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Legacies of Beijing’s 2008 Summer Olympic Games and 2022 Winter Olympic Games

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Domestic sport policy development [in China]: Legacies of Beijing’s 2008 Summer Olympic Games and 2022 Winter Olympic Games

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ABSTRACT

Since the term legacy first appeared in the Melbourne 1956 candidacy for the XVI Olympiad (Leopkey, 2009), debates on Olympic legacy analysis started with how to define legacy and moved on to how to measure legacy, and to more recently how to plan and deliver legacy. The last decade has seen burgeoning research interest in legacy and impact analysis for the Olympic Games, encompassing areas including economic impacts (Baade & Matheson, 2002; Blake, 2005; Kasimati & Dawson, 2009; Preuss, 2004), sociocultural impacts (Truno, 1995), environmental impacts (May, 1995; Zhou et al., 2010), reputational legacy (Berkowitz, Gjermano, Gomez, & Schafer, 2007; Gold & Gold, 2008; Zhang & Zhao, 2009), political legacy (Preuss & Alfs, 2011; Tomlinson & Young, 2006), and infrastructural legacy (including both sporting and non-sporting legacy, see for example, Cashman, 2006; Hiller, 2006). However, impacts on and legacies for domestic sport policy, ensuing from the hosting of the Olympic Games, have not yet been seriously investigated.

Although hosting the Olympic Games inevitably brings about domestic policy changes (for sport policy in particular), long-term policy impacts do not necessarily follow. Once the Olympic circus ends, fine-tuned policy (particularly sport policy) and related financial investments are often dialled back (Greece is a notable example of this occurring). As an Olympic host county, China presents a somewhat unusual case: It will become the second country ever (the first being Austria) to have hosted the Olympic Games more than once.

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within a 15-year interval. The relative brevity of the time period in question creates appropriate conditions for one wave after another of Olympic-impetus for policy change. We may thereby examine changes in policy patterns occurring between the two Games.

It is against this background that our research unfolds. The study is part of a large, ongoing research project funded by the Chinese National Social Science Fund and examining the principles, key legacy areas, and issues of Beijing hosting the 2022 Winter Olympics. The first phase of the research involves identifying the impact of China hosting two Olympics Games on domestic sport policy development. The presented paper will draw on Preuss’ (2015) framework for identifying the legacies of a mega sporting event. Documents published since 2001—extracted from the academic literature, from government departments, from sports governing bodies, and from influential domestic media—will be systematically reviewed.

Specifically, by tracing policy development, from the time of the successful bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games up until the present, the aim is to map out the characteristics and patterns of change for sport policy statements and interventions relating to the Beijing 2008 Games and to the Beijing & Zhangjiakou 2022 Games. Guided by Preuss’ (2015) framework, the following four elements will be identified: (a) what has changed in sport policy patterns; (b) who (in terms of specific stakeholders) is affected by the policy changes; (c) how (in terms of specific Olympics-related interventions and programmes) the change has affected the host city and country; and to identify (d) the times at which changes have occurred and the length of time for which those changes have remained effective. In addition, a summary of the analytical logic model will be presented, setting out the link between policy strategy and policy intervention to outputs, results and outcomes. It is expected that the process of
data collection will be completed before August 2017, and findings and results will be
finalised before the end of 2017.

Keywords: Olympic legacy, Beijing 2008 & 2022, sport policy, policy change

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