



# Bidding to host a major sports event: The Youth Olympic Games

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## Abstract

In this studies the possible social and economic impacts on former host cities based on their experience of the major sports events. An assessment of the Socio-Economic profiles of bidding for the Youth Olympic Games, helping to create a competitive advantage over competing cities in the world. Thailand has bid to host the first Youth Olympic Games 2010. This study focuses on “how to improve strategies for winning the 2026 the Youth Olympic Games bids” The studies based on Thailand hosting experience of staging major sports events, could serve as reference for Thailand to host the 2026 Youth Olympic Games. The study on the impact of hosting major sports events goes beyond the assessment of economic impacts. The games can also be leveraged for social benefits, and the study of the social impact of hosting a major sports event is relevant for Thailand. The experiences of the international games studied manifest the following possible social impacts generated by staging the event and these are the socio-cultural benefits of events which can include shared experiences, further studies been conducted on the Youth Olympic Games and other mega-events.

**Keywords:** Youth, Olympic Games, Bidding, Sport Event

## Introduction

In 1998, Johann Rosenof, an Austrian industrial businessman, saw the decline in health and physical fitness of children and young people from everywhere around the world. He was very worried about the obese youth since they were young. The assessment from general conditions can be concluded that the reason is that children and the youth are less involved in physical activities and sports, especially the youth groups of developing countries (Michio Akama, 2000). There is a reduction in the number of hours in physical education from the curriculum of the educational institutions. As a result, children and the youth lacked opportunities to participate in activities and they lacked opportunities to socialize in friends because they used exercise and sports as a medium. Another reason for acceptance to organize the Youth Olympic Games is the belief that the Youth Olympics Games will be a first step in the challenges that young Olympic athletes will be able to participate in at the international level. However, this concept was the beginning of an interest to support the Youth Olympics Games, especially from the 8th president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Jacques Rogge. The main reason was the need for the Youth Olympic Games to be a venue for exchanging and learning various cultures of humankind, from 205 member countries. It was as important as organizing sports events. The idea was unanimously responded to by 115 members of the IOC. So this was the origin of the project "Culture and Education Program: CEP", which is an important element during the competition (Somphong et al., 2019).

Therefore, there was an announcement of the above conclusion in order to officially organize the Youth Olympic Games at the 119th IOC Session in Guatemala on July 6, 2007. There were 4 main objectives which was

- (1) Together to create the best youth athletes in the world.
- (2) Dissemination of knowledge and understanding about the Olympic Games.



(3) Created innovation in educating the ideals of the Olympics through sporting activities and exercise during the Youth Olympic Games.

(4) Use the time of the Youth Olympic Games to exchange learning about the values of the Youth Olympic Games.

Finally, on 21 February 2008, the IOC announced that Singapore was the host of the 1st Summer Youth Olympic Games 2010, and on 12 December 2008, they announced that the Innsbruck in Austria was the host of the 1st Winter Youth Olympics Games 2012 (IOC, 2010). However, Thailand will continue to propose their city as a candidate city to host the next Summer Youth Olympic Games in 2026. Thailand will try again until they get it. The hosting of the Youth Olympic Games supposedly affects the regions involved in different ways - politically culturally as well as economically. Hosting international sports events can generate economic benefits not just before and during the games, but also after the games. Hence, it is important for a host city to leverage long-term benefits from the legacy assets inherited from the games. Infrastructure development, urban regeneration and enhanced international profile are among the most important legacy assets gained by a host city. The experience of The International University Sports Federation (FISU) 2007, SEA Games 2007, Asian Games 1998 in Bangkok studied may also provide reference for the possible social and economic impacts generated from hosting the events. These impacts include social cohesion in the local communities, event management skills, and greater interest of students in sports activities.

This research focuses on “how to improve strategies for winning the 2026 the Youth Olympic Games bids” The research studies based on Thailand’s hosting experience of staging major sports events, h could serve as reference for Thailand to host the 2026 Summer Youth Olympic Games.

### **Economic Impact of Hosting Major Sports Events**

The reasons why cities bid to host major sports events is the prospect of positive economic impact. There are a number of economic impact studies evaluating the possible economic benefits of hosting major sports events. (Andranoyich, et al, 2001). According to these studies, major sports events have the potential of increasing economic activities arising from the games-related expenditure. (Maennig, 2002). In addition, the games may also generate economic benefits such as job creation, provision of new sports facilities and infrastructure, urban revival, enhanced international profile, increase tourism/convention business and more inward investment. (Brown & Massey, 2001)

#### ***Increased income***

It is anticipated that the games-related expenditure can generate additional demand for goods and services in a host city. The games-related expenditure includes:

- (a) spending by visitors who are attracted to the city by the event;
- (b) operating cost of preparing and hosting the event; and
- (c) expenditure on the construction of sports facilities and other infrastructure.

#### ***Job creation***

A significant number of studies agree that one of the economic benefits of hosting major sports event is the creation of jobs before and during the games, particularly in the construction industry and many service sectors. The construction of the games-related infrastructure increases the demand for construction workers, while the influx of visitors to the games creates jobs in the tourism and other service sectors. The organizing committees of the games also require salaried staff to run the events, notwithstanding the participation of volunteers in the operation of the games. (Bell, 2003)



However, one study has questioned the magnitude of the job creation effect generated by hosting major sports events. The short duration of the events does not necessarily justify the hiring of new employees and/or the creation of fulltime jobs. Employers may initially resort to other alternatives, such as asking existing employees to work overtime or perform other tasks before hiring additional workforce to meet the temporary additional demand created by the events. (Hotchkiss, et al, 2003).

### ***Games legacies***

The economic benefits generated by the games-related expenditure is most apparent in the years leading up to the events (pre-games phase) and the year when the events are held (games year). This is particularly the case for the labour market, as games-related jobs created are primarily short-term in nature. For example, construction workers are mostly required in the pre-games phase, as the competition venues and other infrastructure facilities must be put in place before the games begin. (Burbank, et al., 2001). In addition, the organizing committee of the games employs a large number of temporary staff to assist in running the event in the games year, and these jobs only last for months or even days. Hence, it is important for a host city to leverage long-term benefits from the legacy assets left after the games.

According to the studies, infrastructure development, urban regeneration, and enhanced international profile are among the most important legacy assets left to a host city. Hosting mega sports events provides the opportunity to undertake new infrastructure development and/or bring forward the planned projects, from which the host city will benefit even after the events. The most obvious additions to the urban infrastructure are new sports facilities specifically built for the games. These facilities may generate ongoing income for the host city through staging subsequent major sports events.

### ***Social impact of hosting mega sports events***

A number of studies which assess the social impacts of hosting major sports events. According to these studies can generate social impacts in respect of volunteer participation, social cohesion, sports participation, event management skills and student participation. (Cashman, 2003).

### ***Volunteer Participation***

Most of the social impact studies consider that the hosting of games is also a community event, in addition to a sports event. Many students were recruited under volunteer programs to be involved in games related activities before and during the games. Volunteer programs help foster public support for the games, with residents in the host city feeling that they are participating in and contributing to the event. These volunteer programs also benefit the games organizers by reducing the number of salaried staff and hence the wage expense required for running the events. These projects also aim at bringing in new volunteers who have developed interest in volunteering as a result of the high profile success of the games-related volunteer programs. Most of the studies consider that the post-games volunteer programs, if implemented successfully, can provide a legacy of well-trained volunteers to enhance the quality of the potential workforce available for forthcoming events.

A social impact study has criticized the widespread use of volunteers in the hosting of major sports events for its displacement of volunteers from work of greater social values. Furthermore, the operation of a volunteer program may incur expenditure other than that related to recruitment, provision of uniforms and training of volunteers.



### **Social Cohesion**

According to the studies, hosting the games may enhance social cohesion through bringing together the attention of individuals of diverse backgrounds towards a common goal. During the games, there are many opportunities for residents of a host city to take part in the games. Apart from volunteering their time and expertise for the games, they can participate as paying spectators or non-paying spectators watching the marathon, cycling or triathlon along the streets of the host city. Furthermore, the arrangement of a number of community events, such as torch relay and arts festivals, may also encourage residents to become more involved in the games. (Guttman, 1992).

On the other hand, the hosting of mega sports events may arouse opposition from the local community groups for its disruption to the host city. In the pre-games period, the construction of sports facilities and transport infrastructure can cause inconvenience, such as noise and dust, to people living close to the construction sites. This will affect the residents in the deprived areas, which are mainly of the low-income bracket. During the games, there will be road closures, traffic diversions, and closures of some public facilities to facilitate the hosting of the competition events. (Spilling, 1996).

### **Student Participation**

Hosting major sports events provides a platform for the host cities to implement educational programs conducive to encouraging students to participate in sports and learn the valuable lessons in team spirits and sportsmanship. The objective of these programs is to arouse students' interest in sports activities through their personal experience in the games.

### **Bid profile and fact sheet - 2010 Youth Summer Olympic Bids**

The Bidding for the 2010 Youth Olympics Games began in August 2007, to which nine cities presented their candidature files. In the competition to host the inaugural Youth Olympic Games in 2010, the list was shortened to five in November 2007. The list was further shortened to two in January 2008--Moscow and Singapore. Moscow was the highest rated city in the evaluation report, but may have been disadvantaged due to the win by Russian city Sochi to host the 2014 Winter Olympics. Singapore also had a very high evaluation and had a possible geographical advantage, being situated in a region (Southeast Asia) which had never hosted. Singapore was announced as the host city on 21 February 2008 after a tally of a postal vote.

#### **Timeline for 2010 bidding process (IOC, 2010)**

<b>July 5, 2007</b>	Concept approved at IOC session in Guatemala.
<b>August 31, 2007</b>	Deadline for NOC's to confirm names of interested cities. Algiers, Athens, Bangkok, Belgrade, Debrecen, Guatemala City, Kuala Lumpur, Moscow, Poznan, Singapore and Turin are applicant cities.
<b>September 18, 2007</b>	Belgrade drops out of competition.
<b>October 26, 2007</b>	Cities to submit their candidature file.
<b>October 26, 2007</b>	Algiers doesn't submit candidature file; out of running.
<b>November 19, 2007</b>	Selection of candidate cities by expert panel. Athens, Bangkok, Moscow, Singapore and Turin qualify



<b>November 30, 2007</b>	Submission of detailed budget information by candidates.
<b>December 3, 2007</b>	Written response to the evaluation report by candidates.
<b>December 3-9, 2007</b>	Potential visits by IOC evaluation technical experts to shortlisted candidates - arranged by IOC.
<b>December 13, 2007</b>	One-hour video conference calls between candidates and IOC evaluation committee.
<b>December 18, 2007</b>	Submission of YOG Guarantees File 2
<b>January 2008</b>	Evaluation Committee submits report to IOC executive board.
<b>January 21, 2008</b>	Evaluation Committee selects Moscow and Singapore to short list.
<b>February 15, 2008</b>	Election by IOC members through secret postal ballot.
<b>February 21, 2008</b>	Announcement of winner. Singapore Elected.

Cities interested in hosting the games had to have their applications confirmed by their respective National Olympic Committees and submitted to the IOC by August 31, 2007. On September 3, nine cities were confirmed as official applicants by the Committee. They were later acknowledged as completing the questionnaire due October 26, 2007. A shortlist of five cities was announced on November 19.

Although it was planned to have an evaluation committee visit the short listed cities in December, eventually each city presented a video conference on December 13th. As the IOC predicted, they further eliminated some of the cities before the final stage. The IOC has stressed that the main goal of these games is not competition, but education based on Olympic values. The host city, therefore, should not have to build new venues for the occasion, but rather use existing infrastructure for the games. Still, the games would include an Olympic village and protocols which would prepare young athletes for future Olympic competition. The risks of quickly preparing for the first edition of the event was a major factor in selection of the final candidates. There will only be two-and-a-half years to organize the Games, but Games with longer lead times may allow some of the non-selected cities to bid for future Games.

An evaluation committee viewed a video conference presentation from each city in December 2007. In January, the short list was reduced from five to two, Moscow and Singapore. When the result of the final postal tally was revealed, Singapore won the right to host the Games over Moscow in a tally of 53-44. (IOC, 2010)

## **Thailand - Major Sports Event Experiences**

### ***Universiade Games 2007***

The International University Sports Federation (FISU) 2007 in Bangkok, Universiade Games is an international sporting and cultural festival which is staged every two years in a different city and which is second in importance only to the Olympic Games. The Summer Universiade consists of 12 compulsory sports (Athletics, Basketball, Fencing, Football, Gymnastics, Judo, Swimming, Diving, Water Polo, Table Tennis, Tennis and Volleyball) and up to three optional sports chosen by the host country. The record figures are 7,805 participants in Izmir, Turkey in 2005 and 174 countries in Daegu, Korea in 2003.



### ***SEA Games 2007***

The 24th Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games) was held in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand from December 6 to December 15, 2007. The National Olympic Committee of Thailand planned the event to coincide with the commemoration of 80th birthday of King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Officials studied the possibility of doing the events in multiple venues like what was done in Vietnam and the Philippines. It was the sixth time Thailand has hosted the SEA Games. Thailand had hosted the 1959 (inaugural games), 1967, 1975, 1985, 1995 and 2007 SEA Games.

### ***Asian Games 1998***

The 13th Asian Games were held from December 6, 1998 to December 20, 1998 in Bangkok, Thailand. This was the first time that Thailand bid for the event after it shouldered the two postponed hosting rights in 1970 and 1978.

### **A comparison of the major sports events studied and its reference for the 2010 Bangkok Youth Olympic Games bids.**

Through its analysis of Thailand's candidature file, initial guarantees and photographic files, the Panel of Experts' assessment of Thailand's project to host the 1st Summer Youth Olympic Games placed Thailand above the IOC benchmark for a majority of criteria. Thailand's principal strengths included the quality of existing competition venues, the city's experience of hosting international multi-sport events, modern and attractive culture and education programmes, the capacity and layout of the existing Youth Olympic Village venue and the city's ample and adequate hotel room inventory. The Panel of experts questioned Thailand's ability to deliver the required Youth Olympic Games service levels within the proposed financial envelope. It also questioned the impact of the upcoming (now past) parliamentary elections in terms of the guarantees submitted to the IOC and indicated its concern about the spread of venues, particularly with regard to long distances and the uncertain reliability of transport operations.

During the video conference between the IOC and the bid committee on 13 December 2007, which included the presence of the Governor of Thailand, the Minister of Tourism and Sports and the IOC member for Thailand, the Evaluation Commission understood that the future YOGOC would be a government agency that would operate in close collaboration with the private sector which would play a major role in delivering the Games. The bid committee reassured the Evaluation Commission that the forthcoming parliamentary elections in Thailand would not adversely affect the organization of the Youth Olympic Games as Thailand's regime follows that of most modern states in the sense that incoming governments are bound to respect the commitments made by previous governments. The support of the private sector would translate essentially in the provision in kind of products and services, such as broadcasting and telecommunications. However, the division of responsibilities and leadership between public and private sectors appears to be unclear. Furthermore, while it also remains unclear whether some of the guarantees submitted would require additional legislation to be endorsed and implemented, the bid committee stated that budgets already allocated by the government for current programmes could be re-directed to fund the organization of the Youth Olympic Games.

Finally, a number of guarantees remain incomplete or have not been provided, including for example guarantees for the use of proposed culture and education programme venues outside the Youth Olympic Village, a guarantee clearly stating the division of responsibilities in terms of security operations and an insufficient number of guaranteed hotel rooms. In view of the above information, the Evaluation Commission believes that the constitution of a comprehensive and well-coordinated project governance architecture to manage all aspects



of the implementation of the Youth Olympic Games would be a challenge for Thailand and presents a risk in terms of delays for the transition from bid committee to organizing committee.

While the NOC would lead any marketing programme associated with the Youth Olympic Games, no further details or signed agreements were submitted to the IOC. The Youth Olympic Village project makes good use of the Thammasat University Rangsit Campus that was built for the 1998 Asian Games and refurbished for the 2007 Universiade Games. All 23 proposed competition venues exist. The venue plan includes one large cluster containing 11 sports/disciplines and the Youth Olympic Village, with other sports dispersed throughout the city.

Road and traffic management measures proposed to deal with congestion and sustain reliable travel times using existing expressways and connecting roads are well detailed. However, these measures do not include dedicated Olympic lanes, without which the already high average travel time of 40 minutes and average speed of 59 km/h between the Youth Olympic Village and competition venues might be a challenge to achieve. Over half of the venues (including culture and education venues) require travel times of 45 minutes or more from the Youth Olympic Village. Despite the guarantees and transport plan information provided by the bid committee, the Evaluation Commission is concerned that the spread of venues is such that a substantial amount of the young participants' time would be spent in transport, thus reducing the time they would effectively spend living and experiencing the sporting, cultural and educational components of the Games.

To conclude its analysis, the Evaluation Commission believes Bangkok's project to host the 1st Summer Youth Olympic Games presented a number of risks to the IOC. While Bangkok's plan for the Youth Olympic Games offers a tested and sustainable solution with all competition venues and the Youth Olympic Village already existing and having been used for major international events, the spread of venues over a large geographical area may have a negative impact on the Youth Olympic Games experience. The bid committee explained the motivation and relevance of Bangkok and Thailand hosting the Youth Olympic Games to further address local issues confronting youth and society and to develop Bangkok's international image. However, throughout the documents submitted to the IOC and the video conference call, the Evaluation Commission did not gain sufficiently thorough and clear information regarding the overall governance of the project, including the division of responsibilities between stakeholders, to feel confident that Bangkok would transition from bid committee to organizing committee without delay. Furthermore, with a number of guarantees still incomplete and a relatively low YOGOC budget, the Evaluation Commission was not sufficiently reassured that Bangkok would be able to deliver a high enough level of Youth Olympic Games.

## **Conclusion**

The profiles of selected international games are summarized and the comparison of the economic and social impacts of hosting the International University Sports Federation (FISU), SEA Games and Asian Games in Bangkok; Based on the findings in this study, the following issues are highlighted for Members' consideration when deliberating the impact of hosting major sports events:

- (a) reasons for hosting international games;
- (b) assessment of the economic benefits;
- (c) long-term economic impact;
- (d) assessment of the social impact;
- (e) government support for the games.



***Reasons for hosting international games. All the international games studied in this report had a non-sporting agenda, which included some of the following:***

- (a) facilitating exchanges, unity and friendship among participating countries/regions;
- (b) promoting the Olympic values;
- (c) attracting inward investment;
- (d) promoting the tourism/convention industry;
- (e) creating jobs;
- (f) urban regeneration and infrastructure development;
- (g) enhancing the international profile; and
- (h) gaining experience to host subsequent major international events.

While the reasons for staging international games varied among the host cities, they all tended to make use of the events to raise their international profile. Most of the former host cities leveraged the games to promote their image as a city capable of hosting large-scale international events. Some even went further to make use of the games to promote themselves as an attractive tourist destination and as a suitable investment location.

Bangkok also aims to take advantage of staging the 2026 Youth Olympic Games to promote its image as a world city for hosting international events. In addition, the Games are expected to serve the functions of enhancing the local tourism industry and attract more inward investment.

***Culture and Education Program***

In response to one of the true intentions of the Youth Olympic Games, as the International Olympic Committee has flagged, the cultural and educational activities program is an important event that must be organized in the Youth Olympic Games to organize the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore. The hosts prepared this activity almost two years in advance. They started with Twin Schools. The elementary school and high schools in Singapore connected with, and had friendly relations the elementary school and high schools in the 205 member countries by exchanging knowledge, culture, traditions, language, dress, and way of life of that member country during the competition. Representative schools from various countries in Singapore had booths to show the outstanding culture and education (CEP) of that country. The project consisted of a variety of activities. In addition to publicizing the details of the Olympism, the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Education, health-related content, knowledge about the avoidance of banned substances, the history of the Olympic Games, was projected in the form of posters, exhibitions, lectures, speaker lecture and quiz. Games that are linked to the knowledge of the Olympic process, a prominent event hosted by, which has received a lot of attention from Olympic youth athletes, was "Chat with Olympians". The hosts, together with the IOC and ISF, will select outstanding Olympic athletes with outstanding results from one sport from each of the 205 nations, in order to be a representative to talk with the Olympic youth athletes to inspire these young athletes to try to step up to become an Olympic athlete in the future. (Somphong et al., 2019)

***Assessment of the economic benefits***

There are no official figures/estimates or studies on the economic contribution to the annual GDP growth made by the mega sport events. Hence, the study by Jones Lang LaSalle in 1994 on the Olympic Games is employed to help illustrate the possible magnitude of the economic benefits generated by hosting international games. The study assessed the four recent Olympic Games and found that a host city would benefit more in terms of GDP growth, if it made use of the Games as a catalyst for infrastructure development. Among the four host cities, Barcelona invested most aggressively in infrastructure development. In contrast, Atlanta invested least in infrastructure development.





### **Long-term economic impact**

Hosting international games can generate economic benefits for hosting communities not only before and during the games, but also after the games. Hence, it is important for a host city to leverage long-term benefits from the legacy assets inherited from the games. For example, the new sports infrastructure built specifically for the games may generate ongoing income for the host city through staging subsequent major sports events. (Tews, 1993).

In general, infrastructure development, urban regeneration and enhanced international profile are among the most important legacy assets gained by a host city. The objectives that a host city adopts in hosting the games will determine the type and amount of legacy assets left to the city. Even if urban renewal and infrastructure projects have not been undertaken, a host city may still benefit from the legacy of enhanced international profile through the successful delivery of the games. (Hotchkiss et al, 2003). Enhanced international profile facilitates the long-term economic development of a host city. Some studies suggest that staging the international games does not necessarily enhance the image of the host city. The host city can receive negative publicity if the games turn out to be not as successful as anticipated. Furthermore, there is always the possibility that the games may not be sufficiently unique or exciting to attract enough visitors or to generate significant positive publicity to boost the host city's tourism/convention business.

The study on the impact of hosting mega sports events goes beyond the mere assessment of economic impacts. The games can also be leveraged for social benefits, and the study of the social impact of hosting mega sports event games is relevant for Bangkok. The experience of the international games studied manifests the following possible social impacts generated by staging the event.

### **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank the Faculty of Science and Technology and the Research and Development Institute, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand for supporting this study.

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