

# The Development Of Olympic Education Programs: Towards Olympic Games

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## Abstract

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According to Pierre de Coubertin, the modern Olympic Games (OG) should be more than just an event that takes place every four years. Coubertin's view has a very strong significance, especially in light of the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 OG following the corona crisis, and maximum attention should be given to the existence of Coubertin's legacy by viewing sport as a way of life, not only as a 17-day OG celebration, but in building a structural sports component into children's education.

The OG have the potential of being a platform for dealing with serious problems in society, and issues on a daily agenda. The Olympic Education Programs needs to respond to these events in order to preserve the Olympic spirit of the Games, and to promote the ideals, values, and the working principles.

This study gives an overview of the Olympic education programs development, and aim to find a way of implementing Olympic education programme, as well as keeping Olympism a live every day during the year. The mission is to implement an Integral, and global education program in the world, and raising the awareness of this philosophy as a way of life.

## Keywords

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Olympic education, Olympism, Olympic values, Olympic Games, OVEP, Olympic Movement.

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## Introduction

According to Pierre de Coubertin, the modern Olympic Games (OG) should be more than just an event that takes place every four years. From the first modern OG in 1896 onwards, this international sports meeting should serve as a means to emphasize the educational values of sport around the world. It should be borne in mind that Coubertin viewed the OG as only a framework for promoting the deeper meaning of the Olympic ideas and their educational possibilities (Wassong, 2006, p. 222). Coubertin has seen Olympic sports as an opportunity for self-sufficient independent improvement. He devised educational concept and create teaching resources to serve as models for this purpose (Coubertin, & Müller, 2000, p. 748).

The Olympic Values Education Program (OVEP) is using the context of Olympic sports and core principles of Olympism to encourage participation in values-based learning and to assume the responsibilities of good citizenship (IOC, n.d.).

The benefits of an Olympic values-based curriculum based on the aims of the Olympic Movement (OM) as from 1894, as shown in figure 1 (IOC, 2017, p. 3).

## Olympic Education

According to Naul, Nobert Mueller (1975) was the first to use the explicit term “Olympic education” as a reminder of Coubertin’s association with sport’s educational concerns (Naul, 2008, p. 53). Coubertin (1863-1937), saw himself first and foremost as an educator, and his primary aim was educational reform (Muller, 2004, p. 1). His aim, initially limited to France and the French schools, was to make modern sport an integral part of the school routine, and so introduce into that routine a sports education which would embrace both body, and mind. He had learned from modern sport in England, and especially from his knowledge of public school education at Rugby, that the moral strength of the young can be critically developed through the individual experience of sporting activity, and extended from there to life.

Coubertin did not use the term “Olympic education”, but referred initially to “sporting education”, and indeed that was the title of the book he published in 1922, *Pedagogy sportive*. Since as early as 1900, and not exclusively within schools, he had been encouraging the idea of playing sports accessible to adolescents, and even to older people as a newly discovered

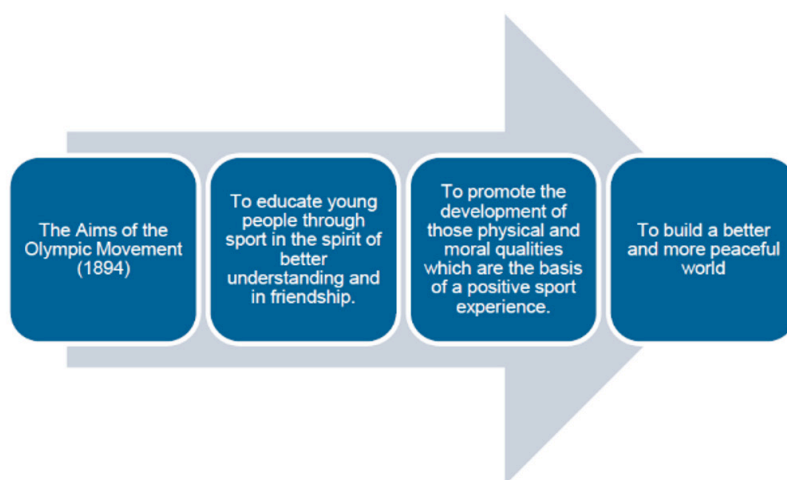


Figure 1: Olympic Values-Based Learning 2017, 3.

part of a complete education (Mueller, 2004, p. 1). According to Coubertin, the Olympic athlete must take over the responsibility to act as role model to disseminate the educational value of sport. Olympic athletes should give an example that competitive sport contributes to the education of a modern citizen who has the character traits to deal with the challenges of modern life, including democratic behavior, and transcultural tolerance (Wassong, 2014, p. 108).

Brownlee quoted in Rubio, “Olympic education is a process that seeks to bring life to the philosophy of Olympism by teaching Olympic ideals - providing experiences that reinforce cultural, and personal identity; tolerance for all, mutual understanding, individual development, and search for human excellence” (Rubio, 2013, p. 110).

Although broadly speaking the term ‘Olympic education’ is somewhat ambiguous in what it means and embraces, when it comes to the programs of the host cities during an Olympiad (the four years cycle between the Games) its meaning becomes clearer. People often recognize as “Olympic education” the programs traditionally offered to primary and secondary schools, but Olympic education programs also include other sectors such as staff and voluntary training, teacher’s education, community education and involvement of further and high education (Chatziefstathiou, 2014, para. 1). Although the staging and delivery of each Game has common characteristics in terms of their management and running, yet there are some distinctive differences which reflect the cultural, economic, political and social conditions of the host nations. Such disparities are also found in the different

Olympic education programs of the host nations cities, hence also in the involvement of the further and high education sectors with each Games (Chatziefstathiou, 2014, para. 2). One can define Olympic Education as a set of educational proposals through sport which we take the OM, its values, symbolism, history, heroes and traditions as reference points.

As Coubertin quoted in Seman, “The future of civilization is not based on political or economic grounds - based solely on how to develop the direction of education” (Seman, 2014, p. 42). Olympic education means different things to different people. As shown in Figure 2, the term Olympic education encompasses a variety of educational initiatives aimed at children and youth in school and community settings. These programs have different objectives and different audiences, albeit with a great deal of overlap, in the fundamentals, which are based on the “education through sport” approach.

### **Olympism, The Olympic Movement And The Modern Olympic Games**

The OM, through the catalyst of global sport, can play a key role in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation process, by blending sport, culture and education (Olympic Charter, Fundamental Principles of Olympism) and in bringing to ‘life’ a transformative and fun learning pathway. More than 100 years after establishing the IOC, the combination of sport with a focus on education and culture continues to be an ongoing mandate and growing in its importance. The stronghold of Coubertin’s vision lay in safeguarding the needs of future generations through the ancient practice of sport and translated to an active and modern form of inspiring youth to develop a values-based, life-

long learning perspective. Under the guidance of the Olympic Education Commission and in alignment with the IOC's Olympic Agenda 2020 strategic roadmap, recommendation 22 (IOC, 2014, p. 18), the department is focusing on learning principles for youth within the framework of the Olympic principles and philosophy: (i) experiencing the values of sport through play and physical activity; and (ii) development of a curriculum using the 'power of play' and the practice of sport to learn about Olympism and experience the intrinsic value of sport (IOC, 2017, p. 2). Fundamental to the understanding of Olympism is its emphasis on an educational mandate. In fact, the "Olympic idea cannot be understood without an understanding of its educational mission" (Gessman, 1992, p. 33). This educational mandate is outlined in several of the fundamental Principles of the Olympic Charter (Binder, 2010, p. 1). The IOC mission is built on the Fundamental

Principles of Olympism: "a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles" (IOC, 2020, p. 11). The goal of the OM is clearly defined in the Olympic Charter: "The goal of the OM is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practiced in accordance with Olympism and its values" Olympic Charter, 2017, Rule 1.1 (IOC, 2020, p. 15). This embodies a holistic pedagogical objective and a philosophy of life, as Coubertin attempted to impart the philosophical foundation of "modern Olympism" (IOC, 2020, p. 10). The NOCs' role is to promote the fundamental principles and values of Olympism in their countries, in Particular, in the fields of sport

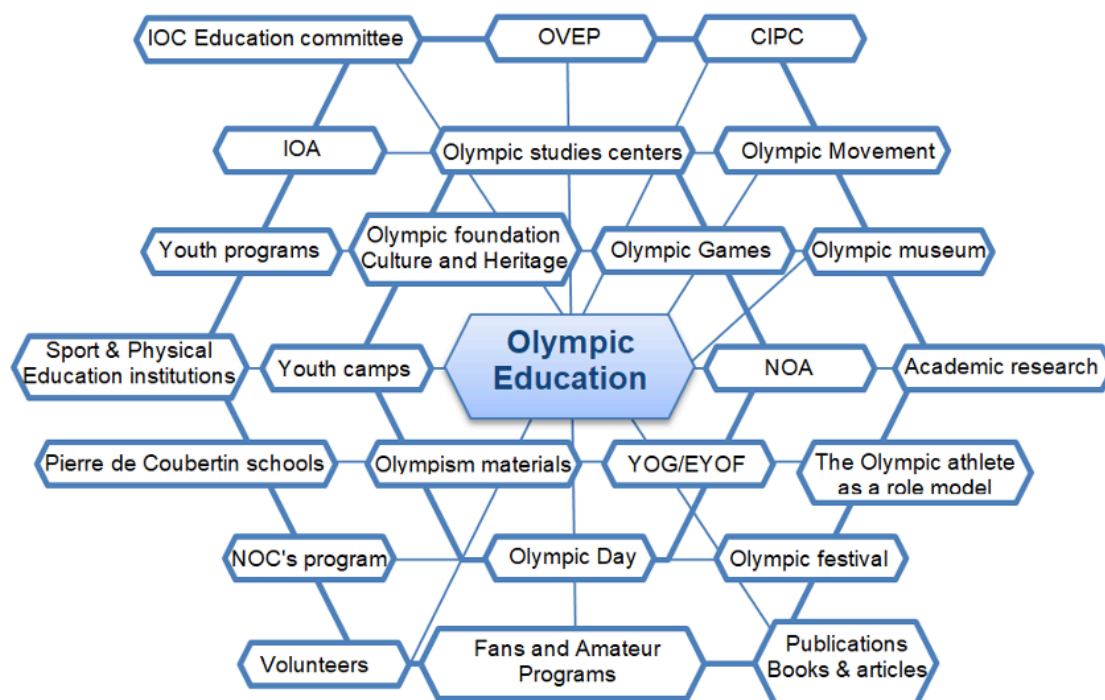


Figure 2: Olympic Education Network (Examples of the wide variety of programs).

and education, by promoting Olympic educational programs in all levels of schools, sports and physical education institutions and Universities. In addition by encouraging the creation of institutions dedicated to Olympic education, such as National Olympic Academies, Olympic Museums and Other programs, including cultural, related to the OM, Olympic Charter, 2017, Rule 2.1 (IOC, 2020, p. 16). Figure 2 illustrates the Olympism Platform.

### Host Cities And Olympic Education

The OG are not just about being on the world stage. They have the potential of being a platform for dealing with serious problems in society and issues on a daily agenda, as shown in table 1. The development of Olympic education programs has responded to these events by producing positive responses to preserve the Olympic spirit of the Games.

The largest sports event of our time, founded by Coubertin, provides a chance for the respective host city to impact and promote on various areas, such as: culture, health, economy, politic, social, tourism, environment, finances, traffic, education and more. The OG leaves a large stamp on a host city and this impact on have increased since 1984 as the Games have become larger involving more athletes, sports, a greater media and sponsor presence (Cashman, 2010, p. 5).

The International Olympic Academy in Olympia was established at 1960. At the end of last century, when the idea of recovering the Olympics began to gather momentum and the traditional celebration of the Games was renewed, there was much talk of the “Olympic spirit”. There was a hope that the essence of the attitudes and values will be born again. Although the practical application of these ideals has not been free of contradictions, the “Olympic spirit” has been the origin

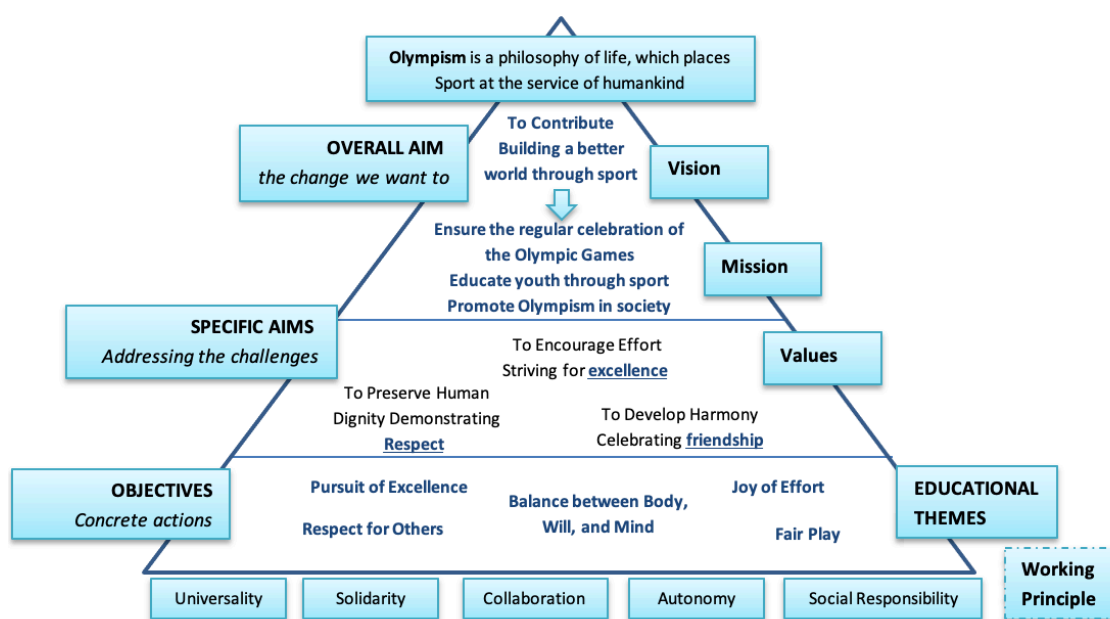


Figure 3: The Olympism Platform.

of certain activities such as, for example, the International Youth Camps (IYC). The first Olympic Education initiative was the Olympic Youth Camp in Stockholm in 1912 with the aim of fomenting an understanding of cultures and encouraging respect for and sense of belonging to the world community. The program used the idea, symbol & the message of the Olympic Games to derive educational benefits for the youth (Fradera, 1992, p. 32-35).

The first Olympic educational program was at Tokyo OG in 1964. Around 600,000 elementary and high school pupils from all parts of the country watched the OG. The Japanese government announced on an essay competition with the aim of educating young people for the future. Furthermore, two Olympic education textbooks were compiled. The collective report named "Tokyo Olympics Uniting the World" was published in December 1964 and contains 1,600 essays about the OG written by pupils (Nikolaus, 2016, p. 20).

Munich OG in 1972, Munich OG in 1972, the goal was to present a new image of Germany that would have nothing in common with the previous Games - Berlin 1936 and to replace lingering memories of the Third Reich. The Munich Games were to be "cheerful Games". Unfortunately, this was not the reality due to the terrorist attack on the Israeli team. These games became the most serious occurrence of political interference. Despite the tragedy which have happened the Olympic Games & the Youth Camp continued under the declaration "The Games must go on". Such terrorist actions that target institutions and symbols of a country rely on the powerful impact on the public opinion (Pop, 2013, p.

733). The "Olympic Reader" (400 pages) was edit by Walter Umminger who wishes to reach the youth through education and positive values, and was designed to help teachers prepare their pupils for the games (Schiller & Young, 2010, p. 66).

(See Table 1 next page)

Montreal OG in 1976, during three consecutive school years (1973-1976) the program "Promoting Olympism in the school environment" (POMS) was implemented in Quebec schools. The objectives of this program were to promote broader understanding of the OM and its impact on modern society. Today, in many countries around the world, Olympic education programs are being implemented, particularly during the staging of the OG (Georgiadis, 2010, p. 6712). Cerezuela was quoted 2006: "Promotion de l'Olympisme en milieu Scolaire". A school resource package in the French language was developed, based on ancient and, modern Olympic history and Coubertin ideals in order to promote popular participation in sporting, socio educational and, cultural activities" (Naul, Binder, Rychtecky, & Culpan, 2017, p. 107).

Since Montreal 1976, the educational mission of Olympism has, among other activities, been largely implemented through Olympic Education Programs of OG Organizing Committees. Although not explicitly demanded in the Olympic Charter, there was no denying that the applicant city could earn bonus points in the Olympic bid by offering an attractive Education Program (Nikolaus, 2017, p. 37). Twenty-six countries, mostly from Africa, chose to boycott the Games when the IOC denied their request to ban New Zealand, whose national rugby team had recently toured apartheid-era South Africa. Many

<b>Year</b>	<b>The Development of Olympic Education Programs</b>	<b>Significant events</b>
<b>Since</b>	Olympic Youth Camp	
<b>1912</b>	"Olympic spirit" belonging to the world community	
<b>1936</b>	Olympic Youth Camp	Politics: A display of the Third Reich A boycott threat
<b>1952</b>	Olympic Youth Camp	Politics: A boycott threat
<b>1956</b>	* No documentation was found regarding sport education	Politics: Affected by a number of boycotts
<b>1960</b>	The IOA in Olympia was established	
	Olympic Youth Camp	
<b>1964</b>	The first Olympic Educational Program "educating young people for the future", collective report "Tokyo Olympics Uniting the World"	Politics: A boycott threat due to the apartheid
	Olympic Youth Camp	
<b>1968</b>	Olympic Youth Camp	Politics: A boycott threat due to the apartheid Drug testing and female gender verification
<b>1972</b>	Olympic Education Program "Olympic Reader" "The Games must go on"	Politics: A boycott threat due to the apartheid Terrorism
<b>1976</b>	Promotion de l'Olympisme en milieu Scolaire Promoting Olympism at School	The bidding process Politics: Big boycott in 1976, 22 African countries, including Guinea and Iraq
<b>1980</b>	Developing relations with third world countries - education program	Politics: A boycott by United States and its allies The Cold War The end of amateurism
<b>1984</b>	The program "The Olympics: An Educational Opportunity"	Politics: A boycott by the Soviet Union The Cold War Money and Commercialism
<b>1988</b>	Official Language School -training volunteers in German and French	Volunteers Media coverage
<b>1992</b>	Several initiatives by NOCs to raise the interest of children and young people in sports event	Politics: fall of the Berlin Wall
<b>1996</b>	The Olympic Day in the Schools program, Dream Team program, teaching loyalty and respect	Violence/ Terrorism Education Commission Women in Sport Commission at 1995
<b>2000</b>	The Aussie Frog Challenge, Aspire, Set no limits, first website, education programs strategy	Anti-doping development The first website for an Olympic Education
<b>2004</b>	Change in the National curriculum by enactment of new laws in the parliament, appointed 3000 new PE teachers, teaching material published for students with special needs, Olympic fairy tale "Despina and the Dove"	Social Media: The changes in broadcasting forms Globalization and new communication Technologies Security Sep 11
<b>2008</b>	Complete revision of the moral education curriculum, generic set of OE materials-OVEP, worldwide largest OE	Social media tools to spread Olympic education Report freely YOG
<b>2012</b>	Two websites: "Get Set 2012", first ever international legacy initiative linked to an Olympic and Paralympic Games Podium, Inspire program	Social Media: 2 websites "GET SET" and "PODIUM"
<b>2016</b>	Pedagogical Strategy document, Transforma was the Education Program	Social Media as communication and marketing tools Provided virtual pedagogical materials for classes Bidding process, Agenda 2020, Clean Sport
<b>2020</b>	Education Program across the whole of Japan - "Yoi Don! Programme" and a web portal Themes: Solidarity, friendship and social responsibility	Social Media: Teachers share and collaborate through the website Bidding process Agenda 2020 COVID-19
<b>Towards</b>	Integrate sport into all educational subjects	COVID-19
<b>2024</b>	France's national school sports day, Olympic Day, and Olympic and Paralympic Week	Olympic Agenda 2020+5 Technological-based teaching, online environment

Table 1: The Development of Olympic Education Programs since 1912 and significant events.

athletes-particularly the East German women swimmers were suspected of using anabolic steroids to enhance their performance. There was also concern that the amateur spirit of the Games had been undermined by the growing commercial influence on sports in the West and the pervasive government control of athletes in the Eastern bloc countries. Moscow OG in 1980, no documentation was found in literature regarding a specific education program in the host city, excluding the developing relations with third world countries - education program. Student from developing countries study physical education in Soviet higher schools, the entire cost of their education being borne by the Soviet government. 18 students and 25 trainers from 20 countries were participating in this program in the 1979-1980. Many Soviet trainers work in developing countries. In 1979 alone, 40 Soviet trainers were sent to 15 African, Asian and Latin America states. These trainers were much more than sports instructors. The Soviet Union considers them ambassadors of good will-representing the Soviet Union and promoting its image abroad (Hazan, 1982, p. 61). The most serious disruptions to the modern Olympics, however, occurred in 1980 and 1984 with the boycott as known the cold war. The special education program for the third world countries help to improve the Soviet image following the embarrassment on worldwide television (Siljak & Djurovic & Djurovic, 2017, p. 44). Samaranch wanted the best athletes to compete in the Olympics, which led to the gradual acceptance of professional athletes-winning at all cost and to the end of amateurism (Muller, 2004, p. 5).

Los Angeles OG in 1984, the Education Council of the U.S.O.C. (United States Olympic Committee) accepted the challenge

of developing an Olympic Education Program, and the program "The Olympics: An Educational Opportunity" was developed in close cooperation with national education organizations. The Managing Director of the American Olympic Committee, F. DON MILLER, explained his view of the program's intention in his preface to Volume 1: "Today, there is, in our country, general agreement that the OG are good for the development of youth, and we hope that these materials will contribute further their development" (Nikolaus, 2016, p. 162). For the first time in the Olympic history, educational handbooks, titled *The Olympics: An Educational Opportunity* were produced, providing suggested classroom activities in a variety of subject areas. The Youth Department provided over 40,000 teachers' guides to instructors in kindergarten through 9th grade. 46 high schools participated in 10 academic events. Over 2,000 schools participated in drawing and painting Olympic project (Naul, Binder, Rychtecky, & Culpan, 2017, p. 293). Programs began to shift their objectives from simply information about the Games, to educating young about Olympism through values" (Naul, Binder, Rychtecky, & Culpan, 2017, p. 294). Since the 1984 Games in Los Angeles, the process of selecting host cities has become politicized, because of the money involved, the commercialism and tremendous potential for profit which were threatened the expansion of corruption. This moved the participants even further away from the basic Olympic principles, and increased problems to the IOC, the OG, and the OM as a whole (Siljak & Djurovic, 2017, p. 45).

Seoul OG in 1988, no documentation was found in literature regarding a specific education program in the host city excluding



the Official Language School of the Seoul 1988 Summer Olympics training volunteers in German and French. The volunteers broke down barriers and built bridges with every greeting. They served as ambassadors of the host city and improved the city image. Since 1986, education in fair play has been prescribed as an essential aspect of an Olympic education, the target group including not only schools but also, especially, sports clubs and associations, and the general public as well. Training seminars for teachers were delivered and managed by the Kuratorium Olympische Academy with the support of the education ministers and school's senators of the German Lander. The OM is an educational mission which is becoming increasingly topical as a result of media coverage. The fact that its values may seem unattainable does not mean that the idea is obsolete or misguided. Olympism contains visions which offer an ever-changing field of opportunity to athletes and everyone else concerned (Muller, 2004, p. 6).

1992 OG in Barcelona, the organizers did not develop an Olympic Education Program. However, there were several initiatives by NOC's to raise the interest of children and young people in the country for the sports event and to use the occasion for an intensified integration of the Olympic spirit into education (Nikolaus, 2016, p. 82). For the first time in three decades, there was no boycott. The dramatic political changes that had swept across Eastern Europe had a tremendous effect on the Olympics. Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia competed as independent countries. With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the German team was again united.

Atlanta OG in 1996, one of the first activities organized was the Olympic Day in the Schools program, which provided teacher's assistance in terms of integrating Olympic values into the curriculum. In 1990, a school Olympic Day was organized with 400 pupils in Georgia, and in 1991 the Dream Team program was launched and the Georgia Department of Education (DOE) finalized the goals of an Olympic Education program. The most important aspect was "to teach loyalty and respect for self and others in the classroom". The education goals were to be attained through the implementation of four measures: Involving young people statewide about the history of the OM while fostering teamwork, sportsmanship, and excellence, increasing awareness of and participation in Olympic sports, and encouraging young people to develop life-long values; and promoting cultural awareness and physical fitness. Two more programs were set up, Children's Olympic Ticket Fund (COTF) and Olympic Youth Camp. The curriculum guide for "Olympic Days in the Schools" was printed to 5,000 copies and distributed to the use by 1,800 public and private elementary and middle schools in Georgia. In addition, copies were also distributed on request to a substantial number of schools across the whole USA, and a series of videos on the topics covered in the teaching materials were produced and distributed (Nikolaus, 2016, p. 92-95).

An increasing departure from the basic Olympic principles and insufficient knowledge of the essence and meaning of Olympism in general led the IOC to establish a special Olympic Education Commission in 1994. In collaboration with the NOCs, the national Olympic Academy was established

to be responsible for the implementation of the Olympic education program (Siljak & Djurovic, 2017, p. 45), and the Women in Sport Commission was established in 1995. During that time, violence was created at sporting events which was spread to the stands and to the city streets before, during, and after the competition, and this has become a serious social phenomenon, which forced the organizers of the OG to put efforts for the safety and security of the games. At Atlanta 1996 and Sydney 2000 the education program strategy emphasized the value of loyalty and respect (Siljak & Djurovic, 2017, p.45).

Sydney OG in 2000, the development of Olympic education got underway in 1992 in the New South Wales department of education. During the bid process for the 1996 Games in Melbourne the Australian designers had already published a two-volume program for elementary and middle schools (teaching Olympic values as a long-term project). In the following period, a comprehensive package of program and activities for pupils all over the country entitled Olympic 2000 School Strategy was developed in close cooperation between the NOC and the Sydney Organizing Committee of the OG. (Nikolaus, 2016, p. 105). The goal was expressed by the Australians as follows: "...to provide school students with the opportunity to become involved in the 2000 OG through ongoing education programs and special strategies which further the Olympic ideals whilst developing a range of skills, effective learning and understanding" (Nikolaus, 2016, p. 105). The Sydney education programs include: environmental and physical education, first interactive Olympic Education, and Paralympic resource kit. In 1999, with the fundamental ethical principles being violated, by "Win at all cost", the IOC

formed an ethics commission, and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to test athletes at the upcoming Olympics, and to increase drug testing standards. The development of social media, in the form of Internet and mobile platforms, has rapidly flourished in the early twenty-first century, and Sydney games were noted in the field of education mainly by presenting the first excellent website for an Olympic Education (Gresham College, 2012). Under Samaranch, the IOC revamped its sponsorship arrangements, and new broadcasting deals, commercializing the Olympics and making them more economically viable.

Athens OG in 2004, Olympic Education was initially launched on a limited, pilot basis, in certain elementary schools, and then it expanded to more schools, sponsored by the Ministry of Education in partnership with "Athens 2004" OG Organizing Committee. The Program was implemented nationwide, was integrated into the overall organization and administration of the Greek educational system and was supported by the state, thus demonstrating the importance of this effort (Tzachrista, 2017, p. 57). The government adopted relevant laws (Gresham College, 2012), appointed a Deputy Minister for Olympic Education and established an Olympic Education office under the Ministry of Education, appointing physical education teachers as heads of that office (Tzachrista, 2017, p. 57-58). The Olympic Education Program (OEP) has been implemented in all Greek school levels since 2000 and about 2000 physical education teachers have worked on this project (Grammatikopoulos, Hassandra, Koustelios, & Theodorakis, 2005, p. 347). Teaching materials were published for preschool, higher grade teachers and

students, and for students with special needs. Nevertheless the Olympic Education faded away with the OG of Athens (Tzachrista, 2017, p. 58).

The changes in broadcasting forms of the first three OG of the twenty-first century, Athens 2004, Beijing 2008 and London 2012, have corresponded and reflected the speedy expansion of the social media. Thanks to globalization and new communication technologies, OM is now available in all its forms across the globe. There is a causal relationship between the media and sports as a social phenomenon. The current reality of the world of sports with an increased number of international competitions is very different from what Coubertin experienced in his era. His ideas about the universality were reinforced by communication technology, and the communication of the 21st century. At the same time the unique character of the OM was threatened, which primarily emphasized the importance of physical education and participation rather than winning as an absolute imperative. The OM must resist these pressures and continue to promote educational and cultural responsibilities of Olympism in the context of the new social phenomenon of “sports and the media”. Negotiations between sports institutions (with the OM to lead the process) and the media may also include an agreement on the idea of loyalty to promote the core values of sports as described in several of the most important documents about sports of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the OM, namely peace, brotherhood, cooperation, and tolerance (Siljak & Djurovic, 2014, p. 477).

Beijing OG in 2008, Beijing OG in 2008, 400 million children (Dongguang, 2008, p. 541)

in 400,000 Chinese schools were exposed to the Olympic values and, 550 Chinese schools partnered with schools in other countries to conduct cultural sports and educational exchanges (IOC, 2016, p. 4). A complete revision of the moral education curriculum was written. The IOC OVEP project was a generic set of Olympic education materials that can be customized to any country, written by Diana Binder (Gresham College, 2012). In 2007, the former IOC President, Jacques Rogge, formally announced plans for the Youth OG in order to bring together the world’s best young athletes, offer an introduction into Olympism, and innovating in educating and debating Olympic values (“Youth Olympic Games”, n.d.).

For the first time, foreign media were able to report freely and publish their work freely in China. This phenomenon invited not only attention to the historical transformation of the roles of media for the OG but also reflection on the concept of education, culture and intercultural exchange based on this phenomenon. The OM has learned to use social media tools to spread Olympic education.

London OG in 2012, the Olympic and Paralympic Games inspired over 2,000 community projects designed to educate young people in the UK about sport, health and fitness, art and Olympic values. The official London 2012 education program “Get Set” operated over a four-year period across the UK providing flexible teaching resources for over 25,000 schools and 6.5 million young people. An impressive 85 per cent of UK schools signed up to this program (IOC, 2016, p. 3). “Get Set”: first integrated program, promoting learning about both the

Olympic and Paralympic Games and Values “International Inspiration Program” in 21 countries (Nikolaus, 2017, p. 41). The aim was to change attitudes, particularly towards disability, inspiring greater participation in sport and promoting young people’s interest in and engagement with the OG. The web-based program took place in contexts within the curriculum and/or outside school, under the notion that education must be extended beyond the school itself (Chatziefstathiou, 2012, p. 394). There were two websites: “GET SET” with training programs for teachers and “PODIUM” website for further and higher education (Gresham College, 2012). The London Games were the first Olympiad where in each participating country had at least one female athlete competing. The successful work of the IOC on the implementation of their projects related to world peace, the education of youth, equal inclusion of women in every aspect of the Movement, the establishment of the Women’s Commission, the Sports for All Commission, and the Sports and the Environment Commission are facts indicating that the IOC has a significant impact on the values of the OM (Siljak & Djurovic, 2017, p. 45).

Rio OG in 2016, the Official Olympic Education Programme (ROEP), called Transforma (A document called Pedagogical Strategy), began in 2013 and was one of the actions to take the OG into schools and promote new education-based opportunities. The Education Program goals were to provide an all-nation program, develop a program that would be relevant to primary and secondary education schools in Brazil, strengthen the program as an educational legacy of the Games for Brazil, and use the program as an important tool to get the whole society

engaged in the Games (Ribeiro, Correia, Figueiredo, & Biscaia, 2020, p. 1). Transforma offered training courses for teachers, provided virtual pedagogical materials for classes, and promoted nationwide challenges between schools to mobilize their communities around themes and milestones of the OG and of the OM. The aim was to stimulate pupils and teachers to experience the Olympic and Paralympic values, and to have an active and healthy life. The strategy to bring more schools joining Transforma consisted in the use of social media as communication and marketing tools to spread life stories of athletes who experienced the values of Olympism (Berbat, 2017, p. 53-54). More than 177,000 students in 349 schools in the state of Rio de Janeiro were benefiting from the Education program, which was expanded to reach a total of 19 municipalities (“Rio 2016 education programme continues to spread Olympic values”, 2015). In December 2014, the IOC committed to the educational mission of the OM and willing to meet the future challenges between Olympism and commerce, including a courageous fight for a clean sport, launched its Agenda 2020. Russia was banned from 2018 Olympics and Thomas Bach called to “respect the rules and stay clean”. In Rio 2016, women participate in all disciplines.

Tokyo OG in 2020, the Organizing Committee has launched its very own nationwide education programme. Tokyo 2020 gave special certification to schools using the Olympic and Paralympic-related educational materials it produces and authorizes (“Tokyo 2020 Goes Nationwide with Ambitious Education Programme”, 2017). Inspired by Coubertin’s philosophy, the programme was launched to engage young people across Japan and spur their interest in the 2020

Games. The education programme “Yoi Don!” (Japanese for “Get Set”) aims to help children grow as they experience and learn the values of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the power of sports (“About Tokyo 2020 Education Programme”, n.d.). The programme had a website offering a range of free resources for teachers, including ideas for activities and projects, as well as films on Olympic and Paralympic values. Teachers could also be able to share and collaborate with each other through the site (“Tokyo 2020 Goes Nationwide with Ambitious Education Programme”, 2017).

In particular, the educational programs were related to the concept of “Unity in Diversity”. The meaning of this concept was accepting and respecting differences in race, color, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, level of ability or other status allows peace to be maintained and society to continue to develop and flourish (Sanada, 2017, p. 46). The five pillars of the project were to promote the educational values of Olympism, train volunteers who embody Japan’s spirit of hospitality ‘OMOTENASHI’ for the 2020 Games, raise awareness about the Paralympics and sports for people with a disability, raise awareness of Japanese culture and distinct regional cultures, as well as advance intercultural and international understanding through sports, and spread the enjoyment of sports. These pillars took into consideration the IOC’s OVEP and the current Japanese education system (Sanada, 2017, p. 48).

A total of 18,947 schools including public, private and national schools have been authorized and the Olympic and Paralympic

education was broadening nationwide (As of 1 September 2021). 19,004 schools from 47 prefectures, 2,352 schools in 20 cities, and 20 Japanese schools located outside of Japan (“Be part of the Yoi, Don! School”, 2021).

Unfortunately, the OG, Tokyo 2020, have been postponed to 2021 due to the developing global situation in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. At a time when many nations felt isolated, the Olympic ideals of community and unity could be the magnet that draws them back together. There was no way to put this idea into words better than IOC President Thomas Bach did when he declared that “The Olympic flame can be a light at the end of this dark tunnel”. Just before the lighting of the Tokyo 2020 flame, with the world slowly, but courageously, recovering from the worst disease of our lifetime, we need a reminder of the Olympic ideals of friendship solidarity and social responsibility more than ever (Taljaard, 2020).

Towards Paris OG in 2024, the aim of is to integrate sport into all educational subjects, give students the opportunity to meet sporting champions and to promote participation in sport among young people. Following on from France’s national school sports day every September and Olympic Day on 23 June, the Olympic and Paralympic Week (an annual weeklong event) is a key moment to promote education through sport and bring the values of citizenship and sport to classrooms (“Olympic and Paralympic week”, n.d.).

## **Conclusion**

Since its inception, the OM has faced many challenges before the application of the Olympic ideas. From the beginning, the

modern OG were part of world culture and modern history, reflecting political tensions, economic crises, cultural flowering, and technological development. Dynamic changes in the political, economic and social spheres that have taken place since its establishment around the world, often required it to deal with the gap created between the idea the “pure” Olympic and the reality that has been created in practice. Some of them have shaken the foundations of Olympism and required the operation of the IOC in order to preserve the basic Olympic principles and ideals. However, the human factor as the cause of all events is the same as three millennia ago. The disputed referee decisions, the use of doping substances in order to win at all cost, amateurism that has grown into professionalism, political boycotts, terrorism, and commercialization are present at today’s OG (Siljak & Djurovic, 2017, p. 45-46). Nelson Mandela was quoted “Sport has the power to change the world”. It was true then and it is even more relevant today, as the world is more fragile than ever. We are living in an age of global crises, division and discrimination. We see political crises, financial crises, health crises, terrorism and civil wars. Our society is more fragmented, more individualized and more selfish. In this times, the Olympic Education Programs, more than ever needs to promote the ideals and values excellence, respect and friendship, and also the working principles universality, solidarity, collaboration, and social responsibility (OSC newsletter, 2021).

The corona virus crisis has changed our world in fundamental ways, and the world will never be like it was before. Coubertin’s view has a very strong significance, especially in light of the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 OG following the corona crisis, and maximum

attention should be given to the existence of Coubertin’s legacy by viewing sport as a way of life, not only as a 17-day OG celebration, but in building a structural sports component into children’s education. The elements for achieving these aims should be implemented in the education of the youth through sport activities without discrimination and in the sense of mutual understanding, friendship, solidarity, social responsibility and fairness. The values of the Olympic Education must and can only be realized in addition or in co-operation with the education and culture leaders of the countries.

The 15 recommendations that make up Olympic Agenda 2020+5 address five trends: solidarity, digitalization, sustainability, credibility, and economic and financial resilience. These trends have been identified to be decisive in the post-coronavirus world. They are also areas where sport and the values of Olympism can play a key role in turning challenges into opportunities. Our aim is and will remain to contribute to building a better world with even more solidarity (OSC newsletter, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic led people and society to the “new normal” lifestyle, which not only the society becomes a fully digitalized system, educational management model is also affected, and needs to be accessible and adapted for an online environment. Arrangements need to be made whereby teachers/students can continue developing skills and values through sport by reconsider technological-based teaching, in which online platform will take a major role for teaching quality. It is beneficial to analyze how the Olympic Education in particular, can remain relevant not only in an immediate post-COVID world, but also in the future and continue to contribute to the Olympic

Agenda 2020+5, as well as the UN global education agenda. The recommendation would be, to find a way of implementing Olympic education programme not only in the host cities once every 4 years, but, keeping Olympism a live every day during the year. “Coubertin intention was to create a language that would be universal with humanistic values that would be understood by all. This will allow everybody to connect and understand that we are one nation fighting for the same goal to avoid wars” (Zolidis, 2021, 54:27-57:37). The mission is to bring sport into education by implementing an Integral and global education program in the world and raising the awareness of this philosophy as a way of life that everybody will speak in a common language - speak the language of values, live their life with values and lead the change with values.

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