



International Journal of Management and Decision Making

ISSN online: 1741-5187 - ISSN print: 1462-4621

<https://www.inderscience.com/ijmdm>

Relational dynamics and decision making for the organisation of the Olympic Games in France

Frédéric Lassalle

DOI: [10.1504/IJMDM.2025.10059008](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMDM.2025.10059008)

Article History:

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Received: | 04 October 2022 |
| Last revised: | 17 April 2023 |
| Accepted: | 21 April 2023 |
| Published online: | 02 December 2024 |

Relational dynamics and decision making for the organisation of the Olympic Games in France

Frédéric Lassalle

CREGO – EA 7317,
IAE Dijon,
Burgundy University,
2 Boulevard Gabriel, BP 26611,
21066 Dijon Cedex, Dijon, France
Email: Frederic.lassalle@u-bourgogne.fr

Abstract: The contribution of this research resides in the proposal of a comprehension tool allowing to represent the relational dynamics and the decision making within the framework of a bid for an international sports event. To control the selection and organisation phases, the International Olympic Committee maintains close relations with the candidate cities. It is legitimate to question the power profiles of the candidates and the decision made. The methodology is qualitative through expert interviews and data collection from the press on the specific case of French bids for the organisation of summer and Winter Olympic Games since 1968. The results obtained within the framework of French bids make it possible to verify that relational dynamics and power profiles have an impact on the selection of the candidate city. Relational dynamics are present in the literature on sport management, they very rarely appear under the aspect of relational dynamics.

Keywords: corporate strategy; relational dynamics; sport organisation; International Olympic Committee; IOC; Olympic Games; France.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Lassalle, F. (2025) 'Relational dynamics and decision making for the organisation of the Olympic Games in France', *Int. J. Management and Decision Making*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp.1–18.

Biographical notes: Frédéric Lassalle is a Professor Assistant at the University of Burgundy in IAE Dijon. He conducts research in the CREGO Laboratory (EA 7317) on Strategic Management, Strategic Innovation and Organizational Performance. Its testing grounds are principally sport and international sport event. He is particularly interested in sports organisations public (federations) or private (clubs) as illustrated by his book came out in 2015 on the 'Management of sports organizations'.

1 Introduction

At a time of health crisis, the repositioning of public policies on austerity measures and the loss of household confidence, the sports industry continues to see its events develop (Szymanski et al., 2019; Andersson and Getz, 2020). International sports events now represent the objectives of many countries (World Cups of football) or cities (Summer or

Winter Olympic Games) (Gökgöz and Yalçın, 2021; Mancini et al., 2022). Bidding to host international sporting events is a phase in which each city tries to implement strategies to be able to take advantage of the considerable stakes and emerge victorious (Bourg and Gouguet, 2010; Yang et al., 2015). The theoretical literature in management is primarily concerned with the resources of these candidates (Slack and Parent, 2006), but it is important to ask whether the relational dynamics of power are not more important (Jalali, 2020). International institutions own these events and are sovereign in terms of attribution and control of the organisation (Dingle and Stewart, 2018). In France, for nearly a century (1900–2024) 11 cities (Paris, Lyon, Lille, Annecy, Grenoble, Nice, Chamonix, Gérardmer, Luchon-Superbagnères, Albertville and Pelvoux-Écrins) were candidates to the French National Olympic and Sports Committee (CNOSF) to be the French city selected by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for the Olympic Games (Summer Olympics: 1900, 1920, 1924, 1968, 1992, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2024; Winter Olympics: 1924, 1968, 1992, 2014, 2018). These 20 candidacies resulted in six victories (three Summer Olympics: Paris 1900, Paris 1924, and Paris 2024; three Winter Olympics: Chamonix 1924, Grenoble 1968, and Albertville 1992). These cities had to maintain relations with the IOC, whose objective is to obtain, from the candidates, the realisation of the specifications of the competition. The relations give rise irremediably to power (Weber, 1947) according to three power profiles named by Galbraith (1983): personality, ownership and organisation. The objective of this research is, firstly, theoretical by the creation of a tool capable of analysing the interplay of relational dynamics and, secondly, methodological by putting this tool in a research field and by the desire to validate it. This research aims to characterise the relational dynamics of power and the decision making at the time of the application phase, and also wishes to answer the question: is there an adequacy of power profiles between the holder of the event and the selected candidate?

The contribution resides in the proposal of a comprehension tool allowing to represent the relational dynamics within the framework of a bid for an international sports event according to profiles. The tool promotes the understanding of the environment and power, and the identification of relationships represents an action tool for organisations allowing them to setup a decision management system (Soltwisch, 2015). Power must be understood as the ability to influence an entity to carry out an action that it would not have carried out without this intervention (Dahl, 1957). To test the chosen tool, a qualitative case study approach is used (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This research is based on interviews with experts (Morrison and Misener, 2021). Two types of secondary data, internal documents and a database of press articles covering the period 1960 to 2019, were added to the interviews conducted. Now that we have introduced the article, we will define the power theoretical framework used in this research. Then we will justify the methodology of the case study applied to the Olympic Games. We will present and discuss the results before concluding this research with the perspectives.

2 Power

The literature on power is abundant and the theories that make it up are many and varied. The choice of Weber (1947) was made out of a desire to anchor a little-explored field thanks to an author who is very present in management sciences (Kim et al., 2005).

Power is the exercise of domination over an organisation, in such a way as to engender behaviour that would not be achieved without this influence (Dahl, 1957). Highlighting this structuring of power implies the need to understand the mechanisms allowing this domination (Crozier and Friedberg, 1980). Among the mechanisms for exercising this domination are the sources of power. Weber (1947) proposes three sources of legitimacy that he identified in traditions, in the charisma of a providential man and in bureaucratic organisation (Pichler, 1998). From these sources he founded three sources of power: traditional power, charismatic power and legal-rational power (Pichler, 1998). Before looking at other control mechanisms, it is necessary to explain the reasons that lead to the existence of such processes. The justification lies in the actors' desire to enjoy freedom and the power holder's desire to see this freedom limited in order to constrain them (Crozier and Friedberg, 1980). This freedom generates zones of uncertainty that must be reduced by the holder of power or else they will disappear (Crozier and Friedberg, 1980). Power resides in the margin of freedom available to each of the partners involved in a relationship. The magnitude will depend on the holder's modes of control and the capacity of the other stakeholders to deal with it (Crozier and Friedberg, 1980).

To analyse the mechanisms and strategies allowing this domination, a tool is proposed based on the proposals made by Galbraith (1983) using Weber's (1947) model. Each of these sources comprises three elements:

- 1 personality is composed of charisma (Selzer et al., 2018), daring (Young, 1991) and strength (Toffler, 1991).
- 2 ownership combines tradition (Selzer et al., 2018), wealth (Toffler, 1991), and intelligence (Young, 1991).
- 3 organisation is based on law (Young, 1991), knowledge (Toffler, 1991), and structure (Young, 1991).

The authors in management completed the model and proposed a tool for analysing relational power dynamics. This identifies the power held by the dominant entity in the relationship and characterises the control mechanisms. It consists of a single source, a form of application (Galbraith, 1983), a mode of control (Mintzberg, 1983) and two control mechanisms (Ghera and Lassalle, 2015). Table 1 will present all the elements.

This results analysis tool will allow the power profiles of organisations during the Olympic bid campaigns to be drawn up. In the theoretical literature (Weber, 1947; Schelling, 1958; Mintzberg, 1983), two different power profiles cannot lead to an agreement in the relationship unless there is sufficient concession from one of the parties (Nakamura, 2005; Bertrand and Lumineau, 2016; Couper et al., 2020). The analysis will make it possible to determine whether the organisations in question have an identical typology of relational power dynamics. In the positive case, they are in a stable situation guaranteeing the success of the relationship (Schelling, 1958; Bertrand and Lumineau, 2016). Otherwise, the relationship cannot lead to an agreement and ultimately leads to conflict (Couper et al., 2020). Aware of this latent conflict, the holder chooses to negotiate with the organisation that has the same power profile as his or her own (Bertrand and Lumineau, 2016; Yenyurt and Carnovale, 2017). The winning candidate organisation will have the same power profile as the organisation holding the event and those that are different will be in a situation of failure.

Table 1 Power relations analysis tool

| | <i>Personality</i> | <i>Ownership</i> | <i>Organisation</i> |
|--|--|---|--|
| Sources | Charisma | Tradition | Law |
| | Force | Wealth | Knowledge |
| | Daring | Intelligence | Structure |
| Forms | Persuasion (popularity/ negotiation/ conditioning) | Retribution (material/ moral) | Dissuasion (constraint/ directivity/ punishment) |
| Control modes | Power (strength) | Authority (prestige) | Direction (rationality) |
| Reactions to previous oversight mechanisms | Fear (fear/terror) | Assent (enthusiasm/ fanaticism/ conviction/respect) | Consent (scheme) |
| Subsequent control mechanisms | Death (dead/exile/ slavery) | Excommunication (excommunication/ putting to death) | Exclusion (exclusion) |

Source: Self-development

The power and power profiles present in the relationship are decisive for the conclusion of an agreement. In the field of international sports events, many factors will impact this relationship and the likely agreement. Indeed, the field of this research is particular in the sense that many stakeholders influence the relationship between the IOC, the National Olympic Committee (NOC) and the national bids (Pizzo et al., 2022). Among the various stakeholders, sponsors, the media (especially television groups), international federations, spectators and athletes play an influential role in the choice of the attribution of the organisation of the Olympic Games to a city (Li et al., 2021). This influence of stakeholders is particularly studied because each of them will try to favour their position by intervening in relational dynamics through the possession of information, financial or material resources, or more simply by making use of their power over the actors in the relationship (Talay et al., 2020).

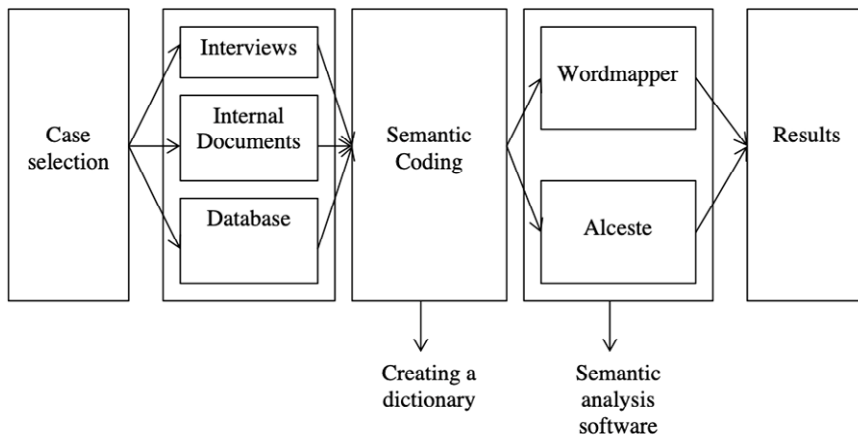
The multi-stakeholder approach also justifies the use of power for the dominant stakeholder according to the theory of resource dependence (Andriof et al., 2017; Weitzner and Deutsch, 2019). Ansoff and Slevin's (1968) approach makes it possible to understand that the organisation must achieve objectives not only for its survival but also to satisfy a relational game with its partners (clients (spectators), suppliers (media), investors (sponsors)) (Schönberner et al., 2021). The sport organisation must adjust its goals to ensure that they receive a fair share (Ansoff et al., 2018). In the case of international sports events, expectations can be measured in terms of media exposure, entertainment, number of hours of broadcasting, consumption of products, etc.

The multi-stakeholder approach is part of a strategic logic of justification of the existence of power (Mitchell et al., 1997) and an interdependent relational dynamic between the different actors (Andriof et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2022). Multi-stakeholder relationships are affected by the quality and nature of the stakeholders, but also by the specificity of the interaction between them and with the organisation (Fransen and Kolk, 2007). The field of sports events is specific by its ephemeral nature (one month), by the time between each event (four years) and by the considerable stakes that each of the stakeholders hopes to gain from it (McGillivray et al., 2022).

3 Methodology

This research is based on a qualitative case study methodology (Yin, 2017). It makes it possible to observe hidden organisational phenomena or power relations (Sanday, 1979). Primary and secondary data were collected in order to triangulate them and ensure their credibility (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1994). 134 expert interviews were carried out, 652 internal documents (IOC protocols and internal documents of the candidate cities) were retrieved and a database of international press articles (279,680 press articles) was created to allow saturation. Data collection began in 2016 and was completed in 2019. During these three years, press articles from 1960 to 2019 were searched. Those prior to 1960 were either too few or not accessible for technical reasons (applications from Paris 1900, Lyon 1920, and Paris 1924 for the summer and Chamonix 1924 for the winter). The first candidatures studied were therefore those of 1968 (Lyon for the Summer Olympics and Grenoble for the Winter Olympics) representing 15 candidatures (out of 21) and three victories (out of 6). Once collected, data must be coded (Eisenhardt, 1989) before being subjected to content analysis. Coding in this research is based on a dictionary created from authors' writings and completed by words with identical meanings, which is almost 90% reliable (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Wordmapper and Alceste allow data analysis using complementary techniques, one by hierarchical top-down classification and the other by hierarchical bottom-up classification. The statistical results generate a representation of the masses and then provide access to the details.

Figure 1 Research methodology



Source: Self-development

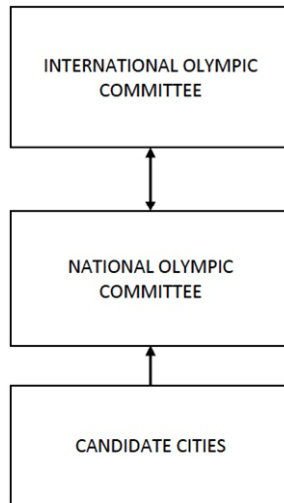
The software, Alceste and Wordmapper, allow to cross complementary techniques (Illia et al., 2014), by hierarchical descending analysis (Alceste) and hierarchical ascending analysis (Wordmapper), which will automatically group text segments into context units according to their frequency, or their importance, in the studied contexts, sentences, paragraphs, etc. The hierarchical descending analysis draws up lists, classes or categories of significant words and links them together, while the hierarchical ascending analysis identifies important words and goes back up in the text to find the connections, then

scroll up through the paragraphs to the full text. A top-down analysis of the text and an ascending analysis of the text is necessary to obtain a complete coding of the data. Software goes further and further down the text until it makes sense. Alceste shows more homogeneous and less numerous classes of discourse than the clusters resulting from Wordmapper's hierarchical ascending classification, which, on the other hand, makes it possible to highlight the articulation of themes between them (Illia et al., 2014). They allow, from the 'contexts of use' of concepts, to make a readable graphic representation and give an exploratory representation of the domain allowing to clarify the problematic. The software allows the obtaining of frequencies of recurrence of the terms. This statistical method first allows a representation of the masses (co-occurrence of significant words, representation of a context of use of the words) and then gives access to details (Illia et al., 2014).

4 Olympic Games

The choice, to test the present power over international sporting events, was based on the bids for the summer and Winter Olympic Games of French cities since 1968. To obtain the organisation of Olympic Games, the NOC, CNOSF in France, must present a single city as a candidate to the IOC (Nys, 2006). The latter sets up a bid committee that will become an organising committee (OCOG) for the event. The position of organiser, due to the ratification of the Olympic Charter and the specifications, places the victorious organisation of the bid campaign in a bidding situation with respect to the IOC (Geeraert et al., 2014; Hums and MacLean, 2017).

Figure 2 The IOC's hierarchical structure for the bid to host the Olympic Games



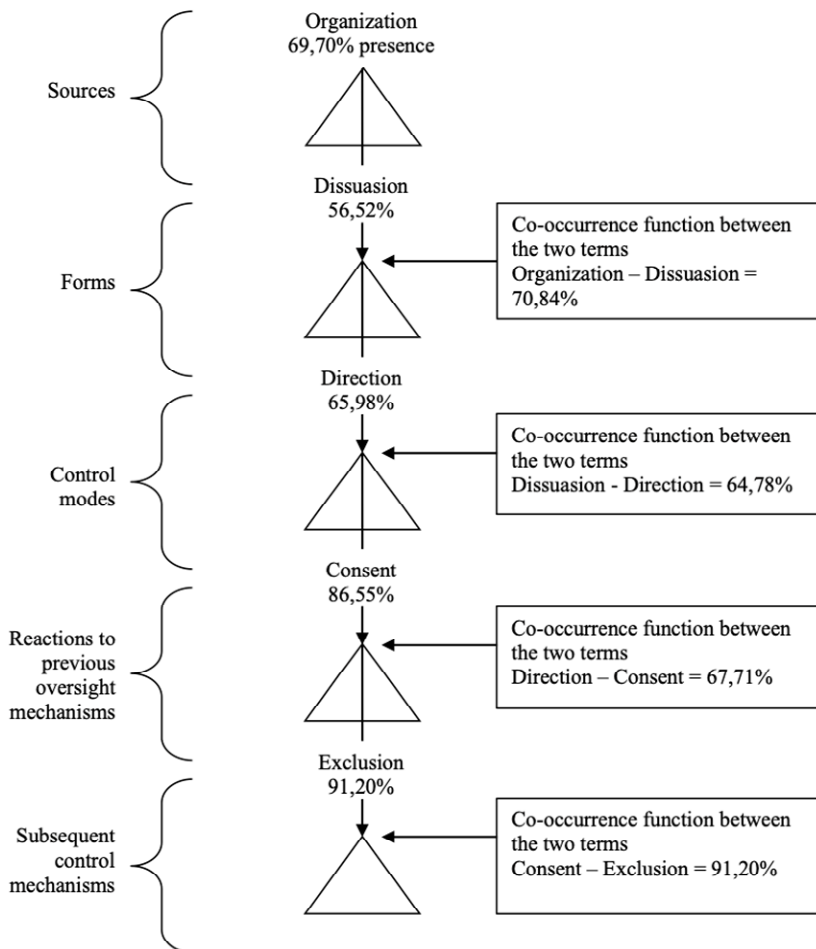
Source: Self-development

The Olympic Games currently represent the pinnacle in terms of organisation, media impact, and financial benefits that a city can obtain when it presents itself for the organisation of an international sports event (Geeraert et al., 2014). The summer and

Winter Olympic Games have the particularity of having financial coverage, allowing the construction of sports venues, provided by the IOC to the organiser through media rights. This media coverage also provides the various candidates with international visibility that generates tourism spin-offs (Miller, 1979; Wall, 2001). In order to answer the research question, it is necessary to draw up the power profiles of the various protagonists (Figure 2) present in the French bids to organise the Olympic Games.

The research field is limited to French applications. Access to the field is an important element of a qualitative analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994). For France, the CNOSF is therefore the institution that can present a city's bid to host the Olympic Games (Nys, 2006). The presence of 15 French cities bidding to the CNOSF to compete in the Olympic Games guaranteed a rich national terrain that allowed for an analysis made up of a large amount of data due to the national regulations in place.

Figure 3 Frequencies and co-occurrence of the elements of the 'organisation' dimension for the IOC (2018 Olympic Winter Games)



Source: Self-development

Table 2 Power profile of Olympic Movement Relations

| <i>1968</i> | <i>1968</i> | <i>1992</i> | <i>1992</i> | <i>2004</i> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Summer</i> | <i>Winter (V)</i> | <i>Summer</i> | <i>Winter (V)</i> | <i>Summer</i> |
| International Olympic Committee power | International Olympic Committee power | International Olympic Committee power | International Olympic Committee power | International Olympic Committee power |
| Personality | Personality | Personality | Personality | Organisation |
| Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency |
| 78.70% | 77.68% | 78.67% | 82.47% | 62.37% |
| Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence |
| 73.44% | 77.02% | 76.55% | 79.55% | 60.62% |
| National Olympic Committee power | National Olympic Committee power | National Olympic Committee power | National Olympic Committee power | National Olympic Committee power |
| Personality | Personality | Personality | Personality | Organisation |
| Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency |
| 72.09% | 71.51% | 72.21% | 78.44% | 63.55% |
| Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence |
| 69.57% | 70.34% | 70.08% | 74.32% | 61.84% |
| <i>2008</i> | <i>2012</i> | <i>2014</i> | <i>2018</i> | <i>2024</i> |
| <i>Summer</i> | <i>Summer</i> | <i>Winter</i> | <i>Winter</i> | <i>Summer (V)</i> |
| International Olympic Committee power | International Olympic Committee power | International Olympic Committee power | International Olympic Committee power | International Olympic Committee power |
| Organisation | Organisation | Organisation | Organisation | Organisation |
| Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency |
| 65.61% | 72.48% | 73.17% | 73.99% | 72.36% |
| Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence |
| 64.93% | 70.19% | 70.26% | 70.13% | 69.33% |
| National Olympic Committee power | National Olympic Committee power | National Olympic Committee power | National Olympic Committee power | National Olympic Committee power |
| Organisation | Organisation | Organisation | Organisation | Organisation |
| Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency |
| 67.83% | 73.04% | 73.51% | 74.25% | 71.76% |
| Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence |
| 66.82% | 70.82% | 71.28% | 67.48% | 67.35% |

Source: Self-development

5 Results

The first results from the analysis software concern the IOC and should make it possible to identify the form of power exercised in relational dynamics. For example, for the bid for the 2018 Winter Olympics, in terms of frequency of terms, all the elements of the 'organisation' profile score higher than the elements of the other two profiles. With the source of power in Wordmapper software, the term 'organisation' reaches 68.81% presence with 27,410 appearances. 'Personality' has only 5.97% presence (2,380) and 'ownership' reaches 25.22% (10,047). These terms, under Alceste software, also validate this distribution. The 'organisation' is at 82.30% with 2,326 appearances, the 'personality' obtains 9.70% (274) and the 'ownership' 8% (226). To facilitate the presentation of the data in this research, the two results have been grouped together to present only the final total. The process was identical for the frequency of the terms and for the co-occurrence between them.

All the results, regardless of the different candidatures, show that the IOC's power profile is identical to that of NOCs. Each of the power profiles exceeds the 50% presence in the data. The results concerning the form of control, the mode of control and the two control mechanisms are also each time above 50% (Table 2). It is also necessary to check the existence of links between the elements of the dimension. The 'co-occurrence' function calculates the number of times these elements are linked according to the software and the results confirm the power profile. It can therefore be concluded that the IOC and the NOC manage their relational dynamics according to the same profile.

It is necessary to study the results obtained for the candidate cities in order to finalise the analysis. If we look at Table 3, presenting the results obtained on the two software, for the different French cities, we realise that the cities do not all have the same profile.

Table 3 Power profile of candidate cities

| | | <i>Cities power</i> |
|------------|------------------|--|
| 1968 | Olympic Movement | Lyon |
| Summer | Personality | Organisation Frequency 74.28% Co-occurrence 70.57% |
| 1968 | Olympic Movement | Grenoble |
| Winter (V) | Personality | Personality Frequency 65.33% Co-occurrence 62.08% |

Source: Self-development

Table 3 Power profile of candidate cities (continued)

| | | <i>Cities power</i> | |
|------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 1992 | Olympic Movement | Paris | |
| Summer | Personality | Organisation | |
| | | Frequency | |
| | | 71.88% | |
| | | Co-occurrence | |
| | | 69.03% | |
| 1992 | Olympic Movement | Albertville | |
| Winter (V) | Personality | Personality | |
| | | Frequency | |
| | | 73.76% | |
| | | Co-occurrence | |
| | | 70.64% | |
| 2004 | Olympic Movement | Lille | Lyon |
| Summer | Organisation | Organisation | Organisation |
| | | Frequency | Frequency |
| | | 72.83% | 54.37% |
| | | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence |
| | | 70.91% | 52.77% |
| 2008 | Olympic Movement | Paris | |
| Summer | Organisation | Personality | |
| | | Frequency | |
| | | 72.44% | |
| | | Co-occurrence | |
| | | 69.70% | |
| 2012 | Olympic Movement | Paris | |
| Summer | Organisation | Organisation | |
| | | Frequency | |
| | | 54.38% | |
| | | Co-occurrence | |
| | | 52.87% | |

Source: Self-development

Table 3 Power profile of candidate cities (continued)

| | | <i>Cities power</i> | | | |
|------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| 2014 | Olympic Movement | Annecy | Grenoble | | |
| Winter | Organisation | Organisation | Organisation | | |
| | | Frequency | Frequency | | |
| | | 59.34% | 53.55% | | |
| | | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | | |
| | | 57.92% | 51.09% | | |
| 2018 | Olympic Movement | Annecy | Grenoble | Nice | Pelvoux-Ecrins |
| Winter | Organisation | Organisation | Organisation | Ownership | Ownership |
| | | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency |
| | | 60.72% | 53.84% | 58.86% | 63.00% |
| | | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence | Co-occurrence |
| | | 70.53% | 64.03% | 58.63% | 63.58% |
| 2024 | Olympic Movement | Paris | | | |
| Summer (V) | Organisation | Organisation | | | |
| | | Frequency | | | |
| | | 73.88% | | | |
| | | Co-occurrence | | | |
| | | 70.22% | | | |

Source: Self-development

The results tell us that some cities do not have the same power profile as the Olympic Movement (Lyon 1968, Paris 1992, Paris 2008, Nice 2019, and Pelvoux-Ecrins 2018). All these cities did not obtain the organisation of the Olympic Games, or were not even presented by the NOC to the IOC. Thus, we can confirm Schelling's (1958) statement that two different power profiles cannot lead to victory. Other cities do have the same power profile as the Olympic Movement and won the bid phase and thus were able to organise the Olympic Games (Grenoble 1968, Albertville 1992 and Paris 2024). Nevertheless, some candidate cities, although they have the same power profile as the Olympic Movement, were either not selected by the NOC (Lyon 2004, Annecy 2014, Grenoble 2014 and Grenoble 2018), or did not succeed in winning the bid phase to be designated 'host city' (Lille 2004, Paris 2008, Paris 2012 and Annecy 2018). Regarding the latter situation, the reason may come from foreign cities, also candidates, which may have power profiles more in line with that of the Olympic Movement.

On these results, not having those of foreign cities, two situations raise questions. The first is that of cities with the right power profile and not selected by the NOC. Concerning this situation, we can dwell on the results obtained. For example, in the case of the 2004 Summer Olympic Games, the city of Lille was chosen to the detriment of Lyon, but this choice is explained by a power profile more in line with that of the Olympic Movement. Indeed, the city of Lille has an attendance frequency of 72.83% in terms of the

organisational profile, while Lyon's is 54.37%. For co-occurrences, those of Lille are at 70.91% while those of Lyon are at 52.77%. At the same time the Olympic Movement has frequencies at 62.37% and co-occurrences at 60.62%. Thus, we can note that it is the city that has the power profile with the best results that is selected. This is also true in the case of the 2018 Winter Olympics with Annecy.

For Annecy and Grenoble in 2014, it is the choice made by the NOC not to handicap the Paris 2012 candidacy (a dual candidacy, summer and winter, could have led some IOC voters to choose the winter 2014 candidacy to the detriment of the summer 2012 one for France, so that one country would not organise both major events). In the case of 2014, this is a purely political choice and not based on an analysis of resources, relational dynamics or other factors.

The second question is related to the choice of presenting a city with the wrong power profile. Did it have a chance of winning or is defeat inevitable? To do this, we simply checked the verbal trials of the elections¹ to see if these cities came close to victory (Lyon 1968, Paris 1992 and Paris 2008). For Lyon 1968, the city ranked 3rd out of 4 candidates. The winning city, Mexico City, won in the first round of voting with a relative majority and 250% more votes than Lyon.² For Paris 1992, the city ranks 2nd out of 6 candidates. The winning city, Barcelona, wins in the third round of voting with a relative majority and 204% more votes than Paris.³ Finally, for Paris 2008, the city ranks 3rd out of 5 candidates. The winning city, Beijing, wins in the second round of voting with a relative majority and 311% more votes than Paris.⁴

It can therefore be said that these three candidatures were not close to winning in view of the voting results. Indeed, for 1968, Lyon finished 3rd out of 4 and there was only one round of voting, whereas if the results had been close it would have taken three to determine the winner. In 1992, although 2nd, Paris lost in the third round of voting when it could have hoped to go as far as the fifth and last. Barcelona did not need to go that far in the electoral process to win. In 2008, Beijing crushed the competition with only two out of four possible rounds of voting and more than three times the number of votes that the city of Paris received. We can therefore conclude that a bad profile of power although it can pass at the level of the NOC does not manage to obtain the final victory for the organisation.

6 Discussion

The results in the case of the Olympic bid show that the winning cities of the bid phase (Grenoble 1968, Albertville 1992 and Paris 2024) have a profile of relational power identical to the Olympic instances. It can be noted that in view of the selection result (2004: Lille selected, Lyon eliminated; 2014: Annecy and Grenoble eliminated following the Paris 2012 bid; and 2018: Annecy selected, Grenoble, Nice and Pelvoux-Écrins eliminated), the cities managing their relations on a different dimension of power from those of the IOC and the French National Olympic and Sports Committee were eliminated first. When the selected cities are not on the same power profile or the percentages of representation of this power are too low, then they fail on the result of the bid. In this situation, the Olympic Movement selects a candidate with the characteristics most likely to suffer its power (Couper et al., 2020). The answer to the research question is that there is a good match between the power of the holder of the event and the city selected.

The limitation of this research is that we do not know whether cities with the right power profile lost because of identical power profiles of victorious foreign cities but superior in terms of frequency and co-occurrences. For this, we would need to study the power profiles of these cities [Athens⁵ (Greece) 2004, London⁶ (England) 2012 and Pyeongchang⁷ (South Korea) 2018]. The study was limited to the bidding campaign of French cities due to a lack of access to information from foreign bids. One of the research perspectives will be to obtain information from these bids in order, first of all, to verify that they too are on the same power profile and possibly through the frequencies of the tool's terms to identify the reasons for their victory. The choice of the different French cities serving as an illustration for power relations may be a limitation due to other parameters such as culture, French organisational structure, etc. nevertheless, French cities must compete for the Olympic Games according to their own characteristics. They therefore present a credible choice of research field. Theoretical limitations, such as analysis based on the Weberian model or the use of mainly management authors, generate opportunities for future investigations. The complementarity of certain theoretical tools would make it possible to strengthen the analytical tool proposed for the study of power relations.

Table 4 Evolution of the power relationship analysis tool

| | <i>Personality</i> | <i>Ownership</i> | <i>Organisation</i> |
|--|--|---|--|
| Sources | Charisma | Tradition | Law |
| | Force | Wealth | Knowledge |
| | Daring | Intelligence | Structure |
| Forms | Persuasion (popularity/ negotiation/conditioning) | Retribution (material/moral) | Dissuasion (constraint/ directivity/punishment) |
| Control modes | Power (<i>demonstration of strength</i>) | Authority (prestige) | Direction (rationality) |
| Reactions to previous oversight mechanisms | Fear (fear) | Assent (enthusiasm/ fanaticism/respect) | Consent (scheme) |
| Subsequent control mechanisms | Death (<i>punishment/ dismissal</i>) | Excommunication (excommunication/ <i>fine/dismissal</i>) | Exclusion (<i>dismissal wanted by the team and not management</i>) |

Source: Self-development

Improving the tool also involves changing certain terms (Figure 1). Indeed, modes of control, reactions to previous control mechanisms and sanctions are no longer necessarily relevant in the context of organisations, and even more so in the context of sports organisations. The power-based mode of control needs to better reflect the notion of demonstration of strength in order to train the appropriate response. The reaction to control mechanisms now leads to fear of punishment or dismissal on the field of sports events. Concerning conviction, these mode of assent no longer appear in the data, while Respect and Enthusiasm are widely acclaimed. Fanaticism, although limited, still exists essentially through a deep belief in the values of such events (dove of peace, stopping conflicts during the Olympic peace, universal values, etc.). The response to subsequent control mechanisms has evolved to be more relevant, given the different behaviours. Death, exile, slavery, excommunication or killing are no longer used in organisations,

while fines (mainly financial), punishment (loss of role and influence) or dismissal play a dominant role in control. Moreover, dismissal can take different forms depending on the source of power (Turker, 2014). In the case of personality, it can be a professional death by the withdrawal of the deviant entity, the weak place it may subsequently occupy leading it to disappear. In the case of ownership, it may be a rejection of the group by a loss of common value, as surfers' organisations have been able to illustrate by certain decisions (Byers et al., 2022). Finally, for the organisation, the dismissal is wanted by the whole team who asks the management to exclude. Thus the new tool should, in view of the changes perceived in the field of sports organisations, rather look like this in Table 4.

In order to obtain a scientific tool, generalisation remains essential, so it will be necessary to test it in other sectors of economic activity in order to validate its global character. The analysis identified the power exercised by the holder and the profiles of the candidates in the restricted framework of the Olympic Games bid. Identifying the power present in the relationships as the determining element of a bid to organise an international sports event represents a new avenue of understanding for sports organisations. This understanding of the relations between sports organisations on an event is a major challenge for all the players.

At the managerial level, understanding power and explaining the different relational profiles is today a determining component of organisational management. This research shows, first of all, that an organisation whose power is not identical to that of the owner of a sports event has little chance of being organised. An organisation wishing to bid for the organisation of a sports event should first make sure that its power system corresponds to that of the holding organisation in order to avoid failure (Malik and Yazar, 2016). An additional managerial attraction of this search is to define its relational power profile. Candidate organisations, often unstructured and ephemeral in nature, have little or no knowledge of their power structure and often misjudge this element as a determinant in relationships (Weber, 1947; Schelling, 1958). The power profile is one of the prerequisites for the performance of organisations in the bid phase (Jensen, 2021). The second step will be to question the performance of organisations based on their power profile. Understanding and maintaining performance is now the most important element to master for all organisations, whether sporting or non-sporting (Di Minin et al., 2014; Jaoua, 2016).

Among the writings in sports literature, most authors have focused on the study of the organisation of a sports event through organisational functions (ticketing, logistics, ...). Other research has measured the impact of these one-off, rare and sought-after events, intuitively generating strong financial, media or tourism spin-offs (Miller, 1979; Wall, 2001). On the other hand, little research has been conducted on the power present in the relations between sports organisations. The essential contribution of this research lies in the proposal of a tool for understanding based on different profiles.

7 Conclusions

This research focuses on the existence of power who affects organisations' relationships (Weber, 1947; Mintzberg, 1983) and their ability to reach agreement (Schelling, 1958). According to theory, two power profiles cannot agree (Weber, 1947; Schelling, 1958; Mintzberg, 1983). Power therefore plays a central role in the application phase, which requires the matching of two identical power profiles (Bertrand and Lumineau, 2016).

The existence of two different power profiles can lead to relational disagreement and de facto failure to organise an event (Couper et al., 2020). The example of French candidacies to Summer and Winter Olympic Games shows that the relational dynamics put in place are articulated around a relational power, a dominant organisation (the Olympic Movement) and an adapted response by the other organisations (candidate cities).

The understanding of power relations for sports organisations on a bid is a major issue for all stakeholders. The aim of the tool is to enable relational representations that promote understanding of the environment and power, an element that is often intangible. Identifying power relationships is an action tool for organisations enabling them to setup a decision management system based on the type of power they are subject to and exercise. Another interest of this research lies in the understanding of their profile and the adequacy or not with the holder of the event, favouring the capacity to apply. The relational approach to power allows organisations to focus not only on tangible elements such as the resources they possess (Fink et al., 2017), but to take into account what may be decisive in the attribution of an event.

References

- Andersson, T. and Getz, D. (2020) 'Specialization versus diversification in the event portfolios of amateur athletes', *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, pp.1–22 <https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250.2020.1733653>.
- Andriof, J., Waddock, S., Husted, B. and Rahman, S.S. (2017) *Unfolding Stakeholder Thinking: Theory, Responsibility and Engagement*, Routledge, New York, USA.
- Ansoff, H.I. and Slevin, D.P. (1968) 'An appreciation of industrial dynamics', *Management Science*, Vol. 14, No. 7, pp.383–397.
- Ansoff, H.I., Kipley, D., Lewis, A.O., Helm-Stevens, R. and Ansoff, R. (2018) *Implanting Strategic Management*, Springer, Cham, Switzerland.
- Bertrand, O. and Lumineau, F. (2016) 'Partners in crime: the effects of diversity on the longevity of cartels', *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 59, No. 3, pp.983–1008 <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.1209>.
- Bourg, J.F. and Gouguet, J.J. (2010) *The Political Economy of Professional Sport*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK.
- Byers, T., Gormley, K.L., Winand, M., Anagnostopoulos, C., Richard, R. and Digennaro, S. (2022) 'COVID-19 impacts on sport governance and management: a global, critical realist perspective', *Managing Sport and Leisure*, Vol. 27, Nos. 1–2, pp.99–107 <https://doi.org/10.1080/23750472.2020.1867002>.
- Couper, C., Reuber, A.R. and Prashantham, S. (2020) 'Lost that lovin' feeling: the erosion of trust between small, high-distance partners', *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 3, pp.326–352 <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-019-00286-w>.
- Crozier, M. and Friedberg, E. (1980) *Actors and Systems: The Politics of Collective Action*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, USA.
- Dahl, R.A. (1957) 'The concept of power', *Behavioral Science*, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp.201–215 <https://doi.org/10.1002/bs.3830020303>.
- Di Minin, A., Frattini, F., Bianchi, M., Bortoluzzi, G. and Piccaluga, A. (2014) 'Udinese Calcio soccer club as a talents factory: strategic agility, diverging objectives, and resource constraints', *European Management Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp.319–336.

- Dingle, G.W. and Stewart, B. (2018) 'Playing the climate game: climate change impacts, resilience and adaptation in the climate-dependent sport sector', *Managing Sport and Leisure*, Vol. 23, Nos. 4–6, pp.293–314 <https://doi.org/10.1080/23750472.2018.1527715>.
- Eisenhardt, K.M. (1989) 'Building theories from case study research', *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp.532–550 <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4308385>.
- Fink, R.C., Hatten, K.J., Keeler, J.P., James, W.L. and Edelman, L.F. (2017) 'Relational focus in long duration buyer-seller relationships', *International Journal of Management and Decision Making*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp.73–96 <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMDM.2017.082510>.
- Fransen, L.W. and Kolk, A. (2007) 'Global rule-setting for business: a critical analysis of multi-stakeholder standards', *Organization*, Vol. 14, No. 5, pp.667–684 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508407080305>.
- Galbraith, J.K. (1983) 'The anatomy of power', *Challenge*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp.26–33 <https://doi.org/10.1080/05775132.1983.11470852>.
- Geeraert, A., Alm, J. and Groll, M. (2014) 'Good governance in international sport organizations: an analysis of the 35 Olympic sport governing bodies', *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp.281–306 <https://doi.org/10.1080/19406940.2013.825874>.
- Ghera, S. and Lassalle, F. (2015) 'The role of power conceptions when choosing a host city', *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 34, No. 4, pp.440–459 <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-09-2013-0117>.
- Gökgöz, F. and Yalçın, E. (2021) 'A comparative multi criteria decision analysis of football teams: evidence on FIFA world cup', *Team Performance Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 27, Nos. 3/4, pp.177–191 <https://doi.org/10.1108/TPM-05-2020-0039>.
- Hums, M.A. and MacLean, J.C. (2017) *Governance and Policy in Sport Organizations*, Taylor & Francis, New York, USA.
- Illia, L., Sonpar, K. and Bauer, M.W. (2014) 'Applying co-occurrence text analysis with ALCESTE to studies of impression management', *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp.352–372 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2012.00842.x>.
- Jalali, S.H. (2020) 'Interplay between cognition and design: how performance of strategic alliance with different design affected by cognitive capabilities?', *International Journal of Management and Decision Making*, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp.391–407 <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMDM.2020.10030490>.
- Jaoua, F. (2016) 'Place of middle managers on the relationship between creativity in strategy and organisational performance', *International Journal of Management and Decision Making*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp.113–133 <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMDM.2016.077762>.
- Jensen, J.A. (2021) 'Are firms like fair-weathered fans? Examining decision-making in B2B relationships', *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp.281–291 <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-04-2020-0187>.
- Kim, P.H., Pinkley, R.L. and Fragale, A.R. (2005) 'Power dynamics in negotiation', *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp.799–822 <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2005.18378879>.
- Li, Y., Liu, J., Ang, S. and Yang, F. (2021) 'Performance evaluation of two-stage network structures with fixed-sum outputs: an application to the 2018 Winter Olympic Games', *Omega*, Vol. 102, p.102342 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.omega.2020.102342>.
- Liu, F., Jarrett, M. and Maitlis, S. (2022) 'Top management team constellations and their implications for strategic decision making', *The Leadership Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 3, p.101510 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2021.101510>.
- Malik, T.H. and Yazar, O.H. (2016) 'The negotiator's power as enabler and cultural distance as inhibitor in the international alliance formation', *International Business Review*, Vol. 25, No. 5, pp.1043–1052 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2016.01.005>.
- Mancini, S., Triki, C. and Piya, S. (2022) 'Optimal selection of touristic packages based on user preferences during sports mega-events', *European Journal of Operational Research*, Vol. 302, No. 3, pp.819–830 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejor.2022.01.031>.

- McGillivray, D., Koenigstorfer, J., Bocarro, J.N. and Edwards, M.B. (2022) 'The role of advocacy organisations for ethical mega sport events', *Sport Management Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp.234–253 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14413523.2021.1955531>.
- Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*, Sage, London, UK.
- Miller, G. (1979) *Behind the Olympic Rings*, HO Zimman, Lynn, Massachusetts, USA.
- Mintzberg, H. (1983) *Power In and Around Organizations*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, USA.
- Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R. and Wood, D.J. (1997) 'Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: defining the principle of who and what really counts', *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp.853–886 <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1997.9711022105>.
- Morrison, K.A. and Misener, K.E. (2021) 'Exploring the conditions for strategic planning in nonprofit community sport', *Sport Management Review*, Vol. 24, No. 5, pp.747–769 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14413523.2021.1906054>.
- Nakamura, M. (2005) 'Joint venture instability, learning and the relative bargaining power of the parent firms', *International Business Review*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp.465–493 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2005.04.003>.
- Nys, J.F. (2006) '13 Physical activity, sport and health', *Handbook on the Economics of Sport*, Vol. 143, Northampton, Massachusetts, USA.
- Pichler, H.K. (1998) 'The godfathers of 'truth': Max Weber and Carl Schmitt in Morgenthau's theory of power politics', *Review of International Studies*, pp.185–200 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20097517>.
- Pizzo, A.D., Jones, G.J., Baker, B.J., Funk, D.C. and Kunkel, T. (2022) 'Sensemaking of novelty: the dynamic nature of integrating e-sports within a traditional sport organization', *Sport Management Review*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp.383–405 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14413523.2021.1935609>.
- Sanday, P.R. (1979) 'The ethnographic paradigm (s)', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 4, pp.527–538 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2392359>.
- Schelling, T.C. (1958) 'The strategy of conflict. Prospectus for a reorientation of game theory', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp.203–264 <https://doi.org/10.1177/002200275800200301>.
- Schönberner, J., Woratschek, H. and Ellert, G. (2021) 'Hidden agenda in sport sponsorship – the influence of managers' personal objectives on sport sponsorship decisions', *Sport Management Review*, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp.204–225 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2020.07.001>.
- Selzer, V.L., Schumann, J.H., Büttgen, M., Ates, Z., Volz, J. and Komor, M. (2018) 'How to manage person-role conflicts: differential effects of transformational leadership dimensions and the moderating role of individual cultural orientation', *SMR – Journal of Service Management Research*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp.36–49 <https://doi.org/10.15358/2511-8676-2018-2-36>.
- Slack, T. and Parent, M.M. (2006) 'Understanding sport organizations: the application of organization theory', *Human Kinetics*, Champaign, Illinois, USA.
- Soltwisch, B.W. (2015) 'The influence of anticipatory emotions, risk perceptions, and managerial experience on escalation of commitment decisions', *International Journal of Management and Decision Making*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp.97–111 <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMDM.2015.070733>.
- Szymanski, M., Fitzsimmons, S.R. and Danis, W.M. (2019) 'Multicultural managers and competitive advantage: evidence from elite football teams', *International Business Review*, Vol. 28, No. 2, pp.305–315 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2018.10.003>.
- Talay, C., Oxborrow, L. and Brindley, C. (2020) 'How small suppliers deal with the buyer power in asymmetric relationships within the sustainable fashion supply chain', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 117, pp.604–614 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.08.034>.

- Toffler, A. (1991) *Powershift: Knowledge, Wealth, and Violence at the Edge of the 21st Century*, Pub. Bantam, New York.
- Turker, D. (2014) 'Analyzing relational sources of power at the interorganizational communication system', *European Management Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 3, pp.509–517, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2013.06.007>.
- Wall, A.M. (2001) 'The game behind the games', *Marq. Sports L. Rev.*, Vol. 12, No. 2, p.557.
- Weber, M. (1947) *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, Vol. 132, Trans. A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, New York.
- Weitzner, D. and Deutsch, Y. (2019) 'Why the time has come to retire instrumental stakeholder theory', *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 44, No. 3, pp.694–698 <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2018.0342>.
- Yang, D., Sonmez, M.M., Li, Q. and Duan, Y. (2015) 'The power of triple contexts on customer-based brand performance – a comparative study of Baidu and Google from Chinese netizens' perspective', *International Business Review*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp.11–22 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2014.05.004>.
- Yeniyurt, S. and Carnovale, S. (2017) 'Global supply network embeddedness and power: an analysis of international joint venture formations', *International Business Review*, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp.203–213 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2016.06.007>.
- Yin, R.K. (2017) *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California, USA.
- Young, O.R. (1991) 'Political leadership and regime formation: on the development of institutions in international society', *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp.281–308 <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300033117>.

Notes

- 1 Voting results available on the IOC website. Elections are made so that in each round of voting a candidate city is eliminated. Voting rounds continue until only one city remains, unless in previous rounds a city has obtained an absolute or relative majority.
- 2 60th IOC Session, Baden-Baden, West Germany, 18 October 1963.
- 3 91st IOC Session, Lausanne, Switzerland, 17 October 1986.
- 4 112th IOC Session, Moscow, Russia, 13 July 2001.
- 5 106th IOC Session, Lausanne, Switzerland, 5 September 1997.
- 6 117th IOC Session, Singapore, 9 July 2005.
- 7 123th IOC Session, Durban, South Africa, 9 July 2011.