

## ASSESSMENT OF TURKEY'S POSSIBLE CANDIDACY FOR WINTER OLYMPICS (A CASE STUDY OF ERZURUM)<sup>3</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to evaluate modern Olympics in terms of organization, to analyze them financially, and to make an assessment about the sport venues in order to obtain tangible data for a possible Olympiad in our country. In this regard, Summer and Winter Olympiads which have been carried out for 2000 years were included in this study. Having evaluated the required sport venues and the financial sources of these Olympiads, the revenues and the expenditures of a possible Olympiad in Turkey were tried to be estimated with a proactive approach. At the end of the study, it was found that Winter Olympics can be carried out with a less organizational expenditure than Summer Olympics and also it was concluded that it would be easier to be selected as the host country regarding the nomination process.

*Keywords: Olympic Games, Venues, Sport Economy*

### TÜRKİYE'NİN KIŞ OLİMPİYATLARINA MUHTEMEL ADAYLIĞININ DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ (ERZURUM ÖRNEĞİ)

#### ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı, modern olimpiyatları organizasyonel açıdan değerlendirmek, mali açıdan analizlerini yapmak ve tesisler bakımından değerlendirmesini yaparak ülkemizde yapılacak bir olimpiyat için gerekli somut veriler elde etmektir. Bu bağlamda 2000 yılından buyana düzenlenen Yaz ve Kış Olimpiyatları çalışmaya dâhil edilmiştir. Bu olimpiyatların yapılabilmesi için gerekli tesisler ve finans kaynakları bakımından değerlendirilmesi yapılarak Türkiye'de yapılacak bir olimpiyatın ülke ekonomisine getirileri veya götürüleri proaktif bir yaklaşımla tespit edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonucunda Yaz Olimpiyatlarını düzenleme maliyetlerinden çok daha az maliyetlerle Kış Olimpiyatının yapılabileceği ve adaylık sürecinde düzenleme hakkını ülkemize verilmesinin daha kolay olabileceği sonuçlarına varılmıştır.

*Anahtar Kelimeler: Olimpiyat Oyunları, Tesisler, Spor Ekonomisi*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Olympic Games which are considered the biggest sporting event in our day make significant financial contributions to countries and cities. Apart from uniting whole nations, Olympic Games instill the idea of Olympics and the universality of sports into people. Games are the world's biggest sporting events in terms of both participating countries' making profits concerning political, social, and economic aspects and appearing in international platforms regarding the universality of sports. In addition to the modernization of host countries' facilities, countries have engaged in a fierce rivalry in order to host these games which provide great financial input. Even the leading companies of world trade have focused on this organization (Seçilmiş, 2004).

Thanks to these games that have attracted all countries' attention, organizational structures in sports have been formed over time. This sport organization and the delivery of services to the public are often carried out as a public service in many host countries. Services such as health, security and the renovation of facilities which are parts of Olympics criteria that countries have to fulfill within the historical process have undoubtedly pioneered change and development. These changes that stand out in sport organizations as in many organizations may take place depending on political and economic systems adopted by the countries as well as in parallel with the needs required by the era (Devecioğlu, 2004). Therefore, all the economic and social changes of modern world can be observed in sport organizations and the big organizations that we call Olympic Games.

It is undeniable that Olympic Games have contribution from an economic aspect. For the smooth conduct of organizations, considerable amount of investments are made to cities. These investments provide income to national economy and the employment (Seçilmiş, 2004). In this respect, sport with its socio-economic and social characteristics is located among major actors regarding both global and national economic stability. In parallel with these developments, sport industry has been developing based on the quality of games and the ever-changing technology. In the process of these developments, many sport clubs have been incorporated today. These clubs have aimed to achieve success in sport branches as well as to increase their earnings. For this reason, they have looked for ways to increase their earnings by reflecting their rivalry in sports to trade areas (Yavaş, 2005).

These financial aspects of the Olympics and the countries' wishes to gain political supremacy have urged countries to be a candidate to host the Olympics. In this respect, our country has hosted many sport organizations for a long time. Turkey which is open to innovations and has developed considerably in terms of modernity aims to organize Olympics. Our country which aims to host Summer Olympics has given importance to infrastructure works since 2000. Lack of public support, telecommunications, environment, health and security works; unresolved issues of transportation and airports can be considered the reasons for the conclusion of nomination process (International Olympic Committee, 2012, Keskin, 2007). However, geographical structure of our country, current situation of the facilities, developments in the field

of health, convenience of the transportation system, and the housing facilities are consistent for winter sports at maximum level. There is a high possibility that our country's nomination for the

Winter Olympics will give positive results as it has never applied for the candidacy until now. In order not to delay this process and its realization, it is necessary to revise these stated issues.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In this study, 2000 Sydney, 2004 Athens, 2008 Beijing and 2012 London Summer Olympics which were organized between 2000 and 2012 and 2002 Salt Lake City, 2006 Torino, and 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics were analyzed in terms of facilities and the financial aspect. Regarding the financial aspect of these organized Modern Olympic Games, an income and expense analysis was carried out. Facilities in host cities where Olympic Games were held were compared with facilities in Turkey. Historical research method was used in the study. In this way, all the statistics, financial assessments, facilities' construction, and all the written documents related to the Olympics organized between 2000 and 2013 were collected, compiled and evaluated. As a result of this assessment, it was tried to draw a conclusion assuming the possible candidacy of Turkey for Winter Olympics.

## **FINDINGS**

### *Summer Olympics:*

2000 Summer Olympics that was held in Sydney, Australia with a population of 3,7 million people was 27th Olympics in the history of modern Olympics. Sydney hosted 10.651 athletes in total including 4.069 female and 6.582 male athletes from 199 nations in 36 sport branches. Games that were organized with the participation of 46.967 volunteers were accompanied by 16.033 members of media including 5.298 printed media and

Especially, the adequacy of facilities for the games and their audience capacity in the province of Erzurum were analyzed and its nomination process for Winter Olympics was assessed financially. An assessment regarding the suitability of city's geographic structure for the Winter Games, the climate availability, the ease of transport services, its central location in the region in terms of health services, and having enough space for housing facilities was carried out. Yet another research method, Monograph Technique which is one of the Introductory Research Methods and helps introduce events and facts, was used. Of the monographs which is divided into Case Study Monographs and Change Monograph, Change Monograph technique that aims to monitor changes in events over time as well as introducing the current state of these events was used.

10.735 publications (IOC, 2012). Games were played in Sydney Olympic Park, Sydney, and venues far from Sydney city center. These facilities have the capacity of approximately 639.000 people in total. When evaluated in financial terms, only the construction of Olympic Stadium with a capacity of 110 thousand people has cost 402 million dollars (Australia.gov, 2012). Total revenue reserved for the games was 8.940 billion dollars. It was stated that the total expense was 3.629 billion dollars. According to these data,

net income was 5.311 billion dollars (Cave&Leader, 2003).

2004 Summer Olympics which was held in the capital city of Greece, Athens, with a population of 4 million people was 28th Olympics. 10.625 athletes in total including 4.329 female and 6.296 male athletes from 201 nations in 39 sport branches participated. 21.500 members of media followed the games that were accompanied by 45.000 volunteers (IOC, 2012). Games were held in 33 sport venues including Athens Olympic Sport Complex, Helliniko Olympic Complex, Faliro Coastal Zone Olympic Complex, Goudi Olympic Complex and other places. These facilities have the capacity of approximately 546.000 people in total (Official Report of the Athens, 2004). Total cost of 2004 Athens Olympics is equal to 15 billion dollars. The budget reserved for the Olympics was 6 billion dollars. These figures show that Athens had a net loss of 9 billion dollars in the Olympics. As Athens Olympics was the first Olympics after the September 11 attacks, security measurements cost approximately 1,2 billion dollars (Timeturk Web, 2012).

2008 Beijing Summer Olympics was 29<sup>th</sup> Olympics held in Beijing, China with a population of 16 million people. Beijing hosted 10.942 athletes in total including 4.637 female and 6.305 male athletes from 204 nations in 41 sport branches. 24.562 members of media accompanied the games that were held with the participation of 100.000 volunteers. 2008 Summer Olympics were held in 49 sport facilities with an approximate capacity of 826.000 people. Facilities were classified as 7 green Olympics, 6 university sports halls, 11 new competition venues, 11 current competition venues, 8 temporary

venues and 6 other venues far from the city centre (IOC, 2012). It was stated that 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics whose cost was approximately 43 billion dollars provided an income of approximately 146,4 billion dollars. When Beijing applied the International Olympic Committee to host the Olympics, it stated spending 14,3 billion dollars for infrastructure development (Timeturk Web, 2012). In subsequent years, it was noted that this figure rose to 40 billion dollars. Only 1.8 billion dollars of these spendings was for the new sports facilities, the rest was used for the infrastructure projects that this city with 16 million people population already needed such as airport, subway, etc. Half of the money spent for the sports facilities was provided by the government whereas the other half was provided by the sponsorships and donations (Brunet and Xinwen, 2008).

2012 Olympics was held in London. London is the capital city of England and the United Kingdom. With a population of 8.174 million people, it is the second most crowded city of EU (London.Ca, 2013). 10.500 athletes in total from 204 nations in 38 sport branches participated. 21.000 members of media followed the games that were accompanied by 70.000 volunteers (London2012.com, 2013). Games were played in 35 facilities that were classified as Olympic Park, London Venues, Outside Venues, and Street Competitions. These facilities have an approximate capacity of 715.000 people (London2012.com, 2013). When evaluated in financial terms, it is observed that the cost of preparations for the Olympics was higher than estimated. A huge budget was reserved for the accommodation of athletes, Olympic facilities, transportation, and the

renovations of other infrastructures. New employment areas were created in many sectors, especially in construction sector. According to data that was released, total cost of the preparations was 13.621 billion dollars while only the cost of Olympic Stadium was 750 million dollars. Initial cost estimation was around 3.706 billion dollars. No exact data was found about the income. It was stated that 735 million dollars remained in the emergency fund. The budget which was planned much lower initially was increased after a revision for the development of the region where Olympics was held in March, 2007 and for permanent investments after the games (Guardian.co.uk. Com, 2013).

#### *Winter Olympics:*

2002 Winter Olympics which was held in Salt Lake City-the capital of state of Utah with a population of 852.000 people- was 19th Olympics. 2.399 athletes in total including 1.513 male and 886 female athletes from 77 nations in 15 sport branches participated in these games. 8.730 members of media including 2.661 printed media and 6.069 broadcasters followed the games that were accompanied by 22.000 volunteers (IOC, 2012). Olympics was held in 10 sports facilities with an approximate capacity of 120.000 people. In addition to this, more than 3.500 athletes, coaches, and officials attending the games were hosted in the 78-acre Olympic Village in the campus of Utah University. 170 million dollars was spent for achieving the world standards for the venues (Salt Lake 2002 Legacy, 2012). A budget of approximately 1.264 billion dollars was reserved for the games. On the other hand, it was noted that the expenses was approximately 1.317 billion dollars. Regarding these figures, there was an approximate loss of

54 million dollars in these games (Bondonio and Campaniello, 2006).

2006 Winter Olympics that was organized in Torino, a city with a population of 900.000 in Italy, was 20th Winter Olympics. 2.508 athletes in total including 960 female and 1.548 male athletes from 80 nations in 15 sport branches participated in these games. 8.408 members of media including 2.688 printed media and 6.720 broadcasters followed the games that were accompanied by 18.000 volunteers (IOC, 2012). Olympic Games were held in 14 sports facilities with an approximate capacity of 142.000 people. Also, Torino Olympic Village with an area of 100.000 square meters hosted more than 2.500 athletes. In this village, there are logistics center, shopping center, sports hall, and lounges for athletes and staff (Torino 2006 official site, 2012). When evaluated in economic terms, it was stated that the expense was approximately 1.333 billion dollars whereas the income was almost 1.3 billion dollars. Concerning these figures, there was an approximate loss of 33 million dollars (Bondonio ve Campaniello, 2006).

2010 Winter Olympics which was held in Vancouver, a city with a population of 162.000 people in Canada, was 21st Winter Olympics. Vancouver hosted 2.566 athletes in total from 82 countries in 15 sports branches. Almost 10.000 members of media and 3 billion TV audience followed the games that were held with the participation of 18.500 volunteers (IOC, 2012). Olympic venues were composed of four zones classified as Vancouver, Whistler, Richmond, and West Vancouver. Games were held in 11 venues in total. These venues have an approximate capacity of 142.000 people.

There are two Olympic Villages with a capacity of 4000 people- one in Vancouver and the other one is in Whistler (Arkitera.com,2012). Almost 1.25

billion dollars was spent on games (Vancouver Olympic Games Final Report, 2012).

## **DISCUSSION**

Organizing Olympics which is the biggest sport event of the world is an important factor in terms of the country's economy, publicity, image, and the investments to be made to the city. These reasons trigger the countries' candidacy process to host the Olympics. Besides its contributions, Olympics' negative effects in terms of economy should not be ignored. It is obvious in the literature that such big organizations affect the country's economy. Researches show that financial losses of host countries are higher than their earnings. It is assumed that 2004 Olympics spending have had impact on the increasing dimensions of economic crisis in Greece (Ekonomi Sayfası Web 2012). Despite this, countries make great efforts to be a candidate. It can be considered that the goal is not financial gain but the political supremacy.

Olympics may have positive effects such as the publicity of the country, modernization of the facilities; an increase in foreign capital and preparing new athletes with the accelerating effect of games (Keskin, 2007). These effects can be considered the biggest reasons for Turkey's desire to host the Olympics. Given these listed positive effects, economic disadvantages are subordinated.

For 2000 Olympics hosted by Sydney, Istanbul was also a candidate. While the population of Sydney was 3,7 people, Istanbul's population was 8 million people (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu- Web 2012). 70 % of people supported this organization in

Istanbul whereas this number was 90 % for Sydney. Compared with Sydney, Istanbul's infrastructure inadequacy and its unsafe city image were assessed by low scores by the Commission (IOC, 2012). When evaluated in terms of Olympic Village, the Olympic Village in Istanbul was planned to be built on an area of 134 hectares and is located 22 km from the city centre. Concerning the accommodation, 80.000 shelter beds were planned. On the other hand, the Olympic Village in Sydney was built on an area of 84 hectares and it was within walking distance to the competition area (Keskin, 2007).

When Athens was selected to host Olympics in 2004, public support was 96.5 % while it was 96.2 % in Istanbul. At that time, Istanbul's population was 40 % greater than Athens'. It was stated that if Istanbul had been selected for the Olympics, the capacity for the Olympic Village would be increased to 180.000 people and the distance between the facilities would be shortened. In addition, 20 out of 34 facilities would be available for public use. On the other hand, games were held in 33 sport facilities in Athens. Regarding the environmental conditions and transportation, Istanbul could not get the required score (Keskin, 2007). In those years, political and economic uncertainties that Turkey was facing was a hindrance for Istanbul (Erdem, 1997).

In 2008 Olympics, public support was 96 % for Istanbul which had a population of almost 13 million (TUIK, 2012) while it was 94 % for Beijing with a population of

16 million people. Concerning the evaluation of infrastructure, Istanbul got 5 points at minimum and 6 points at most in terms of its current transportation and it was stated that Istanbul had a lower probability of improving its means of transportation compared with Beijing. On the other hand, Beijing got 4 points at minimum and 6 points at most in terms of current transportation performance. It can be noted that Beijing's ready-made projects have attracted more attention than Istanbul's projects (IOC- ATHENS 2004, 2012). For example, while Istanbul's current sport infrastructure was 34 %, it was 48 % for Beijing. Beijing was also regarded more prepared in terms of Olympic Village. In addition to these, as in previous Olympics, environmental conditions, accommodation, transportation, security, and most importantly previous sport organization experiences were evaluated with lower scores compared with Beijing (Keskin, 2007).

Regarding 2012 Olympics, public support for Istanbul was 70 %- a higher percentage compared with London. This situation was evaluated positively in terms of nomination rating. As the date of games got closer, this percentage for London reached 82 %. In those years, Istanbul's transportation infrastructure percentage was 85 %, air transport was 5 %, and press infrastructure was 10 %. Istanbul's current transportation system was evaluated as insufficient in meeting the rapidly growing needs. On the other hand, London has the world's most advanced rail and metro network. With these facilities, London was classified as the city which had the highest level of transportation system among other candidates. London was evaluated in a

better position than Istanbul in terms of overall infrastructure criteria.

Concerning overall rating for competition areas, Istanbul got 6 points at most while it was 7,1 points for London. Accordingly, London was regarded more prepared than Istanbul in terms of competition areas.

London got a higher score than Istanbul, especially with its location of Olympic Village. Although the Olympic Village Criteria was the same for both ratings, Istanbul got 5,5 points at minimum and 7,2 points at most in 2008 while these percentages were lowered to 4,2 and 6,3 respectively in 2012 (Aksoy, 2004).

London's Olympic Village which was located in Olympic Park was within walking distances from competition venues. In the Olympic Village, shops, restaurants, health departments, entertainment sections and open spaces were available. There were approximately 17.000 flats for athletes and officials. In each flat, internet accesses including wireless and state-of-the-art communication systems were available. The Village's construction started in May, 2008. Developing slowly during 2008 and 2009, the construction finished in 2012. After the games, the Olympic Village was transformed into permanent housing for east London (London2012venues.com, 2013).

Istanbul which was a candidate for 2008 Summer Olympic Games reached final as a result of elections and was regarded capable of organizing the Olympics by the Commission. However, in the elections it held the organization over to Beijing. In 2012, Istanbul which reapplied for the candidacy by improving its criteria got lower scores compared to 2008 in terms of overall infrastructure, transportation, sport facilities' infrastructure, Olympic

village, organization experience, and security and was considered as regressed (Aksoy, 2004).

Regarding the Olympics that were held since 2000, it can be observed that countries organizing Summer Olympics did not profit economically, but even lost money. Concerning the cyclical structure of the world, it is likely that Istanbul will make a loss if it hosts the Olympics. On the other hand, when the financial aspect of Winter Olympics was analyzed, it was observed that countries lost less money in Winter Olympics compared with Summer Olympics. Especially in Summer Olympics, as the number of branches, participating athletes, facilities and the capacity of these facilities are greater, countries have more difficulty in financial terms compared with Winter Olympics. While the number of branches was 35-40 on average for Summer Olympics, this number decrease to 15 for Winter Olympics. When Summer and Winter Olympics are compared proportionally, in Winter Olympic there is 36 % fall in the number of branches, while it was the same for the number of nations with 37 %, the number of athletes with 23 %, participation of volunteers with 28 %, the number of facilities with 83 %, and financial expenses with 14 %. When these percentages are analyzed, it can be considered that our country is more available for Winter Olympics. Successful organization of 2011 Winter Universiade in Erzurum can be a pioneer for Winter Olympics. When Winter Olympics are analyzed statistically, it can be observed that Erzurum Winter Universiad was close to these numbers. Erzurum which is located on a plateau, surrounded by mountain ranges and plateaus is the highest city of Turkey. Erzurum, which is located in Eastern Anatolia region, has

been an important center of trade and accommodation leading Iranian-Indian and Central Asia trade to Mediterranean since Middle Ages. Besides the availability of its natural conditions and geographical location, its proximity to significant centers of civilization are important characteristics in terms of Erzurum (Erzurum2011.gov, 2012).

In analysis, it was observed that when Winter Olympics were organized, the population of Salt Lake City was 852.000, while it was 900.000 for Torino and 162.000 for Vancouver. Erzurum is Turkey's 15th largest city with a population of 780.847 people (Tuik, 2012). Whereas competitions in 15 sport branches were held in 2002, 2006, and 2010 Winter Olympics, competitions including 11 sport branches were organized in Erzurum (25th Winter Universiade Final Report, 2011).

In 2002, Salt Lake City hosted 2.399 athletes in total from 77 nations. It was indicated that these numbers were 2.508 athletes from 80 nations for Torino and 2.566 athletes from 82 nations in Vancouver. On the other hand, Erzurum hosted 2.438 athletes in total from 11 nations in Winter Universiade (25th Winter Universiade Final Report, 2011). Regarding these numbers, it is observed that Erzurum hosted more athletes than Salt Lake City and Torino. Since the Olympics are the biggest sport events of the world, games were held with the participation of 22.000 volunteers in 2002, 18.000 volunteers in 2006, and 18.500 volunteers in 2010. In 2010 Universiade, 4.676 volunteers participated in the games. Most of these volunteers were the local people of Erzurum. It can be remarked that Erzurum people supported the games at every stage of the organization. Winter games have

provided a considerable experience to the people of Erzurum in terms of such organizations.

When Winter Olympics are analyzed in terms of facilities, the number of facilities between 10 and 20 is considered sufficient for the games. Salt Lake City games were held in 10 venues with the capacity of 120.000 (Salt Lake 2002 Legacy, 2012). Torino hosted the Olympics with 14 sport facilities with the capacity of 142.000 while Vancouver used 19 sport facilities with the same capacity (Torino2006official site, Arkitera.com, 2012). On the other hand, Erzurum completed competitions successfully with 15 sport facilities with the capacity of 51.400 (25th Winter Universiade Final Report, 2012). Olympics can be organized by increasing the capacity of current facilities and constructing new facilities with a lower budget compared with Summer Olympics. Regarding the financial aspect of Winter Olympics, it can be noted that countries lost less money compared with Summer Olympics. It was observed that Salt Lake City made a loss of 54 million dollars on games for which they spent 1.317 billion dollars. Torino made a loss of 33 million dollars. Vancouver spent approximately 1.25 billion dollars on these games. Erzurum also spent 1.167 billion dollars for the games (25th Winter Universiade Final Report, 2012).

This statistical information is consistent with the idea that Winter Olympics can be organized in Erzurum. Modernization of the facilities may be advantageous in terms of Winter Olympics nomination process. Concerning the Olympic village, it is located within the university campus in the province. The village is 3 km away from the city centre, 11 km to airport, and

1 km away from the Winter Universiade Arena where opening-closing ceremonies were held (Erzurum2011.gov, 2012).

Concerning all these aspects, it can be stated that nomination process for Winter Olympics will be easier than Summer Olympics. As long as the required arrangements are made, it is likely that our country's nomination for Winter Olympics will end positively. In this respect, it can be noted that Erzurum can host Winter Olympics if the necessary work is done with a lower budget than Summer Olympics' since its infrastructure ready to a certain extent for Winter Olympics.

In conclusion, Istanbul has been a candidate for Summer Olympics since 2000. However, its nomination process hasn't ended positively because of lack of infrastructure works, environment, accommodation, security, etc. In this study, Summer and Winter Olympics that were organized since 2000 were analyzed in terms of the number of branches, participating nations and athletes, facilities, the capacity of these facilities and financial terms. It is probable that Winter Olympics will be completed with a lower budget than Summer Olympics. It is considered that Winter Olympics can be organized in Erzurum with a lower budget than the one that Istanbul planned for Summer Olympics. It is observed that the number of training facilities in Erzurum is sufficient, so these facilities can be ready for Winter Olympics by increasing the capacities of some of them. Regarding the fact that Erzurum is suitable for Winter Olympics in terms of financial and technical capability and less money will be spent for improving facilities compared with Summer Olympics, Erzurum is suggested for candidacy for Winter Olympics.

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