

## Economic, Environmental and Regulatory aspects of sustainability of the Milan-Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games Legacy

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### Abstract

*This article critically examines the prospective sustainability legacy of the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games by integrating economic, environmental, and regulatory dimensions within a single analytical framework. From an economic perspective, the event adopts a comparatively restrained infrastructure model centred on the reuse of existing and temporary venues, the valorisation of established alpine and metropolitan tourism systems, and the reduction of stranded asset risk. Such an approach may enhance allocative efficiency, stimulate local small and medium-sized enterprises, and support regional development; however, its long-term effectiveness will depend on rigorous expenditure control, timely project delivery, and credible post-event governance. Environmentally, Milano Cortina 2026 advances a sustainability agenda based on venue reuse, renewable electricity, circular procurement, waste separation, and lower-carbon mobility solutions. Nevertheless, the spatial dispersion of venues, the climate vulnerability of winter sport, and the ecological sensitivity of Alpine ecosystems raise persistent concerns regarding transport-related emissions, snowmaking requirements, water consumption, and biodiversity impacts. Regulatory factors are equally decisive. The legacy of the Games will be shaped by the interaction between Olympic commitments and Italian and European legal instruments governing strategic environmental assessment, public procurement, transparency, monitoring, and compliance. The article argues that Milano Cortina 2026 could constitute a significant case of pragmatic sustainability in mega-event governance, but only if institutional oversight, measurable indicators, and ex post evaluation transform declaratory commitments into durable social, environmental, and territorial benefits. Its ultimate scholarly relevance lies in whether these mechanisms generate verifiable redistributive gains and ecological improvements beyond 2026.*

**Keywords:** Olympic legacy, sustainability governance, regulatory compliance, mega-event governance, strategic environmental assessment, public accountability