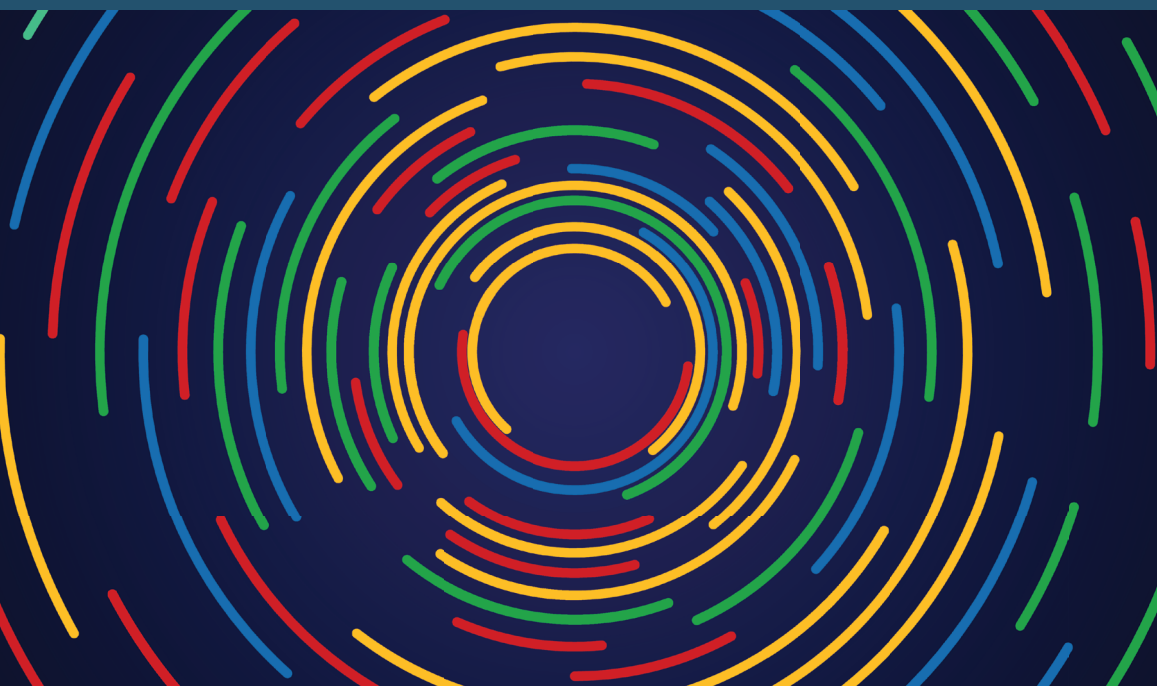Preuß | Schallhorn | Schütte

Olympic Sport Organisations in Times of Crisis and Change

Guide for Strategic Management and Good Governance

ACADEMIA

PR◉JECT RINGS

In cooperation with the EOC EU Office and in the framework of the RINGS project, co-financed by the Erasmus+ Sport Programme of the European Union.

This Guidebook is one of the outputs of the ERASMUS+ (2020-2022) RINGS project (Road towards Innovative Governance of NOCs and Grassroots Sport organisations).

The RINGS consortium consists of:

- EU Office of the European Olympic Committees (EOC EU Office)
- National Olympic Committee of Belgium (BOIC)
- National Olympic Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina (OCBiH)
- National Olympic Committee of Cyprus (COC)
- National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF)
- National Olympic Committee of Greece (HOC)
- National Olympic Committee of Italy (CONI)
- National Olympic Committee of Liechtenstein (LOC)
- National Olympic Committee of Lithuania (LNOC)
- National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of the Netherlands (NOC*NSF)
- National Olympic Committee of Slovakia (SOSC)
- National Olympic Committee of Turkey (TOC)
- Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz (JGU)

Holger Preuß | Christiana Schallhorn | Norbert Schütte

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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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Introduction to the Guidebook

"Change or be changed" (Bach, 2013) is the motto which means that strategic management is needed to keep track of the changes of the environment. The Olympic Movement, led by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), established Olympic Agenda 2020, and extended it to Agenda 2020+5 to capture current challenges, such as digitalisation, attracting the youth, or strengthening solidarity. The world is changing quicker than wanted and provides ever stronger disruptions – as can be seen by the COVID-19 pandemic and its manifold consequences for sport and the society, or the Russian invasion of Ukraine causing a new world order and at least several millions of refugees.

In response to the new and complex challenges facing society, National Olympic Committees (NOCs) must act strategically; for example, by developing professional and sustainable action plans. A proactive and creative mindset is essential. This can be increasing partnerships or cooperations with stakeholders from government agencies to the private sector. The work with stakeholders, communications, and public affairs becomes increasingly important. This book covers the most important topics of the ERASMUS+ (2020-2022) "RINGS" project (Road towards Innovative Governance of NOCs and Grassroots Sport organisations). Over the past decade, it has become clear that many Sport organisations do not have a good governance structure, as was covered in the previous ERASMUS+ (2015-2016) "SIGGS" project (Support the implementation of good governance in sport). Both projects, led by the EU Office of European Olympic Committees, show that it is also essential that NOCs demonstrate high standards of governance, in order to maintain confidence in their activities and to protect the integrity of the Olympic sport movement.

NOCs should draw the right and wise conclusions from the many current changes, and then aim to turn the challenges and inherent threats into opportunities. This book aims to assist in identifying changes and providing tools to implement them, as well as analysing the situation and the respective NOC, in order to enable the various boards and managers to identify opportunities by avoiding threats and minimising risks. To do so, an NOC should plan for its future. The IOC started that initiative by launching the Olympic Agenda 2020+5, based on the feedback it received from its many stakeholders, including the NOCs.

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Since every NOC has a different organisational and communicational culture, as well as different issues and challenges, each one has to adapt the tools, processes, and cases that are presented in this book to its particular needs and requirements. Strategic planning will help to successfully realise the goals of the NOCs.

Strategic Planning in a Nutshell

Strategic planning is widely used by organisations, as it is an integral part of strategy. It has several advantages that will:
1. provide a clear, coordinated, and prioritised focus for your NOC;
2. engage and inspire external stakeholders of your NOC;
3. motivate NOC staff by providing a clear purpose for each activity.
Strategic planning helps to position an NOC, through prioritising its use of resources according to identified goals, as set out in its statutes, in an effort to guide its direction and development over a period of time (Bryson, 1995). After the planning, strategic management refers to the implementation of a strategic plan that is designed to achieve long-term goals, and the allocation of the necessary resources to meet these goals (Ansoff et al., 2019; Robinson, 2020).

In an environment that is changing at an increasingly faster rate, strategic thinking and action have, in turn, become increasingly important. These factors have been adopted by public and not-for-profit organisations to enable them to successfully adapt to future changes (Mintzberg, 1989; Bryson, 1995; Wilson, 1990; Freeman, 2010; Courtney, 2002; Allison & Kaye, 1997). In this book, the aim is to use the best of these adoptions, and in a particular way that would best fit to the Olympic sport system, specifically the NOCs. Such as Robinson and Minikin (2011) we try to develop strategic capacity in Olympic sport organisations.

Practical Issues Offered in this Guidebook

This guidebook offers many practical applications, recommendations, and training sessions via workshops and case studies. The workshops should be adopted to each of the NOC's particular needs and specific culture. Case studies will end with questions that shall direct you to the issues which are worthy of reflection.

In this book we offer the following formats:

Illustrations:	These are best practices from other NOCs, that are used to illustrate good solutions. Here, you can learn from other experiences, bearing in mind the different culture, different professional environment, and different organisational development of the NOC.
Case studies:	These are provided for training purposes. Besides describing a particular case, they also include questions or study activities.
Workshops:	These are proposed activity units where the processes are explained in a "hands on" way, and in detail.
Recommendations:	Whenever an NOC had found a solution to a problem that could, potentially, be copied, we provide it as a recommendation.
Fact boxes:	These contain important explanations, or definitions of terms and facts.

This guidebook cannot give assistance about which tool and which recommendation are most important to a particular NOC, because they depend solely on the development of an NOC, and on which assessments an NOC has already achieved in the past.

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Chapter 1 Organisation of the Olympic Sports World

1.1 IOC as Leader of the Olympic Movement

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) was founded by Baron Pierre de Coubertin in Paris on 23rd June 1894, and has been headquartered in Lausanne since 1915 (IOC, 2021a). Today, the IOC is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) in the legal form of an association under Swiss law, with an explicitly pro-social ambition to promote education and peace (IOC, 2021a), thus ensuring its moral legitimacy. With the help of strong commercialisation and digitalisation, the IOC promotes Olympism, which is enshrined in seven Fundamental Principles of Olympism in the Olympic Charter. Principle three defines the idea and ownership, and thus the cognitive legitimacy, of the Olympic Movement and Olympic Games:

> *"The Olympic Movement is the concerted, organised, universal and permanent action, carried out under the supreme authority of the IOC, of all individuals and entities who are inspired by the values of Olympism. It covers the five continents. It reaches its peak with the bringing together of the world's athletes at the great sports festival, the Olympic Games"* (IOC, 2021, 8).

From 2017 to 2021, the IOC generated USD7.6 billion from the Olympic Games. Of this, 10% remains with the IOC as an organisation, 21% goes to NOCs, and 69% is passed on to other IOC-recognised organisations of the Olympic Movement (IOC, 2021b). The Games are a major source of funding for the Olympic Movement. However, the money also ensures that the IOC has its practical legitimacy, and thus its power in the governance of world sports (Preuss, 2021). This has to be considered in any strategic consideration.

The Olympic Movement comprises the majority of the organisations in world sport, and at its core it consists of three pillars,
1) the IOC as the leader of the movement,
2) 40 International Sports Federations (IFs), and
3) 206 National Olympic Committees (NOCs).

The NOCs and IFs are umbrella organisations and, therefore, all of their members, i.e., the national federations (NF), sports clubs, and individuals

(athletes, judges, referees, coaches, officials, and technicians), are also part of the Olympic Movement. It also includes the Organising Committees of the Games.

4) Summer and Winter Olympic Games (OCOGs, Organising Committees for the Olympic Games), and
5) Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in summer and winter.

Finally, the Olympic Movement includes other organisations and federations that are recognised by the IOC, such as:

6) the International Paralympic Committee,
7) recognised IFs, whose sports may, at some time in the future, be included in the Olympic programme.
8) 60 other recognised organisations (e.g., Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF), or simply the International Olympic Academy (IOA), and the International Pierre de Coubertin Committee (CIPC)).

All of the organisations that are recognised by the IOC (Fig. 1), and which represent the Olympic Movement, must follow the duties for their organisation, as written in the IOC Statutes (Olympic Charter), in return for the money and other benefits that they receive.

Fact box: Olympic Charter

Every organisation of the Olympic Movement is guided by the Olympic Charter. That is, the codification of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism, Rules, and Bye-laws that are adopted by the IOC. It governs the organisations, actions, and functioning of the Olympic Movement and establishes the conditions for the staging of the Olympic Games.

The Olympic Charter serves three main purposes:

- as a basic instrument of a constitutional nature (Fundamental Principles and essential values of Olympism).
- as statutes for the IOC.
- it defines the main reciprocal rights and obligations of the main organisations of the Olympic Movement (IOC, IFs, NOCs, OCOGs), as all of them are required to comply with the Olympic Charter (Robinson, 2020, 12).

This practically means that all of these organisations must bring their statutes and activities in line with the Olympic Charter, in order to remain recognised. However, each IF and NOC retains its autonomy in the governance of its sport and territory (IOC, 2021a, § 25).

IOC

IOC Organisations
(S.A. & Foundations)

81 IFs
- 32 Summer IFs
- 8 Winter IFs
- 35 recognised IFs
- 5 IF Associations

214 NOCs
- 206 NOCs
- 8 NOC Associations

5 OCOGs
- Paris 2024
- Dakar 2026
- Milan/Cortina ´26
- Los Angeles 2028
- Brisbane 2032

46 Individual
- 6 educa. Ass.
- 15 Multi Sport Associations & Events
- 27 other Org., e.g. CIPC, IOA, TAFISA, CISS

Legend

OCOG	*Organising Committee*
IF	*International Federation*
NOC	*National Olympic Committee*
	IOC recognition
	Money from IOC
	Follows regulations of Olympic Charter
*	*money distributed in 2013-2016*

Fig. 1: Organisations of the Olympic Movement financed by the Olympic Games

Sources: IOC (2019, 120f.); IOC (2022a); IOC (2021a, § 45.1.3)

The NOCs received from IOC in 2019 around USD10 million for administration development, and in 2018 USD18.5 million for travel support at Olympic Games.

1.2 Role of NOCs in the Olympic Movement

The NOCs are the representatives of Olympism within their respective territories, and play a vital role in spreading the Olympic Values and the work of the Olympic Movement around the world. Their functions include preparing athletes and teams for the Olympic Games, developing sport at all levels, training sports coaches and administrators, and creating Olympic educational programmes. However, the last function can also be taken over by National Sport Federations or governments, e.g., in Türkiye this role is undertaken by the Ministry of Youth and Sports (government), to whom all the NFs are affiliated.

NOCs are *not-for-profit (private)* or *non-profit (public)* organisations. They all must be non-governmental as required by the Olympic Charter, and they must also be legaly organised as a non-profit/not-for-profit organisa-

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tion, where the majority of member votes are from the Olympic National Sports Federations. The choice of the legal form has an influence on strategic planning, as it can limit or extend the number of actions.

The following differentiation contains legal aspects and, therefore, may be applied differently in different countries or, in some countries, it may even be undifferentiated. However, the basic principles are valid, and changes from *not-for-profit (private)* to *non-profit (public)* do occur.

Illustration: Change of legal form

The Hellenic Olympic Committee recently changed from a public to a private not-for-profit organisation. The reasons for that can be a lower influence of the government on the one hand, but also a better possibility to get private financing, on the other.

Public Non-Profit NOC

A (public) non-profit NOC has tax-exempt status by the government because its mission and purpose are to further a social cause and provide a public benefit. To qualify as a non-profit, the NOC must serve the public good in some way. Non-profits do not distribute profit to anything other than furthering the advancement of the organisation. As such, it is required to make all financial and operating information public (Heaslip, 2020). Public non-profit institutions rely more heavily on public support, and are less regulated than private not-for-profit NOCs. For an NOC to become a bona fide public non-profit institution, at least 33 percent of its income must come from small donors, the government, or other charities. The collected funds must then be used to directly support the organisation's initiatives. Since public non-profit NOCs rely heavily on public contributions, typically, they are more susceptible to public scrutiny than private non-for-profit NOCs. Additionally, any public non-profit must contain a diversified board of directors that represent the public interest. More than half of the board must be unrelated, and unable to receive compensation as employees of the institution (Zimmer, 2019). However, the terms "public non-profit" and "private non-for-profit" often may get mixed up, e.g., the Turkish Olympic Committee is legally a public non-profit association, it does not receive any income from the government. Thus, by our definition it is a not-for-profit organisation.

(Private) Not-For-Profit NOC

Similar to a non-profit, a (private) not-for-profit organisation (e.g., the IOC) is one that does not earn profit for any owner. All money earned

through pursuing business activities or through donations goes right back into running the NOC. However, not-for-profits NOCs are not required to operate for the benefit of the public good. It can simply serve to achieve the goals of its members as stated in its statutes (Heaslip, 2020).

As opposed to a public non-profit institution, in which more than half of the board must be unrelated, a private non-profit organisation can be controlled by a small group of individuals. A fundamental reason regarding why an NOC, such as the Hellenic Olympic Committee, might prefer to establish a private not-for-profit, rather than a public non-profit, is the level of control. Since private not-for-profit NOCs mainly rely upon private revenue generation, they can operate fairly independently. Typically, private not-for-profits are not held accountable by the public, but their actions are limited by stricter and more extensive federal regulation (Zimmer, 2019). For further differences see: https://www.wallstreetmojo.com/n on-profit-vs-not-for-profit/

For-Profit Organisation

A *for-profit organisation* is one that operates with the goal of making money. Most businesses are for-profits that serve their customers by selling a product or service. The business owner earns an income from the for-profit, and may also pay shareholders and investors from the profits (Heaslip, 2020).

1.2.1 Duties and Rights of NOCs

In NOCs, the executive boards have their powers constrained by statutes and regulations which predetermine, to various degrees, not only the very purpose of the NOC but also its level of freedom to diversify or reduce a service. The primary financial driver in NOCs is not profit, but to maximise output and follow the IOC obligations, that are predefined in the statutes via the Olympic Charter within their given budget. While elements of competition exist, cooperation is much more common, because an NOC has a monopoly position in a territory.

Via the NOCs, the IOC is territorially represented all over the world and disseminates its basic ideas, the so-called "Fundamental Principles" (IOC, 2021a, § 27.2.2). The Olympic Charter contains some strict duties for NOCs. They are only recognised by the IOC if they ensure compliance with the Olympic Charter in their country. An IOC regulatory requirement is that the majority of NOC member votes must come from

National Olympic Sports Federations (IOC, 2021a, § 28.3). In addition, governments are not allowed to appoint officials to an NOC, although the members of an NOC may elect government representatives to office (IOC, 2021a, § 28.4), as is currently the case in China. These restrictions limit the strategic flexibility of NOCs.

The NOC revenues contain, firstly, a basic contribution to ensure its political independence; secondly, grants via Olympic Solidarity Programmes (USD590 million in 2021-2024 (IOC, 2020)); and, thirdly, a contribution from the TOP-Sponsors programme, based on the economic importance of the country for the sponsors. The latter is based on the fact that the NOCs keep their territory exclusively free for a sponsor product category, which restricts the strategic options in revenue generation.

Fact Box: Olympic Solidarity

The Olympic Solidarity Commission (chaired by Dr Robin E. Mitchell) has a special mandate and responsibility under Rule 5 of the Olympic Charter over the following programmes in support of world sport. The budget has been increased to USD590 million (2021-2024) and is divided up into 41% for world programmes (for NOCs to develop sports), 44% for continental programmes (projects of NOCs by continent), and 10% for NOCs to secure participation in the Olympic Games. The missing 5% is used for administration and technical support. This support is intended to help NOCs professionalise, create efficient structures, and organise training at various levels of performance (IOC, 2019, 22 & 80f). Thus, the IOC works very closely with all NOCs, supporting them in the development of their teams for the Olympic Games, and their efforts to promote the Olympic Movement around the world.

Besides the financial benefits, NOCs have the exclusive authority for sending athletes to the Olympic Games, or selecting interested hosts to organise the Youth Olympic and the Olympic Games. Additionally, the IOC provides substantive support by spreading the Olympic ideals and fighting against manipulation of sport events, doping, racism, etc. NOCs also get support for different projects e.g., on environmental protection, grassroots sports, and athlete health. Further, they receive accreditations to participate in all of the Games and all of its events (IOC Session, Olympic Forum, and Olympic Congresses). The Olympic Games and the Olympic Channel deliver media visibility to the NOCs. All of this could be considered in strategic planning.

In return for the financial and service contributions, NOCs implement the stipulations of the Olympic Charter, i.e., they follow the World Anti-Doping Code, create basic good governance structures, fight manipulation of the Games, and remain politically independent of the national government. If the Olympic Charter is violated, the IOC can impose sanctions. These range from withdrawing financial allocations, to limiting the number of athletes to be sent to the Olympic Games (example: weightlifting 2016), to exclusion from the Games (example: NOC North Korea for 2022 (violation § 27.3)), or even exclusion of the entire sport (example: wrestling 2013). All of this affects the size of the national teams. NOCs (or their officials) can also be excluded from the Games (examples: India 2013, Kuwait 2016, Russia 2018, Belarus 2021, and North Korea 2021).

Fact Box: Olympic Charter, Chapter 4: NOCs

According to the Olympic Charter, the mission of the NOCs is to develop, promote, and protect the Olympic Movement in their respective countries (IOC 2021a, § 27,1). The expected contribution is to
– promote the fundamental principles and values of Olympism in their countries,
– encourage the development of sport (high performance & sport for all),
– help in the training of sports administrators,
– take action against any form of discrimination and violence in sport,
– adopt and implement the World Anti-Doping Code, and
– secure medical care for, and health of, athletes.
The NOCs must preserve their autonomy and resist all pressures of any kind, including but not limited to political, legal, religious, or economic pressures. The tasks of the NOCs are framing the potential strategic planning and are, therefore, important to consider here. Their tasks are to
– constitute, organise, and lead their respective delegations at the Olympic Games,
– provide for the equipment, transport, and accommodation of the members of their delegations,
– assist the IOC regarding the protection of Olympic properties, and
– recognise national federations.
Further, it is recommended to
– regularly organise an Olympic Day to promote the Olympic Movement,
– include in their activities the promotion of culture and arts in the fields of sport and Olympism,
– participate in the programmes of Olympic Solidarity, and
– seek sources of financing in a manner which is compatible with the fundamental principles of Olympism.

Illustration: Turkish Olympic Committee
The TOC is a non-profit, autonomous, and non-governmental civil society organisation which is made up of volunteers. The TOC is the representative and the national constituent of the worldwide Olympic Movement in Türkiye and, as such, promotes the fundamental principles of Olympism at a national level within the framework of sports. It has the exclusive authority for the representation of Türkiye at the Olympic Games and at the regional, continental, or world multisports competitions that are patronised by the IOC. As one of the most important stakeholders of Turkish sports, the TOC uses its mandate as a member of the Olympic Movement to positively enhance Turkish sport. The TOC delivers this by putting athletes first, to ensure that it does all it can to help them achieve their full potential through providing practical, effective, and value-adding support and services to, firstly, athletes and national federations, as well as coaches, other sports officials, and technicians at every level of their sporting pathway. The TOC also commits itself to the physical, mental, social, and emotional development of Turkish children and youth. To inspire the children and youth through sport and Olympic values, the TOC runs various programmes, integrating sport with culture and education, and encouraging participation in physical activity for children and youth, thus expanding the universality of sport and attempting to bring it to everyone. There is no separate sport confederation in Türkiye.

1.2.2 Finances of NOCs

The financial structure of NOCs provides information about indirect dependencies on national governments, sponsors, and also the payments of the IOC. The two most important financing sources for smaller NOCs are the national governments and the IOC. Sponsoring, Lottery, or NOC assets are other revenues. Revenues from private industry (sponsors, licenses, etc.) are often bound to the use of the Olympic emblems. However, NOCs may only use the Olympic symbol, flag, motto, and anthem within the framework of their non-profit-making activities and in their territory, provided such use contributes to the development of the Olympic Movement, and does not detract from its dignity.

> *"The Olympic symbol, the Olympic emblems and any other Olympic properties of the IOC may be exploited by the IOC, or by a person authorised by*

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it, in the country of an NOC, provided that the following conditions are respectively fulfilled:

2.2.1 For all sponsorship and suppliership agreements and for all marketing initiatives other than those referred to in paragraph 2.2.2 below, such exploitation shall not cause serious damage to the interests of the NOC concerned, and the decision shall be taken by the IOC in consultation with such NOC, which shall receive part of the net proceeds deriving from such exploitation.

2.2.2 For all licensing agreements, the NOC shall receive half of all net income from such exploitation, after deduction of all taxes and out-of-pocket costs relating thereto. The NOC will be informed in advance of any such exploitation." (IOC, 2021a, § 14 bylaw 2.2)

Usually, only the NOC emblems can be used within the country of the NOC concerned; such emblems, as well as any other symbols, emblems, marks, or designations of an NOC which refer to Olympism, may not be used for any advertising, commercial, or profit-making purposes whatsoever in the country of another NOC. This restricts the strategic action options for any NOC.

Case Study: Finances of NOC

The following chart illustrates the share of revenues of NOCs. The size of the country varies, as well as the market for sponsors. What can be seen is that the revenues roughly reflect the relations an NOC has with its supporters.
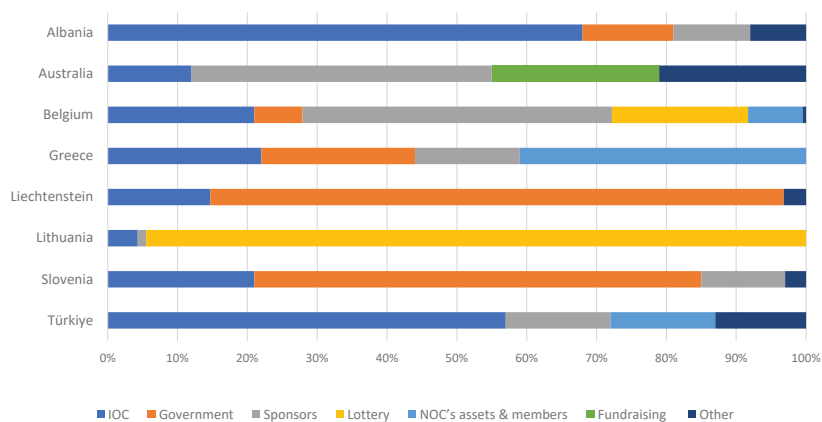
Fig. 2: Share of revenues of various NOCs in percent

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Questions to reflect upon:
1. Try to explain why the IOC contribution to NOC budgets is so different. Reflect upon that in relation to your NOC.
2. The government is important in different ways regarding offering help with financing the NOCs. How is that in your country? What do you give to your government in exchange for the money?
3. Sponsors are not easy to find. What are the difficulties in your country to find sponsors? Compare your country to those countries in our case study, and judge how you perform under your particular circumstances.

The following illustrations showcase how different the governmental funding, and the relation between the NOC and the government are. These already show the different roles the government or other sport leading organisations play as stakeholders.

Illustration: Public Funding of NOCs – a huge variety

Due to a complex political and economic situation in *Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)*, the NOC of BiH is registered as an Association of Citizens and, as such, it is not permanently funded by the governments, but the NOC of BiH has to apply for governmental grants under the same criteria as national sport federations and sport clubs. The NOC of BiH does not receive the funds from the government in order to distribute the financial aids. However, the NOC of BiH implements a great number of Olympic Solidarity programmes and projects, through which it helps the national sport federations in the country.

The *NOC of Belgium* has to work with three different communities that have their own political competence over sport. Thus, the NOC only receives around 7% of its income from public authorities (without taking into consideration the subsidies from the National Lottery). The funding for federations (only community-level federations) is managed directly by the executive agencies of these communities.

The *Slovak NOC* has really close collaboration with the government. Sport falls under the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport, where a special Sport Section is designated to handling all sport-related matters. Moreover, in 2019 a position of State Secretary for Sport was developed. The funding is approx. 30% from the government funding, and the amount is based on the fixed percentage, which is stipulated in the sports law. The Slovak NOC is not distributing the government money to the federations, but rather they receive the government funding directly from the government. However, they have several grant projects

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which are aimed at the NFs via project-based funding, whereby they can benefit from the funding which the Slovak NOC offers.

1.2.3 The Stakeholder Landscape of NOCs

The Olympic organisation landscape is complex, and NOCs have many other organisations and interest groups to work with and to rely on. The constant change of the environment, and ever new challenges, affect the shape of the stakeholder landscape.

Stakeholders are all groups of people or individuals who are affected by the NOC's activities, or can influence its success (Holzbaur, 2020, 20). Many strategic actions which involve stakeholders and NOCs should take into consideration their power, interest, influenceability, and alignment with each NOC project (see stakeholder analysis). Many initiatives will only be successful when the NOC cooperates successfully with stakeholders because, often a value is only created when both involve their resources (value co-creation) (Woratschek et al., 2014). In other words, strategic planning involves cooperation with stakeholders in order to create the value.

The following case study addresses many stakeholders, and illustrates how a collaboration of them creates value through the Olympic Day.

Case Study: Olympic Day – Digital 22nd-26th June 2021

Every year, more than 140 countries participate in Olympic Day. From South Africa to Norway, and from Canada to Australia, millions of people celebrate Olympic Values. The Olympic Day marks the founding day of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on 23rd June 1894, and all National Olympic Committees are encouraged to participate.

What is special about Olympic Day is that it combines sport and movement with Olympic Values. Under the motto of "Move", "Learn", and "Discover", people of all ages can try out a wide range of sports, meet sports stars, and take part in hands-on activities and many attractive activities related to the fascination of the Olympics. The organiser of Olympic Day in Germany is the German Olympic Academy (on behalf of the German Olympic Sports Confederation, DOSB).

Sports students at the University of Leipzig are looking into Olympic Day 2021 as part of a project.

What could Olympic Day in Germany look like in the future? What creative approaches are there to enable its implementation, even in the current pandemic situation? 28 sports students of the University of Leipzig

presented these to a jury of the German Olympic Academy (DOA) and the University of Leipzig.

As an international day of exchange and movement, Olympic Day combines Olympic Values and an extensive sports, information, and exercise programme. However, the 2020/21 pandemic situation made it almost impossible to implement the event as a live event for the second year in a row. The students took up this current challenge, and dealt with how a comprehensive Olympic Day concept for Germany could look. In addition to creative solutions for times with limited contact opportunities, clear visions and goals, as well as realistic financial and marketing plans, were important criteria for the jury.

The groups chose contemporary formats that are centralised and decentralised, as well as purely digital or hybrid, for a possible implementation of Olympic Day. Ideas ranged from an Olympic Family Day, to a school competition. The international motto of the Olympic Day: "Move", "Learn", "Discover", was taken up and imaginatively considered in the respective concepts. Theoretical workshops, practical (digital) sports activities, and the Olympic Run were the common thread throughout the concepts of the individual groups for Olympic Day. The target groups for the implementation of the project varied, from children and young people, to parents and senior citizens. In addition, the individual groups focused on different locations such as Munich, Leipzig, and Frankfurt.

Source: DOA (2022)

Questions to reflect upon:
1. Besides the DOA (DOSB), which other stakeholders were involved in the plan of Olympic Day?
2. Using a brainstorm process, consider which resources were involved at Olympic Day, from the respective stakeholder groups.
3. Discuss why the value of Olympic Day is only given when it gets co-created by several stakeholders.

The NOC cooperates with various governmental and public institutions in its efforts to protect the interests of athletes, coaches, medical staff, Olympians, and others. However, they shall not associate themselves with any activity which would be in contradiction with the Olympic Charter, stating that NOCs "may cooperate with governmental bodies, with which they shall achieve harmonious relations" (IOC, 2021a, § 27.5).

Figure 3 illustrates the various stakeholders (interest groups and partners) of an NOC, which can be internal and external.
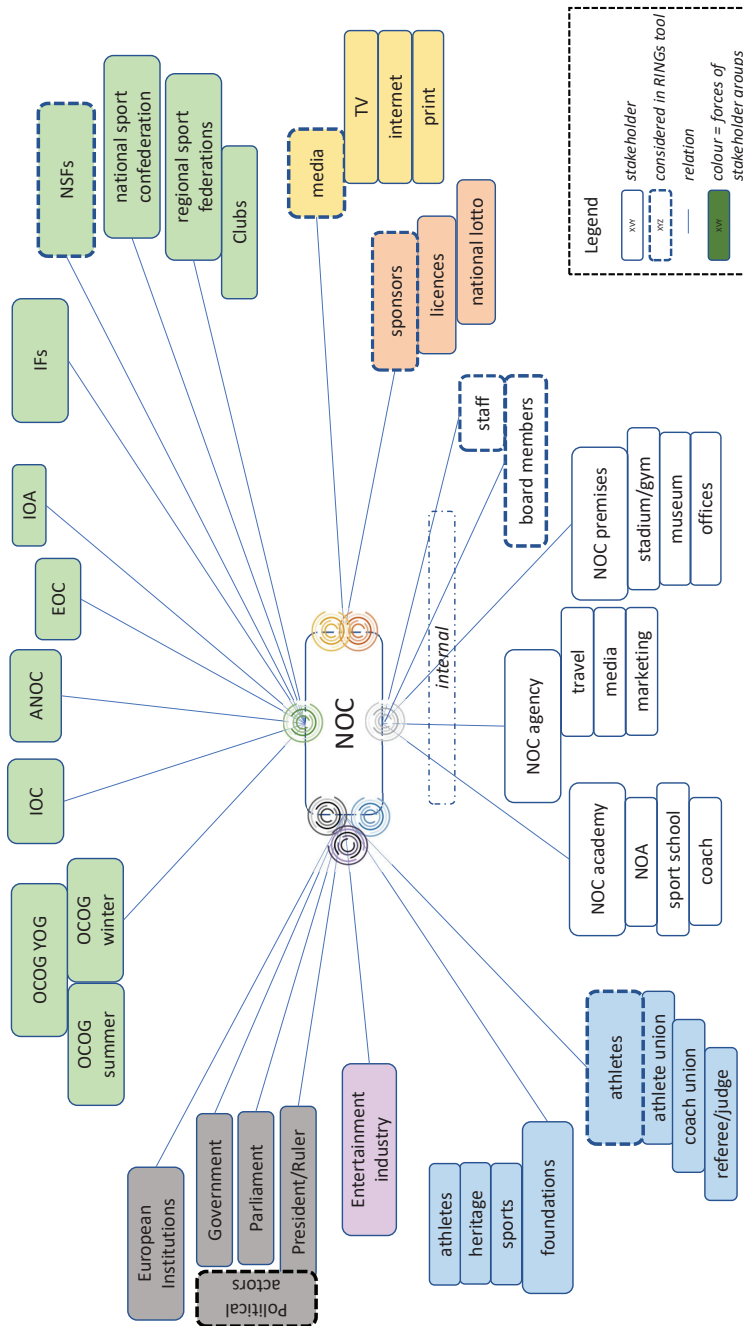
Fig. 3: Stakeholder Landscape of NOCs

From these many factors, the RINGS Project contains 10 main stakeholder groups which are the most important for NOCs. Political actors, athletes, member organisations, NOC board, staff, media, sponsors, NGOs, other actors in sport and international umbrella organisations (marked in Fig. 3).

Figure 3 contains six forces (Chappelet, 2005, 20):
1. Relations among the Olympic Movement (green)
2. Sport media corporations (yellow)
3. Sponsors and other commercial partners (orange)
4. Athletes, coaches, fans, and their unions and foundations supporting them (blue)
5. Entertainment industry (lilac)
6. Governments, intergovernmental organisations, and public authorities are interested, as sport is an important socio-economic phenomenon. They often finance the NOC (e.g., the Liechtenstein NOC a lot, but the Türkiye NOC not at all) (grey colour).

The force missing here is internal (white colour), which can be the board members, the staff, or internally built (strongly connected) institutions. Often, that is the National Olympic Academy, internal marketing, or travel agencies owned by the NOC. Finally, NOCs sometimes have their own premises (e.g., a national stadium or an office building, such as is the case for the Hellenic Olympic Committee).

Insights: Governments as Stakeholders of NOCs

A poll among 11 European NOCs (RINGS Partners) has shown that the government is the most important stakeholder, and that it is also the most difficult to work with.

Fig. 4: *Poll on the most important stakeholders of 11 NOCs*

Further, the question was asked: "What currently are the biggest challenges for your NOC?" Of the responses, government relations are in bold type; and each NOC could only mention three most important challenges:

65%	**convincing the government**
40%	financial instability
35%	restructuring my NOC
30%	lack of monitoring the success of efforts
30%	**no public funding**
25%	lack of professionalisation
20%	people engaging in sport outside clubs
20%	federations losing members
10%	missing knowledge about how to manage change
10%	federations are **losing government trust**
5%	loss of reputation

1.3 Good Governance at NOCs

Strategic management has to consider good governance. NOC management refers to the control and regulation system. However, the term "governance" is often used loosely. As good governance will have to be considered as a must in strategic management of NOCs, and due to the fact that it is also necessary for successful change management, this chapter will provide some basic explanation.

> *"The sports movement has a special responsibility in the discussion about integrity because by definition, all sports organisations stand for the values of excellence, fair-play and respect. As values-based organisations, we have the double duty to ensure that we uphold the principles of good governance in all our activities."* (Bach, 2017)

However, the media investigate the evidence they gather, and then report on cases of mismanagement of major sporting bodies, but this is also true for the NOCs which are closely associated with the IOC and the Olympic Games. This shows that good governance is still not reached, regarding a necessary level. To our knowledge, to date, there is no study on the NOCs, but there is a fourth review of IFs.

The ASOIF published its fourth review of IF Governance led by the Governance Taskforce (GTF) (ASOIF, 2022). In the context of evidence of cases of mismanagement of major sporting bodies, the ASOIF General Assembly in 2016 mandated a Governance Task Force (GTF) to assist the summer IFs in promoting a better culture of governance, to help ensure that they are fit for purpose, or could rapidly achieve that status. Methodological governance was split up into five sections. Each section consisted of ten indicators and had a theoretical maximum score of 40, and a minimum of 0. 33 IFs were investigated in 2021/22 (ASOIF, 2022).

Tab. 1: Governance status of IF

Integrity Section	Min	Max	Mean	Median
Transparency	27	39	35.6	36
Integrity	16	39	29.3	28
Democracy	20	39	30.5	31
Development	11	39	29.2	30
Control Mechanisms	16	39	28.1	28

Source: ASOIF (2022)

Several IFs posted section scores as high as 39 out of 40, while a handful had scores for specific sections under 20. Consistent with the findings in previous studies, the Transparency section was the highest-scoring overall for most IFs. Four of the top seven best-performing IFs were within one point of the maximum in this part of the assessment. Integrity and Control Mechanisms were the joint-lowest scoring in terms of the median figure (ASOIF, 2022).

SIGGS, tool, developed in an Erasmus+ Sport co-financed project and led by the EOC EU Office, (see Fig. 5) was designed to help the NOCs in undertaking a self-assessment of governance. It is important to note, that strategic management must consider and promote a better culture of governance. Further, the level of good governance has an effect on options

and also on stakeholder relations. Good governance must be considered in strategic planning.

> *"Recognising that sport occurs within the framework of society, sports organisations within the Olympic Movement shall have the rights and obligations of autonomy, which include freely establishing and controlling the rules of sport, determining the structure and governance of their organisations, enjoying the right of elections free from any outside influence and responsibility for ensuring that the principles of good governance are applied."* (IOC, 2021a, Fundamental Principle 5)

Strategic management involves "the use of power to direct, control and regulate activities within an organisation, and deals with high-level issues of strategy, policy, transparency and accountability" (Robinson, 2020, 18). Governance is the process of decision-making, and the process by which decisions are implemented (see Brands,2017) as example for Netherlands). An analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors (athletes, NFs, etc.), and the formal and informal structures (strategic planning, programmes, systems, etc.) that have been set in place to arrive at targets and implement decisions.

In a slightly different way, compared to the analysis of IFs, we can consider for the NOCs four principles of good governance: 1. integrity, 2. autonomy and accountability, 3. transparency, 4. democracy, inclusivity, and participation. Inherent in these principles are "control mechanisms" to avoid misbehaviour. The EOC EU Office, together with the project consortium, has developed the aforementioned self-assessment tool named "SIGGS", by providing practical guidance to implement good governance in an NOC.

Illustration: Good Governance at NOCs

SIGGS (http://pointsapp.novagov.com) is an online self-evaluation tool, which aims at providing practical guidance to NOCs and federations on the implementation principles of good governance. SIGGS 2.0 consists of an online questionnaire of 61 questions, depending on the nature of your organisation, focusing on four main principles:

Integrity	Autonomy and Accountability	Transparency	Democracy, Inclusivity, and Participation

By completing this online self-assessment, sport organisations can achieve an overview of their strengths and weaknesses, in terms of the implementation of these four principles, and a customised action plan, that is tailored to their specific situation.

Fig. 5: SIGGS Self-Evaluation Tool

Source: EOC EU Office, www.siggs.eu/content/information-sheet-siggs-self-evaluation-tool.html

The tool is accessible to all sizes of organisations, free of charge, and it contains multiple examples of guidance and good practices.

Table 2 shows the four principles of good governance and 20 SIGGS headlines. Those marked in italic are of particular importance, or they directly refer to strategic planning. The four principles are referred to in the columns from left to right: 1. Integrity, 2. autonomy and accountability, 3. transparency, 4. democracy, inclusivity, and participation.

Tab. 2: Principles of good governance

	Integrity	Autonomy and Accountability	Transparency	Democracy, Inclusivity, and Participation
1	*Personal integrity*	Autonomy	*Vision and mission (2.3)*	*Statutes (2.3)*
2	Sanctions	*Accountability*	*Strategy (2.0)*	*Democratic process* and elections
3	*Risk management*	*Responsibilities and clearness of role*	Availability of documents	Decision-making process
4	*Human resources management*	Career support for athletes/ staff/ volunteers	*Internal communication and consultation*	Representativeness and participation of athletes
5	Integrity of sport competitions	*Financial aspects*	*External communication*	Diversity and inclusivity

Italic = content directly connected to strategic management
(x.x) = refer to chapters of this handbook

Each NOC should take a closer look at the four principles and their meaning for strategic planning.

Integrity means to be honest, and to show a consistent and uncompromising adherence to ethical principles. The NOC should act in an honest and truthful way in all of its activities, and towards all of its stakeholders. A strategy based on integrity holds NOCs to a more robust standard. While compliance is rooted in avoiding legal sanctions, organisational integrity is based on the concept of self-governance, in accordance with a set of guiding principles (SIGGS, 2022). This refers to persons as well as to strategic plans.

Accountability will be addressed when change management is under analysis. It means that the NOC has to explain what will be done, why it will be done, and also what has been done so far. This leads to acceptance for its future activities and actions, and it will disclose the results of its activities, in order to avoid any perception of mismanagement. An NOC is accountable to its members (general assembly), to the government (as it is often funding the NOC), and to the IOC. It also includes the responsibility for money or other entrusted property (SIGGS, 2022). Autonomy means

a degree or level of freedom and discretion that is allowed to an organisation, and which includes not being controlled by others or by outside forces. Autonomy has to be understood in a twofold perspective: political autonomy and financial autonomy (SIGGS, 2022). Both will enable an NOC to act freely and to develop its own strategic plan.

> **Insights: Autonomy of NOCs and Cooperation with National Authorities**
>
> In the application of Recommendation 28 of Olympic Agenda 2020, the IOC now allows the NOCs and NFs at the national level, and the competent government authorities to develop a regular and constructive dialogue (i.e., memorandum of Understanding, a cooperation agreement, and/or a partnership agreement) on the basis of the Olympic Charter (IOC, 2021a, Fundamental Principle 5)
>
> *"Recognising that sport occurs within the framework of society, sports organisations within the Olympic Movement shall have the rights and obligations of autonomy, which include freely establishing and controlling the rules of sport, determining the structure and governance of their organisations, enjoying the right of elections free from any outside influence and the responsibility for ensuring that principles of good governance be applied."*
>
> But, it is clear that autonomy alone is not supporting the Olympic Movement. The development of sport in a country requires harmonious collaboration, synergies, and common-sense relations between both, the public authorities and national sports organisations, in the framework of their missions as both aim to develop, regulate, and manage sport.
>
> "Responsible Autonomy" implies rights, such as the power of self-regulation, internal governance rules without undue external interference, etc., but also duties such as respect for the general legal framework that is applicable in the country, the rules of the IFs, the principles of good governance, etc. Thus, the NOCs and NFs do not act in isolation, outside of their national context. They are part of the local society. It is a fact that the majority of NOCs and NFs rely on the technical and/or financial support of the public authorities to pursue their activities and sport within their country. Additionally, the public authorities support sport by having policies that are established to fight against doping, corruption, illegal betting, match-fixing, violence, racism, etc..
>
> Sports organisations are non-governmental organisations with their own legal personality, that are governed by their own statutes, with the ability to comply with the World Anti-Doping Code and to implement it at their level, and to make provision for independent mediation and/or

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arbitration mechanisms to deal with sports-related disputes. All of this is in conformity with the general framework of the applicable law and the universal principles and rules of the IFs by which they are recognised. A constructive and inclusive dialogue between the government authorities and the sports organisations is needed in order to establish a consistent sports policy and a legislative framework, which are compatible with the general principles of law in the country, the minimum principles of the Olympic Movement, and the rules of the IFs.

An example of a structural cooperation with public authorities comes from the *NOC of Belgium*. It has a close cooperation with the three different language communities that have the political competence over sport. The type of recognition and the type of cooperation differ from community to community. In terms of elite sport policy, the NOC works together with the three communities within the ABCD cooperation. This cooperation is based on a cooperation agreement (ABCD agreement), which sets out the principles of cooperation and creates the formal structures for interaction between the different actors. The highest level of interaction is called 'the Olympic Platform' and it brings together the three Ministers who are responsible for Sport, and the President of the NOC.

Source: Morgan (2020)

Transparency is a key principle in strategic management. It refers to openness and the communication of important information. It must be transparent; that is, it has to be easy for others (both internally and externally) to see its actions. A fundamental headline here, is to have a clear "Vision and Mission" (subchapter 2.3), and to publish the "statutes" which contain the objectives of the NOC. Transparency can be defined as the minimum degree of disclosure to which agreements, dealings, practices, and transactions are open to all for verification. However, it is not always the case that a full transparency would be a good move in strategic management, as it may cause trouble at too early a stage, or it may inform competitors about the plans/contracts.

   Democracy means that there is a rule for electing and replacing board members by way of elections. It is a system of organisation that is based on freedom, instead of fear and control (SIGGS, 2022). The Olympic Charter demands that the voting majority of NOCs is in the hands of Olympic NF (IOC, 2021, § 28.3). However, it is also demanded that all rules and procedures apply equally to all stakeholders and members. Additionally, there are stakeholder groups that should be considered to be taking part

in each decision-making body (e.g., athlete representative, disabled representative). This directly refers to inclusivity. Ensuring inclusivity means that the involvement of diverse individuals / stakeholders in the NOC must be completed by a functioning, which values the perspectives and contributions of all people, and strives to incorporate the needs and perspectives of diverse communities into the design and implementation of universal and inclusive programmes (SIGGS, 2022). Indirectly, this ensures a representation of all stakeholder groups in the relevant decision making process of strategic planning.

Illustration: Good Governance of NOCs

Good governance is part of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism. Since 2017, the IOC has increased its efforts to strengthen its principles of good governance, promoting integrity across all NOCs. For the IOC, it is clear that good governance is important, in order to justify and constantly maintain the autonomy of sport and the Olympic Movement. According to the IOC and Robinson (2020), there are seven themes that impact on the governance of NOCs:
1. Vision, mission, and strategy
2. Structures, regulations, and democratic process
3. Highest level of competence, integrity, and ethical standards
4. Accountability, transparency, and control
5. Solidarity and development
6. Athletes' involvement, participation, and care
7. Harmonious relations with governments while preserving autonomy

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1.4 Current and Future Challenges for NOCs

The aim of this subchapter is to shed more light on the future of sport and its impact on the NOCs, and to show what changes are necessary, and to be expected, as a result of foreseeable social, technological, and regulatory trends in international sport. Sport is currently exposed to multiple influencing factors and challenges. It is shaped by society (e.g., conditioned by societal demand for eSports), driven by pressures for sustainability (e.g., the IOC commits all recognised sports organisations, including NOCs, to sustainable sports), and transformed by modern technologies (e.g., use of video referees at Olympic Games since 2016). And the dynamics of these influencing factors have never been as large and uncertain as they are today (Aschauer et al., 2022). In this dynamic environment, the systematic

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examination of future scenarios becomes an indispensable prerequisite for the future viability of athletes, and officials of the NOCs, because for more than 20 years "sport no longer represents [...] only a system of activities that is primarily shaped by sport-related rules" (Breuer, 2003, 4).

The following short explanations show the challenges NOCs are facing today. There are many challenges for NOCs, which vary due to different size, culture, organisational structure, etc. Many of them affect the strategic plan or must be considered in strategic thinking. In 2021, the IOC released Agenda 2020+5. The trends and challenges that the IOC foresees are integrated into the following list of challenges to NOCs.

Fact Box: Agenda 2020 and Agenda 2020+5

Olympic *Agenda 2020+5* (IOC, 2021c) builds on the results of *Olympic Agenda 2020* (IOC, 2014) (adopted in 2014). Agenda 2020 strengthened the Olympic Movement by introducing 40 changes (e.g., make the Olympic Games fit for the future; safeguard the Olympic Values; and strengthen the role of sport in the society). These achievements have laid a solid foundation for the future.

The 15 recommendations of Agenda 2020+5, launched by the 2021 IOC Session, emerged from an inclusive and collaborative process of proposals around the world, and from all NOCs. The new recommendations are based on "key trends", that are identified as likely to be important in the post-COVID world, where sport and Olympic Values could play a key role.

The five key trends include:
1. The need for greater solidarity within and among societies
2. The growth in digitalisation
3. The urgency of achieving sustainable development
4. The growing demand for credibility, for both organisations and institutions
5. The need to build resilience, in the face of the financial and economic consequences that will result from the COVID-19 pandemic, and which will most likely influence future priority-setting among governments and enterprises.

These trends are backed by 15 recommendations, but not all of them are applicable to NOCs. They are all tangible, with key deliverables:
1. Strengthen the uniqueness and the universality of the Olympic Games
2. Foster sustainable Olympic Games
3. Reinforce athletes' rights and responsibilities

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4. Continue to attract the best athletes
5. Further strengthen safe sport and the protection of clean athletes
6. Enhance and promote the Road to the Olympic Games
7. Coordinate the harmonise the sports calendar
8. Grow digital engagement with people
9. Encourage the development of virtual sports and further engage with video gaming communities
10. Strengthen the role of sport as an important enabler for the UN Sustainable Development Goals
11. Strengthen the support given to refugees and populations affected by displacement
12. Reach out beyond the Olympic community
13. Continue to lead by example in corporate citizenship
14. Strengthen the Olympic Movement through good governance
15. Innovate revenue generation models

All NOCs face several challenges in the (near) future. These have a different origin and affect each NOC in a different way. The challenges presented here may be the reason for change and must, therefore, be considered in strategic planning. Challenges occur either through disruptions of a system that worked well before, or as a further development of a trend that, at a certain point, pressures an NOC to change.

In the following, some challenging areas are displayed (see also ASOIF, 2019). They should be considered by an NOC, in order to adopt a better approach to taking an active part in changes, by aiming to use them as opportunities. Alternatively, an NOC can wait while other organisations change more quickly, and then the NOC can react, and copy the others, which obviously is a risky strategy.

1.4.1 Organisational Challenges

1) *Each new edition of the Olympic Games will be new, modern, and demanding for NOCs*
   Each NOC has to be ready for the next Games with all its specificities. The IOC organises "Hosting Games preparation forums" and publishes "Playbooks" to assist NOCs in their planning for attending future Games.
2) *NOCs need Good Governance*

There is a high demand for credibility, for both organisations and institutions. The IOC delivers services to help NOCs comply with the Olympic Charter, and implement the Basic Universal Principles of good governance, as well as offering support related to elections, statutes, and dispute management. The EOC EU Office published the SIGGS project, thus providing a self-assessment tool for NOCs, in order to better their governance.

3) *IOC expects that NOCs develop Olympic Festivals*
   NOCs shall develop the Olympic Festival initiative, following a successful pilot during PyeongChang 2018, in establishing live sites within their countries/territories during upcoming Games, so as to engage local fans.

4) *NOCs shall fight manipulations*
   Fighting all forms of cheating is a key for sports integrity. The NOCs, with the support of the IOC, need to set up robust educational programmes and intelligence systems, and engage in partnerships with various stakeholders. Both doping and match fixing destroy the integrity of sport competition and the value of fair play. Additionally, the limit of human performance triggers manipulation (technology doping and genetic doping), but technology also develops high performance sport (Balmer et al., 2012). Even though it is not directly the task of an NOC, it does challenge the system, and as has been learned from the systematic doping in Russia, for example, the NOC and National Anti-Doping Agencies may be in league with any conspiracy and would, subsequently, be excluded from the Games.

5) *Safeguard athletes and sport events*
   NOCs must protect athletes from harassment, guard against injuries, and help protect their mental health. NOCs shall develop toolkits (such as undertaken by the IOC) and athlete safeguarding policies, procedures, and initiatives. Additionally, the danger is that sport competitions and events could get used by terrorists, extreme groups, or political statements, or spectators with strong particular interests. All of these can lead to higher security standards. How resilient are the NOCs to disruptions in the safety environment?

The next chapter looks at the financial challenges and upcoming disruptions that NOCs should consider when drafting a strategic plan.

1.4.2 Financial Challenges

6) *Capitalism & monopoly*

Without regulation, the capitalist free market leads to domination by the wealthiest governments, corporations, or individuals. Private investors (states and individuals) take over the control of parts of the sport market (leagues, federations, clubs, athletes), and benefit from the imbalance of the unevenly financed sport market. But, this is only by using sport for their own wealth, without any genuine interest in the sport system itself. The regulation systems, e.g., by the IOC, are challenged and it can be seen that some regulations were, or will soon be, taken over by governments or NGOs (such as Interpol regarding match fixing, US Justice at FIFA scandals, or British Governance to control Premier League Clubs).

The challenge is to keep the autonomy of NOCs, but also to show solidarity with small and poor NOCs. This also refers to keeping a competitive balance among nations at the Olympic Games. For example, through supporting athletes from poor countries, to train and attend the Games, or very practically in supporting the supply of uniforms to poor NOCs. The IOC has a liaising system with the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry, on a programme to provide free athlete uniforms for upcoming Games to those NOCs that are most in need.

7) *Sustainability*

NOCs receive financial support via Olympic Solidarity for NOCs' sustainability initiatives. The IOC provides technical support on sustainability for NOCs, e.g., through the creation of regional NOC sustainability working groups.

The next chapter looks at the technological challenges for NOCs, as technology is a driver for innovations.

1.4.3 Technological Challenges

8) *Covering the Olympic Movement 365 days a year*

NOCs shall reach their population all year round with Olympic content. This gets supported by the "Olympic Channel", in covering Olympic sports for 365 days a year. However, technology may help each NOC to create and spread Olympic news and values.

9) *Digitalisation*

The increasing speed of digitalisation, and the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI), both challenge each NOC. It has to be kept in mind, that there is need to expand the digital capability, and this is also true regarding the currently digitally underserved NOCs. AI can support NOCs in many matters, but for that, a great abundance of data needs to be collected. Data are the basis for highly complex algorithms, but at the cost of the transparency of the athletes, officials, spectators, and organisations. How can data protection be secured? And how can the NOC avoid becoming too dependent on AI systems?

10) *Virtual worlds and eSport*

Esports, virtual reality, and metaverse – these will be the reality of NOCs in the very near future. The world of Sport will be partly reborn, with new opportunities to compete, meet, exchange, consume, and entertain in the Metaverse. New sports, new organisations (NF), and new owners will construct a parallel universe; indeed, a parallel sport system. The IOC entered that field already, with the IOC virtual Olympic series, and already makes plans for the first Virtual Sport Festival for Singapore 2023. Further, new international federations pop up, such as the Global Esports Federation (GEF), with the aim of connecting to organised sport.

The next chapter looks at the political challenges for NOCs; and there are many that should be considered in strategic planning.

1.4.4 Political Challenges

11) *Political neutrality required*

The IOC is the leader of the Olympic Movement and has to provide mediation among 206 NOCs. Thus, it has established the NOC institutional relations team, to resolve issues related to the political neutrality of the Olympic Movement, particularly in situations where athletes have faced challenges to participate in competitions, due to discrimination or political constraints.

However, with the war in Ukraine, it seems that a new world order may occur. Wars and de-globalisations will be a challenge for the Olympic Movement. NOCs get challenged by disrupted international relations, including solidarity actions for other nations (e.g., the Ukraine or Syria). The IOC has the great challenge of keeping a global competition running, with the best athletes in each sport competing in

peace. Olympic sport, with NOCs at the centre, will take on a new role as facilitator for peace, or gate opener for reconciliation.

12) *Supporting refugees*

The IOC initiated a refugee foundation and closely collaborates with UNHCR. However, NOCs also have challenges with large numbers of refugees, in particular when millions enter from neighbouring countries (such as into Türkiye from Syria, into Poland from Ukraine, or into Spain from North Africa). It is expected that NOCs would commit to ensuring that displaced young people can access sports facilities and programmes, and are free to take part in competitions at all levels.

13) *Gender equality*

The first challenge is that the NOCs shall advance in gender equality in their countries' sport organisations. Obviously, that is easier for some countries (e.g., Scandinavia), but difficult for others due to their cultural background (e.g., Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia). Another challenge is to work with third gender or transgender individuals. Finally, the question is: "How should we treat female athletes with hyperandrogenism, which results in increased testosterone production, and may disrupt their equal chances?". All of these gender issues call for NOC policies and integrity.

14) *Solidarity and social change*

The youth are the sport consumers of tomorrow. The media consumption, excitement, and consumption of sport will surely change. However, humans wish to move and stay physical, and competition is human nature (maybe in a different way, though). Movement, physical actions, and human nature will continue to attract the sport behaviour of the youth. On the other hand, many societies have a growing elderly population (the *Silver Society* or *Silver Tsunami* - agile and interested old people, who feel increasingly younger). Overall, more people are single and the urban population is growing. All of these factors challenge the NOC regarding the width of its programmes. The NOCs shall consider reaching out for greater solidarity within and among the societies, in its strategic planning.

15) *Autonomy of sport organisations and NOCs*

The immense money in sport (fostered by private investors), and the potential image effects, both disrupt the currently existing solidarity model of the organised sport system. Investors and interests of states add to the imbalance of the sport system and will, at some stage, disrupt it (consider, for example, the private swimming league challenging grassroots sport, Saudi Arabia with LIV-Golf challenging

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qualification systems, or boxing and weightlifting with irregularities challenging the integrity of sport). Furthermore, politicians and governmental power use NOCs or sport clubs/leagues/events to illustrate social responsibility and sport enthusiasm, but they may strive, in reality, to either cover-up or disguise other political decisions (nationally, to placate the population via "bread and circus" acts, or internationally via "sports washing / diplomacy"), or they may use the Olympic Movement to increase influence (soft power). The autonomy of NOCs or their member federations will constantly be challenged, and political actions and interference will affect the sport eco-system (influenced, for example, by heavy investments versus minimised subventions).

The final chapter on challenges covers the environmental situation. These challenges have a massive influence on strategic planning for NOCs.

1.4.5 Environmental Challenges

16) *Pandemics*
    In terms of COVID, SARS, and Zika Virus, it is a fact that globalisation and Olympic Games support the spreading of diseases. The fight against such spreading hits sport, NOCs, and events, and causes chaos in the sports calendar; hence, there is a need for a diverse finance structure to cope with it.
    NOCs need to build resilience in the face of the financial and economic consequences resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The change of priority-setting among governments and sponsors has to be managed.

17) *Global warming*
    For many NOCs, sports, and Olympic hosts (nations) it will be challenging to deal with weather inconsistencies and with environmental requirements, such as green policies or energy saving. The environment will become an ever-stronger stakeholder. Ecological sustainability considerations will have to be considered in strategic planning by the NOC, as the weather and climate change, have very strong influences over how to practice sport (and to what degree), and how to maintain sport facilities.

The list of challenges for NOCs, as noted in this subchapter, is certainly not exhaustive. The utility of this list, is in providing an impetus to stimulate strategic discussions, to question the existing processes and projects in

an NOC, and should serve to stimulate sports policy debates and promote innovation in the NOCs.

Chapter 2 Strategic Management of Olympic Sport Organisations

The following subchapters will introduce the strategic management process for NOCs. Common knowledge on strategic management in industry was transformed to make it applicable for NOCs. Thus, in subchapter 2.2, the five phases of strategic management are explained to provide a general understanding. However, to work strategically, each NOC must have well-defined goals. The way in which to formulate them will be described, together with how to develop the overarching vision and mission of an NOC (subchapter 2.3). This is essential for every NOC that wants to start strategic planning. Finally, in subchapter 2.4, a deeper introduction is given about the elements a strategic plan of an NOC should consider. This chapter concludes with some important considerations about culture (subchapter 2.5). That should enable the reader to reflect upon his/her culture and NOC organisational culture, and help to sensibly finetune the recommendations and workshops that are provided in this book.

2.1 Strategic Management of NOCs

Strategic planning is an intelligent preparation for action, which is systematic, deliberate, continuous (Glaister & Falshaw, 1999), widely used by NOCs, irrespective of their cultural background or size, and the formal consideration of an organisation's future course (Kriemadis & Theako, 2007).

To govern where an NOC is going, whether it operates as a quasi-private or remains a public owned non-profit organisation, each NOC needs strategic planning. An NOC should know the following important points:
1) where it stands. Ask yourself "What are we doing?",
2) where it wants to go. Ask yourself "For whom do we do it?", and
3) how it will get there. Ask yourself "How do we excel?" (Bradford & Duncan, 2000)

These are three core questions in strategic management. The success of a strategic plan depends on the quality of the planning behind its creation.

Before an NOC starts to develop a strategic plan (subchapter 2.2), it must formulate a detailed political and administrative plan. According to Robinson (2020, 52), that should address four key questions:

1) Why do you need a strategic plan?
2) How will you develop your plan?
3) How much time do you have?
4) What is your budget?

It is important to have influential advocates of the strategy and its development process, and to communicate both properly (see chapter 4).

2.2 Strategic Management Process

There are different reasons for an NOC to use strategic management and in this way, develop a strategic plan. Reasons can be:

1) internal problems (e.g., vague objectives, unclear priorities, poorly defined roles and responsibilities, and an overall lack of organisational cohesion).
2) external factors (e.g., the need to demonstrate good governance, please sponsors, and better communicate Olympic Values) (Robinson, 2020, 52).

In this section, an overview of the Strategy Change Cycle is given. The nine-step process adopted from Bryson (2018, 39) explains the strategic management of NOCs, and contains five general phases (the RINGS in Fig. 6) with which to provide hands-on recommendations. The nine steps are:

1. Initiate a strategic planning process for any challenge the NOC has adopted
2. Check the NOC mandate for the project area
3. Reflect the project towards the current vision and mission of the NOC
4. Diagnose the external and internal environmental factors, in order to identify the strengths and weakness of the NOC, and the opportunities and threats from those environmental factors
5. Identify the strategic issues facing an NOC
6. Formulate the strategic plan
7. Review the strategic plan and develop an implementation plan
8. Implement the project through change management
9. Monitor the change process, and then reassess the situation

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Illustration: Liechtenstein Strategy Process
The NOC of Liechtenstein started its strategic process in 2014 with a situation analysis. Here, the answer to "Why do we need a strategic plan?", was developed. Then, in 2016, the NOC of Liechtenstein defined its strategic plan for 2017-2020. Before the plan started, goals were set on the basis of the vision and mission (see subchapter 2.3). Actions were defined to achieve the goals; resources were allocated, and a four-year plan was prepared. But, the NOC learned that two important actions were not addressed in this early phase – the involvement of stakeholders, and a stakeholder (external) evaluation of the plan. Thus, the lessons learned from the entire strategic process were:
1. **Analyse** the initial situation before you start planning
2. Aim to **foresee** the **future**, or **imagine** the future you would wish to achieve - that is, set your **goals**
3. Organise or provide **resources** to achieve those goals – but, be as realistic as you possibly can
4. **Plan** your actions in detail and over a long period of time – changes can take time
5. Determine and integrate your **stakeholders** – consider their power and alignment impacting on your changes
6. Constantly **rethink** and **evaluate** your strategy and your actions, and check whether you are still on the right track

As the environmental factors and persons are constantly changing, so does an NOC also need to change, in order to keep up over the course of time, if it does not want to be changed from outside pressure(s). Therefore, each NOC board should be permanently concerned regarding moderate change(s), in order to achieve its strategic plans / aims. In what follows, the nine steps of strategic management, according to Bryson (2018), are reorganised into five phases (Fig. 6). Then, we can start to draw up an NOC strategic plan (subchapter 2.4).
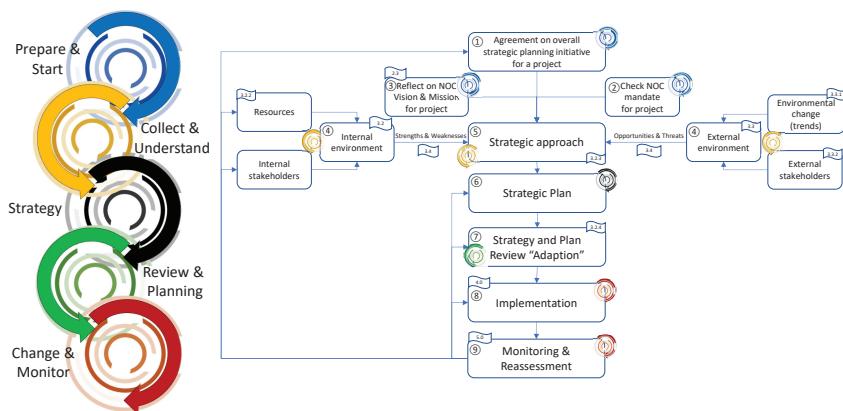
Fig. 6: Five-phases in NOC Strategic Management Related to the nine Steps from Bryson (2018)

2.2.1 Phase 1 – the BLUE RING: Prepare & Start

First, the NOC identifies the problem areas for which it wants to develop a strategic plan (project). The project can be about the current challenges (subchapter 1.4), topics related to IOC Agenda 2020+5, or other issues.

Implementing a precise definition of the purpose of the strategic plan (project) is important. Then, a steering team must be set up, and the members must fully understand the decision-making structures within the NOC. The team should be made up of a good mix of people, who know all about the different areas of the problem(s) (internal, external) at hand. The team members should be aware of the decision-making process and culture within the NOC. They should collect existing internal data, and also existing strategies (if available) concerning the project. An external search can be added (e.g., looking to see if other NOCs, or the EOC, or the IOC have any relevant data). In this phase, the steering team should write a draft of a "strategy development plan", and also reflect upon "what must stay the same", and "what must be changed". Here, both must be set up, a priority and an understanding of the importance of issues. To do that an "NOC vision" is needed (subchapter 2.3).

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Recommendation: Blue Ring - Prepare & Start
1. Identify and describe your problem or aim, as precisely as you can.
2. Identify persons that would fit into the steering team. They should be ambitious and/or influential people, such as communicators and decision makers.
3. Write a strategy development plan – i.e., produce a Gantt Chart.
4. Identify red lines to determine: What must stay the same, and what must be changed.

2.2.2 Phase 2 – the YELLOW RING: Collect & Understand

Here, the NOC needs a team that looks deeper into the current situation and the problem / project to gain an overview of actions that would be necessary, for fully understanding the current situation. A diagnosis must be undertaken (Robinson, 2020, 51).

The NOC may use a brainstorming session to formulate questions that need to be answered, for a full understanding of the NOC's current situation regarding the topic. It is important to gather all relevant information here. To this end, the NOC can use assessment questions to develop a tailored guide for consultation interviews, that are aimed towards the project / issue. After that, the NOC can conduct consultation interviews with internal and external stakeholders.

Recommendation: Data Gathering via Consultation Interviews
1. Choose enough people to gain a good breadth of opinion and knowledge
2. Conduct six-fifteen interviews, depending on the complexity of the issue / project, including people in charge of the project, to determine whether they are positively or negatively affected by the project
3. Identify any knowledge gaps (outcome)

The NOC can also conduct benchmarking regarding the project against other NOCs and/or other national sports organisations.

Fact Box: Benchmarking of NOCs
Benchmarking is the practice of comparing organisational processes and performance metrics to good practices from other NOCs. It is a tool with which you can measure your NOC's degree of success (in a project), against other similar NOCs, in order to discover whether there is a gap in performance that can be closed by improving your performance/processes/governance. Studying other NOCs can highlight what it takes to enhance your own NOC's efficiency and thus become a better organisation within the Olympic Movement.

For benchmarking, it is recommended to consider organisations with a similar geographical and cultural background. From the knowledge gained, your NOC may take lessons from successful practices and apply them, while considering its own culture, politics, and specialties.

In a final step, compile all findings from analysis, diagnosis, and consultation interviews, and then produce an overview of insights. With this information, a SWOT analysis (see subchapter 3.6) can be conducted. A SWOT analysis makes it clear what the strengths and weaknesses of the NOC are, against the project/issues. Further, threats and opportunities can be found by analysing the environment of the NOC. The result of the SWOT analysis is a direct link to strategy development.

2.2.3 Phase 3 – the BLACK RING: Strategy

In this phase, the objectives (goals) are clear, and a strategy will be developed. Important stakeholders will have to be included by workshops, or informed via feedback loops. It is a good idea to conduct interviews with senior management and relevant specialists, to identify all necessary actions that are required to support an emerging strategic plan.

Workshops are needed for each action of the strategy, and each action is differently important in a strategic plan. The different actions of an NOC strategy and their importance should be seriously developed before initiating any strategy. In these workshops, a set of actions for each objective in the strategy has to be developed. A clear ownership and a high-level timeline for each action are needed. The actions of a strategy are, for example, targeting:
– People who are addressed, such as staff, athletes, etc.
– Venues, and their staff and volunteers to run the project
– Financial resources (costs and revenues) of the NOC

– Leadership, governance, and organisation
– Legal issues

As can be seen here, a strategy is composed of several strategic objectives, each addressing the different action areas. Specific criteria for setting goals and project objectives should be SMART (Drucker, 1977). To be effective, every project goal must adhere to the SMART criteria:

1. **Specific:** The goal should target a specific area of improvement, or answer a specific need of an action area noted above, e.g., checking a new NOC code of ethics from a legal perspective.
2. **Measurable:** The goal must allow for measurable progress, e.g., reaching all Olympic athletes of your country, to educate them about World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Code.
3. **Attainable:** The goal must be realistic, based on available resources. Existing constraints must be considered, e.g., the planning for an Olympic Day.
4. **Relevant:** The goal should align with other NOC objectives, which are considered worthwhile, in order to address the challenge / problem, e.g., addressing Olympic Values.
5. **Time-bound:** The goal must have a specific deadline, e.g., one Olympiad.

Illustration: SMART Goals for NOC Project Managers

SMART goals can be applied to all aspects of NOC project management. To be clear, all SMART goals should be simplified into one simple sentence. Then it becomes a powerful tool for aligning the NOC team around a shared intention. The German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) developed a "Strategy 2028" and formulated SMART goals. These are e.g.:

– By 2020, we will formulate a "Strategy for Major Sporting Events of the DOSB", in consultation with the relevant partners in the federal government, the states, and member organisations, and implement the first steps by 2022, under the responsibility of the DOSB Director of Association Development.
– Together with the member organisations, we are creating at least 20% more offerings in the "Sport pro Gesundheit" [Sport for health] quality label by 2022. We are revising quality management by the beginning of 2020, and adapting it to the new framework conditions, under the responsibility of the DOSB Director of "Sport Development".

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– By the end of 2020, we will reverse the downward trend in the number of German sports for all "Sportabzeichen" [badges] awarded each year, and increase the number of sports badges awarded annually to 900,000, again by 2022, under the responsibility of the DOSB Director of "Sport Development".
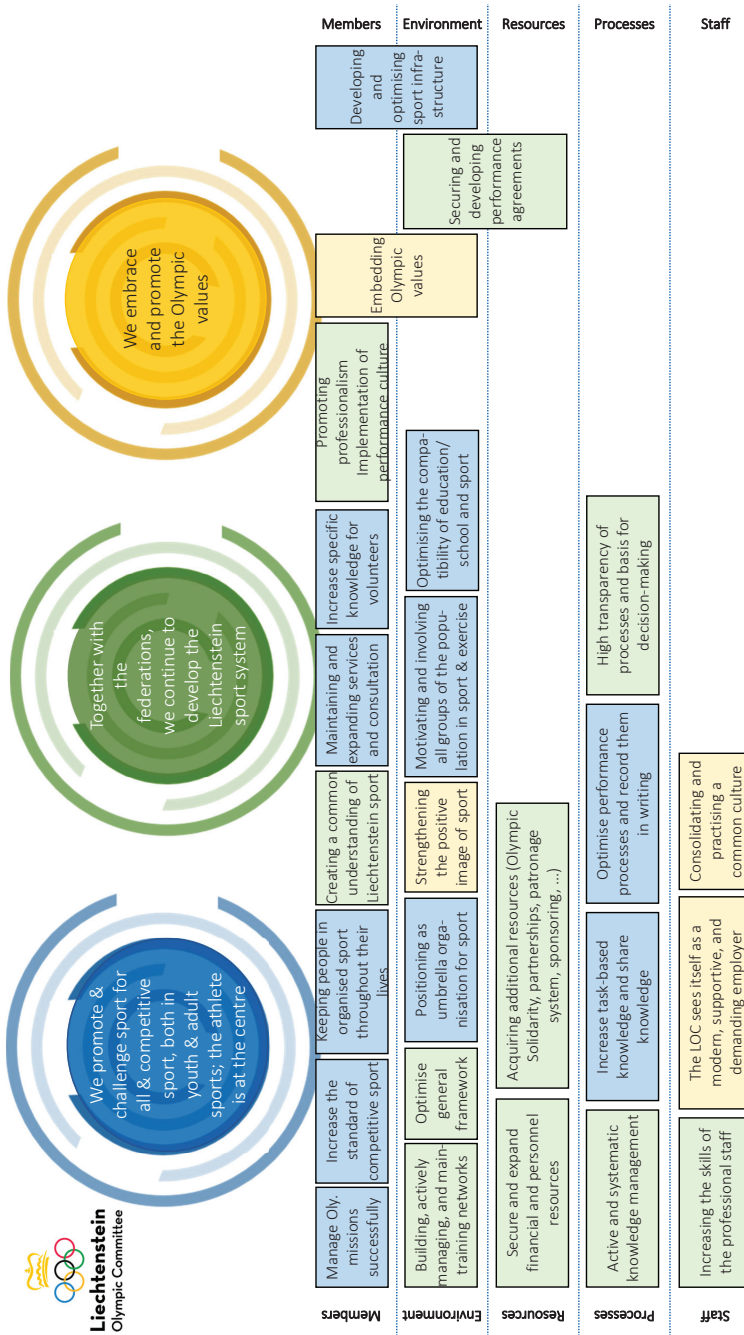
Fig. 7: Goals of NOC Liechtenstein Strategy 2021-2024

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Case Study: NOC Liechtenstein goals prepared prior to adoption into its strategic plan

In 2016, the NOC Liechtenstein formulated its goals, that were driven by its vision/mission, that were divided into five areas, which then needed to be transferred into actions. Here, the assignment of goals of its revised strategy 2021-2024 is shown.

Questions to be answered:
1. Notice the overarching goals of the NOC. Do you also have these for your NOC?
2. Discuss whether all of the subgoals are assigned to the overarching goals.
3. Take some subgoals and reformulate them, by considering the SMART concept.
4. Imagine that you are the NOC Liechtenstein, and then aim at placing the subgoals from your perspective into the Action Priority Matrix (explained below)

As there are actions and SMART goals for many strategic objectives, an NOC should build priorities. To identify priorities, the NOC can use an action priority matrix (Covey, Merrill & Merrill, 1995).

This is useful, because not all actions have the same importance. Further, NOCs rarely have time to complete all of the extra tasks and projects on their wish lists. Therefore, the aim here is to identify the high-value activities that keep the NOC moving forward.
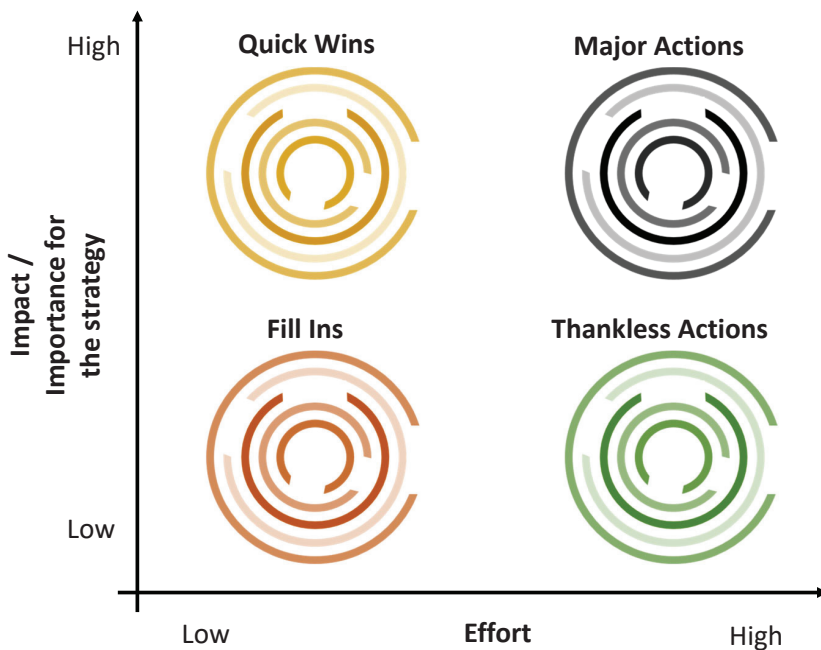
Fig. 8: Action Priority Matrix for NOCs

Source: Adopted from Covey, Merrill, and Merrill (1995)

To use the matrix, you score tasks based, firstly, on their impact and, secondly, on the effort needed to complete them.

Quick Wins (**High Impact, Low Effort**)**:** Quick wins are the most attractive goals because they give you a good return for relatively little effort.

Major Actions (**High Impact, High Effort**)**:** Major actions give good returns, but they are resource-consuming. There is a risk that one major project can crowd out many other actions.

Fill Ins (**Low Impact, Low Effort**)**:** These actions are of low importance, and if there is sufficient capacity, then you can do them; but drop them if something more important comes up.

Thankless Actions (**Low Impact, High Effort**)**:** Try to avoid these activities, even though they are mentioned as integral to your strategy. Not only do they give little return to achieve your goals, but also they take up time and resources.

   Plan the process of reviewing the draft strategy that was developed in the workshops. Develop clear procedures for involving the necessary people, and collecting the necessary information.

Workshop: Strategy Development for NOCs

Strategy development workshops should have the most relevant attendees to achieve the goals. They can then facilitate a successful implementation of actions or even organisational change (explained in RING RED - Change).

A) The attendees who are needed for strategic change are different from project to project, NOC to NOC, and culture to culture. In many cases they are in senior positions (with experience), directors, board members, and external stakeholders (e.g., delivery partners, athletes, politicians). The attendees must be relevant for the action which is discussed in the workshop. Attendees should represent those that will later be important in the change process (e.g., the leader, the enablers of change, the blockers of change).

B) Size and duration depend on the size of the project and its degree of importance. Decide between: a one-off discussion versus a series of workshops.

C) It is important to think about reasons for some potential failure of change.

D) Prioritise actions via the action priority matrix: Develop a list of all your actions, and rate each of the actions that you need in your strategy, regarding:

IMPACT: Importance for your strategy, such as number of people/stakeholders reached, other benefits received

EFFORTS: resources used, such as time to implement, costs, staff required

How to manage priorities
   – Step 1: List the major activities that you need to manage for achieving your goal.
   – Step 2: Score these in consultation with others on Impact (0 for no impact to 10 for maximum impact), and on effort involved (0 for no real effort (included in business as usual) to 10 for a major effort).
   – Step 3: Plot the activities on an "Action Priority Matrix" (Fig. above), based on your scores.
   – Step 4: Check if any action that has a low impact is a "must do" activity which is vital for your strategy.

> – Step 5: Prioritise actions appropriately, and then decide on the actions to take.

2.2.4 Phase 4 – the GREEN RING: Review & Planning

This phase represents the planning process of how the drafted strategy can be put into action, i.e., the so-called "action plan".

To set up the action plan, the NOC meeting(s) should be used to review and refine the strategy, with all its actions, and then check each action for good governance practices.

When reviewing the actions planned, it will be necessary to confirm whether or not the financial requirements can be met. The reviewing should include internal stakeholders (board members and affected members) to review and discuss the draft strategy, and to ensure the feasibility of any actions. Then, external stakeholders (athletes, sponsors, government, etc.) should be involved, when they are affected by the strategy. This final consultation ensures that no major issues are missed out, and that all relevant stakeholders are willing to be involved. This helps to communicate the strategy (see more in change management, chapter 4).

Identified problematic issues must be addressed here. Depending on the likely impact of the issue not being resolved, a particular degree of urgency could be given. Consider the accountability and the timeline for the resolution, and address the right persons in this regard. The strategy development team should, therefore, not only collect the issues, but also rate them, and develop a plan, in order to aim at resolving those issues.

A final adjustment of the strategy will be done, based on the received feedback of the internal and external stakeholders, the resolution of problematic issues, and the availability of necessary resources. The final "action plan" includes an assignment of ownership, plus prioritised and established timelines for each strategic action.

At the end of this phase, the NOC will develop the final strategy document.

Case Study: "Strategic Plan" IOC Agenda 2020

Started by the IOC Session in December 2014, Olympic Agenda 2020 is a set of 40 SMART Actions, whose overarching goal was to answer the challenges of outdated structures and a loss of interest in the Olympic Games. Agenda 2020 was made to safeguard Olympic values,

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and strengthen the role of sport in society, and is built on the three pillars of Credibility, Sustainability, and Youth.

The "strategic plan" for the IOC (and indirectly for the Olympic Movement) was formulated as Olympic Agenda 2020. The 40 separate – yet interrelated – recommendations were identified and collated through a collaborative and consultative process, involving Olympic Movement stakeholders and a panel of external experts. Since February 2014, the IOC received 1,200 ideas that were generated by 270 contributions, and 43,500 emails from various stakeholders from within the Olympic Movement, as well as from various organisations and individuals from the civil society (academics, NGOs, business, etc.). These ideas were shared with the relevant working groups. They were driven by a recognition that the world was evolving rapidly, and that the Olympic Movement had the opportunity to be an important agent of change.
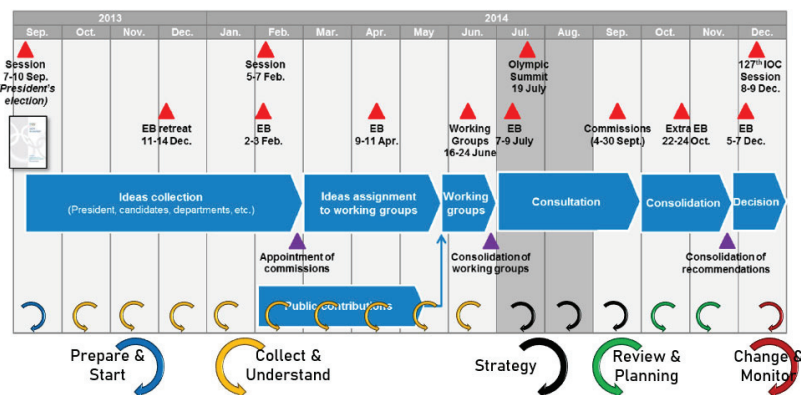
Fig. 9: Timeline of the Development of Agenda 2020

Figure 9 shows the process that was used to develop the strategic plan, which took 15 months to build, and included a worldwide consultation process. The outcome is the strategic plan (phase 4). Agenda 2020 closed in March 2021, when IOC President Thomas Bach published the "Closing Report" ahead of the 137th IOC Session. The Session voted on it, which is an important step to formally close a strategic plan, that was well communicated, and agreed upon by the members of the organisation.

The closing report describes in detail each of the 40 recommendations, the different activities undertaken to implement them, and the im-

pacts that all of the recommendations, both individually and together, have had on the IOC and the Olympic Movement since December 2014. Case Study questions to be discussed:

1. Check which of the recommendations are also valid for your NOC, and to what extent you can take the IOC action as a benchmark.
2. Judge how well the recommendations follow the SMART formulation of objectives.
3. Look at Agenda 2020+5 and discuss potential actions which your NOC may address.

2.2.5 Phase 5 – the RED RING: Change & Monitor

Here, the change process starts (see chapter 4), and the NOC needs to get buy-in from all the relevant stakeholders. The objectives and the role of the change team must be clear. An implementation plan must be developed and the budget needs to be secured. The main task here is to develop a plan for organisational changes, and a communication plan. Some actions may cause only a small change, while others could call for major changes. Remember to never make too many changes at the same time.

After successful implementation, the NOC should monitor the ongoing strategy and constantly review/evaluate its development. The accountability for this must also be clear.

At the end, the NOC should review the measures, and then the next big steps can be planned. The attention of the NOC must then be refocused towards the next strategic plan (Ccapter 5).

2.3 *Setting NOC Objectives: Vision – Mission – and Working Objectives*

A strategy is a clear plan that describes the path by which an NOC intends to reach its vision by fulfilling its mission. The mission defines why the organisation exists, what it aims to accomplish, and how it will proceed on its journey, while the strategy specifies the practical steps the organisation will take to achieve its vision. This chapter helps to find a good vision and mission statement, which is the founding structure of any strategic management process.

The typical deliverables from a Mission, Vision, & Values project in NOCs would include:

– Stakeholder agreement on the mission of an organisation, resulting in renewed commitment to, and enthusiasm for, the NOC's work (most important deliverable).
– A clear and shared picture of what the NOC will look like in four years time (i.e., the next Olympiad), should be compelling enough to rally the commitment of the people.

2.3.1 Vision

A vision is a representation of a future reality that is aspired to by the NOC. It thereby defines the ambition level; that is to say, the "height of a bar over which the NOC would like to jump, one day" (i.e., aiming at a goal). The vision and values allow NOC members and partners to share the NOC dreams (i.e., better ideas of better goals) for the future; therefore, it defines what the NOC would wish to be in the long term (which might, seemingly, be out of reach) (Chappelet & Bayle, 2005). See many examples in Table 3.

Collins and Porras (1996) describe a well-constructed vision as being comprised of two parts: a core ideology and an envisioned future. The latter is made up of both a clear picture (vision) of what the NOC will become, and the major long-term results to be accomplished. In colloquial terms, Collins and Porras (1996) call these "BHAGs" (Big, Hairy, Audacious Goals). A true BHAG is clear and compelling, serves as a unifying focal point of effort, and acts as a catalyst for team spirit.

To establish a vision, an NOC must be very clear about the values it wants to protect and promote. Values, such as those that guide the Olympic Movement (friendship, respect, excellence), are the essence of an NOC's vision, working both as principles and as a framework that will inspire the formalisation of its objectives, and the implementation of its strategic plan. The perception of Olympic Values can vary by culture (see Chapter 2.5). Fig. 10 shows the core values of the Olympic Movement, as tested in four cultures. There are three main values. Each of the value positions is described by four adjectives, giving a deeper understanding of that value. They are the essence of the NOC's vision.

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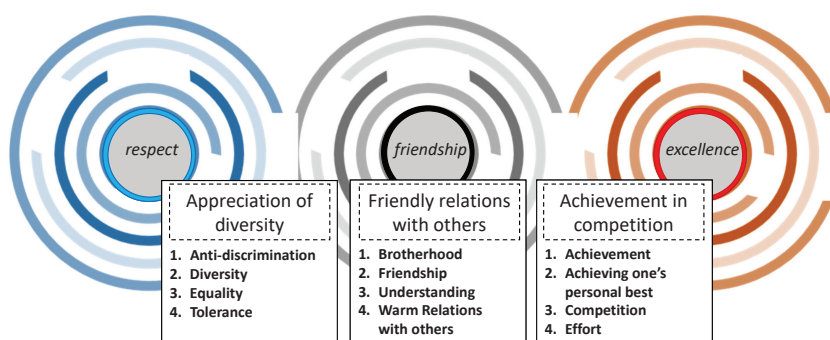
Fig. 10: Values Perceived by the Population (GER, UK, BRA, USA)

Source: Koenigstorfer and Preuss (2018)

Agenda 2020+5 faces additional values besides respect, friendship, and excellence, by adding solidarity, sustainability, and credibility. These values represent a collective belief that inspires individuals' behaviours, and are often a reflection of the society's contemporary concerns. An NOC's vision and values provide a framework for the rest of its strategic planning process (subchapter 2.2), which is why it is important to be sure of the values that an NOC wants to promote the most (see Table 3, where many NOCs stick to excellence).

Recommendation: Vision Statement
Vision should be
1. Unique
2. Simple & Short
3. Memorable
4. Ambitious but Achievable
5. Inspirational
6. Rational & Emotional
7. Meaningful

2.3.2 Mission

Any successful strategic planning project requires that first, there has to be clarity and agreement on the NOC's mission or purpose. Its mission must

be agreed upon by the major stakeholders, before undertaking a strategic planning process. Even though the Olympic Charter and the Olympic Movement define a large part of the mission, each NOC will apply it in its own particular way.

With the mission (also called mission statement), an NOC defines the purpose of its actions. It explains what mission the NOC and its employees are pursuing, and what its contribution or value proposition to its stakeholders should be. It is focused on the present, and emerges from discussions about what it wants to do. A mission is aspirational, therefore, it can never be fully realised. In this way, the purpose explains why the NOC does the work it does, but a mission does not define how that work is to be done.

Many NOCs centre their mission on the idea of sport performance and winning medals (excellence). Today, NOCs should integrate humanistic, social, and environmental concerns, to reflect the values of the Olympic Movement, such as those which are formulated in Agenda 2020+5.

Workshop: Development of a Mission Statement		
This workshop takes about 1 hour, and provides you with a mission statement.		
Steps	**Action / Task**	**Time**
Preparation	Paper / Pencils / Whiteboard / Index cards Introduce what you will do, what a mission is, and why it is important to have one.	5 min
Storytelling	1. Split up into several small groups of three to five people in each group, and make the people in each group as diverse as you possibly can. 2. Each member of your small groups gets a few minutes to share a story. This question can prompt some good stories: "What does it look like when we're doing our best work?" If they do not have any story, allow them to simply make one up. 3. Write details out on a sheet of paper, because you will need to share it with the larger group later. 4. Look at the stories and identify and <u>circle</u> every phrase when a specific place or person is mentioned. 5. Now, draw a <u>square</u> around any mention of your organisation making a difference and taking action. (It is fine for you to overlap your squares and circles.) 6. Then, <u>underline</u> at any time, something in the story that changes for the better; or results from your work, for example.	10-20 min

Sharing	1.	All small groups merge back into one large group.	20-25 min
	2.	You, as moderator, will create a grid on a whiteboard behind you having the lines:	
		— "Our Cause (Who?/What?/Where?)" - then, write down the <u>circled</u> items	
		— "Our Actions (What are we doing?)" - then, write down the <u>squared</u> items	
		— "Our Impact (Changes for the better)" - then, write down the <u>underlined</u> items	
	3.	Have several group members share stories from their own small group. As they share, have them identify the objects, and place them on your grid (use attributes and abstract terms).	
	4.	Patterns and similarities will develop naturally - group similar ideas together, more or less.	
	5.	Name and identify that "common ideas" (from 4.) from your stories, and label their **Big Idea**.	
Craft your statements	1.	Return to your small groups.	5-10 min
	2.	Write a mission statement for your NOC that incorporates the **Big Ideas** you identified as a large group (They should still be in a place where everyone can see them). All mission statements have these three elements: Cause (the <u>circled</u>), Actions (the <u>squared</u>), and Impact (the <u>underlined</u>) of **Big Ideas**.	
	3.	Remind your group of these five factors:	
		— Do not worry about word choice. This is the easiest part to nit-pick and the least important for your final statement!	
		— Keep it short. Many of the best mission statements have fewer than ten words.	
		— Keep it simple. Too many non-profits have long, flowery mission statements that sound as if they were constantly toiled over.	
		— Say it out loud. Does it sound awkward? Memorable? Catchy? Humanly possible?	
		— If no one would disagree with your statement (e.g., "make the world better" or "act with integrity") then your statement is too generic. Do not hide behind clichés!	
Sharing	1.	All small groups merge back into one large group.	5 min
	2.	Have the moderator write down each potential mission statement for everyone to see, as each group loudly broadcasts and shares it.	
	3.	If you like, you can identify each time a **Big Idea**, which was identified earlier shows up. Remember: the Big Ideas can be implied — they do not have to be stated directly.	
A dose of vision	1.	Now you have several strong, simple mission statement possibilities. Each statement is built from the powerful stories your NOC has experienced, or hopes to make true.	5 min
	2.	The moderator asks for volunteers to share why they know the mission you have defined is important. Why does it matter? And most of all, why do you know that you can achieve this mission together? This is the final, and most important, test.	
Jump	1.	Appoint a committee or final decision maker to take these mission statements and Big Ideas, and finalise the wording.	
	2.	Have the final decision maker present the final mission statement to your organisation at a later date.	

Source: https://nonprofithub.org/wp-content/themes/nonprofithub/img/landing-pages/mission/nonprofithub-missionstatement.pdf

After you have developed your new mission statement, the typical next steps are:
– Individually interview five to nine key stakeholders (board members, staff, external key stakeholders, e.g., donors, partners, govt. agency reps) to assess alignment on mission, vision, and values. If wide divergence appears, additional interviews may be required.
– Hold small focus groups (up to seven people), if needed, to complete the picture and to work in a similar way to that in the workshop above. Ensure that people are in groups which are different to the groups where their bosses are, to facilitate an open dialogue.
– Complete a mini-assessment of the clarity and alignment regarding the mission, vision, and values, and meet with the president and board members (if they are not already included in the workshop) to present the findings. If there is severe resistance and an unwillingness to hear things, then consider terminating the project.
– Design additional communications and discussions to facilitate stakeholder, and most importantly, member buy-in.

Case Study: Vision and Mission-making Process NOC Denmark
The NOC of Denmark (DIF) developed its Vision and Mission: Vision: Sport must have a significant place in the lives of all Danes throughout their lives - in communities on and off the pitch, and through experiences that excite and unite Denmark.   Mission: DIF moves Denmark through sport, volunteering, and joy. In our many sports and diverse associations, we create great achievements and cohesion in society.   The process behind this was complex and inclusive. Following Lewis (2006), the Danish leadership style is: "Basic Danish assumptions are generally in line with their essentially democratic stance. Leadership is by achievement and demonstration of technical competence. Leaders are expected to be low profile and benign and to consult colleagues for opinions." (Lewis, 2006, 352). This best fits to the communication pattern which is, firstly, the examination of facts, then the making of a proposal. When resistance comes in from stakeholders, skilful moderations are made and the outcome will be repackaged.
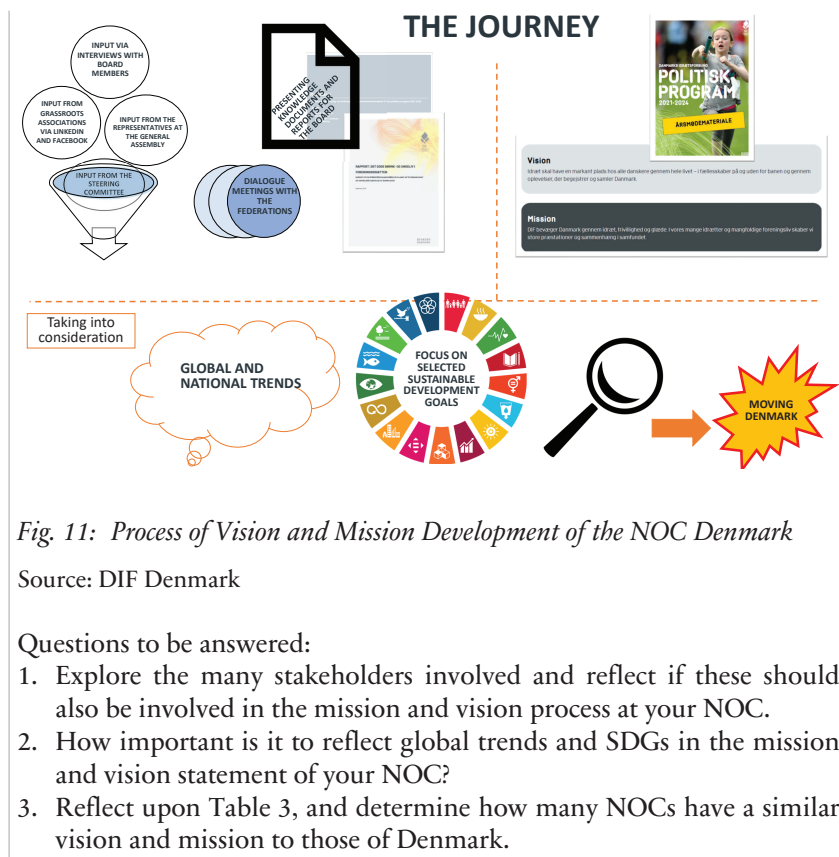
Fig. 11: Process of Vision and Mission Development of the NOC Denmark

Source: DIF Denmark

Questions to be answered:
1. Explore the many stakeholders involved and reflect if these should also be involved in the mission and vision process at your NOC.
2. How important is it to reflect global trends and SDGs in the mission and vision statement of your NOC?
3. Reflect upon Table 3, and determine how many NOCs have a similar vision and mission to those of Denmark.

We mention "brainstorming" several times in this book. Many senior NOC board members, at some point or another, experience the pain of pursuing new ideas by way of traditional brainstorming sessions. It is still the most common method of using groups to generate ideas at sport organisations worldwide. The scene is familiar: a group of people, often chosen largely for political reasons, will begin by listening passively as a moderator urges them to "Get creative!" and "Think outside the box!", and cheerfully reminds them that "There are no bad ideas!". But, all of that really does not work very well. Coyne and Coyne (2011) developed a better method, called "brainsteering," and while it requires more preparation than traditional brainstorming, the results are worthwhile.

Recommendation: Brainsteering to Replace Brainstorming

1. **Know your NOC's decision-making criteria**

   One reason good ideas often go nowhere, is that they are beyond the scope of what the NOC would ever be willing to consider. Those hoping to spark creative thinking in their teams should, therefore, start by understanding the real criteria (restrictions, limitations), which the NOC will use to make decisions about the resulting ideas.

2. **Ask the right questions**

   Research shows that traditional and loosely structured brainstorming techniques ("Go for quantity — the greater the number of ideas, the greater the likelihood of winners!") are inferior to approaches that provide more structure. The best way to provide more structure, is to use questions as the platform for idea generation.

   In practice, this means building your workshop around a series of the "right questions" that your team will explore in small groups, during a series of idea generating sessions. The technique involves identifying questions with two characteristics: A) They should force your participants to take a new and unfamiliar perspective; B) They should limit the conceptual space which your team will explore, without being too restrictive.

   It is recommended to come up with 15-20 questions for a typical workshop that is attended by about 20 people. Choose the questions carefully, as they will form the heart of your workshop. Your participants will be discussing them intensively in small subgroups during a series of sessions.

3. **Choose the right people**

   The rule here is simple: pick people who can answer the questions that you are asking. Try to choose participants with first-hand knowledge.

4. **Divide and conquer**

   To ensure fruitful discussions, have the participants conduct multiple, discrete, and highly focused idea generation sessions among subgroups of three to five people - no fewer, no more. Each subgroup should focus on a single question for a full 30 minutes. When you assign people to subgroups, it is important to isolate "idea crushers" in their own subgroup. These people are otherwise suitable for the workshop but, intentionally or not, they do prevent others from suggesting good ideas. They come in three varieties: 1) the boss type, 2) the indiscreet or boastful type, and 3) the subject expert type. By quarantining the idea crushers, and violating the old brainstorming

adage that "a melting pot of personalities is ideal", you will free the other subgroups to think more creatively. Your idea crushers will still be productive and, above all, they would never stop each other from speaking up.

Finally, take the 15 to 20 questions which you prepared earlier, and divide them among the subgroups - with about five questions each.

5. **On your marks! - Get set! - Go!**

   After your participants arrive, but before their division into sub-groups, orient them so that your expectations about what they will — and will not — accomplish are clear. Remember, many participants are accustomed to traditional brainstorming, where the flow of ideas is fast, furious, and ultimately shallow. The first five minutes of any subgroup's brainsteering session may feel like typical brainstorming, as people test their pet ideas or rattle off superficial new ideas. The new part is that now each subgroup will thoughtfully consider and discuss a single question for 30 minutes. No other topic should be mentioned during a subgroup's individual session.

   Prepare your participants for the likelihood that when a subgroup attacks a question, it might generate only two or three worthy ideas. In knowing that probability, in advance, you shall surely prevent participants from becoming discouraged.

6. **Wrap it up**

   Consider that, a typical subgroup has produced perhaps 15 interesting ideas for further exploration. Thus, all of the 20 persons in their subteams have generated up to 60 ideas. One thing not to do, is to have the full group choose the best ideas from the pile, as is common in traditional brainstorming. Instead, have each subgroup privately narrow its own list of ideas to a top-rated few, and then share all of the leading ideas with the full group, in order to motivate and inspire participants. But, the full group should not pick a winner. Rather, close the workshop and describe to them exactly what steps will be taken to choose the winning ideas, and how they will learn about the final decisions.

7. **Follow up quickly**

   Decisions and other follow-up activities should be quick and thorough. A high-level board member should announce, before a brainsteering workshop, that a full staff meeting would be held the morning after it, in order to discuss the various ideas the group had generated. To close the loop with participants, the NOC board should made sure to communicate the results of the decisions quickly to

everyone involved, even when an idea was rejected. While it might seem demoralising to share bad news with a team, it has been found that doing so actually has the opposite effect. Participants are often desperate for feedback, and eager for indications that they have at least been heard.

Source: Coyne and Coyne (2011)

Tab. 3: Selection of Visions and Mission Statements of NOCs

Nation	Vision	Mission
Australia		1. Develop, promote, and protect the principles of Olympism and the Olympic Movement in Australia in accordance with the Olympic Charter and all regulations and directives issued by the IOC; 2. Promote, raise awareness of, and encourage participation in sport for benefits of health, longevity, fitness, skill, achievement, social interaction, wellbeing, others regarding exercise for all individuals in AUS; 3. Encourage the development of sport for all for the health, wellbeing and other benefits to all individuals in Australia, and in support and encouragement of those objectives, the development of high-performance sport as the pinnacle of the benefits of sporting participation; 4. Promote the fundamental principles and values of Olympism in Australia, in particular, in the fields of sport and education, by promoting Olympic sport and health, educational programmes at all levels of schools, sports, and physical education institutions and universities, as well as by encouraging the creation of institutions dedicated to Olympic education, such as National Olympic Academies, Olympic Museums (OMs), and other programmes, including cultural, and all things related to the OMs; 5. Ensure the observance of the Olympic Charter; 6. To recognise the heritage, culture, and contribution of our nation's first people, and to give practical support to the issue of indigenous reconciliation through sport.
Belgium	Contribute to the image of a successful country, and share this success with everyone by significantly increasing the number of Belgian athletes in the world top athletes (Top 8) at Olympic Games.	1. Select the Belgian top athletes and send them to Olympic Games in optimal conditions, to perform to the maximum with respect for Olympic Values. 2. Mobilise all the actors involved to create a 'top sports climate' in Belgium. 3. Support the sports federations, members of the BOIC, in their activities. 4. Promote the values of the Olympic Movement, of which the Belgian Olympic and Interfederal Committee is the representative in Belgium.
Cyprus		The mission of the Cyprus N.O.C. is to encourage interest in Olympic Games and to develop, promote, and protect the Olympic Movement in Cyprus, in accordance with the Olympic Charter.

Nation	Vision	Mission
Denmark	Sport must have a significant place in the lives of all Danes throughout their lives - in communities on and off the pitch, and through experiences that excite and unite Denmark.	DIF moves Denmark through sport, volunteering, and joy. In our many sports and diverse associations, we create great achievements and cohesion in society.
Great Britain	Our vision is to inspire the nation with Olympic athletes, in the pursuit of excellence.	Our mission is to bring our country together behind a team which everyone can believe in through the power of Olympic Values.
Greece		The mission of the HOC is to oversee and act to ensure the development, promotion, and safeguarding of the Olympic Movement, the spirit of fair play, and out-of-school physical activity, in accordance with the principles of the Olympic Ideal and the traditions of the Hellenic sport. The HOC's role is: — To supervise the Olympic Sports and cooperate with the State, as well as with the public and private bodies for the promotion of healthy sport policies. — To encourage love for sports and respect for the spirit of sportsmanship among the young. — To organise in cooperation with the National Federations the Olympic preparation of athletes. — To proceed, on its sole responsibility, to the final selection of athletes, who will represent Greece at Olympic Games and Mediterranean Games.
Ireland	Inspiring the nation through the success of Irish Olympic athletes by improving our Olympic performance in each cycle	Our role is to use our mandate as a member of the International Olympic Movement, to positively enhance Irish sport, Irish athletes, and the country itself.
Italy		The Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI), by authority of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), provides discipline, regulation, and management of national sports activities. CONI is a public entity, which is responsible for the organisation and strengthening of national sports, and the promotion of the maximum proliferation of sport.
Japan		As a National Olympic Committee, constituted in accordance with the Olympic Charter and the ideals of Olympism, the JOC aims to contribute to the promotion of sport by supporting the Olympic Movement, which serves the cause of preserving world peace, and developing international goodwill through sport, and by developing and strengthening athletes in Japan.

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Nation	Vision	Mission
Liecht-enstein		The Liechtenstein Olympic Committee (LOC) is the umbrella organisation of the federations and clubs, and the direct contact for all sports-related questions. The LOC supports and advises the organisations in their activities and developments for sport in Liechtenstein, provided that these comply with the principles of sports ethics (environment, fairness, anti-doping, anti-discrimination, etc.).
Nether-lands	Our ambitions: High sports participation, excellent top sports performance	Our mission is to create optimal sports conditions for everyone: from recreational to top athletes, from disabled athletes to volunteers and fans. The more specific mission of TeamNL is to inspire and connect the Netherlands from the achievements of TeamNL. This is how TeamNL shows that we win a lot with sports in the Netherlands.
Slovakia		Mission of SOSC is to universally contribute to development of sports in the Slovak Republic, to spread and to popularise basic principles and values of Olympism, to expand the Olympic heritage through sports, to contribute to harmonic development of a human being, mutual understanding and friendship among nations, and to deepen peaceful coexistence.
Spain	In the fulfilment of its aims, the Spanish NOC will act in collabo-ration with the Spanish Sports Federations affiliated to the International Sports Fed., recognised by the IOC and, where appropriate, with the other sports federations and organisations legally recognised in Spain.	The Spanish Olympic Committee aims to develop and perfect the Olympic movement and sport, to stimulate and guide its practice, and to prepare the activities that will be represented in Olympic Games, as well as to strengthen the Olympic ideal through the appropriate dissemination of its spirit and philosophy. The Spanish Olympic Committee is committed to participating in actions in favour of peace, and the promotion of women in sport. It also undertakes to participate with its athletes in Olympic Games, to defend and encourage the promotion of sports ethics, to fight against doping in accordance with the rules of the World Anti-Doping Code, and to take environmental issues into account in a responsible manner.
Türkiye	Creating a winning Olympic nation in which sports and Olympic Values become indispensable parts of the lives of every citizen	Instilling the spirit of Olympism in our people and promotion of our nation via Olympic Values, with a focus on: *Athletes / Infrastructure / Olympic Games*
USA	Inspire and unite the US through Olympic and Paralympic Sport	Empower Team USA athletes to achieve sustained competitive excellence and well-being.

Sources: respective webpages of NOCs mentioned

2.3.3 Implementation of the Mission and Working Objectives

Before the strategic plan, based on the Vision and Mission, gets formulated, the working objectives must be implemented in the NOC. This is not an easy task, because the staff and stakeholders should be taken into the process.

It is of particular importance that the vision and mission become guiding principles. As an example, Fig. 12 shows eight steps (to be read from left to right). A so-called "counter-current" process is used, which oscillates back and forth between top-down and bottom-up processes. In this way, a broad anchoring and widespread acceptance of the mission statement can take place. The initiative for the mission statement should formally come from the NOC Executive Board, as it will later be responsible for it. The NOC board then sets up a project team in which stakeholders and employees are represented. They then create a group of experts, who then prepare the first version of the mission statement, based on their particular knowledge. This is then evaluated by the project team to crosscheck it, and if it is found to be good, it can then be given to the staff. This is where further input can take place. The project team can then formulate a final version to present to the NOC board. If it is then found to be good, they will ratify it, and ultimately pass it to the staff. Here, it needs to be diffused and brought to life by everyone (as similarly described in Müller-Stevens and Lechner, 2005, 241f).
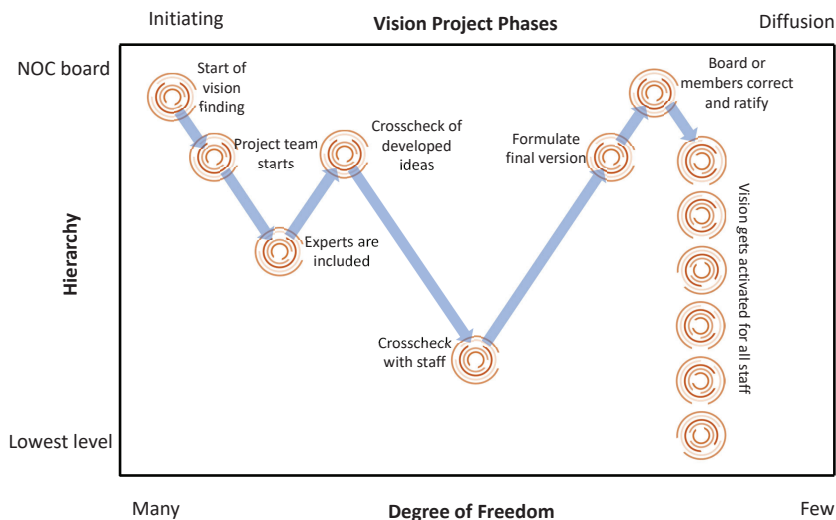
Fig. 12: Stepwise Counter-Current Process to Produce a Mission Statement

Source: Adopted from Müller-Stevens and Lechner (2005, 242)

This process is not only valid for the development of the Vision and Mission, but it can also be used for the plan of any major project.

Case Study: Netherlands NOC*NSF Development of its Strategic Cycle

The Netherlands developed their strategy in a similar way as described above. The NOC*NSF started with an internal evaluation of the actual strategic plan, and took a broad look at the overall functioning of our NOC (organisation and association). That process led to the process of the Sportagenda and, specifically, the need of a strategic plan, one year before a discussion with the NOC board and management (in a strategic session) took place. Here, a first draft of the Mission and its goals was written. Then a consulting session was executed, with an advisory group consisting of CEOs as representatives of all members and experts. After that, a working group started with a detailed proposal of the strategic plan (led by NOC professionals). Six months before, a discussion of the strategic plan with the council took place. In this discussion, all member federations had access to the proposal. This was important, to get a kind of first approval before the strategic plan will enter the annual meeting. After that first iteration, the working group finalised the proposal

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according to the new inputs. Then it was given via the board to the general assembly, which had to vote on the strategic plan in their annual meeting.
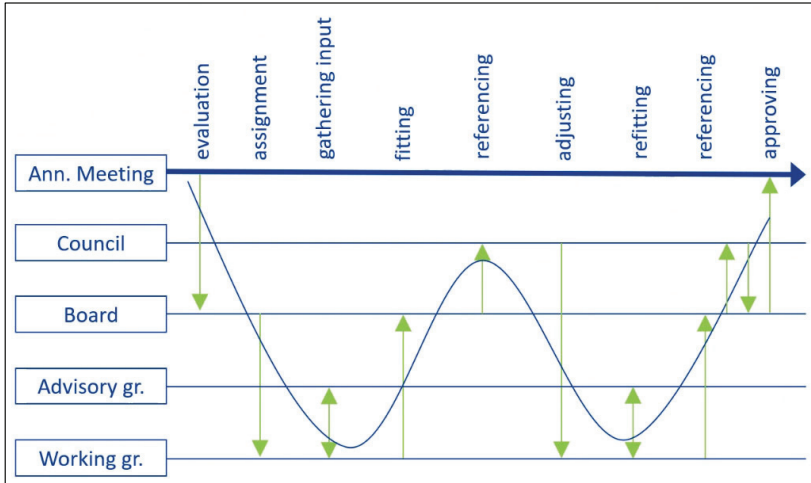
Fig. 13: NOC*NSF Process Towards its Strategy

Source: NOC*NSF (2022)

Questions to answer:
1. Have a close look at Fig. 12 and Fig. 13 and compare both of them. Can you see a pattern that could also be the process for your NOC?
2. Discuss, whom you would invite to the working group when you develop your strategic plan.
3. Reflect, who or where potentially could be the bottle necks in your NOC when you develop a new strategic plan.

2.4 Formulating a Strategic Plan for an NOC

Strategic management refers to the implementation of a strategic plan, that is designed to achieve long-term goals, and the allocation of the resources which are necessary to meet these goals. A strategic plan for an NOC considers many areas.

Depending on the size of the country, the national sporting success, the existence of a national sport association, besides an NOC, and many other factors, not all areas of a strategic plan have the same importance. Many areas become more important when the NOC is also the national sport confederation. Then, it not only accounts for the IOC obligations, but also for many governmental activities (e.g., coordinating subventions for high-performance sports, taking care of grassroot sports). Another fact that makes some areas more important is, when the NOC wants to bid for the Olympic Games in the near future.

Illustration: Netherlands NOC*NSF Strategic Plan

The NOC*NFS developed a strategic plan, based on their vision and mission. Fig. 14 illustrates the time span of validity for the vision, mission, and the final executed plan.
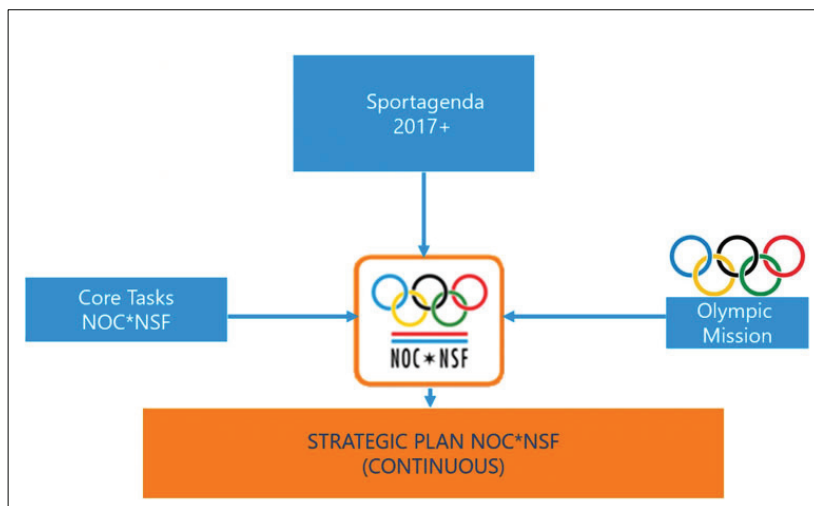
Fig. 14: Influence on Fundamental Strategy of the NOC*NSF plan

Source: Source: NOC*NSF (2022)

Then, the strategic plan was developed by recognising the "binding blocks", which are the Sportagenda of the Netherlands, the core tasks of the NOC*NSF, and the Olympic Mission as formulated in the Olympic Charter.

Then, five areas are particularly considered in the Netherlands, as shown in Fig. 15.
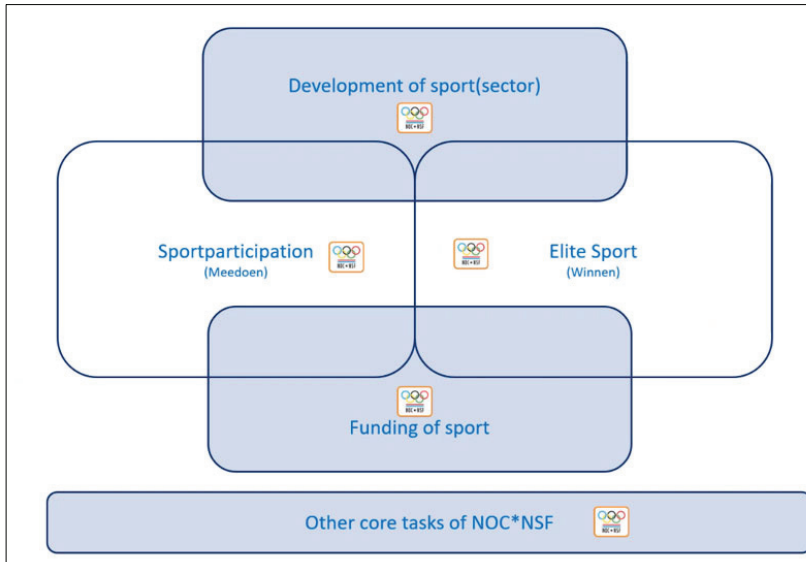
Fig. 15: Fundamental Strategy of the NOC*NSF plan

Source: Source: NOC*NSF (2022)

There are 9 areas which are important for NOCs, without claiming completeness. They are discussed in detail in this chapter.
1. Governance
2. Sport Development
3. Sport and Olympic Team Presentation
4. Sport Promotion
5. Medical and Safety
6. Risk Management
7. Commercial
8. Events
9. Sustainability and Legacy

Before starting strategic management, an NOC should answer four key questions for each of the nine areas:
– What is the situation of your NOC in area ___?
– What are the objectives of your NOC in area ___?

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– How can your NOC achieve these objectives of area ___?
– Have you achieved your objectives in area ___ in the past, and how did you do that?

Strategic plans for NOCs often used to run for an Olympiad, as financial streams are regulated in this way. At the end of each Olympiad, the NOC Board and its management must review the plan, and make revisions for the next Olympiad.

2.4.1 Governance

The question of good governance in Olympic sport organisations has become a key issue since the Salt Lake City scandal in 1999. Good governance is increasingly becoming a core topic for sport organisations at all levels (Henry & Lee, 2004; Siekmann & Soek, 2010; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2011; Brands, 2017). According to Zintz and Gérard (2019), there are many reasons for this trend, including the pressure on the proper use of public funds, as well as the responsibilities of sport organisations, towards their sports and wider stakeholders.

Many NOCs have implemented Basic Principles of Good Governance, through self-assessments (e.g., via SIGGS-Project), and their own initiatives. Good governance standards in the corporate world have also evolved towards an increased level of requirements, specifically concerning transparency, and checks and balances. The expectations from the general public, sponsors, Olympic hosts, and athletes, to name just a few, have grown accordingly. Consequently, NOC governance needs to match these expectations.

For many NOCs, the athletes have become a very important stakeholder for the good governance of the NOC. Athletes have become a matter of interest, not only to ensure that the finances are well managed in order to support the athlete, but also to defend the credibility and image of Olympic sports and the Olympic Games. For example, recent exciting issues refer to the Olympic Charter (§ 50), and the Olympic Games in Tokyo (vaccination) and Beijing (political issues).

Another area is IOC Agenda 2020+5 calling for credibility. According to the IOC, trust in traditional institutions is declining, and younger generations are demanding more purpose from organisations and businesses. "Our ability to make a difference will rest with the credibility of our institutions and competitions, by further strengthening integrity, transparency,

and good governance across the entire Olympic Movement" (IOC, 2021c, 3).

The IOC wants to foster the compliance of all NOCs with the 'Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance', and will, in the future, widen the scope of the auditing of NOCs in this regard. The IOC will "urge the […] NOCs to be transparent in their budget and accounts concerning the direct and indirect support for athletes, sports development and Olympic Values" (IOC, 2021c, 33).

For the strategic plan, this means that the NOCs will have to continue, and also deepen their efforts to match the constantly evolving standards of governance.

2.4.2 Sport Development

Sport Development is a very broad field. Even though grassroots sport development is more related to the national sport confederations of the NF, NOCs usually have the responsibility to support the NFs (as they are members of the NOCs). Additionally, NOCs shall develop the national sport system. NOCs can provide athletes with service (e.g., when sending them to the Olympic Games), and help in the development of high-performance sport, in general. The NOC is often the link to the government and, therefore, needs to lobby for greater public support (public affairs).

Depending on the responsibility of an NOC, it can also include the development of sports for all. Then, the NOC may take care of sustainable sport infrastructure, to ensure that COVID-19 or the Energy Crisis in Europe do not stop sports for all. An exciting topic here is the potential inclusion and development of physical virtual sports.

Illustration: CONI - Italian Government has Confirmed Plans to Recognise and Regulate Esports

The Customs and Monopolies Agency (ADM, Italy) took action following a complaint, which required it to "verify compliance of taxation on gambling and with regard to the correct application of the legislation aimed at the protection and health of minors." The Italian Government has confirmed it will seek to introduce legislation, which will include the establishment of an esports federation. That would potentially be a national governing body with the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI).

The Italian Government is considering, in concert with the CONI, the establishment of a federation that oversees the organisation of competitive sports gaming. The Italian Federation for Electronic Disciplines (FIDE) has welcomed the "positive news". The organisation said that the recognition of esports would support the development and sustainability of the esports sector.
Source: Pavitt (2022)

Overall, this is a good example of sport development, in the case of sport being regulated in Italy.

> **Case Study: Sport Development Commission of the Indonesia Olympic Committee**
>
> The Indonesian Olympic Committee established a commission to take care of sport development. Even though it is an Asian country, many of the obligations fit with European Olympic Committees. The duties and obligations of the Indonesian Olympic Committee are to:
> – Help Executive Committee (EC) members and the President to carry out their duties and obligations, especially for coaching activities, and the development of sports achievements.
> – Provide recommendations to the EC and the President in preparing and establishing the Indonesian Contingent to participate in regional, continental, and international multi-event sports activities.
> – Provide technical assistance for the implementation of training camps […] facing regional, continental, and international competitions.
> – Provide deliberations/recommendations to award sportsmen, coaches, referees, and technical coaches who have gained achievements in sports.
> Source: Indonesian Olympic Committee (2022).
> Issues to work on:
> 1. Reflect upon which of the obligations fit to your NOC.
> 2. Develop ideas which are important for "Sport Development" of your NOC.

Olympic Solidarity is also keen to support NOCs in developing and strengthening the national sport systems, by supporting their placement of a medium- to long-term action plan for one or more sports. According to Olympic Solidarity, the detailed action plan "must be coherent and realistic and must be established in close collaboration with the national federation (NF) concerned, after a detailed analysis of the situation (strengths,

weaknesses, objectives, etc.). It must include proof that the training of lo-
cal coaches will continue once the project has ended (Olympic Solidarity,
2016).

2.4.3 Sport and Olympic Team Presentation

Each NOC is promoting sport by presenting Olympic sports, the Olympic
Games, and in particular the Olympic team. The quickly changing tech-
nology and digital innovations offer new formats and entertainment to
show the Olympic and Paralympic Teams. Regarding the Olympic Games
coverage, the NOC can take action with its national TV channels and other
media forms. NOCs could start events to show the Olympic athletes, and
present the Olympic Team, their dressing event, or their arrival after the
Games.

Even though the sport presentation and its format are obligations of the
IFs, the NOC should keep supporting them. For example, United World
Wrestling announced in 2021, that it will be making substantial modifica-
tions to its wrestler and referee uniforms, as well as changing the colour
of its competition mats, to improve the online and television viewership
experience.

2.4.4 Promotion of Sport and Olympic Content

Communication becomes increasingly more important for NOCs. Infor-
mation and communication technology and social media have changed
strategic planning. The use of e-mails, social media, clouds, virtual confer-
ences, podcasts, etc., have become increasingly more important for plan-
ning processes (Bryson, 2018). Judicious use of social media tools can
stimulate and support the assembly of relevant people, groups, perspec-
tives, and knowledge in such a way that noticeably better judgements,
coordination, collaborations, and overall effectiveness can occur (Mergel,
2015; Shilbury et al., 2020, 27).

Communication is needed, not only for efficient work, but also to pro-
mote the Olympic Movement. Olympic Games should be accessible to all
and must connect people. Agenda 2020+5 wants that "value-adding inno-
vative solutions must be sought to increase the number of touchpoints
with people to share the unique Olympic Games experience regardless of
age, gender and location" (IOC, 2021c, recommendations 1 and 8). With

new emerging technologies and innovations, the broadcasting landscape (i.e., radio, television, or internet) is in constant evolution. This provides new opportunities to highlight the Olympic Values and experience the Olympic Games, and all of the sports therein, like never before.

Therefore, strategic communication is needed to present the topics and diversity of sport, and the Olympic Movement, more strongly to the public. NOCs shall make greater use of new and digital forms of communication. Regarding commercialisation, NOCs have to consider strengthening and further developing their brand (in the same vein as what IOC is doing).

To do so, NOCs could improve internal communications (with member organisations) and work with them to develop and implement media campaigns, to promote sports participation in general.

Public affairs are also becoming increasingly more important. A large part of the population is sceptical about the Olympic Sport Organisations and the Olympic Movement, which can be seen in public referendums against hosting the Olympic Games, politicians professing to be against the Olympic Games, or in the many critical news items that are published by the media. Strategic plans are needed to turn this perception back. Koenigstorfer and Preuss (2019) proved that the perception of the NOC is different, based on the values people see in the Olympic Games. Therefore, NOCs need to report on their work with even greater transparency, and understand communication as a dialogue-oriented and participatory process.

Finally, a public affairs strategy is useful. The political representation of the interests of public-spirited sport is a central and increasingly important task for NOCs. The many environment changes (political, economic, media, etc.) lead to an increasing number of policy fields, regulations, and laws affecting the NOC, directly or indirectly. NOCs need to advocate consistently for the interests of sport, especially regarding legal regulations, and in doing so we will increasingly focus on international developments. RINGS Public Affairs Guidelines provide information on 10 key elements to consider, for successful public affairs of an NOC.

Public affairs also mean to expand networks and alliances, wherever the interests of sport and the Olympic Movement are affected in your country, and in the European and international context.

2.4.5 Medical and Safety

Strategic planning is needed for athletes' safeguarding, medical services, and all anti-doping and clean sport initiatives. An NOC should strengthen safe sport/safeguarding, to protect the physical and mental well-being of athletes, as recommended by Agenda 2020+5.

The strategic plan covers key aspects, from athlete representation to protection from doping and competition manipulation, to supporting athletes, both on and off the field of play. Each NOC must implement the anti-doping programmes, and should support innovative testing, intelligence and investigations, and work closely together with the respective NADO.

Regarding safeguarding athletes, an NOC should implement safeguarding policies and procedures among all stakeholders, establish a Safeguarding Officer position within the NOC, promote the fact that the NF should be doing the same, and offer safeguarding education for their national stakeholders (in particular athletes and entourage) through webinars, courses, and international scholarships (IOC, 2021c, 13).

2.4.6 Constant Change of Environment

Each strategic planning process should include risk management, which means the proactive process that involves assessing all possible risks to events and their stakeholders by strategically picked actions which would minimise any of the identified risks (Leopkey & Parent, 2009) (see subchapter 3.5). Risk management should be developed by every NOC, as changes in the environment, or sudden incidences, could cause severe harm. As the COVID-19 pandemic or the Russian invasion of Ukraine have shown, NOCs should be prepared for incidences affecting their field of action (see case study in subchapter 6.3).

2.4.7 Commercial

Successful sport marketing and financing are the result of carefully structured planning, creativity, and perseverance. Technology and the change of external forces constantly impact on and, consequently, change the commercial environment. NOCs must monitor changes in each of the financing sources, also be aware of changes elsewhere, that could be impact-

ing on those financing sources. Government legislation, for example, can alter the economic infrastructure of an NOC through legislative change.

Illustration: CONI Transformed by Government
The Italian NOC (CONI) is already facing challenges as a result of government actions in 2018, that included stripping 360 million Euros in funding, leaving it with only 40 million Euros. The sum of 360 million Euros was distributed by CONI to the national governing bodies for sport, a responsibility which is now handled by a new ministry for health and sport. Source: O'Kane, P. (2019).

There are other examples (apart from that of CONI) of what can affect an NOC, such as the change in lotteries and gaming legislation, or Pay-TV legislation; and other factors like demographic trends. For example, the youth consume sport in a different way (e.g., in non-linear formats, via social media, or via second screen, which is using a mobile device for supplementary content while watching TV) than in the past, which will have an effect on the finances of an NOC.

Overall, the commercial situation is determined by the market in which the NOC acts. Even though the NOC will be limited to the national market, there is competition to attract sponsors (against other sports). Sponsors and suppliers have a bargaining power that changes over time. Strategic planning should consider these changes.

2.4.8 Events

Many nations develop national strategies on how to attract major sporting events. These strategies help NF to win bids and attract major events to their country. In a strategic plan, the NOC should consider how responsibilities are distributed among relevant stakeholders in the bidding, and the hosting process of major sporting events. Here are some relevant questions:

– Are special (central) structures established for organising the bidding and hosting processes?
– Is a standardised decision-making process established for the allocation of public funding?
– Is a procedure established to avoid competing bids for the same major sporting event?

- Does a taxonomy for different types of major sporting events exist in the country under study?
- Which major sporting events are eligible for public funding?
- Are clear requirements formulated for an award of public funding?

Further, an NOC has to consider which competitions the national team will be sent to, the relevant team sizes related to multi-sport events, and how the selection process, dressing, travel support, etc. will be organised (e.g., for Special Olympics, Universiade, World Games, Youth Olympic Games, the Olympic Games, Urban Games).

2.4.9 Sustainability and Legacy

The relevance of sport in society was acknowledged in 2015 by the United Nations (UN), when sport was highlighted as an "important enabler" to achieve the ambitious agenda of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (IOC, 2018, 2). Climate change is already impacting sport activities and events, and will continue to do so, even more seriously, in the foreseeable future. Winter sport may be challenged, heat will harm outdoor sports, rain and flood water may destroy sport venues, and vulnerable groups of the society may reduce their sport participation.

Therefore, each NOC should make sustainability an integral part of all its activities. Sustainability is a continually evolving and changing process and, therefore, should be included in a strategic plan. An NOC Sustainability Strategy could include a long-term perspective that is aligned to both the 2030 Strategic Development Goals (SDGs), as set out by the UN in 2015, and climate action. These "global goals" provide a framework. The IOC is working to ensure that sustainability considerations are integrated into the future work of Olympic Solidarity with the NOCs, including providing guidance, education manuals, and evaluation of funding requests from NOCs. A strategy is needed to enable your NOC to start implementing sustainable measures.

Fact Box: NOCs and Sustainability

The IOC started a European NOC Sustainability Working Group in 2017, to collate and share existing sustainability best practices of NOCs. Discuss opportunities for future support and collaboration; discuss challenges faced in embedding sustainability at an NOC; carry out an initial gap analysis by subject matter; and discuss how best to assist, and share best practice with, other NOCs. (IOC, 2018, 85)

The EOC EU Office (together with the IOC) is running a series of webi-nars on climate action in sport on areas such as sustainable sourcing, climate, sport and biodiversity, and sport and sustainable events. Additionally, the EOC EU Office will start a new project to educate climate action officers in 18 NOCs and measure the NOCs' carbon footprint.In response to requests received from the Olympic Movement for simple, easy-to follow guides on sustainability, the IOC has begun to create a series of entry-level guides that are specifically aimed at NOCs and IFs. Known as the "Sustainability Essentials" series, these guides will provide simple, practical, and useful information on key aspects of implementing sustainability within sport.

An example is the way to create an "event plastic plan" (see below), and also find essentials for climate action, sustainable sourcing, sustainable management, and how to be a sustainable champion. An example here is from "Create your event plastic plan" (IOC, 2018). The text is taken from IOC (2018)

Want to cut down on plastic at your next sporting event? You'll need to create a plan and get all the right people involved. To have the most impact, be sure to start well in advance. These are the key steps you should take:

Identify and prioritise	Engage and research	Plan
• Start by understanding where plastic is used and the main sources of plastic waste. You can use the checklist on page 36 to get started.	• Identify the stakeholders who will need to be involved. This may be everyone from suppliers and athletes to catering managers and volunteers.	• Write your plan; you can use the template on page 34 as a guide.
• You may not be able to tackle everything in one go, so be prepared to prioritise.	• Discuss your plans and ask for people's ideas. You may find they have helpful suggestions and creative solutions.	• Your plan should set out the goals and policy for your event. Be specific. It should list the actions that must be taken and identify who is responsible.
• Include some easy-win steps to boost morale but also some more aspirational and challenging goals. If you think big, you'll get further.	• Explore ways to reduce plastics use and alternative options. Beware of unintended consequences: reducing plastic waste from catering outlets, for example, only to find it increases food waste.	• You'll probably need to create more detailed plans for different phases and areas of your event.

The importance of legacy is specifically addressed in Rule 2.14 of the Olympic Charter (IOC, 2021a), and highlighted in Olympic Agenda 2020. Any activity that an NOC is undertaking should leave a legacy. A strategic plan should cover the various ways in which the NOC intends to further encourage, support, monitor, and promote legacy in partnership with its stakeholders.

Olympic legacy encompasses all of the tangible and intangible long-term benefits that are initiated or accelerated by any national sport project / sport event for people, cities / territories, and the member organi-

sations. NOCs could encourage Olympic legacy celebrations for former host cities, and build strategic partnerships (IOC, 2017).

Illustration: Importance of the nine areas of any strategic plan for an NOC

In 2020, 11 European NOCs rated the individual importance of the areas of any strategic plan. Even though all areas were important (scale 1-10; 1=not important at all, 10=most important), the commercial and governance parts are the most important, followed by sport promotion and events (Olympic Games).
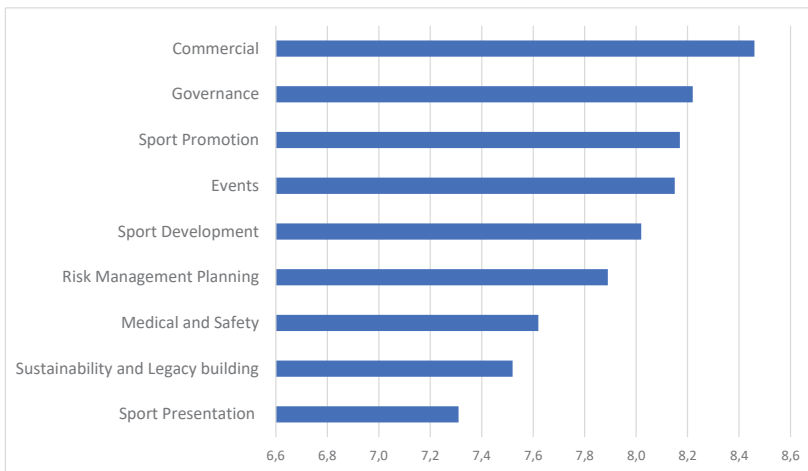
Fig. 16: Importance of Areas of the Strategic Plan Evaluated by 11 NOCs

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Finally, an NOC should regularly review how its organisational performance is still aligned with the NOC's strategic plan.

2.5 Organisation and Strategy in Different Cultures

Without doubt, it is clear that culture is a strong influencer on the success of any strategy. According to Hofstede (2004), culture is "The collective programming of human thought, which differentiates members of one group from those of another group." The late management guru, Peter Drucker (1977), said that "culture eats strategy for breakfast", which illus-

trates the fact that the best strategy does not always work, and especially when it is not implemented into cultural habits. However, that does not mean that an adopted strategy works better. Lewis (2005) discusses the phenomenon of "cultural myopia", which means that ethnocentrism blinds everyone to the salient features of his/her own cultural makeup. This makes someone see other cultures as deviations from his/her own "correct" system. To read the suggestions in this book, rightly means that any advice should not be taken as being equally successful in every NOC. Policies and regulations that are congruent with the IOC or other NOCs (within their own cultural values), may not necessarily be congruent with your own NOC. However, as the Olympic Movement is global, and the objectives may be similar for each NOC, the management and stakeholder reflections must be culturally adopted.

For this book, two applications of cultural differences are particularly important in being considered. One is the differences in leadership style, the other is the differences in communication methodology (see subchapter 4.4).

Leadership can be autocratic or democratic (see subchapter 4.2.4 for more detail), collective or individual, merit-based or ascribed, desired or imposed. According to Lewis (2005, 104), it is not surprising that business leaders, as well as national sport leaders, often wield their power in conformity with the national setup. For instance, a democracy like Sweden produces low-key democratic managers; Arab managers are good Muslims; and Chinese managers usually have government or party affiliations. It is almost impossible to transfer good leaders successfully from one culture to another. Even though we may think that football coaches can be from nationalities that are different to our own, that may not be the case when the task becomes much more complex, and the leader needs a deep knowledge of processes, and also a large network. For example, a Japanese NOC president would be largely ineffective in the United States; American league commissioners would fare badly in most European sport leagues; and an Arab sport leader would probably not be tolerated in a Scandinavian sport confederation. The same applies when a strategic plan is set up by simply copying it from another nation.

2.5.1 Cultural Roots of Organisation and Leadership

The development of concepts of leadership is closely connected with the organisational structure of the society. Each society breeds the type of

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leader it wants, and expects him or her to keep to the path of the age-old cultural habits of that society. In the long run, people of an NOC will adhere collectively to the set of norms, reactions, and activities which their experience and development have shown to be most beneficial for them. When it comes to the development of strategic plans, and the change management to implement a plan, the mentality of a culture — the inner workings and genius of the mindset — are important for success.

Culturally speaking, each NOC is a specific group. It organises itself in ways that are different from what other NOCs are doing. The leaders in each NOC think in a variety of ways about authority, power, cooperation, aims, results, and satisfaction. Thus, developing a strategy and change management would imply leadership skills, which means: people in authority who know how to write the rules for the system.

Lewis (2005, 42) constructed a cultural model, according to which, leaders in NOCs in cultures that are linear-active (i.e., task-oriented, highly organised planners, operating in a positive one-step-at-a-time way, etc.), such as in countries like Germany, the UK, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, or Finland, will generally demonstrate task orientation. They look for technical competence, place facts before sentiment, and logic before emotion. Furthermore, they will be deal-oriented, focusing their own attention, and that of their staff, on immediate achievements and results. They are generally orderly, while adhering to agendas and inspiring their staff with their careful planning.

In contrast, multi-active leaders in NOCs in countries such as Italy, Spain, Russia, Türkiye, France, or Greece, for example, are much more extroverted, and they tend to rely on their eloquence and ability to persuade, and will finally use human force as an inspirational factor. They often complete human transactions emotionally, assigning the time this may take to developing the contact to the limit. Such NOCs are usually more oriented to networking.

2.5.2 The Sense for Change and Innovation

As already explained, the environment changes constantly and, thus, ever new challenges occur for NOCs. Depending on the culture, both "change" and innovation are seen differently.

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Tab. 4: Innovation and Change in Different Cultures

NOCs in linear-active cultures (Germany, UK, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, or Finland)	NOCs in multi-active cultures (Italy, Spain, Russia, Türkiye, France, or Greece)
Change is constantly necessary NOCs must innovate to survive	Change is imaginative and exciting Innovation should be aesthetic
Decisions should be future-oriented Change stimulates growth and improvement	Decisions should be bold and original Change stimulates people
Plan in detail, then change	Change charismatically, then plan details
Change is top-down	Change after key lateral clearances
Democratic brainstorming is an excellent way to foster creativity	Brainstorming is great, but it must be restrained in the presence of superiors

Source: Lewis (2005, 128)

Lewis (2005, 128) shows differences which are important in strategic management. Table 4 illustrates the differences in planning and innovation, and should be considered when planning.

2.5.3 Communication and Culture

Communication is key in strategic management. It is needed when developing a strategy, and then when implementing it (change management). Effective communication is different in each country and, as a result, so is the way in which to address and motivate stakeholders and staff. Each NOC that is working with recommendations from this book, must reflect on adapting them to their NOC culture (organisational culture), based on the national culture.

According to researchers on cultural differences, there are different dimensions that have impacts on management.

Each culture possesses its own set of components dictating the limits of what is culturally acceptable. These components are involved in the transfer of information among individuals within that culture, and they lend context to the discourse and activities of the community, which can be your NOC as the organisation. Therefore, regarding communication, it is important whether a culture acts more in either a high context or a low context (see Hall, 1976).

> **Fact Box: Low versus High Context Culture**
>
> In a **high-context** culture, there are many contextual elements that help people to understand the rules. As a result, much is taken for granted. This can be very confusing for persons who do not fully understand the 'unwritten rules' of the culture, such as in the trust cultures (i.e., population majority believing that others can be trusted) of Greece, Hungary, or Türkiye, for example.
>
> In a **low-context** culture, very little is taken for granted. While this means that more explanation is needed, it also means that there is less chance of misunderstanding, particularly when visitors are present: Contract cultures (e.g., Switzerland, Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, or the UK). In the middle, between high- and low-context cultures, we find France, Russia, Spain, or Italy, for example.

The 'context' (high or low) refers to the amount of information, with regards to communication and cultural issues, that is conveyed via a strategic plan, action undertaken, behaviour for or against staff, or speech. Depending on the amount of information conveyed, cultures can be classified as being high-context and low-context, as in the above descriptions. However, this type of segregation is not rigid, but rather it is relative and, in brief, in some national cultures, more information needs to be given regarding the strategic plan and change management than in others. The following explanation is taken from Lewis (2005), and is adapted to strategic management.

High-context Culture: Most of the information is either in the physical context or initialised in the mind of the person. The execution of change management and the strategic plan is highly dependent on the relationships between the people, and the attention paid to the group process. Staff see a specific hierarchy in social structure and authority. The responsible person (NOC Executive Board) will look after the benefit of the NOC and its success. Information about the strategic plan is often conveyed implicitly, and is heavily dependent on context rather than actual words. Communication is also indirect, can be lengthy, and avoids direct concentration on the topic at hand. Communication is considered to be more of an art than a skill, and as a means to establish and nurture relationships. Change management can, therefore, be achieved through relations, but change management can also indirectly manifest or create certain relations. Any disagreement or conflict can quickly be taken at the personal level. A differing opinion is seen as being personally threatening; hence, conflict must either be avoided or resolved, and as soon as possible.

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Indeed, this makes change management difficult to achieve. Knowledge is gained from situation-specific cues, and in a change process misunderstandings can occur. Learning and problem solving, which are inherent in strategic plans and change, are seen as group tasks.

Low-context Culture: The mass of information is vested in the explicit message, e.g., a detailed description of the strategic plan and its steps for its implementation. Tasks are carried out by following predetermined procedures, as explained in the plan, and attention is paid to the end goal. The social structure is not centralised, and the authority is distributed on various levels. Each level is, in turn, responsible for something. Information is conveyed explicitly in a precise and easy to understand form. The information depends on the actual words rather than the context. This makes it critical to give explanations for each step during change management. Communication is direct, succinct, and to the point. Communication is regarded as a means with which to exchange information, ideas, and facts. Disagreement is not taken personally, but is rather acknowledged as a difference in opinion/outlook that does not affect the personal relationship of the individuals. Instead, both individuals focus on formulating a rational solution. Gained knowledge is subject to the individual's perception, which means without explanation; in that, some of the staff may think differently about given situations, or the goals of a strategic plan. Learning is achieved by following the directions and explanations of others. Learning and problem solving, in order to achieve the goals of the strategic plan, are considered to be individual tasks.

Chapter 3 Strategic Analysis of NOCs

3.1 Strategic Analysis

This chapter introduces tools, with which to analyse an NOC (internal analysis in subchapter 3.2) and its environment (external analysis in subchapter 3.3). The environmental examination is based on the stakeholder analysis (subchapter 3.3.2). Then, the so-called SWOT analysis (subchapter 3.4) gets introduced, which is an analysis that matches the strengths and weaknesses of an NOC, with the opportunities and threats that are driven by the environment. This is important, in order to fully understand the position of an NOC, and the interaction forces of an NOC and its environment. In this way, an NOC gains strategic recommendations, which should be considered when developing a strategic plan.
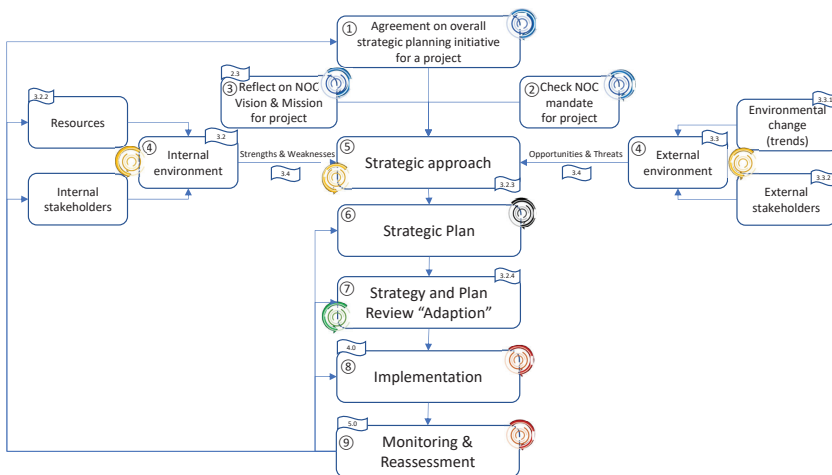

Fig. 17: Overview of Strategic Management

3.2 Internal Analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses of an NOC

The purpose of the organisational (internal) analysis is to provide information about the strengths and weaknesses of the NOC (Fig. 17, ④), which can guide the strategic actions (known as the "strategic approach"; Fig. 17, ⑤).

3.2.1 Strategic Action Fields and Strategic Action Units

Each NOC has a particular view of its stakeholders, and a routine in its business activities.

The purpose of the organisational (NOC) and environmental (external factors) analysis is to provide information about a) type, b) strength, and c) interplay of the influencing forces of the NOC and its environment.

When analysing an NOC, you decompose the following two components:

1) The environment (subchapter 3.3) into **strategic action fields** (**SAFs**). This conveys a market-related structuring of an NOC's current activities in the environment. It illustrates which fields are not covered by an NOC, and which are.

2) The NOC as organisation into **strategic action units** (**SAUs**). This visualises the departments (staff working units) inside the NOC, and shows in which fields the NOC is active.

The segmentation and delineation of the SAFs and SAUs are critical to success. Here, it is not only defined in which activities an NOC sees itself, but it is also decided in which form of internal structuring (SAUs) the NOC would wish to work on the environment (SAFs).

Illustration: Lithuanian NOC (LNOC) and its athletes

The Lithuanian NOC (LNOC) has an independent "Athletes Commission" since 2001, where elite athletes are represented. Some athletes believed that the representation in the LNOC (SAU) is not enough. Then, in 2018, a few elite athletes established the separate entity "National Athletes Association" (which is funded by government resources), the purpose being to represent elite athletes at the government level, to organise qualification improvement seminars, etc. The SAF is comprised solely of elite athletes. Inside the LNOC the athletes have their commission (SAU), which represents the athletes and, therefore, the LNOC views them as important stakeholders. However, the athletes (as the stakehold-

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er group) have built their own government-financed association, as they felt that their representation was inadequate. Hence, this association builds the environment of the LNOC.

The same happened at the German NOC (German Olympic Sports Confederation, DOSB), where the "Athletes Commission" (six members) is the SAU of the DOSB, and the "Athleten Deutschland e.V." (founded 2017, 1400 members) is an association that is independent of the DOSB, and is financed by the government (SAF).

As the illustration shows, SAFs are areas of an NOC's environment. Here, the NOC has a professional unit, which works with the important issues of the environment. Usually, an NOC creates an SAU (this would be a department, or at least one person) to be responsible for the respective SAFs. The SAU shows which fields of the environment are important for an NOC (e.g., an ethics commission or integrity officer will duly inform us that the NOC takes care of overseeing good governance).

Illustration: DOSB structure of SAU

The organigram of the DOSB shows which SAUs the DOSB formalised due to the goals it would wish to achieve; refer to this document:-
https://cdn.dosb.de/user_upload/www.dosb.de/uber_uns/Organigramme/DOSB-Geschaeftsstelle.pdf

The structure is typical for NOCs. The 19 SAUs are structured in five areas:

1. Development of the NOC (federation development, communication, international relations)
2. Sport development (venues & ecology, prevention & health, education, diversity, gender, inclusion, integration)
3. High-performance sport (consultancy/finance of NSF, organisation & management & digitalisation, science & HR at federations, athletes' dual career)
4. Finance (administration, finance & controlling, human resources, IT, legal matters)
5. Youth sport (finance of youth sport, society politics, international youth sport)

By looking at Agenda 2020+5, you can identify the environmental challenges (SAFs) that the IOC would consider as important. The following list of recommendations is highlighted (bold letters) where the DOSB has a strategic action unit (SAU) installed:

1. Strengthen the uniqueness and the universality of Olympic Games (not appropriate for NOCs)
2. Foster **sustainable** Olympic Games (SAU environment)
3. Reinforce **athletes' rights and responsibilities** (SAU non-existent; but there is the athletes' commission)
4. Continue to attract **best athletes** (SAU high performance sports)
5. Further strengthen **safe sport and the protection** of clean athletes (SAU prevention and health)
6. Enhance and promote the Road to the Olympic Games by **qualifying events** (SAU federation development)
7. Coordinate the **harmonisation of the sports calendar** (SAU federation development)
8. **Grow digital engagement** with people (SAU digital communication)
9. Encourage the development of virtual sports and further engage with video gaming communities
10. Strengthen the role of sport as an important **enabler for the UN Sustainable Development Goals** (SAU venue and ecology, diversity, inclusion, and education)
11. Strengthen the **support of refugees** and populations affected by displacement (SAU Integration, international relations)
12. Reach out beyond the Olympic community
13. Continue to lead by example in corporate citizenship (e.g., **sustainability, gender**, human rights) (SAU environment, diversity, gender equity)
14. Strengthen the Olympic Movement through good governance (SAU federation development)
15. Innovate **revenue generation models** (SAU Marketing outsourced)

Many of the relevant SAFs are addressed in Agenda 2020 and Agenda 2020+5. In all of these fields, an NOC can develop an SAU and then take action. This provides opportunities and may reduce risks for the NOC.

An NOC shall ask itself:
1) In which area (SAF) do we want to operate?
2) How attractive is this area (SAF) for our NOC?
3) Who are the key stakeholders in this area?
4) What is our current position towards those stakeholders? What position do we want to take?
5) How do we want to achieve this position?

These questions will be addressed in the stakeholder analysis in subchapter 3.3.2. Here, it helps to better understand the NOC's activities and position.

3.2.2 Analysis of NOC Resources

An analysis of NOC resources is useful, to better understand the NOC's competencies and the value of its resources. But what are those "resources", and what should an NOC achieve?

The missions of non-profit organisations (NPOs) are not about revenue assurance, but rather they are about value creation (Moore, 2009). This applies to NOCs and the Olympic Movement in general. The central NOC asset is its ability to create public value.

Fact Box: Public Value

Public value refers to the value and benefits that an organisation provides to a society, and answers the question of what makes an organisation valuable to that society. The decisive factor here is the new understanding of "value" creation, which arises solely through appreciation and social acceptance. Public value is intended to provide the management team with a guideline, that promotes entrepreneurial activity for the benefit of the common good.

Case Study: Public Value and the IOC

A number of firms use public value to obtain management information, that helps in making strategic decisions. For example: The football club FC Bayern Munich uses a public value approach to systematically assess the challenges pertaining to its societal role, which are concomitant with its growth from a regionally embedded football club to a global entertainment brand. For a football club that enjoys permanent public attention, and is seen as a role model by many people, such questions are especially relevant. In this regard, there are different public values involved, such as "Mia san mia" (Bavarian for "we are who we are" or "us is us"), which is the identification at the *local level*, and the "global brand image" which is the high-performance success and the identification at the *international level*; and both are partly in tension with each other. The structured compilation and full awareness of these conflicts of the club's societal value can be used as management information for strategic decision-making.

This is similar to the IOC, which faces challenges that are connected with an Olympic-Value driven, historically-rooted sport event versus a multi-billion-dollar generating brand, and an organisation which coordinates and rules world sport. The public value of the IOC is partly fixed in the fundamental principles. However, it is very broad. It becomes apparent that the public values, as listed below, cannot be viewed in isolation from one another. In some cases, those values overlap and are in tension with each other.

- Strong values (fair play and participation, peace building, non-discrimination of any kind, see also Fig. 10)
- Citius (faster), altius (higher), and fortius (stronger) - sporty striving for success, performance culture, social role model for success orientation
- Strength of the brand (Positive advertising carrier for the Olympic Games, international flagship as sport event, entertainment brand, one of the most known global brands)
- Olympia as a social melting pot (promotion of integration (refugees, all nations), socially focused as a topic of conversation, the Olympic Games as community experience for all social classes)
- Community through polarisation (together against the Olympics, daily friction with the IOC, arrogance and superiority, IOC as an enemy image)
- Olympic Games as event (Olympic Games as celebrations of the Olympic fans, fun and joy, emotional anchor, different needs of the fans pleased by wide sport programme)
- Role model for economic success (solidarity with all sports, independence from external investors, risk awareness, economic role model for associations)

Topics to be worked on:
1. Analyse the conflicting values that the IOC and the Olympic Games have.
2. Discuss what the public values of your NOC are.
3. Look back at the visions of NOCs' statements, and identify where they address public value (Tab. 3).

Source: Beringer and Bernard (2013)

Considering its own available resources is a necessary step for an NOC, before planning any of its actions. In other words, the NOC should become aware, regarding whether the currently available set of supplies, either support or hinder the actions that it plans.

Results of studies on organisational capacity, show five main variables that describe resources (De Vita et al., 2001; Wigboldus et al., 2010). NOC resources can be viewed as:

Financial: Funds, investment, subventions, lottery shares, sponsors, licences.

Human: Demographics, skills, motivation, knowledge base, experience, social capital, social interaction.

External: Relationships, trust, networks, legitimacy capital.

Infrastructure: Buildings, sport venues, office space, IT.

Intellectual: Brands, athlete data, other databases, processes, NOC culture, strategies.

Many of these NOC resources are intangible. Some of them shall be explained here, to better understand their value. Resources that are often overlooked are social capital (Uslaner, 1999; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008) and social interactions.

Fact Box: Social Capital

Social capital is trust, norms, mutual support, and informal relations in a society (or an NOC), that enable the coordinated behaviour of members. Social capital characterises the relationships between persons or groups. An association can be regarded as an organised example of social capital. Associations are part of the infrastructure of well-established relations, and contribute to cooperation, compromise, information, and advocacy through negotiations.

Social interactions are central for any engagement with the Olympic Games. Turner (1998, 13-14) defines social interactions as "the process whereby the overt movements, covert deliberations, and basic physiology of one individual influence those of another and vice versa". It follows that when an NOC articulates a vision for sport, that NOC is inviting its constituencies (i.e., athletes, members, sport organisations) to interpret it, and to react accordingly.

Social interactions shape people's consumption of sport and the development of their lifestyles, which certainly is part of a vision for each NOC. People's experiences of events are predicated on social interactions (Marques et al., 2021), and as Downward and Riordan (2007) demonstrate, interactions are also important for understanding the demand for sports,

and the accumulation of personal and social capital, opportunities, information, and support.

In the context of NOC's relationship with its stakeholders, eight types of social interactions that are stimulated by the Olympic Games can be identified:

1. motivational (i.e., how the process of interaction is affected by different motivations),
2. knowledge generation/dissemination,
3. advocacy,
4. service provision and consumption (i.e., interactional),
5. partnerships,
6. celebrations,
7. collaborations, and
8. structural (i.e., ability of an NOC to sustain/extend their interactions with different target groups).

To reflect the type of interaction for each stakeholder an NOC is working with, can help to better shape the strategic actions with this stakeholder, and promote their better functioning.

3.2.3 Analysis of the Importance of NOC Projects

NOCs usually have many projects running at the same time. It is useful for an NOC to sometimes reflect on the importance of each project. Here, we introduce the BCG (Boston Consulting Group) portfolio matrix, which is a common tool in strategic planning for FPOs (for-profit organisations). It is typically used for the identification of business units, in order to estimate the current and expected profitability.

In this book, the BCG portfolio is used to analyse the NOC's activities, and evaluate them with regard to their future prospects for success, in creating public value and achieving the vision of the NOC. For this purpose, all NOC projects will be presented together in an overall portfolio, to make it easier to visually compare among them. This enables an NOC to make strategic decisions for each project.

The tool suggested here, is used to resolve the question of whether the currently existing portfolio mix of projects/activities is sufficient to secure the future of the NOC, and to achieve its vision. The portfolio matrix (Fig. 18), can be used to determine the extent to which other, more promising projects and action areas should be promoted. Consequently, this means that resources are withdrawn from less promising projects. These can then

be invested in new or existing activities to better achieve the NOC vision. In other words, the portfolio matrix is a tool for setting the correct priorities, when allocating the limited resources that are available to the NOC.

The performance portfolio of an NOC is shown in a matrix on the basis of three dimensions:

– Environmental dimension: the ordinate shows the future importance of a project. It must be reflected whether the project can reach the vision in future.
– NOC dimension: the abscissa shows the real proportion (percentage) of people the NOC wants to reach via a project.
– Project success: each project (circles) has a different importance (blue quadrants). The size of the circles symbolises the success of the project (success is the degree of target achievement).
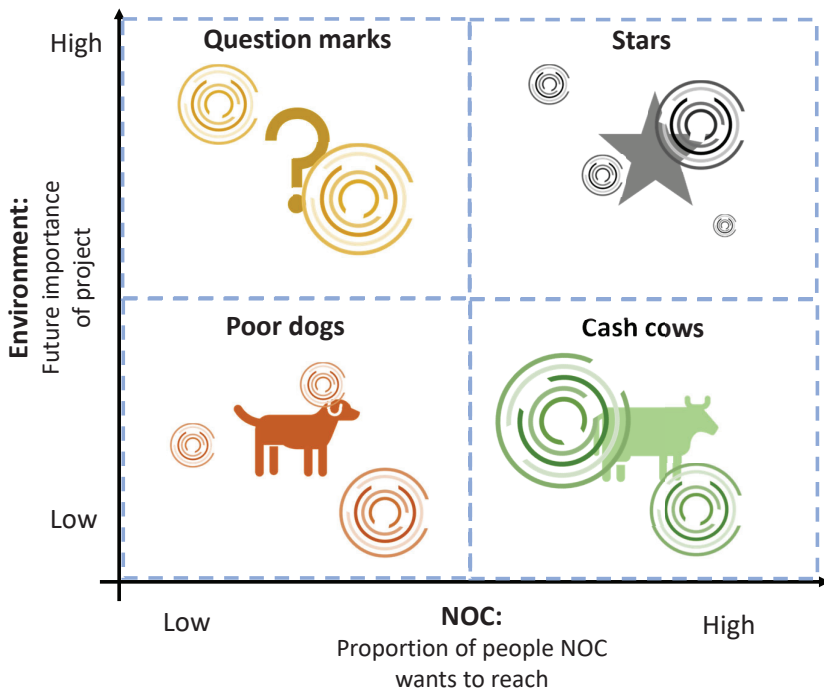

Fig. 18: Portfolio Performance Matrix of NOC Projects

The four areas (blue quadrants) lead an NOC to different strategic considerations.

Question-Mark projects are those that are just being introduced, or are in the early growth phase of the importance of that field (e.g., good governance, safeguarding athletes). At this stage, the future of the projects in this segment is still uncertain, as it can develop into either a success or a failure. In this phase, a lot depends on the resources which the NOC can invest in this project, under the condition that the degree of importance of the project remains high. The projects in this field are not yet developed well enough to attract a sufficient number of people, that the NOC wants to reach as the final goal.

Stars refer to projects that are facing increasing importance, regarding being undertaken, and where the many people who should be reached, have already been reached successfully. These are projects that are in the growth phase. Here, high investments of resources are necessary to maintain the well-running project, and to further increase the number of persons reached. Stars are largely self-supporting and, politically, they are absolutely wanted.

Here, the size of the circle will be explained: the black circles represent projects that already reach a large population (e.g., all Olympic athletes), and are very important for the future (e.g., Whistleblowing portal, sustainability guidelines). The satisfaction of the NOC is represented by the size of the black cycle, and the small circle means that the NOC is not satisfied, and the target is not reached, as it should have already been.

Recommendation: CONI and its portal for Whistleblowing
Whistleblowers are vital for maintaining an open and transparent society, as they expose misconduct or hidden threats. To ensure that they are better protected against negative consequences, EU Directive 2019/1937 on the protection of whistleblowers came into force on 16 December 2019 (Refer to the checklist there that can be used for each NOC). The goals of the EU Whistleblowing Directive are: – To detect and prevent misconduct and breaches of laws and regulations.   – To improve law enforcement by establishing effective, confidential, and secure reporting channels to effectively protect whistleblowers from fear of retaliation.   – To protect and enable whistleblowers by helping them to confidently raise concerns without fear of retaliation, by ensuring anonymity.   In cooperation with UNODC, the IOC published a study "IOC-UNODC Reporting Mechanisms in Sport: A Practical Guide for Development and Implementation". This guide provides information on good practice for

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sports organisations, regarding receiving and handling reports of wrong-doings, and provides an overview of current practices and frameworks. At the IOC hotline one can report:

1. Competition manipulation
2. Abuse and harassment
3. Infringements of IOC Code of Ethics and other integrity issues
4. Press freedom violations

The EU directive and IOC's practice was transformed from CONI (NOC Italy) into a whistleblowing reporting centre. However, the centre is limited to issues of corruption and competition manipulation, and is not directed to the athletes, which is a good step, but one that is missing the above-mentioned points 2-4 of the IOC. [Thus, it makes it a small black circle in the portfolio of CONI, see Fig. 18]. In the CONI reporting centre, all employees, collaborators, goods and service suppliers of CONI can learn about Whistleblowing, competition manipulation, and how to make a report. The reports that are submitted to this platform are forwarded, as strictly confidential, to the appointed Department, which notifies the Authorities in charge. However, alternatively, the report can also be sent to the National Anticorruption Authority (ANAC).

Sources: EU White Paper on Whistleblowing https://www.integrityline .com/en-gb/expertise/white-paper/eu-whistleblowing-directive/; CONI Whistleblowing reporting centre https://www.coni.it/en/whistleblowing -en.html

Cash cows operate in a mature "market", where the number of people that need to be reached are successfully reached. This part of the portfolio matrix is characterised by the fact that the projects usually already run longer, and synergy effects and knowledge are built up. Thus, the use of resources has already fallen (e.g., projects are designed, and just need to be repeated). Only a small investment is needed to continue generating success in these projects. However, only if the size of a circle is small, can it then be discussed regarding how to make the project better to achieving the target.

Poor dogs represent a project area in which the NOC has a low reach to people it needs to reach. At the same time, the degree of importance of the projects in this area is in relation to questioning, stagnating, or even decreasing. High investments of resources are necessary to maintain the project; therefore, it should be considered whether or not to cancel these projects (if no other political issue is hindering that direction).

In practice, it is difficult to correctly classify all NOC projects and services in a four-field matrix. Firstly, it is important that the NOC is able to quantify the two most important basic terms of the portfolio matrix, "the proportion of people you want to reach" and the "future importance of a project". The proportion of people you want to reach, is the actual number of people you successfully reach, in relation to the population-reaching extent that could have been achieved. You calculate this key figure using the formula:

$$\text{proportion of people you want to reach} = \frac{\text{number of people you reach}}{\text{total number of people that can be reached}}$$

The "future importance" of a project can be expressed in a scale in the portfolio matrix. For example, Very important, Important, More-or-less important, Unimportant, Not at all important. The units of your axis should be based on the global future importance of a topic, but also reflected on the local (cultural) circumstances. Here, specific topics and projects can have a high relevance in one culture or geographical region, but no relevance whatsoever in other cultures/regions (e.g., the number of gold medals to be won is important for the French NOC, but not for the Andorran NOC). Each NOC should orient itself on important project areas in Agenda 2020+5 or – if available – you can inspect other NOC's vision and mission statements (Tab. 3).

The portfolio matrix is not the tool of choice for tracking the NOC development over the long term. Rather, it serves to analyse and record the current states of projects and their results, that are represented in a snapshot. Nevertheless, you can use the portfolio matrix to a limited extent to monitor changes. To do this, you need to collect the figures mentioned at regular intervals. You can reallocate the positions of the individual projects.
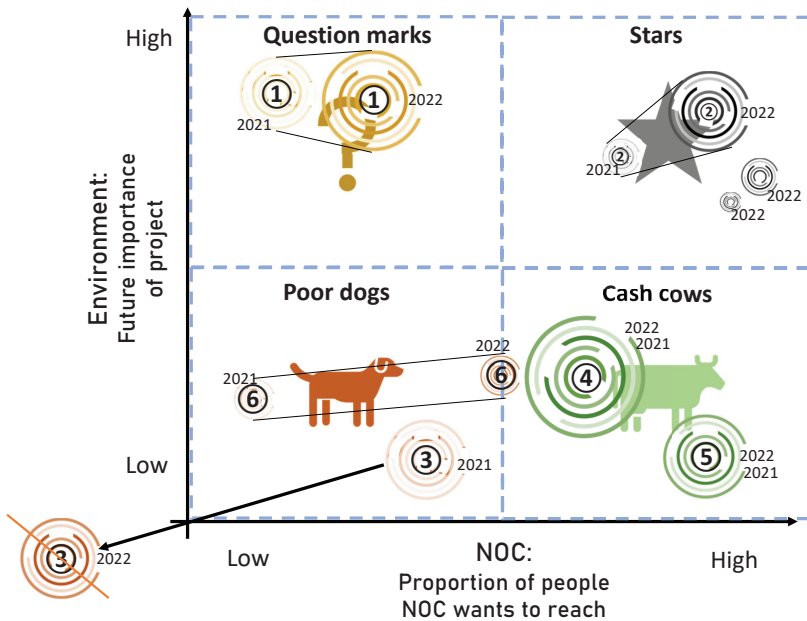
Fig. 19: NOC Project Performance Portfolio 2021 and 2022

Figure 19 shows the projects 2021 and 2022. Project 1 is now reaching more people and the success of the project became improved (larger size). Similarly, regarding project 2, after reassessment in 2022, it was found that the topic will become more important in the future. Project 3 was quite large and was cancelled in 2022. Projects 4 and 5 stay the same as the year before. It was discussed that Project 6 should be cancelled, but as it is a duty for an NOC to keep that project (perhaps, it was the organisation of Olympic Day), the NOC made efforts to reach more people. However, the size of the circle is the same, which means that the target is still not reached. It moved up a little (in degree of importance), because Agenda 2020+5 stresses the issue as being important.

Strategies Driven from the 4 BCG Matrix Quadrants

The division into the four quadrants of Question marks, Stars, Cash cows, and Poor dogs serves not only as an overview of the current NOC project situation, but also to (potentially) develop strategies for the future. Each of the four quadrants is assigned to a strategy that an NOC can take for the assigned projects:

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Selection strategy: This strategy is used for Question marks, where the future importance of the project and the development to reach more people is uncertain. Here, the NOC should select which projects seem most important to develop. The NOC should invest in these projects to reach more people. In other words, the NOC should make these projects to become Stars or, later, Cash cows. Projects where such a development is unlikely (e.g., due to the difficulty of reaching more people with the given resources), should be considered for elimination. The NOC should withdraw resources from these projects and remove them from the programme.

Investment strategy: This strategy is used for Stars, where the NOC reaches a high number of persons in an area of ongoing high importance (e.g., this can be the promotion of the national Olympic team). The investment of resources should be increased if the importance of the project is staying high, or even increasing.

Levee strategy: For Cash cows, the NOC can reduce investments to the required minimum, to maintain the number of people reached. The input into the project can be checked for saving as the project runs well, but is not of high importance for the future. The resources saved can be used to support the expansion of Stars and Question marks.

Disinvestment strategy: This is applied to the Poor dogs. The NOC should consider withdrawing all resources from projects in this quadrant. However, it must be checked if there is a mandate (i.e., a must do project written in Olympic Charter or NOC statutes) to keep a project alive. The NOC may even try to bring it into the area of Cash cows. Investments for projects in the Poor dogs area no longer bring any significant improvement, but take up resources. Therefore, the NOC should put these resources and capacities to better use in other projects.

Workshop: Project Portfolio of an NOC
Preparation: Meet with a group of persons from different departments. Take care to have people involved who oversee all projects, and others who are well informed about the projects.
1. Determine which projects or services you want to consider in the portfolio matrix. Show the list to the board members to check for completeness.
2. Then, determine the proportion of people you want to reach, and the importance of the project for the future, related to your country and culture, for each project in step 1.

3. Enter the corresponding values on the two axes and mark the point where the two lines meet as the project under consideration.
4. Define for each project the targets you want to reach. The higher the success/satisfaction with a particular project, the larger the size of the circle you draw. The determination of "success" is difficult, and should be discussed among members of a small group (independent from the project leader). Then, draw the circle with a specific size over the point from step 3. Keep in mind that a project can also serve to satisfy an external stakeholder, or to maintain relationships, etc. and, therefore, it also can be named as successful.
5. Draw lines to define quadrants. The line must not be in the middle of each axis. It is better to orient a line that is related to projects that are around the middle of each axis. Get the group to agree on the positions of the lines.
6. Analyse each project following the suggested strategies. Before deciding on a strategy, check whether there are binding mandates, contractual bindings, or promises (from board members), indicating that it would be better to keep a particular project running, even though it appears in the Poor dogs area.

3.2.4 Analysis of the Key Competencies, Strengths, and Weaknesses of NOCs

Analysing and finding key competencies (strengths) is an essential part of NOC analysis. Knowing the NOCs' strengths allows better decision-making, strategic planning, and management. The awareness of competencies and strengths are needed for the SWOT analysis (subchapter 3.4).

The McKinsey "7S Model" (Müller-Stevens & Lechner, 2005, 218) is a well-fitting tool, with which to analyse an NOC's strengths and weakness. It is an organisational tool that assesses the well-being and future success of an NOC. It looks to seven internal factors (7 Ss) of an NOC as a means of determining whether or not an NOC has a good potential to be successful in the future. In particular, it also helps the NOC to analyse what it needs to do to reach its mission.

In the following, the 7 Ss of the model are explained. Firstly, the central S is Shared Values.

Shared Values: These are the commonly shared values, the so-called NOC "corporate culture" values, defining the key beliefs and aspirations that form the core of the NOC culture. Shared Values unite, challenge,

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and give direction to all NOC staff. Shared values are the motivational drivers, and they are likely related to the Olympic fundamental principles. However, each culture and each organisational culture also has values that need to be considered. The shared values are important to all of the other six S areas.

The following six assets contribute to the shared value. Hard elements are easier to change and include:

Strategy is defined as the set of projects/actions that an NOC plans in response or anticipation of changes to its external environment (Channon & Cooper, 2015). That means it should be "stakeholder led"; in that, the NOC must have a deep recognition that achieving the NOC vision depends on meeting the needs of the stakeholders that are addressed (the member federations, the athletes, the sport development, or the Olympic success-related persons). To find your strengths or weaknesses, you can compare your own NOC achievements (i.e., projects) to those of other NOCs (that have a similar vision and similar projects).

Structure refers to how people in an NOC are organised to work together. It is also the structure of all available resources.

Systems refer to the processes of the daily activities. It is how information moves around the NOC and its network partners. It is about the daily activities people do. It is important to react appropriately and to produce responsiveness, e.g., to properly react to demands from athletes (rewards or resource allocation) or the government.

Soft elements are human-related and, therefore, are more difficult to change. They include:

Staff concerns the background and culture of people who work for the NOC. The staff can be seen as a valuable pool of resources, who need to be nurtured, developed, guarded, and allocated into projects. In other words, the term "staff" includes all of the NOC's human resource, demographic, educational, and attitudinal characteristics (Channon & Cooper, 2015).

Skills of your staff and board members are competencies and distinctive capabilities that the people possess, and which are the basis for the NOC's ability to create value. Many different skills are a strong point in your NOC. However, it is argued that old skills can often act as hindrances in developing new skills (Channon & Cooper, 2015). In analysing the skills, an NOC can better decide on what should be outsourced more successfully. All NOC competencies depend on the staff and board members.

Style refers to the behaviour pattern(s) of the executive board and NOC directors and, in particular, how effectively they communicate the values and priorities of the NOC. Style defines the way in which the NOC does

things and what the organisational roles are, e.g., who has which respon-
sibilities, who needs to report to whom, and what freedom there exists
for decision making. Style is highly influenced by culture, e.g., general
leadership styles can be collegial (Scandinavian countries) or hierarchical
(Eastern European countries).

Workshop: Analysing your NOC using the 7S Model

This workshop needs time and effort. Data need to be collected, inter-
views with staff need to be undertaken, etc. You need to take top man-
agement people on board.

1. Analyse every "S"
   - Shared Values: What are the common and shared values in the
     NOC? Are they still up to date?
   - Strategy: Do you know the NOC strategy? Do you think that the
     strategy is sufficient to master the upcoming challenges?
   - Structure: How is your NOC structured? Where is this structure
     helpful, where is it a hindrance?
   - System: Which systems that you use are up to date, old, or insuffi-
     cient?
   - Staff: What are the strengths/weaknesses of your staff? Which staff
     members are missing?
   - Skills: Where is your NOC really strong?
   - Style: What characterises leadership and collaboration? Where do
     they fit, where do they hinder or encourage?
2. Compare the current situation (internal analysis), as best you can,
   with other of the NOCs that have a similar vision.
3. Write down your brief analysis and aim at using the facts, that you
   really can observe, such as the levels of education of your staff mem-
   bers, communication systems you use, IT infrastructure you have, or a
   typical leadership style.
4. Each of the points from step 3 should end with a paragraph enti-
   tled: "Choice through Degree of Importance: The substance of the
   development, or the degree of development?". Here, you reflect upon
   where you are, in comparison to where you could be, in a "perfect"
   world. Relative to your desired situation, your "S" can be high/low,
   average, or strong/weak.
5. Then, draw a conclusion regarding which "S" needs to be developed.
   Keep in mind what your strengths and weaknesses are – these are
   needed in the SWOT analysis, where you reflect strengths and weak-
   nesses against the environmental changes.

Source: Workshop taken from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGceF
EDmtIM retrieved 1.8.2022

At the end of the internal analysis, the strengths and weaknesses of the
NOC should be clear.

3.2.5 Internal NOC Analysis by External Stakeholders – Image

The Olympic system has become extremely complex: power, money, and
image have inevitably brought far-reaching changes on what was once
a gathering of athletes, for athletic purposes, from around the world
(Chappelet & Kübler-Mabbott, 2008, 3). With the corruption scandals in
1999 the reputation of the IOC, and thus the Olympic Movement, started
to decline. The first reactions, such as the founding of the IOC ethics
commission (1999) and a large restructuring of the IOC and its Olympic
Charter, were not enough. A few years later the Games were awarded to
Beijing and Sochi. Due to political issues (freedom of press, homophobia,
etc.), these Games put additional pressure on the credibility of the IOC.
In 2010, FIFA awarded the World Cup to Russia 2018 and Qatar 2022.
This marks a turning point regarding the credibility of international sport
federations. Many consumers do not differentiate FIFA from IOC or other
sport organisations, even though the IOC started serious reform processes
with Agenda 2020 (in 2014) and Agenda 2020+5 (in 2021).
  For strategic management, it can be important to understand how the
image of the NOC is perceived by an important stakeholder, in particular,
when the NOC is looking for winning arguments in stakeholder relations.
Often, the self-perception of an NOC (the so-called identity) is different
from the perception of a stakeholder (the so-called image) regarding that
NOC.
  Methodologically, there are many ways to measure an institutional im-
age (see Elouali et al., 2020). The measurement is always based on the
implicit or explicit associations that the respective stakeholder attributes
to an NOC (as a brand). The stronger the associations are, the stronger
the NOC brand equity is. The associations should be strong and varied.
The measurement of an institutional brand is complex due to the fact
that NOCs relate to the successes at the Olympic Games, and the Games
change from edition to edition, which is relative and dynamic and, there-
fore, varying over time. For example, in the positive case, the winning of

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many medals, and in the negative case, a scandal at the NOC (and doping cases are serious issues) that can directly impact the image.

The measurement tools that have been developed to measure the image of an organisation, are based on tangible and intangible elements. Tangible elements include e.g., number of medals won, events organised, athlete services, money received. The intangible elements refer to the ideas and sensations that a stakeholder would experience, when they see or hear about the NOC.

The attitude scale refers to the attractiveness of the NOC brand. The rating scale considers brand preference, and characteristics that distinguish the NOC from other sport organisations.

The measurement of NOC brand image can be done indirectly through the study of perceptions, or directly, through the analysis of preferences and direct questions. An NOC brand image is considered to be strong in this indirect measurement approach, when the population (segmentable into sport-interested vs. not-sport-interested persons, for example) associates many attributes with it. In other words, the indirect approach to brand measurement refers to the measurement of brand (attitude) awareness (Abyre & Allaoui, 2015).

Psychometrics is a branch of psychology that focuses on the objective measurement of latent constructs (i.e., an NOC brand), that are immeasurable and unobservable directly. Psychometric measurements have the advantage of being practical, operational, and direct. The measurement technique is based on questions about the opinion of the population through a pre-established questionnaire. This is the easiest method. You simply ask the population or a stakeholder of your interest about rating attributes of your choice concerning your NOC or any project, or the Olympic Games itself.
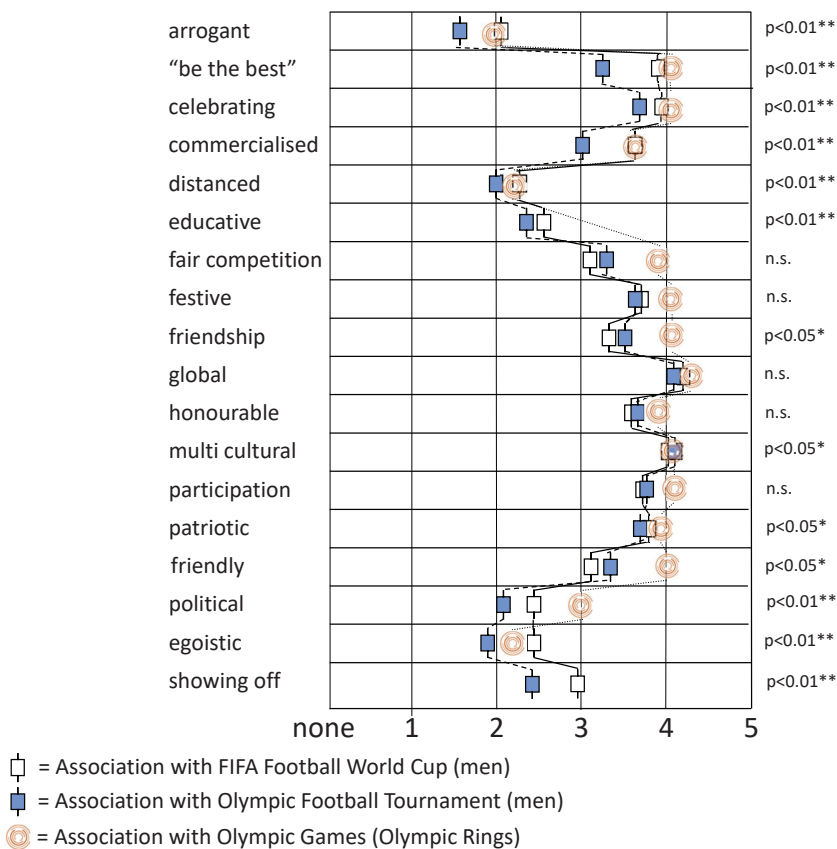
	none	1	2	3	4	5	
arrogant							p<0.01**
"be the best"							p<0.01**
celebrating							p<0.01**
commercialised							p<0.01**
distanced							p<0.01**
educative							p<0.01**
fair competition							n.s.
festive							n.s.
friendship							p<0.05*
global							n.s.
honourable							n.s.
multi cultural							p<0.05*
participation							n.s.
patriotic							p<0.05*
friendly							p<0.05*
political							p<0.01**
egoistic							p<0.01**
showing off							p<0.01**

☐ = Association with FIFA Football World Cup (men)

■ = Association with Olympic Football Tournament (men)

◎ = Association with Olympic Games (Olympic Rings)

Fig. 20: Image Profiles of Olympic Football Tournament, FIFA World Cup, and Olympic Rings

Source: Modified from Preuss (2014, 4)

The brand influences our attitude towards an organisation, event, project, product, or service through the ideas in our own heads. Accordingly, the image of a brand is transferred to individually-perceived organisational characteristics (the so-called halo effect, see Kroeber-Riel & Weinberg, 1996). This is exemplified by a survey of spectators at the 2004 Olympic football tournament in Athens (n=1,096) (Preuss, 2014). The spectators were asked about the image of the Olympic Games, the Olympic football

tournament, and FIFA football World Cup (5-Point Likert scale and the value zero).

Comparing the Olympic Football Tournament (blue) with the FIFA World Cup (white), shows that many attributes are significantly different (last column in Fig. 20), even though both tournaments feature national teams competing against each other to win the tournament. With few exceptions, the perceived attributes of the Olympic Football Tournament are influenced towards the perception of the attributes (rings) of the Olympic Games. The fact that the football match which was seen, was played in the context of the Olympic Games, influences the image attributes of the Olympic Football Tournament.

A more sophisticated method, that also reflects the culture of a country, is the Repertory Grid Technique (RGT) (see case study).

Case Study: Image of the DOSB

The Repertory Grid Technique (RGT) was used by Scheu et al. (2020) to analyse the view of the German population on the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB). The RGT allows the combination of qualitative and quantitative research, which leads to novel results. Importantly, the bipolar constructs (blue dots below) are set by the culture of the German population. Therefore, the positioning of the DOSB is unique, as seen by the German population, in this case. For this purpose, 30 Repertory Grid interviews were conducted. The results show the negative image of the IOC, FIFA, and DOSB. Other organisations were included, in order to see the relative position of the DOSB.

Currently, there is a large discrepancy between the Olympic Games of today, and the ideal Olympic Games as desired by the German population. That provides information on what the ideal Olympic Games should look like, and how the Olympic Games of today should change, in order to regain acceptance in Germany. While the DOSB, IOC, and FIFA are seen as being rather critical, boring, not needed, and even corrupt, the study also showed that the sport itself is evaluated positively, and the Olympic Idea is viewed as representing positive values within the population (see Fig. 21).
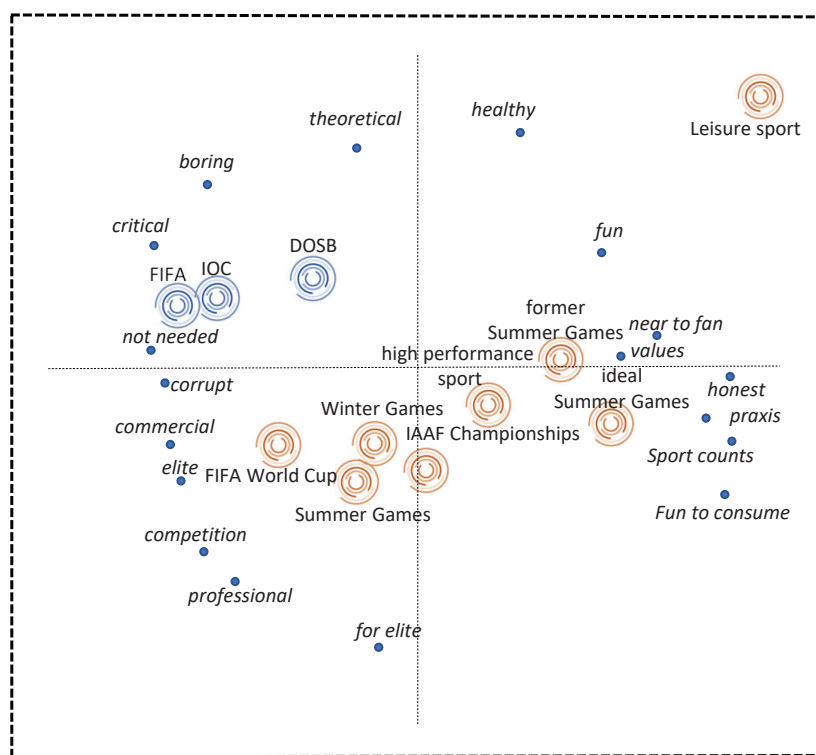

Fig. 21: Repertory Grid Analysis for Sport Events and Organisations by the German Population

Source: Adopted from Scheu et al. (2020)

Questions to discuss. You should conduct an image analysis:
1. For which stakeholder do you wish to know the stakeholder perspective of your NOC image?
2. What kind of research is appropriate to collect information you need to study your NOC image?
3. When is the right time to initiate an image study, while considering that actual media news, staging of Olympic Games, or an actual crisis can influence the result severely?

Another similar, but more advanced, image analysis is called the "CAE-SAR® Model" (ONE8Y, 2019), which stands for "Concept of Archetypes,

Emotional Stories And Regions". In essence, it is about an image analysis and the associated localisation of brands in a 3-dimensional perception space, which consists of four different motif dimensions (Fig. 22). As with the other image analyses, the NOC brand can be analysed; but so can projects, target groups, events, etc.
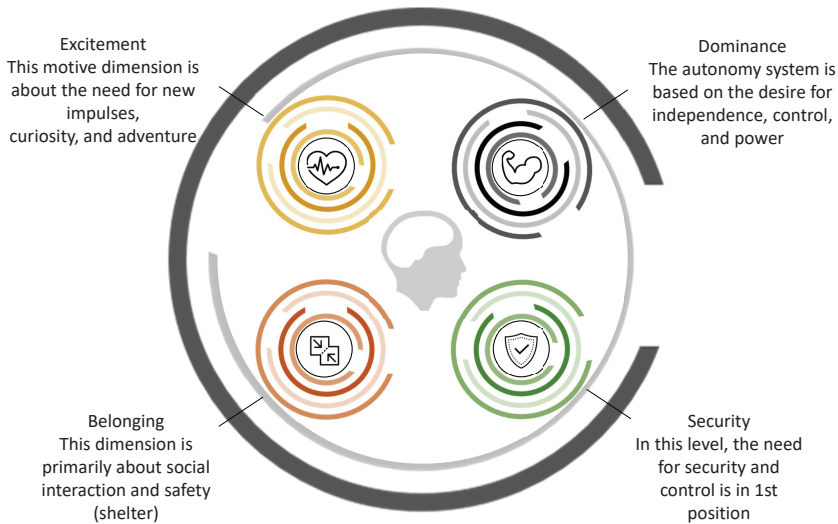

Fig. 22: Four Different Motif Dimensions

Source: Adopted from ONE8Y (2019)

In order to analyse brands on the basis of different attributes, ONE8Y semantically located 49 terms (attributes) in the perception space, with regards to the four motive dimensions, and placed a grid behind them. This allows to precisely locate the image attributes in the CAESAR® model. That is based on a 2-step research procedure. In the first step, all attributes are surveyed among brand connoisseurs, and evaluated with regards to their fit with the brand which, here, is the NOC. Attributes get mentioned and the interviewee has to approve if those attributes fit, or not, as soon as possible. The time of approval is decisive (< 800 msec), as the speed of approval is seen as a criterion for clarity or freedom from contradiction (implicit measurement method). In a second step, all attributes that were assigned in a period of time shorter than 800 msec are evaluated with regards to the level/strength of agreement on a 10-point scale. The result is a 3-dimensional image of the brand.
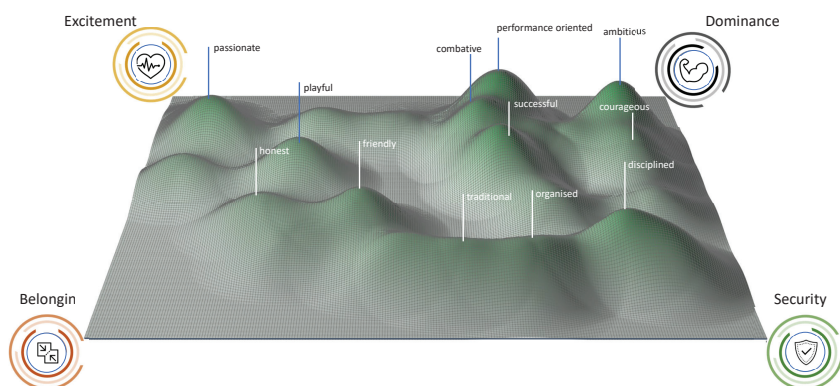
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Fig. 23: Visualised Hypothetical Image Profile of the German Olympic Team by the CAESAR®Model

Source: Modified from ONE8Y (2019)

This image analysis is powerful, as it combines explicit and implicit measurements. It has a strong visual image of the brand, which generates much more understanding in the discussion, than a typical spider diagram or simple bar charts.

Lastly, it may be of interest to get an idea about what the local population is thinking, concerning the Olympic Games and Olympic Values. In that way, an NOC gains information on how the Olympic Movement is perceived in its own country.

Koenigstorfer and Preuss (2018) developed an "Olympic Values Scale" (OVS), which is an easy assessment tool. The OVS contains twelve items that load onto three factors: (1) Appreciation of diversity, (2) Friendly relations with others, and (3) Achievement in competition (see Fig. 10). The scale is scientifically tested and reliable in the UK, the USA, Germany, and Brazil. It can be assumed that it is also reliable for most European countries. All three OVS dimensions relate to individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and intentions. The NOCs and their stakeholders can use the OVS to assess and monitor value perceptions in relation to the Olympic Games, the Olympic Movement, and how the perception may fit to sponsors' image, etc.

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Workshop: Measuring the Olympic Values perceived by a stakeholder

1. Identify a good sample of persons representing the stakeholder.
2. Run the questionnaire, which should consist of three parts:
   Part 1: Socio-demographic data. You need these data to check if you have gathered a good sample, and you may also need them to differentiate the results by subgroups. It may be of interest what youth versus mature persons think, or sport fans versus non-sport fans.
   Part 2: This part is related to the Olympic Value measurement. You start in this way: "Please look at the Olympic Rings (Olympic Games symbol), and think about the values of the Olympic Games, as well as how they are similar or different. Please think of values of the Olympic Games, in general, and refer to what … (here you put in your project, or your NOC, or Olympic Games) stands for. Please do not refer to specific Olympic Games.
   On the following you show a variety of values. Ask the interviewee: "Rate how the following values describe the ... (your project, or NOC, or Olympic Games). Please think carefully about how applicable each individual value is in describing the project (NOC, the Olympic Games). Do not assume that all values are equally applicable to describing the Olympic Games. Please differentiate between those values that are highly relevant and those that are less relevant to characterising the … (project, or NOC, or the Olympic Games)".
   Please rate the extent to which each of the following items could be used to accurately describe the values in relation to the … (project, or NOC, or the Olympic Games), measured on a 7-point scale from 1 = 'does not describe the values of the … at all' to 7 = 'describes the values of the … very well'.
   – Anti-discrimination / Tolerance / Diversity / Equality
   – Friendship / Warm relations with others / Brotherhood / Understanding
   – Achievement / Competition / Achieving one's personal best / Effort
   Part 3: Here, you can ask about any other topic that you like to attach to the values. For example, Koenigstorfer and Preuss (2019) asked whether the people wanted an Olympic Games bid, and whether they see IOC as a corrupt organisation. Later, it could be shown that persons who see particular values more than others would support a Games bid more, or see IOC as more corrupt. Learning from that, the

> promotion of certain values could provide a stronger support of your NOC.
> **3.** Analyse the data and start activities to promote certain values.

3.2.6 Analysis of an NOC's Organisational Culture

Each NOC should also understand its organisational culture, which has to be differentiated from the culture of a nation (see subchapter 2.5). Both have an effect on the strategic behaviour, stakeholder treatments, etc.

First, the analysis of the organisational culture is needed, and then an analysis of the (national) cultural habits of an NOC. The latter can provide a first glance towards its openness to change.

Here, the principle of the concept of culture is transferred to organisations (NOCs). Culture develops through the actions of people. In general, an organisational culture is a system of shared patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting, as well as the norms, values, and symbols that convey them within an organisation.

There are common cultural influences that are similar for all NOCs:

1. All NOCs have Olympism as their basis, and they follow the Olympic Charter, have the IOC as umbrella organisation, spread the Olympic Values, and send teams to the Olympic Games.
2. All NOCs are "sub cultures" of their national culture.
3. All NOCs are non-profit organisations, and are focusing on the interests of the members (Horch, 1983; Kaiser & Schütte, 2012)
4. All NOCs have a slowly-grown organisational culture:
   – With a specific role of the founder (often an early IOC member). Many organisations were shaped by strong founders or had a strong leader for a period of time. They may have a remaining myth.
   – The development of how to organise an organisation is closely connected with the organisational structure of the society. Each society breeds the type of leader it wants, develops organisations and their culture, and expects him/her to keep to the well-worn path which their age-old cultural habits have chosen. Religion, language, and climate have some influence, as do crises, successes, and reforms. This can be seen in the formal structures (e.g., rules, hierarchies, principles) (Lewis, 2006, 105).
   – Daily interactions create informal rules, norms, and values, which become patterns and then solidify into structures that are difficult to control or change.

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– New presidents, board members, or executive staff are not solely new individuals that get socialised by the NOC's organisational culture. Change happens whenever a socialised new person comes in, and brings new habits into the organisation. For example, lawyers will likely urge caution and contribute to the NOC's bureaucracy, while businessmen would likely tend to be more risk taking in their approach. Former Olympic athletes probably have other sport values and Olympic passion, that are different from those of grassroots athletes.

These points illustrate that each NOC – even having a common pattern - has developed a different organisational culture. Therefore, it is valuable to analyse the NOC's organisational culture, to learn about its strengths and weaknesses, as well as about its potential resistance to change (subchapter 4.1). If the NOC can benefit from what was slowly developed over the years (e.g., connecting with the founder or Olympic Idea), it becomes easier to find and implement a new strategy that fits the organisation.

Organisational cultures can vary a lot. One aspect is the strength of the culture. In this context, the stronger an organisational culture is, the more deeply rooted it is among the members of the NOC (degree of anchoring), the more widespread those members are - i.e., no strong subcultures are developed (degree of diffusion), and the stronger the conciseness and scope that are developed (Schreyögg, 2000, 451ff). Peters and Waterman (1982) identified the importance of a strong organisational culture as a success factor.

The striving towards a strong organisational culture is justified, by the fact that it leads to a uniform orientation of action. In addition, strong organisational cultures ensure a uniform language and an understanding of language, which should lead to smooth communication. This, in turn, results in a complex and powerful communication network. Important information spreads without regard to titles or positions, and it is reliably interpreted, and also passed on without distortion. Action corrections can be easily communicated through the network, and are effective due to the acceptance of equal values. This leads to fast decision-making and implementation, as long as the plans are compatible with the basic patterns of the culture. Overall, a low level of control can be assumed, due to the internalised common orientation patterns. In addition, strong cultures strengthen employee motivation and team spirit, since the same values and goals are shared (Schreyögg, 2000, 451ff).

Workshop: Identification of the NOC organisational culture and its strength

1. Facilitator first explains the objective of the workshop and what organisation culture is. Then, the team reflects individually on the following questions
   – What are the key values of your NOC?
   – What are the symbols of your NOC?
   – What is the biggest mistake a newcomer/new staff/beginner can make in your NOC?
   Exchange the findings in your team and aim to find a common ground.
2. To find the degree of anchoring, you look at the answers from step 1. How many members of your NOC would give the same answer in Step 1? Answer: _____ %
3. To find the degree of diffusion you should reflect upon: Are there groups of members (or are there departments) that have their own spirit, own language, or own particular values?
4. To find the degree of conciseness you should reflect upon: Is it part of your NOC leadership to communicate the core values, the symbols, and the norms of what should definitely not be done?

Typically, sports organisations, like NOCs, have strong cultures. They have been formed over a long period of time, and are aligned with the values of sport and, in this case, Olympism. The Olympic Rings unite their members under the same symbol, which is part of each NOC logo. Strategy development must address these, especially in the case of strong cultures. On the one hand, there is the chance of easy implementation if the strategy fits well with the existing culture, and on the other hand, there is the danger that the new strategy will fail in implementation, because fundamental values and norms of the culture are violated. Strong cultures can, therefore, be beneficial or detrimental to strategic management.

Besides the organisational culture, each NOC is a subculture of its national culture and, therefore, is affected by it through the persons acting in that organisation. As long as the NOC staff members are not highly internationally oriented (as with the IOC), then the common national cultural patterns will influence the strategic management of that NOC.

Harris and Ogbonna (1998) associate, in general, cultural influences with a low degree of willingness to change. However, Elwing (2005) has shown, that a communicative culture and the feeling of belonging to a community, had a favourable effect on readiness for change.

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In most strategic plans, the idea is to change things. However, different cultures have a different level of "uncertainty avoidance". This defines the society's tolerance for ambiguity, i.e., how much people embrace or avert an event of something that is unexpected, unknown, or away from the status quo.

According to Hofstede (2004), the societies that score a high degree in "uncertainty avoidance" will opt for stiff codes of behaviour, guidelines, and laws. In a change process, they need good analysis and theory. Therefore, the change needs time. These cultures generally rely on absolute truth, or the belief that one lone truth dictates everything, and that people would know what that truth is. For a change process, this means that arguments must be well reflected, and any "what if?" questions should be answered, as it is not "ok" to fail.

A lower degree in "uncertainty avoidance" shows more acceptances of differing thoughts and ideas. They rely more on concrete facts. As these cultures accept mistakes, they become faster decision makers. The change process can, therefore, be quicker. Here, the NOC tends to impose fewer regulations, is more accustomed to ambiguity, and the environment is more free-flowing.

In other words, the tolerance for change is different. Most European cultures are avoiding uncertainty, with the highest scores in this regard, from Greece, followed by Portugal, and Belgium, then France. Germany, Finland, and Switzerland are midway; while Denmark, Sweden, the UK, and Ireland have the lowest scores in uncertainty avoidance in Europe (Hofstede, n. D.).

Here, NOC culture is seen as a link or transition between individual and collective behaviour. This refers to the idea that an organisational culture is "embodied" in individuals, but shared by the collective (Miettinen & Virkkunen, 2005) and, here, the collective is the NOC as the organisation.

Cultures that are developed in organisations function as stabilisers, in order to resist change (Schein, 1993). Change represents a situation of imbalance and is considered to be a threat (see chapter 4). This relationship is especially evident in public organisations, such as NOCs. They are often highly governmentally supported, and they are also monopolies, therefore, they are stable and rarely threatened by bankruptcy. Thus, NOCs as organisations tend to have a culture that is more resistant to change.

3.3 External Analysis: the Environment

The purpose of this analysis is to gain information about the external environment, and how that creates opportunities and risks for an NOC.

3.3.1 Analysis of Macro-Environmental Changes

Although all NOCs are part of the Olympic Movement, each operates in a unique cultural and legal environment. The environmental factors lead to opportunities, threats, and challenges. To effectively deliver its services and projects, each NOC should evaluate its operating environment.

PESTLE+M is a mnemonic which in its expanded form denotes P for Political, E for Economic, S for Social, T for Technological, L for Legal, E for Environmental, and finally M for Media. It gives a bird's-eye view of the whole environment, from many different angles, that an NOC wants to check and keep a track of while contemplating a certain idea/plan. This subchapter is here related to subchapter 1.4, as the challenges for an NOC can also be sorted into the PESTLE+M scheme.

Political Factors

Political factors refer to policies issued by organisations that affect an NOC. This can be the IOC, World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), Court of Arbitration (CAS), IPC, European Union, or the national authorities with their laws, policies, and the attitudes of ruling politicians towards sport development. For example, if a nation wants prestige by winning gold medals, or uses the staging of an event as soft power to improve its image, then support for high performance sports or event organisation is highly financially supported by the national government. It is a similar situation when a government wants to use sport to improve national health. Then, an NOC or NF will easily get funds, to deliver such activities.

Illustration: Political Factors influence NOCs
There are several examples how politics influenced NOCs.
1. The introduction of quotas for women in management in Norway. Norway was the first country to pass a legislation on gender quotas, whereby women must comprise 40% of corporate boards.
2. A greater commitment to sport, added public money to the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) for high performance sport.

However, that money is bound to criteria which the government wants to see fulfilled.
3. In the USA, the government does not pay anything to support the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), or any high-performance sports.

Changes of laws also have an impact on NOCs; for example, tax policies may affect income, subvention policies may affect the possibility to get extra funding, lottery laws can change NOC revenues, or legislation relating to gambling, alcohol, or tobacco may reduce the number of potential Olympic sponsors.

Overall, government policy has a big impact on an NOC's operating environment. Conversely, if the relationship between the government and an NOC is poor, it is difficult to get funding, legislative support, and promotion. An improvement in public affairs is needed, in this case.

Fact box: Public Affairs (PA)

Public Affairs (PA) refer to the strategic management of decision-making processes at the interface between politics, business, and society. PA describe that part of the professional communication of NOCs, which analyses and plans the relationship with political groups, and with social influence groups. The definition of PA in this context is the organisation of an NOC's external relationships (with governments, authorities, communities, other sport federations, etc.). It implies representing the NOC's interest(s) in a political context. It uses the methods of both classic public relations (press and (social) media relations, etc.), and specific instruments (communication with and consultation of relevant decision-makers, directly or via opinion leaders, media, CSR, etc.).
In RINGS Public Affairs Guidelines, it is explained that PA are all about strengthening the NOC's reputation, legitimacy, relationship with key stakeholders, and ability to influence bodies and decision-makers, thereby gaining political influence. Simply put, good PA are about having and keeping good relations. They are all about the ability to make your interests relevant for the right decision-makers. You need to find the interest and perspective that you and the decision-maker share, to enable both of you to win on the solution you propose. The challenge and solution you propose must be relevant for the decision-makers' own agenda and policy.

> For further information, check RINGS Public Affairs Guidelines, which provide information on ten key elements to consider for successful public affairs of an NOC.

To make their group of organisations (IFs, NOCs, etc.) more influential in negotiations with the IOC, umbrella organisations have formed (e.g., Association for NOCs (ANOC), European Association of NOCs (EOC), or Association for Summer Olympic IFs (ASOIF)).

Economic Factors

Each NOC is managing within a national economy. Many potential revenues for an NOC are related to the economic strength of a country, such as public subventions, sponsor acquisition, and the overall size and professionalisation of the sports market. The employment rate, offer of sport opportunities, plus the wealth and education levels of the population, determine the desire to attend sport events, or the ability to practice sport. High tax revenues enable a government to invest in sport infrastructure and high-performance sports, and then provide stronger support of an NOC.

Illustration: The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and its IOC funding

The USOPC receives nearly 25% of the funding that all of the other 205 NOCs receive from IOC. This is due to a contract that entitles the USOPC to 20% of the revenue from the TOP programme (global marketing programme). Since the TOP programme revenues (2017-2020) have increased extremely, the USOPC should be much better off financially for the coming years (Owen, 2019).

In some countries, the economic factors are such that the respective NOCs cannot generate much money. Thus, their services are limited to the mandatory deliveries that are written in the Olympic Charter.

NOCs compete for funding and visibility against other national sports and events, which people consume in their leisure time. Most importantly, the governmental funding has a significant economic importance for NOCs.

The value which public authorities see in sport (see political factors above), severely influences the financial situation of an NOC and the NFs. The government as organisational environment should, therefore, be constantly observed, and relations should be maintained through public

affairs (PA). Each NOC should take into account the opportunities and threats it may face when cooperating with the government, without losing its autonomy.

Illustration: Financial and economic dependence of the Italian Olympic Committee (CONI)

According to a changed law, the Italian government was authorised to reorganise CONI, its activities, and its internal organisation. CONI's previous government funding was then divided between the Olympic Committee, and the newly-formed company Sport e Salute S.p.a. (i.e., Sport and Health), which is entirely state owned by the Ministry of Economy, that distributes the income from state funds and financing. In practice, this gave the Italian government greater control over how much money goes to CONI, and how that money is used.

CONI has historically been primarily funded by the Italian government via a scheme that includes revenues from sports betting, television rights, tickets from football matches, and other sports-related ventures. As already noted in subchapter 2.4.7, the annual CONI budget was approx. 400 million euro, but CONI was then reduced to receiving only 40 million, while the rest will be distributed through the new entity (i.e., Sport e Salute S.p.a.).

The changed law also states that the Italian Olympic Committee's activities and responsibilities would depend on governmental decisions. The new law further indicates that, the federations which make up the Italian Olympic Committee should abide by the government's statutes, rather than those of the Olympic Charter and the International Federation (IF), with which they are affiliated. Lastly, Italy's government would have specific control over the Italian Olympic Committee's financial activity.

In the Cabinet meeting in January 2021, former Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte managed to push an important legal amendment. By this, he secured for CONI, the necessary financial and administrative independence, as requested by the IOC.

Source: O'Kane (2019)

It is equally important to understand how the government funds sport and supports NOCs, and how NOCs can benefit from IOC resources (directly and through Olympic solidarity). As the illustration above has shown, it is also important to keep political independence, and to aim at diversifying the financial resources.

Sociocultural Factors

Cultural factors have a great impact on an NOC's environment. The demographic structure of the society, and the population's interests in sport, affect the manner in which people behave. This can influence the power and position of any NOC. Gender and age distribution, sport interest, family structures, income distribution, and education all differ across countries and cultures. That does not only affect the NOC, but also the interest of sponsors, the political support to construct sport venues, and the desire to have large sport events in the country.

For strategic planning, the NOC should consider the societal interest in sport, and how it is changing.

Technological Factors

These factors pertain to innovations in technology, that will affect the operations of the NOC and the Olympic Movement, either favourably or unfavourably. An example is the ongoing digitalisation, where the IOC will use the Alibaba Cloud, which provides almost unlimited features and information to the NOCs. Additionally, technological development plays an increasingly important role for athletes' equipment and training. Technology will enable eSports, Gaming, and Metaverse. The technology in sports becomes ever more important, and NOCs have to address this development in their strategic planning.

Communication technology, social media, and information challenge the way an NOC interacts with its stakeholders. Social media is continually expanding – both in the number of users and in its dissemination reach. Most people and organisations have accounts on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, and the younger generation uses Telegram, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. The target groups on the different social media channels are constantly becoming more fluid. Data-based communication will be the essence of WEB 3.0. That is an idea for a new iteration of WEB 2.0, which incorporates concepts such as decentralisation, blockchain technologies, and token-based economics. The IOC is already looking into that by striving to have customer-based Olympic communication.

Environmental Factors

The relevance of sport in the society is already known over the ages. However, for the NOCs it lately became crystal clear and affirmed, when it was acknowledged in 2015 by the United Nations (UN). In that, the UN said that sport is an "important enabler", with which to achieve the ambitious agenda of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This recognition called all NOCs to make sustainability an integral part of all their activities. IOC

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Agenda 2020+5 also emphasises this development and, therefore, increased the expectations towards the NOCs.

Climate change also affects the NOC activities regarding sports and sport events. Training for Winter sports is becoming more difficult in several countries and heat waves or other extreme weather conditions hamper the practice of sport.

Legal Factors

NOCs should consider, in their strategic management, that they must keep the power to determine the internal governance rules in their own statutes, their operating procedures, the holding of meetings, decision-making mechanisms, election rules, etc., in accordance with the general principles of national laws, and the basic rules of the IFs and IOC, to which they are affiliated. In other words, in brief, the NOC must comply with national laws, and is bound to the regulations of the Olympic Charter. An NOC does not operate in a space free of regulations and cultural expectations. Thus, it must respect the national laws and also, its stakeholders must act in a legally bound environment. For example, an Olympic Games bidding may be bound to governmental guarantees in terms of security, tax exemptions, or financial shortfalls.

Each NOC is also affected by the legal rules and policies of its external environment. This can be a sponsor's company law, the national laws of the Olympic Games host country to which an NOC sends its athletes and officials, employment laws for NOC staff, national doping laws, data protection and intellectual property laws, laws for not-for-profit organisations, etc.

Media Factors

Each NOC acts in a culturally-formed media environment. The power of social media and influencers is as important to consider, as the degree to which the media are sport-critical. As the media is the central connection to the society, and a strong influencer to the government, the best means of communication should be considered (see subchapter 4.4.5). Here, we can also add the degree of digitalisation of a country. This is related to the capability of accessing (unlimited) Olympic information (OBS cloud), using non-linear broadcasting (streaming), reaching all consumers and stakeholders to best offer the NOC services. The operating environment is very different from one NOC to another, and this should be considered in strategic planning.

3.3.2 Stakeholder Analysis

This subchapter explains why NOCs should go about using stakeholder identification and analysis. It helps them to meet their mission and create public value. Stakeholders form the external environment of an NOC (subchapter 1.2.3), and need to be accurately analysed to successfully develop and implement a strategic plan (subchapter 2.4).

No matter their size, all NOCs work with a great variety of stakeholders, and should meet their different interests. However, the interests of stakeholders and an NOC can be contradicting. Therefore, it is important to understand the opinions and expectations of stakeholders, no matter whether a stakeholder supports or opposes the NOC.

Taking that into consideration will improve the strategic plan, and also an organisational change, because it allows the NOC to better serve and interact with its stakeholders. NOCs rely on their supporters, and can anticipate the concerns of their detractors (Robinson, 2020, 56).

A stakeholder analysis can be undertaken for the NOC as an organisation, for a specific issue (e.g., digitalisation), and also for a particular project (e.g., sending the Olympic Team to the Olympic Games). Before starting an analysis, the subject for which an analysis is planned must be made clear.

Step 1: Identification of Relevant Stakeholders
The first step is to identify the stakeholders that are related to the project. If a central stakeholder is missing, then the strategy may not work, because actions and relations regarding that important stakeholder are not considered. In subchapter 1.2.3, the stakeholder environment of an NOC is shown. Additionally, project-specific stakeholders may be added (e.g., planning the Olympic Day together with the sport youth organisation, and staging it in a fair ground (e.g., Messe Hamburg) adds two stakeholders that are usually not relevant for an NOC).

Fact Box: Automatic assisted tool available in RINGS – Stakeholder Analysis

In RINGS you will find a tool that helps you to select and rate relevant stakeholders. The tool will automatically position each stakeholder in the "Power-Interest Map" " with further elements regarding your "Ability to Influence" them and their "Alignment" with your position on the project in question (see handbook in the RINGS webpage). The tool will work

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by guiding questions to identify the relevant stakeholders (see below) and position them.
–   Political actors
–   Athletes
–   Member Organisations (individuals, Sport Organisations)
–   Board members
–   Staff
–   International Umbrella Organisations (e.g., IOC/EOC, IFs, ANOC)
–   Sponsors
–   Media
–   Other actors in sport (not members, but e.g., sport clubs, leagues, agents)
–   NGOs (e.g., Transparency International, Greenpeace)
–   Furthermore, the stakeholder tool will provide a mapping grid proposed list of actions with each stakeholder group, depending on their "Power", "Interest" and your "Ability to Influence" them and their "Allignment" in the project in question.
Link: https://rings-project.com

Care should be taken, when deciding on the relevance of stakeholders for a project, that some stakeholders are not automatically classified as irrelevant, simply because there is no direct benefit relationship with them. In order to make the selection of stakeholders ethically viable, attention should be paid to stakeholders who have no influence on the NOC (or the project), but who have legitimate interests in the NOC, because they are affected by the strategic action. This also applies if they are not in a position to articulate their interest themselves. For example, the "next generation" is a stakeholder with legitimate interests on how an NOC should deal with the environment. Another example is that of nature (i.e., natural environment, see Laine, 2010) as stakeholder when it comes to construction or pollution. For example, Driscoll and Starik (2004, 65) argue that "organizations must interact with the natural environment for their physical survival, making nature a ubiquitous stakeholder of all human organizations".

Step 2: Analysis of Relevant Stakeholders
The next step is to map the stakeholder importance. That is not an easy task as there are four dimensions to consider. The NOC needs to analyse, for each stakeholder, the

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1. **power**, which indicates the power the stakeholder has over the NOC (or the project under consideration);
2. ability to **influence**, which means the potential NOC liability to influence the stakeholder, in general, or regarding the respective project;
3. **interest**, which means the interest the stakeholder has in the NOC (or the project under consideration);
4. **alignment**, which means the nature of the stakeholder's attitude (support versus opposition) towards our NOC (or the project).

Interest and alignment are not the same. Interest is a feeling that accompanies or causes special attention towards the NOC or the respective project. Alignment then defines whether the interest is in the same direction as that of the NOC (supportive), or a counterargument (in opposition). For example, the media can have a high degree of interest in reporting about an Olympic Bid, but may not aligned with the NOC (i.e., the media are in opposition).

Further, it is also important to consider the power which the stakeholder has over the NOC (or the respective project). Taking the two dimensions of alignment and power together, we can design a "Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid" (Fig. 24; Bryson, 2018, 415).

One project often has several challenges (e.g., organising an Olympic Day means to get many people involved, get funding, get high social media coverage, get member federations involved). For each challenge the stakeholder can have another position, relative to that of the NOC. Therefore, the same stakeholder may be recurrent several times over in the "Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid".

Figure 24 shows how stakeholders can be categorised by simply looking at their alignment to the NOC's position, with respect to the project (and each of its challenges) (ordinate). The abscissa shows how powerful the respective stakeholder is regarding the project. The NOC can be pleased when many stakeholders appear in the upper right and lower left corners. Stakeholders in the lower right corner cause problems, as they are powerful and not aligned. Here, a strategy is needed to either align them, or reduce their power.
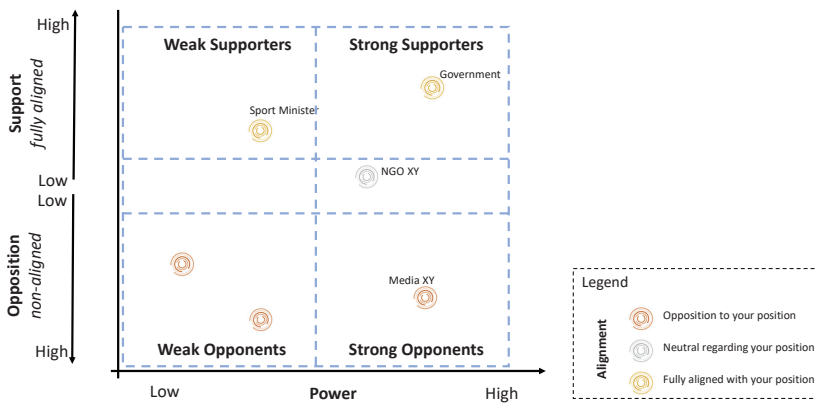
Fig. 24: Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid with Fictive Stakeholders

Source: Adopted from Bryson (2018, 418); Nutt and Backoff (1992, 198)

According to Weber (1972), power means every chance to impose your own will within a social relationship, even against reluctance, whatever that opportunity is based on. There are different types of power. For this stakeholder grid, it is not important to define what kind of power a stakeholder has; however, when it comes to strategic consideration, it is necessary to know the source of the power. French and Raven (1960) differentiate five types of power:

Type 1: Legitimate power

Based on the general belief in the formal correctness of rules and those who enacted them, this is considered to be a legitimised authority (e.g., the IOC). Cultural values serve as common basis of this power. In some cultures, aged persons are granted the right to prescribe behaviour, in other cultures it may be a caste, religion, or education.

Legitimate power refers, for example, to the power of superiors, by virtue of their relative position in an organisational structure (e.g., NOC president, state parliament). Thus, legitimate power is identical to authority, and is dependent on the acceptance of the position holder. Legitimacy for that position can be created through election, adjudication, or other processes.

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Type 2: Reward power

This power depends on the ability of the power exerciser (e.g., the government) to provide rewards. In addition to material or financial rewards, praise, and attention may also be applied. Reward Power exists also inside an NOC (e.g., the ability of an NOC board to provide employees with benefits, or promotion, or to increase their salary or scope of responsibility).

Type 3: Coercion power

This means the exercise of negative influence, e.g., by demotion or dismissal or withholding of rewards. Dependent obedience is achieved through the desire for valued rewards, or the fear of their denial (e.g., an NOC is gate keeper for governmental money given to NF).

Type 4: Power through identification (also called referent power)

This form of power refers to the power wielder's ability to evoke a sense of attachment in caregivers (e.g., an NOC identifies with the IOC). The power exerciser (e.g., here, IOC) influences attitudes of the reference organisation (e.g., here, an NOC) towards the power organisation (IOC); and thus, the emotions as well as goals and intentions (e.g., here Olympic Values) of the reference organisation (NOC).

Type 5: Power through knowledge (also called expert power)

This power arises from situational, valuable knowledge of the power exerciser. This power of experts is based on their skills or experience. Unlike the other bases of power, this is highly specific, and limited to the particular area in which the expert is experienced and qualified (e.g., an IT company running an NOC's webpage; attorney's advice in legal matters).

It should be considered, that in stakeholder relationships, power is not limited to one source. Normally, the relationship between two stakeholders is characterised by several qualitatively different variables, which are the bases of power.

Workshop: Developing a "Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid"

1. The facilitator introduces the project proposals – The grid in Fig. 24 is drawn, and the axes are explained.
2. The team reflects on all specific project proposals. For each project proposal, a separate grid should be available.
3. The team identifies the relevant stakeholders for each project proposal. Each stakeholder is written down on one label.
4. Each stakeholder will get placed, for each proposal, on its grid (you may repeat this; one proposal after another).
5. The facilitator pins the stakeholder label on the grid(s) after discussion in the team. If the team is large, then build sub-teams (three to five members each) to create more proposals for step 7
6. Team members should discuss the implications of the resulting stakeholder placements. Specific tactics should be discussed, and deployed based on the analysis with which to build a stronger coalition. Find arguments on how powerful opponents can be weakened or even converted into supporters.
7. At the end, the different proposals are compared, and those with the most (strong) supporters in coalitions, or those with the least (strong) opponents, can be decided on, either for or against.

The strong supporters of a project proposal build a so-called "winning coalition" (Bryson, 2018, 418). However, it should be considered that the larger the winning coalition is, the more concessions or trades there are that have to be made, to please the supporters. Often, a project proposal can get diluted, to the point that it can no longer achieve its original purpose (Brams, 2011), due to the fact of too many compromises and concessions.

Next, is to include the fourth dimension – the influenceability of a stakeholder. Stakeholders that are relevant for a particular project need to be more deeply analysed and categorised. The "Power-Ability to Influence Map" (Fig. 25) visualises the categorisation of the stakeholder. The map shows all four dimensions:

– Ability to influence: The ordinate shows how much influence the NOC has over the stakeholder.
– Power: The abscissa shows how much power the stakeholder has over the given topic or project, and the power is measured based on the types of power (see above). Here, only the power that a stakeholder has on the project under consideration, will count.

– Stakeholder alignment with NOC view: The colour of the circle shows how likely the stakeholder agrees with the NOC on the topic/project (colours are defined by "Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid" above)
– Interest of the stakeholder: The size of the ring shows the degree of interest the stakeholder has in the NOC (or project)

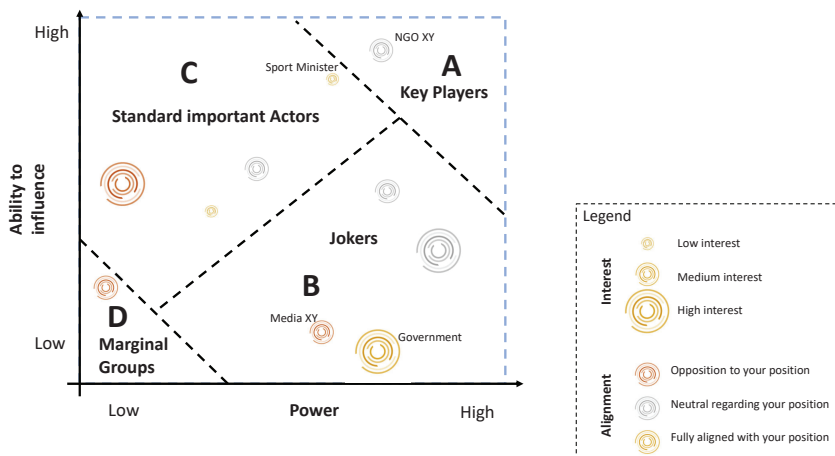Figure 25 illustrates this for a fictive project with fictive stakeholders.

Fig. 25: Power-Ability to Influence Map with Hypothetical Examples

Source: Adopted from Müller-Stevens and Lechner (2005, 179)

The four areas in the diagram are not absolutely defined, but roughly show the meaning of a stakeholder (Müller-Stevens & Lechner, 2005, 179-180):

A – Key Player: This stakeholder is in a position to have a great influence over the NOC's project. The NOC thus has a certain dependency on this stakeholder (e.g., resources, access, permission, policies). However, this is also true regarding the vice versa sense. The stakeholder is highly dependent on the NOC's project, and thus can be influenced, i.e., the NOC and stakeholder are highly interdependent. Therefore, it is a positive factor if there is good communication between these two and, if necessary, even common principles or agreements.

B – Jokers: Stakeholders in this category can exert a high degree of influence (they have power), but are difficult to influence. However, the power clearly lies with the stakeholder. In order to assert its interests in the project, a Joker can threaten to withdraw its commitment, resources,

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or even close important access points. Such a threat is definitely recognised by the NOC. This stakeholder is called a Joker because the NOC will have to aim to gain more ability, in order to properly influence this stakeholder. This can be achieved by aligning interests, by getting involved in the project, or even by the NOC seeking a replacement or an additional partner, so that it is not solely dependent on the initial partner.

Here, stakeholders which are in opposition, and in the worst case have a large interest in the project, are the most dangerous, while vice versa, those that have no interest and are in alignment, probably do no harm.

C – Standard Important Actors: Here, the power clearly lies with the NOC. The stakeholder is dependent on the NOC's project. This can be a supplier that provides the necessities for the NOC projects. While the supplier does need the business; effectively, the NOC can also use other suppliers.

D – Marginal Groups: These stakeholders are not game changers for the project, as there is no resource dependency in either direction. Such stakeholders will be kept informed without much effort. However, it should be borne in mind that stakeholders in this group can become important through certain incidences (i.e., they become a Joker).

In the RINGS stakeholder tool (see https://rings-project.com), the axes of Fig. 25 are "power" and "interest". Variables "alignment" and "ability to influence" are shown in the box that is opening next to each stakeholder, with the possibility to click the action list. Stakeholder groups will have a neutral colour (black), whereas "alignment" and "ability to influence" are either "green" or "red" depending on whether the response is "yes" or "no". Overall, this differently designed tool follows the classical design and diverts the stakeholders in the groups: "manage closely", "keep satisfied", "keep informed", and "monitor".

Workshop: Development of "Power-Ability to Influence Map" (if not done by automatic tool in RINGS)

– *RINGS provides an automated stakeholder analysis platform where the stakeholders can be picked, and the four dimensions of power, interest, influenceability, and alignment for each of them gets evaluated. Then, after you have completed the questionnaire, you would get the visualisation grid, where there can be seen, a dot for each stakeholder, with a pop-up opening, and showing that stakeholder's interest, alignment, and influenceability, with traffic-light colours as signals, and a link to proposed actions.*

In case you do not like to use the web-based proposal, you can run the following workshop

1. The facilitator introduces the project for which the map shall be developed.
2. The team identifies the relevant stakeholders for the project. The stakeholders can be internal and external. Be detailed here, so as to not forget important stakeholder groups. Some stakeholders may have to be split up into subgroups (e.g., national media versus international media versus social media, etc.).
3. Each stakeholder will get a score (scale 1-5), regarding the power it has on a given project, and then a score (scale 1-5) on the ability of the NOC to influence the stakeholder regarding the respective project. By doing that, a new stakeholder may come to your mind, and shall be added; or a stakeholder may have to be split up into more subgroups. The facilitator dots a point for each stakeholder on a map by using the scores.
4. Think about the interest a stakeholder has in the project (size of the cycle), and also about the alignment of the stakeholder with your project (colour of the cycle). The facilitator draws a differently-sized ring in a particular colour over the dots on the map.
5. After discussion, the facilitator draws the lines on the map, splitting the chart into four areas. The position of the lines should be made based on the stakeholders; e.g., the team may decide that a particular stakeholder shall count as a "Joker". In principle, the positions of the lines are similar to those in Fig. 25.

After becoming clear about the stakeholder's position on the map, the NOC can develop a strategic action list, which includes how to work with the different stakeholders.

Step 3: Strategic Action List I – Understanding Stakeholders' Interests and Power
To become strategic and to work with the stakeholders, it is mandatory to analyse each of the important stakeholder groups for the project (Key Players, Jokers, and some standard important players). The suggested technique, is to use a "Power-Directions of Interest Diagram" (Fig. 26), which should be drawn for each important stakeholder. That diagram indicates the sources of power that are available to a stakeholder, and the goals or interests the stakeholder seeks to achieve or serve. Thus, the NOC can use that for its internal analysis, with the NOC itself at the centre.

Differently to the way in which Bryson developed the diagram in Fig. 26, here the NOC is at the centre. The lower part of the diagram, shows the power a particular stakeholder has towards the NOC/project,

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and the upper part shows the interests the stakeholder has, in order to be interested in, or aligned with, the NOC or its project.

Power can come from access to, or control over, various support mechanisms. The power a stakeholder has over the NOC can come from the five power theories (see above), or the power of voters (for an NOC, the members) and the connection to media or influencers. Here, first an analysis is needed regarding which types of power a stakeholder has.
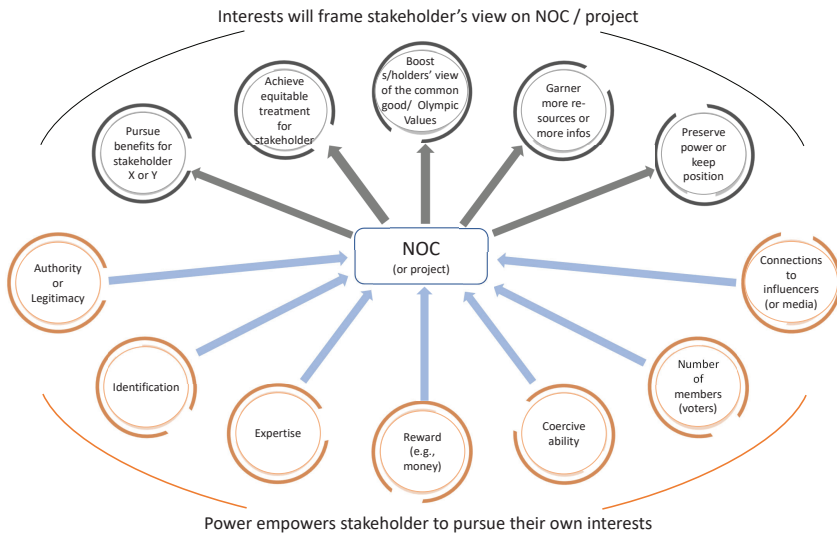

Fig. 26: Bases of Power-Directions of Interest Diagram (with examples)

Source: Transformed from Bryson (2018, 410)

The direction of the interests of the stakeholder would indicate the stakeholder aspirations (see also Tab. 5)

There are three reasons to construct this diagram for each (important) stakeholder:

1. It helps the NOC to find a "common ground" in terms of interest. The identification of commonalities across several stakeholders helps to find "winning arguments", and would move a Joker stakeholder to become a key stakeholder.
2. The diagram helps to collect and provide background information (partly, to be included in the table below), in order to know how to

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tap into the stakeholder's interest, or to make use of the stakeholder's power over the NOC's project.

3. The diagram can also help to understand or foresee stakeholder's reactions to the project, or specific problems, or proposals to change. For example, what power the stakeholder can use if he/she is in opposition.

Workshop: Development of "Power-Direction of Interest Diagram"

1. The facilitator attaches a flip chart to a wall and writes the stakeholder's name in the corner of the sheet. This is the stakeholder we are to assess. The facilitator then writes the name of the project or the NOC in the centre of the sheet.
2. The team brainstorms possible bases of power for the stakeholder (particularly as they affect the NOC's purpose or interests). The facilitator writes them down on the bottom half of the sheet.
3. Following the team discussion, the facilitator draws arrows on the diagram from the power base to the NOC/project, and between power bases, to indicate how one power base is linked to another. The width of the arrow symbolises the strength of the power.
4. The team brainstorms goals or interests, which they believe the stakeholder has. Here, it is of particular interest if they are also relevant to the NOC's purposes or interests. Then, you find a "common ground". The facilitator writes the stakeholder interests on the top half of the sheet, and marks the interests with "common ground".
5. A thorough discussion of each stakeholder diagram and its implications should follow. The facilitator records the results, as they are needed in the strategic table, which is developed later.

Source: Workshop developed and strongly modified according to Bryson (2018, 410-411)

Figure 27 explores which interests or themes appear to garner support from stakeholders. For the work with stakeholders, it is also important to find "common goods and the structure of a winning argument" (Bryson, 2018, 411). By finding those, the potential to gain some degree of influence over a stakeholder increases. Bryson created a technique to develop a viable political strategy, based on the above "Power-Directions of Interest Diagram". Therefore, the interest part has to be explored more deeply, to determine which interests or themes appear to find persuasive arguments, that would show how support for specific policies/projects will further the interests of a significant number of important stakeholders, and how to garner their support.

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The following considerations apply only to the NOC stakeholders, and no longer to individual projects.

The NOC needs to search for common themes, which are called "super interests". These are at a meta-level (meta-interests). For each theme from the stakeholders, the NOC should create a label, that appears to capture or integrate the specific stakeholder interests which make up the theme. The identification of common themes is a subjective exercise. The NOC needs creativity, discernment, and judgement. After identifying these themes, the NOC should then create a map, which identifies all of the super-interests that tie together the individual stakeholders' interests, and indicates how to emphasise on win-win situations (winning coalition), or how to gain some degree of influence over the other stakeholders (Bryson, 2018, 411).

Developing a variable political rhetoric is a key visionary leadership task (Crosby & Bryson, 2005), and should help an NOC to understand how it can pursue its mission and create public value. It is, therefore, important to understand how specific stakeholders might be inspired and mobilised to act in such a way that the common good is advanced. Thus, an analysis is needed to understand how each stakeholder's interests connect with the super-interests.

To gain influence over stakeholders, the NOC should be very clear about the goals and interests of those stakeholders. Parent (2008) collected the core interests regarding "event management", which may be financial, human resources, infrastructure and operations, legacies, media/visibility, planning and organisation, policy, relationships and participation, or sport.

The interests of the stakeholders can be diverse, and can basically be grouped into 5 areas:

– Affiliative: They want contact and cooperation regarding the project; interest in human relationships, and needing to belong.
– Informative: They want information. Interest is knowledge-based.
– Material: They want gain/loss of tangible benefits.
– Political: They want political power and distribution of influence.
– Symbolic: They want to be associated with a symbol, or an image.

Table 5 shows a choice of stakeholders and their interests towards an organising committee of an event (e.g., trials, Olympic Day, the Olympic Games).

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Tab. 5: Organising Committee External Stakeholder Interests

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholder	Interests				
		Material	Political	Affiliative	Informational	Symbolic
Governments	Federal, provincial, & municipal	◎	◎		◎	◎
Community	Residents, sponsors, & Community groups	◎		◎	◎	◎
Sport Organisations	International, National, & Provincial	◎	◎		◎	◎
		◎			◎	◎
Media	Television, print, & radio	◎			◎	◎
Delegations	Participants & support staff	◎			◎	

Source: Parent (2008)

So far, the stakeholder mapping provides a good understanding of the wider strategies that could be applied. An issue that must not be overlooked is whether or not the particular stakeholder is aligned with the NOC position.

It may be that the NOC and a stakeholder have different positions on the project; however, there may also be issues that are of common interest. The technique discussed here refers to finding a common position, or creating a public value, by searching themes, concerns, or goals that are shared by key stakeholders. This intends to downplay opposition to the project. The technique explained here addresses the ways in which opposition to the project need to be taken into account.

Figure 27 shows the "Stakeholder-Issue Interrelationship Diagram" (see Bryson, 2018, 413). It helps the NOC to understand which stakeholders have an interest, and in which issues, and how some stakeholders might be related to other stakeholders through their relationships with a particular issue.
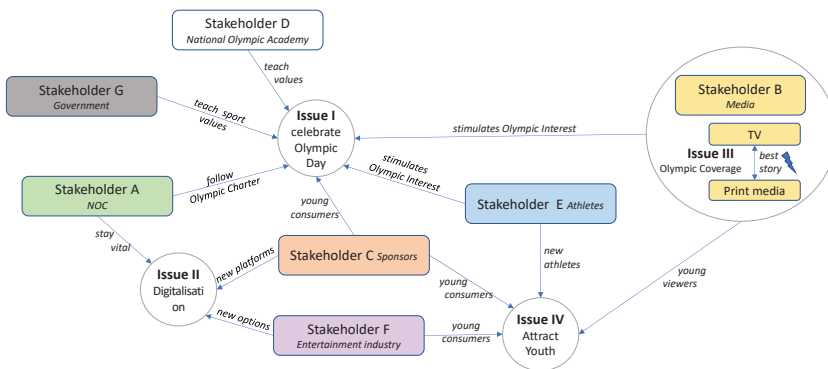
Fig. 27: Fictive Stakeholder-Issue Interrelationship Diagram

The diagram in Fig. 27 provides structuring of the areas of issue. It visualises a number of actual or potential areas for co-operation (or conflict). An arrow in the diagram indicates that the stakeholder has an interest in an issue. The specific interest is likely to be different for each stakeholder. Some interests may even be in conflict. Therefore, it is even more important to understand which stakeholder interests need to be prioritised, and which issue(s) would fare better if they were not overly addressed.

Fig. 27 illustrates that stakeholders A, B, C, D, E, and G each have an interest (or stake) in issue I (celebration of the Olympic Day). Stakeholder A is also related to stakeholders C and F, because of their joint relationship to Issue II (these want more Olympic digitalisation activities). Here subgroups of stakeholder B have a further issue between them (issue III; regarding the Olympic Games coverage media fights to gain exclusivity over the best story). Issue IV is interesting for B, C, E, and F. In general, many more stakeholders may be interested in all of these issues, but here only the most important were picked. All arrows should be labelled to explain what exactly the interest of the stakeholder is. It should be marked whether there are any conflicting interests.

Workshop: Developing a Stakeholder-Issue Interrelationship Diagram

Have a facilitator with a flip chart. Equip yourself with different coloured pens and self-adhesive labels.

1. Start with agenda setting. It must be explained what the diagram shall show. It can be projects, trends (e.g., Agenda 2020+5), or challenges of the NOC.
2. Relevant stakeholders are taken from the "Power-Ability to Influence Map", or have them brainstormed by the team. Write all stakeholders on labels.
3. The team brainstorms issues that appear to be present and related to the project (or to the trends or challenges of the NOC), and will write them down on other coloured labels.
4. Following team discussion, the facilitator places the issues (which can be small projects in themselves) on the flip chart, and then places stakeholders all around and connects them with arrows to issues. An arrow indicates a stakeholders' stake in an issue. The content of each arrow – that is, the stake or interest involved – should be identified and written down on the arrow.
5. The team thoroughly discusses each issue, stakeholder, and arrow, and any implications for the framing or reframing of issues and management of stakeholder relationships should be noted.

Source: Workshop developed and modified from the work of Bryson (2018, 414)

Step 4: Strategic Action List II: Developing Strategic Work with Stakeholders

Finally, all of the information that is collected in this subchapter, will build the basis for the strategy that is applied to each stakeholder. All of the maps, grids, and diagrams that are introduced, are useful when working with the various stakeholders, and when implementing a project, or initiating change. They can help the NOC to develop project proposals, that are likely to garner significant stakeholder support. But, it is still important to also maintain a focus on stakeholders during the implementation. To collect all information for a clear picture, the NOC can develop a table (see Table 6), which displays information on perspectives, power and controlling, etc. It is exemplary and can be extended by using additional information (for example, contact persons, historical incidences).

Tab. 6: Strategy Development and Implementation Table

	NOC's perspective		Stakeholder's power			NOC's power		
Stakeholder	Interest/ stake (What is our benefit from this stakeholder? How can stakeholder contribute to project/us?)	Influence Channel (What influence channels are open to stakeholder? What kind of power do we have over stakeholder?)	Influence (How much influence does the stakeholder have on the project/us?)	Damage (What damage/ harm can be caused to us? On what is the power of the stakeholder based? Can stakeholder block the project?)	Opposition (With whom and in what issues is this stakeholder in opposition?)	Interest (What are the interests of the stakeholder – what is needed to win them)	**Strategy for engaging the stakeholder** (Person in charge of controlling if strategic actions are effective)	Controlling (Person in charge of controlling if strategic actions are effective)
Government (contact person/ email/phone)	100,000 Euro	• Sport attracts Youth • Expert power	very high	• Loss of 100,000 Euro is 30% of finance • Reward power • Cannot block	No opposition	• Political influence • Symbolic (become related to project)	Involve government visibility in project, keep them informed, & have regular contact	CEO talks regularly with contact person
Media (contact person/ email/phone)	Visibility in TV	• Provide interesting stories/news • Legal power as we have the rights	medium	• No coverage in that media • Coercive power • Cannot block	• In opposition with other media • We want a large audience; the media want exclusivity	• Good stories • Interest of viewers • Symbolic (visibility through project)	Work on delivering news/stories via a functioning media centre	Head of media department meets 3 times before project with stakeholder
IOC (contact person/ email/phone)	…							
Sponsors (contact person/ email/phone)								
…								

Table 6 includes a brief description of the strategy that should be implemented. These strategic actions (see black ring) should be developed and formulated with great care, and be much more detailed than shown. This table helps managers and NOC board members to stay attuned to their stakeholders, and to think, act, and learn strategically. It also helps to keep the need for ongoing responsiveness clearly in mind (see Bryson, 2018, 421-22).

3.4 Strategic Analysis and Action Plan Development (SWOT)

SWOT is the acronym for **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats. Up to here, we have primarily looked at the "inside" of an NOC, and the external influencing forces of the environment of the NOC, in relative isolation from each other. In this paragraph, we will now combine the two areas. Thus, we examine the interactions that occur between the environment and the NOC, and obtain indications of how an NOC can proceed strategically, in order to react adequately to environmental changes.

A SWOT analysis is a tool, with which to assess the internal and external environments of the NOC, and should be part of an NOC's strategic planning process. In addition, a SWOT analysis can be done for an NOC project, a place (e.g., to locate an Olympic training centre), or even a

person (e.g., find a new social media manager). A SWOT analysis helps with both strategic planning and decision-making, as it introduces opportunities to the NOC, by way of being a forward-looking bridge with which to generate strategic alternatives.

Strengths and weaknesses refer to the *internal* analysis of the NOC. Opportunities and threats are a result of upcoming changes of the *external* environment.

Strengths

Strengths are those things that the NOC does well. Strengths are based on resources that the NOC controls, and they must be maintained and developed through good strategic management (Robinson, 2020, 59).

Strengths are a property of every NOC, and represent the answer to the question "What do we do well?" or "What is good about us/our Olympic actions?". Strengths can be determined via an internal NOC analysis. Subchapter 3.2 addresses strengths. This can be, for example, stakeholder support, good public image, satisfied sponsors, motivated staff with expertise, good government relationship, sustainable NOC premises, effective promotional strategy, or lack of competitors.

Strengths differ from opportunities, in that opportunities are external factors. In other words, NOCs have no control over the presence or frequency of opportunities (but, in fact, NOCs do have control over whether or not, and how, they would choose to use any encountered opportunities); however, they do have control over strengths (by choosing to either neglect or improve certain areas).

Weaknesses

Weaknesses are the things that the NOC performs poorly, and the resources it lacks related to the projects and public value it wants to achieve. Those shortcomings can, and should be, corrected through better management (Robinson, 2020, 59).

Every NOC, potentially, can do some things poorly, or may focus on things that are not so beneficial or effective for its members. Weaknesses are particularly noteworthy if they prevent the NOC from achieving its mission. This might mean finances leaking unnecessarily, hidden agendas of some directors, adding high work load to staff, having a low level of professionalisation, having a lack of rooms, improperly targeting member federations or athletes, losing money by not dealing well with government, IOC, or sponsors. Weaknesses harm (or prevent benefit), and are related to how the NOC is managed. Therefore, weaknesses are a part of the internal analysis of the NOC.

The difference between weaknesses and threats, is that the threats are external factors. In other words, every NOC faces the same global trends which may produce threats, but weaknesses are unique to how the NOC is run/structured.

Opportunities

Opportunities are positive factors that are outside of the NOC's control, but can be used to its advantage (Robinson, 2020, 59).

Opportunities are a combination of different circumstances (from the external environment) at a given time, that can offer positive outcomes, if they are properly adopted and used to good advantage. Indeed, the NOC cannot create opportunities. It can only choose how to position itself, to gain the maximum benefit from an opportunity that comes up. Examples here are new governmental sport investment programmes (bringing new programmes), a positive change in the public authorities that value sport more (bringing more financial support), or an increase in the awareness of the population that sport is healthy (bringing new sponsors).

Threats

Threats are negative factors outside of the organisation's control, and which must be rebuffed or blocked through good strategic management (Robinson, 2020, 59).

Threats are anything from the external environment, that could cause damage to the NOC. For example, this can be anything from other organisations which might intrude on the NOC's sphere, such as athlete unions or competitors for sponsors. Because threats develop externally, there is nothing an NOC can do to stop them from materialising. Also, while the NOC cannot change the frequency of threats (or it might intentionally bring them about), each NOC can still choose how to approach such threats, and then deal with them. Examples of threats are a negative attitude towards sport due to new politicians, doping scandals, decrease of IOC/Olympic Games reputation, Covid-19 postponement of the Olympic Games, or refugees arriving in massive numbers due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

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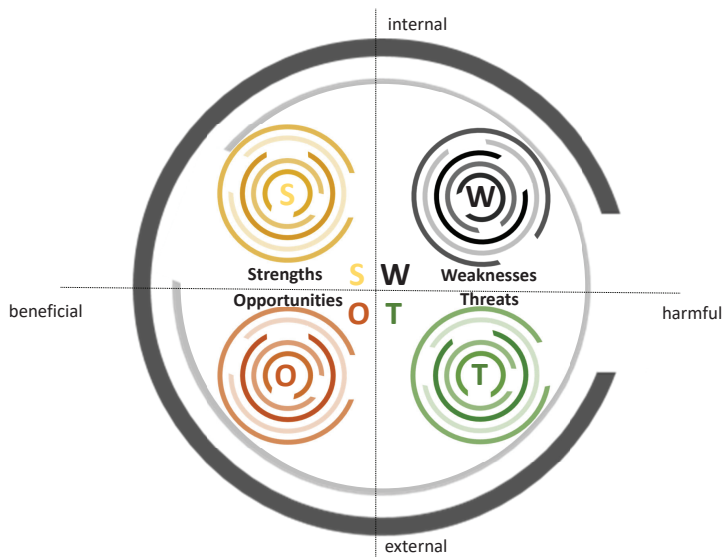
Fig. 28: SWOT Matrix for an NOC

Figure 29 gives only a rough overview of potential strategies that can be applied when strengths meet opportunities (SO-Strategy), or threats (ST-Strategy) and weaknesses meet threats (WT-Strategy) or opportunities (WO-Strategy).

SO-Strategy: Using strengths to seize opportunities

The SO-strategy is the ideal case. The NOC identifies opportunities that match the NOC's strengths. For example, existing knowledge in the area of environmentally friendly event hosting (strength), can be optimally aligned with the need towards greater environmental awareness of the population regarding the event hosting (opportunity).

WO-Strategy: Reduce weaknesses to exploit opportunities

Regarding the WO-strategy, the idea here is how opportunities can be realised, despite internal weaknesses. In this strategy, the NOC should consider which weaknesses need to be reduced and how that would be achieved, in order to be able to profit from external opportunities. In a fast-growing, innovative event environment (opportunity), for example, a missing support of regional government, and slow bidding processes (weakness), are great hindrances to attracting a sport event, but their impacts can be reduced by entering into co-operation with the national

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government, by developing a national event strategy (such as in Canada, the UK, or Denmark).

Environment / NOC	Opportunities (a combination of different circumstances at a given time offering a positive outcome)	Threats (anything that could cause damage to the NOC)
Strengths (things that the NOC does well, and the resources it controls)	**SO-Strategy** Use strengths to grasp opportunities	**ST-Strategy** Apply strengths to avert risks
Weaknesses (things that the NOC does poorly, and the resources, it lacks)	**WO-Strategy** Reduce weaknesses to exploit opportunities	**WT-Strategy** Reduce weaknesses to reduce risks

internal — external

Fig. 29: Strategies Taken from SWOT Analysis

Illustration: National Strategy to attract events

The establishment of Sport Event Denmark (SEDK) was in 2008. The aim of SEDK is to strengthen Denmark's position among the world's leading hosts of international major sport events. The motivation for a strategy for the period of 2019-2022, was to define the overall direction of SEDK. Further, SEDK establishes goals and prioritises development areas, in close collaboration with experienced stakeholders.

The key framework conditions identified were:
– Internationally, only a few countries have established a similar national event organisation, yet some countries are already in the development phase (Germany, Switzerland, Austria, etc.).
– Despite a current lead, an increase in competition for major sport events is anticipated.
– Significantly lower financial resources of Denmark in international comparison.
– Increasing costs of promoting and hosting major sport events.

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The result was, that SEDK had a success rate of 80% for its event-applications. Winning events:

year	number of events in Denmark
2008	39
2009	60
2010	26
2011	31
2012	28
2013	24
2014	14
2015	38
2016	28
2017	30
2018	22

1. IOC Session and Olympic Congress 2009
2. UEFA Congress 2009
3. Taekwondo World Championships 2009
4. Track Cycling World Championships 2010
5. Women's Curling World Championships 2011
6. BMX World Championships 2011
7. UCI Road World Championships 2011
8. European Dressage and Show Jumping Championships 2013
9. Short Course Swimming European Championships 2013
10. European Handball Championships 2014
11. Half Marathon World Championships 2014
12. BWF Badminton World Championships 2014
13. Archery World Championships 2015
14. Women's Handball World Championships 2015
15. Ice Hockey World Championships 2018
16. [...]
17. Handball World Championships 2019

ST-Strategy: Apply strengths to avert threats

The ST-strategy means to use existing strengths to counter external risks. For example, stable and financially independent sport clubs and federations (strength) can be advantageous in countering pandemics, such as COVID-19 (threat).

WT-Strategy: Reduce weaknesses to reduce threats

The WT-strategy is the least favourable, and is about which threats the NOC must avoid, at all costs, because the corresponding strengths are missing. The strategy, in this case, is to reduce weaknesses in order to mitigate risks. For example, if an NOC is not good in governance (weakness), and the population is increasingly sceptical and against the Olympic Games (threat), it should be considered how the governance can be improved, or whether it may be necessary to give up bidding to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Workshop: Conducting a SWOT analysis

1. **Choose the right candidate**
   A SWOT analysis should be conducted by someone from your NOC, internally. This person may be someone who oversees internal departments. He/she may have direct access to personnel, projects, data, and research. That person should be able to examine processes, workflows, and task management, without showing bias.

2. **Start with the strengths**
   Begin with examining the NOC strengths or the 'S' in SWOT. These can be found by gathering data, specifically by examining results from previous projects. Additionally, the analyst will also interview staff and board members, and also athletes, to hear their perspectives. It is important to gather insight from staff, as they will have strong opinions on where NOC strengths lie. Then, identify how strengths can be increased or leveraged.

3. **Rank the strengths**
   Not every strength is equally dependent on your NOC's expectations. Rank the strengths by pinpointing your top 3three to five choices. Limit the list to focus on primary advantages, because it is difficult to maximise the potential of every strength on the list.
   NOCs have limited funding and resources. Shortening the list of strengths can help to focus on what is important.

4. **Summarise findings**
   With your now concentrated list of strengths, you should highlight:
   – What are the chosen strengths?
   – Who do they affect?
   – What are the potential benefits from those strengths?
   – Why are these strengths in your chosen list of top items, above others?

5. **Repeat steps 2 – 4 for the rest of the analysis**
   Follow the above steps for each phase of the analysis. Replace strengths with weaknesses. Then focus on opportunities and threats. Note: The questions in step 2 will differ:
   – Weaknesses: Consider how they can be eliminated, reduced, or altered. If they cannot be removed, how can they be reduced? If they cannot be reduced, can they be converted to a strength or an opportunity?
   – Opportunities: Assess them on how they can benefit the NOC. But also, assess how they could become threats. Remember that

       opportunities are not real yet. In SWOT, opportunities are about acknowledging and utilising their benefits as they develop.
  – Threats: Examine them to mitigate risk, and to prepare for any adverse impact.
6. **Develop strategic actions**
   Meet with a group of three to five adopted persons and discuss the lists from steps 1-5. Then, combine the strengths/weaknesses with the opportunities/threats, and think about potential strategies which you could adopt and implement.
   – Strategise strengths opportunities
   – Strategise weaknesses opportunities
   – Strategise strengths threats
   – Strategise weaknesses threats

Source: Adopted from https://pestleanalysis.com

3.5 *Strategic Risk Assessment and Risk Management*

Risk and crisis management are different, but they are interrelated. Risk assessments enable the NOC to be a little more prepared for crises. Whether your NOC is in a sudden crisis, or in a situation that could have been anticipated, it is good practice to perform a risk assessment. In a risk assessment, the following four points are important to consider:
– What is the potential economic impact?
– What are the expected societal consequences?
– What is the potential loss of credibility, and devalued image and reputation?
– What is the degree of probability (low or high) of the above points happening?

Crisis management is the identification and effective response of an NOC to threats, in order to mitigate any adverse impacts on the NOC and its stakeholders (you can read about crisis management in chapter 6). Individuals, organisations, stakeholders, and industries can all be affected by crises. As the global COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the different societies around the world, the need for NOCs and NFs to react to, adapt to, and address a multitude of existing crises becomes increasingly imperative. In essence, COVID-19 in itself has been a crisis that the entire global and Olympic sport industry was struggling with, had to deal with, and had to overcome (see case study on COVID-19 and NOC in subchapter 6.3.2).

This chapter aims to give a better understanding of risks, and how to consider them in strategic planning.

Risk (management) is "the proactive process that involves assessing all possible risks to events and their stakeholders by strategically avoiding, preventing, reducing, diffusing, reallocating, legalising and building/managing relationships to minimise identified risks" (Leopkey & Parent, 2009).

The terms, risk and uncertainty, are often confused, but with risk you would know all potential outcomes and their likelihood, while with uncertainty you have no idea of outcomes or their possibilities. For example, for Olympic Games there is a certainty of cost overruns (Andreff, 2012), but an uncertainty concerning their magnitude, which is never taken for granted, as it depends on many factors. Often, the media will report on a risk of cost overruns at Olympic Games but, as aforementioned, uncertainty has nothing to do with risk. If the Olympics were indeed "a risky business", we would actually observe no cost overrun at all for some editions, and even some cost underruns for some other editions.

According to Leopkey and Parent (2009) and Robinson (2020, 26-27), there are different risk types. Although each NOC has a unique environment and structure, NOCs face some common risks. In the following, the questions formulated indicate a risk:

–   **Environmental**: How independent are NOC projects from weather conditions and air pollution? Is the Olympic team able to handle a pandemic?
–   **Financial:** Do NOCs rely on only one main source of funding? How easy would it be to replace that source of funding, and what would happen if the major funder withdrew its support? Think about sponsorship, lotteries, governmental support, media rights, etc.
–   **Good governance:** The efficient use of resources for their intended purposes (written in statues), is an ethical responsibility for every NOC. Does your NOC follow financial procedures? Are these procedures formally documented? Does your NOC have financial controls in place, and are you sure that these controls cannot be circumvented by those in power? Can your NOC account for all its revenue and expenditure? Does your NOC present audited accounts to its members and stakeholders?
–   **Human resources**: The way an NOC operates may lead to risks, such as an inappropriate recruitment of staff and volunteers. Does your NOC have a clear and appropriate strategy for achieving its objectives? Is it backed up by appropriate human resource operating principles?

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- **Infrastructure**: Your NOC administrative building or stadiums may be owned by your NOC. Are these properties insured for damages, vandalism, or natural disasters?
- **Interdependence**: It consistently occurs that the government takes too much control over your NOC's autonomy, but also sponsors may make you dependent. How can you avoid that risk and, at the same time, keep your autonomy?
- **Legally**: The manner in which an NOC is constituted will greatly determine the extent of the legal liability it can bear as an independent legal entity, as well as the corresponding extent to which individual members or Board members may bear personal liability. All contracts binding an NOC, even those of a low value, should be reviewed by a legal expert to identify legal risks. An NOC must also ensure that it complies with all applicable legislation, in areas such as employment, data protection, and health and safety. Is your NOC an unincorporated association, in which the individual members have personal liability, or is it an organisation with its own legal capacity shielding its members from personal liability? Are Board members aware of the extent of their personal legal liability? Are contracts reviewed for legal risk? Are the NOC's assets properly protected by law (this is especially important in relation to intellectual property protection for all NOC brands, NOC merchandising, or national Olympic sponsorship rights)?
- **Media**: NOC projects, the Olympic Team, and Olympic bids are well covered by the media. Have you considered how to react in any cases of negative coverage? What if a negative incident occurs (corruption, doping, nomination scandals, etc.), and there are questions from the media, asking for reasons? Are you prepared to react positively if your Olympic team is successful, and you can meet the sponsors' interests?
- **Political**: Policy- and strategy-related risks arise from both the inside and the outside of an NOC. The organisation may have a policy that leads to risk, such as poor communication with stakeholders, or it may be affected by a change in government policy towards physical education in schools, or the role of sport in the society. Does your NOC have an appropriate strategy for the resources it controls, and the services it must provide? What if the government changes? What if the government decides to boycott the Olympic Games?
- **Sport**: Some risks may be directly connected with the sport itself – for example, combat sports are more likely to have more inherent health risks than badminton. At the Olympic Games delegation, members or athletes can be injured or involved in lethal accidents. An NOC's future

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funding may be at risk if your athletes' performances are considered to be insufficiently successful, from the perspectives of the sponsors or the government.

- **Threats**: Have you thought about risks caused by epidemics, or even pandemics, terrorism, natural disasters, etc.?
- **Workflows**: What if the logistics (travel, transport, catering, or accommodation) do not function correctly, and materials that are required by persons do not arrive on time at the Olympic Games? How is the location/facilities management organised to stage events successfully? Is enough security in place, and did you already consider the safety of your staff?

All management of an NOC should have a responsibility to take well-judged, sensible risks to develop the organisation. However, to ensure that those risks are, indeed, well-judged and sensible, an NOC must ensure that its general procedures include the need for risk management. According to Robinson (2020, 26), risk management procedures may follow these three steps:

1. Assessment of risks facing the NOC, including the identification of key risks
2. Risk management strategies
3. Periodic review of the programme

3.5.1 Assessment of Risks Facing the NOC

One common approach to risk management is impact-probability assessment. The aim is to estimate the range of possible impacts, of an event or trend, on the NOC.

Consequences/Impact for NOC

	Negligible (minor problem, easily handled by normal day to day processes)	Minor (some disruption possible)	Moderate (significant time and resources required)	Major (operations severely damaged)	Catastrophic (NOC survival is at risk)
Watch out! (> 90% chance)	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
Likely (50-90% chance)	Moderate	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
Moderate (10-49% chance)	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme
Unlikely (3-9% chance)	Low	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
Very Unlikely (<3% chance)	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High

(Left axis label: Probability)

Fig. 30: Risk Assessment Grid

Source: Own investigation

Quantifying risk involves multiplying the likelihood (or frequency) of the risk event occurring, by the extent of its potential impact: Risk = Likelihood × Impact.

3.5.2 Risk Management Strategies

There are different ways to work with risks. Managing risk then involves selecting tools to prevent or minimise each individual risk, by reducing its likelihood or its impact.

Leopkey and Parent (2009) introduced five risk management strategies. These mitigate the risks affecting an NOC:

1. **Reduction**: Many risks can be reduced by being aware of them. A better planning, clear business objectives, training, staff deployment, controlling, test events, communication, and using previous experience are good. Often, a change of operating style can reduce a risk.
2. **Avoidance:** Other risks can be avoided if you are aware of a risk area. This includes the fact that it would be better to not start projects that appear too risky. Overall, this limits the number of options you have

in your strategic decisions. Avoidance of "catastrophic" risks should be undertaken.

3. **Redistribution:** This strategy demands that you transfer the risk or responsibility for the risk to another person/institution outside of the NOC.

4. **Dissemination:** Here, the NOC spreads the risk by becoming less dependent on one stakeholder, or sharing the risk with the stakeholder or other entities. NOCs can also create backups, in the case where any incident occurs. Thus, the consequences would be reduced.

5. **Prevention**: Similar to avoidance, an NOC can aim to avoid a risk by setting up rules and regulations to educate the respective party and, therefore, this places the risks back on them. This is not always working, as certain damages (e.g., reputation loss) can also occur when regulations are set up. Another way to prevent this, is a substitution of the risky entity/person (e.g., not picking a risky sponsor, but rather picking another and less-risky sponsor). Finally, the NOC can prohibit actions that involve too much risk. For example, there may be travel restrictions to dangerous countries, or risky investments for the available NOC budget. Prevention can also be done by way of contracts. The NOC can severely decrease the potential damage, by having the right insurances or having contracts/agreements. For example, in many countries, officials are insured against liability for injuries that occur to athletes under their responsibility, and most NOCs that stage events (Youth Olympic Day, etc.) insure themselves against injury to participants and spectators (Robinson, 2020, 28).

By using the strategies to control the risk, the assessment will show a different risk situation. The NOC can either aim to reduce the probability that an incident will occur, or that NOC can reduce the potential consequences that the incidence has over it.

Consequences/Impact for NOC

	Negligible (minor problem, easily handled by normal day to day processes)	Minor (some disruption possible)	Moderate (significant time and resources required)	Major (operations severely damaged)	Catastrophic (NOC survival is at risk)
Watch out! (> 90% chance)	High	High	Extreme	Extreme ①	Extreme
Likely (50-90% chance)	Moderate	High	High ①	Extreme	Extreme
Moderate (10-49% chance)	Low	Moderate ③	High ③	Extreme	Extreme
Unlikely (3-9% chance)	Low	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme ②
Very Unlikely (<3% chance)	Low	Low	Moderate	High	② High

(Probability — vertical axis label)

Fig. 31: Risk Assessment Grid Before and After Taking Action

Source: Own investigation

To visualise the actions undertaken, and the monitoring process behind the action, Robinson (2020, 27) suggests to develop a risk register.

Tab. 7: Risk Register for an NOC

Risk	Proba-bility of risk	Conse-quence/ Impact	Over-all risk	Action un-dertaken	Monitor	Responsi-bility	Further action	Date of reassess-ment
① Covid19 affects spon-sor pay-ment	almost	major	ex-treme	Offer local VIP ar-rangements	Sponsor workshop	Head of market-ing	Report to board be-fore Paris 2024	Septem-ber 2023
② Loss of government support post-Covid	unlike-ly	catas-trophic	ex-treme	Promotion of impor-tance of sport in post-Covid world	Regular talks to govern-ment rep-resenta-tive	President	Report to board at next meeting	End of year
③ Loss of director high-perfor-mance sport	moder-ate	moder-ate	high	Increase of salary; more responsibili-ty	Commu-nication with di-rector	Head of HR	Review HR salary plans	After next Olympic Games

Source: Own investigation

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As explained above, you also can add columns anticipating the economic, societal, and reputation impacts of each risk in a few words. This would underline, and give an immediate understanding of, the column on "overall risk"

3.5.3 Review of the Risk Programme

Settings dates for reassessments of risks is important. As the environment and stakeholders change, risk will also change. Successful action and risk strategies also change former risks. Therefore, risk management is a process that needs evaluation and renewal.

   Robinson (2020, 28) demands that, as with all aspects of governance, the process of risk management should be transparent and communicated throughout the NOC. This is in line with Agenda 2020+5 - the demand for credibility. Trust in the NOC can be built, by including an acknowledgement of the Board's responsibilities in the annual report. Additionally, the process followed, and a confirmation of the systems in place to control areas of major risk, should be included. This allows all stakeholders to be comfortable with the risk management of the NOC, and can eventually strengthen relationships.

Workshop: Risk Management at NOCs
1. Identification of risks: Meet with your Board members and management, and have appropriate conversations with external consultants and auditors, and make a brainstorming session to identify risk areas.
2. Understand the probability of occurrence and impact of risks: Quantify risks by placing them in the risk assessment grid.
3. Realise the degree of severity of a risk. It can be economic, societal, or reputational: Aim to put a "price" on each consequence. The price can be any resource (money, time, relations, reputation, etc.). Then calculate the risk.
4. Work on a risk strategy: Consider for each risk, how you would control issues to avoid the risk. Discuss how you would set up a "control procedure", and then set a date for a review.
5. Control: Dedicate a responsible person to each risk area. This person is in charge of observing the risk development, initiating further action, or calling for a meeting. The person in charge must control the date of review.

> **6.** Develop a "risk register" with all data from steps 2-5 for your NOC board, in order to keep the members informed.

Another part about risk management, regarding organisational change, will be described in detail in subchapter 4.4. Chapter 6 will have a closer look at crises and crisis management.

Chapter 4 Implementation and Change Management

4.1 The Difficulties in Implementing Change

This subchapter deals with the management of implementation of changes at an NOC, or more generally speaking, the management of change in organisations. Change can be based on a new strategy, or it can be not strategic at all. There is a really large body of literature on this topic, in terms of both quantity and variety of approaches, and this is an indication of the importance of the topic for the success of organisations. However, no change approach has established itself as the best, or even one factor as the most important, in implementation or change management. Planned change in organisations can be difficult because it often does not completely achieve its goals. It also leads to unintended consequences (Merton, 1936) and collateral damages, to a certain extent. The gap between the planned goal of change and what is actually achieved can be very large, and in the worst-case scenario, the change never occurs. Books on strategy often cite a lack of implementation as the cause for the failure of strategies (Koromzay, 2021, 76). Some managers admit that, although the new strategy was launched and new structures (e.g., how the NOC deals with member organisations) were introduced, people unconsciously fell back into the old behaviour patterns after a short period of time. Others report that new strategies failed due to resistance from parts of their organisation. These unintended consequences of implementation attempts are also called resistance to change. Change is, therefore, difficult to achieve, and implementation or change management deals with this problem in attaining the goal, which is an effective achievement of the desired conditions. Adapting to the ever-faster changing environment (see subchapter 3.3) can be seen as one of the most important prerequisites for lasting success for organisations, in general, and for NOCs, in particular.

In the following subchapter, firstly, it shall become clear when change is a problem, and when it is not. Subsequently, a phase-oriented approach for the implementation of change or change management is presented.

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4.2 The Different Kinds of Change

Not every change or conversion plan is the same; therefore, the difficulty of change does not occur in the same way for each case. For a better understanding and for better management, it is necessary to be clear about the kind of desired change that is required. There are many different approaches and research results, some of which will be briefly explained here. For managers, it is important to identify which plans can be easily implemented, and which will cause trouble.

4.2.1 Unplanned Change vs. Planned Change

Change is a universal phenomenon; however, not every change is the result of intentional behaviour or even an elaborate plan. Change management is always connoted with the planned change, while unplanned change eludes conscious planning and, thus, any form of management. Nevertheless, it is an important factor for organisations, and many structures in organisations were not planned, but rather were a result of institutionalisation processes. This means that someone started to do something in a certain way, then they repeated it, and by the third cycle, it had already become so entrenched that they no longer even bothered to consider the best way to do it (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). Modern management science does not blindly aim to repeat these habits, but would rather subject them to tests of effectiveness and efficiency (Clegg et al., 2012, 26).

4.2.2 Small Change vs. Big Change

How big is the change? The problem of change grows with the magnitude of change. Small things are rather easy and quick to implement and, in that case, an NOC does not need large-scale implementation management. Small changes (also called incremental changes) are aimed at solving problems with small, systematic steps that provoke change over time. By using an incremental change procedure, an NOC can reduce risk, and focus on aiming to improve the system they already have in place, rather than starting from scratch and creating a new system (Schroedel, 2019).

However, a "big change" (Taffinder, 1998) is, generally, considered to be a very fundamental restructuring of an NOC. In for-profit organisations, this often involves a change in the business area – for example, Nokia

sold off its rubber boot production facility, and switched to producing TV-sets and mobile telephones. For NOCs or NFs, converging the abandonment of the old core product (its sport) into other fields is rather absurd (Schütte, 2021, 179f). Even if an NOC looks for new goals, e.g., youth attraction, digitalisation, or sustainability, it will not give up its core, the support and successful participation in the Olympic Games. But, in these organisations, there can also be very significant changes in both the field of activities, and the way work is undertaken.

Illustration: Turkish NOC (TOC) Uses Incremental Change

Following the implementation of its 2012-2016 Strategic Plan, which produced good results in many areas, including a new athletes' commission, stronger cooperation with athletes, clean sport initiatives, women in sport activities, as well as development, restructuring, and general organisational efficiency enhancement of the TOC structures and office, TOC is currently developing a new strategic initiative – not a plan with a set end-date, but rather a road map – a rolling strategy that will be monitored and adjusted annually.

4.2.3 Self-induced Change vs. Coercive Change

Who starts the change? There is a big difference between, whether a change is wanted and started by oneself, or is imposed by a third party. Even though the definition of non-profit organisations assumes complete autonomy, in reality this differs. Although NOCs are autonomous organisations of the state and of the IOC, de facto strong dependencies do exist. NOCs have to change, especially when their umbrella organisation (the IOC) issues new rules in its Olympic Charter, in order to be compliant. But, also changed laws on accounting and state assertion are good examples of coercive change in organisations (see subchapter 1.3). This type of change is also considered a cause of the great similarity (isomorphism), that organisations in the same field often exhibit (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Coercive change is inevitable, whereby, one is forced to implement it with no alternative. Although the implementation power of this method is maximum, the collateral damage and the unintended consequences also tend to grow to a maximum.

Case Study: Italian Government Forces CONI to Change

The Italian government decided to restructure its sport supporting system (CONI) that, beforehand, was in charge of the coordination of high-performance sports, but in losing this task, the majority of its resources and staff also vanished. In brief, CONI was put in a pressure situation to shrink in size (more details are in Chapter 2).

A separate Government-controlled organisation was set-up to distribute funds to the country's national governing bodies. This body, an Italian Government sports agency called "Sport e Salute" – or Sport and Health – has reduced CONI's role to only handling preparation for the Olympic Games.

The IOC raised an issue with the impact of the Italian Parliament approving plans to set up a Government-controlled organisation, which would distribute funds to the country's national governing bodies. The preservation of CONI's autonomy, a basic foundation of the Olympic Charter, is the key issue at stake for the IOC. An IOC letter expressly noted Article 27.9 of the Olympic Charter: "The IOC Executive Committee can take the most appropriate decisions for the protection of the Olympic Movement in the country of an NOC, including the suspension or withdrawal of the recognition of such NOC if the constitution, the law or other rules in the nation are in question."

The letter also reflected the NOC's autonomous responsibility in the determination and control of the rules of sport, the definition of the structure and the governance of their organisations. CONI were reminded that NOC's should "resist pressures of any kind, including, but not limited to, political, legal, religious or economic pressures that could prevent them from fulfilling the Olympic Charter".

The Italian Sports Minister, Vincenzo Spadafora (5 September 2019 until 13 February 2021), wrote to the IOC, insisting that CONI would still have "autonomy", should the law be passed. However, it was feared that Italy would face a flag and national anthem ban for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics due to a controversial sports law that was introduced, which undermined CONI's position as governing body of sports in the country. The Italian Government's Cabinet approved a decree that safeguarded CONI, whereby the decision eliminated any doubt, and resolves the problem of CONI's independence.

Refer to subchapter 1.3, and the autonomy of sport illustration, for further background.

Questions to think about:
1. Can the government of your country do the same to your NOC?
2. What could be the reason why your government may take away resources and obligations from you?
3. How can you set up a better relation to your government to lobby for your good work (see also the public affairs guidelines of the RINGS Project)?
4. What can be done to prevent an entity from "being changed", instead of driving forward your own active change?

Sources: O'Kane, P. (2019).

Self-induced change, which is voluntary and based on a plan, emanates from members or the board of the organisation. Although the fact of undertaking a self-induced change reduces the chance of implementation, the organisation must be aware of collateral damage and unintended consequences (see case study above). Other factors play an important role here, especially leadership.

4.2.4 Autocratic vs. Democratic Leadership

In similarity with the field of change management science, there is a multitude of leadership theories and studies in existence, but none of the theories has been prioritised. What adds to the complexity, is the fact that culture facilitates one style or the other (see subchapter 2.5.1). Here, we take a look at the classic distinction between authoritarian and participative leadership styles, based on Lewin (1939):

– **Autocratic style:** the leader expects obedience from his/her employees, and always the leader decides what to do, which in a way, is leading without hearing the voices of the employees.
– **Democratic style:** the decision-making process involves the employees even though the leader still plays an important role in the process, as a moderator, and the leader is still in charge and takes the responsibility which, in a way is leading while listening to the voices of the employees.

In fact, both styles are seldom found in their pure form. As a rule, mixed types of these two poles are found, even if leaders are often closer to one pole than the other. For further considerations, however, the use of these two poles is very useful, because both represent ideal types (Bhatti et al., 2012). The more the style of a leader leans towards one pole, the more the

advantages and disadvantages of the style appear. Lewin's approach is still valid, as the basic ideas can be found in all later approaches (e.g., "Theory X" and "Theory Y" by McGregor, 1967; or transactional to transformational leadership by Bass, 1990).

Both styles have their advantages and disadvantages, especially when it comes to successful change management. The authoritarian style implicitly assumes that the manager has a more or less perfect plan, that only needs to be enforced, and with that plan, it is assumed that the decisions are perfect, in principle, because the assumption of all, is that the manager certainly knows everything. However, in this case, we can draw a parallel between the employees, and young children who need to be educated, and are pressured to perform what is necessary to achieve that goal. The more interchangeable (and easily replaced) the employees are in this process, the more successful this leadership approach is. This is especially the case if the employees' activities are simple, and not based on expert knowledge. However, we recall here, that in some cultures an authoritarian leadership style is more appreciated, than in others. The typical change management of this style is the "thrown grenade" approach (Kirsch et al., 1979), in that, out of nowhere the order to change comes down like a "thrown grenade" from the top echelon of the organisation, and the employees have no choice but to follow orders. Such methods have the advantage of being very fast in deciding and issuing the command. But, the employees were not asked what they would want, or what they would think is good practice, hence, the disadvantage is in the problematic implementation. This results in the profound demotivation of the employees, who can often feel blindsided, do not understand the reason for the change, and often have better but unheard ideas. The change can fail due to the lack of commitment of the employees, as well as the more or less open attempts to stop it or sabotage it (Resistance to Change) (Kirsch et al., 1979). The authoritarian style of leadership is based on power, and this can legally lay with the superior through the employment contract, which is also referred to as legal power or domination (Herrschaft in German) (Weber, 1972) (see subchapter 3.3.2). However, it can also be based on illegal means of power, i.e., means that are not covered by the employment contract, e.g., blackmail. The takeaway here, is that illegal means of power always lead to behavioural resistance.

Illustration: Resistance to Change - Slovak Olympic Committee

After starting in 2012, in 2016 there was a first attempt to transform the NOC into an umbrella sports organisation. A lot of effort was put

into projecting the structure of the Sport Movement in this change. It was based on good practice examples from other NOCs, namely, the benchmark was the DOSB.

However, the plan did not work, as the members did not vote in favour of this transformation.

Then, also in 2016, Anton Siekel was elected as the new president, the chosen successor over the former president of 17 years, Frantisek Chmelar, and the vision of Siekel was to transform the NOC into an organisation that unifies all sports and athletes. With this goal, all efforts since November 2016 were aimed at strengthening the position of the Slovak Olympic and Sports Committee (SOSC) in the Sports Movement and towards public authorities. The SOSC became more involved in the working groups at various ministries, and the dialogue between government representatives and the SOSC representatives has become more active.

In the time leading up to the annual General Assembly, that was to vote on new statutes aiming at transforming the NOC into an umbrella sports organisation (December 2018), active dialogue with the members of the Sports Movement (SOSC members as well as the sports confederation members) was led. During the meetings, the new statutes were discussed and all of the questions from the Sport Movement were answered and relevant remarks were included in the new document. The proposed change of statues and the changes within the organisation of the Sport Movement following the transformation, were not as dramatic as was planned in 2012, and the new statues granting the SOSC position of umbrella sport organisation were finally approved by the members of the General Assembly.

The SOSC believes that this transformation was successful as a result of the time that was invested in discussions with all relevant stakeholders, and also the change that occurred was more subtle, as opposed to the change that had been planned in 2012. The most important matter is that the SOSC became an umbrella sport organisation, and now the process of slow centralisation and change will continue. The SOSC, after becoming the umbrella Sport Organisation, also took over the whole role of the former Slovak Sport Confederation, which in 2019 ceased to exist.

Sources: Information on preparation if the umbrella sport organisation in 2012 – July 2012 https://www.olympic.sk/clanok/na-43-vz-sov-sa-viac -nez-o-oh-v-londyne-hovorilo-o-transformacii-slovenskeho-olympijskeho; New Statues proposed for the creation of the umbrella sport organisation not approved November 2012

> https://www.olympic.sk/clanok/frantisek-chmelar-bol-znovu-zvoleny
> -za-prezidenta-sov-protikandidata-jana-filca-zdolal-5321; New Statues
> approved and the NOC transformed into umbrella sport organisation
> with the new name Slovak Olympic and Sports Committee – December
> 2018
> https://www.olympic.sk/clanok/slovensky-olympijsky-vybor-sa-transform
> oval-na-stresnu-organizaciu-slovenskeho-sportu-s

The democratic leadership approach is the antithesis of this, and involves employees in the decision-making process, whereby, they are explicitly asked what they would wish for. Implicitly, the approach assumes that managers do not know everything, and that employees who spend 40 hours a week dealing with their tasks have detailed knowledge that their bosses do not possess. Japanese management often works with quality circles, whereby, workers and administrators are asked in regular group meetings ("circles") how the work can be improved (Fürstenberg, 1981). The approach involves leadership with eye-level relationships, and employees are not treated disrespectfully, but rather they are appreciated as experts. Hierarchy, however, is usually preserved, and only in very self-directing groups do radical approaches disappear, as noted by Drucker (1993). The change management of the participative approach is based on consensus, the extent to which it is used is also related to culture (see subchapter 2.5), and establishing it is lengthy and difficult (especially when important interests might be hurt). Here, too, Japanese management, which relies heavily on consensus, has developed Ringi Sho, a process of making decisions and approvals in a systematic way. Here, the idea is usually born at the top, but then moves down the hierarchical levels of the organisation from top to bottom and, if necessary, back up again from the bottom to the top. All involved parties must put their stamp on the migrating document, and only when everyone agrees can the project be implemented (Fürstenberg, 1981, 72ff). The advantage of such a method is that no resistance to change occurs after the adoption of an idea and, therefore, it can be implemented very quickly, but it takes a long time to establish a consensus.

Most systems that deal with organisational change favour the participatory approach. This has something to do with the fact that those systems were constructed for cases, in which the organisations are to manage a major change. In this case, however, the commitment of the employees involved is crucial for success. Further, the reality of the NOCs, and especially due to the fact that NOCs are expertise organisations, the participatory approach makes more sense, in general.

4.2.5 Reasonable vs. Incomprehensible Change

Participative management tends to make major change successful. This is due not only to self-commitment through consent, but also to the fact that participation in the content of the change, automatically makes it comprehensible. This subchapter is about making the content side of change processes clear. People will likely only follow plans that they perceive to be rational (i.e., making sense regarding content), and the only exception is change that is demanded by charismatic leadership; in which case, people will follow the charismatic leader no matter where he or she leads them. This is true as long as the charisma holds; otherwise, anything that cannot be understood will lead to doubt, rejection, disregard, or even sabotage. Hence, it is so important to communicate in a clear and transparent way (see subchapter 4.4.5).

4.2.6 Chance vs. Pressure Situation

What is the motivation to change? Schütte (2008) developed a typology, with which to understand why NPOs adopt structures (e.g., a paid management in an NPO), and why they do not. A puzzling example, is that organisations which are similar in almost all internal and external characteristics, sometimes hire paid sports managers, and other times they do not. This is the same with NOCs that are in very similar settings, but one NOC implements a new structure and the other does not, which makes a big difference for implementing a new structure, regarding whether it is an opportunity or a pressure situation (Schütte, 2008, 178ff). It is noteworthy that, in most cases, there is no total coercive situation where there is no objective chance not to change, because change is still within the autonomy of the NOC.

A **chance situation** is characterised by the fact that some kind of reward beckons, as a result of the change, and it is, therefore, associated with a positive sanction, but without change, there is no threat of a disadvantage. For example, an NOC may establish a scientific commission that can provide academic advice on all strategic decisions, which provides the chance (opportunity) to make better decisions (positive sanction), but if it does not establish a board, then it has no disadvantage or must fear penalties (negative sanction).

The **pressure situation**, on the other hand, demands change, otherwise there is a threat of punishment, i.e., negative sanctions. For example, if an

IF changes the clothing standards for its sport, the NOCs have no choice but to adapt their clothing or they will be sanctioned. This can range from a fine to exclusion from competitions. The point is that, in a pressure situation there is a greater degree of chance (opportunity) to change, and that is also why a crisis is often imperative, as a trigger for big changes to occur (refer to subchapter 4.4.2).

if the NOC situation does not change	expected negative sanction	
	yes	no
expected positive sanction yes	chance-supported pressure situation	chance situation
no	pressure situation	no action-needed situation

Fig. 32: Chance - Pressure - Typology of Change

Source: Adopted from Schütte (2008, 180)

4.3 Why does Change Fail?

Above, we looked at the planned change from the perspective of an acting organisation. In fact, the organisation is only a construct; that is, an idea that real people have in common and, thus, an organisation exists only in their minds. Organisations cannot act, only people can do so in the name of a particular organisation. It is clear that bad plans must fail, but why is it that good plans can also fail? The answer to this question can be found in human behaviour. Normally, a plan is evaluated by its rationality, but it is often realised that there are many different perspectives on rationality.

4.3.1 System vs. Partial Rationality

What is rational for an NOC as a whole, does not have to be rational for one part of an NOC, because each one of the separate parts (departments of NOCs or simply people) of that NOC can have completely different interests, from any other part. The reason for resistance to change can, therefore, often be identified as the result of violated interests. Plans for change often affect the distribution of power, the prestige of departments and people, or the distribution of resources within an organisation, and people will defend their interests and try to bring down the transformation plan or change, if it is in their own interests. From this perspective, planned change is a struggle over power and interests (Hage & Aiken, 1970).

Fact: Behaviour of Departments Regarding a Budget Cut
In many NOCs, goals are set for both elite sports (Olympic medals) and grassroots sports (sports for all). As a rule, there are departments within the NOC for this purpose. If there is a budget cut, there will be a distribution fight between the departments. As a rule, one department will often only consider its own interests, and ignore the overall success of the NOC.

The more a person feels that they are right, the more that person will fight for his/her interests, and the less likely it will be that the change of the NOC will be successful. Persons feel a greater degree of being right, when the regulations of their interests are older and more well established. In fact, organisations quite often exhibit structures that Veblen (2005) calls "vested interest". In this case, the satisfaction of interests is so well established, that any change is seen as a form of great injustice, and leads to the corresponding harsh reactions when those interests are disturbed. For example, if the president of the NOC is in office for a very long time, then this would likely hinder any chance of having a severe change (during that period in office).

Recommendation: Belgium NOC Implemented Term Limits
In 2017, the Belgian NOC (BOIC) introduced a limitation in the number of mandates for board members. The current mandate is four years and there is the possibility of only three renewals, which means that the maximum period is 16 years. This includes all board positions. In addition to this limitation, the NOC has asked all board members to provide information on their relevant mandates. This overview has been published on the website of the NOC, thus providing a good and transparent overview of the different mandates as well as the current mandates within the NOC. (https://teambelgium.be/nl/pagina/over-het-boic#organen and https://teambelgium.be/fr/page/a-propos-du-coib#organes (you can access the information by clicking of the name of each board member).

4.3.2 Habits are Hard to Break

The fight for one's own claims to power, prestige and resources, even against the rational requirements of the system, is ultimately based on a partial and also personal rationality and, as such, habits would seem to be irrational from the perspectives of others. Hence, in the early stages of power, a particular habit would be in the interests of the acting person, but after the situation/environment changes, the habit can seem irrational to others. Remarkably, people can prefer to keep to their old behavioural patterns, and this fact must be taken into account when you want to change your NOC, especially when the change in the organisational needs will also generate a change in the behavioural patterns of the people involved.

Illustration: Stick to the Old Pattern
A good example of falling back into old behavioural patterns, is the development of computer keyboards. Looking at your computer keyboard, you would probably think that the letters are organised in the best pattern to enable you to write quickly, but that is not the case, due to the strong ingrained habits of users. You will now be asking yourself "Why is that so?". The answer is that, when the typewriter was invented and patented in the 1800s, one could not type very fast, otherwise the mechanical keys would not return very quickly, or they would get jammed against each other, as they were returning to their original start position. Therefore, the letters on the keyboard were positioned in such a way that would likely prevent the keys from sticking, but that design

made typing difficult (the QWERTY keyboard style was invented in the 1870s). The typewriters improved and a return spring pulled the keys back more quickly when typing, and a faster typing speed evolved. At that moment, inventors could arrange the letters on the keyboard in an optimal way to write fast. In fact, such keyboards came on the market, but were not bought, because people had become accustomed to the old suboptimal keyboard design of the original typewriter invention (Rogers, 2010). The takeaway, is that it is most difficult for humans to forget the old behaviours, even if the new behaviours would be more pragmatic.

In sports, a good example of the above, is the International Boxing Federation (IBF) and its governance reform, which was not happening, as all members stuck to old patterns. The IOC suspended recognition of the IBF (formerly AIBA, Association Internationale de Boxe Amateur) in May 2020, following long-standing concerns regarding finance, governance, ethics, refereeing, and judging. An IOC monitoring group has continued to report back to the organisation, since no progress was made by the IBF. IOC President Thomas Bach admitted that the Executive Committee remained concerned with the lack of progress made by the IBF over the reform process. He said: "We have received the report of the monitoring group […] I can summarise that we are very worried about the lack of progress with regard to the governance reforms of AIBA […] There is talk of Presidential elections, but we do not see any progress about these governance reforms which are very important." (Pavitt, 2020). The fact is that the IBF was only approved to be in the programme for Paris 2024 in April, 2022, and is still not on the short list for approval to enter the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, as it continues to keep to its old behavioural patterns.

Sources: Rogers (2010); Pavitt (2020)

Workshop: Analysis and Change of Habits

How do you identify habits that disrupt the change process? This workshop is a process that is rather more suited to the heads of departments.

1. Write down all necessary behavioural changes you expect to occur
   Example: requests from NFs to the NOC have so far been treated in the same way as requests from citizens to public authorities. That is, the NOC staff treat others in a very distant way, expecting the applicants to do everything in the correct way, and those staff are certainly not aiming to be proactive by providing support. Hence, the quality of service to NFs has to be improved, and right away. Therefore, applications from NFs should be welcomed and supported.

2. Introducing the required behavioural change
   Typically, when the change process needs a different behaviour, and when it is well explained, staff will adapt to that new behaviour and, indeed, it will change, but only after a short period of time, after which step 3 will be needed.

3. Conscious observation after three weeks
   In fact, when a behavioural change is required, the new behaviour persists for about two weeks until it may fall back into the old ways.

4. If the behaviour does not remain embedded as required, actions against the poor "habits" are necessary.
   Since we can assume that the employees do not exhibit the old behaviour out of bad intentions, no form of punishment should be used, but rather, there should be workshops or even rewards when better behaviour is manifested. It is important to explain the necessity of the new behaviour, which should occur at regular intervals.
   In the cases where a change of behaviour is not reached, special training sessions can be initiated in the form of a continuing education event, e.g., role playing scenarios would be suitable here. In particular, the benefits of the new behaviour can be demonstrated by familiarising employees with the role they should take. Role play can give deep insights, because people are forced to change their personal perspectives, and they learn how the situation feels and appears from the perspectives of others.

4.3.3 Stability vs. Flexibility – a Dream Revisited

The most often mentioned bad side of bureaucracy is its lack of flexibility. Weber invented the theory of bureaucracy, and also named the problems

of it, calling inflexibility an "iron cage" (Weber, 1972, 569f). Noting that not only do people have habits, but also their actions are affixed to rules that do not provide any space for flexibility, which Türk (1976) called a pathology of the organisation.

The dream of the flexible organisation is old, but extremely topical. The changes in the NOC environment have accelerated; thus, the flexible organisation is increasingly becoming an ideal (see subchapter 1.4), which is currently reflected in the popularity of the so-called agile management.

Fact: Agile Management

Agile (project) management is an iterative approach (several incremental steps) to delivering a project until the goal is reached, and such approaches are used to promote velocity and adaptability, but agile management is not recommended for all projects. The clear benefit of iteration is that you can adjust the situation as you go along, and you do not need to adhere to linear pre-project planning. Additionally, you can release benefits throughout the process, rather than solely at the end of a project (Gloger & Margetich, 2018).

The concept of agile management originally stems from software development, which is not only a long and complex business field, but also it suffers extremely from the changing wishes of the clients during the development process. The old-fashioned bureaucratic project planning style, where the goal was fixed but time and resources were kept flexible was, simply, too inflexible.

With agile management, the goal becomes more flexible, but time and money often remain fixed. There are also fixed rhythms (e.g., two weeks are set out for the project completion), and within these time units, with fixed budgets, the focus is then on fast but realistic work results. In this way, new customer wishes can be incorporated into a two week cycle (Hofert, 2016, 7); thus, agile management is flexible, despite it being fixed in its rhythms and budgets. Work is undertaken in team structures (with a maximum of transparency as the target), which distribute their tasks independently, and also determine the path to the goal. Each team member is informed, at all times, about the goal, and the way to achieve it.

In software development, agile management has been very successful, and has also found its way into other areas of application. In the meantime, agile management has become a management fashion, hence and unfortunately, the original idea of agile management has become blurred. Many

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organisations call themselves agile, but actually do not use agile concepts (Schütte, 2021, 196ff). It is ironic, that flexible management only works best, because it has rigid rules (Schütte, 2021, 198).

Case Study: Agile Management at the DOSB

In 2019, the board of the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) explained to its members about the new agile management as follows: "We are on the way to making the DOSB more agile than before. We started in the High-Performance Sport Division (GBL) based on the recommendations of Kienbaum Consulting as a result of the "task efficiency analysis" of GBL that we conducted in 2018. Among other things, agile working increases internal efficiency, enables a flexible and quick response to complex requests, makes better use of the potential and expertise of the employees, optimises the service for our members, and fundamentally contributes to improved communication and cooperation between all stakeholders involved. In order to prepare and further accompany the process, we have set up a steering group which, with the support of an external consultant, developed the image of the future organisational structure in the GBL".

As part of this, the departmental structure was dissolved on 1st April 2019, and then transferred to a more dynamic, network-like structure of competence groups and, in addition, a significantly more agile style of working was introduced.

Source: DOSB (2019)

Case Study Questions:
1. Consider the structure of your NOC. Where would it make sense to have more flexible department structures?
2. Identify in your NOC the project areas where the goal should not be bound to a rigid project plan, but rather should have more flexibility applied.

Another line of development comes from modern psychology, where Lewin (1890-1947) worked on behaviour change and developed a so-called "organisational development". In one experiment, Lewin wanted the group members to change their behaviour, hence, he formed two groups. The first group was to be convinced by external lectures, while the second group would internally discuss topics among themselves. In fact, the discussion group was far more willing to convert to the internal method, while the members of the external lecture group were apprehensive. Thus, active participation generated greater motivation to change, because each

group member had promised to change their own behaviour, in front of the other group members (Nerdinger, 2011, 150ff; Schreyögg, 2000, 489ff). In other words, in the experiment the first external lecture group did not work as an ensemble, but rather as individuals. Every external lecture group individual kept to themselves, and made their decisions alone. In contrast, within the internal group, the members felt as though they were really a part of a group during their discussions, thus forming what can be termed as a real group. Further, although everyone in the external lecture group continued to decide for themselves alone, the group did act as a social control tool. It is clearly more difficult for group members to decide differently than the majority of the group (Schütte, 2021, 145). Lewin recognised the special importance of group formation in change processes, whereby, groups are more willing to change and are more flexible than individuals. These results should be considered when planning a major change in an NOC.

The study anticipated the golden rules for organisational change, that were commonly adopted later:
– active participation, involvement, and full information;
– the social group as an important medium for change;
– change process in groups causes less anxiety and is completed faster, on average;
– cooperation promotes readiness to change, because there is a greater willingness to take risks in groups (the so-called "risk shift", Schneider, 1975, 227).

Lewin also discovered that change processes occur in a cyclical way, and after a change has occurred, those involved and affected by it, would then need a period of calm (stabilisation phase), before the next change could happen (Schreyögg, 2000, 489ff).

Even though the ideas of Lewin were well perceived, and also his methods triggered a fad in management science, such as "Organisational Development", the results were sobering in the long run. In reality, things are not as simple, because the cooperation of people in organisations presupposes many things, and is also conflict-prone (French & Bell, 1994).

The ideology of "Organisational Development" survived, and was taken up by management teachers and organisation researchers, who addressed the dynamics of the learning organisation. In other words, an organisation, unlike many others, that can manage to adapt to constantly changing requirements is, in an imaginary sense, an organisation that learned how to learn, and in the appropriate way (Agyris & Schön, 1999). However, since organisations are not living beings, they cannot ultimately learn, and

only their carriers (the people who work in them) are capable of learning. Therefore, the concept of Senge (2011) goes back to the skills and the structure of cooperation between the employees, and his approach is based primarily on employee development, but the problem with this approach is that it ignores the conflicts over power, resources, and prestige within the organisation.

In fact, we can cast doubt over the tenet, that organisations are permanently in a state of change, and Lewin had already discussed, for good reasons, a process that has the unfreezing, the changing, and the refreezing (see above). Humans would generally wish to have stability in the rules that guide them, and they would only wish to process and tolerate a certain degree of change. American futurologist, Alvin Toffler (1928-2016), described this fact very well in the 1970s in his book titled "Future Shock" (Toffler, 1970). Indeed, the classical study of the French sociologist, Durkheim (1969), explained why too much change can potentially create problems. Durkheim found that, in times of rapid change, people can lose their ideas pertaining to any rules that must be followed, because nothing would seem to be stable, including the rules; a state he termed "Anomie" (breakdown of guidance). At least, both strict ruling, and the ignorance of rulings following too much change, can lead to problems, and there has to be an equilibrium of both: Change that is somewhat anchored by stability.

Fact: Too Much Pressure to Change

In 2022, NOCs and IFs faced extremely many challenges and pressures to adopt, take care of, or even change. In almost all departments of organisations, new and often emerging challenges occured. Not all changes provided opportunities for sports organisations, because most of them were just costly and only need to be considered to avoid threats. To name just a few here, challenges included safeguarding athletes, breakaway leagues (privately organised), doping, match fixing, gender equality, racism, refugees, pandemics (see more challenges in subchapter 1.4)

Peters and Waterman (1982) identified the importance of organisational cultures as a success factor (see subchapter 2.5.3). However, organisational cultures can be influenced and, therefore, the president and the NOC board should work on the culture of their NOC. But they should be aware, that this is only possible to a limited extent, and their connection with the success of an organisation is very complex. Pettigrew et al. (1992) were able to demonstrate that organisational cultures have a strong influence on an organisation's ability to change. Studies on change in sports organisations

found similar results (e.g., Horch & Schütte, 2003; Schütte, 2008; Nagel, 2006; Thiel et al., 2006).

Peters and Waterman (1982) state that particularly strong organisational cultures are advantageous. In this context, the stronger a culture is,

– the deeper rooted that culture will be among the members (degree of anchoring),
– the more widespread the culture will be - i.e., no strong subcultures are developed (degree of diffusion), and
– the stronger will be the development of the conciseness and the scope of the culture (Schreyögg, 2000, 451ff).

The advantage of a strong organisational culture, is the provision of opportunities for all members to share a vision, to see themselves as a team and, therefore, to cooperate; rather than working in opposition among themselves. There are no departmental egoisms, because when members refer to "we", they are actually referring to the identity of the entire organisation, rather than just to the working group itself; hence, a common use of language develops. For example, the word "immediately" will then have the same meaning for all group members. This can make organisations extremely strong in implementation, and also capable of change. However, all this only applies to change that does not affect the identity of the organisation and its culture. In addition, strong cultures also lead to strong assumptions about the world. This can be an absolute strength for an NOC, in terms of morality, e.g., incorruptibility. On the other hand, it can also become an absolute weakness. A good example is the Olympic torch relay, which became an iconic event of the Olympic Games. But in times when there is a pandemic, it no longer fits, because its very merit of bringing the Games to the people becomes a disadvantage, in this case. When the Games were in their naissance, the Games programme was flexible, and each Olympic organiser incorporated sports that were pleasing (flexibility). Then, in 1912, the programme was standardised (rigidity) (Molzberger, 2010), and it became ever larger. While it was possible to expand it, changing whatever already exists is quite a problem, and this is another good example of the negative side of a strong culture.

The phenomenon also exists in the heightened form of the "sacred cow". In Western culture, all elements of a culture are referred to as the sacred cow; hence, those elements are under a special reservation of change. Everything can be discussed and changed, except for sacred cows, which are discussed as a problem, with respect to change, as they are literally untouchable (Hanrahan et al., 2015), and it is there that the term clearly has a negative connotation. However, sacred cows are also functional. For

example, the core area of NOCs is the Olympic Idea, and changes that might touch on this, are extremely difficult to develop, and they have little chance of implementation. This, once more, shows that flexibility and stability are quite equal in how good they are.

4.3.4 The Role of Time

Time plays an important role in organisational change, but there are caveats: organisations do not change via a simple command, because change is not a matter of one point of transformation, but is rather a complex process, and what may seem right at one point in time may be harmful at another. Therefore, there are many models of change, cutting the change process into phases. Lewin (1939) developed the aforementioned most simplistic of phase models imaginable: Unfreeze - Change - Freeze. The phase model of Hage & Aiken (1974; see also Hage, 1980) emphasises the process character of innovations in organisations, and it distinguishes between four typical phases:
1. Evaluation phase: the time of initial considerations and planning.
2. Initiation phase: the time of concrete planning and resource procurement. It is characterised by high ideals and visions.
3. Implementation phase: the time to realise the plans. It is accompanied by open conflicts and a reduction of demands and expectations.
4. Routinisation phase: the time when change slowly becomes the norm.
Hage and Aiken obtained their model through empirical observation. In particular, it shows a switch in leadership. Whereas in the initiation phase, leadership is more participative, in the implementation phase it changes to an authoritarian style, and includes certain tricks and deceptions, notwithstanding the open use of non-legitimised power.

These explanations bring clarity to whatever usually might go wrong: a switch in leadership style is unavoidable, but it should never be that harsh; in the initiation phase, one should not promise too much, so as to aim at preventing disappointment, but one must clearly address why a change is needed; the urgency must become obvious to everyone, and it has to be sufficient to motivate any change; and, in the implementation phase, we can potentially damage change when using illegal power, thus destroying trust and hindering any return of participative management.

To our knowledge, the best developed model, which contains the four steps noted above, was developed by Schreyögg (2000). Successful change

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processes are characterised by participation, which requires the willingness of the NOC board to share, or even give up, essential parts of their power.
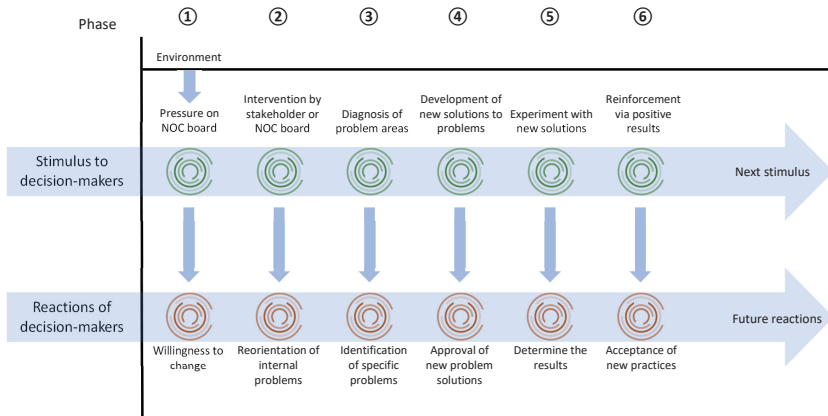
Fig. 33: Phases of Change Process

Source: Modified from Steinmann and Schreyögg (1997, 446)

Figure 33 illustrates the order of phases in the NOC's change process. This is only an overview, and the entire change process will be explained in subchapter 4.4.

Recommendation: Management Behaviour in the Change Process
Different (management) behaviour is needed in different phases of change. Moreover, one should distinguish between empirical observation (how people should actually act) from management concepts (how people should act in order to be successful). One can learn a lot from empirical observations of what goes wrong in a change, in order to make that change better. Therefore, each change process will train you to make your NOC stronger in your next change.

4.4 Steps for Successful Change Management

Many approaches for successful change management do exist. Here, we present a model that we have developed, which merges various established approaches (Hage & Aiken, 1974; Hage, 1980; Kotter, 1997; Kotter, 2012;

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Rogers, 2010; Pettigrew et al., 1992). This merge was also used for sport organisations by Horch and Schütte (2003), but it is now extended to fit Olympic Sport Organisations. Subchapter 4.4.1 explains phase 5 (red Ring) "Change and Monitor", which is the implementation of a strategic plan, or any other change initiative. In the following, seven steps are introduced.

4.4.1 Step 1: Be Aware of the Situation and Plan the Change

It is fundamental to accept that to achieve goals, the NOC should not simply start change and act blindly, but must first analyse the situation, and then plan the change.

It is important to make clear why the NOC wants to change, and how much energy the change is worth. If the initiators, who are often the NOC president, board members or senior management, actually do not want the change, then how can they successfully convince the staff to accept the change? Even if the change does not seem worth much to the staff, they will certainly not fight against implementing something that takes many resources. There are three obvious scenarios:

Scenario 1: The change is seen as urgently necessary, and the measures taken are absolutely correct. These are good preconditions, and one can directly start planning for the next steps.

Scenario 2: The change is not seen as necessary, but rather it is seen as useful and, accordingly, the measures are seen as absolutely correct. These are still good preconditions and one can start directly with the planning for the next steps. One should consider, however, that such changes, which will use only opportunities are by far more difficult to convert than if a kind of compulsion from the environment is present. Here, change must be driven forward with much energy and prudence.

Scenario 3: The change is forced upon you from either the outside or the inside (coercive change), and the measures are seen as a step backwards, or even as a personal insult. These are very bad conditions and, basically, there are three ways to react in such situations: Leave it, Love it, or Change it (Lazarus, 1991):

– *Leave it*: You leave the change ("Exit Option" by Hirschman, 1970), but since it is a coercive change, this will not remain without consequences. For example, if the cause of the change is strong enough (e.g., the IOC), there will be consequences (e.g., for the NOC). Then the NOC board members may either leave, or not get re-elected. Ultimate-

ly, the NOC may lose sponsors, trust, and governmental support, thus leading to finally averting the change.

- ***Love it:*** You accept the change and decide to deal with the situation, in such a way that you keep your NOC going, and see the positive aspects in the change. If you succeed in doing this sincerely and consistently, i.e., without lying to yourself, then you can switch to scenario 1 or scenario 2, and you can start planning the next steps.
- ***Change it:*** You do not accept the change, and you then aim to avert it completely, or in parts ("Voice Option" by Hirschman, 1970). As we are in the scenario of coercive change, this always means a fight. Here, the strength and willingness of the change operator to compromise, will be just as important as the possibilities and arguments which the other side will bring to the table. No matter what, in the end, someone, somewhere, will lose.

You cannot promote change if you are not intellectually and emotionally behind that wish for change. Since the emotional factors can hinder the rational factors, the most important step is to deal with your negative feelings. Gordon (1977) uses Carl Rogers' methods of talk therapy, to deal with emotional blockages in leadership situations. The blockades are often dissolved when they are spoken about, and released. Both the situation and the feeling which are triggered must be named. This can be done among colleagues, at the NOC board meeting, or via trained coaches. Only when you emotionally cope with the situation can you find your way to deal with the unwanted aspects of that situation. If you manage to take the situation for granted, you can try to get the best out of the change. Basically, you have to manage to get into the *Love it* mode. Then, you can start to plan and tackle the next steps.

4.4.2 Step 2: Establish a Sense of Urgency

Change needs energy. The strongest source of energy for change is a crisis (refer to Chapter 6). The greater the threat is, the easier it will be for change to occur (Kotter, 1997; Pettigrew et al., 1992). In any crisis situation, continuing the plan you currently have, is not an always a good alternative, because it is likely leading to a disaster. The Covid-19 pandemic is a good example: In most sport organisations, including NOCs, there has been a longstanding resistance to new forms of work (such as working from home), and new technologies (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.), for

which the pandemic led to a tremendously fast adoption in both areas (see more in subchapter 6.3.2).

Threats can be long-term, such as the constant change of society and the loss of the belief in Olympic Values. That threatens all NOCs, with devastating consequences, but it only provides little energy for change, since it seems that we can still react tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow. In addition, its signs are initially barely visible and, therefore, difficult to imagine, and the threat remains on an abstract level. But threats can also come over us as a shock, with the inevitability of reacting immediately, but such situations actually do generate a tremendous amount of energy with which to change things. A good example of this, is that the knowledge of the long-term threat of indulging in corrupt practices does not make an NOC official change his/her behaviour, but the NOC can always decide to stop the behaviour of the guilty parties, tomorrow or the day after, despite the threat remaining present in an abstract form. Only when the police are arresting officials (e.g., FIFA scandal or officials at Rio Olympic Games 2016), and impacting pressure, does it become concrete and thus change is brought to bear, at least to initiate mechanisms to fight corruption. The takeaway is that, only if the crisis is named, and is concretely presented to everyone, enough energy can be raised to initiate change. Further, the energy that is needed for any change to occur, is only generated when the crisis is perceived and, therefore, the organisational change or the start of a project is urgently needed.

Therefore, Kotter (1997, 55ff) demands the establishment of a "sense of urgency", which also points out how important the aspect of communication is in the process of change (see subchapter 4.4.5). This requirement is easy to meet if there is a concrete, and clearly visible crisis, but difficult to meet if it remains abstract and endures in that form over the long-term. Then, one will aim to develop concrete dramatic crisis scenarios, that are based on small signs, but such attempts can become ethically problematic. That could imply that when such explained danger is a lie, which has been used to initiate change. Change argumentation based on lies has many examples, in particular in social media, where nowadays alternative realities are seen, or conspiracy theories are promoted (even at the highest political levels).

Note that if a crisis really exists, it can be used to successfully initiate change, but if there is no real crisis, then this powerhouse of change cannot be used, which is also the reason why reforms that are not based on crisis situations, but rather on opportunity situations, need a lot more energy to be properly implemented (Schütte, 2008).

4.4.3 Step 3: Building a Coalition to Conduce the Change

The idea of NOC presidents who can influence and control everything with one command is persistent, but false, because if this were true, there would be no need for change management. But the failure in many of the change processes, does make it clear that this is not the case. Even if only one person wants to change his or her own behaviour, such as giving up corruptive behaviour, they are influenced by other members/staff. For example, it would be particularly difficult to quit corruption (taking advantage of situations), if all colleagues continued to use their position for personal benefits, and it would be easier if they were all strictly compliant with anti-corruption policies. In sport organisations, an acute problem of change is based on requiring others to also change.

A big change in an NOC, will always create groups that will gain power, resources, or prestige, and other groups that will lose these attributes. Therefore, there are almost always as many opponents as there are advocates for change. This often results in a battle for the opinions of those who are not affected; thus, winning them over as allies beforehand has a great advantage. In fact, because NOCs are non-profit organisations, they are particularly affected by such effects, since they have democratic decision-making structures, which means that many are involved in decisions regarding change, but they are impacting from the outside (e.g., NOC member federations). It is the majority groups who decide, rather than solely the president, the NOC board, or the executive managers. This illustrates why big changes are not a one-man show and why allies are needed and, above all, this is all about key people. Rogers (2010) showed that it is important to be the first to adopt an innovation. He also noted that, to be successful, you will need many influential opinion leaders who are supporting the change, and the more outsiders there are, who are the first adopters of the change, the less likely it will be that it will work successfully. For example, if a new dress code is introduced in an NOC, and people with high prestige (charismatic or legal power) implement it immediately, the chances of successful overall implementation will be high. If, on the other hand, only staff with lower prestige wear the new clothes, then the chances of success will be low. How to win alliances is similar to what was explained in subchapter 3.3., regarding how to find "common issues".

A major change in an NOC has many consequences. For example, implementing a new department can bring new stakeholders in, which means that, if an NOC starts working on "environment and sport", then

environmental protection groups will become more important. But then, it may become more difficult to work with a sponsor from a mineral oil or petroleum exploration company, for example. Therefore, it is worthwhile to constantly update the stakeholder analysis (subchapter 3.3).

In addition to actual allies, it is useful to recruit change experts (so-called change agents) and receive the appropriate training. Such experts are usually external consultants, which is an advantage, because they are not hindered in their work by your internal interests, and they will surely have a fresh perspective on the NOC. In addition, their assessments are considered to be neutral expert knowledge and can, therefore, be less questionable than with internal assessments, which are seen as part of a coalition. However, as external experts, they will actually lack insider knowledge, especially concerning the specifics of the organisational culture. Therefore, it can also make sense to recruit internal people as change agents. Sometimes, it is also possible to balance the advantages and disadvantages of external and internal staff, by recruiting a team from both.

Fact Box: Change Agent

A change agent is a person who supports transforming the NOC (or assisting in major projects) by putting the onus on organisational development, improvement, and effectiveness. A change agent can be from within the NOC, or hired from outside, to help the NOC in implementing changes for adapting to the changing environment (such as athletes' voices, or governmental changes). An internal change agent has the necessary knowledge (such as an NOC executive or director), and an external change agent has the liberty to bring in different perspectives, and challenge the existing NOC structure (or project structure).

Best Practice: Essential points to be considered as a change agent

1. **Identify your allies:** Find those persons who support your project in your NOC. Make these so-called allies understand the dynamics of the change initiative, its importance, and its impact on the NOC staff or, generally, on the NOC's development. The best approach may be, if these staff members have a substantial standing in your NOC, and the power to influence others. If they start by advocating on your behalf, then half of your battle is already won. Moreover, staff have more confidence in their colleagues, than in a person who is entrusted with an NOC change initiative. When such a colleague speaks, no one is

going to ignore them, but instead they will listen, and they will surely aim to understand why that colleague is in favour of the idea/project.

2. **Co-create the vision:** The change agent should have a vision, and it is essential that the change/project highlights that vision. You must also ensure that the NOC board appreciates your efforts. If necessary, co-create your vision with everyone, so that they feel that their contribution is essential to whatever the change agent is driving changes forward. When everyone has a share in the input, they will always aim to give their best, so that the output supports the change. Be consistent, clear, and precise in your communication of the vision, so that you can tackle any resistance which may obstruct the pathway to success.

3. **Get everyone on the same page:** Now is the time to get everyone else on board. Ask other employees to offer feedback, so that you can realise your shortcomings and make necessary changes, accordingly.

4. **Create a track record:** Create a change plan, because you have enough support, and you also have the required confidence of others in your vision. Pay attention to the fact that the change must have a good timing. Not everyone will wait months to see the effect that the change initiative has on others. Change needs successful execution, in order to build momentum among the staff and members, to mitigate any potential resistance.

Remember, change is not an easy process, nor is being an effective change agent an easy job. Change agents are persons who would likely have the least number of allies and friends at the onset, but the most successful change agents are those who overcome difficulties, and find ways and means to implement change initiatives, and make them worthwhile.

4.4.4 Step 4: Winning People's Hearts Inside and Outside the NOC

People can be convinced intellectually, but that does not mean that they will give energy and engagement to the change. Real commitment is only created when hearts are also won. However, this will occur through visions (defining a new destination), rather than through plans (designing the roadmap to reach that destination) (Schütte, 2021). Therefore, a special vision for change must be developed. This can be achieved in the same way as is in the context of strategy development (see subchapter 2.3).

The crucial factor here is that, the vision can serve many goals and interests at the same time. It is necessary that the vision does not only suit

all essential stakeholders (see subchapter 3.3 for alignment of stakeholders), but also has an emotionalising and motivating effect on others. In commercial enterprises, this involves the clients, the shareholders, and the employees (Kotter, 1997, 106), and in NOCs with a focus on competitive sports, this changes in accordance with the following groups:

– Are the interests of the *IOC tangled*? Is the vision compatible with IOC's interests?
– Are the interests of the *members* of the NOC or *athletes* affected? Does the vision promise to improve their situation?
– Are the interests of the *sponsors and public authorities* addressed? Both would wish to present themselves through the promotion of sports, thus being noticed, and hoping for a positive image transfer through sporting success.
– Are the interests of the *elected board members* involved? They aim to win power, influence, or prestige, and they would wish to avoid any losses.
– Are the interests of *paid employees* touched upon? For them, too, it is a matter of power, influence, and prestige, but in addition, there are issues of working conditions (salary, offices, promotions, etc.).
– Are the *interests of the media* involved? Consider whether a press conference would be useful. Perhaps, interviews with individual journalists would be better, Alternatively, a press release may be adequate to inform and involve the media, as well as the public.

Satisfying all stakeholders equally is an extremely difficult act. This is also due to the fact that the improved influence of elected members comes at the expense of paid staff, and vice versa. However, certain losses are acceptable, if benefits are gained elsewhere. Thus, visions of NOCs in the field of high-performance sports can always be based on the prospect of greater sporting success. This is the "common issue" among all stakeholders. It becomes far more difficult when NOCs target other activities, such as Olympic education, or sport for all.

4.4.5 Step 5: Communicate the Change

The previous subchapter has shown that it is important to win hearts for a new vision. However, if new visions are to be created and implemented, they should be communicated, so that they are more likely to become reality. Thus, communication is essential in every process of management, but it is especially crucial in change management. It is an important tool in all phases of change processes. Your way of communication may pro-

voke certain emotions, which often have a greater influence on people's opinions and decisions, rather than arguments. Beside this, despite the opportunity, that changes can always bring positive developments, and have great potential to improve a situation, most people do not like changes, and they may even resist them. Thus, what may rationally seem logical and right, does not necessarily always feel good, emotionally. Well-known habits and established routines provide feelings of safety and certainty. But, these feelings of familiarity can disappear or, even worse, the opposite emotions (irritation, insecurity, and uncertainty) may be created by changes. The situation may even seem threatening because we are unable to predict future events. Change processes are, therefore, usually associated with strong emotions in either direction and, in many situations of transformation, these are mainly negative emotions. That is why it is important to include the emotional dimension in change management, alongside the many objective and functional tools and strategies. Therefore, this subchapter focuses on the meaning of emotions, and demonstrates how communication helps to overcome negative emotions, and thus resistance, and reinforces positive emotions in change processes.

Emotional Phases of Change and How to Deal with them from a Communicative Perspective

Change curves are frequently used in the management literature, albeit always a little differently each time, to illustrate the emotional phases of change processes. Figure 34, shows one example of a change curve. Interestingly, change curves have their origins in a completely different discipline, that of Psychiatry. Originally, in the late 1960s the Swiss-American psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (1926-2004), developed her theory of emotional phases to depict the grieving process after the death of a loved person. However, in essence, change processes in organisations also usually mean saying goodbye to something familiar and beloved and can, therefore, be associated with grief and regret. Hence, the curve in Fig. 34 is intended to illustrate the various emotional phases within the change process. The model has often been used in different contexts, to make personal reactions to significant changes comprehensible. Perhaps, the most astonishing finding is that all people go through the same emotional phases, even if they are open to changes (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Fig. 34 shows that the process of dealing with change is related to various emotions, and depending on the emotional state of the person(s), their willingness to perform, their motivation, morale, and competence also fluctuate. Here,

we briefly look at the different phases, and explore how communication can be used to minimise reactance and foster acceptance in your NOC.
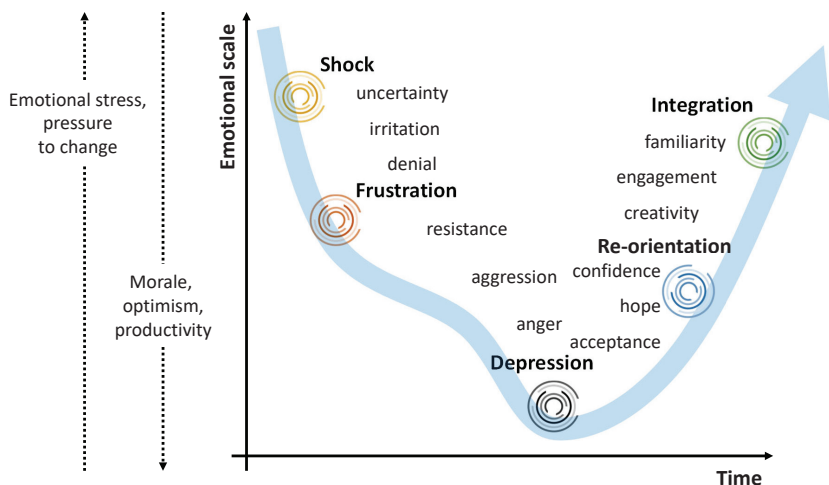

Fig. 34: Change Curve

Source: Adapted in accordance with the work of Müller-Stevens and Lechner (2005, 607)

As long as nothing changes in our lives, we can assume that we will generally stay in our comfort zone, within which, we are familiar with procedures, and we can assess our skills and competences well. If we now (involuntarily) have to leave our comfort zone, as is often the case within changes, this can create stress. We may feel shocked, irritated, and frightened, because we do not know exactly what is coming next. Consequently, this can lead to the denial of the new situation. We would wish to stay cocooned within the security of whatever we are accustomed to, and we would not necessarily wish to accept this new reality, which could trigger all of the negative emotions within us (Deutinger, 2017).

This phase of uncertainty and irritation can be successfully overcome by using clear words, by holding a vision, and by adopting explanations of how the pathway to the future will likely be. It should be clearly communicated why the change is necessary, and what the goals, visions, and missions are (see subchapter 2.3). Potential difficulties and impacts on stakeholders should also be addressed. It is often recommended that an authorised person, who has great responsibility in the process of change,

should provide the information (which must be anything but the change agent itself). This can be achieved through information events, newsletters, intranet, etc. Aim at avoiding your personnel receive information from third parties or from the external sources, such as the mass media. This could cause a loss of trust, which would dramatically reduce employees' willingness to accept change. Thus, ensuring transparency through information is a major important point at the beginning of change processes, to prepare stakeholders in readiness for change (Lauer, 2019, 128 and 132).

The period after the "first shock" is usually characterised by frustration and anger, and it can be disillusioning. People begin to realise that the changes are now being implemented, and often they try to resist them. If there is no good argumentation (an urgent sense – see step 2, 4.4.2) for the change, they will argue against it, and also try to fight off the changes (Deutinger, 2017).

In this phase, it is about the exchange and dialogue with the people who are involved in the change. The change agent should build alliances, and aim to get all on board. Then, it is essential to find out the reasons for the resistance among the staff. This can be realised by conducting personal employee dialogue or workshops with methods like "world café" (a structured conversational process involving the sharing of knowledge), in which stakeholders actively participate and discuss crucial issues.

Workshop: Dialogue in a World Café
The World Café methodology is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue. There are different formats which are available on the internet, and you should adapt the format of your choice to the situation, and the size of the group involved.

1. **Setting:** Create a comfortable NOC-related environment (such as a café), where there should be four/five chairs at each table (optimally).
2. **Welcome and Introduction:** The host begins with an introduction to the World Café process, setting the context (the organisational change or a project), and putting participants at ease (as they may be nervous and frustrated).
3. **Small-Group Rounds:** The process begins with the first of three or more twenty-minute rounds of conversation for small groups of four (with a maximum of five) people seated around a table. At the end of the twenty minutes, each member of the group moves to a different table. They may or may not choose to leave one person as the "table host" for the next round, who welcomes the next group, and briefly fills them in on what happened in the previous round.

4. **Questions:** each round is prefaced with a question, that is specially crafted for the specific context and desired purpose of the World Café. The same questions can be used for more than one round, or they may build upon each other, to focus the conversation, or to guide its direction.

   Questions that can be regarded in those conversations can be:
   – What is particularly important for any involved stakeholders?
   – What interests, needs, or concerns do they have?
   – What alternatives do those who are involved see for themselves?
   – What do they think should be done to solve the problem, and to the satisfaction of all stakeholders? (Lauer 2019, 143).
5. **Harvest:** After the small groups (and/or in between rounds, as needed), individuals are invited to share insights or other results from their conversations with the rest of the large group. These results are reflected visually in a variety of ways, and most often using graphic recordings at the front of the room.

Sources: http://www.theworldcafe.com; Lauer 2019, 143

In general, being an active part of the change, and having the possibility to bring in one's own thoughts and ideas, might reduce resistance, frustration, and anger. Thus, communication can be a catalyst of achieving the detection and reduction of resistance.

At some point, it becomes clear that it is hopeless to fight against the changes, when the mood is at rock bottom, because the motivation and energy are also dashed to the ground. This phase has been described as a "valley of tears", because it is the most emotionally difficult point in the change process (Deutinger, 2017).

Having reached this emotional low ebb, it would be useful, to look one last time at the past events, before finally moving on. There is always a positive energy in what has been achieved so far. This energy is useful for everything that comes next. An essential element of change communication here is to say a last "goodbye" to the old, and then say "hello" to the new. This can take the form of a ritual; for instance, a meeting of all employees (or include the most important), or even a farewell party, in which the achievements are honoured once again. By saying goodbye and letting go of the old in the past, doors are surely opened for the new in a potentially bright future (Deutinger, 2017, 60).

Now, it is time for a new beginning, and for a reorientation, because people accept the changed situation, their original scepticism turns into hope, and they aim to cope with the new situation, and become involved.

People learn to find their way in the new situation and they aim to see that the effort has been worthwhile which will potentially create positive feelings (Deutinger, 2017).

The processes of change are now being implemented increasingly more. Therefore, it is important to let the staff participate in the process. Employees should have the opportunity to experiment and to develop new routines, in order to become familiar with the new situation, and to engage with it. The sooner they learn to cope with the new situation and processes, the sooner positive feelings will arise. It is important that the developments are reflected upon, and the steps for the next weeks or months are discussed. A working group could be formed for this purpose, for example. Additionally, reporting about the progress and successes, and sharing relevant information (e.g., via newsletter, information events, workshops) with the involved stakeholders, are crucial steps towards increasing the motivation among stakeholders, for the further course of the change process. Positive feedback and encouragement are important communication tools with which to strengthen commitment (Deutinger, 2017).

And then, "Voila!" - it is almost done. The greater the acceptance among individuals and also in the group, the better the change can be fully implemented, and then new processes and procedures can be integrated into everyday life (Deutinger, 2017). Also, in this last phase, information and exchange about processes, challenges, and successes are important. Furthermore, the achievements and the way to reach them should be comprehensively appreciated. By communicating that the goal has been achieved by everyone working together, this strengthens the solidarity and team spirit of an organisation.

How to Communicate Successfully

The section above was about what to communicate in each phase. What follows, is a closer look at some basic facts of communication, and rules an NOC should follow to effectively communicate with its stakeholders, to improve the change management or project process.

Communication Processes in a Nutshell

Figure 35 visualises what communication scholars call Lasswell's communication model (Lasswell, 1948). Already in 1948, Lasswell developed this model to describe central elements in communications, and their role on the effect of a message. It reads as follows: "Who says What, in Which channel, to Whom, and with What effect?". This very simplified representation of the effects of mass media is still often used today to illustrate

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communication processes. Here, we will apply the model to communication in change management to explain the most important issues in a simplified way.
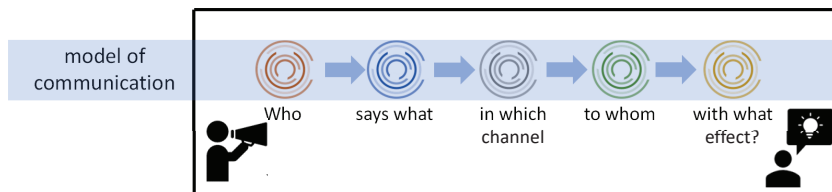

Fig. 35: Lasswell's Model of Communication

Source: Adopted and adapted from Lasswell (1948, 117)

"*Who?*" describes the communicator, that is, the person who communicates the information. Clear and understandable words from the decision makers (usually the NOC executive management) to everyone, are needed, and especially at the beginning of a change project, when the degree of uncertainty is at its greatest. It is recommended that communication be at the highest possible level and, preferably, the NOC president should deliver the message. This top-down communication approach, highlights the importance and seriousness of the change, that needs to be managed in the near future (the sense of urgency). Further, it represents strong leadership and appreciation for the employees. Alternatively, cascade communication (passing information from one level to another) is appropriate, in which the most important issues are first sent asymmetrically from the top of the NOC to everyone (e.g., via plenary meetings or other internal channels). Then, middle management can personally inform their teams about further details. This is especially important, both in and for teams or units, that are particularly affected by change (Hofert, 2018, 98; Deutinger, 2017, 82ff; Lauer, 2019). Smith (2017, 203-208) discusses the three Cs of effective communication (Credibility, Control, and Charisma), and notes that it depends largely on the audience's perception of the spokesperson regarding whether or not a message is accepted. Someone has a high degree of *credibility* if he/she havs a high status, is considered an expert, and is perceived as being honest and competent. Further, a spokesperson with the power to command or to *control* has a persuasive effect. This includes having the power to make decisions, the authority and scrutiny to explore and control the situation, and the ability to determine the

consequences of the situation. Lastly, *charisma* could also be an important factor of an effective communicator. A speaker who expresses familiarity towards a person, who is admired for their achievements, or possibly has certain similarities with some other respected person, can generally be very convincing. This, in turn, goes hand in hand with trustworthiness and credibility.

"*What?*" refers to the message itself. Timely and simultaneous information of all involved persons demonstrates appreciation, and creates a better foundation to discuss possible problems in a constructive way. This can also prevent rumours from spreading before everyone is properly informed. This should be in the interests of full disclosure, especially in the initial phase of the change, where honest and clear words are important for transparency, to reduce resistance, or to discuss concerns together. It is important to explain clearly and succinctly why everything cannot simply continue as it is, what risks can occur, what needs to be done differently in the future, and what role stakeholders will play in this change. Further, it is equally important to communicate successes, and as quickly as possible, which will provide positive feedback, and also increase motivation among the staff (Deutinger, 2017, 57ff; Lauer, 2019, 130).

"*In which channel?*" refers to the means by which you convey the message. The personal conversation is the most important communication channel. On the one hand, this enables a dialogue and, thus, should generate spontaneous questioning and explanations, which could, in turn, prevent misunderstandings. In addition, the personal conversation creates trust, because it signals that time and patience are employed to explain the situation. However, personal interviews with all stakeholders might not always be possible (i.e., time- and work-related restrictions for both parties). In this case, the most important stakeholders should be prioritised and/or other channels, such as video messages or video conferences, could be used to choose a means of communication, that is comparable to personal conversations (Lauer, 2019, 130). However, there are many other useful channels, such as intranet, newsletter, etc.

"*To whom?*" includes our target group that we would wish to reach. Target group-oriented communication can be seen as a success factor. Let us briefly clarify what is meant by target group-oriented communication. Change processes are often very complex and affect many different stakeholders in different ways; therefore, different information is relevant for each stakeholder. That is why, in addition to identifying central stakeholders (see subchapter 3.3.2), it is equally important to consider who needs to receive information, and also what information should be provided.

Further, since some stakeholders are more involved than others and/or have different positions (e.g., trainee, department head, athletes, the media), the choice of language style. or particular words and phrases. is also crucial. Depending on the target group, it may be necessary to properly convince the members, by using the appropriate technical vocabulary, or presenting complicated facts in a very simple way, so that they can be easily understood (Lauer, 2019, 129). For a target group-oriented or tailored communication, a *communication concept* would be helpful and, as such, is presented in an exemplary way in the next section.

"*With what effect?*": Ideally, communication creates an open-minded atmosphere which allows a constructive exchange with stakeholders. If you reach the target group with the adequate channel and with the relevant information, in an appropriate way, there is a good chance that you will quickly overcome the phase of resistance (see Fig. 34), and the changes will be accepted quickly. In the worst-case scenario, your information could fall on deaf ears, which would make the implementation of changes extremely difficult; except that, a well-engineered communications concept can prevent this.

Communication Concept

A communication concept defines which target groups are to be addressed, with which (media) channels, at what precise time, or in what window of time, and with what objectives, to reach the goals. Thus, a communication concept reflects central elements, with which we are already familiar, through Lasswell's model of communication. In simple terms, the communication concept represents the plan for the communicative actions.

The following questions, as recommended by Stolzenberg and Herberle (2013), could be addressed in a workshop with employees of your NOC, to identify key information about target groups or stakeholders, their needs and concerns, as well as the aims of communication, and appropriate channels with which to realise them (Stolzenberg & Herberle, 2013, 72-82).

Workshop: Communication of Important Issues to Relevant Stakeholders Based on a Communication Concept

Think of a current topic or issue affecting your NOC. Answer the following questions, that are important to initiate actual communication afterwards.

Target groups
– Which stakeholders are affected by the change? (see subchapter 3.3.2)
– How much are they affected by the change? (e.g., very strongly vs. marginally, or not at all)
– How do they see the change? (e.g., opportunity vs. threat)
– What reaction should we expect? (e.g., support vs. resistance)
– How relevant are the stakeholders for the successful implementation of any change? (e.g., very important vs. not at all important)

Current issues and concerns
– Which issues are essential for the respective target group?
– Which open points need to be clarified urgently?
– What concerns do the respective target groups have, or what is perceived as disadvantageous and negative?
– What opportunities and advantages can arise for the respective target group, or what is perceived as positive?
– What should be achieved through communication with the target groups? What messages should be communicated to the target groups?

Communication channels / media
– Which communication channels are available? (e.g., face-to-face meetings, workshops, media such as newsletters, video-conferences, etc.)
– Are individual or personal meetings with the target groups possible or, alternatively, should there be a cascade communication to inform the target groups?
– Which means of communication is suitable for a specific need or situation?
– What disadvantages or limitations for communicating the message could a medium possibly have?
– What acceptance does a particular means of communication have with a target group?

Schedule
– When should what be communicated?
– Who should be informed, and when (in the first instance)?
– Which milestones are planned for the change project?
– At what intervals should information be provided?
– What is the best frequency for communication?

After a communication concept has been prepared, and the key questions have been answered (see workshop above), a communication plan can be written. That is, a (time) plan illustrating who is informed when, about

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what, and how. This ensures a structured approach, that takes all important stakeholders into account, and enables communication goals to be achieved as successfully as possible.

To make your message(s) more vivid: Imagine that due to a scandal (e.g., racist remarks against a coloured athlete) involving a Caucasian NOC sports director, her contract is to be terminated prematurely. The crucial point here is, "Who?" is informed, at "What time?", and through "Which channel?", so as to not damage the reputation of the NOC, or lose important partners (e.g., Olympic sponsors). It is never good – but it happens often – that the people concerned first learn of the information from the media, and not first-hand through personal conversations. Therefore, think carefully about the order in which you inform the relevant stakeholders about your plans. Often, there are many stakeholders involved, so it is very important to identify the target group that is strongly affected by the issue(s), as a first step. Further, especially in scandals quick action is essential to keep the situation under control (as best you can). The following example is highly simplified to give you a comprehensible idea of how it could be. As described in the previous sections, it is also important to consider who communicates the information. This depends on individual cases, as well as on the personnel structure of the organisation.

Tab. 8: Communication Plan of a Hypothetical Problem of an NOC

Target group/ stakeholder	Issues and concerns	Aims of communication	Communication Channel	Schedule
NOC Sport Director	Racist comments by the NOC Sport Director that cannot be tolerated and will damage the reputation of the NOC if she continues to work in her position	Contract termination	Face-to-face talk, personal meeting (e.g., NOC president)	One-time. The sport director is the first person to talk to and inform
Team / Athletes / Staff	Emotional reactions of those concerned, uncertainty about future conditions, new staffing, etc.	Transparency, discuss concerns	Meetings with the staff or alternatively top-down communication (e.g., CEO, head of department, coach, etc.)	One-time. Should be informed before external stakeholders are informed
Media	Critical questions from journalists, accusations, further investigative questions that put the association in a bad light	Protect the image and values of the NOC, control what information is released to the public. Demonstrate actions	Press conferences, personal interviews with journalists, press release (e.g., CEO, PR-Manager/publicist)	One-time. After the internal stakeholders are informed
Public	Negative reactions from the public, lack of understanding from the public, fear of losing sponsorship contracts	Protect the image and values of the NOC	Press conferences, mass media, social media, press release (e.g. CEO, coach, PR-Manager/publicist)	One-time. After all other stakeholders are informed

Discourse on miscommunication

It is not always guaranteed that the communicator's message will reach the recipient in the same way. It is not uncommon for misunderstandings to occur. The model of Schulz von Thun (2011), depicts that *every* message has four aspects, although the emphasis is on one aspect, and might be quite different from the emphasis on another message. A message of communication, therefore, is being sent (with one to four aspects), as well as it is being received (with one to four aspects) (Fig. 36). In other words, the sender could talk with the intention of using one side (out of four possible sides), and the receiver may listen to one – not necessarily the same – side (again, out of the four possibilities).
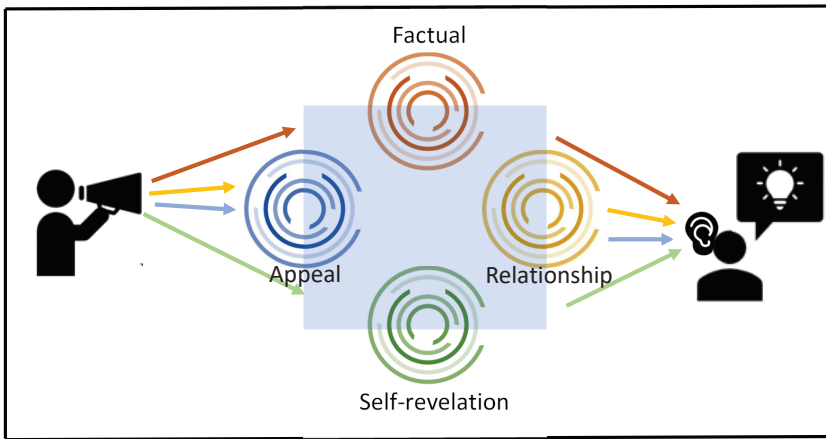

Fig. 36: Four-Sides Model of Communication

Source: Schulz von Thun (2011)

The model shows that the process of sending information has four sides and, in turn, the receiver looks at information from four sides (Schulz von Thun, 2011):

1. Factual information: Matter of fact information, that is objective (e.g., data, facts)
2. Appeal: Desire, advice, instructions, commands that the sender is seeking
3. Relationship: Information on the relationship between sender and receiver, how they get along, and what they think of each other (i.e., how one perceives the other)

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4. Self-revelation: Implicit information (conscious or intended) about the sender, e.g., his/her motives, values, emotions, likes/dislikes, social status through mannerisms, etc.

For example, the IOC puts a lot of effort into refugee teams, and even started a refugee foundation. The IOC sends the fact that such initiatives are started, certainly wanting to communicate the self-revelation regarding Olympic Values. Some members of the media, as receivers, may view the IOC messages as an appeal to start perceiving the IOC as only value driven, and would thus interpret the messages as sportswashing which means to improve a tarnished reputation.

This concept applies to all communication in or concerning projects, change management, or crises communications. It can be viewed as being interpersonal, but also as NOC communication. Even though one may think that this model is limited to the spoken or written word, we wish to emphasise here, that it goes beyond words, as it also applies to non-verbal communication.

Even non-verbal communication (gestures, attitudes, looks, body language, etc.) is communication. For example, if an NOC does not communicate a problem, then that is also information, in itself.

Workshop: Better Communicator - Check-in & Check-back

So, how do you become a better communicator with your NOC teams, your direct reports, your board members, your stakeholders, and with the IOC? How do you quickly learn whether (or not) your communication is effective, and your message has come across as you intended?

Use the Check-in & Check-back approach. It leads to more effective communication, while being respectful towards you and your communication partner.

Check-in: Think

Sender (📣):

1. What is my **intention**?
2. Which information **DO** I want to send?

Receiver (📱) *(someone of your team may play the receiver)*:

1. Which ear am I **listening** through (left or right)?
2. What **information** might the NOC (or a person) be sending?
3. **How else** (in what other way) could I **understand** this message?

Check-back: Validate

Sender (📣):

1. Make the **intention** of the message **explicit** (and concise)! (e.g., "I'd like you to do something for my project")
2. **Ask** what your partner **heard** (and understood), of what you said, and what they **make of the conversation** (how they perceive the information) (e.g., after the brief chat, or within a meeting check-point of what people will do)

Receiver (📱) — Discuss with the Sender, whether or not you correctly understand the information:

1. "So, do you mean…?"
2. "So, do you want me/us to…?"
3. "I/we want to make sure we're on the same page, …"

Source: Schiffer, 2017

Intercultural Communication

Here, we extend subchapter 2.5.3, which provided a brief discussion of communication and culture, in regards to context, and add a brief digression on intercultural communication. The tools that were introduced previously are helpful to plan, design, and implement the communication in your NOC. However, your culture can influence the behaviour and patterns of thinking in your NOC. Hofstede (1983) describes six cultural dimensions, that can be used to characterise work-relevant values and attitudes of different countries. These are 1. High vs. Low Power Distance, 2. Individualism vs. Collectivism, 3. High vs. Low Uncertainty Avoidance, 4. Masculinity vs. Femininity, 5. Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation, and 6. Indulgence vs. Restraints.

We present an example of power distance, in more detail. Employees of a country with a low degree of power distance (e.g., Austria, Denmark),

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would expect to be involved in decisions, and they would also find it to be their normal behaviour to disagree with the supervisor. In contrast, employees of a country with a high degree of power distance (e.g., Russia) would expect the supervisor to give them clear instructions, and it would be highly unusual for them to speak out against the supervisor. As a result, the same way of communicating, even using the same words, is perceived very differently in different countries, in terms of the competence of the leadership (Meyer, 2014, 115ff). Thus, different expectations of leadership styles in different countries, underline the fact that successful communication always depends on the communication culture of the respective country (Towers & Peppler, 2017). Besides these dimensions, according to Hofstede, another important aspect concerns the use and the power of language, and the level of context. For instance, in northern European and in Anglo-Saxon countries, people prefer a direct and straightforward communication. Their way of speaking is often characterised by specific examples, and can be focused on individual goals. Thus, in countries such as Germany, Sweden, or the Netherlands, the initial word is the message, and few further contexts are needed (also called linear active communication; Lewis, 2006, 41f). In contrast, in Italy or Spain, for example, people usually communicate, not only with their words, but rather in an intensely personal and compassionate (and impassioned) manner. People share their experiences and personal backgrounds, and therefore, it is more about the relationships they have with each other (therefore, their communication is multi-active; Lewis, 2006, 41f). Hence, it is not just about the spoken word, because it is also about facial expressions, gestures, and the relationships among people. In other words, context beyond the words can also be important.

Recommendation: Culture and Communication

What do we learn from the cultural differences that are explained above? You should take these cultural characteristics into account, to make your communication perfectly tailored according to the requirement, and more successful. That is, for example, be aware of your choice of medium, that you will use for communicating. In multi-active cultures, for instance, video conferences seem to be more suitable than simple telephone calls or e-mails, for considering the communication culture. Furthermore, depending on the cultural background of your NOC or country, you should individually consider different strategies on how to address changes, deal with generated dynamics, and implement future developments.

4.4.6 Step 6: The Organisation must Fit the Plan

Change in an organisation can fail, because the new structures do not fit to the old structures. In other words, if a new work unit or department has new tasks and, thus, may have to work harder and longer than before, the powers of the persons involved are insufficient when they are based on the old structures. There must be a newly calibrated fit of new duties, their power, and their available resources.

In this context, reference is often made to the possibilities and advantages of empowerment (e.g., Kotter, 1997, 141ff). This is the extension of the powers of staff for functional and motivational purposes. In times of change, more competencies are often needed. If these competencies are missing, then employees do not feel responsible for the change; indeed, empowerment is needed (Brökerling, 2007, 180ff). However, an NOC should also consider that change can also lead to "de-powerment". This is, when competencies are no longer needed; hence, staff can no longer control the working processes. This usually leads to demotivation of the staff, and resistance towards the intended change (Hage & Aiken, 1974).

It is easier to successfully implement a change, if you leave existing structures in place, and establish the new processes via a new work unit or department, or even establish them entirely in the external environment, as a new organisation. For example, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was involved in creating the International Testing Agency (ITA), which is now in charge of services that were organised beforehand by the WADA (but to a lower service level). Expanding existing services is always easier than cutting back or downsizing, because that would lead to distribution struggles.

However, often the easier variant, which is the expansion, cannot be realised for cost reasons. As a rule, it will be the problematic second variant with considerable cutbacks. This usually leads to a resistance to change and open conflicts, severe loss of motivation, etc. Crises can help break the resistance to change, as everyone realises that more problems will occur without the change. In sport, the replacement of a very important player in the semi-finals of a World Cup, due to too many yellow cards being shown in their disfavour, is accepted only to prevent worse potential scenarios (i.e., a disqualification for the finals). The main thread through all of the above, is similar to that in organisations, regarding cutbacks and significant changes.

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Illustration: Modern Pentathlon and its 5th Discipline

For many years, there was a discussion about the Modern Pentathlon dropping horse-riding as the 5th discipline. The Union International Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM) did not want to change, as the sport was invented by Pierre de Coubertin, and most athletes loved their sport; and it was also due to horse-riding in itself. The "crises" came in 2021 after the Tokyo Olympic Games, when the IOC increased pressure on the UIPM to no longer include the sport in the Olympic Programme, when horses remain in the sport. Thus, UIPM took the crises as a chance and the 5th discipline was exchanged for an obstacle run. This change needs upskilling of coaches, referees, etc., but it also caused de-powerment for all those concerned, who were in charge of horse-riding. The "crises" of being potentially taken out of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games, certainly helped to overcome the resistance to change, as everyone quickly realised that more problems would certainly occur, without the necessary change being driven forward.

4.4.7 Step 7: Change in Organisation means Change in People's Behaviour

It is difficult for humans to change their well-established habits, but it will work if people feel the success that is involved in successful changes. Therefore, special attention must be paid to experiences of success in the course of change. Kotter (1997, 161ff) suggests to organise short-term successes (as a celebration), that should be planted and communicated in advance. It should be kept in mind, that deep transformations take time, and any step-by-step procedure towards success, is important for keeping and maintaining the motivation. The takeaway here, is that plans often have milestones (Heagney, 2016, 87), which can be celebrated when reached.

Illustration: Gender Equity at the Lithuanian NOC

In 2015, the Lithuanian NOC became aware of a lack of female members on the NOC Executive Board. An action plan on how to increase the number of women was written up, and driven forward by the NOC president. After seven years of constant work and consistent enforcement the NOC Executive Board is now (in 2022) composed of almost 40% women, and the current LNOC president and IOC member is Ms. Daina

Gudzinevičiūtė. It was an intensive work by the "equality commission", which was specifically established for that purpose.

This illustration can be used as a recommendation for a fictive plan, with which to celebrate successive and successful implanting of noteworthy milestones.

Put up a dashboard, that shows the current gender distribution of your NOC board, staff, Olympic Team, etc.. Then, mark the respective ultimate goal as an equal distribution, between the actual mark and the final mark, where you can set consecutive milestones (e.g., for each 5% increase); and whenever a milestone is reached, there must definitely be a celebration to mark that particular success.

There is a useful maxim: "Practice what you preach!", which means that all attempts to change human behaviour may work poorly, if the key people/decision makers themselves do not overtly practice the behaviour that others would expect of them (Koromzay, 2021, 78). Benefit-seeking executives will not be able to convince other staff to not seek the potential benefits of those executives (by gift taking, or bonus payments, or bribery), because the new behaviour must be exemplified by the decision makers and leaders.

4.4.8 Step 8: Anchoring the Change Permanently

Change in an organisation, especially when accompanied by behavioural change, can be met by the danger of people falling back into old ways, that are based on former structures. Therefore, authors such as Kotter (1997) call for embedding change in the culture of the organisation, to ensure long-term change. This is difficult to implement. The problem is that you cannot simply control or even programme organisational culture (see Calström & Ekman, 2012). You set impulses, and then can only aim to influence those impulses. This is usually achieved through symbols and rituals.

Symbols give change an identity, and remind everyone of change. The IOC wants to transform itself to master the future. They have summarised 15 changes in the Roadmap for Agenda 2020+5. Change encompasses many issues and is ultimately quite complex. The title "Agenda 2020+5" itself sums up the complex transformation. The title is ultimately a symbol for the complex undertaking, which thus becomes manageable. Rituals are even more powerful. They combine the symbolic with a formalised

action, which would then always be repeated according to precise rules. These repetitions carve the inner symbolism increasingly deeper into the consciousness. We know this from the rituals of the Olympic Games, such as the opening ceremony and the award ceremonies. Especially, the Olympic Oath continues to remind all athletes of the code of the Games. These principles can also be used to anchor the change of an NOC. Thus, the contents of the change can be summarised in a symbol, and supported by rituals. This can be undertaken by using a graphic symbol or an appropriate title. For example, if an NOC wants to put athletes, rather than their bureaucratic rules, at the centre of their activities, celebrating an Athletes' Day can serve as a firm and constant reminder of that intent.

Chapter 5 Controlling in Strategic Management

5.1 Control, Controlling, and Evaluation of Change Process

Many strategic transformation approaches and larger projects fail for one simple reason: they were never truly implemented. It is not only essential to plan their implementation precisely, but one must also name responsible persons and measurement techniques, and consider already in the planning phase how the implementation is to be measured. Otherwise, those approaches remain nothing more than good resolutions, similar to those made on New Year's Eve, which are then possibly forgotten and never brought to life. Therefore, some form of operative controlling is necessary.

When it comes to change management or updated mission statements, then an NOC starts a long-term change, which aims to bring innovation, thus addressing changes in the NOC environment. The NOC is doing this change to keep track, and to strive for long-term success.

Tab. 9: Strategic and operative controlling at NOCs

	Strategic Controlling	Operative Controlling
Goal	Long-term innovation and prosperity of NOC	Efficiency of projects, achievement of subgoals, working on the Mission
Controlling goal	Securing future potential for success	Efficiency of the processes and projects
Time horizon	Long-term (5-10 years)	Usually related to the project period or one year
Dimension	Strengths/weaknesses/ opportunities/risks	Costs, output of project
Width	NOC and environment	NOC
Predominant orientation and sources of information	Primarily external	Primarily internal
Main Tasks	Analysis of future stakeholder relations	Information supply Provide planning and Support for decision-making
Degree of uncertainty	High	Low
Type of Information	Predominantly qualitative	Predominantly quantitative
Question	"Doing the right things"	"Doing things in the right way"
Example	Here, the NOC controls its change process, makes decisions on larger projects, aims to reduce weaknesses, or applies any demands from the IOC.	Here the NOC controls the ongoing projects and achievement of set goals and processes. It ensures that they run efficiently and satisfy the board.

Source: Adopted from Steger (2013, 140)

Hence, we have to differentiate strategic controlling from operational controlling. Both are needed in strategic management.

Only a strategically well-thought-out concept can be the basis for successful operational NOC management. However, securing NOC success and funding, without operative action and its controlling, is not possible. Thus, there is a necessity for integrating operational and strategic controlling with interlinked control loops (Steger, 2013, 140).

The task of the "controller" – or better described as an executive director in charge – is to support the management process of
– goal setting,
– planning, and
– regulation of the organisational processes.
"Controllers", in this sense, are thus jointly responsible for the achievement of the NOC objectives. They, therefore, watch over the efficiency in the NOC and the achievement of its subgoals that are formulated in the mission. However, in their role as controller they do not propose the target management.

According to Weber and Schäffer (2014), controlling can also be seen as a concept of results-oriented management, which consists of four subtasks.
1. **Planning**. This ultimately serves to determine the course of the NOC, i.e., to define "Where do we want to go?", which results in a set of goals, that then guide and justify the NOC's actions.
2. **Control goal achievement**. Here, control means to carry out target/actual deviations, and then to also analyse the causes of any deviations.
3. **Acquisition and supply of information**. This means that the relevant information of the NOC and the stakeholders must be obtained and available in a timely, condensed, and problem-oriented manner, so that it can then be presented to the executive board or executive management level.
4. **Control of all sub-tasks**. This means that if the controller detects a deviation from the plan during the control, then he/she must look at how the goal can still be achieved, and how countermeasures must be taken. In case he/she notices that there is insufficient information, then he/she must determine how to obtain the relevant data.

Thus, controlling can also be seen as overall coordination, and is understood here as alignment or linking of single actions or individual decisions, with respect to achieving the overall goal of the NOC. The need for coordination ultimately arises from the fact that each action or decision directly, or indirectly, influences the achievement of the goal of at least one other action or decision.

The main task of the "controller" is to coordinate and prepare the collection of data, i.e., first of all, the acquisition of the essential NOC or project relevant data, followed by the compilation, processing, presentation, and then provision of interpretation aids and impulses to the decision-making executive board or directors.

Further, the controller must develop measuring systems and work with them, because in order to control, you first have to measure where you are.

Depending on the strategy, the type and scope of projects implemented, or the change goal, an implementation of this control can be either very simple or very complex. The simplest variant is to set a deadline for the implementation of the new strategy, or the achievement of the transformation goal. But, then we have to contemplate the following questions:

- Have the agreed steps been carried out according to the plan?
- Was the plan good enough that targets were achieved?
- Has the person responsible done his/her job well or not?

This is the simple version of a check. Modern management has developed more complex control systems that go far beyond this. The classic attempt is to control organisations with the help of key performance indicators, such as Return on Investment (ROI), or better, Social Return on Investment (SROI).

Fact: Social Return on Investment (SROI)

SROI is a tool for communicating the non-profit benefits to the community. According to Lawlor et al. (2009), SROI "captures social value by translating outcomes into financial values." The idea is based on Return on Investment (ROI), a performance measure used by investors, which calculates the rate of revenues received for every Euro invested in an item or activity. SROI is similar to ROI, but shows the double bottom line: the financial impact AND the social impact of your NOC's work. SROI helps you to determine the missed benefits (opportunity cost) of what would happen if your NOC did not exist (Stombaugh, 2019). The simple formula is that SROI is the sum of tangible and intangible value to the community minus the public money invested. However, it remains difficult to monetarise tangible and intangible social values, as there is no price for that. Indirect measurements can be taken, such as the economic value of one Olympic Gold Medal, which is at least the money invested in the high-performance system of this athlete – however, that is not its social value.

Sources: Lawlor et al. (2009); Stombaugh (2019)

NOCs are organisations that have many social and intangible objectives. Therefore, it is an extremely difficult management task to control them, and simple systems based on typical business management ratios are not at all sufficient. Further, they should evolve along with the changes occurring in the Olympic environment. For example, changes due to Olympic Agenda 2020+5 or changes of member (interests) due to new Olympic sports.

Overall effectiveness is considered to be vital for NOCs. Thus, its goals must be controlled, in terms of whether (or not), or to what extent, they are reached. Therefore, indicators are needed that help monitor and control an NOC's projects/activities. To do so, in the following subchapters, useful tools, such as the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) (subchapter 5.2), are introduced. The Kanban method (subchapter 5.3) will be presented as a tool that helps, in general, to control whether tasks are delivered (or not).

Modern NOCs focus on strategic management and control over current and long-term goals. A good goal description (subchapter 2.3), has a corrective role on the success of the NOC, regarding the appropriate use of scarce resources. However, the Olympic environment is constantly changing and thus, the question is whether (or not) all goals are always kept in focus.

We first introduce the BSC as a tool for NOC management. It also helps to control the progress in an uncertain economic and social environment. While the BSC provides an overview of performance, the Kanban method is introduced, to provide a second useful tool, with which to oversee whether all projects, sub-goals, and even tasks at stake are properly achieved.

5.2 Balanced Scorecard

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) of Kaplan and Norton (1992) is a holistic system of (key) performance indicators, which serves to design, implement, and control strategies. More precisely, it serves to translate the vision and strategy of an NOC into goals and (key) performance indicators, and by evaluating indicators it can make strategic action observable and controllable.

The basis of a BSC, is the clear transformation of an NOC vision and strategy into a well-defined bundle of qualitative and quantitative goals and key figures, with the help of a balancing system for controlling and measuring performance based on four perspectives.

Illustration: Olympic Agenda 2020 and its 40 goals

Adopted by the IOC in 2014, Olympic Agenda 2020 is a set of 40 detailed recommendations – we can see them as goals – whose overarching goal, was to safeguard the Olympic values and strengthen the role of sport in society. Identified and collated through a collaborative and consultative process, involving Olympic Movement stakeholders and outside experts, they were driven by an understanding that the world was evolving rapidly, and that the Olympic Movement had the opportunity to be an agent of change.

In the period since it was adopted (December 2014), Olympic Agenda 2020 has had a profound impact on the Olympic Movement, and resulted in large transformations. Each recommendation was controlled for its implementation. Qualitative performance indicators were often used, such as whether a project was started in order to achieve the particular goal.

Even though no BSC was used, the IOC acted in a similar way. A selection of the perceived goals can be seen in the following. Here, we can read the actions that are taken towards a future achievement of the goals that are set up in Agenda 2020:

- The IOC has completely reformed the way the Olympic Games are awarded, with the introduction of the two Future Host Commissions, Winter and Summer, making the whole procedure more cooperative and targeted.
- More than 100,000 Olympic Athletes, elite athletes, and their entourage members have signed up to Athlete365, a multilingual one-stop shop, and dedicated platform offering specially tailored programmes and resources in six languages.
- A Safeguarding Framework, which includes an education component, a safeguarding officer and a reporting process, has been implemented as part of the Prevention of Harassment and Abuse in Sport (PHAS) initiative.
- Engagement with the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport (IPACS), has resulted in the first tool to prevent corruption in sport.
- Memoranda of understanding with INTERPOL, whereby the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are fostering cooperation with governments on sports credibility.

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- All Olympic sports IFs have declared that they comply with the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions (OM Code PMC).
- The independence of the IOC's Ethics Commission has been reinforced.
- An IOC Annual Report, including a financial report, has been published according to the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).
- The IOC has created the IOC Refugee Olympic Team.
- The IOC manifested that it will make the Olympic Games and Olympic Winter Games climate positive from 2030 onwards.
- The IOC is now a carbon-neutral organisation, and has committed to becoming a climate positive organisation by 2024.
- Gender parity of athletes is under preparation to be achieved at Olympic Games Paris 2024.
- A digital strategy has been put in place, beginning with the launch in 2016 of the Olympic Channel, a platform using the "Always-on" marketing approach, to connect the Olympic Movement with the wider public.
- Agenda 2020 reforms have deepened the confidence and trust that the commercial partners are placing in the IOC, resulting in financial stability, and the revenues from the TOP Partners have tripled.

The IOC constantly reported about how many, and which, goals/recommendations were taken into action or achieved. For working with such a large Agenda, it may also be recommendable to use Kanban (subchapter 5.3).

Source: IOC (2022b)

For NOCs, the four proposed perspectives that shall be considered are shown in Fig. 37. However, when developing an individual scorecard, additional perspectives can be added, such as that of a particular stakeholder or national sporting success.
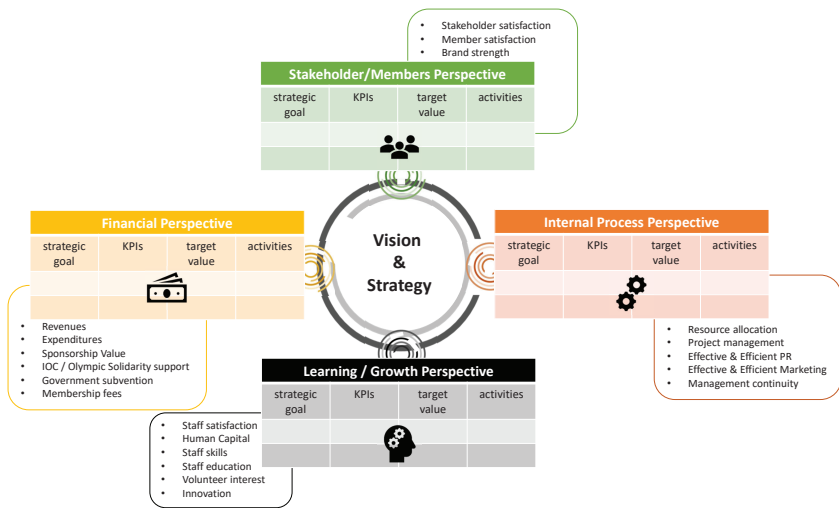
Fig. 37: Perspectives of a Potential NOC Balanced Scorecard

Figure 37 shows that a BSC allows to lay out the key aspects of an NOC vision and strategy, in four perspectives: financial, member/stakeholder, internal processes, and learning/growth. With respect to high levels of organisational complexity, the application of a BSC gives NOC officials a tool, with which to provide and measure the effectiveness of people's performance, processes, and resources (Kaplan and Norton, 1992).

Stakeholder and members perspective: The mission is to achieve the vision by delivering value, and by doing this, satisfying the stakeholders and members. As a member-driven, non-profit organisation, the NOC must deliver value to its members, in the first instance. Since stakeholders have often been closely related to the NOC by its projects, stakeholders' interests are also important to consider and satisfy.

Financial perspective: The mission is to deliver value to the members and stakeholders by using all available financial resources. The more money that is available, the more and larger projects there will be, to facilitate and achieve the NOC goals. Thus, the financial perspective is embedded in supporting the stakeholder/member perspective.

Internal process perspective: The mission is to promote effectiveness and efficiency in all NOC processes. Professionalisation, good governance, digitalisation, management skills, and goal-oriented resource allocation are all needed here. This perspective is supportive of the financial perspective,

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because good internal processes and well-skilled staff support the aximisation of finances.

Learning and growth perspective: The mission is to manifest the vision, by sustaining innovation and change capabilities, through continuous improvement and preparation for future challenges. Thus, staff must be trained and qualified, and volunteers must support this process. This perspective facilitates the perspective of the internal processes.

For this book, the BSC serves primarily as a communication, coordination, and control instrument, for the successful implementation of the NOC strategy. The claim of the BSC as a strategic management tool, is to translate the NOC's long-term strategy (vision – subchapter 2.3) into measurable variables, that form the basis for the management. The BSC is not easy to implement, but when implemented, it is an excellent tool with which to translate the strategy into measurable and comprehensible parameters, and forms a link between strategy and operational controlling.
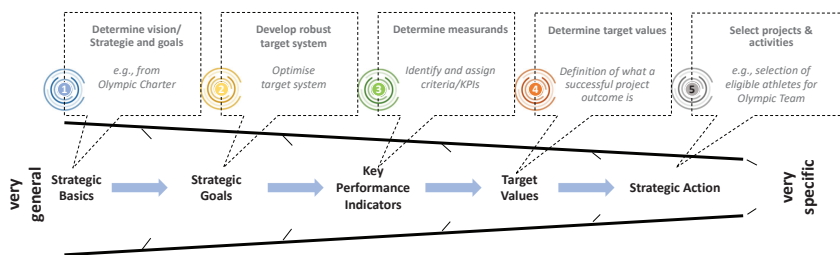

Fig. 38: Setting Up the Balanced Scorecard from Goal to Action

Figure 38 illustrates the necessary steps to develop a scorecard. The vision must be broken down into a target system (sub-goals). These must be translated into measurable indicators. If an indicator describes a target well, it is called a key performance indicator (KPI). Often, several KPIs are needed to measure if a target is met. Then, it must be decided which minimum values a KPI should reach. Usually, that is set by the NOC Executive Board, together with the Secretary General/CEO, and respective area directors. They define the expected outcome, e.g., how many pupils should be educated, how many medals should be won, or how much money should be distributed to member federations. This certainly becomes more difficult, when social projects are evaluated or intangible targets are formulated (e.g., improvement of image, safeguarding athletes). The strategic action plan is the translation into tasks to initiate projects that are sufficiently effective to reach the expected outcome.

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Workshop: Developing a Balanced Scorecard for NOCs

Preparation:

The time to develop the BSC will be significantly reduced if elements such as a strategy and vision already exist. The workshop shall last for one day. The maximum number of participants should be ten. You need a whiteboard and a flip-chart.

Make sure you have a wide-ranging stakeholder group participating in the workshop. Success depends on being able to create a shared understanding of each scorecard dimension. The participants shall have pre-existing knowledge, or should acquire upfront information, about:

– NOC mission statement and any strategic plan and vision.
– Financial key data of the NOC (and where the finances stem from).
– Current structure and operations of the NOC.
– Qualification level and expertise of all (leading) employees.
– Current stakeholder and member satisfaction level with NOC.

Workshop:

1. Define the context in which your NOC operates (e.g., high performance sport, sport development, grassroots sport, etc.). Then, explain how it has developed and, in turn, explain which is the respective purpose/mission of each unit. In other words, consider it in the timeframe of yesterday, today, and tomorrow (using the strategic tools that have already been described, such as SWOT, PESTLE+M, etc.).

2. Establish or confirm your NOC's vision.

3. Identify the four or more perspectives for measurements, that are clear and understandable for everyone in your NOC. The BSC, introduced above, uses four perspectives: financial, internal, learning/growth, and stakeholder/member. Others may be added for strategic reasons, e.g., sporting success.

4. Break the vision down according to each perspective, and formulate overall strategic aims. Use the template (see further down) as a guide.

5. Identify the critical success factors. Collect measures/figures to identify the success of the (several) projects, in attaining the reality of your vision.

6. Develop realisable measures with which to evaluate those key performance factors. Carefully, consider the interactions between the measures. Also, try to identify any potential knock-on effects of the measures. Remember that you can only see what you measure. Indicators that are far too inaccurate, or simply inappropriate, can mislead your evaluation. Make sure that all of your strategic measures are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely). Consider

applying the reliable maxim of "what you can't measure, you can't improve".

7. Analyse the measures as a whole, to ensure at they provide a 'balanced' picture. All perspectives of your stakeholders shall be met. Also, consider that measures shall be in each of your (four) perspectives.

8. Establish a comprehensive, top-level scorecard. Then, take it and create more detailed cards, translating strategy into real day-to-day tasks/projects.

9. Formulate target values for every measure used. To what extent should each criterion be fulfilled to provide satisfaction?

10. Develop an action plan to achieve the goals and strategy that have been set. Prioritisation will be key. Before diving into the action plan, run a sanity check, to make sure all of the suggested measures align with the strategic plan.

11. Develop a strategic action plan for all of your activities. That will illustrate how important each action is. By reflecting on the importance of each action, you can prioritise actions accordingly.

Source: Modified from https://workshopbank.com/balanced-scorecard

Figure 39 provides a working template for breaking down the vision in the four perspectives, and then in an action plan. Additional perspectives can be added if necessary (e.g., position in medal table).

Finally, it is useful to develop a strategy map. This is a graphic that shows a logical, cause-and-effect connection between strategic objectives. The objectives are shown in circles in the figure below. The map can be used to quickly communicate how value is created by your NOC. The graphic is very useful, because many NOC staff members are visual learners, and for them a graph is better than a written explanation.

Most important, is that the development of a strategy map forces the NOC board members, and the involved stakeholders, to agree on what they are aiming to accomplish in very simple terms. It is also a benefit that every staff member can see how he/she contributes to the achievement of the NOC's objectives.
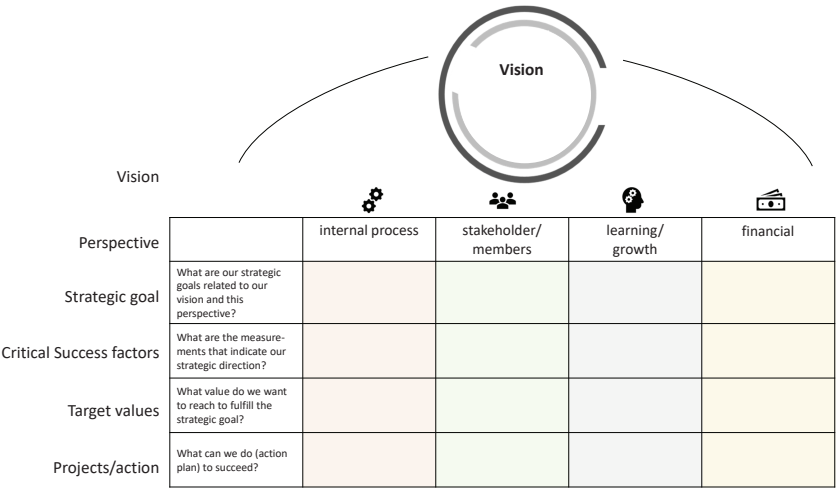
Fig. 39: Template to Develop a Balanced Scorecard

The example below demonstrates how an NOC might organise its strategic objectives across the four BSC perspectives.
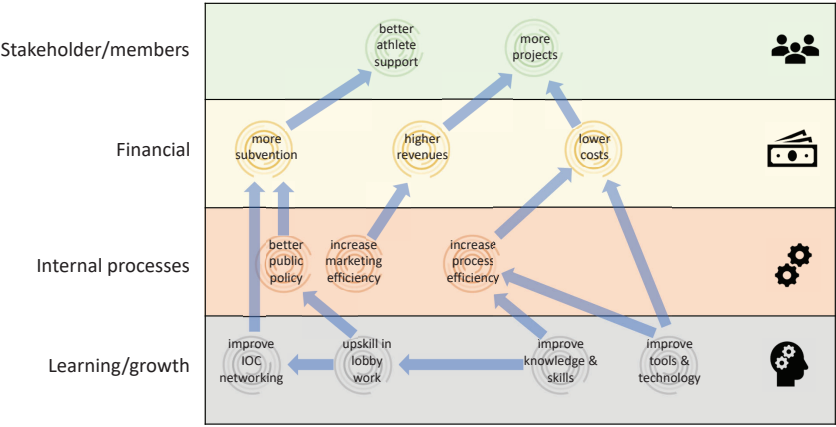

Fig. 40: Strategy Map for a Hypothetical NOC

The blue arrows show the cause-and-effect relationship between the objectives (written inside circles). By following the path of the arrows, everyone can see how the objectives in the lower-positioned perspectives drive the

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success of the higher-positioned perspectives (the position of each perspective is defined by the NOC). These causal relationships are central to the idea of strategic planning and management with a BSC. Fig. 40 illustrates how one sub-goal influences another sub-goal (blue arrow).

In practice, it helps to establish a traffic light system, where green means that a particular target is (almost) reached, yellow means that the target is only partly reached, and red means that the target is not reached at all. Figure 41 explains the method by using a traffic light system, to show how well (to what degree) a particular sub-goal is reached.
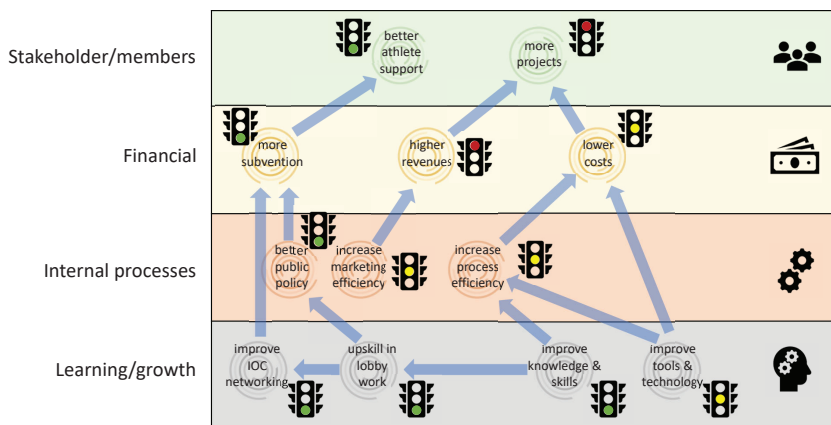

Fig. 41: Strategy Map with a Traffic Light System for a Hypothetical NOC

If objectives in the lower-level are not met, it will later impact on (i.e., damage) the success of the upper levels. Therefore, the lower-level objectives are "early warning KPIs", if they do not meet the target values. For example, if the technology is not advanced enough, that will affect process efficiency, and increase costs. Both will end in having fewer projects, with which to achieve your vision. The "early warning" here is that you see deficits in technology and efficiency in the earlier stages of affecting your projects (illustrated by the yellow signal on the traffic lights). Another example is, if you improve skills in lobby work, it will lead to better public policy which, in turn, leads to more subvention from the government and, finally, more money can be used to better support the athletes (stakeholder) (illustrated by the green signal on the traffic lights).

A recent study conducted on Polish national sport associations, has shown that the application of the BSC may have a positive impact on management processes in the sport organisations (Gulak-Lipka, 2020).

Illustration: Greek Sport Organisation uses BSC

Introduction

Contemporary non-profit sport organisations have been developed in multifaceted organisations, which confront several performance challenges. These challenges exert significant pressures from all types of stakeholders, such as the state, customers, athletes, etc. In the case of public non-profit sport organisations, the main challenge was to establish a managerial system, which could meet the varying needs and expectations of citizens and other state authorities, while sustaining an adequate level of service quality (O'Boyle & Hassan, 2014). Especially in Greece, public sport organisations operate under a strict financial environment, which allows no deviations from budgetary levels, thus exerting even more pressure on managers to balance financial outcomes, and improve the quality of services and operations within those constraints. Consequently, public sport organisations need to progress, from a simple administrative operation, towards an accountable performance-based management approach.

Results for Greece

The results indicated that the citizens of Papagos-Cholargos perceive sport services to be of enhanced quality, related to, and when compared with, the previous years. In addition, the staff improved its skills and abilities by participating in training seminars and, in general, the implementation of the BSC method on the municipal sport organisation of Papagos-Cholargos municipality (the regional unit is North Athens) sets the basis for an effective performance management, which can enhance its future sustainability.

Source: Adopted from Dimitropoulos, Kosmas, and Douvis (2017)

5.3 Kanban Board – a Method of Agile Working

5.3.1 Basics of Kanban

With the Kanban method, you can manage work effectively (Leopold & Kaltenecker, 2015). It is a method with which to define, manage, improve, and control processes. The Kanban method can be used in a very individ-

ual way, such as organising your personal work, but also for the entire organisation – which is the focus of this subchapter.

Using the Kanban method means applying a holistic way of thinking about all NOC projects, with a focus on improving the outcome(s) (i.e., achieving the project mission(s)), for your members and stakeholders. Kanban is widely known for usage within teams, to relieve overburdening, and to maintain control over the work/projects undertaken by the team. It is an effective organisational development tool. Applications can be, for example, related to the services that are needed to send a team to the Olympic Games, or the development of content for an NOC website.

The Kanban method can be used for any team, and for individuals. It can be applied to

– the change management process for the executive board members,
– the project management overview for the NOC president's office,
– the project management for the team of one NOC department,
– the to-do–list management of a small sub-team (two to four - persons), or even
– the to do–list management for an individual.

Above all, Kanban is able to visualise the work of persons, and how that work moves through the workflow. This enables an NOC president, board, or team to control the many tasks of the change process, or to reach goals or sub-targets through the various projects of an NOC.

By using the Kanban method, the teams that are responsible for the NOC activities will develop an adaptive capability, over time, to respond better and faster to changes in your stakeholders' and members' needs and expectations. It is different from one (organisational) culture to the next, whether a necessary Kanban may be more rigid, more detailed, or simply roughly delineated.

5.3.2 How the Kanban Method Works

The Kanban method uses a "Kanban Board" or a digital version (e.g., Trello, KanBo) as its centre. Common to all Kanban Boards is the act of pulling work/tasks from left to right through the board. On the left side, new tasks enter the board. When they exit on the right side, value is delivered to the project, or finally to the members/stakeholders. Figure 42 illustrates a Kanban Board and hypothetical tasks.
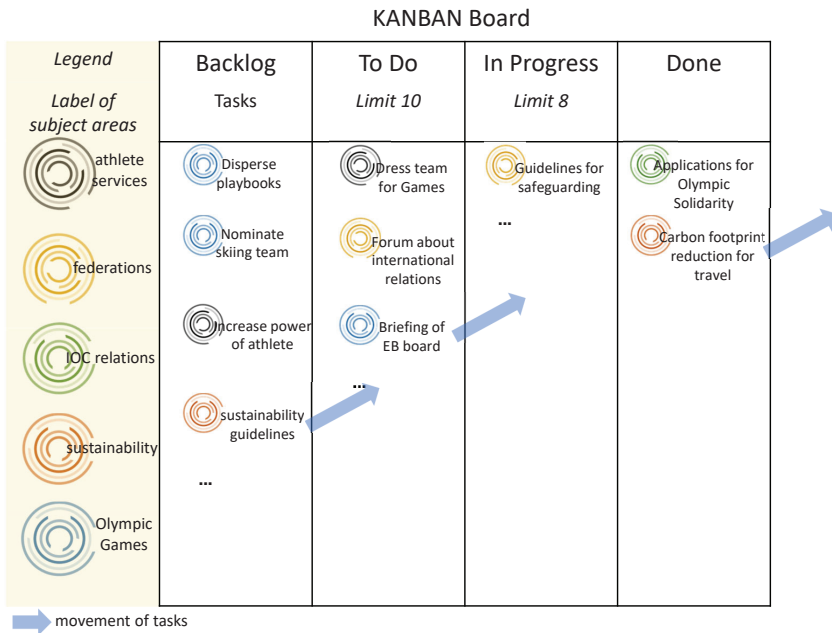
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Fig. 42: *Exemplary Use of Kanban Method for an NOC*

For each project or subject area, a label is given (colour code in Fig. 42). The label can also be the subject areas which the NOC addresses in its change process, strategic plan, or in its Agenda (such as IOC Agenda 2020). Subject areas are broken down into tasks (work items), and each task is written on a (paper) card, a so-called Kanban (Japanese meaning of card or ticket). The delivery of a task shall have a completion time window of between four to 16 hours of workload. If the tasks are too large, then the workflow will stop. If the tasks are too small, then the update of the Kanban Board will be too time consuming, and the board must be, in this case, really large in size.

Besides an NOC official/director who feeds tasks into the Kanban, an "agile coach" is needed, to work on the board. After breaking a project into its logical sub-tasks, they are put into the backlog. Then, the agile coach will be working on the board, coordinating the tasks and their flow through the chart. Regularly (would be best every day) there is a "Kanban meeting" (max. 15 min) where the team meets to discuss the progress, move tasks on the board, and discuss any case(s) of blockage of free passage. Here, the tasks are moving from "to do" to "in progress", and

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finally into the "done" column. The "agile coach" adds new tasks in, after a particular task is moved out. Only when one task is finished, then it can leave the board.

The principles of the Kanban method are:

1. **Pull is preferred over push**. The work that needs to be done in a project is pulled by a staff member, or the agile coach, who places new tasks in the "to do" column, after other tasks have left that column. In accordance with the size of the team, there is a limited number of tasks in each column. The limited number of tasks is limiting the work that is allowed to enter the system. It is an important rule, to reduce any delay which may result in last-minute pressure. Additionally, it creates a continuous flow of work via the pull principle, in which drawing or pulling work only occurs if there is sufficient capacity. A virtual pull signal is generated when the column limit is not fully utilised. While work on the board moves to the right side, pull signals move to the left side (Kanban University, 2021). This regulates the number of tasks each staff member has to do, and no task stays too long. A task that is not taken for a longer period of time, is blocking the flow, and will need to be discussed in the "Kanban meeting".

2. **Transparency by visualisation**. As everyone has access to the board (this works best digitally), everyone in the team can see the progress of each project.

3. **Easy communication**. Each task is written down and contains all important information about the work step.

The overall target is to keep all staff working without overdoing any work pressure that may be impacting on them.

The number of Kanban Boards that are needed in an NOC depends on what for the method is used. It can be used internally for teams, and it can be an overall steering instrument that is used by the executive board to coordinate an agenda or an entire NOC change process.

The number of columns in the Kanban Board is flexible. Each column needs to contribute to the progress of the work. The simplest Kanban Board is "to do", "in progress", or "done" (see Fig. 42). After working with this method, additional columns may be added, e.g., one for "blocked tasks", one for "waiting for information from outside", one for "very urgent with deadline", or for tasks that are stuck for too long in the "in progress area", which is the column for the "re-think priority". The Kanban Board should reflect upon the NOC's specific workflow. The possibilities may vary greatly and, therefore, each Kanban system and each Kanban Board is unique (Kanban University, 2021).

It is important to describe each task in detail, and with deadlines. The description should also contain the expected result from the task. Depending on what the Kanban Board is used for, tasks should be completed in a certain period of time (usually five to ten days), in order to qualify for removal from the board. Tasks that have no time pressure to be finished, often stay longer in the "backlog".

To install the system at an NOC, a feedback loop is required. Continuous improvement is one of the important components of the Kanban method. Feedback can be given at meetings. Thus, improvement is enabled by daily (Kanban meetings), weekly (meetings to decide the new tasks that need to enter the board), and quarterly feedback loops (here, the executive board will meet to discuss the project changes, new projects, and inspect the completed work) (Agile Scrum Group, 2021).

Workshop: Introducing Kanban to your Staff and Explaining How it Works

Build a team of leaders (that lead a Kanban team). Depending on the content of the Kanban, you need to involve all leaders who will be using Kanban to control and coordinate the work.

Preparation: Only a small amount of equipment is needed for the introduction of Kanban: a large, white surface such as a whiteboard, a blackboard, or a pin board (our Kanban Board). You may also use a digital board. You need cards on which the tasks can be written down. Use sticky tape for the width of the columns.

1. Define Workflow: Now, the question is, into which work steps can the Kanban Board be divided? The board is divided into several "lanes" or columns. Each column represents a work step in your workflow or project. Start the easy way, and add something only if you think you need it: BACKLOG / TO DO / DOING / PROGRESS / DONE.

2. Define tasks: Let us stick to the classic model with the three columns "to do", "doing", "done". First, all tasks of a project should be written down on cards. Each task is recorded on its own card and stuck/pinned in the "to do" column (far left side). If you formulate the tasks too granularly, you will lose the overview in the abundance of cards. If the tasks are too large, they will be in progress for days, or even weeks, and you will have the feeling that nothing is progressing. Rule: A task should be completed within a maximum period of two days.

3. Meetings: Communication and agreements within the team are two of the most important elements of agile working, and contribute

significantly to success. In the Kanban method, the so-called "Kanban meetings" (short, daily, 15-minute meetings) are needed. The goal of a meeting, is that all team members will exchange information about how they have progressed since the last meeting, and what the next steps are. In addition, they should be used to clarify open questions, and to discuss the desired results of the individual tasks.

Source: Schweihofer (2021)

Chapter 6 Crises and Crisis Management

Whether your NOC is in an unexpected crisis or in a situation of multiple crises that could have been anticipated, it is good to perform a risk assessment (see subchapter 3.5). If the crisis is acute, there is rarely time for a good and well thought through preparation. In cases where you know that a crisis is under way, you have the opportunity to be a little more prepared, and risk assessments help to identify crises quicker. Some organisations have templates for managing crises, including a template for crisis communication.

Illustration: Belgian Olympic and Interfederal Committee (BOIC) Crisis Communication

The BOIC works together with a communication consultancy (Akkanto) to conduct a risk assessment and to prepare its crisis communication in relation to the Olympic Games. This cooperation includes:
1. a handbook with specific guidelines and procedures for crisis management for the specific situations in relation to the Games and Team Belgium
2. an exercise with the staff/delegation
3. a prepared Q&A form for different subjects for crisis communication (including facts and figures, statements, etc.)
4. the appointment of a responsible crisis communication manager.

The information on crisis management and communication is also included in the Code of Conduct for Athletes and for other members of the delegation. See https://www.akkanto.com/en/

In any case, it is a strategically important move to consider which situations are particularly critical for an NOC.

6.1 Types of Crises

A crisis is an imbalance of an organisation, resulting from serious failure to achieve the organisational goal (effectiveness failure), or an external threat which negatively affects the NOC's image, its finances, or performance. Unlike risks, crises refer to unexpected and unplanned threats. The process

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by which such events or threats are effectively managed and dealt with is called crisis management.

According to Coombs and Holladay (2002, 167), there are different types of crises. A crisis type can be defined as "the frame that publics use to interpret an event". Those authors note that an organisation's reputation is a valuable asset among stakeholders. Therefore, reputational threats must be avoided, and also because a bad reputation makes it much more difficult to get stakeholders aligned and working with your NOC in projects. When crises do befall an NOC, stakeholders typically re-evaluate the favourability of that NOC's reputation, prompting the NOC to strategically engage in reputation repair (Coombs & Holladay, 2005).

Since the perception of being in or facing a crisis is based on the interpretation of an incident, crises "are in the eye of the beholder" (Boin et al., 2018, 35), which means that the event can be perceived differently by different observers. For example, some would see an "Olympic crisis" (Hoberman, 1986), while others would see a promising future for Olympism (Chappelet & Kübler-Mabbott, 2008).

Before looking at how to react to or handle a crisis, we must become aware of the fact that crises are categorised into different types. Brown-Devlin and Brown (2020) created a list of distinct clusters of crises, to which we added another cluster:

1. **Outside forces crisis:** This cluster describes external events that affect the NOC, but which are not caused by it. Thus, in this case, there is no crisis responsibility for the NOC. However, since the crisis affects the NOC, a reaction is needed to safeguard the NOC and avoid any damage. Examples of outside forces crises are the Covid-19 pandemic, severe decrease in the financial support from the government (e.g., CONI), or the challenges that are driven by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

2. **Stakeholder/individual crisis**: This cluster refers to actions of an individual who is associated with the NOC, or an event that the NOC is linked to (e.g., the Olympic Games or national trials). In a stakeholder/individual crisis (which is not the NOC itself), there is a low level of crisis responsibility for the NOC. Thus, it can be considered that the audience does not hold the NOC largely responsible for the actions of each individual or stakeholder. The low level of NOC blame that is associated with this cluster, suggests that the NOC's reputation does not face a strong threat from such a crisis. However, the reputational threat may increase when assessing the crisis history and prior reputation (Coombs, 2007). For example, despite the USOPC Olympic successes

in Gymnastics, the scandal of sexual abuse has forced the media to question the responsibility of the USOPC's good governance guidance. This example shows how the acts of individual coaches harmed the USOPC's reputation by boosting this crisis to the next level of organisational responsibility.

3. **Rules violation crisis:** This cluster involves rules that the NOC either violated or overlooked. It results in a moderate level of crisis responsibility being attributed to the NOC. As the population expects the NOC to protect the integrity and fairness of sport, any violation also hits the NOC. This type of crisis possesses a strong dependence upon the factors of crisis history and prior reputation, when determining the resulting crisis responsibility level. Audiences might forgive a first-time offender when rules are violated, as NOCs can claim ignorance. However, if an NOC does not react properly or, even worse, is a repeat offender, the current crisis would present a much larger reputational threat (Coombs & Holladay, 2005). Repeat offences are likely to increase the perceived crisis responsibility from the moderate level that is typically associated with this cluster, to the strong level of crisis responsibility that is typically associated with the organisational mismanagement cluster. Vivid examples are corruption cases, whereas repeated corruption is seen differently, as is a one-time offence.

4. **Organisational mismanagement crisis:** This cluster is associated with the highest crisis responsibility of an NOC. Typical crises that are classified into this cluster arise from the NOC's own mismanagement. The public is unforgiving of crises that are preventable through proper management techniques. NOCs that face crises in this cluster also face a strong reputational threat, and must select crisis response strategies accordingly. Examples are mismanagement in preparing Olympic Games participation, operational mismanagement during the Covid-19 pandemic, or misleading internal information. These crises all involve an issue that should be located within the NOC's realm of control; yet, the NOC's mismanagement of that issue led to the particular crisis. A good example is the provision of misleading internal information. That involves information/statements provided by an NOC official that is/are related to internal operations, with the result that there is some general controversy, or compromise of his/her own position within the team.

Crisis management is a rather small topic in the management literature, and even smaller in the subcategory of strategic management. However, the economic and social dislocations caused by the Covid-19 pandemic

have made crisis management extraordinarily relevant. Overall, the (sport) world currently experiences major disruptions. This world and many stakeholders are in a constant change process. This means that NOCs must act in a highly-unsecured field, under constant pressure of necessary changes and adoptions which can lead to sudden crises (see also Winter & Steger, 1998).

6.2 Prediction and Prevention of Crises

Crises can have different causes and take different forms. To be prepared for a potential crisis, an important distinction is made between predictable and unpredictable crises. Even though nobody knows what the future holds, or which crises may occur, for some crises it is possible to anticipate and read early developments, in order to predict the probability of a crisis occurring (related to this is risk management, discussed in subchapter 3.5). One idea of strategic management is to anticipate crises and avoid them by taking appropriate measures. For example, the product/project life cycle tool, stakeholder analysis (subchapter 3.3), the balanced scorecard (subchapter 5.2), or portfolio analysis (subchapter 3.2.3), all provide indicators of when the NOC needs to work on any potential switch to new projects, work with stakeholders, etc., because the previous project targets are reaching their end or they become outdated.

Regarding the preparation for a crisis, we can differentiate three types of crises:

1. **Predictable and likely crises:** These types of crises activate preventive action, because imminent crises are foreseeable and highly probable, which is the typical case regarding strategic management utilisation, and measures should be taken to reduce their occurrence. A potential activity an NOC can strive for is diversification. If the NOC is diversified in its projects, it can offset the crisis in one field with the successes in another field.

2. **Predictable but unlikely crises:** These types of crises are not taken seriously. Their occurrence is so unlikely that prevention is usually considered to be a waste of time and other resources. Here, commonly, a crisis management unit could be installed, in order to act in the proper manner should the crisis occur.

3. **Unpredictable crises:** These types of crises are unforeseeable and occur unexpectedly. In such cases, there are no chances of implementing any preventative activity.

Figure 43 roughly illustrates what an NOC should do in relation to the responsibilities it may have in any crises.
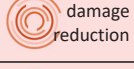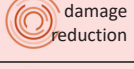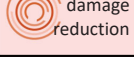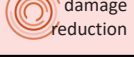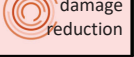
Predictability of crises

	predictable	predictable but unlikely	unpredictable
non (external)	intermediate	secure goals	secure goals
low (environmental/ individual)	damage reduction	intermediate	secure goals
moderate (rule violation)	damage reduction	damage reduction	intermediate
high (mismanagement)	damage reduction	damage reduction	damage reduction

Crisis responsibility of the NOC

Fig. 43: Crisis Responsibility Related to Crises Predictability

When it comes to a crisis that is highlighted by red fields (Fig. 43), the NOC faces severe damage to its reputation and may lose stakeholder support, their alignment to projects, or the project finances. It is absolutely necessary to start crisis management.

When it comes to a crisis highlighted by yellow fields (Fig. 43), the NOC should aim to keep achieving its goals, and also aim at regaining its reputation.

When it comes to a crisis highlighted by green fields (Fig. 43), the NOC would be in danger of not meeting its goals anymore; however, its reputation would not be affected.

Case Study: IOC Crisis due to Mismanagement

Background information:
Due to the increasing number of candidatures during the mid-1980s, the cities in question attempted to influence the IOC members, in ways that were ethically questionable. A fairly significant number of IOC members accepted favours from the cities, or even made demands for such favours, in their own interests or those of their entourage, regarding valuable gifts of all kinds, study grants, free package holidays, airline tickets, paid

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internships and jobs, or even direct cash payments, etc. These practices were revealed and made public in the media as of 1986, on the occasion of the election of the 1992 Olympic cities.

The battle for the 1992 Games provided an almost virgin terrain for lobbying groups of all kinds, and led to a significant waste of resources. During this period, invitations to visit the cities began to be issued to IOC members. Such invitations often involved lavish expenditure. As a result, the IOC decided to impose the first rules for candidate cities and its own members as of 1987; the possibility of holding receptions was restricted and the value of gifts was limited to US$200 (i.e., the so-called "Hodler rules"). Some bid cities reported violations, either confidentially or publicly (by means of press articles or publications). The IOC bored the revelations in mind to a limited extent, and progressively reinforced the "Hodler rules", while never penalising a city or a member, despite several debates on the subject within the IOC Executive Board. Finally, in December 1998, the practices were suddenly, and widely, exposed in the media, and they became the subject of a worldwide scandal that led to a major crisis within the IOC.

The IOC crisis

The cause of the IOC crisis, was the publication of the fact that, those in charge of the 2002 Salt Lake City candidature had given a study grant to the daughter of an IOC member. Marc Hodler (1918-2006), an IOC member, seized the opportunity to make astounding statements to the international media. Beyond the ethical aspect, the deeply held reasons that led to Hodler's statements were linked to his multiple functions within world sport: he was in charge of ensuring that the candidate cities applied the relevant rules, and was also the head coordinator within the IOC for the Salt Lake City Games, and a member of the Sion (Swiss) candidature for the 2006 Winter Games, to be attributed seven months later in June 1999. Hodler's words led to the creation of no less than four enquiry commissions regarding the attribution of the 2002 Winter Games, that were created by the IOC, the Salt Lake City OCOG, the United States Olympic Committee, and the United States Congress, respectively. Investigation procedures were also engaged in relation to Sydney 2000, Nagano 1998, and, following a battle over the ownership of the archives, to Atlanta 1996.

The meaningful decisions taken

The various enquiry commissions reached the conclusion that the "Hodler Rules" had been infringed regularly. Around 30 IOC members in office (out of 104 in 1998), were implicated to varying degrees. Four of

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them resigned of their own accord, six were dismissed following a special IOC Session in March 1999, ten were officially reprimanded with varying degrees of severity, and around ten were placed in question by the media but escaped any form of action by the IOC.

In parallel, the IOC began to study structural reforms, that led to new rules being issued in December 1999. It was decided that the pre-selection would be carried out by the IOC Executive Board, on the basis of a technical report that was drawn up by a working group from the IOC Administration and its experts. Moreover, the NOCs of cities wishing to put forward a candidate were required to ensure that the mentioned cities had genuine potential for organising the Olympic Games. Visits by IOC members to the candidate cities, and visits by representatives of the said cities to the members, have been no longer permitted. Contacts between cities and members during meetings on neutral territory are subjected to tight controls. International communication activities are strictly curtailed. The new procedure for attributing Games is better than those procedures that preceded it but, nevertheless, does not guarantee an end to corruption or methods used to influence votes.

Questions to discuss:

1. What kind of crisis is illustrated here? How large was the crisis responsibility of the IOC?
2. How predictable was the crisis? Were "red flags" visible?
3. Which measures had the IOC taken, and had they been sufficient to pre-empt similar crises of a similar nature in the future?
4. How is your NOC awarding any kind of resources to your stakeholders? Reflect upon good governance.

Source: Modified from Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott (2008, 87-90)

In practice, it is challenging to categorise one crisis into a particular field, as shown in Fig. 43, because the level of crisis responsibility is determined by the crisis history and the prior reputation of the NOC. Additionally, it is not easy to determine the predictability of a crisis, as that also depends on the activities of monitoring the environment/stakeholders of all NOCs.

6.3 Crisis Management

Crisis management is nothing other than management in a severe threat. Ansell and Boin (2019, 1082) define crisis management as "the set of preparatory and response activities aimed at the containment of the threat

and its consequences". To manage a crisis, the same rules as in "normal" times apply, and the same methods and tools can be used. However, the crisis situation has special features that management must address (Schütte, 2021). This implies that crisis management does not begin with improvised spontaneous actions, that are reminiscent of "driving on sight" which means to (dangerously) check for obstacles on a random basis with no proper forward planning, or "muddling through" (i.e., flexible negotiation practices).

In the following, we distinguish between the crisis management of moderate and high NOC responsibility (subchapter 6.3.1), and the crisis management of no NOC responsibility (subchapter 6.3.2).

Ansell and Boin (2019) note that nearly every crisis response has both, an operational and a strategic dimension. On the operational dimension, there are a) first responders, b) operators to control the crisis, and c) system experts (they may come from outside the NOC). System experts are professionals who are trained to deal with accidents, and emergencies. On the strategic dimension, there is the NOC board with the president as political leader, who carries the ultimate responsibility for the outcome of the crisis.

6.3.1 Management for Crises with NOC Responsibility

According to Pearson and Mitroff (1993) and Mitroff (2005), crises management has five phases, and each of them suggests activities, which the NOC can undertake, in order to be better prepared.
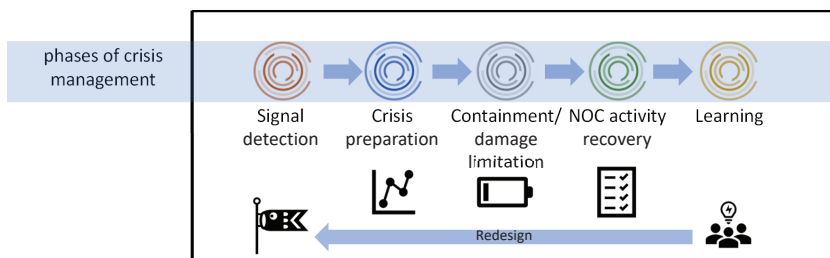

Fig. 44: Crisis Management Model

Source: Adopted from Pearson and Mitroff (1993)

Phase 1 – Signal detection: In this phase, small but significant indicators of an impending crisis begin to appear in an NOC setting. For example, employees complain about the management style at the NOC executive board, or their concerns regarding the integrity of human rights at hosts of the Olympic Games. The recommendation here is that each NOC should regularly look out for "red flags" in its team, organisation, member federations, stakeholders, and environment.

Phase 2 – Crises preparation: This means a systematic planning to prepare the NOC to manage a crisis event. To do so, the NOC must answer the question: What is the crisis? What exactly threatens (the existence of) the NOC? Did we see already, and can we still see, "red flags"? As inferred above, crises can depend upon personal perception regarding their degree of severity, hence the answers to the questions may be disputed. In this phase, it is wise to plan steps which the NOC can take if any crises should occur. Contingency plans typically include formal written statements of critical personnel, resources, and actions to be allocated during a crisis situation.

In each crisis (or put in a better way: Before any crisis at all), the NOC needs to think about certain questions: What must be changed? What options do we have? This is not yet about evaluating solutions, but rather it is about exploring possible solutions. As shown in the SWOT analysis (subchapter 3.4), NOCs should work on their WT-strategy, which is likely the most vulnerable part of an NOC, and here crises can easily occur. To recall, when a weakness of an NOC meets threats caused by a change of the environment, then, that is a WT.

Phase 3 – Containment: This phase involves the attempt at limiting the impact of the crisis event to prevent further escalation and losses, both financial and reputational. To do this, it will be necessary to clarify a number of aspects:

– Current capabilities: What resources are currently and potentially available? In addition to the financial means, the NOC should aim to first use the skills and knowledge of its employees before considering to hire expensive external consultants.
– Stakeholders: Which stakeholders are important for your NOC in a crisis? Which political support can your NOC obtain (e.g., from public authorities, politicians, IOC, EOC, etc.)? A stakeholder analysis (subchapter 3.3) can be used here, but it should have a different focus, and other questions: Who can help my NOC in a crisis? Who is also affected? Who or what might attack the NOC?

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> The alignment with your position is important, as well as the power a stakeholder has on those causing the crises.
> Communicating with internal and external stakeholders on how the NOC is handling the crisis event, and how resources or the network of stakeholders are secured, are important factors in this phase.

The main questions here are: Which ways out of the crises are suitable? Which of those ways would bring the greatest advantages? Which of those ways would bring the least amount of damage? There is certainly no single and simple answer, but it proved to be good to separate the generation of ideas, and allow the widest possible collection of solutions. Thus, even "crazy" and uncommon ideas should be reflected upon, and not quickly eliminated (Gordon, 1979). In times of crises, there are often no easy and pleasant solutions, and in reality, the solutions could well be painful and difficult. Decisions often have to be made through choosing between "plague and cholera" (in that, neither of your two options are really better), and the idea is to limit the damage as much as possible.

However, effective execution of the following recommendation may help a "response network" to produce the best possible actions, that could limit the impacts of crises. Such networks are stakeholders that are interdependent, and are all affected by the crises. Their outcomes of joint emergency response can be seen as "a product of the attributes of the network" (Hossain & Kuti, 2010, 764).

Recommendation: Actions to Limit the Impact of a Crisis

According to Ansell and Boin (2019), strategic crisis management means orchestrating and facilitating a joint response to an urgent threat. Their recommendations to limit the impacts of crises are:

1. Sense-making: Organising the process through which the NOC board (strategic crisis managers) arrive at a shared understanding of the evolving threat and its consequences. This requires the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information about the unfolding threat and its consequences.
2. Critical decision-making: Making strategic decisions that are effective and legitimate (while avoiding those that are operational), both in the short and the long run. A crisis does not allow for unethical behaviour.
3. Coordinating inside the NOC: Facilitating the implementation of planned actions and strategic decisions, by motivating actors in the

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"response networks" to work together and perform their tasks (in an effective and legitimate way). An emergency response network involves the interdependent relations among organisations. Here, the information flow (reflecting the truth), its intensity, and the network density (not too great in number, but mainly all those affected are included), are all important factors to be considered.

4. Meaning-making: Explaining to all involved
   a) what is going on,
   b) what is being done to remedy the situation,
   c) what is being done to limit the consequences; and then
   d) offering actionable advice to move forward.

Sources: adopted but transformed from Ansell and Boin (2019, 1082); Pan et al. (2012)

Phase 4 – Recovery: The NOC begins to enact procedures to resume normal business activity in the recovery phase. Such efforts include long- and short-term recovery plans to bring the NOC back to its "business-as-usual" (BAU) mode.

Phase 5 – Learning: Here, it is important to take the lessons learned from any experiences of a crisis. NOC must critically review and reflect upon its own compliance and response processes that are applied, in order to avoid similar crises in the future. In any case, if any crises should occur again, then the NOC should supervise that they are handled appropriately. Hutchins et al. (2008) state that this phase requires the NOC to engage in critical reflection on the crisis experience. The NOC should analyse the crisis impact on central and ancillary system processes, and then adapt behaviours and systems to improve crisis management practices. It may be recommended, that a third-party or investigative entity, which can see the entire situation from an unbiased and global perspective, should provide a report on the crises and the actions of the NOC. Mitroff (2005) advises organisations to engage in "no-fault learning" (that is, not blaming any particular individual(s) for the crisis event), except in the case(s) of criminal behaviour and liability, but rather organisations should use systemic factors to analyse the cause of the crisis event.

Since crises decisions are often accompanied by major changes (i.e., re-design of NOC crises management), the knowledge and methods of implementation management should be used. In addition, leadership should address the special psychological challenges in times of crises (Kirchler et al., 2020; Seitz, 2020). Both the crisis itself and its

defensive measures often frighten stakeholders and staff. For example, regarding Covid-19, people have as much fear of the disease, as they do of vaccination against it. Therefore, communicating the exact situation of the organisation in the crisis, is as important as explaining the measures to be adopted against the crisis, in an understandable way. This is not only about rationality because, above all, it really is all about people's sensitivities and emotions.

6.3.2 Management for Crises without NOC Responsibility

Some crises are unpredictable and come as a shock to the NOC, out of nowhere. They are also called "ad hoc crises" (Burmann et al., 2005, 5ff.). Unpredictable crises from outside the NOC are manifold, e.g., severe financial cuts from government, lottery funding stops, the Olympic Games get postponed, global financial crises (see illustration below), (civil) wars, or the Covid-19 pandemic (see the case study below).

Within its Covid-19 report, the global leading Irish-American consultancy company Accenture, described outcomes with a simple statement, as follows: "We're all in this together […] Covid-19 has turned into a global crisis, evolving at unprecedented speed and scale. It is creating a universal imperative for governments and organisations to take immediate action to protect their people. It is now the biggest global event — and challenge — of our lifetimes. As such, it is changing human attitudes and behaviours today and forcing organisations to respond." (Accenture, 2020)

This unpredictable crisis from outside the NOC has called for an urgent need to think about new business models and new processes, and to then to start a major change management, in order to cope with the forced changes (for change management, refer to Chapter 4).

The Covid-19 pandemic was a massive shock to everyone in the beginning of 2020. Suddenly, yesterday's rules and regulations, projects and plans were no longer applicable. All NOCs and many IFs and NFs have been seriously affected. Sources of revenue from sporting events, that were thought to be secure, collapsed. The postponement of Olympic Games made an Olympiad of five years duration (due to rescheduling, an extra year was added), and thus caused shortfalls of revenues. Additionally, due to financial problems it also was no longer possible to train in sport clubs or (Olympic) training centres. Thus, athletes could not train for competitions and, consequently, could not properly qualify for the Olympic Games. As the situation was different in each country, the con-

ditions were not equal for the athletes to train, travel, and participate. Furthermore, children could not participate in grassroots and high-performance sports anymore, as facilities were closed, and also local and minor leagues stopped their competitions. Many lockdowns prevented international meetings to coordinate sports. Due to the postponement of the Olympic Games in Tokyo, many other major and smaller events were also postponed. This affected, not only the NOCs, but also the majority of its members.

The following longer case study looks into the crises management of 19 European NOCs and how they coped with Covid-19.

Case Study: Covid-19 Crisis and the Management of NOCs

After a large number of sports venues were closed worldwide, during the first wave of the pandemic in the spring of 2020 (DOSB 2020; LNOC 2020; NSF 2020), and training operations came to a standstill, competitive events – the foremost being the Tokyo Olympic Games – were postponed and also many other events were cancelled. Consequently, the corona pandemic also had a major impact on sports organisations (Parnell et al., 2020), whose employees were required to make decisions in times of great uncertainty, and fundamentally changed conditions, that could be decisive for the existence of their organisation. This also included the European NOCs, whose achievement of goals was hindered by the changed framework conditions of the organisational environment. So that, goals such as the promotion of sport, the transmission of values, the dissemination of the Olympic Idea and Olympic Values, the promotion of sports' societal development, or the promotion of social exchange through sport, could not be realised, due to the strong measures in force to protect against infection, and the associated closure of sports venues and prohibitions on assemblies (DOSB, 2018). In addition, the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games resulted in a lack of financial resources, which are highly relevant for achieving the goals and securing the existence of many NOCs.

We address the question of how the European NOCs can continue to act in a purposeful and functional manner, while taking into account the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the world of sport, as well as on the organisation itself, and its individual organisational environment. Therefore, we show how strategies are developed in the European NOCs, and which actions prove to be most helpful in their development. As a result, we present our model for an ideal strategy development process, with concrete strategy development steps and recommended measures

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within the steps, that can be used as a guideline for all European NOCs. The knowledge gained can now be used by the NOCs to act better, more quickly, and more efficiently in crises situations.

Of the total of 50 European NOCs, 19 participated in the survey. Figures in brackets in the ideal strategy process which follows, indicate the percentages of NOCs that have implemented that particular step.

Ideal strategy development process (based on Lanzer et al., 2020)

Prerequisite: Having good internal and external relationships

The research findings have outlined, that internal and external relationships are the basic prerequisite for being able to act quickly and effectively in crisis situations, as an NOC. This is what all of the 19 NOCs have indicated. Good external relationships with all Olympic stakeholders, including clear communication, and a regulated exchange of information with fixed contacts, is of elementary importance to remain capable of acting in acute crises situations. It is imperative that respect is paid to the growing pressure for interaction and cooperation between institutions. This includes, for example, the relationship with the government, member organisations, athletes, sponsors, or the media. In particular, the NOC's relationship with state authorities can be of outstanding importance. NOCs that usually maintain a good relationship with their particular government, were considered in the corona-related restrictions, and informed at an early stage. Since there have been enormous differences in terms of the national relevance and value of an NOC, and its integration into the state system, the values of sport and the benefits of the organisation should always be manifested to the government, in order to secure sufficient responsibility and authority. Such a relationship of trust must be built over the long-term and regardless of the crisis scenario, and NOCs would be well advised to cultivate their contacts and strengthen relationships early on. When it comes to internal relationships, it has become clear that cross-departmental collaboration within the NOC is imperative to act quickly, efficiently, and effectively as an overall organisation. The fundamental strategic direction of the NOC must come from the NOC board, and not from individual departments. Strategies must be developed holistically and across departments. Accordingly, establishing clear and stringent communication and collaboration within the Committee's departments, is essential to surviving an acute crisis situation. This includes ensuring that the organisational plans, such as the roadmap of the organisation, which will be mentioned later, are accessible to all employees, so that they can be internalised.

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1. *Reviewing & reprioritising of goals*
    In the first step, the organisation's goals are reviewed (84%) and, if necessary, they are adapted to the organisational environment that has changed due to the crisis, so that they can be used as a basis for decisions on how to proceed strategically. The fundamental goals of the organisation are not changed (74%), but rather they are reprioritised (79%). The reprioritisation of goals was focused on supporting the top athletes, supporting children and youth, and teaching the Olympic Values. In addition, the public was encouraged to exercise.

2. *Adaptation of projects & activities*
    This is followed by an adaptation of projects and activities to the context of the crisis (95%), in the second step. Consequently, projects and events that could not take place due to contact restrictions had to be cancelled, rescheduled, or modified. In addition, new gaps for action(s) have been identified. In this regard, it was very useful to have an overview of all ongoing projects and activities, which is accessible for any employee (84%).

3. *Renewing strategies*
    In the third step, the environment that has been changed by the crisis, is captured and evaluated in detail. Here, the corona pandemic and its financial and structural impacts, must be identified as an acute risk factor. An institutionalised meeting in which moods, tendencies, developments, and trends are observed, has proven its worth in capturing and evaluating the effects of the pandemic for 63% of the NOCs. This should take place at regular intervals, and it is important that all key decision-makers in the NOC should attend the meeting or, at least, be informed of its findings. This is followed by a SWOT-Analysis (53%), to renew the strategic planning and identify new strategic fields of action. The strategic fields of action of the organisation are derived by combining relevant influencing factors from the opportunities/risks and strengths/weaknesses matrix, and then they are evaluated in terms of their relevance (68%). The third step of the process ends with the selection of those strategic fields of action, that are decisive for the goals that were set up in the first step, in the context of the current crisis situation. In all significant decisions, the organisation should act in a holistic and cross-departmental manner, and always seek the advice of scientific researchers to assess pandemic impacts, and then base decisions on the findings. Of all the NOCs, 84% found it helpful to seek advice from experts for certain decision-making processes. During the Covid-19 crisis, all

NOCs (100%) found it useful to consult the advice of the scientific community, especially medical experts and virologists, before taking significant decisions. Decisions are, therefore, made in a participatory and systematic manner, by considering all consequences.

4. *Capturing the digital space as a strategic field of action*
   When it comes to the strategic field of actions, in the context of the corona crisis, the digital space and its management have proven particularly effective for 95% of the NOCs. Here, concrete options for action can be digitally reproduced, such as the mapping of the physical events and projects that have been eliminated, to continue to be able to guarantee the achievement of the organisational goals. Digital communication tools and platforms are particularly suitable for maintaining the exchange of information with all relevant stakeholders, such as employees, athletes, member associations, and politicians. In terms of communication, NOCs are increasingly interacting with their target groups via digital channels. Internal and external communication (with member organisations) took place in digital meetings. Above all, the installation of digital communication platforms (that are legally acceptable considering Covid-19 movement and contact restrictions) has been particularly successful in achieving the organisational goals, such as taking care of the top athletes and teaching the Olympic Values, despite Covid-19-related contact restrictions. Over the course of the crisis, various NOCs modernised their digital infrastructure so that, in some cases, all essential work processes could be fully mapped digitally. Those organisations that already had sufficient digital infrastructure in place at the outbreak of the crisis, were able to more rapidly complete the quicker to their working from home office, and everything was immediately functional under the new circumstances of the pandemic. Digitalisation of the overall organisation is helpful in surviving a crisis situation, and reaching its target groups during that period. It is imperative to take into account the current technological change. In this case, the crisis even acts as a catalyst for the technological change, in an ever-changing technological modernity.

5. *Drawing up a strategic roadmap*
   In the fifth step, the fields of action and options should be presented in a strategic roadmap, which is designed for a four-year period, and can also be accessed by all employees (58%). Each measure includes a fixed point in time, or a period of time, and the corresponding availability of resources. The roadmap is to be understood as a dynamic

process, and it will be constantly reviewed and adapted to cope with the dynamics of the corona pandemic (84%).

6. *Constantly adjusting strategies*
   Of course, this type of strategic management should also be exercised independently of the crisis scenario. Due to the continuously changing organisational environment, organisations should constantly, and proactively, adapt to changing conditions, in order to remain competitive, even when confronted by potential crisis scenarios. As aforementioned, crises can accelerate change; hence, acting strategically was helpful for 58% of NOCs in the study.

Source: Schu and Preuss (2022)

Questions to discuss:

1. What measures did your NOC take to overcome the Covid-19 challenges?
2. Which of these ideal strategy processes did your NOC implement; and for those not implemented, then why was this the case?
3. To what extent was your NOC able to use the Covid-19 crisis to change the NOC?

Research on Covid-19 by Accenture (2020), had results which showed that 88% of CEOs of major (non-sport) organisations believe global economic systems need to refocus on equitable growth, and 94% say that sustainability issues are important for the future success of their business. This illustrates that strategic management is an essential tool after a severe crisis, and adjustments to the previous focus (a revised mission and vision, see subchapter 2.3) are what must follow.

Christophe Dubi, the Olympic Games executive director at the IOC, worked on one of the biggest change-management cases in history, which is the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games postponement due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In August 2022, Dubi reflects on the events and identifies the main lessons learned (Klaue, 2022):

In Crisis, Leadership Is Making Tough Decisions

Strong decisions, especially when they are taken in challenging circumstances, inspire trust and a spirit of collaboration all the way through the ecosystem. This "stronger together" spirit was essential to our success, as was Japan's commitment to and vision for the Games.

Communication Is an Act of Management

Projects such as ours demand the highest transparency and a constant cadence of communication and engagement across all audiences. If you

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do not constantly explain what you are doing and how you address issues and what the public benefit of the project is, then you can get in serious trouble.

Constraint Allows You to Prioritise Your True Needs

In Tokyo, we had to be forensic in our search for efficiencies. We learned that when you have to find ways and means to make things simpler, then you will find them.

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