



HEALTHY BODY, HEALTHY MIND... IN AN ACTIVE CITY

IN A NEW REGULAR FEATURE, *OLYMPIC REVIEW* LOOKS AT THE GLOBAL ACTIVE CITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AND HIGHLIGHTS SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES FROM PILOT CITIES AROUND THE WORLD HOPING TO ENCOURAGE HEALTHY ACTIVE LIFESTYLES AMONG THEIR POPULATIONS

A joint initiative of The Association For International Sport for All (TAFISA) and Evaleo, the Global Active City Development project assists towns and cities in their efforts to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles among their different communities. It consists of an ISO-compatible framework, including standards, requirements and best practices, and a certification system.

It is a continuation of TAFISA's Triple AC (Active Cities, Active Communities, Active Citizens) programme, supported by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which brought together the

best practices by different cities in the promotion of physical activity and public health.

The project provides participating city authorities with the means to assess and improve levels of physical activity among their inhabitants, as well as tools to ensure that large sporting events leave a sustainable legacy for all, particularly for young people. It is a coherent, structured and inclusive approach that brings together urban actors from different sectors (sport, health, education, urban planning, economy, security).

The project is perfectly aligned with the priorities of the IOC, in particular

youth, sustainability and legacy of the Games, as well as efforts to combat non-communicable diseases, and enjoys the IOC's support.

Commenting on the approach, IOC President Thomas Bach notes: "Since 2014 the IOC has supported and funded this project, which is totally in line with the recommendations of Olympic Agenda 2020. The proposed framework and solutions will benefit, among others, host cities or future Candidate Cities in the organisation of major sports events, including the Olympic and Youth Olympic Games. The Active City approach will support participating cities in their efforts to overcome inactivity



among their populations, and in the planning and implementation of an event legacy.”

This project also enjoys the support of the IOC's Sport and Active Society Commission, chaired by IOC Member Sam Ramsamy. Two worrying trends prompted this initiative: the first relates to our habitat (growing urbanisation) and the second to our health (lack of exercise, poor diets). Changing habits, notably nutrition and sporting habits, are all too often the result of systemic environmental changes and the lack of targeted policies in sectors including health, transport, urban planning and education. This results in huge costs to society – hyper-connected but largely immobile!

As demonstrated by climate change mitigation efforts and the adoption of new technologies, cities have become primary actors in efforts to effect change. Thanks to their infrastructure, resources and proximity to key players in neighbourhoods, businesses, communities, schools and associations, cities can act as catalysts for the introduction of sport and public health policies. Gabriel Messmer, President and founder of Evaleo, is conscious of the key role that cities can play.

“During my mission for the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) in Somalia and other parts of

the world, I quickly understood that building a strong alliance and mutual understanding among the different local players is key to the success of any large-scale project,” he says.

“Decision-making is often faster in cities than at national or international levels. Thus, delivering tangible impacts on the lives of an ever-growing number of city dwellers can be more effective if managed at a city and neighbourhood level.”

However, cities are not always equipped to deal with these challenges. In addition to a poor understanding of the situation, many have neither the resources nor the tools to implement projects and lack easy access to tried and tested models. The Active City network and certification can really help them. TAFISA Secretary General Wolfgang Baumann has witnessed first-hand the growing interest among cities for this concept.

“Cities are in need of a framework, access to best practices and the capacity to share and learn from each other,” he says. “They often face the same challenges regarding urbanisation and inactivity, even though they all have various constraints, contexts and resources to deal with. We try to assist and guide them as best we can for the well-being of their population.”

During the first phase of the project, two levels of standard were defined incorporating a set of requirements and examples of best practices. While this framework takes into account a number of factors – including the size of the city, the available budget and the objectives – it focuses above all on the need for an ambitious vision, which needs to be supported by the city authorities and bolstered by a strong alliance between actors from different sectors who are not used to collaborating.

This framework was developed in close collaboration with the English city of Liverpool, an early partner in the project, where a forerunner of the Active City concept was first established in 2005, with visible results. The approach and the standards were subsequently tested in 2016 by seven pilot cities, each of which was visited by a delegation that conducted a primary assessment.



1.9bn

adults were overweight (of whom 600 million were obese) in 2014*

41m

children under five were overweight or obese in 2014*

54%

of the global population lived in urban areas in 2014**

66%

of the global population projected to live in urban areas by 2050**

By sharing their suggestions, experiences and challenges, they helped develop a flexible and systematic approach, which is applicable to cities throughout the world – regardless of the context. These standards will be published in June 2017. During the second phase of the project, cities hoping to achieve certification will be assessed and receive accreditation in line with one of the two levels, depending on their starting point as well as their objectives and commitments.

Above all, they will have an opportunity to learn from one another and implement initiatives tailored to their particular situation as part of efforts to reverse current trends and encourage their citizens to become more active and adopt healthier lifestyles.

The Active City framework will be shared and further promoted at the Smart Cities & Sport Summit, a city platform led by the World Union of Olympic Cities, which was recognised by the IOC in 2015.

For more information, please email info@active-cities.org



LILLEHAMMER - STILL ACTIVE

TWELVE MONTHS AFTER HOSTING THE 2ND WINTER YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES, LILLEHAMMER – A PILOT CITY FOR THE GLOBAL ACTIVE CITY PROJECT – IS REAPING THE REWARDS OF ITS YOUTH AND SPORTING LEGACY



On 21 February 2016, when the flame went out on the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in Lillehammer, the Olympic and sporting flame continued to shine brightly in this city, which had also played host to the Olympic Winter Games in 1994.

One year on, memories live on of the 1,100 young athletes who came to compete, learn and share; the 20,000 schoolchildren who came to watch the competitions, try out new sports and dance with Sjogg, the YOG mascot; and Sjoggfest, the hugely successful musical and cultural programme, which attracted more than 100,000 spectators and

participants. A great undertaking for this small Norwegian community!

Along with the vivid memories, the legacy of Lillehammer 2016 is very much alive. The city has benefited from the renovation of several sites, including the Lysgårdsbakkene Ski Jumping Arena, which hosted a leg of the FIS Ski Jumping World Cup in December 2016 and the RAW AIR Tournament in March this year. Lillehammer also organised a stage of the FIS Cross-Country World Cup in December 2016. Neighbouring Hamar, which hosted the YOG speed skating World

Above

YOG volunteers have used the skills they gained from Lillehammer 2016 to play an active role in their communities

Allround Speed Skating Championships in early March 2017.

Some 360 apartments were built to house athletes in the Youth Olympic Village using funding from the IOC. Today, they are inhabited by students – a precious legacy for Lillehammer and the surrounding region.

Alongside the infrastructure, many YOG volunteers and organisers have put to good use the skills and knowledge gained from their Olympic experience or the Young Leaders programme designed to train young people for an active role in the development of sport within their clubs and communities.

“Many of the Young Leaders are now board members of their local clubs or regional sports administrations. They feel their major task is to ensure that youth sport remains open for everyone, not just for people who want to compete,” said Kathrine Godager, Youth Sport Advisor at the Norwegian National Olympic Committee.

The YOG have inspired clubs and volunteers to continue their efforts to encourage sporting activity, especially among young people. Alexander Eriksson, for example, who volunteered at Lillehammer 2016 as a digital content manager, has joined the board of the Lillehammer Ski Club and become a trainer and head of a new freestyle section. He created this department after the YOG.

“At the start, we had no members; we now have 36 and more are joining every week! The creation of freestyle

in the club was most likely a result of the YOG and serves as an inspiration for the kids,” he said.

“I have had so many great opportunities through sports, so I am fortunate to have a lifetime to give everything I can back.”

A Lillehammer 2016 Legacy Centre, supported by the IOC, is also in the pipeline to welcome young athletes, trainers or sports administrators from countries that are less-well equipped for winter sports.

Lillehammer is a good example of a city that has been able to leverage Olympic and sporting events to engage young people and plan for a lasting legacy. The mayor of the city, Espen Granberg Johnsen, is its most enthusiastic supporter.

“Being an Olympic city means a lot to Lillehammer. We work every day for the future to keep the Olympic spirit alive, to empower youth and to give



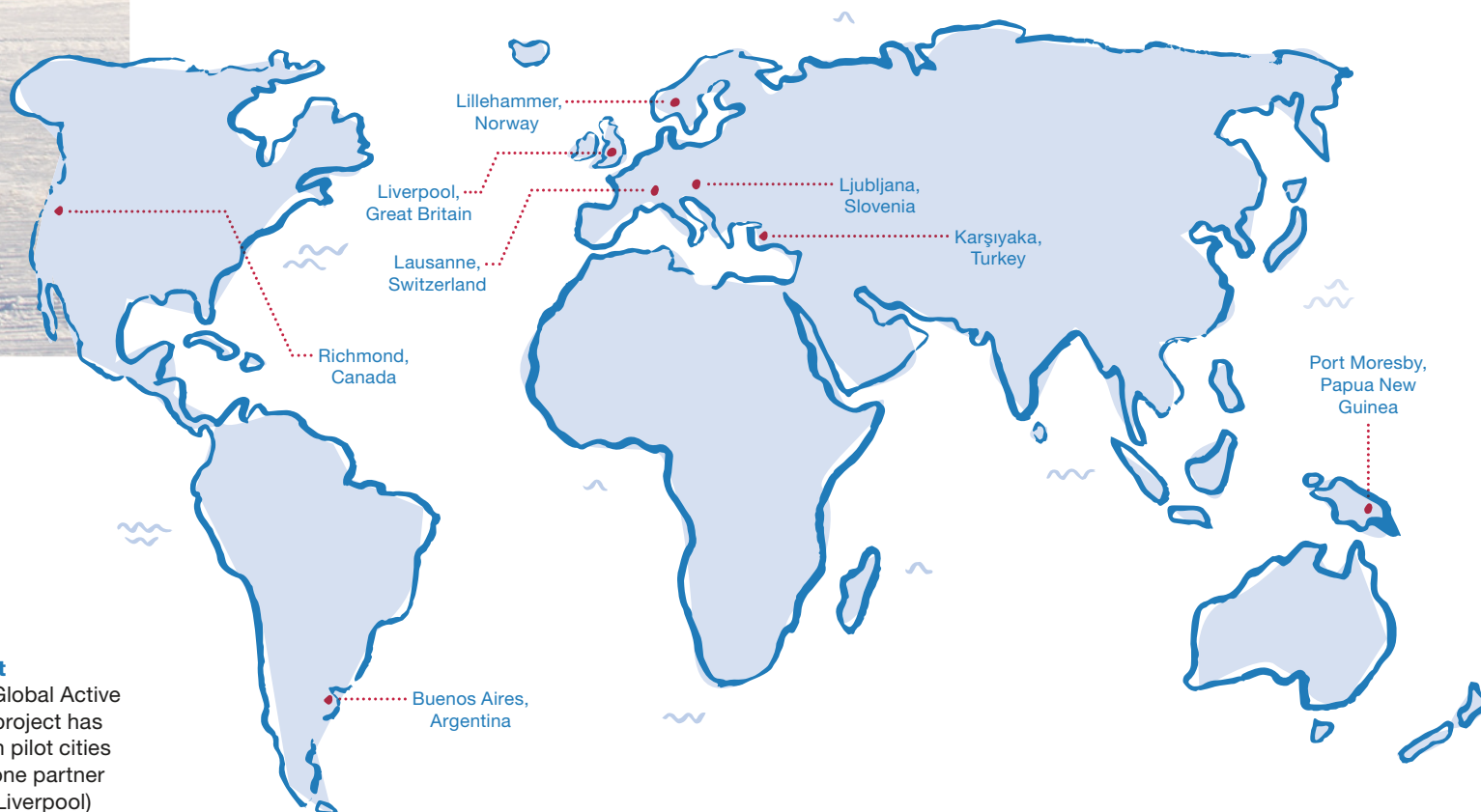
360 apartments, funded by the IOC to house athletes in the Youth Olympic Village, now inhabited by students in Lillehammer



Lillehammer has hosted several **international sports events** since the 2nd Winter Youth Olympic Games

our population the best opportunities to be active,” he said.

“We are proud to be a pilot city for the Global Active City Development project supported by the IOC and our current initiatives will be continued and reinforced within that framework.” ■



Right
The Global Active City project has seven pilot cities and one partner city (Liverpool)