, Willi Daume, as President of the Organising Committee, had made the concept of the "billion Games" a subject of discussion. With a bold, tented roof-construction over the Olympic facilities, Munich also incurred the accusation of gigantism.

Montreal, which four years later was a candidate for the Games of 1976, believed it could exceed the Munich buildings with an Olympic tower and a parachute roof – and that without any cash from taxation. When Mayor Jean Drapeau was asked at the decisive Session whether the city would take on a financial guarantee, the answer was: "A cash deposit would not mean more than the word of Montreal. If this City promises to hold the Games, this promise is the most guarantee."²⁵

Montreal, which had defeated Moscow with this flashiness, incurred a deficit of almost a billion dollars. To make up for this deficit, the inhabitants of Quebec had to pay special taxes until 1995.

It was not the first time that the IOC let itself be deceived. Denver, Colorado, to which the Winter Games had been entrusted at the same Session, relocated the competition areas, with the exception of figure skating and ice hockey. The construction of a sledge run was, in retrospect, cancelled on the grounds of cost.

The resistance of the population grew. In a referendum they spoke out with 60% of the votes against further financial expenditure, leading Denver to return its mandate. The Winter Games were again offered to

applicants and, with Innsbruck, they found a good host for the second time.

Denver and Montreal had a chilling effect. To be sure, the gates of Moscow stood wide open for the Summer Games of 1980, but Los Angeles, less intent on prestige than business, offered itself as the only alternative.

A real alternative was missing for the Winter Games. As Lake Placid was the only candidate, nothing was left for the IOC but to accept the offer.

In this situation, there were proposals which might have led out of this crisis. The Greek Prime Minister Konstantin Karamanlis recommended the creation of a permanent venue for the Games near Ancient Olympia.²⁶ The possibility was examined but rejected, as was the proposal by the Swedish NOC, which wished to decentralise the Winter Games.²⁷



Athens staked their claim 100 years after the first Olympics. Their bid documentation included six books and six video cassettes in a heavy-weight cube but this did not convince most IOC Members.

Photo: Volker Kluge

Milan 2000. A bid to host the millennium Games in Northern Italy was later withdrawn.

Photo: Volker Kluge



The dilemma could still be a formidable problem. For the Summer Games of 1984 only Los Angeles applied. Los Angeles answered the 22 questions of the newly formulated 'Conditions laid down for Candidate Cities' with negligence. The IOC accepted this application under the condition that the city had to fulfill the requirements of the Olympic Charter by 1st August 1978.²⁸

The deadline was extended twice, until the IOC Executive Committee capitulated and let the members vote by letter. To ensure that the Games were not cancelled, 75 voted for Los Angeles, 3 against. Six abstained, one was invalid.

It was the Americans who dictated the rules in 1984. At these Games, which were privately organised, and shaken for the third time in a row by a boycott, there was a profit of 215 million dollars. According to the Olympic Charter, this profit should have gone to the IOC. But the Americans saw it differently.

With the start of the Cold War, a block mentality had entered the IOC. There was the Eastern Bloc, opposed to a network of West Europeans and North Americans. There were mutterings about a Latin 'mafia'. The Asians, Arabs and black Africans held together when it was a question of their interests. Among all the idealists and pragmatists, many were deluded.

An analysis of Olympic voting results might provide some insight about the 'wandering votes', but as there were secret ballots in the IOC, one cannot go any further than suppositions.

One thing was certain: even stronger than ideologies were the new sources of financing that began to appear at the start of the presidency of the banker, Juan Antonio Samaranch.²⁹ He abolished the amateur rules and passed the exclusive marketing of the Olympic rings to the firm ISL, 51% of which belonged to Adidas boss, Horst Dassler.

Thus, the IOC created a second support for itself along with the income from the TV contracts. Nine worldwide

operating partners took part in the first marketing programme, called TOP1 and valid from 1985 to 1988. This brought to the IOC 96 million US dollars. Besides the International Federations, the NOCs also profited. By 1985, 154 NOCs joined the ISL programme.

The number of Olympic applicants leapt up as well. If for 1988 there were only two for the Summer Games and three for the Winter Games, then for 1992 there were six and seven. The advertising campaigns became more aggressive and expensive. Costs in double-digit millions were already considered normal.

To answer the 23 complex questions, bid books were made obligatory. Three volumes with over 500 pages were demanded and a huge mass of detailed plans. Athens set a record in 1990 with a cube of ten kilos, which apart from six bid books, contained the same number of videos.

The application committees alone could no longer process everything, which is why international agencies were engaged. Wherever an IOC Member was seen, he was flattered by so-called Olympic ambassadors and other lobbyists.

The campaigns for the favour of the 90 decision-makers – the number of IOC Members in 1988 – reached such an extent that the Executive Committee was compelled to request applicants not to invite anyone directly involved in the selection of future host cities.

In order to inform the Olympic family appropriately, the IOC set up three commissions in 1983. The first was formed of IOC Members, the second of delegates of the International Federations and the third of NOC representatives. Not everyone liked this. The Ethiopian Ydnekatchew Tessema complained at the 1985 Session in Berlin that doubts were being sown as to the integrity of the IOC Members, whereupon the rule was weakened.³⁰ From 1991 IOC 'tourism' was again permitted. What was distributed in these visits, apart from hospitality, was discreetly tolerated in Lausanne.



A pentathlon for the 2012 Games: London, Paris, Madrid, New York and Moscow (in reverse order of their elimination).

Photo: Volker Kluge

Because of the growing number of applicants for the Winter Games of 2002, the IOC resolved in 1994 to make a pre-selection.³¹ An Evaluation Commission under the direction of Thomas Bach was set up – supported by experts – and visited all candidate cities. After that, five had to drop out.³² The remaining four reached the final, and one year later in Budapest, Salt Lake City won conclusively in the first round.

What had occurred, according to rumour, was confirmed three-and-a-half years later in December 1998. The bubble burst when, on the fringe of the meeting of the Executive Committee, Vice-President Marc Hodler announced that Salt Lake City had corrupted IOC Members. The cities who had lost in 1995 thereupon demanded back the costs of their applications.

The IOC was in the greatest crisis of its existence – a deep look into the abyss. Samaranch set up an examining commission, which reported that four international agencies had offered votes, as a package, for half a million to one million dollars plus a success fee between three and five million.³³ At an Extraordinary Session in March 1999, Samaranch, against all prophecies, was confirmed in office on a vote of confidence with only two votes against. Ten IOC Members were expelled; more received warnings. Salt Lake City had bought them with cash payments of 400,000 dollars as well as gifts, real estate transactions, and bursaries.

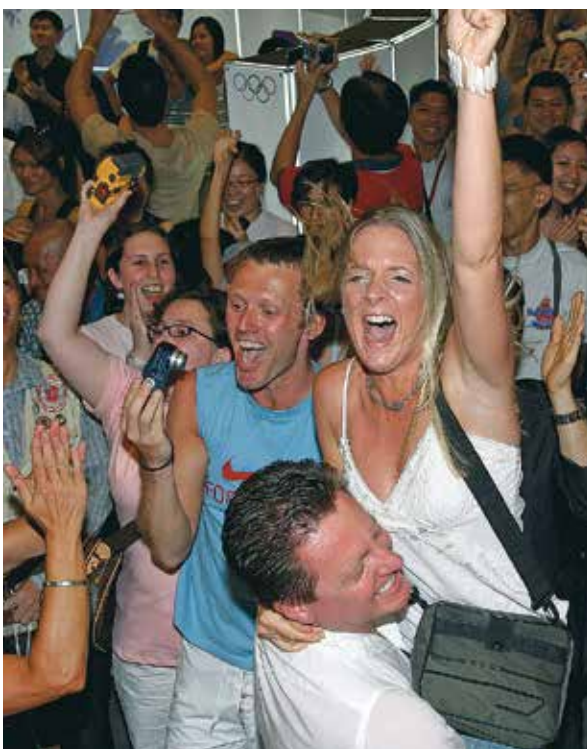
The damage was immense, and it could not be reduced by creating an Ethics Commission, which in 1999 included personalities like the former UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar.³⁴ Even today, the IOC is fighting to win back the lost trust.

The 'Olympic Agenda 2020' as an answer to changed circumstances

In December 1999, a new application procedure with a two-stage process was introduced.³⁵ In the first phase, all the interested cities were examined and described from that point as Applicant Cities. The responsible Evaluation Commissions were composed of IOC Members, representatives of the IFs, of the NOCs, of the Athletes' Commission and of the International Paralympic Committee, as well as experts. The procedure by-law was clarified by the passage: "No member of such commissions may be a national of a country which has a candidate city for such Olympic Games."³⁶

After the presentation of the Report of the Evaluation Commission, the IOC Executive Committee would decide on the final list of cities; they would be permitted to

British expatriates and other supporters hailed the IOC decision to award the 2012 Olympics to London. Photo: picture-alliance



describe themselves as Olympic Candidate Cities. With that began the second stage of the process, which ended with the choice of the host city and the signing of the Host City Contract.

For the Winter Games of 2006, only two finalists were allowed to be candidates: Turin and Sion. They were chosen by a Selection College – consisting of the IOC President, the IOC Doyen, eight IOC Members, Chairman of the Evaluation Commission, and representatives of the IFs and NOCs, as well as three athlete representatives.³⁷

The IOC agreed in future to permit a maximum of three candidates for the final round for winter and five for summer. The decision about the allocation takes place seven years before the Games. Today voices continue to call for an even longer period.

Since then, the IOC administration has made great efforts to better prepare the bidding cities and reduce the costs of candidature. This was formalised in 2002 by the launch of the Olympic Games Knowledge Services (OGKS), a partnership company of Monash University in Canberra, which grew out of the know-how of the Sydney Organizing Committee.

The questionnaire was reduced in 2010 to 18 themes but extended to 199 questions. Working groups evaluated every chapter with a minimum and maximum mark. In 2009 a technical briefing took place for the first time, to prepare the applicant cities for the evaluation.³⁸

A new standard was reached at the start of the presidency of Thomas Bach. The result of the dialogue of the IOC Members with the Olympic Movement stakeholders was a roadmap, which the IOC resolved at the Session in December 2014 in Monaco.

The 'Olympic Agenda 2020'³⁹ takes into account changes in the political, economic and ecological circumstances worldwide, and was accompanied by a public debate about the rising costs of the Olympic Games. It represents a new philosophy to invite potential candidate cities to present an application that fits their specific possibilities and ideas.

With its reforms, the IOC hopes to attract potential applicants. This includes the New Norm, a set of 118 measures that gives cities greater flexibility. It addresses the use of existing or temporary sports facilities, and allows host cities to hold competitions outside their area and, in exceptional cases, in neighbouring countries.

With a new Host City Contract, which other NOCs, regional or national authorities can join, the IOC is answering the demand for greater transparency. For the Winter Games of 2026, the contract is to be published for the first time.

Included in it are obligations about environmental protection, human rights and labour-related matters regarding the Olympic Games. The financial contribution of the IOC to the organising costs for 2026 will be 925 million US dollars.

Summary

The history of Olympic applications is, despite all low points, a story of success, of which the fathers of the Olympic Movement could not even dream. Were it different, then 119 cities from 41 countries would not have been moved to apply to hold the Games.

“... and the winner is ...” In 2011, IOC President, Jacques Rogge announced the voting results for the 2018 Winter Games, won by PyeongChang.

Far right: Munich, which was defeated in the vote, planned another application for 2022, but this was withdrawn after a referendum.

Photo: picture-alliance



At the vote in the IOC there is only one winner. Even the best application does not offer a guarantee. One city, one country must be 'on'. But even a defeat need not be a failure. An Olympic bid is still the most lasting city marketing, provided that the candidate is able to win public sympathies.

In 125 years, there have been 282 applications. Most came from the United States with 23 cities, followed by 9 by Germany. Los Angeles stands at the front, having been a candidate 9 times. Detroit tried seven times – and received 7 defeats.

Sweden applied seven times for the Winter Games with a total of four cities, but unfortunately, that sportingly enthusiastic but flat country was never assigned them. Stockholm (including Åre) has announced attempt number seven for 2026.

The 31 Summer Games were carried out in 23 cities and 19 countries. The Summer Games took place 17 times in Europe, 6 times in North America, 4 times in Asia, twice in Australia and once each in Central and South America. Africa applied twice with Alexandria, and once each with Cape Town and Cairo. When the fifth ring will have its turn, only the stars can tell.

There have been Winter Games 24 times in 21 different cities and 13 countries – 14 times in Europe, 6 times in North America and 4 times in Asia.

I should like to contradict the view that worldwide interest in hosting the Games is decreasing. Enthusiasm and readiness will vary, and with them the continents and nations, which is a basic idea of the modern Olympic Games. The often-heard demand to hold the Games only in democratic countries leads not a step further. According to an annually-calculated index by the British magazine *The Economist* in 2018, only 20 countries could be described as a 'full democracy', which corresponds to 4.5% of the world's population.⁴⁰

An Olympic application with today's stricter standards can, however, contribute to raising the 'Democracy Index', provided that key words – such as sustainability, credibility and legacy – are filled with content. ■



Rarely do the published figures match the true costs. This includes Tokyo, who submitted their candidacy before the adoption of the Olympic Agenda 2020. Afterwards, however, the Organising Committee was persuaded to 'save' four billion dollars through the use of existing sports facilities and infrastructure. Photo: Volker Kluge

1 Pierre de Coubertin, *Olympic Memoirs*, IOC, Lausanne 1997, p. 24
 2 Ibid., pp. 73-76
 3 Ibid., pp. 77-78
 4 *Revue Olympique*, June 1909, p. 90
 5 Ibid.
 6 Ibid., pp. 102-105
 7 Comité Provisoire des Jeux Olympiques (ed), *Aurons-nous la VII^e Olympiade à Anvers en 1920*, Brussels 1914
 8 *Memoirs*, pp. 169-170
 9 Minutes IOC Session Lausanne 1921, p. 3
 10 *Memoirs*, pp. 185-187, 191-192
 11 Minutes IOC Session Berlin 24 May 1930, p. 2
 12 Bundesarchiv (Barch), R 8077/210, letter Adenauer to Lewald, 5 June 1930
 13 Ibid., letter Lewald to Adenauer, 2 July 1930
 14 Ibid., letter Lewald to Reich Chancellery, 20 April 1927

15 Ibid., R 43/729, letter Lewald to States Secretary Hans Heinrich Lammers, 16 March 1933
 16 Cf. Sandra Collins, *The 1940 Tokyo Games. The Missing Olympics. Japan, the Asian Olympics and the Olympic Movement*, Routledge, London and New York 2007, pp. 59-60
 17 Minutes, IOC Session London 6 June 1939, pp. 8-9, 8 June 1939, pp. 6-11
 18 *The IOC Session 1894-1955, A Study made by Wolf Lyberg*, 1991, p. 261
 19 The Machinery of the Olympic Games. The conditions required for a town or a city to obtain the organization of the Games, in: *The IOC and the Modern Olympic Games*, IOC Lausanne 1950, pp. 9-10
 20 *The Olympic Games, Information for Cities which desire to stage the Olympic Games, Questionnaire*, IOC Lausanne, p. 42
 21 Minutes, IOC Session Paris 1955, p. 46
 22 Minutes, IOC Session Baden-Baden 1963, p. 7
 23 Minutes, IOC Session Rome 1966, p. 10
 24 Minutes, IOC Session Amsterdam 1970, Annex 11, Speech addressed to the Members of the IOC
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 31 Minutes, IOC Session Paris 1994, pp. 82-83
 32 Minutes, IOC Session Budapest 1995, Annex 7
 33 Report of the IOC ad hoc commission to investigate the conduct of certain IOC Members and to consider possible changes in the procedures for the allocation of the Games of the Olympiad and Olympic Winter Games, presented to the IOC Executive Board, Lausanne 24 January 1999
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 35 Minutes, Extraordinary IOC Session, 17 March 1999, Annex 9 and 10
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 39 IOC, *Olympic Agenda 2020, Context and Background*, Lausanne, 18 November 2014
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GAMES OF THE OLYMPIAD CANDIDATES / APPLICANT CITIES AND VOTING RESULTS

Year	Decision	Place	Host City	Other Candidates /Applicants	Votes
1896	23 June 1894	Paris	Athens	none Interested: London, Budapest	unanimous
1900	23 June 1894	Paris	Paris	none	unanimous
1904	23 Dec 1902	Paris	St. Louis	Buffalo, Chicago (ret)	unanimous
1908	Nov 1906	London	London	Rome (ret)	unanimous
1912	28 May 1909	Berlin	Stockholm	Berlin (ret)	unanimous
1916	4 July 1912	Stockholm	Berlin (canc)	Alexandria, Budapest (ret)	unanimous
1920	5 Apr 1919	Lausanne	Antwerp	Amsterdam, Lyon (ret) Interested: Atlanta, Budapest, Cleveland, Havana	unanimous
1924	2 June 1921	Lausanne	Paris	Amsterdam, Barcelona, Interested: Rome, Prague	14-4
1928	2 June 1921	Lausanne	Amsterdam	none	14-4
1932	8 April 1923	Rome	Los Angeles	none	unanimous
1936	13 May 1931	Lausanne	Berlin	Barcelona Appl: Budapest (ret), Rome (ret) Interested: Alexandria, Buenos Aires, Cologne, Dublin, Frankfurt/Main, Helsinki, Lausanne, Nuremberg	43-16
1940	31 July 1936	Berlin	Tokyo (ret)	Helsinki Appl: London (ret) Interested: Athens, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Dublin, Lausanne	36-27 (unofficial)
	19 July 1938		Helsinki (cancelled)		
1944	9 June 1939	London	London (canc)	Rome, Detroit, Lausanne	Rome 20 Detroit 11 Lausanne 2 Abstentions 1
1948	4 Sept 1946	Lausanne	London	Baltimore, Lausanne, Los Angeles Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Belgrade (ret)	unknown
1952	21 June 1947	Stockholm	Helsinki	Amsterdam, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Philadelphia	1 st 2 nd Helsinki 14 15 Minneapolis 4 5 Los Angeles 4 5 Amsterdam 3 3 Detroit 2 - Chicago 1 - Philadelphia 0 -
1956	28 Apr 1949	Rome	Melbourne	Buenos Aires, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, San Francisco	1 st 2 nd 3 rd 4 th Melbourne 14 18 19 21 Buenos Aires 9 12 13 20 Los Angeles 5 4 5 - Detroit 2 4 4 - Mexico City 9 3 - - Minneapolis 1 - - - Philadelphia 1 - - - Chicago 0 - - - San Francisco 0 - - -
	Equestrian Games: 13 May 1954	Athens	Stockholm	West-Berlin, Buenos Aires (ret) Los Angeles, Paris, Rio de Janeiro	Stockholm 25 Paris 10 Rio de Janeiro 8 West-Berlin 2 Los Angeles 2
1960	16 June 1955	Paris	Rome	Budapest, Brussels, Detroit Lausanne, Mexico City, Tokyo	1 st 2 nd 3 rd Rome 15 26 35 Lausanne 14 21 24 Budapest 9 1 - Detroit 6 11 - Brussels 6 ret - Mexico City 6 ret - Tokyo 4 - -
1964	26 May 1959	Munich	Tokyo	Brussels, Detroit, Vienna	Tokyo 34 Detroit 10 Vienna 9 Brussels 5

GAMES OF THE OLYMPIAD CANDIDATES/APPLICANT CITIES AND VOTING RESULTS

Year	Decision	Place	Host City	Other Candidates /Applicants	Votes	
1968	18 Oct 1963	Baden-Baden	Mexico City	Buenos Aires, Detroit, Lyon	Mexico City Detroit Lyon Buenos Aires	30 14 12 2
1972	26 Apr 1966	Rome	Munich	Detroit, Madrid, Montreal	Munich Montreal Madrid Detroit	1 st 2 nd 21 31 16 15 16 13 6 -
1976	13 May 1970	Amsterdam	Montreal	Los Angeles, Moscow	Montreal Moscow Los Angeles	1 st 2 nd 25 41 28 28 17 -
1980	23 Oct 1974	Vienna	Moscow	Los Angeles	Moscow Los Angeles Abstentions	39 20 2
1984	29 Jan 1979	Lausanne	Los Angeles	postal vote: in favour 75, against 3, spoiled 1, abstentions 6		
1988	30 Sept 1981	Baden-Baden	Seoul	Nagoya	52-27	
1992	17 Oct 1986	Lausanne	Barcelona	Amsterdam, Belgrade, Birmingham, Brisbane, Paris	Barcelona Paris Belgrade Brisbane Birmingham Amsterdam	1 st 2 nd 3 rd 29 37 47 19 20 23 13 1 5 11 9 1 8 8 - 5 - -
1996	18 Sept 1990	Tokyo	Atlanta	Athens, Belgrade, Manchester, Melbourne, Toronto	Atlanta Athens Toronto Melbourne Manchester Belgrade	1 st 2 nd 3 rd 4 th 5 th 19 20 26 34 51 23 23 26 30 35 14 17 18 22 - 12 21 16 - - 11 5 - - - 7 - - - -
2000	23 Sept 1993	Monte Carlo	Sydney	Berlin, Istanbul, Manchester, Beijing Interested: Milano (ret)	Sydney Beijing Manchester Berlin Istanbul	1 st 2 nd 3 rd 4 th 30 30 37 45 32 37 40 43 11 13 11 - 9 9 - - 7 - - -
2004	5 Sept 1997	Lausanne	Athens	Buenos Aires, Capetown, Rome, Stockholm Appl: Istanbul, Lille, Rio de Janeiro, San Juan, Seville, St. Petersburg	Athens Rome Capetown Stockholm Buenos Aires	1 st t-b 2 nd 3 rd 4 th 32 - 38 52 66 23 - 28 35 41 16 62 22 20 - 20 19 - - 16 44 - - -
2008	13 July 2001	Moscow	Beijing	Istanbul, Osaka, Paris, Toronto Appl: Bangkok, Cairo, Havana, Kuala Lumpur, Seville	Beijing Toronto Paris Istanbul Osaka	1 st 2 nd 44 56 20 22 15 18 17 9 6 -
2012	6 July 2005	Singapore	London	Madrid, Moscow, New York, Paris Appl: Havana, Istanbul, Leipzig, Rio de Janeiro	London Paris Madrid New York Moscow	1 st 2 nd 3 rd 4 th 22 27 39 54 21 25 33 50 20 32 31 - 19 16 - - 15 - - -
2016	2 Oct 2009	Copenhagen	Rio de Janeiro	Chicago, Madrid, Tokyo Appl: Baku, Doha, Prague	Rio de Janeiro Madrid Tokyo Chicago	1 st 2 nd 3 rd 26 46 66 28 29 32 22 20 - 18 - -
2020	7 Sept 2013	Buenos Aires	Tokyo	Istanbul, Madrid Appl: Baku, Doha, Rome (ret)	Tokyo Istanbul Madrid	1 st t-b 2 nd 42 - 60 26 49 36 26 45 -
2024	13 Sept 2017	Lima	Paris	Los Angeles Interested: Boston, Budapest, Hamburg, Rome (all ret)	unanimous	
2028	13 Sept 2017	Lima	Los Angeles	none	unanimous	

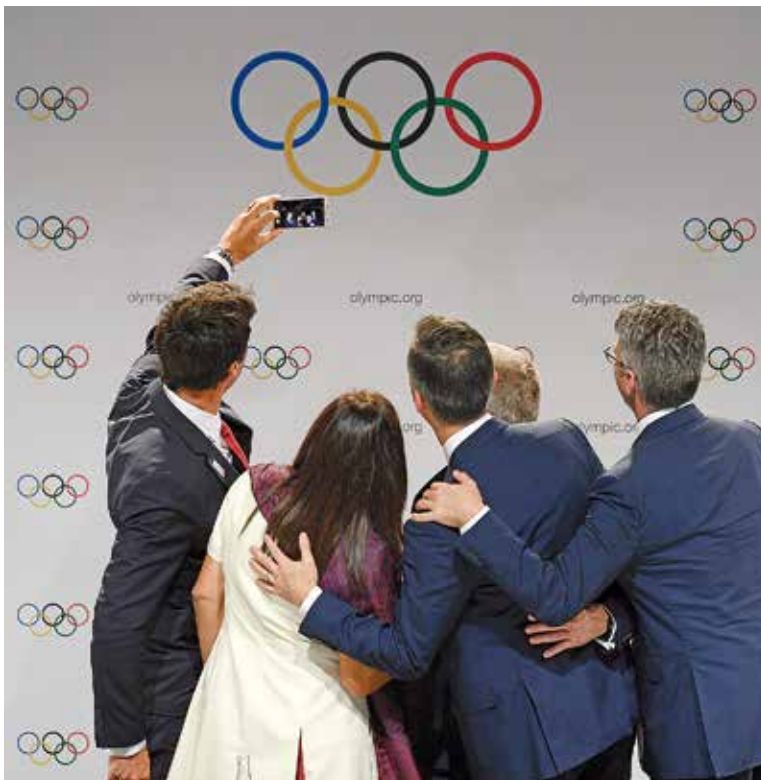
OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES CANDIDATES/APPLICANT CITIES AND VOTING RESULTS

Year	Decision	Place	Host City	Other Candidates /Applicants	Votes	
1924	2 June 1921	Lausanne	Chamonix	none	unanimous	
1928	6 May 1926	Lisbon	St. Moritz	Appl: Engelberg	unanimous	
1932	10 Apr 1929	Lausanne	Lake Placid	Appl: Yosemite Valley, Bear Mountain, Duluth, Minneapolis, Denver, Lake Tahoe (all USA), Montreal	unanimous	
1936	8 June 1933	Vienna	Garmisch-Partenkirchen	none	unanimous	
1940	9 June 1937	Warsaw	Sapporo (ret), St. Moritz (stripped)	Interested: Oslo	unanimous	
	3 Sept 1938 9 June 1939	London	Garmisch-Partenkirchen (canc)		unanimous	
1944	9 June 1939	London	Cortina (canc)	Montreal, Oslo	1 st 2 nd	
					Cortina	16 16
					Montreal	11 12
					Oslo	7 2
					Abstentions	1 5
1948	6 Sept 1946	Lausanne	St. Moritz	Lake Placid	unanimous	
1952	21 June 1947	Stockholm	Oslo	Cortina, Lake Placid	Oslo	18
					Cortina	9
					Lake Placid	1
1956	28 Apr 1949	Rome	Cortina	Colorado Springs, Lake Placid, Montreal	Cortina	31
					Montreal	7
					Colorado	2
					Lake Placid	1
1960	14 May 1955	Paris	Squaw Valley	Garmisch-Partenkirchen Innsbruck, St. Moritz	1 st 2 nd	
					Squaw Valley	30 32
					Innsbruck	24 30
					Garmisch-P.	5 -
					St. Moritz	6 -
1964	25 May 1959	Munich	Innsbruck	Calgary, Lahti	Innsbruck	49
					Calgary	9
					Lahti	0
1968	28 Jan 1964	Innsbruck	Grenoble	Calgary, Lahti, Lake Placid Oslo, Sapporo	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	
					Grenoble	15 18 27
					Calgary	12 19 24
					Lahti	11 14 -
					Sapporo	6 - -
					Oslo	4 - -
Lake Placid	3 - -					
1972	26 Apr 1966	Rome	Sapporo	Banff, Lahti, Salt Lake City	Sapporo	32
					Banff	16
					Lahti	7
					Salt Lake City	7
1976	13 May 1970	Amsterdam	Denver (ret)	Sion, Tampere, Vancouver	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	
					Denver	29 29 39
					Sion	18 31 30
					Tampere	12 8 -
					Vancouver	9 - -
					Abstentions	1 1
1980	4 Febr 1973 23 Oct 1974	Lausanne	Innsbruck	Chamonix, Lake Placid, Tampere	unknown	
					1980	23 Oct 1974
1984	18 May 1978	Athens	Sarajevo	Göteborg, Sapporo	1 st 2 nd	
					Sarajevo	31 39
					Sapporo	33 36
					Göteborg	10 -
Abstentions	1					
1988	30 Sept 1981	Baden-Baden	Calgary	Cortina, Falun-Åre	1 st 2 nd	
					Calgary	35 48
					Falun-Åre	25 31
					Cortina	18 -
					Abstentions	1
1992	17 Oct 1986	Lausanne	Albertville	Anchorage, Berchtesgaden, Cortina, Falun-Åre, Lillehammer, Sofia	1 st 2 nd 3 rd 4 th t-b 5 th	
					Albertville	19 26 29 42 51
					Sofia	25 25 28 24 25
					Falun	10 11 11 9 41 9
					Lillehammer	10 11 9 9 40 -
					Cortina	7 6 7 - -
					Anchorage	7 5 - - -
					Berchtesgaden	6 - - - -
Abstentions	4					

OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES CANDIDATES/APPLICANT CITIES AND VOTING RESULTS

Year	Decision	Place	Host City	Other Candidates /Applicants	Other Candidates /Applicants	Votes
1994	15 Sept 1988	Seoul	Lillehammer	Anchorage, Östersund, Sofia	Lillehammer	1 st 2 nd 3 rd
					Östersund	25 30 45
					Anchorage	19 33 39
					Sofia	23 22 -
					Abstentions	17 - -
1						
1998	15 June 1991	Birmingham	Nagano	Aosta, Jaca, Östersund, Salt Lake City	Nagano	1 st t-b 2 nd 3 rd 4 th
					Salt Lake City	21 30 36 46
					Östersund	15 59 27 29 42
					Jaca	18 25 23 -
					Aosta	19 5 - -
15 29 - - -						
2002	16 June 1995	Budapest	Salt Lake City	Östersund, Québec, Sion Appl: Graz, Jaca, Poprad-Tatry, Sochi, Tarvisio, Almaty	Salt Lake City	54
					Östersund	14
					Sion	14
					Québec	7
2006	19 June 1999	Seoul	Turin	Sion Appl: Helsinki, Klagenfurt, Poprad-Tatry, Zakopane	53-36	
2010	2 July 2003	Prague	Vancouver	PyeongChang, Salzburg Appl: Andorra La Vella, Berne (ret), Harbin, Jaca, Sarajevo	Vancouver	1 st 2 nd
					PyeongChang	40 56
					Salzburg	51 53
2014	4 July 2007	Guatamala City	Sochi	PyeongChang, Salzburg Appl: Almaty, Borjomi, Jaca, Sofia	Sochi	1 st 2 nd
					PyeongChang	34 51
					Salzburg	36 47
						25 -
2018	6 July 2011	Durban	PyeongChang	Munich, Annecy	PyeongChang	63
					Munich	25
					Annecy	7
2022	31 July 2015	Kuala Lumpur	Beijing	Almaty Interested: Munich, Oslo, Kraków/Lviv, Stockholm (all ret)		44-40
2026	24 June 2019	Lausanne	?	Cortina-Milan, Stockholm-Åre Interested: Calgary, Erzurum, Graz/Schladming, Sapporo, Sion (all ret)		

Ret = retired, Appl = Applicant City, t-b = tie-break, canc = canceled



Double vote – double joy: Paris and Los Angeles representatives take a selfie with IOC President Thomas Bach in 2017 when the Games of 2024 and 2028 were decided. Which concept for the Winter Games 2026 will convince the IOC majority?

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