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'Reawakening Sport and Community Engagement in a previous Olympic Host City: Capitalising on the Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Legacy 17 Years on'

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Abstract

Empowering communities through volunteering is one of the IOC priority fields in fostering the Olympic Games' wider civic contributions. In 2004 Greece hosted the summer Games at a time when volunteering was not widespread or well understood. The Athens 2004 Olympic Games volunteer programme is anecdotally portrayed as the catalyst for the current volunteering bloom in Greece. Legacies of volunteer investment cannot be guaranteed however, and empirical data on the current volunteer, sport-volunteering and wider civil society landscape in Athens and Greece are lacking. Subsequently, this project aimed to revise understanding of the current experiences of civil and volunteer sector stakeholders. It employed a qualitative, mixed-method, research design comprising strategically targeted semi-structured interviews and surveys with 19 civil society professionals and Athens 2004 volunteer programme administrators and participants. Findings reveal that the Athens 2004 Olympic Games was aided by existing sector expertise and resources, eventually encouraged further third sector development in the country, and inspired individuals to continue wider volunteer-related work. Additionally, while broader social, political, economic factors and a lack of post-Games strategy hindered sector development, new collaborative opportunities were also created. Ultimately, these findings provide a critical appraisal and guidelines for enhancing future Olympic volunteer legacies in host cities.

Key words

Legacy, volunteering, community engagement, Athens 2004, cross-sector partnerships, knowledge-transfer

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We are extremely grateful to all our participants and participating organisations who graciously offered their time, particularly amid the difficulties of the Covid-19 pandemic, to undertake interviews and/or complete survey responses. Your perspectives and detailed accounts have been invaluable to us in understanding the complexities of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games volunteer programme and the volunteering and civil society landscape in the post-Games phase. The knowledge you have provided will, we hope, help sustain further research and inspire others elsewhere to contribute to enhancing volunteer landscapes in and well beyond sport.

Executive Summary

Rationale

Empowering communities through volunteering and encouraging community volunteering through the Olympic Games is one of the IOC priority fields in the organisation's mission to foster the Games' sustainability and wider civic contributions. In 2004 Greece became one of smallest countries to have ever hosted a summer Games iteration. At the time, volunteering in Greece was not widespread, and the volunteering engagement of Greeks was of concern. Eventually, approximately 45,000 people became volunteers. Subsequently, 17 years after the Games there is anecdotal evidence which portrays the Athens 2004 Olympic Games volunteer programme as one of the main successes of the event and the Athens 2004 Olympic Games as the catalyst for the current blooming in volunteering in Greece. Discussions here highlight changes in volunteering in sport, and the pronounced role of sport in improving civic engagement post-financial and migration crisis (and more recently, the Covid-19 pandemic). Within this context, sport volunteering has been noted as a key mechanism for sustaining Athens' long-term growth and international profile. However, there is lack of primary data on the volunteer, non-profit, civil society, sport, and community organisational landscape, and how these stakeholders may work in concert to support future development of the sector and further support claims for a volunteer legacy post-Games.

Purpose

This research project subsequently examines the contribution of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games within the fostering of stronger volunteer cultures in Greece and analyses the country's third sector and civil society landscape through the perspectives and experiences of key stakeholders who support the sector prior, during and since the Athens Games.

In doing so, the study addresses the 2019/2020 IOC priority research fields No.9 namely 'Olympic Legacy Evaluation' and No.10, 'Intangible Olympic legacies'. This is achieved by examining a social intangible legacy of volunteering at the Olympic Games through focusing on an under researched Olympic Games edition. The Athens 2004 Olympic Games and its volunteer programme were the focus of this case study to understand how social legacies are promoted and celebrated in the post-Games periods and contribute to mobilising individual agency, skill development, social capital, and wider civic contributions.

Approach

The project employed a qualitative mixed-method case study research design focusing on Athens 2004 Olympic Games and involved two phases. Phase 1 comprised a comprehensive review of secondary archival and policy data in the context of Athens 2004 Games and subsequent volunteer legacy developments in Greece. This stage also facilitated the mapping of relevant civil society and third sector stakeholders to approach for data collection. Phase 2 was conducted amidst general public health restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic and comprised virtual semi-structured interviews and online-administered open-ended surveys with 19 Athens 2004

volunteer programme directors and participants, sport, non-profit, and community sector stakeholders. Their perspectives offered new insights on the contribution of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games in the volunteer sector's development, while accounting for broader socioeconomic and political factors in the post-Games phase that challenged and/or facilitated volunteer legacies and wider civic contributions.

Key Findings

A thematic analysis of the data was undertaken, and 8 primary themes were derived that encompass the most substantive perspectives of stakeholders operating in the Athens 2004 and post-Athens 2004 Olympic Games landscape to support volunteer and third sector initiatives, local and national development, and wider civic contributions. These themes include: 'Human resource investment', 'Landscape mapping and effective stakeholder management', 'Strong leadership', 'Building trust, rapport and spaces for effective dialogue', 'Countering cultural assumptions about civil society, the 3rd sector & volunteering', 'Capitalising on resources and contemporary contextual conditions', 'Accountability' and 'Sport-specific volunteer experiences'. These themes capture conceptual commonalities and points of distinction across participant responses that warranted further investigation and debate. Nonetheless, mindful of participants' subjective generalisations, nostalgia or selective recall, perspectives and the analytical conclusions drawn from them were treated with due care and consideration.

Evidently, the findings point towards capitalising on existing human resource capacity, networks, and strong leadership to support an effective Games volunteer programme. Further, there appears to be benefits to sustaining investment in human resource legacy training, ensuring dedicated funding and development of a separate organisation working in parallel with the Organising Committee to support legacy efforts. Part of which may entail undertaking more detailed mapping of the third sector to understand domestic needs and priorities and developing networks with the local communities and promote initiatives in the post-Games phase. In addition, promoting cross-sector partnerships and stakeholder dialogue by building trust, communication, and rapport among stakeholders in both the pre- and post-Games phases was deemed fundamental in working towards a shared and effective vision to enhance unified work for civil society development in Greece. The Athens 2004 Olympic Games appears also to have helped towards facilitating open dialogue across the sector and has yielded shared benefits since the Games.

Work, however, remains needed in understanding contextual forces and challenging public perceptions about civil society and the third sector prior to the Games. Advantageously, it is evident that contemporary organisations in Greece are now more proactive, better resourced, generally committed to good governance principles, and ready to respond to ongoing socioeconomic and political challenges through innovative actions, new funding sources, and cross-sector partnerships to sustain volunteer and civil society involvement. Nonetheless, there remains a need for

introducing sustainable actions post-Games to help counter negative attitudes and educating the public towards the positive contribution of the sector and its volunteer resource for wider social benefits and civic improvements. There remains, too, space for further investment in events like the Olympic Games, such as Greece's Bicentennial celebrations in 2021, the European Olympic Committees (EOC) Assembly in Athens in 2021, or other widespread sport and community initiatives to harness volunteer ethos, mobilise individuals, sustain the 3rd sector and make further civil contributions.

Finally, the findings suggest that the feel-good effects of volunteering at the Games inspired individual volunteer agency post-Games. Post-Games sport-specific volunteering centred around one-off or recurring events such as the 2011 World Special Olympics, the annual Athens Marathon, the 2021 EOC Assembly session, and work in sport clubs, wider projects supported by non-governmental or non-profit organisations, or other local sport organisation initiatives. Despite these individual efforts to sustain wider volunteer activity, sport-specific volunteering still lacks, to some extent, the legislative, institutionalised framework, and appropriate volunteer management systems to attract and sustain new groups into sports through volunteering and encourage broader volunteering in contemporary communities of practice (particularly in relation to that seen in Greece's wider civil society and volunteer landscape).

The above context and discussion arising from the participants' collective narratives led to the development of the recommendations below that might contribute to the sustainability and advancement of Olympic, Sport Mega-Events (SMEs) and wider volunteer and civil society practices.

Recommendations

1. Host cities

1. Source and capitalise on key professional talent from a wide range of sectors who possess experience in and knowledge of the civil, volunteering and/or the sport sector; particularly of/within the municipal and local contexts
2. Invest time, energy, and resources in the early stages of the host city planning to identify all key volunteer sector stakeholders and, from this, develop appropriate systems and communication mechanisms (e.g., databases, social networks, MOUs, informal connection etc) that build strong and positive working relationships between organisations
3. Encourage host cities working with municipal authorities and existing organisations (e.g., NGOS and their programmes like Bodossaki & *Social Dynamo*) to develop a specific legacy organisation dedicated to the sustaining

volunteer networks, and education, training, and professional development across the sector post-Games

4. Ensure host cities invest in strategic identification, recruitment, and professional development of volunteer sector leaders, and provide space and support for these leaders to develop clear strategies, plans and ideas for volunteer delivery (both for the Games and beyond)
5. Utilise shared agendas, MOUs and additional informal/social mechanisms to create a positive working environment and framework around which values of trust and respect may be fostered among all volunteer programme stakeholders
6. From the outset of Games planning, build shared ownership over programme vision, goals, and outcomes across volunteer programme partners, and consider appropriate ways to acknowledge, incentivise and motivate partnership and build relationship trust over the Games cycle and beyond
7. Develop clear standards, guidance, and expectations regarding good governance with all volunteer programme stakeholders at the outset (both within the MOUs and beyond); Specifically, ensure accountability, transparency, feedback, and peer-scrutiny are a standard part of stakeholder partnership and collaborative work

II. State, municipal and local authorities (Pre & post-Games)

8. Have host cities and municipal authorities work together to invest in public relations, media, and communication efforts to raise a positive profile about volunteering not just in relation to the Games but for the wider social landscape
9. Work with academic partners to develop quality mentoring and training opportunities for volunteer programme human resources over the course of the Games cycle; this is particularly important in cases where employees may come from wider sectors and be unfamiliar with good governance processes within the sport mega-event context

III. Civil society, volunteer and sport organisations

10. Consider transitional, post-event, employment pathways, knowledge-transfer opportunities, professional development potential
11. Identify through effective mapping where overlap across civil society organisations exists and help build shared agendas and sustainable spaces for ongoing dialogue
12. Provide development pathways and opportunities in the post-Games phase for leaders and potential leaders to strengthen the growth of the volunteer landscape
13. Involve local communities, groups and stakeholders into the design and delivery of the volunteer programme to effectively harness their experiences of dealing with domestic conditions, forces, and challenges

IV. Sport sector

14. Support sport organisations at the local, municipal, and national level to widen their engagements with the volunteer sector, and build on their capacities to involve youth and/or new volunteers in sport-related volunteering
15. Consider ways international sport federations, national federations and/or National Olympic Committees (or academies) may work together to develop an institutional/sector framework for volunteering that better defines, captures, and supports the varied roles and identities of contemporary sports volunteers
16. Ensure young or new volunteers are provided appropriate training, leadership and/or mentoring opportunities, where desired, to help sustain and develop volunteer career pathways in the sport system

V. Research

17. Scoping research is needed prior to the Olympic Games to understand the pre-existing assumptions and attitudes to sport, sport mega-event hosting, volunteerism and civil society
18. Substantial qualitative and quantitative evaluation of civil society and volunteer stakeholder landscapes in the pre and post-Games phases would be beneficial for identifying areas of resource deficiency, abundance or overlap, and be of use in targeting resource investment and sustainability planning
19. Critical interrogation of local sport organisational attitudes toward sport/mega-event volunteer partnerships is warranted to better understand sector needs and how varied perspectives might be incorporated into more sustainable volunteer programmes and capacity building
20. Further examination of the role corporate, philanthropic, charitable and/or non-governmental agencies play/might play in supporting sport volunteer capacity building
21. Interrogation is needed of the roles sport-volunteering can play in addressing non-sport related social, cultural, and political issues (e.g., Covid-19 responses, environmental sustainability, social responsibility etc)
22. Closer evaluation of the scope and quality of volunteer training and development programmes related to sport-mega events; particularly in light of the inclusion of key professional and personal skill acquisition that may enhance volunteer sector growth and capacity building beyond an Olympic Games cycle

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1. Introduction

Organising, hosting, and developing legacies related to sport mega events represents a major organisational challenge for any country. Such challenges are exacerbated in small nations, such as Greece that in 2004 hosted the Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games. Not unlike in other host nations, of concern for Greece was the need to supply the necessary volunteer workforce to deliver the Games programme. At the time, however, volunteering in Greece was not widespread and there were trepidations regarding volunteer engagement for the 2004 Games. Eventually, there was an unprecedented record of 165,511 volunteering applications in Athens 2004 and an outstanding number of 45,000 eventual volunteers (Panagiotopoulou, 2010). As one of the few academic studies of volunteering at these Games has indicated, 68.4% of the Greek public felt that the Games contributed to the development of volunteers' movement (Georgiadis and Theodorikakos, 2016). Yet, to note, this study was based on a public opinion poll conducted in March 2015, with a nation-wide sample of 600 participants. Notwithstanding this research, there is also only tentative anecdotal evidence, which portray the Athens 2004 Olympic Games as the catalyst for the current blooming of volunteering in the city and wider country.

General examinations of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games to date have highlighted the potential significance of the Games for engendering not just sport volunteering cultures, but also wider public engagements with volunteerism. For example, the country's acute financial crisis, the unprecedented influx of migrants and refugees, and ongoing demographic shifts that have changed the non-profit and volunteer labour markets (Chatziefstathiou, 2014; Georgiadis and Theodorikakos, 2016; Kissoudi, 2010; Sotiriadou et al., 2021). Contemporary national press coverage has also continued to draw connections with the country's participation in the Olympic Games and its volunteer culture as a means to resurrect the national spirit and drive social development. As such, further investigations of the legacies of Athens 2004 are not only warranted but also needed to articulate the nuances of this debate. Moreover, in the interests of better understanding how Olympic host cities, and the Olympic movement more broadly, might be better placed to address current and future humanitarian crises, studies of volunteering may reveal new insights to guide future initiatives across the sector.

Current research has been of use in identifying general shifts in the country's sport volunteer activities. Yet, there remains a lack of primary data collection with volunteers themselves or with people involved with the civil society and volunteer sector in Greece. Accordingly, this research report provides new empirical evidence that captures some of the effects of the volunteering legacy of Athens 2004 and contributors to the sector landscape in the post-Games phase. Currently, there are limited examinations of either the enduring effects of these specific Games for the volunteer sector, or specific focus on the individuals' and organisations' experiences and volunteer community development since. Subsequently, this project focused more directly on micro and meso-levels of society with emphasis on those people at the heart of Greece's volunteering and civil society landscape, and their varied roles in developing local communities. As such, a multi-method approach was adopted utilising in-depth semi-structured interviews with a strategically selected cohort of key stakeholders and a qualitative survey with specific volunteer programme participants. Such a focus provided a meaningful dataset from which more nuanced understandings about the intangible legacies of volunteering could be gained.

Accordingly, the project aims and objectives were:

Aim 1. To identify current levels of involvement with sport-specific volunteering and reasons for non-involvement among the city's inhabitants.

Objective: Explore current experiences, perceptions and memories of volunteering using qualitative research techniques.

Aim 2. To critically evaluate the experiences of individuals participating in sport-specific volunteering schemes since Athens 2004.

Objective: Utilising survey and interview responses, assess the extent to which positive legacy outcomes were achieved for a sample of Athens 2004 volunteers

Aim 3. To explore how, if at all, involvement with the Athens Olympic and Paralympic Games 2004 has inspired further volunteer engagement in sport and local community development.

Objective: To identify which aspects of the volunteering experience with the 2004 Athens Games might have contributed or hindered the achievement of a volunteering legacy after the Games.

Aim 4. To investigate broader socio-economic and political factors that may have contributed to individuals' motivations to engage, develop, and sustain participation in volunteering and enhancement of the city's volunteer culture.

Objective: Using archival and document analysis, identify key factors in the development and sustainment of volunteer support in the Athens post-Games period.

Aim 5. To identify best practices and effective retention strategies employed by key actors in sustaining volunteer enthusiasm and involvement through communication of opportunities.

Subsequently, this current research study provides original empirical evidence about the contribution of the Olympic movement and the Games to the fostering of stronger volunteer cultures and the important promotion of social and civil responsibility in Athens and Greece.

2. Volunteer legacy research as an IOC priority

Empowering communities through volunteering and encouraging volunteering in the community through the Olympic Games forms part of the IOC's legacy to foster sustainability of the Olympic movement. The current project addresses this IOC focus in two ways. Firstly, our research examines a social intangible legacy of volunteering at the Olympic Games using an empirical qualitative approach. Second, we investigate an under-researched Olympic Games edition by focusing on the Athens 2004 Summer Olympic Games. The project specifically focused on priority field No.9 for the 2019/2020 edition, namely Olympic Legacy Evaluation, and No.10 - intangible Olympic legacies. This strategic focus reflected scholarly and anecdotal framing of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games and beliefs about its entrenchment in contemporary Greek identity and the memories of local Athenians. Popular discourse, for example, continues to espouse that the Games helped the Greeks to strengthen their national confidence and improve their international image in their ability to organise large international sport events. Coupled to this are related assumptions about the Games as a catalyst for the development of the voluntary sector within the country. As scholars have noted (e.g., Georgiadis and Theodorikakos, 2016), with 45,000 volunteers needed to support the Games it was vital participants' enthusiasm could be harnessed to fulfil the local organising committee's needs, but also to provide a volunteer legacy that would be of benefit to local communities.

However, research has also noted that the voluntary sector in Greece, at the time, was largely informal with no intervention or policies from the state to support its development. This inconsistency in governmental support led to the sector becoming even more segmented and heterogeneous, with most voluntary organisations being left to their own devices to survive (Tsakraklides, 1998). Despite the general positive opinion of the Greek population about volunteerism before the Games, this was not translated into voluntary activity (Gianniri, 2002). In one national survey, only 27.3% of the population, for example, considered voluntary work. On the contrary, young Greeks, aged 15-29 (50% of participants) were more likely to volunteer. Respondents acknowledged also that they were not aware of how to go about it. Moreover, participants indicated that they were mainly interested in volunteering for philanthropy organisations (74.9%), ecology and environmental organisations (11.2%), or peace and human rights organisations (5.9%) (Dionysopoulos, 2000). Sport associations and Olympic voluntarism was held in considerably lower regard. In fact, two years before the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, this lack of interest for Olympic volunteering (which sat at 9.5% of the public surveyed) posed one of the many problems for the Local Organising Committee (ATHOC) (Panagiotopoulou, 2003). However, three months before the start of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, 160,000 volunteer applications were received (in relation to 75,665 in Sydney and 78,000 in Atlanta). Most volunteers were under 35 years old (78%), female (55%), and included 9.5% Greeks from abroad, and 25.5% foreigners from 188 different countries (Ta Nea, 2004).

Voluntarism at the Athens Games was considered as one of its main successes; namely due to general feelings of pride and enthusiasm engendered by volunteers. This trend became progressively stronger in the post-Games phase as demonstrated in the increased interest of young people aged 15-24 years old to volunteer for sport associations (Polyzoidis, 2008). However, while there may be a potential correlation, the experiences, and motivations of these new volunteers in relation to any specific enduring legacy of Athens 2004 is not fully understood. Furthermore, nor have the

enduring personal and collective effects of voluntarism been captured and evaluated in subsequent years. As Athens looks to reinvigorate its sport development, volunteering cultures, global profile and mega-event hosting capacities, considerations of volunteers' voices remain of fundamental value. These concerns inform the basis of this project. In addition, in the last 11 years, Greece has been experiencing a substantial economic crisis, which has subsequently affected social life resulting in unemployment, marginalisation of certain social groups, and a general pessimism among the population. Despite these issues, a positive attitude towards the Athens 2004 Olympic Games is still evident among the general population (Georgiadis and Theodorikakos, 2016) and a vibrant array of activity being undertaken by organisations across the wider volunteer and civil society landscape.

This current backdrop provides, invariably, amiable conditions for further developing volunteer cultures. Indeed, research evidence suggests that people who have already had a volunteering experience in the past are more likely to volunteer in the future (Koutrou and Downward, 2016). With appropriate planning and strategy in place, individuals with prior volunteering experience could be directed to future volunteering opportunities and further contribute to social welfare (Koutrou, Pappous and Johnson, 2016). This presents a need for more coordinated support for volunteer effort and with new more professionalised civil society organisations that will address emerging societal needs. Additionally, Greece is now welcoming substantial refugee migrants each year (Polyzoidis, 2008). Thus, there is an increasing need for volunteers and the third sector to provide various forms of humanitarian assistance. Given the above context and issues, our project harmonises with the IOC's priorities to understand how legacies are promoted and celebrated in post-Games periods and, notably, contribute to mobilising social capital, individual skill development, collective responsibility, and universal values. Subsequently, as per the specific research aims, this research provides the first study to interrogate the volunteering legacy 17 years on from the Athens 2004 Olympic Games. Mindful of the fading of post-event euphoria, this research unearths new perspectives of Athens 2004 volunteering legacies and insights into the current state of the city and country's wider volunteering and civil society landscape.

3. An overview of volunteerism and the Athens & Greece context

3.1. Volunteering in Greece

Historically, volunteering in Greece has been a practice that was not commonly exercised or understood (at least in any structured or well-organised sense). This is due, in part, to the fact that since the Second World War, the state and political parties dominated the social sphere and prevented the emergence and formation of non-political citizen groups or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to promote social activities. For much of the 20th Century, civil society in Greece was largely characterised by strong intervention in the provision of social services by the State and the Orthodox Church. Invariably, the country could be conceptualised as an individualistically orientated society centred around strong family ties as well indifference, and limited government support towards, NGOs and civil society projects. The 2003 European Social Survey found that 79.5% of Greeks did not offer their services to any NGO, which was the lowest percentage of involvement in the European Union at the time (Panagiotopoulou and Papliakou, 2005). In recent years,

however, there has been a cultural shift and volunteering has begun to be better understood and appreciated within contemporary Greek society. This is evident in an increase in numbers of new non-profit and volunteer organisations as well as in concerted efforts and initiatives by successive governments to clarify the legislative and institutional framework civil society and voluntary organisations in Greece operate within. For example, the General Secretariat for Civil Protection (GSCP) is the national body in Greece responsible for maintaining a register of voluntary organisations or the so-called 'Unified Register of Voluntary Civil Protection' and the 'Register of Civil Protection Volunteers' (<https://www.civilprotection.gr/el/mitroo-ethelontikon-organoseon>).

'Voluntary Civil Protection' Organisations include non-profit legal entities, unions of persons, and groups of volunteers who form part of the potential of civil protection. Their mission is to assist the state bodies and local authorities in the work of protection of life, health, property of citizens, as well as the environment and cultural heritage from threatened or ongoing natural, technological, or man-made disasters and threats, which cause emergencies during peacetime (GSCP, 2021). Indeed, since 2016, in the wake of the financial catastrophe, natural disasters and the humanitarian migrant crisis, high unemployment rates and general economic hardship, formal registration of voluntary organisations was much needed. Yet, despite the undeniable catalytic contribution of NGOs and other formal volunteer organisations in the development of civil society in Greece there remains a general scepticism and mistrust towards them among the Greek public due to questions related to their sustainability, lack of organisation, and management, transparency, accountability, financial management and development of clear action plans (Lazoudi, 2018). As evidence from our research attests, this is an alleged contributor to popular public assumptions that have fed a reluctance in committing to formal civic society actions and official volunteering within the auspices of NGOs and other formal voluntary and non-profit entities (Lazoudi, 2018).

3.2. Athens 2004 Olympic Games volunteer infrastructure foundations

Notwithstanding public scepticism towards volunteering and civil society projects, more than 165,511 applications to volunteer at the Games were submitted, and approximately 45,000 individuals were eventually engaged as volunteers during the Athens 2004 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Panagiotopoulou, 2010). The Athens 2004 Organising Committee (ATHOC) established the General Division of Volunteers in early 2001. The Division was responsible for volunteer recruitment, allocation, placement, training and general management in the various roles and divisions of responsibility. The different sectors of activity for the Games that required volunteer labour were 65 for the Olympic Games and 34 for the Paralympic Games. Specifically, the General Division of volunteers organised the recruitment campaign to attract volunteers both within Greece and abroad, particularly focusing on the Greek diaspora. It also processed volunteer applications and placed volunteers in the different areas that required their efforts by considering the preferences of each volunteer, designed and coordinated the development of the training Guide and seminars for volunteers. The volunteer recruitment campaign started in January 2001 with the release of informational material. In January 2002, the first official application to become a volunteer was released to the Press and on the Internet. The communication efforts to attract volunteers concentrated on two key categories of volunteers a) general volunteers and b) special categories of volunteers who would

assist at the opening and closing ceremonies as well as some volunteers of special skills (interpreters, doctors, journalists) (Panagiotopoulou, 2010).

3.3. Analysing volunteer landscapes

Despite the apparent importance of Olympic-related volunteering, and while event volunteers feature prominently in the pre-event legacy rhetoric, this interest fades somewhat rapidly once the event is over (Auld et al., 2009). Past research has addressed event volunteers' specific characteristics, experiences, and benefits that may accrue to the community after their involvement with the Games (Bang et al., 2009). Giannoulakis et al. (2008) found that 'to help the others and the community' and 'to become associated with the Olympics' were the most prominent motivations among a sample of individuals who volunteered at the 2004 Olympic Games. Similarly, Dickson et al (2013) established that the most prominent reasons for volunteering at the Olympic Games were 'a chance of a lifetime, followed by 'to help make the Games a success'. On the contrary, many regular volunteers consider altruism as their central motive (Bussell and Forbes, 2002). For example, the desire to help others was the most frequently cited reason for volunteering in the Guide Association (Nichols and King, 1998). However, Cnann and Goldberg-Glen (1991) highlight that some people also volunteer with egoistic motives. Yet, research has also illuminated that volunteers may also be driven by future intentions after the event (Doherty, 2009; Dickson et al., 2013).

Downward and Ralston (2006) have similarly suggested that volunteering at a major sports event is more likely to raise interest in non-sport related volunteering. Similarly, Koutrou and Pappous (2016) have examined the influence of socio-demographic characteristics and motivations in inspiring a volunteer legacy following the London 2012 Games. It was found that volunteers who were motivated by the love of sport and the Olympics were more likely to increase their sport participation levels and more likely to have a wider awareness of volunteering opportunities after the Games. Furthermore, individuals between 18-24 years of age were more likely to consider volunteering in a wider range of activities in the future. Finally, individuals who were motivated by the desire to develop interpersonal contacts were more likely to take up volunteering in sport clubs, more likely to volunteer for other mega events along with women and people from ethnic backgrounds, and less likely to quit volunteering in general. These findings inform research and critical appraisal of participants' volunteering lives and experiences since Athens 2004.

The aforementioned research could, to note, be an indicator that investment in such events is more likely to have a wider social capital legacy, rather than just the sports development legacy. On the other hand, with the 'after glow' time period of an event, the enthusiasm of volunteers for future volunteering is much likely to be higher (Dickson and Benson, 2013). This does not provide reliable data as to whether volunteer involvement with an event has inspired future regular, or sustainable, community volunteering in the long-term. For example, individuals could volunteer sporadically, regularly, informally, or formally. Thus, there is lack of longitudinal data to support whether volunteer intentions after an event have been translated to actual behaviour (Dickson et al., 2013; Doherty, 2009). Further evidence has been offered by Koutrou et al (2016), in a small-scale longitudinal study that was conducted approximately four years after the London 2012 Games, on the current volunteering levels and the associated legacy of a pool of 'Games Makers'. The authors established

that the London 2012 Games was the first volunteering experience for most individuals who participated in the study. The primary motivation of the respondents was the 'one-life time experience of working for the Olympics'. Notably, just over half of the respondents were volunteering at the time of the study, however, they suggested they were either unaware or not approached by any volunteering scheme following the London Games. This suggests that while a volunteering legacy might have been created out of the London Games, this was more reactionary and part of the individuals' positive experiences with the Olympics, instead of it being a coordinated effort between the Games Organising Committee (LOCOG), UK Government and the local London volunteering infrastructure to harness volunteer enthusiasm in a targeted fashion.

Georgiadis and Theodorikakos (2016) also conducted a large-scale, country-wide longitudinal study 10 years on from the Athens 2004 Olympic Games and concluded that the event was a catalyst for the development of the volunteer sector in Greece (68.4%), the development of Sport for All (55%) and for a wider awareness regarding disability among the Greek population (66%). Similarly, the authors approached 600 young Greek people who saw the Olympic Games of Athens in a positive way suggesting their contribution to the development of Greek sport (54.3%), mass sport (53.7%) and the volunteer movement (51.9%) (Georgiadis and Theodorikakos, 2016). Among the main objectives of the Greek Government at the time was to use the Games to upgrade the volunteer movement. Despite the positive effects, the Games brought in improving the general infrastructure and quality of life in Greece, Georgiadis and Theodorikakos (2016) note that further research is needed to articulate the long-term benefits of the legacy of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games. In addition, while there has been considerable research and discussion regarding the legacy of mega events in terms of sporting infrastructure, as a catalyst for economic development (Cashman, 2006), and impacts on sport participation (Hayday et al., 2017;2019; Pappous and Hayday, 2016), there has been a limited focus upon a legacy for the body of volunteers (Lockstone-Binney et al., 2016). Such a gap in the research exists despite the rhetoric for the associated social capital development through volunteering and its contribution to the development of a 'Big Society' (Koutrou and Downward, 2016). Nichols and Ralston (2015) suggest that this could be due to a lack of precise objectives for a volunteering legacy, and the lack of a sustained legacy organisation after the Games.

Ultimately, very little research exists that has analysed the success of post-Games volunteer schemes. In general, existing scholarship strongly supports the need for more recent research concerning volunteer levels, and to investigate whether the momentum of an Olympic legacy has or can be sustained years on from the Athens 2004 Games. With a lack of published literature on this aspect of volunteering, it is difficult to conclude the extent to which the Olympic Games may be a feature of long-term volunteer legacy cultures. Future research efforts, to which this report contributes, thus need to explore the complexities of volunteer perspectives post-Games as well as understand the conditions and stakeholders that contribute to post-event volunteer landscapes.

In examining experiences of sport volunteers within the context of the 2004 Athens Olympic legacy, this current study is also informed significantly by scholarship critiquing connections between Olympic legacy investments and changes to citizen's lifestyles and behaviours; specifically, those related to sport, physical activity, and health. For host cities, demonstrating investment in the public, and specifically

volunteer/community sport, sector has become a fundamental part of Olympic Games proposals and delivery (Brown et al., 2012; Doherty, 2009; Homma and Masumoto, 2013). Accordingly, our research has been informed by scholarship that has provided valuable insights into the contextual forces and structures that enable or inhibit sport organisations' capacities to effectively deliver on legacy imperatives. For example, those regarding increasing volunteering, improving community engagement with local sport facilities, or general public health and wellbeing promotion. Moreover, studies have highlighted the need to critically interrogate Olympic legacy rhetoric, domestic sport policy environments (in this case, Athens circa 2004-2021) and the realities as experienced by those practicing and working within the sport sector (e.g., volunteers and their sport organisations). Within this domain, an established body of research has specifically examined connections between people's (often young children's) participation in sport/physical activity within the context of legacy investment and Olympic Games hosting, and organisations' related efforts to fulfil government agendas to adequately resource associated sport promotion within the city/country (e.g., Carmichael et al., 2012; Girginov, 2012; Giulianotti et al., 2014; IOC, 2017; Kennelly and Watt, 2011).

Landmark here were the legacy initiatives of the London 2012 Olympic Bid and Organising Committee. Research here has evaluated how, for example, London 2012 was 'successful' as a volunteer and sport promotion space not only because it leveraged the city's distinct demography, but also because it capitalised on improving the populations' health and wellbeing through promoting increased participation in sport and physical activity (Brown et al., 2012; Bullough, 2012; Weed et al., 2012). Differing in focus and scope from previous Olympic host cities legacy efforts, a key part of LOCOG's, 'inspire a generation' approach was the use of strategies capitalising on people's volunteer 'spirit' and perceived proclivities for sport participation (Mahtani et al., 2013; Thornley, 2012; Weed et al., 2012). Beyond London, however, debate persists among academics, the public and political sphere, and within the sport sector, regarding the post-games delivery and the meaningfulness of legacy experiences (Devine, 2013; Giulianotti et al., 2014).

When retrospectively applied to examining Athens 2004, the analysis of London 2012 is useful in demonstrating ways the geopolitical and temporal context aided or inhibited sport promotion and volunteering, but also the opportunities and possibilities that remain for contemporary Athens. Specifically, critiques of London 2012 legacy enhance how we might appreciate the ways the domestic sport sector and government agencies in Athens might better utilise infrastructural, economic, environmental, and social conditions now, and in the future, to improve the scope and sustainability of volunteering and transform the city's existing provision for the better. Overall, the extant research evidences a clear disconnect between official Olympic legacy imperatives, sensitive and sensible sport sector development (especially with respect to volunteering and sport promotion), and individual and collective experiences in host city locales (Chatziefstathiou, 2012; Hsu and Kohe, 2014; Kennelly and Watt, 2011; Kohe, 2010; Kohe and Bowen-Jones, 2015; Mackintosh et al., 2014; Wright et al., 2003). More work is still required that continues interrogation of stated Olympic host city legacy agendas and the realities and memories of citizen's experiences longer after the Games have departed.

4. Contribution to academic knowledge

The project's contributions to knowledge are evidenced in three key domains:

4.1. Theoretical/Conceptual contribution

The project is unique in drawing collectively upon volunteerism, stakeholder, and legacy theory to produce a conceptually rigorous analysis of sport sector volunteers' individual and collective legacy experiences. Our synthesis of theory, coalescing conceptual frameworks of volunteering, stakeholder, policy implementation, and actor-network, and organisational theories is unique within Olympic and sport studies. Such new theoretical innovation is not only warranted, but also necessary to understand these complexities and appreciate the entrenched yet fluid meanings Olympic legacies have in the experiences and memories of the cities' inhabitants. The theoretical basis of our interrogation, for example, offers an original way to collectively evaluate and comprehend Olympic experiences, legacy consequences, human resourcing, and legacy and sport stakeholder networks within distinct geographic locations. In doing so the project contributes to new directions that will advance knowledge of Athens' historical significance within the Olympic movement (particularly in relation to volunteer sector activity) and provides a mechanism for future research evaluating justifications for Olympic legacy investment in post-Games periods.

4.2. Methodological contribution

Adopting a qualitative focus, the project adopts a robust and rigorous research design that allows for an appropriate analysis of Athens' volunteer sector, but also provides a valuable model for comparable research in other contexts. The approach is innovative in its use of multi-methods combining strategic semi-structured interviews with volunteers and experts within key stakeholder organisations, online qualitative surveys, and archival and policy analysis. The policy analysis, specifically, focuses on current national and domestic policies related to Olympic legacy and subsequent sport/physical activity provision in Athens. The data collection methods also build original and enriched understanding of the ways Olympic volunteering legacy initiatives, and Olympic Games memories more specifically, continue to shape Athens' citizen lives.

4.3. Empirical contribution

The project provides a contemporary comparative picture of the experiences of volunteers involved in the Athens 2004 Olympic and Paralympic Games. In doing so, the project produces new qualitative data that updates and adds clarity on how the legacy of volunteer and sport participation are embodied and 'made visible' in Athens. Such data is extremely valuable for stakeholders in the sport and public service sector (e.g., sport organisations and schools), civil society agencies and municipal authorities, charities, commercial providers, and philanthropic entities. The data contributes to producing new guidelines and initiatives for those working in Athens on sport legacy investment, social development, and community enhancement. In particular, the study provides academic and public audiences with a better understanding of volunteering, and sport-specific volunteering, in a geographic region where there is less of a volunteering tradition. In doing so, the study offers a valuable case study that might act as a catalyst to drive volunteer sector activity and investment

in other international cities; particularly those with sport mega events and/or Olympic aspirations.

5. Methodology

The project employed a two-phase qualitative mixed-method case study research design focusing on the Athens 2004 Olympic Games. Phase 1 comprised a comprehensive review of secondary archival and policy data on the concepts of Olympic legacy, event and Olympic volunteering, volunteer legacy. The review included consultation of the bid file of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, policy documents, media reports, academic research and historical materials, theoretical foundations and empirical knowledge relating to the most recent volunteering legacy developments, the Athens OCOGs (ATHOC) plans for volunteer involvement during and after the Games, their plans for volunteer legacies if any, and the anticipated outcomes of the Games in relation to volunteering legacies and wider social legacies. In addition, the secondary sources were used to identify relevant stakeholders that could be approached to take part in the second phase of the primary data collection. Phase 2 involved semi-structured interviews and online open-ended questionnaires with volunteers of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, sport governing bodies, community organisations, local government, the 2004 Olympic Games Organising Committee, and Hellenic Olympic Committee representatives. The combination of methods and data sources that were employed in this study aimed to provide a comprehensive account of the phenomenon under study (Yin, 1996).

The second stage of the study involved semi-structured interviews and online open-ended questionnaires with:

- Volunteers of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games
- Sport governing bodies and sport-related organisations
- Greek volunteer organisations
- Non-Governmental Organisations and civil society/volunteering agencies
- Policy makers and government representatives at the local level (e.g., Athens municipality council)
- The organising committee of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games
- Hellenic Olympic Committee representatives.

Research participants were recruited purposively using existing networks and snowball sampling (see Figure 1 below). Participants were identified through preliminary research that was undertaken in phase 1 of the project. To note, due to covid-19 restrictions and public health and safety advice at the time of data collection, the research team were required to alter the research protocol and virtual technologies (including Microsoft Teams, Skype and Zoom) were utilised to conduct the semi-structured interviews. In addition, the development and use of the online questionnaire to reach volunteers had additional value in the current climate in being able to be utilised with participants who may not have been able or felt comfortable with participating in an in person/in-situ interview. The data collection process resulted in gathering data from 14 semi-structured interviews (approx. 1hr each in duration) and 5 online open-ended survey responses. Ethical approval was obtained from the institutions collaborating on this project to cover the primary data collection and the project protocols.

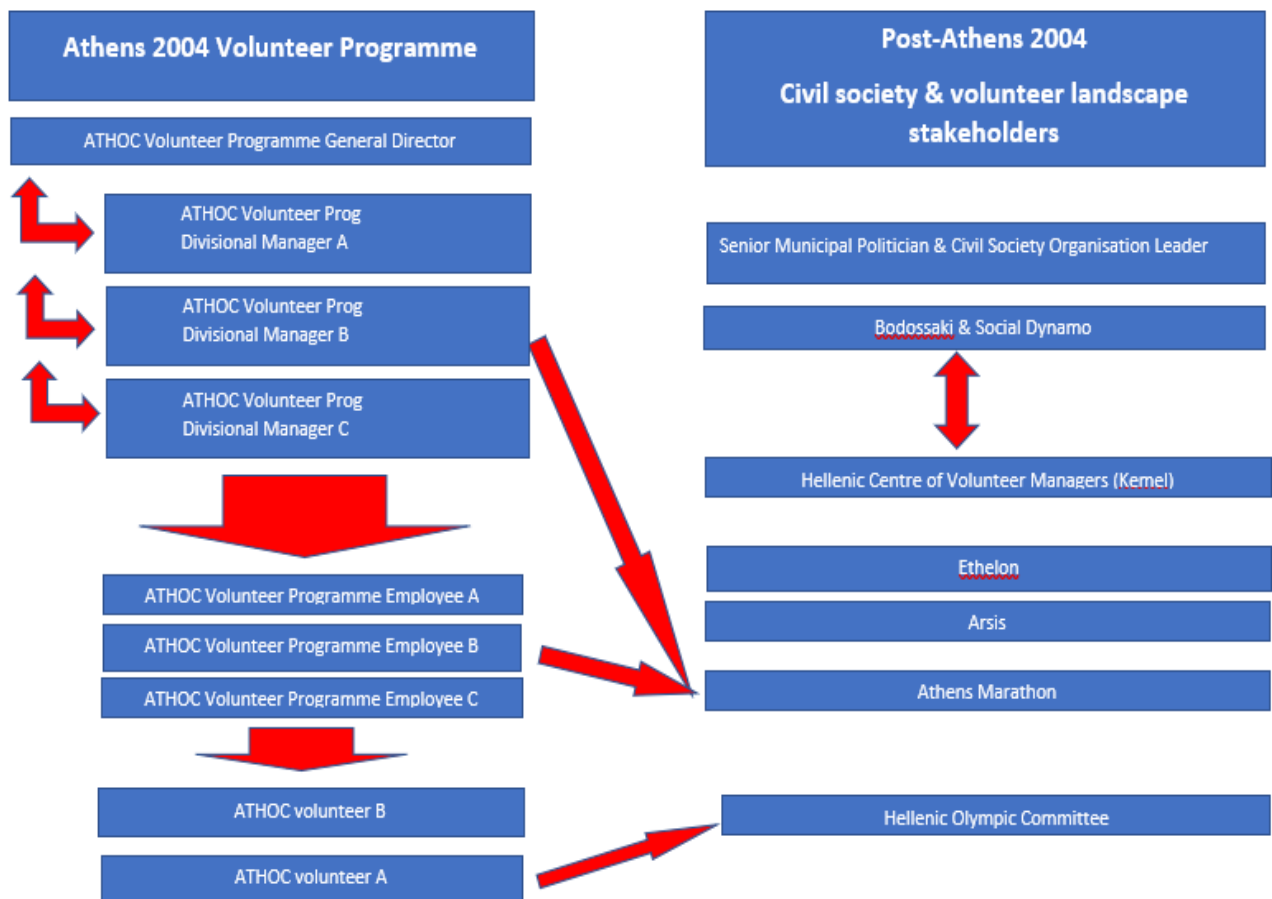


Figure 1. Demonstration the study participant scope, organisational relationships, and transition of individuals post-Athens 2004 Olympic Games

(NB: Arrows denote hierarchical, collaborative, or transitional connections).

6. Results overview

In the following section we detail some of the primary thematic findings. The findings are derived from empirical data taken from both participant interviews and survey responses. In keeping with the nature of the research, an iterative analysis was undertaken. Informed by Tracy (2013), this approach entails critical interchanges between emic readings of the data (specifically understanding volunteer and civil society stakeholders' experiences within Greece and Athens) and etic synthesis with the literature (in particular, locating these experiences within the overarching scholarly understandings outlined earlier in this report and archival document material available from the Olympic Studies Centre/World Olympic Library). Accordingly, interviews were transcribed verbatim and cross-read repeatedly by the co-investigators. Survey response data were similarly collated and shared. This process enabled immersion in the data and an understanding of notable issues to evolve. Data were coded (separately by each researcher, then collaboratively) in light of general meaningful words and ideas related to experiences and understandings of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, the Greek and/or Athens civil society and volunteer landscape, contextual forces acting upon the sector, and prevailing ideologies and practices within the volunteer/civil society community. Subsequent to initial coding, co-investigators engaged in further discussion about the data, and further engagement with the

literature was utilised to deepen critical analysis and understanding. As a result of this process, data were reviewed, and codes further refined and/or created *anew*. From this, a set of primary thematic codes were agreed upon. These include, for example, 'Human resource investment', 'Landscape mapping and effective stakeholder management', 'Strong leadership' and 'Building trust, rapport and spaces for effective dialogue'.

The primary themes presented below encompass some of the most substantive perspectives from civil society and volunteer stakeholders we engaged with who are operating in the Athens 2004 and post-Athens 2004 Olympic Games landscape. However, the perspectives and themes detailed are not exhaustive. Indeed, as participants themselves noted, over 800+ organisations are working in the sector in Greece at the moment, with more organisations emerging all the time. As such, there is a breadth and depth to the landscape and activities therein that cannot be captured by this report. Moreover, in some cases it remained difficult to distinguish personal opinions from official/organisational perspectives. Thus, perspectives - which evidently appear also tinged by nostalgia, selective recall, and generalisation - and the meanings we have drawn from them as researchers, have been treated with care. We also appreciate that the targeted focus of the expert interviews, selectiveness of our questions, and limited time available, have also contributed to the unique and specific nature of our data set. These caveats notwithstanding, nonetheless there are evident commonalities and points of distinction across participant responses that warranted analysis and deeper consideration; particularly in relation to scholarly debates regarding sector stakeholders/partnerships, contemporary forces (e.g., Covid-19), austerity and grassroots resourcing, and knowledge transfer and exchange. Ultimately, we consider the seven themes below are conceptual catalysts for further debate and action that might sustain and advance Olympic, Sport Mega-Events (SMEs) and wider volunteer and civil society practices.

7. Primary thematic findings

7.1. Human resource investment

A significant contributor to both the effectiveness of Athens 2004 volunteer programme delivery, and to the overall growth of the civil society sector in the post-Games period, was the notable strength of human capital. While it may be expected that SMEs and/or large multi-faceted projects require a breadth and depth of individuals with substantive experience and expertise, this was particularly important within the Greek and Athens volunteer context.

In the early 2000s, for example, participants noted the country and municipality lacked not only a coherent and cohesive landscape of volunteering, but also the central recognition, effective organisational structures, and relevant individual expertise needed to develop and implement appropriate management, administrative and operational systems.

'Back then [in 2000/01] they [Athens 2004 Organisers] were searching for professionals that had experience in volunteering and that was not easy to find in Greece because the truth is non-governmental organisations, say the third sector, before the Olympic Games were not as well structured as today'

(Senior Manager within Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme A)

In the early 2000s, either through professional or personal contacts, or serendipity, several individuals who were working across the sport, volunteering, wider civil society, private and education sectors were drawn to the opportunities to work on the nascent Athens OCOG volunteer programme. Of note, many of the individuals already possessed considerable prior experience of both volunteering and volunteer administration; particularly in relation to working with civil society, grassroots/local community level activities on a personal or professional level. Others had considerable experience in human resource management in the public sector and were directly approached by the ATHOC President Mrs Yanna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki to support the Athens 2004 volunteer programme.

'I had just received a Human Resources Management Master's degree. So, it was somehow a unique to work for this large-scale project...My general manager back then told me that I think you will never again have the opportunity to manage something like 60000 people for a certain event. And, he was very correct. it was a challenge for me'

(Senior Manager A, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

'I was always in some ways participating in volunteerism, say working within organisations. Working with organisations in the civil society sector was something that I was particularly interested in, and in a way, I was [already] quite involved in environmental and animal advocacy issues'

(Senior Manager B, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

'I was originally a Physical Educator, so I have a Bachelors' Degree in Physical Education [from a local University]. Then I got the Master's Degree in Sports Management [from a University in the United States] and a PhD [from another University in the United States]...using the three tools of sport management, sport marketing and sports sponsorship, I got back to Greece in '92 and started offering such services to the market...I had clients across 12-15 different sports and worked on promotional programmes, sponsorship programmes and organising events...my expertise is in major multi-sport mega-events, either as an active role as a general manager or as a consultant [particularly for European and wider regional' sport events]'

(Senior Manager C, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

'I was offered to undertake this activity by the President, Mrs Angelopoulos-Daskalaki, as they required a Diplomat mainly to deal with the relations with the Olympic Committee, but very soon in the process this need arose and I was offered to undertake this activity [to lead the Athens 2004 volunteer programme]. I had no previous service in voluntary organisations other than personal participation, but I had no professional experience. Of course, I had experience in HRM management and international experience which was an important part of the volunteer program. In terms of its international dimension'

(Senior Manager D, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

This pre-existing interest, commitment and appreciation for civil society and volunteering, it was noted, was useful in understanding the idiosyncrasies of volunteers, appreciating the holistic values and ethos that underpin practices, and the varied roles volunteerism plays over individual's life courses. This was particularly important in relation to Greece and Athens where, participants acknowledged, volunteering was not well-understood and there existed ingrained adverse cultural attitudes to civil society and volunteering (discussed later).

'Volunteering until the Games had a bit of a tangled meaning, more of charitable giving or a sense of helping those in need. I would say with the Olympics, the term was redefined to mean 'I belong' to something that happens which is either problematic for society or positive like a celebration like the Olympics but through offering my help, I feel I belong'

(Senior Manager E, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

'...it was very helpful that my background was human resource management, because you had an understanding of how to develop your plan in order to grow it, to develop it, to train others, to proceed'

(Senior Manager A, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

Further to this, and through to volunteer programme creation, the professional and personal knowledge individuals possessed helped contribute to the development of the strategic vision, nuanced marketing and promotional campaigns, and recruitment, retention, and recognition strategies. Here, professional expertise in leadership, management, human resources, community outreach, marketing, communication, international relations, strategic operations, and educational delivery were key skills that formed part of Athens 2004 volunteer programme management job descriptions and roles. Ultimately, although participants acknowledged degrees of serendipity in joining the Athens Olympic management, there was general consensus that prior experience in the third sector positioned them favourably to achieve within the administration.

Additionally, several participants noted that they had the opportunity to engage in knowledge-transfer activities with the Sydney 2000 OCOG to obtain a significant know-how in the management of the volunteer resource for the Athens 2004 Games. Though, as noted by participants, they had the opportunity to enhance and improve the Athens 2004 Volunteer programme incorporating educational, and theoretical concepts related to the value of volunteering and linking it to Greek society and key Greek cultural values and ideals.

'We did not teach ourselves by ourselves. We had all the help by experts from all around the world, especially experts coming from the previous Olympic Games from Sydney...we went to Australia to watch, observe, and work for the Olympic Games, all of us for two months...We're in Australia, collecting everything and talking to everyone. At the same time, the Greek government had sent 60 graduates from various universities to Sydney, and they worked there for two years. And at the same time, they acquired sport management degrees...so this, altogether, was a huge transfer of knowledge along with the foreign experts'

(Senior Manager C, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

Beyond the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, participants identified that the Games aided their key skill sets and knowledge that was beneficial in transferring into other roles and sector areas. For Athens, and importantly for the sustainability of wider volunteer and civil society projects in the city and country, the environment benefited from having a set of well-equipped individuals with a wealth of expertise in volunteer and large-event project management, and knowledge of the wider stakeholder landscape.

'I was a volunteer for over 20 years in the UK and in Greece, and before that a top European Marketing manager (for a large international technology firm)...So upon retirement, the idea was that here we are, we know all these things, we know about management, organisations, market development, marketing at an international level. And it's going wasted. So, we created the organisation because we thought that we can pass on our knowledge to young people.'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

'After the Games, I was approached to lead the strategic development of a new environmental NGO and initiative named 'Let's do it Greece'

(Senior Manager E, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

Such knowledge, and the fact that individuals had been connected to the prestige of Athens 2004, provided recognition and political capital that helped lead to further roles, projects, events, and initiatives. Individual employment transitions in the post-Games phase were varied, but participants noted the Games offered an array of personal and professional learning experiences that crystallized and propelled future career development and interest in the volunteering and the civil society sector.

Recommendations

1. Sourcing and capitalising on key talent from across wide areas of the volunteer, sport and civil society sector enables strong volunteer programme teams to be built at the outset
2. Ensure professional expertise (e.g., business management, international relations, financial nous, operational expertise, human resources management) utilised within the host city volunteer programme is attuned to the local context and the specificities of the volunteer and civil society sector's cultures, needs, values and desires
3. Effectively resource volunteer programme management teams with individuals with varied skill sets and leadership experiences (especially in relation to volunteer or civil society sectors), and provide autonomy and support within the OCOG for this team to manage its mission
4. Consider transitional, post-event, employment pathways, knowledge-transfer opportunities, professional development potential

7.2. Landscape mapping and effective stakeholder management

As a result of the fragmented nature of civil society organisational work in Greece and Athens at the time, lack of any clear centralisation of administration and resourcing, or recognition of volunteering at the state and municipal levels, there was not a comprehensive overview of the sector. Nor, also, an understanding of who or how many prospective stakeholders or existing networks there necessarily were who might be able to contribute to Games delivery or support volunteer programme ventures. Subsequently, mapping the volunteer sector landscape was noted as a key priority for the Athens 2004 volunteer programme management at the outset.

To this end, early phase tasks required identification and communication with the local volunteer infrastructure and some large-scale organisations (e.g., Red Cross, Scouts/Guides, public services, universities, sport federations and known 3rd sector organisations) to establish initial partnerships. Such dialogues led to Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and the opening of communication channels over the course of the initial Games phase. Such MOUs and dialogues were relatively organic and flexible at the outset yet were refined as the needs and strategic priorities of the volunteer sector programme progressed. However, the scale of the endeavour and the number of volunteers needed, the conflicting priorities of both the ATHOC and of the local volunteer bodies, as well as the strict operating protocol that the OCOG had to follow meant that these attempts were not as fruitful. While some smaller municipal, state and sector organisations were identified and offered services to aid volunteer promotion, recruitment and/or delivery, the mapping did not also pick up on the untapped and unknown cohort of existing individual interest. Thus, while initially it was possible for volunteer programme management to propose the general scale of volunteers required, and for key stakeholders to in return propose cohorts of potential participants they might recruit from within the membership, the motivations of Greek and Athens' residents for volunteering or scope of organisations available to assist was writ large uncertain, and there remained questions over final capabilities to sufficiently resource the Games.

Challenges were identified both in dealing with initial administration (due to the primitive nature of the internet and communication technology at the time), and the lack of any previous central administrative oversight of volunteer organisations and services in the region. In some cases, these challenges were ameliorated by Athens volunteer programme managers utilising professional and personal contacts, and political capital, to establish key connections with stakeholders. This, in practical terms, was also useful in ensuring effective promotion of the programme across the wider-sector, Athens and Greece, and contributed to higher volunteer programme exposure and recruitment.

Initial landscape mapping was also beneficial in aligning key stakeholders and their members with specific volunteer sector roles and priorities. For example, sport federations and University sport science departments and students with the needs of the volunteer programme's sport division; travel agents and language studies students and professionals with the programme's international relations division; journalism students with the media coverage of the Games; and public service personnel with the health, safety, medical and operational logistics areas. Such mapping also provided a clearer picture of volunteer recruitment surpluses and deficiencies as ATHOC plans

progressed. Mapping also uncovered a vibrant pool of existing volunteer and civil society activity and interested individuals as a potential resource of talent beyond the games period.

Additionally, mapping, and the opening of intra- and cross-sector dialogue was of value in terms of transmitting the overall Games vision, challenging, and changing perceptions of volunteering, and strengthening political ties, and enhancing trust, mutual respect and understanding among stakeholders that aided effective programme delivery. The strength, effectiveness and sustainability of the stakeholder exposure, connections and partnership that were forged through this process were not, and could not, be necessarily assured. Accordingly, participants reiterated the importance of constant work (e.g., communication, public relations, meetings, events, workshops, training etc.) to maintain relations. All of this work also helped reiterate and fortify stakeholders around the volunteer programme ethos and mission and contributed to a strong sense of collective identity and collaborative spirit.

'The truth is that when you have a traditionally organised and long-term historical volunteer organisation, it also has its own ways of working, its own needs that it aims to meet. If it was to be deprived of its volunteers, it too had to make up for them. So, we tried on a case-by-case basis to make some collaborations [with the local volunteer sector]. That is, while we were asking for volunteers from the Scouts, for example, at the same time we helped them in their recruitment campaign, with talks or newspaper posts and ads to attract scouts'

(Senior Manager D, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

Beyond the Games, participants have continued to stress the value of mapping for the volunteer, civil society, and sport sector development. While Athens 2004 contributed to some notable progress in stakeholder identification and partnership, there was no strategic interest (and pragmatic or financial need/incentive) to extend this activity as part of OCOG's legacy plans. While there were initial intentions, there was, participants lamented, no direct legacy plan or commitment demonstrated by Athens 2004 OCOG, or municipal or state administrations, at the time to explicitly capitalise on this new-found knowledge of the volunteer sector and the connections forged through partnership work. In some cases, this was thwarted, in practical terms, by technological and data-protection limitations which worked against organisations sharing contact details of stakeholder organisations and members beyond the contractual period of the Games cycle. These limitations were also compounded by the drifting of organisations back to localised and independent operations, transition of key contacts into other roles and sectors, and apathy and lack of interest in sustaining partnership and communications beyond the Games.

'The Athens 2004 volunteer program had been designed with thoughts to leave a legacy behind and in some respect, this was achieved. However, once the OCOG disbanded, they [state authorities] could not build a structure that would hold the volunteer momentum alive for data protection reasons... Some attempts to institutionalise volunteering were made by the Ministry of Culture and Sports and even volunteers themselves self-organised on every occasion... But there was no such central organisation, that is, an umbrella'

(Senior Manager D, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

In addition, with the absence of a clear channel of state, municipal or private funding, and the natural dissolution of the OCOG, there also lacked financial resource and benefit for many stakeholders to preserve the knowledge and learning gleaned from the mapping and partnership work. Though, in some cases, there were some informal attempts to sustain the volunteer momentum through individualised efforts to develop volunteer databases, for example the development of the Group 'Συνεχιστές Εθελοντές Αθήνα 2004' (roughly translated as 'Continuator Volunteers of Athens 2004') that aimed to communicate opportunities and engage Athens 2004 volunteers with further volunteering opportunities post-Games. Furthermore, other groups and individuals organised themselves and maintained contact through emails, telephones, and subsequently social media. Some of these networks remain active and through word-of-mouth activities still engage in volunteering opportunities.

Nonetheless, stakeholder mapping continues in other areas, and has been evidently instrumental to the more recent success of a number of key civil society and volunteer sector organisations in their work to enhance, consolidate and grow the landscape. Here, organisations such as the Ethelon (section 8.1), Athens Marathon (section 8.2), Bodossaki Foundation and its *Social Dynamo* project (section 8.3), Arsis (section 8.4), and the Hellenic Centre of Volunteer Managers (HCVM, aka Kemel). This has been aided by technological improvements (e.g., advances in social media, dedicated platforms to promote volunteer work nationwide (e.g., Ethelon), partnerships between sectors, website development, online resource delivery, and virtual learning platforms). Efforts to better understand the needs of civil society and the volunteer sector at the local, municipal, and state levels have also been made through quasi-NGOs such as SynAthena and other 3rd sector organisations. Such entities develop and sustain partnerships, undertake outreach to new partners, and forge meaningful collaborative ventures to fill social, cultural, and economic development needs.

'Having worked for various groups I see overlapping. And the moment that I see overlapping, and here we're not talking about companies right, we are talking about people wanting to do good. So, you know to have an antagonism between two organisations who are both trying to help is ridiculous. But this is where egos come in, or whatever'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

'As far as I am aware, there is currently a level of corporate volunteering in Greece. That is, many companies as part of their social responsibility efforts cultivate some activities for social welfare objectives. This is very important because I repeat volunteering starts with small units locally and grows at a national level'.

(Senior Manager D, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

A challenge of mapping volunteer and civil society organisation, however, has been the varied definition and criteria used by organisations, the state and municipal authorities, financial institutions/regulators, and academics to classify what constitutes a volunteer organisation and/or volunteering. Such definitions have also made it difficult to accurately capture the scope and nature of informal, casual, or sporadic

sector activity (particularly that occurring in peripheral municipal areas or rural locales, or 'hidden' within existing structures of the family or religious associations). More research here, participants noted, is needed to better understand these areas of activity to aid future partnerships and resourcing.

'It's a real big problem...there is no kind of single database of civil society organisations in Greece. So different studies, depending on their criteria, recorded completely different numbers of organisations. And even for us we were fairly confident that after 5-6 years of work, kind of reaching out across to organisations across the country, we thought we had a fairly good idea of the situation. Then... [after partnering with new organisations]...we realised that there was this whole kind of universe of civil society organisations on the islands and rural areas that they didn't know us and we didn't know them'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

'When we did our research for the 'Citizens Project' established by the state to record Civil society organisations in Greece, we found that there are as many as 20,000 but from those, active are between 500-700'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader, Formerly Athens 2004 Manager)

Nonetheless, mapping has continued to identify key areas of overlap between sector organisations (particularly in terms of work focus, aims, ethos and physical spaces), and provided new opportunities for dialogue, knowledge exchange, education/training/professional development, and creative collaboration.

While some organisations have amassed large data bases of organisations in the sector (for instance, e.g., Bodossaki Foundation's *Social Dynamo* project identified some 800+ entities), there remains scope, need and value in developing centralised, open, and substantially resourced platform to exchange this knowledge at the municipal and state levels.

'...other organisations have helped in this (mapping), but I think something that has changed is that people realise from all angles that without collaborating they can't move forward...If they don't help each other's sectors - we're still very suspicious of each other - public, private and now civil society all need to come into the helix together'

(Senior Municipal Politician - Civil Society focus, & Civil Society Sector leader)

'Instead of having 16 (small competing organisations), you can have one central administrative organisation facilitating them, and you can have better results...this is something that we are doing, writing down all these organisations that exist. And maybe one day we can find out how many there are and try to persuade them to get together, or even have an umbrella (organisations)...Keep them separate, but have an understanding together, or even get them to know each other, sometimes that works.'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

Recommendations

1. Ensure substantial resource is devoted to volunteer sector mapping in OCOG planning and operations
2. Work in concert with stakeholders from diverse areas to develop a wide definition and scope of volunteering to help increase potential organisation identification (consider adopting holistic criteria to account for informal channels of involvement)
3. Invest in appropriate technology and address data management issues (potentially at contractual stage) to ensure the availability, utilisation and preservation of mapping information and knowledge in perpetuity
4. Have a clear plan of what will happen to the Games volunteer database, and/or wider civil society organisation database
5. Consider possibilities for incorporating database management within municipal/local authority division (e.g., in Greece, within the General Secretariat for Civil Protection)
6. Go beyond the remit of volunteer resource provision for the Games by building in further training, professional development and educational opportunities for organisations and individuals that may be of use in the post-games phase
7. Consider overlap across organisations and help build shared agendas and sustainable spaces for ongoing dialogue
8. Establish a parallel organisation to work in conjunction with the Games OCOG to focus on delivering legacies and undertaking stakeholder mapping in key areas including volunteer sector capacity building, community engagement, sport development

7.3. Strong leadership

From the outset of Athens 2004 volunteer programme operations, participants noted the programme benefited significantly from the strong leadership demonstrated by the OCOG President, Mrs Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki. In particular, it was noted that Angelopoulos-Daskalaki's explicit decision to make the volunteer programme a strategic priority and a unique, special and independent entity within the Games' delivery. This contributed to the development of strong unity among programme management, beyond subsequent stakeholder partnerships and public relations, and to the programme's ultimate success. Those within the team of volunteer directors commented positively on the effectiveness of the President to ensure the programme was well-resourced with excellent human resources, financial support, and political advocacy at the municipal, national, and international level. Participants also acknowledged the President's role unifying activities around a clear commitment to delivering a successful Games for Athens and Greece.

Strong leadership also manifested through public relations leadership and media exposure for the volunteer programme which helped disseminate the key messages and value, attract public support, and aid eventual volunteer recruitment. Within the team of volunteer programme directors, the programme benefited from comprising individuals with pre-existing leadership experience and understandings of sport and volunteer sector issues and mega-event needs. Leadership skills here were of particular value in developing a team ethos around the Games vision and instilling volunteer values (especially for employees coming from business or other sectors within limited understanding or experiencing of volunteering). In addition, the ATHOC leadership (which was ultimately buoyed by being resourced with senior industry experts) helped also build trust and respect within the volunteer programme's management core.

'I had the chance, the biggest one, throughout this time to lead 1200 paid staff and 7000 volunteers working for the division. Which was very challenging, especially for all of us. They [programme managers] were not all as aware as now, we were young and we experimented, but finally proved that if you have the proper education, the proper attitude, develop professionalism, respect the people you work with, and then think and imagine about what the whole team expects from you. Finally, this whole team I led, we were able to be successful'

(Senior Manager C, Athens 2004 Volunteer Programme)

Beyond the Games, participants have continued to evidence strong leadership skills in work to improve host city and national civil society and volunteer landscapes. Here, notable leadership has been evidenced by individuals continuing work at the highest levels of sport, volunteering and civil society in Athens, Greece and Beyond.

'One of the other things Kaminis (Athens Mayor 2011-2019) did, and it is remarkable. He needed money to do a lot of things. So, what he did was that he went outside of Greece. Instead of going to the Greek government and asking for money, he went to other European Mayors - to Barcelona, to Norway, to various place - he created this programme of transnational development and knowledge exchange...he would get ideas and money from abroad and I think that helped'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

Directors and other political stakeholders who contributed to the Athens 2004 volunteer programme have gone on to European and international civil society development, diplomacy, third sector support, public outreach, sport development, and educational roles. Importantly, the Athens 2004 Olympic Games provided those central leadership figures opportunities to build upon this experience and share their knowledge, skills, experiences within their own team. Potentially, also, inspiring or assisting others in recognising sport and/or volunteering as meaningful industries in which to undertake civil society work and employment.

'For me, business foundation (knowledge) is extremely important, particularly for people who are in charity, or volunteers - as are most people in these Athens/Greek civil society organisations - and for me, also being a volunteer, I understand how difficult it is to manage volunteers'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

'I have seen infinite opportunities for volunteers to find very good positions in sports events because they once started as volunteers and I have seen many people like me who started somewhere and we have carried on in events just because we did a good job, we met with five people and these five people through word of mouth, suddenly got us to other events after 2004'

(Senior Sport Sector Leader, Former Athens 2004 OCOG member)

The Athens 2004 Olympic Games was notable in its breadth and scope, and for bringing together and developing a set of key volunteer, sport, and civil society leaders. Yet, it has been one of several contextual catalysts of the period that brought together notable individuals with particular expertise and skill sets and afforded opportunities to enhance and progress individual's personal leadership ambitions.

'The Mayor, Kaminis, was a remarkable man. He realised the necessity of allowing the Athenians to help themselves. Because that is what it is. To allow themselves this possibility. And, Amalia Zepou (Vice Mayor 2014-2019), she is an amazing woman...She did amazing work...there was groups of people teaching Roma children. Amalia was the one who would gather all these groups of people who were offering their work, their time, their efforts, voluntarily and she would try to get them organised. And that is how we helped, by trying to organise them (the groups), and teaching them basic organisation skills'.

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

Although not part of the future planning/legacy from Athens 2004, it was acknowledged that specific initiatives of the state and municipality (in particularly more socially conscious political shifts) also contributed to the sustainability of leaders' work to transform Athens and wider Greece for the better. For example, the provision of state scholarships for tertiary sport management students to study abroad in Sydney in the lead up to the Games.

As the excerpts above attests, strong leadership was of strategic importance in all key stages of the event management process. In the case of Athens 2004 Olympic Games and post-Games volunteer activity, the development of strong leadership was created, in part, through event leaders developing and maintaining positive working relationships with the state, dissidents, corporate partners, the public and the wider sport and volunteering communities within Athens and Greece. Within this setting, leaders invariably benefitted from possessing a wealth of skills including adaptability, character, flexibility, political savviness and problem-solving, among others, that enabled them to not only to plan and execute a good event but also develop and leverage strong social legacies post-event (despite legacy leadership not being formally planned for).

Recommendations

1. Ensure host cities invest in strategic identification, recruitment, and professional development of volunteer sector leaders

2. Provide leaders at all levels with space, support, and resource to develop clear strategies, plans and ideas for volunteer delivery (both for the Games and beyond)
3. Ensure volunteer programme receives notable support and recognition within the OCOG and IOC
5. Consider development pathways and opportunities in the post-games phase for leaders and potential leaders
6. Consider and plan for longer-term leadership growth across sport, volunteering, and wider civil society spaces

7.4. Building trust, rapport & spaces for dialogue

'There is often quite a resistance among organisations to collaborate. Maybe they fear that they will lose their slice of the pie.'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

In both the pre- and post-Games phases, participants have identified the necessity of building trust, respect, rapport and understanding within and across stakeholder partnerships and networks. In the Athens 2004 volunteer programme, the large-scale and periodic nature of the event meant strong and trustworthy relationships between organisations needed to be established quickly and collaborative plans and actions undertaken promptly. Participants, especially specific volunteer programme divisional directors, also expressed the need to establish good lines of communication and open dialogue with a wide variety of organisations, and to get these groups working effectively around a shared Games and volunteer vision.

Trust and rapport appeared not, however, something that could immediately be generated by one individual or organisation and their actions alone. Rather, relations were forged slowly and patiently, and with care, over time; particularly as Athens 2004 volunteer programme organisers progressed and better understood their roles, teams grew, outreach plans evolved, and stakeholders better understood their position with the Games plan and in relation to volunteer resourcing priorities. Overtime, collaborations within the volunteer programme grew stronger and gathered momentum and more specific plans started to take shape (e.g., with regards to promotion, recruitment, and training needs).

While in the first instance MOUs aided the initial formal grounds and parameters of relationships for volunteer programme partners, these were supplemented further by an array of tangible mechanisms (e.g., correspondences, seminars, workshops, meetings, training opportunities), as well as intangible and informal relationship building actions (e.g., casual conversations, social occasions etc). Of note here is that given the relatively small nature of Greece and Athens, and the concentration of public, civil society and sport organisations within a small region, many individuals within the programme already had a good pre-existing knowledge of stakeholder partners, either at the organisational level or 1-1 professional level. Such existing connections enabled, in some cases, effective working relations to be established with relative ease

and efficiency, and a firmer foundation of trust and rapport upon which to build partnerships and collaborations for the Games.

Following the Games, it appears that these sorts of efforts to build trust and rapport have continued to be used to bring stakeholders together and enhance their work across sector spaces.

'For a long time, there were kind of informal contacts, meetings and things. Greece is a small country, so we all kind of know each other, and who our colleagues are in the other foundations. But, gradually, we actually begun to start some collaborative programmes as well'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

Within sport and sport development focused activity this has been aided naturally by the institutional structures of the national and municipal sport system in which many clubs and federations are already aligned and/or have some form of central administration and independence (for example, the Hellenic Athletics Association and the Athens Marathon). While not all local community, municipal or state sport organisations may possess shared opportunities, or interest, vis-à-vis volunteer sector resourcing or collaboration, the Athens 2004 Olympic Games appears to have helped open dialogue in and across the sector and produced amiable conditions of trust and respect that have yielded benefits since the Games.

Within the wider volunteer and civil society sector, and in light of prevailing contextual conditions (e.g., Covid-19 and natural disasters), it appears that this ethos of trust has become fundamental to building relationships and sustaining partnerships. Many participants noted that this has become important for helping counter instances where groups, organisations, communities, or individuals may be reluctant to work together, share resources and ideas, or commit to large or lengthy projects.

'During the first years, it was very much us going out to them...Gradually, I think that the awareness (of civil society investment and partnership) has become more mainstream. We've really tried to promote the importance of capacity building. Not just through our programmes, but through others and to partner with others'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

Particularly for the volunteer sector, where financial and human resources at the grassroots level may be sparse and/or competitive to gain, developing mutual respect and trust appear evermore vital. Yet, there are no guarantees that trust may be sustained over time, and there is evident need to future-proof organisational relationships between stakeholders (if mutually agreeable), especially if these relations may have been the result of an individual's pre-existing political connections or agency.

'We've been lucky. We've got a great relationship with both municipalities. But very much it involves kind of personal relationships with people in individual positions. And the problem that we found is that before and after the municipal'

elections, everything is on hold and you end up losing time and effort trying to maintain those relationships'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

'The most important thing is acceptance (of civil society and volunteer work), change of mentality, different recognition, some type of recognition of local community volunteering. And, again, you need to have the recognition to drive the volunteers out of their little holes to help the community'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

Recommendations

1. Identify areas within the mapping process where potential for mutual opportunities and benefits may exist
2. Ensure good governance within volunteer programme management and educate programme stakeholders in upholding governance principles (e.g., transparency and accountability) to help build shared ownership over programme vision, goals, and outcomes
3. Utilise shared agendas to create a positive working environment and framework around which values of trust and respect may be fostered
4. Utilise MOUs to establish initial institutional grounds for relations (make this a shared and democratic dialogue and process)
5. Build upon the MOUs with additional mechanisms for relationship building
6. Consider future-proofing relationships for greater sustainability

7.5. Countering cultural assumptions about civil society, the 3rd sector and volunteering.

Although the largesse and spectacle of the Olympic Games, and its underlying moral ethos, may mark the event out for wide-spread popularity with host cities and nations, there is no guarantee this will necessarily translate to broad interest or support for its resources, or specifically to participation in the volunteer programme. Concomitantly, although voluntarism and related investment in civil society may appear altruistic and meaningful endeavours, voluntarism is not always met with universal approval. For Athens 2004 volunteer programme directors, this confluence of Olympic Games criticism associated with anti-capitalist attitudes and perceptions about corruption among the city's and country's inhabitants, the long-standing scepticism towards civil society, philanthropy and the 3rd sector, created a challenge for organisers to overcome.

'The tradition of volunteerism was quite different in Greece than what you would see in the UK, US or other countries. So, the family unit was where you would

see a lot of volunteer work, for example neighbours would help their families. But it was not put together in more formal or systematic way...In general, being a volunteer was not a concept that was well embraced by everyone'

(Senior Manager B, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

'There was a feeling that while in Greece there was a lot of concern for the neighbour, the offer of service, in terms of humanistic behaviour. there was no culture of systematic volunteering'

(Senior Manager C Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme, Currently Public Servant)

'I had colleagues that were not familiar with volunteering so they had a different understanding of the programme...they were somehow afraid of the programme...they did not have the confidence in volunteering and in how volunteers can really benefit a sport event, the Olympic Games in particular, and generally speaking anything that could be supported through volunteer service'

(Senior Manager A, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

'We wanted to address the general public who had no voluntary experience until then. It might have been involved in charitable actions that we Greeks have to a large extent, but we did not have this systematic commitment and systematic and regular offering through volunteering. So, we spent a lot of time [in the volunteer recruitment] and in fact, the president Mrs. Angelopoulos-Daskalaki had led the Athens 2004 Volunteer campaign'

(Senior Manager C Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme, Currently Public Servant)

Participants collectively noted that prior to the Games (particularly across the late 1990s and early 2000s) Greece had developed a negative domestic, regional, and international reputation for its deficient state and municipal oversight of the third sector. This also extended to the funding of private and corporate organisations engaged in sector work under the auspices of corporate social responsibility. High profile cases of corruption and mismanagement had precipitated a culture of public mistrust, scepticism and general ambivalence toward sector activity.

'When I told them, I was in a volunteer organisation they would think two things. most often they would tell me that I am a crook, and that some I have created these charities and somehow, I make money...In fact, in our organisations, we put money in out of our own pockets'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

These cultural assumptions also carried over to well-meaning volunteer organisations were often viewed as fronts for nefarious individual and/or organisational activity.

'Everywhere there was this negative feeling coming from some saying you'll never make it, you won't get all these volunteers you need...people will drop out, or they will never come...So, we had to fight against this to make sure...to prove them wrong'

(Senior Manager B, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

'There was a lot of discussion from media, in Greece or in the international media, especially UK media, a lot of criticism if we can make it, if we're gonna make it because Greeks usually do things the last moment, we do not have the culture to schedule here...and the politics are very much intense and interfere all the time with all kinds of projects'

(Senior Manager C, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme)

'As you may know, nothing is self-evident in Greek reality. There were voices of reactions, there were people who, for some reason, I do not want to say political, but social, said why should I volunteer in an activity that the multinationals support, etc.'

(Senior Manager D, Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme, Currently Public Servant)

Coupled to this was a set of assumptions and a lack of understanding about what volunteering constituted, and that it transcended the level of existing work undertaken within conventional realms such as the church, family or more informal community settings, or larger entities such as the United Nations or Red Cross projects.

'Before the Games, there were some large NGOs and volunteer associations such as Red Cross, the Scouts etc but there were many small ones scattered around Greece, under-functioning, not at all organised or institutionalised'

(Senior Athens 2004 Manager- Currently Civil Society Sector Leader)

'People did not want to call themselves volunteers and I think it is really just the cultural and linguistic idiom to hear this negative connotation...one can explain it in many ways, but the image of the volunteer, the Olympic volunteer, you know with the hat from the sponsor was not - it did make us proud - but I think for some people it was like [explicit] capitalism and surveillance. Being surveilled is something that is not Greek'

(Senior Municipal Politician - Civil Society & Volunteer focus)

Accordingly, the Athens 2004 volunteer programme managers undertook considerable communication, public relations and media work with stakeholders and local groups in Athens (and the other Olympic-designated municipalities) to change public perceptions. Efforts varied, but included: communicating how expansive definition and involvements in volunteering could be; emphasising the value of volunteers to stakeholders and recruits as part of the wider Games delivery; educating

volunteers on the historical/cultural significance of the event; incentivising and encouraging recognition and additional opportunities for stakeholder organisations and volunteers; promoting the values of volunteering in public through OCOG leadership, educational and corporate channels; evidencing the need for the city and country to develop volunteerism for wider social benefit and civic improvements (e.g., to help grow sport club activity); and, the ability to use volunteering to bring stakeholder together for further collaboration. In addition to this was continued political work with state, municipal and local authorities to ensure both the volunteer programme and wider investments in volunteering would be administrative priorities.

While it is difficult to ascertain precisely if, how and why these efforts specifically worked for Athens 2004, the belief among participants is that there was both a discernible shift in public opinions about the Olympic Games, sport volunteering, volunteering, and civil society. In the pre-Games period for instance, and in light of criticism about ATHOC's ability to adequately resource and fulfil Games' obligations, volunteer positions were eventually heavily oversubscribed.

Beyond the Games, and invariably throughout the pronounced work civil society organisations have done in response to continued crises in the region, there remains a notable positive shift in understanding about volunteering among the public.

'I think that Greece did show a face that hadn't been seen before which was that of a very empathetic society. This small-scale family enterprise, the drive is very strong, very resilient and very democratic as well...it's as if they have this natural leaning towards sharing things and that is something'

(Senior Municipal Politician - Civil Society focus, & Civil Society Sector leader)

Participants noted witnessing greater affection towards volunteers associated with the Games, and more notable respect and appreciation for volunteering and civil society projects within the national, municipal, and local landscapes. Nonetheless, challenges remain with regards to institutional structures and clear volunteer discourse. As one participant noted,

'Unfortunately, although we see an increasing trend in people involved in volunteering, there is no institutional framework for volunteering in Greece. This creates ambiguity about how volunteering is defined and in what context one works voluntarily'

(NGO Manager).

'Resources that are needed by the organisation to promote volunteering cultures include continuing training on volunteer education and management and an institutional framework on which to base decisions on volunteering. The proper organisation and management of volunteers are key points that make an experience to be the one that will make volunteers want to participate again combined with being able to see the end result (impact)...Every volunteer is part of the final effort. The more they are supported, the better for the activity / outcome in which they will participate'

(NGO Manager)

'The Olympics gave a big boost to the volunteer sector. Of course, the state did not use it to their own advantage to institutionalise the sector, with a legal institution, similar to how sport is institutionalised, for example, with NOCs in each country... But with some NGOs that were funded without existing, this led to negative public perception towards the sector'

(Senior Athens 2004 Volunteer Programme Manager, Current Civil Society Leader)

Although state and municipal support and centralisation of volunteering remains variable, and in need of development, within both Athens and Thessaloniki, and in other parts of Greece, there are now more pronounced institutional spaces for volunteer service organisation within the administration.

Recommendations

1. Prior to an Olympic Games, work remains needed to understand the pre-existing assumptions and attitudes to sport, sport mega-event hosting, and voluntarism
2. Research is needed to reveal how nuanced definitions and appreciations are of voluntarism and civil society
3. Public relations, media and communication efforts remain vital in allaying trepidations or scepticisms towards volunteering and civil society work
4. Further ways are needed to evidence the scope and nature of volunteering before, during and after the Games period
5. Ensure commitment of volunteering and civil society organisations, particularly those engaged in sport and/or Olympic Games delivery, to good governance practices and principles (e.g., ethical responsibility, transparency, accountability, monitoring, and evaluation)
6. Ensure capable leaders can project good governance values and develop shared respect for these principles within their delivery teams
7. Find appropriate pathways (working with stakeholders) to training, development, and education about volunteering, and make such pathways sustainable beyond the Olympic Games period

7.6. Capitalising on resources and contemporary contextual conditions

With any Olympic Games, or mega-event, organisers are faced with undertaking operations and the delivery of the event amid a particular set of contextual considerations and forces. For Athens 2004 volunteer organisers these included a vibrant, and increasingly successful, regional, and international sporting profile, notable tangible heritage and cultural assets with which to leverage public relations and the programme image, an existing pool of talented individuals with appropriate sector expertise, a strong family and/or church-based values system, and active

pockets of volunteer and civil society sector activity. As previously mentioned, there was also varied work already being undertaken in the 3rd sector at the time.

However, numerous adverse conditions were also noted that worked against the smooth establishment of the Athens 2004 volunteer programme. These included: Greece's poor political and economic reputation among the European community; Athens' under-developed institutional, political, economic, and bureaucratic infrastructure to facilitate volunteer growth; poor recognition of volunteerism within municipal and state authorities; and widespread public and media mistrust and lack of understanding of wider NGOs, volunteering and civil society organisations and their work. Aspects of this trust, some participants noted, had stemmed from lack of adequate oversight and authority of civil society organisations, notable instances of sector corruption, and perceptions about the alignment of civil society work (particularly that undertaken under the auspices of corporate social responsibility) to capitalism and its ills.

'There were constant challenges with [mediating perceptions of] civil society agendas, the role of non-governmental organisations in the sector... Yes, huge suspicion towards them and also antagonism between the city officials and the people in the city that do things for free.'

(Senior Municipal Politician, Civil society & Volunteer focus)

Such conditions and factors were not necessarily unique to Greece or Athens. Yet, they invariably shaped the working environment for ATHOC and the volunteer programme. Here, and as discussed in relation to stakeholder mapping (section 7.1), organisations undertook significant efforts to frame the programme ethos in ways that would counter and hopefully ameliorate these forces, and ultimately work to appeal to local sensibilities and sensitivities. Useful in this instance, and acted through the marketing and promotion campaign, was the programme slogan, 'I want to be there, I will be there' ('Θέλω να είμαι εκεί, θα είμαι εκεί' in Greek). The slogan drew upon the prestige of the Games, its historical origins, and public memory to foster collective spirit, pride and a sense of national unity and vision.

Beyond this, volunteer programme organisers worked extensively with local/grassroots stakeholders (Universities, schools, churches, community organisations, public services etc) to aid the dissemination of the volunteer programme ambitions, public image, and eventually aid volunteer recruitment (as well as wider interest in the Games).

'The OG was the largest employment of volunteers in the country, so this will always be a point worth mentioning. I also personally believe that the Games 'gave birth' to more and new volunteers. Despite the time since the Games, we maintained an active approach to working with the Athens 2004 volunteers, as they/their families had remained active after the Games looking for the next opportunity to support'

(NGO Manager)

Utilising the professional human resource expertise, and substantial volunteer programme budget, organisers were also able to maintain internal and direct control

over key programme aspects, message, and recruitment. Strategic resource use here enabled volunteer programme messages and communications to remain clear and coherent, and cohesive with the overarching Athens 2004 OCOG strategy.

After the Games, the experiences organisers and volunteers gained in mediating contextual forces and challenges were, evidently, of benefit in helping them develop management, coping and resilience strategies when the sector faced further adversities.

'After the Olympic Games, there was a huge rise of suspicion towards the volunteers. But, it was an image that was in ways good, we made it to the Olympics. But it wasn't the reality. It wasn't good for a lot of people. Not for everyone, and for a lot of people it wasn't resonating familiar...with the reality of what they were experiencing in their lives at that moment'

(Senior Municipal Politician, Civil society & Volunteer focus)

Specific here were the 2008 financial crisis, the 2014/2015 refugee, asylum and migrant crisis, notable natural disasters, and more recently the Covid-19 pandemic. The financial crises – in which Greece faced severe economic disaster and considerable pressure (and required assistance) from its global peers and international organisations to reform – created a significant increase in the need for civil society and volunteer sector organisations. Particularly in terms of filling the extensive gaps in services now left vacant by the collapse of state, municipal and local authority resourcing.

'It was a moment of huge financial crisis, moral crisis and political crises...and of course this led to different types of solutions for the city, different types of government innovations. Experiments to share in the decision making. For example, with some of those people that used to be seen as squatters or anarchists. I think it was a moment of maturity...the crises had given us a door, an open door. Let's say a temporarily open door to the usual bureaucratic resistance, with city officials and activists'

(Senior Municipal Politician, Civil society & Volunteer focus)

'It was about that time, in the economic crisis that we got together, and we thought very hard, and we thought Greece is going through a very bad economic situation. As I said, Greeks are very entrepreneurial in their nature, except that (Greek) society does not accept failure. Failure is a disaster. So, start-ups were very afraid to start up in case theirs was a failure...the legal situation was difficult, and it was extremely expensive to start a small company or civil society organisation'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

This increase in activity has been notably evidenced in the work of organisations such as Bodossaki Foundation, HCVM, Levindas, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, Desmos,

Ethelon, Arsis and many others, in their continued individual and collaborative efforts to unite public, private and third sector entities in Athens and wider Greece.

'The Bodossaki Foundation is doing such a great job in bringing all these organisations to get to know each other. And there's a lot of networks. Personally, I have networked and got together with several groups. It was really interesting, because one was doing this bit, but not this bit, and the other was doing this bit, but not this bit. So, you put them together and they were better'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

'We have limited resources ourselves. Yet, even symbolically, we believe in the ethos of collaboration, we encourage the organisations we work with to collaborate, so we wanted to kind of lead by example and be very collaborate ourselves'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

'One thing that the municipality could not do was - it had not the capacity to do [post-Olympics and post-financial crises] - was capacity building seminars, and giving methodologies and tools to those activists (in the civil society sector) and grassroots communities that wanted to develop, and go in the direction of a Non-Governmental Organisation'

'So, it was a matter of fine-tuning small things that the municipality could do for them. That was, I think, one of the ways by which we gradually got their trusts...because it was a matter of building trust...and we knew money was not the answer'

(Senior Municipal Politician, Civil society & Volunteer focus)

'The outbreak of the pandemic was a key obstacle to the maintenance of voluntary activity of [VA]. Having as main concern the protection of both the [VA] team and the volunteers, we decided to refrain from organising physical presence actions that may be sources of spreading the virus. For this reason, but wanting to continue the offer to the community, we created a series of actions remotely or virtual so that the voluntary activity does not cease completely. During this time, we noticed that [VA] platform held its own dynamic and was a key tool in maintaining the activity in a more general context'

(NGO Manager)

Organisations have continued to demonstrate the tangible and intangible value of sustained volunteer and civil society involvement. Yet, in addition, the continuity of their work also exemplifies how events like an Olympic Games (or Greece's current Bicentennial celebrations scheduled for 2021) may provide opportunities for harnessing civic volunteer ethos, and communities and organisations. Moreover, irrespective of the contextual forces or conditions, these moments appear to also help crystallize and catalyse individuals or groups to sustain and/or be responsive to future concerns and make further civil society contributions.

'The feedback [on our collaborative civil society capacity building programme] has consistently been really high. There is a real appetite for this kind of thing, and that has made us really want to keep going and grow the programme'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

Notably, it cannot be determined that the Olympic Games necessarily better equipped Athens or Greece to face the array of contextual conditions it has over the last 17 years or led to the generation of specific and sustainable volunteer or civil society resources that were not in some form existing previously. Yet, the event offered (at least in the minds of participants) the opportunity to strengthen, promote, unify, and organise the volunteer movement and a distinct platform for a variety of volunteer and civil society activity. In addition, the post-event environment also afforded means for some well-placed organisations and individuals to advance their sector work and collaborative ambitions.

'The big question (post-refugee crisis) was whether the sector could kind of retain those volunteers. People who had really come in to help because of the urgent humanitarian need and interest. And whether this would keep an interest in the sector. I think there has been a mixed picture over the past few years. I think that some people certainly lost their interest after that real crisis situation passed. But I think we are still seeing new organisations that started during that period that have managed to kind of keep going, stay growing'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

Through effective, yet ongoing mapping, and developing an acute proactive response to their contemporary circumstances, civil society organisations have found ways to enhance the available financial, cultural, human, and political resources to build meaningful, innovative and collaborative partnerships that may aid future sustainability.

'Societal attitudes are changing. People are going on television etc, and there is this idea that 'the person started from nothing'. So, things are slowly changing. Plus, the fact that the people in power right now are younger'

(Senior Civil Society Sector and Volunteer Organisation Leader)

As Athens and Greece may yet face further turbulent conditions, there exists now an improved context in which to establish, enhance and grow volunteer and sector society activity; both broadly speaking and in specific relation to sport development. As such, potential host cities should look, in the first instance, to the existing organisational landscape and its capacity to best respond to contextual forces to drive effective volunteer engagement.

Recommendations

1. Provide volunteer programme development sufficient resource to not only deliver Games objectives, but establish meaningful landscape partnership post-event

2. Develop ways within the initial volunteer programme to learn from existing organisations who have considerable experience in dealing with contextual forces and conditions
3. Learn from contemporary experiences more generally that have afforded opportunities to galvanise public and sector interest in civil society and volunteer work
4. Seek creative solutions at the grassroots/local community level, and look to where resource deficiencies may be encountered and/or plugged by existing work
5. Understand what local communities want, need and desire from a longer-term volunteer and civil society-orientated programme and build this into Olympic volunteer programme planning
6. Involve local communities, groups and stakeholders into the design and delivery of the volunteer programme to effectively harness their experiences of dealing with domestic conditions, forces, and challenges
7. Identify key stakeholders who may be well-placed to contribute to volunteer resource gaps
8. Acknowledge that the goodwill and altruism of people is the most significant resource, and appreciate and recognise their efforts accordingly

7.7. Accountability

Although participant discussions did not explicitly focus on good governance practices, it was evident that many leaders and stakeholder organisations within the volunteer programme, and beyond in the post-Games period, exhibit a strong commitment to principles of professional and personal accountability, social justice ethics, and transparency in their actions. At the time of the Games, those working within the context of the volunteer programme, for example, expressed a clear sense of moral conviction and responsibility towards the Athens 2004 vision and collective enterprise of enhancing the volunteer and civil society sectors for the better.

This accountability and ethics worked at several levels. In operational terms, the volunteer programme remained accountable to the overarching ATHOC, and was monitored and evaluated in financial and pragmatic terms in relation to effective operational delivery goals. Beyond this, however, there was an evident feeling among volunteer directors that they and their teams had an honest and genuine commitment to their work and its outcomes. Here, the unifying of volunteer programme employees (and eventually volunteers) around the Games vision and ethos aided, invariably, building strong connections and a sense of belonging and ownership between individuals and their place in the Games structure. Volunteer directors noted strongly of the importance of being a part of the Games, and the unique opportunity to show commitment to a key historic and cultural moment. Such thoughts were also echoed in some of the wider connections, volunteers and OCOG contributors felt at the time, and have reflected upon in the post-Games phase; particularly in regards to positioning themselves as part of the prestigious Olympic Games family.

'I am very interested in participating at the Paris Olympics. Twenty years after the Athens Olympics to participate as a volunteer there too'

(Athens 2004 Volunteer)

Principles of transparency and accountability have become central within both contemporary sport sector governance, and more broadly within the corporate and third sector environments. Such principles, as noted earlier, are especially salient within the Athens and Greece context where there have been pre-existing cynical, sceptical, and condemnatory public attitudes towards civil society and volunteer enterprise. Here, and through the work of groups such as the Bodossaki Foundation, Ethelon, HCVM, and Arsis for example, there has been notable work to continue upholding the highest standards of governance and organisational practice across the sector. Both state and municipal authorities have also tightened regulatory frameworks that have improved accountability, monitoring, and evaluation of sector activity.

'Obviously it's crucial for the whole sector to have rules in place, and there has to be transparency and accountability, but I think there has to be a way for professionals in the sector to get paid as well. So that's something that needs a lot of work. There are efforts that have been made. Our organisation has consulted with other organisations, some of the larger NGOs, and there have been some draft laws put forward, but things move very slowly at that high level'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

As a result, many large civil society organisations (such as those mentioned in this report) remain committed to ensuring their practices are run in accordance with sound governance principles (for example, ensuring accurate, transparent, and open financial and administrative reporting). In addition, some organisations are becoming more open and accepting of public scrutiny, and closer scrutiny from stakeholders (e.g., through Annual General Meetings and further collaborative dialogue).

'At the end of the programme we fill in this evaluation. This evaluation comes not just from the organisations, but from the other kinds of stakeholders who've been involved, from the volunteer mentors and coaches. We try to get a spherical view of how the project went.'

'...[Also] it has always been our policy to make our training activities as open as possible...Everything is always free. Everything that we offer is always free. Quite a lot of what we offer is also offered for free by our pro bono partners as well'

(Senior Civil Society Organisation Leader)

In addition, many organisations (such as Bodossaki and its *Social Dynamo* project and affiliated partners) are now going beyond and have further agendas towards building better practices across the wider volunteer and civil society landscape. Efforts here include: democratising/sharing organisational resources (particularly with regards to training and educational development) more openly; providing good governance and other associated business training; offering professional mentoring schemes for

volunteer organisations and charities; providing sponsorship and training in-kind; and, enabling smaller organisations to feedback specific governance needs to help build clearer ideas about gaps in the landscape and where financial, human or educational resources may be directed in the future.

Recommendations

1. OCOG leaders, and their respective teams, should be provided with substantial training and/or professional development opportunities to enhance good governance knowledge prior to the Olympic Games
2. Clear standards, guidance and expectations regarding good governance should be explicitly developed with all volunteer programme stakeholders at the outset (both within the MOUs and beyond)
3. Make an understanding of good governance (including business ethics) a part of volunteer programme director and employee job role skills and recruitment specifications
4. Encourage communication and open-reporting among teams
5. Establish mentoring and training opportunities on governance for employees over the course of the Games cycle; this is particularly important in cases where employees may come from wider sectors and be unfamiliar with good governance processes within the sport mega-event context
6. Make accountability, transparency, feedback, and scrutiny a standard part of stakeholder partnership and collaborative work
7. Ensure public, local community constituents, end-users have frequent and meaningful opportunities to engage with the volunteer programme management and plans; preferably engage and include them at all stages of the process
8. Involve local groups in administration and leadership of volunteer programmes to build trust, rapport, and a sense of ownership, and relatedly, ensure local needs, context and desires are understood and acted upon (where possible)

7.8. Experiences of volunteers in sport-specific volunteering

Participants in the survey unanimously agreed that ATHOC selected and deployed them in the given roles based on their existing unique skills. Some of the skills they developed through Games volunteering include teamwork, self-confidence, to take the initiative and reach decisions quickly, organisation, intrapersonal communication and problem-solving. The findings suggest that volunteer skills' development is evident, most notably soft skills that are transferable to other situations (Koutrou, 2021). However, participants felt that the skills developed during the Games did not influence their career direction or subsequent employment. However, they all recognised that it enriched them with unique experiences and enhanced their desire and passion to volunteer and help others.

'To a large extent, because I always wanted to offer, but Greece before the Games did not have organised volunteering systems. Today it has many voluntary organisations'

'Made me to want to offer more to my fellow humans, to my city and to be present in all events that promote sports.'

Thus, it could be said that an inspiration effect to volunteer was created with the Games experience, but this was not planned by ATHOC to occur. Interestingly, participants noted that they were not approached by any other organisation after the Games to continue volunteering. It was through their actions that they got engaged in subsequent volunteering. For example, one was involved in the founding of the Association of 'Continuators Volunteers of Athens 2004' (mentioned earlier). Another participant who volunteered in athletics as a judge noted that the Hellenic Athletics Association (ΣΕΓΑΣ) has its own protocols and procedures for volunteering. The participants commented upon state indifference and the lack of supportive structures and proper organisation that could have influenced future volunteering. As noted by volunteers:

'What could and has never been done is that the required attention was not given to the thousands of volunteers of 2004 and no database was kept in order for them to reach out to us after the Games and organizations that could draw volunteers from there'

'I remained active in volunteering, but the state could, through voluntary actions, attract new children to volunteer, and maintain the excellent facilities that had been built and unfortunately left to abandonment and destruction'

'Lack of funding has led to erosion of the ability to sustain the volunteer base'

With regards to the sports system in Greece of volunteer deployment, various participants remarked as follows:

'The athletic system deters participation of volunteers. Athletic dinosaurs have had a negative impact'. 'In the popular road races that take place in the streets and the parks of the cities, the system is very good ... In other structures it is almost non-existent or very closed circuit''

'After the Games, the state forgot the volunteers. There should have been annual training and educational sessions for volunteers, as these people want and can offer'

'Organisation by the local authorities of volunteering departments for each municipality - community with respect to the volunteers and by people who believe in it to attract volunteers for various actions that will take place locally and will have a good impact in the community, and that will have an impact on the whole the population'

'Education through seminars to strengthen volunteering, more media coverage, reimbursement of expenses, encouragement, trust, respect, reward for volunteers'

The above comments confirm the general sentiment from the interviews that despite a growing trend in people who are engaged in voluntary giving in Greece, there is no institutional framework for volunteering. This lack of structure appears to create ambiguities about how volunteering is ultimately defined and in what context one/a works voluntarily.

Further, negative experiences overshadow to some extent the benefits of volunteering, in particular the ill mentality by many, most notably supervisors who treat volunteers in a negative way. In that respect, participants commented:

'Many times, and mainly by the "responsible" of volunteering who often behave in a disparaging way to the volunteers and sometimes offend them and (participant's emphasis) sometimes some people believe that volunteers are their 'slaves' and this due to lack of education'

'Dealing with those in charge who think they are talking to animals or slaves or something inferior since they have almost no understanding of the reasons for each volunteer's offer'

Other general improvements volunteering participants mentioned included:

- More incentives: such as covering the costs of the volunteer for their travel, a diploma of participation even electronically if not printed and a souvenir from each action, 'seminars and recognition of volunteer efforts', encouragement, correct instructions
- 'Voluntarism would expand with an influx of funding and more infrastructure'
- 'A greater acceptance by the state and the citizens for their offer'
- 'By covering travel expenses'
- 'With a remunerative gift from the organisation and from the correct and appropriate behaviour towards the volunteers as well as the recognition of their work'
- 'By reckoning, supporting and sometimes financial measures' 'Recognition is not just monetary. An award or reward should be in line with results, and not just participation'

Participants also positively commented upon some good examples of volunteer activity in sport in the current era including the Special Olympics or foundations outside of sport that support sporting activity such as Floga, Kivotos tou Kosmou, and the work of Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF). Volunteers who participated in the study noted that the work of Stavros Niarchos Foundation is a stellar example of good management and promotion of ideals. Interestingly, civil society participants from other organisations noted the notable separation of SNF from other sector partnerships, collaborations and activities. As previously discussed, however, participants seemingly recognise that there are an array of good practices and commendable organisations following good governance principles and developing strong trust and rapport with communities, the public and volunteers. Moreover, evidently, there are positive changes occurring in the third sector via cross-sector partnerships; particularly those that promote and support sport activity.

Participants, when asked about issues that encouraged or prevented them from volunteering, commented:

'I had the volunteerism in me anyway but the change of mentality that I saw during the Games gave me a sadly void hope that this change would stay forever like this'

'I was a javelin athlete, so sport for me was a way of life, particularly having the chance to take part in the greatest sport event worldwide. As a track and field judge taking part at the Games helps you to go on to the next level, which I managed to do'

Recommendations

1. Support sport organisations at the local, municipal, and national level to widen their engagements with the volunteer sector, and build on their capacities to involve youth and/or new volunteers in sport-related volunteering
2. Ensure young or new volunteers are provided appropriate training, leadership and/or mentoring opportunities, where desired, to help sustain and develop volunteer career pathways in the sport system
3. Consider ways international sport federations, national federation and/or National Olympic Committees (or academies) may work together to develop an institutional/sector framework for volunteering that better defines, captures, and supports the varied roles and identities of contemporary sports volunteers

8. Case Studies

The following section provides four case studies drawn from organisations encountered in the course of this research. The vignettes offered here illustrate some of the current developments and best practices occurring in Athens and Greece's sport-related and wider civil society and volunteering landscape. The case studies draw particular attention to the utility of strengthening volunteer resourcing, fostering collaborative partnership, enhancing training and development provision, closer community engagement and capacity building for greater sustainability.

8.1. Ethelon

Ethelon was formed in 2016 from the merger and collaboration of two non-governmental non-profit organisations, Global Volunteers Platform (Glovo) and Volunteer4Greece. This merger was a result of their common aim to join forces in order to strengthen volunteer cultures in Greece. Ethelon is essentially a platform that brings together individual and prospective volunteers, civil society stakeholders and the corporate world. Through Ethelon's platform various volunteering opportunities across Greece and in different sectors are communicated regularly. Through a set of actions, events, and initiatives, Ethelon serves as the reference point in identifying, mobilising, training, and connecting individuals, autonomous groups, institutions, and companies with non-profit organisations, aiming to develop synergies between them based on diverse ways of voluntary offer. The organisation's core values are: Reliability, Solidarity, Transparency, Teamwork, Evolution, Excitement and Mission. The organisation has a team of more than 8750 volunteers and has coordinated,

organised, trained, and mobilised 5500 volunteers for their participation in 214 events. Ethelon collaborates with 213 NGOs across Greece to provide them with volunteer resources. and they organise regular talk, educational seminars for NGO actors and employees, and personal development seminars for volunteers. Through Ethelon's platform, volunteers are given opportunities to find volunteer positions in other NGOs based on their interests. Their employment gives them experience equal to work, as they can be part of a team and strengthen with their contribution the work of the organisation, evolving themselves in both hard and soft skills. In addition, the training of volunteers concerns general issues (for example, 'what is volunteering?', Sustainable Development Goals, NGOs, and civil society) and emphasises what one can gain from their voluntary activity in terms of knowledge & abilities (and beyond the intangible moral reward).

Some of the notable actions that Ethelon runs include the *Careerfair4all*, which is a Career fair for people with disabilities. On the day, candidates have the opportunity to go through professional interviews with companies that take part in the scheme and potentially find employment. In the first edition of the CareerFair4all, 1100 interviews took place with participation from more than twenty companies. Further, within the framework of corporate volunteering programmes, 25 actions were implemented with the participation of 31 collaborating NGOs and 403 employees. Finally, Ethelon has recently run an extensive survey related to Volunteering and covid-19 to identify the impacts of the pandemic on volunteer activity in Greece (Ethelon.org, 2021).

8.2. Athens Marathon

Variations of the modern Athens marathon have been held since 1955. However, the race in its most current form originates from approximately 1972 and has, under various names, been held annually since (<https://www.athensauthenticmarathon.gr>). The event has grown from its relatively small beginnings to become one of the notable fixtures on the regional and international long-distance running calendar. Run under the auspices of the Hellenic Athletics Association (ΣΕΓΑΣ), and with International Amateur Athletic Federation gold-standard accreditation, the event attracts approximately 16,000 runners for the main event and a total of 43,000 entrants for the auxiliary and shorter events. The growth of the event has been propelled by several key factors. These have included strong organisational leadership and strengthened strategic marketing and sponsorship relationships with key stakeholders. Now, the organisation has a multivarious sponsorship partnership structure that includes long-standing corporate and state partners, media sponsors and social/civil society organisations. While such partnerships are critical to sustainable financial resourcing, the event also relies on - and has become an important vehicle - for voluntarism. While in its own right the marathon grew in popularity throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, the event also subsequently benefited from the success of voluntarism during, and in the immediate aftermath of, the Athens 2004 Olympic and Paralympic Games. From approximately 4300 runners in 2005, the event in 2019 hosted 60500 participants. While the Covid-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the event in 2020, there are expectations that this number will increase for the forthcoming event in 2021.

In terms of volunteer capacity building, and from a small base of 300 volunteers in 2005, the event today attracts over 3000 volunteers, and comprises a well-established volunteer programme that includes substantive training and professional development opportunities, and a strong civil society/social development programme.

As the official website attests:

'The Volunteering Program of "Athens Marathon. The Authentic" (AMA) has been established in order to support all runners and guests. Over the years, it has evolved into delivering high-quality services to all runners during the event and parallel activities during the pre-race period. The Volunteering Program of AMA trains, supports, and coordinates all volunteers, whether they participate individually or as members of a group / club. Our Volunteering Program aims to raise community awareness, strengthen community engagement and collaboration resulting in our overall Social Sustainability.'

(<https://www.athensauthenticmarathon.gr/site/index.php/en/volunteering-en/volunteering-program-en> Accessed 14 August 2021).

Although the volunteer programme draws significant volunteers from within the Athens metropolitan area, many participants also come from across Greece and further abroad. Here, the capacity building has been enabled through the organisations forging partnerships with local businesses, schools, as well as existing volunteer and youth organisations within the city and beyond.

In the post-Athens 2004 period, the Athens Marathon has served as a primary contributor to sustaining the city's and country's sport volunteerism legacy. Similar to regular civic sport-mega events elsewhere, the annual hosting of the event, in particular, has provided continued opportunities for a growing cohort of volunteers to continue their service to sport and wider community/civic development. Notable here is that while many of the event volunteers may trace the origins of their volunteer involvement to the Athens 2004 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the event has also successfully attracted younger volunteers with little to no pre-existing memory or association with Athens 2004 Olympic Games. As Senior event management has noted:

'The corp of volunteer programme of the Athens Marathon is a legacy that demonstrates how Greek volunteer culture developed but has been able to continue to grow steadily, year on year; in particular, not only for organisations such as the boy scouts, but for every sort of events, music event, sports events, environmental projects'

Of relevance here is that the Athens Marathon preceded and proceeded the Olympic Games, and thus its success cannot solely be directly attributed to particular post-Games legacy development.

'we see more sport events taking place with the participation of volunteers either in organisational roles or as participants, for example, in a road race for a public benefit purpose'

(NGO Manager)

Athens Marathon event managers who were directly involved in the delivery of the Athens 2004 Olympic Volunteer Programme (particularly those with a background in sport volunteerism, sport marketing, social/civil society work, and grassroots community organisations) have, however, utilised their Games experiences and knowledge to strengthen volunteer capacities within the sector. The effectiveness of skill transfer has also been enabled by ensuring strong leadership and management within the event's executive team, deployment of high quality human resources

(specifically, employing individuals with sound knowledge not only of event management, but of volunteering, community development and the sport sector), development of a clear strategic vision within the organisation and volunteer workforce (and with external stakeholders), and sustaining financial capital to ensure the quality of volunteer services and training can be maintained.

Ultimately, the success of the Athens Marathon provides an example of how an Olympic host city may potentially look to continue supporting volunteer development and capacity building post-event. While host-cities may not have large sport events like the Marathon, efforts may be made in the legacy planning that identify appropriate cultural and social opportunities that may serve as segues to continue post-Games volunteer capacity building. Here, partnerships with pre-existing city, regional or national events, or large civil society organisations or corporate organisations with philanthropic branches, may provide effective mechanisms for supporting both the continued development of volunteer programme managers' and volunteer participants' personal and professional skill development. Such outcomes could be integrated within stakeholder mapping processes and initial partnership building which may then provide clearer and more direct ways for the Olympic volunteer sector to envisage continuity of their work beyond the event.

8.3. *Bodossaki & Social Dynamo*

In evaluating Athens' and Greece's post-Athens 2004 Olympic civil society and volunteering landscape, several organisations were identified as significant contributors to sector development. One of the foremost entities in this regard was the Bodossaki Foundation (<https://www.bodossaki.gr/en/> Accessed 17 July 2021). Founded in 1972, the Bodossaki Foundation is one of the largest charitable foundations in Greece and has significant experience and reputation in supporting voluntary and non-profit sector organisations. Through its four primary pillars of activity that include 'Promoting education', 'Improving healthcare', 'Protecting the environment', and more recently, 'Empowering civil society', the Foundation has allocated more than €450mill to various causes. With the aim to reduce inequalities of opportunity, educate young people, and support socially vulnerable populations, the Foundation has become particularly adept at understanding, engaging, and working with a large array of organisations in the civil society and volunteer sector landscape. Signalling a progression in the organisation's charitable vision, and recognising the continued resource and humanitarian support needs in the country following the 2014/2015 migrant crisis, the Foundation more recently established a specific organisational programme, entitled *Social Dynamo*, to drive civil society and volunteer capacity building (<https://www.bodossaki.gr/en/our-initiatives/social-dynamo/> Accessed 17 July 2021).

'We started doing surveys of civil society organisations and they told us that the majority of organisations also reported an increase in volunteer numbers. So, the big question was whether the sector could kind of retain those volunteers. People who had really come in to help by urgent humanitarian interests, and whether they would keep an interest in the sector...Civil society was in this dynamic area of growth, the social needs were kind of growing. So, we wanted to make that a priority of our work.'

(*Social Dynamo* programme management)

Recognising that capacity building in the sector required more than just offering financial support, the emphasis in *Social Dynamo* is on providing tangible support to civil society entities through various forms of training, professional and personal development, networking, and educational initiatives. Central to which is the imperative to upskill organisations across the sector and offer mechanisms to support collaboration and resource and knowledge sharing that might further drive sector growth. To these ends, *Social Dynamo* has developed a strong network of corporate, educational, and civil society/volunteer sector partners, and paired with entities such as the Hellenic Centre of Volunteer Managers (HCVM) and the Hellenic Coaching Association (HCA), state and municipal agencies, and seven other Greek and international charitable foundations, to establish an ongoing cycle of training programmes. These programmes, which also involve substantial contributions from over 50 pro bono mentors and over 20 pro bono coaches from the private sector, NGOs, and the academic community, cover a wide variety of themes including basic business management, financial reporting and accounting, applying for funding, good governance, monitoring and evaluation, organisational strategy and vision, volunteer management. In response to feedback from its participants, *Social Dynamo* has also developed several thematic sessions on topics such as combating climate change and supporting local environmental ecosystems. While volunteer and civil society organisations must register to participate in the training programmes, access to *Social Dynamo* services is provided entirely free of charge. The programme has now supported approximately 6900 representatives of civil society organisations, hosted over 1000 organisations on its programme (and through its primary hub in central Athens), organised 141 training activities and provided more than 1100 hours of mentorship.

The success of *Social Dynamo* may be attributed to several factors. However, the effectiveness of the programme has been aided, notably, by the efforts made by management at the outset to try to better understand the breadth, depth and complexity of the civil society/volunteer sector landscape and its resource needs. While initially *Social Dynamo* managers had particular agendas and aims for the initiative, even at the outset the programme has entailed nurturing open and supportive dialogue with sector stakeholders. This relationship building has, foremost involved mapping sector contributors (the programme has, to date, identified approximately 800 civil society/volunteer organisations with more still being identified). From this, significant work using surveys and constant feedback opportunities has been used to enable contributing participants (volunteer organisations, as well as coaches, mentors, and partner organisations) to better tailor and refine the programme and its offerings to the sector. In the interests of enabling the sector to help itself, *Social Dynamo* has also sought to connect similar organisations and foster collaborations that might enhance individual and collective sustainability and growth (for example, unifying around a common social/cultural project or event, sharing financial, practical, or human resources, partnering to establish local volunteer training services, or establishing knowledge exchange forums).

Invariably, in *Social Dynamo* there is a good example for current and potential Olympic host city organisations with regards to capacity building and sustaining volunteer legacies. Whether it be through existing international, national, or local philanthropic/charitable organisations, Host city volunteer organisers may benefit from working in partnership with existing entities that have considerable and long-standing

experience of the civil society and sector landscape. In the pre-Games phase, such organisations may be of value in providing necessary mapping information and knowledge of sector relationships that may benefit more effective development of Olympic Games volunteer programmes. Existing organisations may also be in an appropriate position to offer the necessary training and development infrastructure to support volunteer programme managers and volunteer participants. Beyond the Olympic Games, existing civil society/volunteer focused foundations may be better incorporated into legacy planning.

What happened after the Games is that many people left right away, and I saw that there was not really...this had not been, let's say, planned well enough, especially from those who would follow. You know, when the committee and functioning stop

(Athens 2004 Senior Volunteer Director).

Accordingly, there is specific scope for both individual volunteer participants and/or sport clubs and/or sport-for-development organisations to be given knowledge of and/or provided access to existing training and development programmes available in the sector. Where no such programmes exist, there may be possibilities for Olympic Games volunteer directors to consider working with civil society stakeholders to establish sport-specific initiatives akin to *Social Dynamo*. Although this may not be desired by all volunteers or clubs, it may go some way to capitalising on post-event momentum and drive capacity building.

8.4. Arsis

Arsis is a social non-governmental organisation that has been active since 1992 in supporting children and young people and defending their rights. In addition, various services are provided to vulnerable social groups including housing, education, legal aid, psychosocial support, and sport programmes. It operates with centres in Athens, Thessaloniki, Volos, Kozani and Alexandroupolis, while it has developed activities in many other cities. The organisation grew bigger since 2015 and the refugee crisis in Greece. It currently employs 700 people and a significant number of trained volunteers who support its actions that are estimated to approximately 500 individuals. Some of Arsis centres are completely run by volunteers such as the centre in Kozani, northern Greece. Since the Games, organisations like Arsis have enhanced the volunteer movement within sports with running activities and actions that have a prime sport focus or use sports to achieve positive social outcomes. Prior to the Games, volunteering in sport was left to the sport federations, clubs, and sport events' devices to be promoted.

Arsis implements various national and European programmes and cooperates with social services, public and non-governmental organisations at national, transnational, European and international level seeking to highlight, inform and raise awareness about the conditions of exclusion and other social problems, and plan actions, immediate interventions and offer assistance to socially disadvantaged young people to address them. To do so, among other initiatives, it combines activities in and through sports. Some of the notable projects that Arsis had implemented previously,

which had a sport remit include the project '*Using the power of sport to eliminate violence, discrimination and marginalisation*'. This one-year long project was funded by the Laureus Sport for Good and SOL Foundation and included GAME, and Yoga & Sport for Refugees as partners (Arsis.gr, 2021).

9. Primary recommendations

9.1 Host cities

1. Source and capitalise on key professional talent from a wide range of sectors who possess experience in and knowledge of the civil, volunteering and/or the sport sector; particularly of/within the municipal and local contexts
2. Invest time, energy, and resources in the early stages of the host city planning in identifying all key volunteer sector stakeholders and, from this, develop appropriate systems and communication mechanisms (e.g., databases, social networks, MOUs, informal connection etc) that build strong and positive working relationships between organisations
3. Encourage host cities working with municipal authorities and existing organisations (e.g., NGOS and their programmes like Bodossaki & Social Dynamo) to develop a specific legacy organisation dedicated to the sustaining volunteer networks, and education, training, and professional development across the sector post-Games
4. Ensure host cities invest in strategic identification, recruitment, and professional development of volunteer sector leaders, and provide space and support for these leaders to develop clear strategies, plans and ideas for volunteer delivery (both for the Games and beyond)
5. Utilise shared agendas, MOUs and additional informal/social mechanisms to create a positive working environment and framework around which values of trust and respect may be fostered among all volunteer programme stakeholders
6. From the outset of Games planning, build shared ownership over programme vision, goals, and outcomes across volunteer programme partners, and consider appropriate ways to acknowledge, incentivise and motivate partnership and build relationship trust over the Games cycle and beyond
7. Develop clear standards, guidance, and expectations regarding good governance with all volunteer programme stakeholders at the outset (both within the MOUs and beyond); Specifically, ensure accountability, transparency, feedback and peer-scrutiny are a standard part of stakeholder partnership and collaborative work

9.2. State, municipal and local authorities (Pre & post-Games)

1. Have host cities and municipal authorities work together to invest in public relations, media, and communication efforts to raise a positive profile about volunteering not just in relation to the Games but for the wider social landscape
2. Work with academic partners to develop quality mentoring and training opportunities for volunteer programme workers over the course of the Games cycle; this is particularly important in cases where employees may come from wider sectors and be unfamiliar with good governance processes within the sport mega-event context

9.3. Civil society, volunteer and sport organisations

1. Consider transitional, post-event, employment pathways, knowledge-transfer opportunities, professional development potential.
2. Identify through effective mapping where overlap across civil society organisations exists and help build shared agendas and sustainable spaces for ongoing dialogue
3. Provide development pathways and opportunities in the post-games phase for leaders and potential leaders to strengthen the growth of the volunteer landscape
4. Involve local communities, groups and stakeholders into the design and delivery of the volunteer programme to effectively harness their experiences of dealing with domestic conditions, forces, and challenges

9.4. Sport sector

1. Support sport organisations at the local, municipal and national level to widen their engagements with the volunteer sector, and build on their capacities to involve youth and/or new volunteers in sport-related volunteering
2. Consider ways international sport federations, national federation and/or National Olympic Committees (or academies) may work together to develop an institutional/sector framework for volunteering that better defines, captures, and supports the varied roles and identities of contemporary sports volunteers
3. Ensure young or new volunteers are provided appropriate training, leadership and/or mentoring opportunities, where desired, to help sustain and develop volunteer career pathways in the sport system

9.5. Research

1. Research is needed prior to the Olympic Games to understand the pre-existing assumptions and attitudes to sport, sport mega-event hosting, volunteerism, and civil society
2. Substantial qualitative and quantitative evaluation of civil society and volunteer stakeholder landscapes in the pre and post-Games phases would be beneficial for identifying areas of resource deficiency, abundance or overlap, and be of use in targeting resource investment and sustainability planning
3. Critical interrogation of local sport organisational attitudes toward sport/mega-event volunteer partnerships is warranted to better understand sector needs and how varied perspectives might be incorporated into more sustainable volunteer programmes and capacity building
4. Further examination of the role corporate, philanthropic, charitable and/or non-governmental agencies play/might play in supporting sport volunteer capacity building
5. Interrogation is needed of the roles sport-volunteering can play in addressing non-sport related social, cultural, and political issues (e.g., Covid-19 responses, environmental sustainability, social responsibility etc)
6. Closer evaluation of the scope and quality of volunteer training and development programmes related to sport-mega events; particularly in light of the inclusion of key professional and personal skill acquisition that may enhance volunteer sector growth and capacity building beyond an Olympic Games cycle

10. Conclusion

With regards to community engagement, the Athens 2004 Games presented the largest ever deployment of volunteers at a national level.

'The Games helped to institutionalise volunteering, as there are now formal associations and NGOs helping in sport and beyond. This seemed more intense when the crisis started in 2010 where people went out and helped others in need. Greeks were always willing to help others but did not know how to go about it. After the Games, you know where to go and how to find out about volunteering opportunities'

(Athens 2004 Volunteer)

However, during the post-Olympic period, there was a weak interest by the Government and other key actors in continuing the Olympic dynamic and its implantation in the Greek reality with initiatives that would have a long-term social effect. The Athens 2004 Olympic Games offered numerous opportunities to Greece for infrastructure, economic, social and community development. Some of these were realised and exploited, others were overlooked, and a few were ostentatiously ignored.

Post-Games Athens has benefited from new transport, hotel, sporting infrastructure and urban regeneration projects. Now the volunteer and civil society landscape in Athens may currently be described as a vibrant space of activity that has shown considerable resilience, creativity, fortitude, and entrepreneurialism, particularly despite challenges and contextual adversities. As one participant noted in light of the current Covid-19 context:

'The pandemic also significantly affected volunteering. However, the contribution of volunteers at the local level was remarkable, as there were many municipalities that in the midst of the pandemic and with the help of volunteers were able to meet the current needs of their residents (e.g. Home Help Program, Municipal social cooking for homeless, responding to natural disasters)'

(NGO Manager)

In the first instance, the IOC, OCOG, States and municipalities, and local host city communities need to acknowledge that work invested in the pre-Games phases into identifying key stakeholder partners in the civil society and volunteer sector is vital. Prior understanding of the landscape dynamics provides a knowledge base and organisational foundation upon which subsequent financial, human resource and strategic planning may be then leveraged. From this base, it may then be possible for appropriate investment to be made into not only ensuring OCOG delivery objectives are met, but importantly that resource can also be directed into capacity building (partnerships, collaborative projects, organisational and professional upskilling) so that stakeholders have the resource, motivation, and ability to sustain activities post-games. While it may not be possible (for economic or pragmatic reasons) to have extensive plans in this regard, host cities may be well placed (and equipped with notable political capital) to forge relationships with existing civil society and volunteer organisations to achieve such ambitions. As evidenced in the case of Athens and Greece, there are benefits for sport, sport-related volunteering, and wider volunteering

cultures when there are mechanisms available that support continued development, collaboration and partnership.

'Private sector companies have integrated volunteering as a key unit of their Corporate Social Responsibility programs. This strengthens the culture of volunteering in Greece as employees slowly become active volunteers inside and outside the company'

(NGO Manager)

It is possible that the nature and scope of civil society and volunteer organisations in host cities differs vastly from that of Athens and/or Greece. Accordingly, resources available and subsequent strategies adopted by OCOGs and post-Games legacy entities (if such are even in existence) will also vary considerably. In some contexts, for example, State and municipal authorities may have centralised volunteer administration and services, clear institutional and bureaucratic frameworks to facilitate volunteer and civil society capacity building, and different social and cultural attitudes vis-a-vis volunteering. In these cases, there still remains merit in appreciating the value and benefits that can accrue from prioritising the volunteer sector within local, regional or national development plans; particularly those that seek to utilise large volunteer workforces to sustain mega events/sport-mega events.

Accordingly, this critical evaluation of the volunteer landscape post-Athens 2004 Olympic Games provides some useful lessons. In particular, the findings highlight that more dedicated work by the post-Games legacy teams/units, in cooperation with Municipal authorities and sector partners, remains needed and of value. Furthermore, in order to build positive, productive and meaningful sector partnerships in and through an Olympic Games volunteer programme it is integral to not only engage with, but to give agency and voice to, existing grassroots organisations. As is evident in the work that organisations such as the Bodossaki and HCVM organisations have undertaken more recently, such entities are those best placed to understand local dynamics, contexts, and issues. As such, grassroots organisations should play a key role in the design, implementation, and evaluation of Olympic volunteer initiatives, *and* should be encouraged, supported and resourced appropriately to leverage agendas in the post-Games phase.

We recognise that such tasks may not, ordinarily, fall within the immediate remit of an OCOG or its volunteer programme division, or be central to the resource of any legacy priorities by municipal or State authorities post- Games. Yet, the findings of this research give reason to suggest that through strong, clear, and collective vision there are fruitful possibilities. To aid this task, and as outlined in brief above, further investigation of host city landscapes would help stakeholders identify ways and means for sustaining sport-specific and broader volunteer and civil society capacity building. Attention here might specifically attend to:

- Analysing further stakeholder perspectives to better understand how areas of best practice could be shared further (beyond local, national and regional settings);
- Investigating how network formations could be made more resilient both in practical and intangible terms;

- Identifying how future social/cultural events (e.g., Olympic Games, SMEs, etc) might provide not just valuable labour forces, but be instrumental in longer-term civic missions to grow volunteer/civil society capacity;
- Undertaking detailed economic and organisational analysis to ascertain areas of resource need, overlap and abundance within spaces (here, more work is certainly needed on sport-specific volunteer activity and partnership in the post-Olympic phase).

Overall, the experiences of Athens and Greece are useful in exemplifying, respectively, some of the fundamental challenges host cities and nations face in delivering volunteer programmes, the positioning of sport-volunteering as part of wider civil society and volunteer culture shifts, and outcomes of establishing capacity building networks and opportunities in the sector. At the very least, there is merit in future OCOGs acknowledging pre-existing sector organisations and activities, and complementing this activity, rather than replacing it with top-down programmes that may not best fit local ideas, beliefs, and values. More specifically, there remains a need to recognise that sport volunteering is a distinct area of the landscape whose stakeholders may have different understandings/conceptions of volunteering.

However, there is also value in not seeing sport as entirely separate from the wider landscape of activity and to look to areas where resource sharing and partnerships may be forged (for example, around environmental or social responsibility agendas. While there are no guarantees an Olympic Games will contribute to sustained volunteer or civil society strengthening, the case of Athens 2004 illustrates a number of areas (e.g., human resourcing, stakeholder mapping, effective marketing, partnership building and strong leadership, and political advocacy) where investments and energies may be directed. Athens' volunteer, civil society and local authorities continue to learn also, volunteerism is borne out of the goodwill, enthusiasm, dedication and motivation of individual citizens and communities first and foremost. Thus, it needs to be their values, experiences and desire that should be central to any volunteer legacy planning.

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Appendix 1. Interview and Open-ended Survey Protocol

Email Invitation

Dear,

We are researchers based at the Universities of Bournemouth and Kent in the United Kingdom and We are conducting a research funded by the Olympic Studies Centre of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The research aims at a better understanding of the subject (if any) of the 2004 Olympic Games in the long-term development of volunteering within Athens and the wider country. We are currently in the data collection phase. We conduct interviews with voluntary organizations in Greece and individuals who played a leading role in the management of volunteers both in Athens 2004 and subsequently to other events and civil society initiatives post-Games. I would like to personally invite you to participate in an online interview, if at all, possible. We are particularly interested to hear more about the leadership role that executives of Athens 2004, the sports federations or civil society organisations played in shaping the voluntary culture in Greece.

Participation in our research would enable us to create important links between the past, present, and future development of volunteering in Greece, in order to collectively help strengthen resources and provide volunteers.

The online interview lasts about 45-60 minutes and can be set to a day and time that facilitates the individual participant, is anonymous and participants can leave at any stage of the research they wish.

We appreciate that this is a busy time for you, however we hope that you will be able to help us by participating in our research. Please contact me if you have any questions about conducting the survey.

Volunteers

1. Athens in 2004

- What can you recall about the Athens 2004 Olympic Games?
- Can you tell me about your experiences as a volunteer during the Olympic Games?
- Why did you apply to become a volunteer?
- What sort of volunteer experience, if any, did you have before the Games?
- Can you tell me a bit more about the volunteer programme/s you were involved in at the time?
- Can you explain about your precise role/s at the time?
- How did you come to be selected for this role? Was it random, by choice or based on your particular skills set/expertise?
- What sort of training (informal/formal/induction/course/workshop etc) did you receive, if any, prior to commencing volunteering?
- Did you feel you were prepared enough?

- If can recall, can you tell us a little more about the nature of the training?
- How effective/ineffective was it in terms of preparing for either a) the role you undertook at the time, and/or b) future skill development and volunteering after the games?
- What did you consider to be the benefits of volunteering at the Games?
- Immediately after the Games, what did you do to sustain your volunteering (if anything)?
- Do you feel you developed any tangible or intangible skills by volunteering at the Games?

2. Athens since 2004

- Since Athens 2004, have you continued to volunteer?
- If yes, what sort of volunteering have you done?
- If no, are the particular reason why you have not volunteered?
- Can you tell us a bit about your work and life since Athens 2004?
- In what ways has volunteer featured, if at all?
- What skills, if any, that you developed during Athens volunteering do you continue to use or still practice in your daily life?
- Have there been any social, political, or economic influences since Athens that have either inhibited or encouraged you to take up further volunteering?
- What have been some of the most significant factors influencing your take up of volunteering?
- What do you think could have been done after the games to sustain your involvement in volunteering?
- What do you think could have been done at the city and national level to strengthen volunteering?
- Have you been approached by any organisation to consider any further volunteering?
- Have you been involved in sport volunteering or volunteering outside of sport?
- Have you experienced ways skills transfer from sport volunteering into non-sport volunteering and vice versa?
- Has volunteer participation at the Games influenced your career and/or any decisions in your career since 2004?
- Has volunteering provided any opportunities personally or professionally for you since the Games?
- Have you experienced any adverse effects of volunteering?

3. Athens in 2020/2021

- Tell us about your work and life now?
- Are you still engaged in volunteer activity? In sport or outside of sport?
- To what extent, and whether, did the experience influence your attitudes toward sport?
- To what extent, and whether, did the experience influence your attitudes toward community engagement?

- What comment could you make about Athens' ability to encourage and support volunteers?
- How would you describe the city's current volunteer cultures?
- How would you describe the city's grassroots sport system for volunteers?
- What challenges to you feel individuals wanting to volunteer face in the city?
- What do you feel could improve volunteering?
- What comment could you make about Greece's ability to encourage and support volunteer?
- Have current events (e.g., Covid-19, earthquake, refugee crisis, austerity, the government responses) influenced your attitudes to volunteering? And your behaviour and actions?

Volunteer organisation/NGO

1. Athens in 2004

- Can you tell us about the organisation you were working in at the time of the Athens Olympic Games? (size, focus, sport, location, numbers of staff, specific initiatives etc).
- Where you in touch with the Local organising committee to jointly develop the volunteer programme?
- Were your working with any specific Olympic partners or sponsors? If so, what sort of relationship was it? And how did it influence the delivery of volunteer activities?
- In what ways did your relationship/position as an organisation change with Athens 2004 Games stakeholders over the course of the event's life-cycle?
- Did the organisation experience any challenges at the time? How were these resolved (if at all)? And, what impact, if any did it have on the organisation's ability to deliver its volunteer objectives?
- How did the organisation develop its volunteer programmes at the time? (e.g., resource, training, recruitment, retention, motivation etc.)?
- At the time, was there any planning in place for sustaining post-Games volunteering? If yes, what was the focus? If not, why not?

2. Athens since 2004

- How has the organisation evolved since the Games?
- In what ways has volunteer infrastructure changed within the organisation?
- Externally, how have forces within the city and/or country impacted upon the organisation and its volunteer activities?
- In what ways since the Games have volunteer activities changed in your organisation?
- Were there any enduring/long term benefits to the organisation from the Athens 2004 Olympic Games? Or were there disadvantages? How were these benefits, if any, capitalised on?
- How do you feel the organisation has contributed to the development and enhancement of volunteer cultures within the city and/or country?

- Similarly, in relation to the development of grassroots sport participation?
- Was the organisation involved in legacy planning and delivering after the Games?
- Did the organisation adopt a proactive or reactive approach to engaging with Athens volunteers after the Games?
- Is previous involvement in Athens 2004 a notable feature of volunteers' experiences/CV when they are recruited?
- Does experience as an Athens 2004 volunteer influence recruitment decisions?

3. Athens in 2020/2021

- What is the current status of volunteering in the country?
- How do you feel the city is prepared and/or resourced to support: volunteers, generally? sport-specific volunteers?
- How do you currently recruit your volunteers?
- What strategies do you find most effective?
- What challenges do you face in sustaining the organisation's volunteer activities?
- What factors do you feel have influenced the current uptake of volunteering in the country?
- What resources does the organisation need to improve its volunteer capacities?
- Is there a meaningful/discernible connection between what the organisation's focus and activities are now, and the legacy of Athens 2004?
- Is it still feel appropriate to talk about an Athens 2004 Olympic volunteer legacy?
- have you have seen a change in sport volunteer engagement in recent times because of the Games' effect?
- Are there currently any strategies in place to develop volunteers' skills, training, and career opportunities through their volunteering? If so, can you tell us more? If not, are they plans in the future for volunteer training?
- Had the Athens 2004 experience been utilised when the organisation has involved itself in volunteer activities related to other sport mega events in the country/city?
- What could have done to make sport mega-event volunteering and/or community volunteering more appealing to potential volunteers?
- If Athens/Greece, were to bid again and host an Olympic or similar sport-mega event, what advice would you give to local organising committees?
- If such an event took place in the future, what roles would you like your organisation to have in supporting volunteer activity?

Other organisations (e.g. NOC, governing bodies, local councils, Athens 2004 Volunteer Programme Managers)

1. Athens in 2004

- Can you explain the role/s the organisation took at the time of the Athens Olympics?

- What sort of relationship, if any, did you have with the Local organizing committee?
- What sort of relationship, if any, did you have with volunteer organisations?
- Were you approached at the time by Athens' volunteers or volunteer organizations? If so, can you explain a little further?
- Were there any particular project that your organisation did that required volunteer resources?
- What sort of roles did volunteers undertake in your organisation during the Games?
- Were you consulted in the development of the volunteer programme in Athens? And, in what ways?
- In what ways did involvement in the Athens Olympic help your organisation achieve its aims and objectives? Can you explain further?
- How did the organization evaluate or monitor, if at all, its Olympic Games involvements?
- What skills did your organisation require of volunteers, if any?
- What sort of training, if any, did you organisation put in place for volunteers?
- What sort of feedback did you receive, if any, on the organisations volunteer initiatives?

2. Athens since 2004

- How do you feel the Athens Olympics developed the voluntary sector in the city and country?
- What lessons, if any, did you organisation learn from Athens hosting the Olympic Games?
- Do you think something else could have been done to develop the volunteer movement since?
- How has your organisation changed since 2004?
- Do you feel these changes have been influenced, if at all, by the city/country having hosted the Games? Can you explain further?
- What approach does you organisation take with regard to volunteer recruitment, retention and resourcing?
- In relation to specific volunteers that have come to your organisation from Athens Olympic volunteering, what have you done (if anything) to provide them with new roles or opportunities to further their development?
- What barriers have the organisation faced in developing volunteering?
- What opportunities has your organisation leveraged to develop volunteering?

3. Athens in 2020/2021

- What is the current status of volunteering? What is the main focus of volunteering activity within your organization?
- Do you currently have any programmes or resources to develop and support your volunteers?
- Can you explain what these are and how you use them? Are they effective?

- From your organisation's perspective, that are the challenges for volunteering in sport in Greece and Athens today?
- What opportunities are there for volunteering going forward?
- What do you feel the organisation could do to sustain volunteer cultures?
- What roles do you feel the state or local government should have in supporting sport volunteering?
- Has the organisation applied, or been successful, with any funding in relation to volunteer recruitment, training, and retention? If so, what specifically has this been used for?
- Are there other organisations and stakeholders you work or partner with to deliver sport volunteering projects?
- What roles would you like the organisation to play in the growth of sport volunteering in the future?
- How do you foresee the future of the sport volunteering in Athens and Greece?

Appendix 2: Online Survey to target Athens 2004 Volunteers

Email Invitation

Dear Participant,

We are researchers based at the Universities of Kent and Bournemouth UK. We are currently working on a project funded by the Olympic Studies Centre of the International Olympic Committee.

The project investigates volunteering and sport-related activities and communities within Athens and Greece since 2004. A focus within is to better understand the impact of the 2004 Olympic Games on the long-term development of volunteering within the country.

We would like to hear your experiences following your contribution as a volunteer at the Athens 2004 Games.

The survey takes around 30 minutes to complete. All data collected will be held anonymously and securely and no personal data is retained or passed on to any third-party members. Your involvement in this survey is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any point. Should you choose to withdraw from the study at any time, your personal data will be removed from our database.

There are no right or wrong answers. Please try and answer as many of these questions as accurately and honestly as you can.

Kind regards,

The Researchers

Section 1: Athens in 2004

- This section focuses on your reflection, recollections and memories of the Athens 2004 Games and your involvement in sport and volunteering at the time.
- What can you recall from your experiences as a volunteer during Athens 2004 Games?
- Why did you apply to become a volunteer?
- What sort of volunteer experience, if any, did you have before the games?
- Can you tell me a bit more about the volunteer programme/s you were involved and your role at the time?
- How did you come to be selected for this role at the Games? For example, was it random, by choice or based on your particular skills set/expertise?
- What sort of training did you receive, if any, prior to commencing volunteering? (e.g., informal, formal, basic induction, or workshop)
- Please tell us a little more about the nature of the training.
- Do you feel the training prepared you enough to undertake your volunteer duties?
- How useful was the training in terms of future skill development after the Games?

- Immediately after the games, what did you do to continue your volunteering (if anything)?

Section 2: Athens since 2004

This section focuses on the period since the Athens 2004 Olympic Games (2004-2020), and your perspectives on the changes and continuation of sport and volunteer development within Athens and wider Greece.

- Can you tell us a bit about your work and life since Athens 2004?
- Since Athens 2004, have you continued to volunteer? - If yes, what sort of volunteering have you done? - If no, are there particular reasons why you have not volunteered?
- Have you been approached by any organisation to consider any further volunteering?
- What skills, if any, that you developed during Athens volunteering do you continue to use in your daily/working life?
- What sort of issues and factors since Athens that have either inhibited or encouraged you to take up further volunteering?
- What do you think could have been done after the Games to sustain your involvement in volunteering?
- What do you think could have been done at the local and/or national level to strengthen volunteering?
- How do you feel the skills you have developed in sport volunteering translate to other forms of volunteering?
- Has volunteer participation at the Games influenced your career and/or any decisions in your career since 2004?
- Has volunteering provided any opportunities personally or professionally for you since the Games?
- Have you experienced any negative effects of volunteering?

Section 3: Athens in 2021

This section focuses on the current period (2021) and your experiences and feelings about the future of sport and general volunteer cultures.

- In what ways, if any, are you still engaged in volunteer activity? (Please specify if this is within or outside sport)
- To what extent has the Athens 2004 experience influenced your current attitudes toward sport?
- To what extent has the Athens 2004 experience influenced your current attitudes toward community engagement?
- In what ways, if any, have current events (e.g., Covid-19, natural disasters, refugee crisis, austerity, government responses) influenced your attitudes, behaviour and actions related to volunteering?
- How would you describe the city's current volunteer cultures?
- How would you describe the city's grassroot sport system for volunteers? What challenges do you feel individuals wanting to volunteer have in Athens?
- What do you feel could improve volunteering?

- What sort of skill development do you feel organisations should include in volunteer training?
- In what ways should organisations acknowledge the value of their volunteers?
- What comment could you make about the Athens' municipal government's ability to support volunteers?
- What examples of good models of volunteer organisations do you know of in Athens currently?
- Please add here any further comments you wish to make about Athens 2004 volunteering or your sport and volunteering experiences since.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey

If there is anyone else, you believe could provide further insights please forward them this survey link.

We thank you for your time and value your contribution to helping us enhance sport volunteering and mega-event legacy impact in Greece.