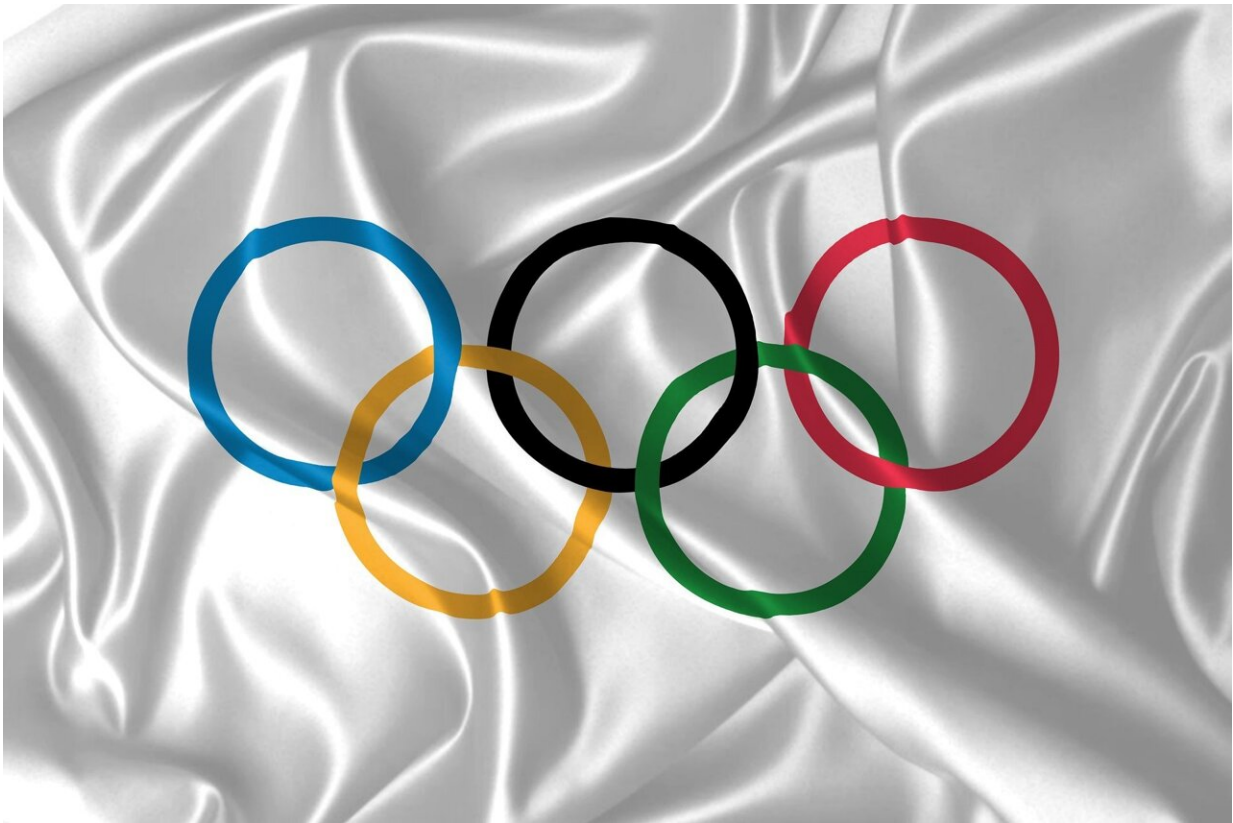


Little evidence that host countries win more Olympic medals

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Countries hosting the Olympic Games do not tend win more medals when socioeconomic factors are controlled for, reports a study published in *Scientific Reports*. The findings dispute the existence of the so-called

"host effect"—where hosting countries win more medals than usual—although the authors caution that larger studies involving more editions of the Olympics are needed to confirm these findings.

Countries bidding to host the Olympics often use the suggestion that this will increase their medal count as justification to their citizens for their application. It has previously been claimed that host countries typically win an additional 1.8% of medals at the Summer Olympics, although this boost varies across different sports.

Gergely Csurilla and Imre Fertő investigated the extent to which hosting the Olympics increases medals won by comparing medal count data for countries who hosted the Summer Olympic Games between 1996 and 2021 in the year they hosted versus when they did not host. The host countries for these games were: the U.S., Australia, Greece, China, the U.K., Brazil, and Japan. The researchers analyzed total medal counts as well as medal counts for male and female athletes.

The authors report that, when adjusted for [socioeconomic factors](#) such as GDP per capita and [population size](#), the host effect vanished for most countries. Only Australia (2000 host) and the U.K. (2012 host) retained a significantly increased total medal count. For male athletes, the U.K. and Brazil (2016 host) saw significantly greater medal numbers, while Australian [female athletes](#) also won significantly more medals than expected.

The authors suggest that countries bidding to host the Olympics should be cautious about expecting to win more medals than usual.

More information: Gergely Csurilla, The less obvious effect of hosting the Olympics on sporting performance, *Scientific Reports* (2023). [DOI: 10.1038/s41598-022-27259-8](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-27259-8).
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