

## **“NOlympics 2018 in Munich! Resistance network is growing!”**

Amongst the local community the “Munich +2” bid for the Olympic Winter Games 2018 is a topic of ever increasing controversy. The pro Olympic contingent generates glowing prospects of financial gain, an improved infrastructure and a boost for the region in positive publicity. Garmisch-Partenkirchen maintains that the town to this day still reaps the benefits that are a result of the 1936 nazi olympics. Unfortunately, this dark chapter in the history of Garmisch-Partenkirchen has never thoroughly come to light.

### **The dark side of the coin**

All that glitters is not golden and in reference to the shimmering Olympic medal there is also a darker side of that coin. Greenwashing and Alpine Disneyland in spite of the climate change, zero transparency and lack of democratic control, immoral adherence contracts for the host towns, the actual expenditure for the games themselves is constantly rising and megalomaniac road construction projects – in short, the Munich, Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Schönau bid for the Olympic Winter Games 2018 represents all of this and more.

If we take a realistic view at the requirements and planning proposals of the Munich bid, it is plain to see that the 2018 games are not only an uncalculated ecological and economical venture but they also pose as a social risk for many local citizens, more so for the people who dwell in the mountains towns of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Berchtesgaden and Oberammergau.

### **The opposition is gaining momentum**

The platform **NOlympia** was founded in Munich on January 11, 2010, with a view to preventing this pending disaster by stopping the Olympic Winter Games from taking place in these harrowing times of climate change. The platform comprises large nature preserve associations such as the Bund Naturschutz, political parties such as the Greens or the ÖDP, the Society for Ecological Research and dedicated private individuals. In addition, there is growing opposition from the local citizens of Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Oberammergau and from the land owners who will be affected. With each new piece of legitimate information that is added to the growing dossier, this opposing movement finds a mounting response. A survey that was conducted in November 2009 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen revealed that only 57% were in favour of the games. A more detailed and in-depth line of questioning revealed, however, that the votes in favour are generally the people who are uninformed and unaware of the concealed negative effects. In short, this means that the more information gathered, the more likely it will be for the percentage of those who are in favour of the games to decrease.

Currently, there are two websites under construction which will possibly go live in February: <http://www.nolympia.de> and <http://www.nolympia2018.de>. As an example, the website of the Society for Ecological Research reveals the drastic environmental interventions with regards to the forest clearing that will be necessary to create the Ski World Cup slopes in Garmisch-Partenkirchen ([www.goef.de](http://www.goef.de) : Arbeitsschwerpunkte/Olympische Winterspiele). Several more information events, with – amongst others – the Olympia critic Willy Rehberg from Salzburg, are already planned (March 9 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and March 11 in Berchtesgaden).

## **No snow guarantee due to climate change**

“Munich + 2” – the town of Munich and the communities of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Oberammergau and Schönau am Königssee – make their bid with the promises of “ecological”, “sustainable” and “climate neutral” games. Even a “green heritage” for the local area has been pledged. But how can they possibly fulfil these requirements for 2018, i.e. in eight years time, in the times of the climate change? How can they guarantee e.g. reliable snow conditions? It is a fact that the affected Alpine region is ecologically very sensitive and has only low altitudes that range from 900 to 1700 metres.

Currently, the televised images of the drastic measures taken in Vancouver are in view for the whole world see. Gigantic trucks and helicopters hauling massive loads of snow as the slopes of Vancouver are subjected to record spring-like temperatures. This should be a warning of grim prospects for us if the Munich 2018 games take place (as early as 2007, the world cup in Garmisch could only be secured by colossal transportations of snow using trucks from the Wipptal which is 100 km away). The effects of producing snow for a large area are the opposite of sustainable with regards to the local water supply and the massive energy consumption that goes along with it. Already in 2007, the costs for one single snow cannon were greater than the amount of money that the Garmisch council received for the sale of one social flat.

## **What must be built to accommodate the games, interventions into nature and the environment**

Contrary to the statements of the bidders, a large number of new facilities would have to be built such as the “Snow Village” and the Media Village, the street for the sporting facilities, parking places, a small jump, lifts and even more facilities that would be necessary for the skiing competitions. The construction of these facilities constitutes a massive intervention into nature and will permanently destroy the century old small scale agriculture and valuable cultural landscape devastating the abundant wildlife species in the meadows. The large-scale forest clearings at the Kandahar slope in Garmisch which was within the framework of the preparations for the Ski World Cup 2011 proved that such invention can turn out to be a lot bigger than originally planned and approved: baring this in mind prepare for substantial serious consequences as the results of the Olympic constructions.

Temporary facilities for cross-country skiing and biathlon are planned to be built on the beautiful suntrap meadows of Oberammergau in the midst of a wonderful natural and cultural landscape.

In addition to the plans for road construction, there also exist other extensive construction plans with regards to the bid for 2018:

The plans for motorway and main road construction is estimated at the cost of about 2 billion Euros; whereas the extension of public transport is planned with an investment of only 300 million Euros, a clear thwarting of the goal of sustainable games. If all main roads in the area of the Loisachtal – in which Garmisch-Partenkirchen is located – are built, then the valley will be part of a new transit road, this will result in a massive increase in traffic that will greatly influence the future of the affected towns and the landscapes.

## **Security Costs**

In Vancouver, the security costs quintupled. According to estimations, the security costs alone will reach 1 billion \$ (for the Munich bid the security costs were estimated with 17 to 21 million €, even though the risk of danger is a very real prospect due to the terror attack at the Summer Olympic Games). Up to now, there has been no mention whatsoever in the bidding documents of 16 thousand soldiers and policemen who are planned to be deployed as the security force.

### **The IOC and their adhesion contracts**

The IOC places all responsibilities and liabilities, all costs and succeeding costs (occurring after the games), all risks firmly onto the shoulders of bidding towns' in contrast the IOC secures all advantages, rights and financial securities for itself. When Salzburg was still in the bidding, Austrian finance lawyers proclaimed these contracts as "immoral adhesion contracts".

We do not want to be amongst the towns that submit themselves to the diktat of these immoral contracts through the IOC: Contracts in which the undersigning local councils have to make guarantees at a time where the actual contract is not yet available. The following passage is taken from the annex to the consultation basics: "The decision making on this guarantee must be made without knowing the later content of the contract and the respective duties that have yet to be revealed."

### **The financial effects on the communities and their citizens**

The bidding towns of Munich, Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Oberammergau are already amongst the towns with the highest rate of debt in Bavaria. The financial effects of hosting the winter games will render these communities unable to act and redeem.

The Olympic winter games lead to massive cost increases in the town, to the construction of second homes and a rise in rents. This means that the living costs of the local population will substantially increase and remain so.

### **We do not want the games!**

The constant planning and re-planning and the never ending discussion on which location for both the permanent and temporary facilities already makes it quite clear at this early stage that the valley of Garmisch-Partenkirchen is far too small to host such a huge event.

Another example for the insecurity of the planning is the promise of a "lighthouse project within the environmental concept" of the bidding association: Already even before submitting the bidding documents the so-called biosphere reservation – announced as green heritage – was found to be unfeasible.

Knowing that the games will also be a high risk for the tourism branch in a town like Garmisch-Partenkirchen, that the increase in the guest figures are mere fiction, that the debts and problems will suffocate all of the participating towns of the bid "Munich + 2 we do not want the games, especially not here in Upper Bavaria.

In these dire times of the climate change responsible actions to avoid any CO<sub>2</sub> output are required more than ever before. Every four years the Olympic winter games in their current dimensions become a massive detriment to each and every new hosting mountain area.

February 9, 2010

NOlympia 2018

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