

BALMUN'24

142nd International Olympics Committee Session

**Under Secretary General:
Kaan ÖZTOPRAK**

STUDY GUIDE

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1. Letter from Secretary-General

Most Esteemed Participants,

As the Secretary-General of the conference, it is my utmost pleasure to welcome you all to the very first edition of BALMUN'24. The World is changing in various and major impacts. Every single day, another crisis occurs in a different location on Earth. Policies are changing, economies are changing, and even human culture is changing. However, the only thing that does not change is humanity's desire to achieve their own interests. This desire has been the main factor in the establishment of the global system in the past, present, and future.

At this conference, we aimed to show you the real politics, the truth behind the curtains, and provide a full United Nations simulation experience for you. We created eight wonderful committees that contain all the political aspects of the past, present, and future. We are expecting a lot from you to find initiative solutions for crises, successfully cooperate with other ideologies, have lasting reconciliation for the problems which occurred in the World more than a century. While academically improving yourselves also, I, as Ceylin Umay Köylü, sincerely hope you have fun during the conference. MUN events brought me amazing friends that I would not have even dreamed of. I wholeheartedly wish you to gain friendships and enjoy every single second of the conference. We were the past, we are the present and we will be the future. I wish you all to find your importance and purpose in the World.

Yours Faithfully,

Secretary-General

Ceylin Umay KÖYLÜ

2. Letter from Under-Secretary General

Most distinguished participants,

I am really honoured to welcome all of you first to BALMUN'24 and then to the most astonishing committee of the conference, that is to say the International Olympic Committee. Before going into the introductory section of the committee, let me introduce myself. I am Kaan Öztoprak, a senior studying history and political sciences at Boğaziçi University. I am glad to be serving you as the Under-Secretary-General of the IOC in this prestigious conference held at Bahçelievler Anatolian High School, where I graduated in 2019. The fact that this very first BALMUN is actually a homecoming for me brings a more special dimension to this committee on behalf of me, but let's skip the emotional part for now and delve into the subject matter!

During four days of the conference, you will be discussing various agendas of the most popular sport organizations of mankind since prehistoric times, that is to say the Olympics. I accept that it might be the broadest way to specify what waits for you in this unique committee. You'll have the chance to exercise nearly all the rights of the superior authority of the Olympic Games. While doing so, all of you are supposed to become involved with your critical standing points, constructive mindsets and appropriate solutions, all of which would lead to fruitful debates within the committee. This study guide is prepared with the purpose of addressing the general knowledge about the governing body of the Olympics, the IOC, and giving details of the latest circumstances of issues chosen as agenda items of this committee. It is better for you not to read this work alone, but also grasp its contents in parallel with the decision making dynamics of the IOC, which is clearly explained in the following pages. Those who are actually not familiar with a sport-related MUN committee, no need to worry because this is not rocket science at all! I assure you that it has nothing to do with theoretical or practical knowledge of sports, but rather the decision making processes for one of the most precious bounds among nations.

I really look forward to seeing you in this unprecedented experience for the realm of MUN in Türkiye and wish you all the best in your preparations.

Yours Faithfully,

Under-Secretary-General
Kaan ÖZTOPRAK

3. The List of Abbreviations

- IOC Exec: International Olympic Committee Executive Board
- IOC: International Olympic Committee
- NOC: National Olympic Committee
- IF: International Federation
- OCOG: The Organising Committees for the Olympic Game
- WADA: World Anti-Doping Agency
- CAS: Court of Arbitration for Sport
- ROC: Russian Olympic Committee

4. Introduction to the Committee

Olympics, the power that has been connecting numerous people all around the world for nearly more than two centuries. Being the most broadcasted sporting event around the world, the modern Olympic Games have today gained more ground; so, it is now more than what it meant yesterday. In such an atmosphere, International Olympic Committee, as the supreme body of Olympic movement on a global scale, has been attempting not only to cherish the principles that had been established in the beginning of the 20th century, but also to create the best experience of the Olympiad in each four years both on behalf of the athletes and the audiences. In the IOC Committee, delegates participating in the 142nd annual session of the organization would have a say in designating the path the Olympics will follow in the next decade. They would have the chance to consider the current issues of the international arena from a different perspective, that is to say, their base would be sport this time. However, the fact that certain agenda items are directly intertwined with political grounds will stimulate delegates to think and shape their attitude and rhetoric in the light of their countries' interests. Regardless of your interest in any kind of sport represented in the Olympic Games, this committee is for those willing to create a new dimension in their standpoints over contemporary global crises and experience a new journey in their MUN career.

5. Committee Background

5.1. The Roots and Evolution of the Olympics

Today, what we call the Olympics can be actually traced back to the ancient times, when it was more likely to be a social gathering, something like a festival with sportive endeavours. The real origin of the games, however, is a matter of controversy with a wide range of mythical claims, the most outstanding of which points out that it was the figures from Ancient Greek mythology, namely Heracles and Zeus that heralded such games. The first ancient Olympics seems to take place in 776 BCE, which was confirmed through written evidence found in Olympia, an ancient site in modern Greece. From that year onwards, games began to be held every four years, which was named after 'olympiad'. In other words, a period of four years was called an olympiad, which was also used as a vehicle to arrange timeline among historical events by contemporary historians. For example, Dionysius of Halicarnassus determines the

year of the foundation of the city of Rome by pointing to the first year of the seventh Olympiad, roughly equivalent to 751 BC. These ancient editions of the Olympics merged more old-fashioned sport branches into competitions, which were highly tied with religious rituals such as ceremonies to gods and so on. Accordingly, it had a religious dimension too. The games remained to be held in Ancient Greece, but the Roman domination over the region allegedly put an end to this nearly thousand-year tradition. To clarify, some scholars argue that Roman emperor Theodosius I ordered the displacement of all kinds of pagan cults inherited from Ancient Greece, which also abolished the games itself. Amidst all these uncertainties about the ancient roots of the Olympics, one can more easily observe its modern counterpart thanks to the abundance of written sources. It should come as no surprise that the period of so-called 'dark ages' is of course excluded from that research-free zone since any sentiments regarding ancient cults were highly refused by the single authority, the church. The following centuries witnessed a number of incidents which were supposed to reflect the ancient games and recorded in different parts of Europe, including Britain, France and Sweden. Among these, one organized in Liverpool during the 1860's was pioneering in the sense that it would not only impact upon the first recognised modern edition of the Olympics, which would then take place in Athens at the turn of the 19th century, but also constitute the grounds for modern Olympic Charter. The desire to revive the games was also simultaneously expressed by the Greeks after they separated from the Ottoman rule and gained their independence. In such an atmosphere, a contemporary French historian came to the scene and took the lead.

5.2. The Foundation of International Olympic Committee

As a scholar pursuing physical education and sports, Pierre de Coubertin had long been thinking about the role of sport in schooling. During his visit to England in his early life, he observed how effective the integration of athletics into the British education system was. His number one desire is to follow suit in France, which he attempted to set by looking at the ancient examples of gymnasiums in Athens. This connection, however, brought another ground-breaking idea in his mind, the international competition. Already in his time, English educationalist Brookes was also struggling for reviving the games, though to a national extent. However, it was Coubertin that set the ideals of athletic competition and led the first Olympic Congress in Paris in 1894, which seemingly delved into the topics of amateurism and the Olympics. The latter was addressed by a commission led by a Greek businessman Demetrios Vikelas. This commission would then turn into what we call today the International Olympic Committee with its first president being Vikelas, whose very first agenda was to re-organise ancient games under the name of the Olympics. According to the decision that had been already passed by the Congress, the first summer Olympics would be organized in Athens in 1896, also marking the first year of the first Olympiad (*see section 5.1.*). At first glance, all efforts were drawn to the organization of the games, which increased tension between Coubertin and Vikelas. The first president's withdrawal from presidency after the first edition of modern Olympics in his homeland left the throne to Coubertin, who held the office until 1925. Since then, seven more presidents have been elected with varying years in service, the last (and

current) of which is a German lawyer and athlete Thomas Bach.

6. The Framework of International Olympic Committee

Modern Olympic identity is nowadays reflected by the term olympism, which can be regarded as ‘a philosophy of life placing sport at the service of humanity’.¹ The direct expressions of this phenomenon includes olympic values (excellence, friendship, and respect) determined by IOC, symbols (five rings and the torch), the motto, anthem, oaths, all of which actually describes a way of life. It is certainly spreading day by day thanks to the Olympic Movement.



As seen from the diagram above, the movement has a number of components; namely the International Federations, National Olympic Committees, the Organizing Committees for the Olympic Games and International Olympic Committee. IOC is the supreme authority above all other branches of the movement. It is crucial to grasp its charges and to differentiate between assigned duties of aforementioned structures. Only in this way would one be able to comprehend the hierarchy within the movement, thereby understanding the function of IOC. Being the main unit of the Olympic movement, IOC holds annual sessions during which all its members gather to take critical decisions on behalf of the movement. It is important to note that these members are not the official representatives of their home countries, meaning that they are not appointed to this job, but rather serving on a volunteer basis. Yet, the decisions of IOC, they constitute its framework, are still bounding to the participating countries of the games. The IOC's agendas primarily consist of the host selection of the Olympic Games, the election of board members including the President, the amendments to the Charter and the recognition or exclusion of its members, IFs or NOCs. Earlier to each annual session, the agenda is established by the executive board, a group of fifteen members with a president and four vice-presidents.

In this line, IOC is not the main unit in charge for sending delegations of athletes to the

¹ The Olympic Museum, *Olympism and the Olympic Movement*, 3.

Olympic Games (that is the business of NOCs), practical or technical organisation of single sporting branches (that is the business of IFs) or that of the Games overall (that is the business of OCOGs). In general, it makes final decisions to manage the Olympic games in the background.

7. Introduction to the Agenda Items

7.1. The Reconsideration of Russian and Belarusian Individual Athletes' Participation in 2024 Summer Olympics

7.1.1. Russian Olympic Committee's Career at the Olympics

The participation of the Russian athletes at the Olympics nearly dates back to the beginning of the 20th century, 1900 Games with the first being. Then, these competitors were representing the Russian Empire, but it was no longer the case following the 1917 Revolution. In the very first years of Soviet Russia, high officials were likely to keep their distance from the games since they blamed the Olympics for being a bourgeois pursuit. A new national olympic committee was founded and recognised by the IOC only after the Second World War and the Soviet athletes returned to the courts with the 1952 Summer Olympics. Afterwards, Soviet players performed in a wide range of summer and winter games up until the dissolution of the USSR. An exception to this trend was its boycott of the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, which can actually be seen as a retaliation for U.S.-led western boycott for previous games held in Moscow in 1980. In total, Soviet athletes won more than 1,200 medals in less than forty years; thereby ranking the second place after the United States, another reflection of the Cold War between these gigantic powers. In the tumultuous nature of the 1990's, Russian athletes could participate in the Games, first, under the title of 'Unified Team'; however, this vacuum was filled subsequent to the domination of Russian Federation over the pre-Soviet territories. From 1993 onwards, players began to prepare for and join the Olympics as the members of the Russian Olympic Committee. Since then, Russian athletes appeared twelve times in the Olympic scene, through which they won roughly 550 medals, following the success of the American and Chinese athletes. The Russian host to the 2014 Winter Olympics was a turning point for its relation and international status since numerous allegations for state-sponsored doping of athletes publicized by European broadcasters. Such concerns were already existing back in the Soviet era, but the issue was brought forward once again in 2010's. Check tests on Russian athletes' blood conducted by IAAF shadowed their success in 2008 and 2012 Olympics and caused IOC to ban the contemporary head of the Russian athletic federation and a coach for lifetime. In 2016, a deeper investigation was carried out, during which athletes competing in 2006 and 2010 Winter Olympics were under assessment too. After numerous mutual accusations and denials, IOC concluded its investigation in 2017 and declared certain sanctions over suspicious Russian competitors. Meanwhile, WADA declared Russia's non-compliance with World Anti-Doping Code meaning that Russian athletes were violating the international standards for artificial medicine usage. Eventually, the IOC suspended the Russian Olympic Committee and prevented it from participating in the 2018 Winter Olympics.

Nonetheless, this decision was eased by letting ‘clean’ Russian athletes to join the Games without the usage of Russian flag or anthem. In contrast to what expectations were, the Kremlin did allow its athletes to realize their Olympics dreams under such harsh conditions. Accordingly, competitors gathered in the group called Olympic Athletes from Russia and performed on a volunteer basis. Such allegations, however, did not come to an end at all. WADA announced the misleading reports launched by the Russian Anti-Doping Agency in 2019. Accordingly, it announced the ban of Russian teams to a full scale from international sport organisations for four years, which was then decreased with certain conditions by the CAS. In the following two Olympics, held in 2020 and 2022 respectively, Russian players were welcomed given that they represent ROC via its specific flag and uniforms, which are actually a clear reflection of the Russian flag.

7.1.2. IOC’s Response to the Russian Assault over Ukraine

Through all this relation with ups and downs, the latest, and perhaps the biggest, point of tension came with the Russian military campaign over Ukrainian territories by 2022. Just like most of western state or non-state foundations, IOC has declared its solidarity with Ukraine and created a special fund for Ukrainian athletes for lessening their misery, from which some 3,000 athletes have benefited so far.² However, it did not take a radical step to suspend ROC at first glance although Russia did clearly neglect the Olympic Truce, a long lasting tradition of peace settlement before and during the games. This was a clear violation of the Olympic Charter. The first ramification then was the Russian and Belarusian athletes' exclusion from the 2022 Winter Paralympics. To be honest, there was the probability for them to compete under the Paralympic flag, but a number of NOCs were likely to boycott the Games in such a case and that’s why the decision was not altered. While the war was ongoing, ROC President Pozdnyakov made a speech, by which he encouraged players to join the military:

“From the point of view of the Russian Olympic Committee, we, being citizens of the country, consider service to the motherland is an honourable duty and an honourable duty of every citizen, including members of national teams.”³

It seems that he could not attain Russian athletes’ attention at all, but rather most of them lost their motivation due to warfare. At the end of the year, a new recommendation was declared by the Olympic Summit chaired by the IOC President Bach. It was agreed to remain fully in solidarity with the NOC of Ukraine and enable their athletes to prepare for the 2024 Summer and 2026 Winter Games. Another consensus was made that those with Russian or Belarusian passports would be allowed to join as individual neutral athletes though an official invitation would not be forwarded to the related national committees. By doing so, the IOC refrained

² International Olympic Committee, last modified October 25, 2023, <https://olympics.com/ioc>.

³ Owen Lloyd, “ROC President Pozdnyakov claims Russian athletes should be honoured to fight in war against Ukraine,” Inside the Game, last modified September 22, 2022, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/>.

from applying a collective punishment by allowing individual players whereas it did not send an official invitation to the ROC for the 2024 Summer Olympics. Meanwhile, international communities such as G7, G20 and Non-Aligned Movement expressed their togetherness with IOC and aligned with its values-based course of actions. A more recent controversial step was taken in October 2023 by ROC after it announced the integration of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia into the Russian National Olympic Committee. That was another crystal clear breach of the Olympic Charter due to the violation of territorial integrity. As a result, the Russian Olympic Committee was suspended with a common declaration, in which also the reservation of the right to decide about individual players' participation was highlighted. ROC President Pozdnyakov argued in one of his press conferences that he cannot see any single Russian player that has the possibility to take stage at the Games until an invitation is released by the IOC.⁴ Lastly, the IOC has made the final decision, in response to the demand by the Olympic Summit gathered at Zurich last month, to declare Russian and Belarusian athletes as being eligible to attend the games next year. Those qualifying will be able to join the games under the umbrella of 'Individual Neutral Athletes (AINs)', bound with aforementioned conditions. IOC's green light can be rooted back to March, when it had actually recommended the international federations to open the door for previously banned athletes. Subsequently, the Council of Europe, primarily governments in Ukraine, Poland, and Czechia voiced their concern upon hearing this suggestion.⁵ Yesterday's concern becomes today's reality. However, the IOC highlights that no Russian or Belarusian officials would be invited and be allowed to enter the Olympic venues. IOC's attitude seems to satisfy neither the Russian nor Ukrainian side since both sides' related ministers express their discontent. Russian President Putin blamed the IOC for making ethnic discrimination by following such policies. Ukrainian Foreign Minister said on X:

“The IOC essentially gave Russia the green light to weaponize the Olympics because the Kremlin will use every Russian and Belarusian athlete as a weapon in its propaganda warfare. I urge all partners to strongly condemn this shameful decision, which undermines Olympic principles.”⁶

The IOC still keeps the right to change the status, and it should not come as a surprise in case a shift in its decision would be observed in the near future, on which the global reactions might have a huge impact.

7.2. Inclusion of Esports in Olympic Games

⁴ “Russia boycotts the 2024 Olympics in Paris (Russian Olympic Committee),” last modified October 5, 2023, <https://www.africanews.com/>.

⁵ Oliver Browning, “Council of Europe hold hearing on Russian and Belarus athletes participating in 2024 Olympics,” Independent, last modified April 25, 2023, <https://www.independent.co.uk/>.

⁶ Emre Aşıkçı, “International Olympic Committee allows athletes from Russia, Belarus to take part in Paris 2024 games,” Anadolu Ajansı, last modified December 9, 2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en>.

As one can guess, the category of Olympic sports has been broadened with each Olympiad since the beginning of the 20th century. Disciplines such as athletics, swimming, cycling, fencing, and gymnastics had constituted the core of the Olympic competitions, but more were to come in the following years whereas some others were displaced in process. For instance, polo, a ball game on horseback, was lastly added to the official programme of 1936 Summer Olympics, after which it was removed mainly due to decrease in its popularity. From then on, only abandoned sports are baseball and softball, both of which were discarded following an annual IOC Session. That means, the decision for inclusion or removal of a sport can be reached merely by the IOC. Throughout the 20th century, certain local sports were also added to the list for once under the category of 'demonstration sports' with the aim of boosting popularity for traditional games from home countries. To give an example, a tournament of Wushu, a Chinese martial art, was organized for the nonce in the 2008 Summer Olympics held in Beijing. Nevertheless, the IOC has nowadays quitted such applications, and mainly remained stuck with the previously agreed Olympic games. According to the Olympic Charter, Olympic sports for each Olympics must be enlisted by the IOC seven years prior to the Games at the very latest. Thus, delegates within this committee would decide whether esports would be included in the 2032 Summer Olympics or not. In order for a sport to be regarded as an Olympic discipline, there are some preconditions. First, it must be governed by an International Federation, which should be recognized by the IOC. Secondly, it must be played in at least seventy five countries spreading over four continents. Last but not least, it should not violate the Olympic values, including excellence, respect and friendship. All these factors must be accomplished without exception for the IOC to take a sport's nomination as an Olympic discipline into consideration.

Electronic sports, esports hereafter, constitutes multiplayer digital competitions and corresponds to a major part of the video game industry. With the coming of streaming platforms, it has rapidly prevailed all around the world by 2010 onwards and today, it has a mass audience stretching from East Asia to Europe and the Americas with an approximate size of 550 million fans worldwide.⁷ This rising interest and social acceptance did pose unsurprisingly the question whether it can be included in the Olympic or not. Some argue that esports is not ready to share the Olympic stage yet while others point out that it has the necessary quality and also value enough to be regarded as an Olympic discipline. Amidst all these contrasting views, IOC had actually shown its interest in esports already in 2007, when another multinational sport organization called Asian Indoor Games admitted FIFA07, NBA Live 07 and Need for Speed under the category of esports as medal events. The first official step, however, was taken by the IOC when an Olympic Summit in 2017 was held, in which the subject matter was the integration of esports into the Olympics. However, the lack of an IF and also high level of violence in popular video games hindered the IOC from maturing its mindset about esports. A further advent was then made in the Olympic Agenda 2020+5, in which further engagement with video gaming communities and the addition of physical virtual

⁷ Craig Morris, *Why Esports Should Have a Place in the Olympics* (Finland: KAMK, 2022)

sports in the Olympic programme were set as future aims. Accordingly, a new department for virtual sports within the IOC was established, whose head became Vincent Pereira by March, 2022. The COVID-19 pandemic marked a milestone in the sense that the IOC decided to organize an Olympic Virtual Series in 2021 in compensation for the postponed 2020 Summer Olympics. This new pursuit included baseball, cycling, motorsport, rowing, and sailing, all of which had its specific digital counterpart as sports-based video games. The initial success paved the way for the first Olympic Esports Week taking place in Singapore in the 2023 summer. This time, the total amount of discipline was raised to ten with the inclusion of archery, chess, dance, shooting, taekwondo, and tennis.⁸ The IOC's preference for the game list created controversy among public opinion since many argue that the chosen game titles do not have enough social acceptance. Indeed, members of the esports industry even claimed the illegal partnership with unlicensed mobile games within the organisation. Also, the requirement to possess certain equipment that is not available for everyone violates the value of inclusivity, some point out. Amidst all such criticisms, it seems at first glance that the IOC struggled for following the safest path for this modest endeavor. The Department Head Pereira seems determined to keep traditional esports such as Call of Duty, Valorant, and so on out of the embraced game titles.⁹ It is also important to note that these two organizations were separate from the Olympic programme meaning that esports is not a recognised discipline for the Games yet. In short, the IOC regards esports as having its own identity and the latest organizations as positive developments apart from the official programme. As Duncan put it, there is a growing tendency toward its inclusion, but this race would be run as a marathon rather than a sprint.

7.3 Host Selection of 2030 Winter Olympics

According to the Olympic Charter, the Summer Olympics must be organized in the first year of an Olympiad, whereas the Winter Games in the following third year. In this light, the 34th Olympiad is going to begin in 2028, when the Summer Olympics is scheduled to take place in Los Angeles. Subsequently, the Winter Olympics has to be done in 2030, for which delegates within this committee are supposed to choose a host site.

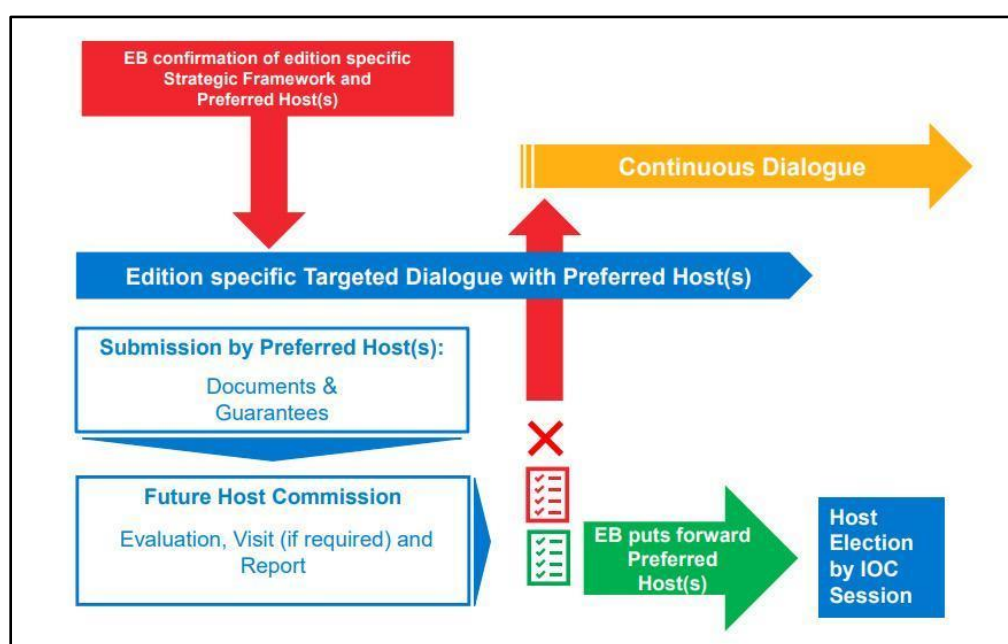
7.3.1. The Inner Workings of a Host Selection Process

As stated previously, the decisive party for the host selection of the Olympics is the IOC Session. The IOC Exec is responsible for the prior period to the election. A secret-ballot procedure is mostly applied while reaching a decision. There are some binding conditions for those parties willing to put forward their nominations whereas the IOC Exec is obligated to follow certain proceedings. First and foremost, it is important to note that the Session selects a

⁸ Esports FAQ, <https://olympics.com/ioc/esports-faq>.

⁹ Duncan Mackay, "Duncan Mackay: IOC thinks it's embracing esports, but the esports community isn't embracing the IOC," Inside the Game, last modified June 29, 2023, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/>.

host-city, not a whole country for the Games. That, however, does not mean that different cities from the same country cannot be nominated. If so, the NOC of the related country is in charge of deciding the more appropriate candidate for hosting the Olympics. At the end, one single city from each country must submit its claim for the election. After the IOC receives pre-applications, a future host commission, led by IOC members, is usually established with the aim of assessing the potential of possible hosts of the Games, resulting in a detailed report. This study is prepared mainly for informing the IOC Exec about advantages and disadvantages of each interested host, just like a cost-benefit analysis. After the IOC Exec evaluates the conditions, it would present the possible nominees to host the Olympics with recommendations to the IOC Session one month before the opening date of the meeting at the latest. The IOC members vote for a candidate during the Session and one receiving the majority would be entitled to host the Olympics. It should come as no surprise that those members from any candidatures standing for being the host are allowed to take roles neither in aforementioned commission nor in the election. When the host is elected by the free will of the IOC members, an Olympic Host Contract would be signed between the IOC and the host, highlighting the guarantees and obligations the latter confirms to undertake until and during the Games.



Just like the site, the timing and framework of the Games are determined by the IOC, both of which are already specified by previous declarations. The 2030 Winter Olympics will start on 8 February and last for sixteen days in accordance with the Olympic Charter. In normal circumstances, the host should also have been decided until now, but the IOC has decided to postpone the announcement to the 142nd IOC Session in Paris, on the eve of the 2024 Summer Olympics. The main reason for this delay is the IOC's concern for climate change and its desire to take the suitable step in this sense.

7.3.2. Confirmed Bids and their Statues

The IOC established Future Host Commissions for the Olympic Winter Games after it had decided to change its policy for selecting hosts for the Olympics in the 134th IOC Session in 2019. One of the very first missions of this committee is to constantly monitor and analyze the possible venues to host Olympics and conduct mutual talks with them, thereby reporting regularly to the IOC Exec. Today, the commission has eight members and is chaired by the Austrian NOC's President Karl Stoss, who is also an IOC member since August 2016. As stated earlier, these members should, and are, not from those showing their interest in bidding for the Olympics. The dialogue with bidding parties consists of two phases; continuous and targeted dialogue successively. The complete achievement of both stages would enable candidates to run for the election being scheduled for the IOC Session. At first glance, potential hosts were announced as follows: the U.S., Japan, Spain and Canada. In the process, three more potential submitters have put themselves forward whereas some countries withdrew for certain reasons. First, the Spanish government announced the unfavourable atmosphere to host the Olympics in a politically tumultuous region in June 2022, signaling the dispute between autonomous communities of Catalonia and Aragon, through which the Pyrenees mountain range stretches. At the end of that year, again the local government of Vancouver declared its opposition for being nominated as an Olympic venue in the name of Canada. The already existing tight schedule of the province was the main reason for this refusal. Also important is that the same city was again the host of the 2010 Winter Games. Lastly, the relatively powerful Japanese bid, Sapporo being the designated city, was shifted from 2030 to 2034, as the president of Japanese NOC revealed in October, 2023. No need to mention rumours claiming a possible European joint bid among France, Switzerland, and Italy with all three sharing famous Alpine mountain range. It was immediately denied by one of the local mayors of southern France.

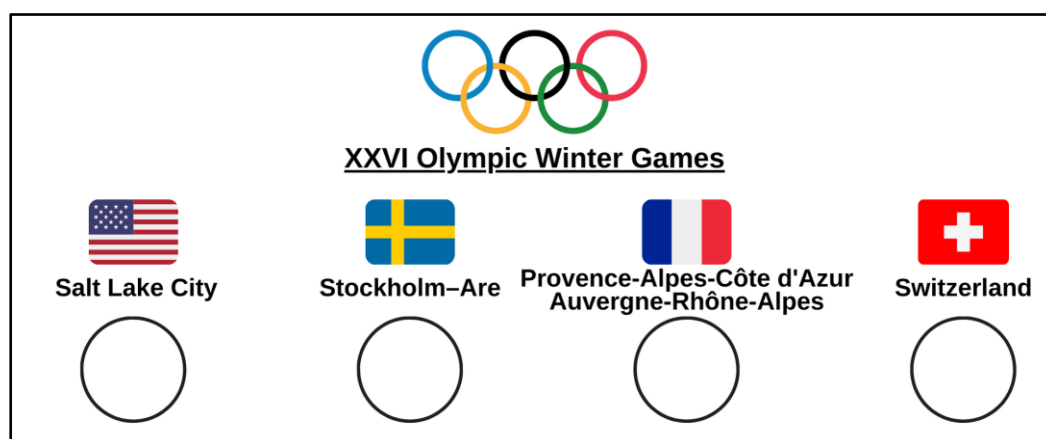
The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee has first shown their desire to organize any Winter Olympics as early as December 2018 by choosing Salt Lake City, Utah as potential venue. A specific committee for the Games was founded subsequently. Nevertheless, the selection of Los Angeles as the host city for the 2028 Summer Olympics have puzzled the minds of the American officials for this pursuit. Both parties, the Americans and the IOC Exec, accepted the harsh conditions that would result from hosting two successive Olympics, first the 2028 Summer and then the 2030 Winter Games. Some argue that it is feasibly impossible while others point out the superiority of the American bid over the rest. The IOC representatives visited the designated venues for a supervision, followed by the statements by Fraser Bullock, the chief of the American committee, saying that they still keep their focus on 2030. Lastly, both parties went through the targeted dialogue phase, thereby knocking the door for hosting the Winter Games.

Another outstanding bid came from the Swedish Olympic Committee, which put a combined venue Stockholm - Are forward. The Swedish NOC is somewhat experienced since it has organized two Summer Games in the last century, a fairly high number for a Scandinavian country. Its last attempt, however, failed to receive another title when the Italian bid for 2026 Winter Games got the better of the Swedish counterpart. This defeat, nevertheless, encouraged

the Swedes to pursue their ideals, that is to say, the Swedish NOC kept carrying out feasibility studies for future gains. The sufficiency of the already existing facilities and infrastructure provides the Swedish bid with a whip hand. Also, the Swedish public opinion and government are in great favour of organizing the Winter Games. In return, the IOC welcomed the Swedish bid to the second phase of mutual talks, thereby knocking the door for hosting the Winter Games.

French interest in the 2030 Olympics began relatively afterwards. The mayors of two provinces from southern parts of the country, Renaud Muselier and Laurent Wauquiez, suggested to the parliament to propose a joint bid to the IOC in the summer of 2023. The proposal was made with an emphasis on the awareness of biodiversity and climate change. To elaborate, the French argue that the selection of such a venue would contribute to direct international attention to the sustainability issues such as the acceleration of global warming and the preservation of endangered species, both of which occupy a major part of the IOC's long term agenda. Last month, the IOC announced the opening of the targeted dialogue phase with the French NOC, thereby knocking the door for hosting the Winter Games.

Last but not least, the Swiss NOC has recently confirmed their eagerness to propose its own bid. Switzerland has organized three separate Winter Olympics, sharing the first rank with the U.S. in this term, the last of which was the Winter Youth Olympics in 2020. That's why its bid is strong enough to challenge other parties' nominations. As an exception to the usual, the Swiss bid has no designated city, but rather the whole country is a candidate. It can be, to some extent, admissible given the very nature of the size of the country. The Swiss officials declared their intentions first in October, 2023, but they have not been invited yet to enter the targeted dialogue phase by the IOC, which is more likely to appoint it as the venue for subsequent games. The attitude of the Swiss officials and the IOC members will determine the path the world witnesses in the short term.



(a sample ballot being used in the election procedure)

It is officially confirmed that the IOC might change its attitude towards the selection of the Winter Olympics' hosts in accordance with Olympic Agenda 2020+5, the second recommendation of which emphasizes the development of unprecedented strategies to handle the climatic effects on the Olympics, especially upon the Winter Games. The Olympic Games executive director Christophe Dubi confirmed serious threat posed by global warming to the Olympics with the following remarks:

“We have preliminary results of leading academic research on the impact of climate change, which shows a potential reduction in the number of climate-reliable hosts in the future.”¹⁰

Following the latest IOC Exec's meeting in October, the details of research are laid out. According to the presented results, there are only fifteen climate-reliable NOCs left, two of which would lose this title by 2040. Therefore, sustainability targets were set to be followed strictly. In the meantime, there is the possibility to choose two or more hosts as a joint allocation along with the creation of a rotational pool for the organization. Furthermore, the idea of selecting the hosts of next two Winter Games simultaneously was taken into consideration although such an application had been previously deemed by the president of the IOC, Thomas Bach.¹¹ The following IOC Session is supposed to assess all these suggestions, for which the IOC Exec. gave the green light.

8. Points of Controversy

8.1. Regarding the 1st Agenda Item

A majority of people advocate the participation of each athlete that has achieved to qualify for the Olympics. Their main argument is that Russian or Belarusian players should not be punished for the actions, in which they have no say. The IOC seems to stick in that mindset from the very beginning of the Russian assault over Ukraine. It enables each athlete to realize

¹⁰ Kenneth Chan, IOC pondering the idea of rotating host cities for Winter Olympics,” DH Canada, last modified December 7, 2022, <https://dailyhive.com/canada>.

¹¹ “IOC Executive Board discusses sustainable future for the Olympic Winter Games and the opportunity for a 2030-2034 double allocation,” <https://olympics.com/ioc>.

their Olympic dreams, provided that he/she does not violate the Olympic Charter and its values. On the other side of the coin, Ukrainian and some other eastern European countries' officials find any such initiative unacceptable and question IOC's sincerity with its statement of solidarity with Ukraine. A third party voices its security concern for any possible organizational match between Russian and Ukrainian players in the Olympic competitions. The IOC has already warned the IFs and organizational authorities in this regard, but no one can guess until the last moment how successful the OCOG for the 2024 Olympics would be in such a case.

8.2. Regarding the 2nd Agenda Item

It is certain that there are lobbies both for and against the inclusion of esports into the Olympics. There is nowadays a growing tendency towards the former. Esports' rise in Asia and its full recognition by major organizations there is the major driving force behind this pattern. The inclusion of esports into the Games would certainly provide the Olympics with a higher viewership and satisfy thousands of its spectators, the advocates mainly argue. On the other hand, many others highlight the lack of physical actions in esports as a discriminatory factor, for which reason the IOC has evaluated this new area as a separate branch so far.

9. Special Procedure of the IOC Committee¹²

Article 18.1 - The Session is the general meeting of the members of the IOC. It is the IOC's supreme organ. Its decisions are final. An ordinary Session is held once a year.

Article 18.3 - The quorum required for a Session is half the total membership of the IOC plus one. Decisions of the Session are taken by a majority of the votes cast.

Article 18.4 - Each member has one vote. Abstentions and blank or spoiled votes are not taken into consideration in the calculation of the required majority. Voting by proxy is not allowed. Voting is held by secret ballot when so required by the Olympic Charter, or if the Chairman so decides or upon the request of at least a quarter of the members present. In the event of a tie, the Chairman shall decide.

Article 18.5 - The provisions of Rules 18.3 and 18.4 are applicable to elections, whether of persons or of hosts of the Olympic Games. However, when there are or remain only two candidates, the candidate obtaining the greater number of votes is declared elected.

Bye-law to Rule 18, an IOC member must refrain from taking part in a vote when the vote concerns an Olympic Games host election in which a city or any other public authority in the country of which he is a national is a candidate.

Bye-law to Rule 18, the President, or, in his absence or incapacity, the attending Vice-President who is senior in such office or, in the latter's absence or incapacity, the attending IOC Executive Board member who is senior in such office, chairs the Session.

¹² "The Olympic Charter," last modified October 15, 2023, <https://olympics.com/ioc/olympic-charter>.

Bye-law to Rule 18, any decision of the Session, including decisions on amendments to the Olympic Charter, comes into effect immediately, unless otherwise decided by the Session. A matter which is not listed on the agenda of a Session may be discussed if one third of the members so request or if the Chairman authorises it.

Article 33.1 - The election of any host of the Olympic Games is the prerogative of the Session.

Article 44.3 - Any entry is subject to acceptance by the IOC, which may at its discretion, at any time, refuse any entry, without indication of grounds. Nobody is entitled as of right to participate in the Olympic Games.

Bye-law to Rule 45, upon proposal from the IOC Executive Board, the Session shall decide on the sports programme of an edition of the Olympic Games. Unless otherwise decided by the IOC Executive Board, such decision by the Session shall occur, in principle seven years prior to the opening of the concerned Olympic Games, or at the Session electing the relevant host of the Olympic Games, whichever occurs later.

10. Further Readings

- [Olympic Charter](#)
- [Olympic Agenda 2020+5 / 15 Recommendations](#)
- [Olympic Host Election Results](#)

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Photos:

(1):<https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/Documents/Document-Set-Teachers-The-Main-Olympic-Topics/Olympism-and-the-Olympic-Movement.pdf>

(2):<https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Documents/Olympic-Games/Future-Host/Approach-to-Olympic-host-elections.pdf>