

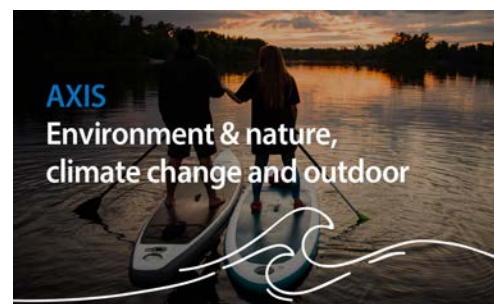
UNESCO Chair Sport for Development, Peace and Environment

« 2025 Annual Report »

Chairholder: Prof. Tegwen Gadais and Prof. Karen Petry

Introduction

The UNESCO Research Chair *Sport for Development, Peace and the Environment* in a Multidisciplinary and Global Perspective' focuses on sport, physical activity and physical education initiatives and projects that are implemented to respond in particular to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targeted by the United Nations (SDGs 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 13, 16, 17). It brings together experts from every continent, in many languages, on several themes to offer a global, multidisciplinary and collaborative vision of research work between so-called "North" and "South" countries. It focuses primarily on collaborative projects, or the creation of partnerships at several levels (local, regional, national or international) and between several players (researchers, civil society, administrators, beneficiaries). The chair uses *global collaboration* to conduct *teaching, dissemination* and *research* across 4 axes: education, health and social development; environment and nature, climate change and outdoors; gender and equity; and peace and social cohesion. The following report presents a summary and highlights of activities across the chair in 2025.



UNESCO Chair Launch

On August 12, 2025, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) inaugurated its seventh UNESCO Chair, co-chaired by Professor Tegwen Gadais and Professor Karen Petry (Chairholders).

The event presented the key aspects of the chair to a range of guests, including students, academics, practitioners and politicians.

Special thanks to the Fonds de recherche du Québec, Université du Québec à Montréal, and the Ministère des Relations internationales et de la Francophonie du Québec for their support in making this event possible. A heartfelt thank you to the students and the UQAM team for their invaluable support in organizing this launch.



GLOBAL COLLABORATION

Dialogue with the UNESCO Sport Section began during the development of the UNESCO chair. In 2024, the relationship was further consolidated with Co-chairholder Karen Petry and Advisory Committee members Alana Richardson and Sally-Ann Jennifer Fischer representing the UNESCO Chair at the UNESCO's 'Change the Game' Global Sport Conference. The event included a Partner's and Ministerial forum where a new UNESCO report was launched: 'The Social Impact of Sport: unlocking the potential of sport to drive social transformations'. We are committed to contributing to the report's calls for more evidence-based insights, research and collective action to change the game over the coming years.



Cooperation with UNESCO Headquarters

In 2025, the executive committee team has been in consistent contact with the UNESCO headquarters Sport Section in Paris. Over a series of meetings each quarter, the executive committee updated the sport section on our work and plans. There will be continued involvement and alignment. Co chair holders are members of the Knowledge Innovation Network (KIN). The UNESCO chair also consulted on UNESCO's Global Policy Standards for Inclusive, Equitable and Safe Sport and Physical Education.

Scientific and Advisory Committees

Our commitment to global perspectives is highlighted through the diversity of the advisory and scientific committees. The [Scientific Committee](#) contains 9 members, representing all 7 continents. The [Advisory Committee](#) currently has 28 members, working in 34 countries, across all continents. Additionally, 14 languages are represented within the team. We meet with each committee to discuss the progress and projects of the chair and offer opportunities for collaboration and connection across regions and disciplines.

Collaboration in Action - Research Wraps

A collaborative project that has been born out of the UNESCO Chair is the [Research Wraps](#). After identifying the need to support research and learning in the sector, the executive committee, along with Scientific Committee member Ben Sanders, Executive Director at the International Platform on Sport and Development (sportanddev), developed the idea of publishing a summary of key academic research in the sector each quarter. This project is a joint venture between the UNESCO Chair, sportanddev, and the UNESCO Sport Section. After the successful launch, we published 4 research wraps in 2025, providing insights from 28 articles, contributing to bridging gaps between policy & practice and research & reality.



TEACHING

Oscar Mwaanga lectures at German Sport University

Students from the Master of International Sport Development and Politics at the German Sport University were lucky to hear the expertise of Scientific Committee member Oscar Mwaanga in a series of online lectures, the first in June and the second in November. The students in Germany were also joined online by students from the UK and Zambia, creating an environment for everyone to engage with and learn from each other. The lecture covered decoloniality in sport for development and was thought provoking for all involved.

Summer school in Montreal

From August 12–13 in Montreal, we held our 1st Summer School. The program brought together PhD and Master's students – including Umair Asif, Alana Richardson, Kazem Hozhabri, Jérôme Verret, Glen Hascoët, and Kehoe Picard – who presented research aligned with the Chair's themes: gender and equity, health and education, environment and nature, peace and social cohesion. The Summer School also included an insightful "Decolonizing in Sports" workshop led by advisory committee members Luc Parlavecchio and Jennifer Brazeau, sparking valuable and thought-provoking discussions. It concluded with The Climate Fresk, a collaborative educational activity on climate change, where participants shared ideas and perspectives for future action.



DISSEMINATION

UNESCO Chair - Sport for development, peace and environment

Education · 3K followers · 2-10 employees

The UNESCO Chair has established an online presence across our [website](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Both platforms are used to disseminate information about the chair and its members including publications, events and other news. The LinkedIn page has approximately 3,000 followers and has been an effective way to share chair activities with larger audiences. We encourage committee members to tag the page in their posts which helps to expand the reach.

[Videos](#)

Videos introducing the chair and the members of the executive committee were produced to showcase the UNESCO Chair in an easily accessible format. These videos will be a continued part of dissemination and promotion of the chair across both the website and LinkedIn.



Conferences

International Sociology of Sport Association (ISSA) World Congress 2025

Tegwen Gadais (Co-Chair), Billy Graeff (Co-President), Jeremy Hapeta (Scientific Committee) and Rochelle Stewart-Withers (Advisory Committee Member) presented four research projects at the World Congress of Sociology of Sport (ISSA), held from 8–11 July 2025 at Seoul National University. The presentations explored critical issues in the field of Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) and sociology of sport, including:

- Sport for Development and Peace Initiatives with Indigenous Peoples: A Systematic Scoping Review from International Perspectives
- A Systematic Review of Sport for Development and Peace Reviews
- Sport for Development and Peace in the Americas: Past and Present Research — a presentation based on multi-sited research across the continent
- Tino Rangatiratanga: Indigenous (Māori) Sovereignty and the Messy Realities of Reconciliation Efforts at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup



These contributions reflect the growing academic and practical relevance of SDP in diverse global contexts.

Olympism 365 Summit

Executive Committee member Simona Safarikova, represented UNESCO Chair at the Olympism365 Summit in Lausanne from 3–5 June 2025. The summit brought together key stakeholders to explore how sport can accelerate progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It was a valuable opportunity to engage with global leaders on how sport can contribute to building a better, more inclusive world.

RESEARCH

One of the first priorities of the UNESCO chair was to conduct some literature reviews, to ensure we have up to date and comprehensive information about the state of research. Below is a summary of two key pieces of research conducted within the chair.

[Sport for Development and Peace Reviews: A Systematic Scoping Review](#)

Members of the Executive, Scientific and Advisory Committee worked together to conduct a systematic review of other reviews within Sport for Development and Peace (SDP). Findings highlighted diverse thematic focuses, including those aligned with Sustainable Development Goals such as health promotion, gender equality, and educational outcomes, alongside novel areas such as managerial implications and critical pedagogy. Despite the wealth of research, consensus on sport's developmental potential remains elusive, hindered by methodological limitations and a dearth of quality assessments. Moreover, the dominance of English publications underscores a need for linguistic inclusivity, while reevaluating terminology and expanding disciplinary engagement can enrich and globalize the discourse. Critical reflection is warranted on the historical context of SFD/SDP, moving beyond colonial narratives to embrace diverse development paradigms, including intra-European perspectives.

[Sport for Development and Peace Initiatives with Indigenous People: A systematic scoping review from international perspectives](#)

Members of the Executive, Scientific and Advisory Committee worked together to conduct a systematic scoping review of International Perspectives of SDP initiatives with Indigenous People. Findings highlight a wide range of program structures and outcomes. Prominent themes include alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (notably 3, 4, 10, and 16), decolonization and cultural resurgence, health and well-being, and sport as a tool of resistance against systemic inequality. Challenges such as limited funding, logistical constraints, and political tensions remain significant. A critical insight is the necessity for culturally sensitive, community-led approaches that integrate Indigenous worldviews and knowledge systems. Programs centred on Indigenous practices show more sustainable and meaningful impact. Despite a growing body of research, most studies originate from English-speaking contexts—primarily Canada and Australia—indicating a need for greater linguistic and cultural inclusivity.

Selected Publications

Members of the chair, across the executive, scientific and advisory committees, have published a wealth of research in 2025. Below is a selection of those publications:

Asif, U., Derrick, C. & Gadais, T. (2025). Navigating Qualitative Method Challenges in Sport for Development and Preventing Violent Extremism in Pakistan. Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in Sport for Development and Peace. In B. Graeff (Eds.). London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003728214>

Asif, U., Derrick, C. & Gadais, T. (2025). Traversing Complex Landscapes in Pakistan: Exploring the Potential for Community-Based Sport Initiatives and the Prevention of Violent Extremism. International Handbook on Social Exclusion and Radicalisation. London: Routledge.

Asif, U., Charway, D., Gadais, T., Shafiq, M. A., & Asif, A. (2025). Transformative Impact of Kafka Welfare Organization's Sport for Development and Peace Program in Pakistan: A Holistic Approach. In A. F. Varela Jiménez, E. D. Ángel Landeros, D. Vazquez Licona & L. O. García Cortés, Leticia Ofelia (Eds.), Diplomacy and sports cooperation: Reputation, development, and peace. Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León.

Décarpentrie, L., Bélanger, C., Rakotondramanana, B.*, Rakotomalala, O., Guirao, J-L., Andrianina Ramarokoto Ny Aina, M.* & Gadais, T. (2025). Art, Music, and Sport: Catalysts of Growth for Youth in Extreme Contexts – A Qualitative Inquiry. Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10852352.2025.2580746>

Freitas, G. da S., Teixeira, J. C., Miguel, I. G. S., & Graeff, B. (2025). “Quero saber quando a gente volta de verdade”: Reflexões sobre o exercício do cuidado em projetos sociais com idosos(as) no sul do Brasil, em meio à pandemia de COVID-19. In A pandemia de COVID-19 e suas consequências para o esporte, o lazer e a educação física. Editora FURG. <https://repositorio.furg.br/server/api/core/bitstreams/786c79cd-7455-45ef-8838-7595056236ec/content>

Garcia Gonzalez, V. (2025). Deporte Social: un campo en disputa en México. *Revista da ALESDE*, 17(1), 31-57. <https://doi.org/10.5380/ra.v17i1.96039>

Graeff, B., & Marques, R. F. R. (2025). Sharing gifts: The modus narrandi of athletes' and former athletes' interests in supporting sport for development and peace programmes in Brazil. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 10126902251396244.

Graeff, B., & Giulianotti, R. (2025). Global sport mega-events and local community impacts: the case of housing and redevelopment in Porto Alegre at the 2014 Men's World Cup finals in Brazil. *Sport in Society*, 28(8), 1197-1213.

Moustakas, L., Carney, S., Fischer, S. J., Richardson, A., Petry, K., Svoboda, A., Hofmann, A., & Sanders, B. (2025). Playing for progress: policy advocacy in sport for development. *Frontiers in sports and active living*, 7, 1546222. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2025.1546222>

Moustakas, L., Raub, V., Petry, K., Wagner, J., Broermann, M., Alfindi, J., Al-Barwari, S., Mohammed, T., Qafisheh, B., Asim Mohammed, W., & Aldoski, D. (2025). Sport for Development and Psychosocial Wellbeing in Displacement Settings: A Quasi-Experimental Study from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. *Current Issues in Sport Science (CISS)*, 10(1), 002. <https://doi.org/10.36950/2025.10ciss002>

Neeten, M., **Petry, K.** (2025). Facilitating social cohesion between Syrian refugees and Turkish host communities - A conceptual & methodological approach of sport-for-social cohesion activities. In Petry, K./ Moustakas, L. (Eds.), *Sport for Social Cohesion. Theoretical and Practical Perspectives*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge (p. 125 - 141) <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003383291>

Petry, K., & Moustakas, L. (Eds.). (2025). *Sport for Social Cohesion: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003383291>

Petry, K., Moustakas, L., Frainer, K., Silva, A.(2025). Deporte con Principios and Treino Social: practical insights from international sport for development and peace activities in Colombia and Brazil. In S. Safarikova & Rojas C. (Eds.), *Sport for Development and Peace in Iberoamerica*. Escuela Sin Fronteras, p. 110 – 135.

Pitois, L., Chevance, G., Green, J., Benmarhnia, T., **Gadais, T.** & Bernard, P. (2025). Understanding urban climate-resilient cyclists: A solution to reducing individual motorized transport. *PLOSOne Climate - Sustainability and Transformation* 4(4), e0000611. Understanding urban climate-resilient cyclists: A solution to reducing individual motorized transport. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pclm.0000611>

Stewart-Withers, R., Hapeta, J., Rynne, S., & Giles, A. (2025). Tino Rangatiratanga: Indigenous (Māori) Sovereignty and the Messy Realities of Reconciliation Efforts at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup. *Event Management*, 29(1), 125-130.

Svoboda, A., **Šafaříková, S.**, Wittmannová, J., Hoffmann, A. (2025). Experiences from Implementing a Football for Development Programme as a Tool for Social Cohesion in the Olomouc Region, Czech Republic. *Sport for Social Cohesion* (Eds. Karen Petry and Louis Moustakas), Pp. 197-213. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003383291-18>

Svoboda, A., **Šafaříková, S.**, Knijnik, J., & Graeff, B. (2025). Gender-washing or gender equity? Women and sports in contemporary Saudi Arabia. In A. E. Ali & U. Hussain (Eds.), *Arab and Middle Eastern Sport: Critical Muslim Perspectives*.