# P191 / Sport Policy as Crossroads with other Public Policies

**Topic :** Agenda-Setting/Problem Definition

**Chair :** Hiroko Kudo (Chuo University)

**Second Chair :** Takuma ABE (Taisho University)

**Third Chair :** Gianluca Antonucci (Università degli Studi "G. d'Annunzio" Chieti)

**Fourth Chair :** Takuya Hiratsuka (Nara Women's University)

**5th Chair :** MASAKAZU NAITO (Aichi Gakuin University)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Background

After our first successful presence as panel at ICPP7, we would like to create opportunities for researchers of public policy to “encounter, rethink, and redefine” sport policy. Sport Policy has attracted researchers interested in sport; however, our panel at ICPP7 was eye-opening experience, as researchers with other research interests, such as healthcare, environment, inclusion, and youth/elderly, participated in the panel with interesting works related on sport policy from different perspectives. We would like to repropose the panel on sport policy, but from different angle: offering opportunities for researchers who worked on sport from various perspectives to redefine their works and refine the value under sport policy.
Thus, our panel proposal would like to address to those who have worked on sport related issues from different perspectives and reposition their work with sport policy.
Starting from the post WW2 “rebirth” of the London Olympic Games in 1948 (IOC, 2024), the link between sport and public policy has been evolving fast, having nowadays, most of the countries in the world, with specific Sport Acts to manage both elite and amateur sport (Dowling et al., 2018). Since new millennium, public sector bodies are having an always increasing direct and/or indirect involvement in the provision of sport (Houlihan & Green, 2007) even invoking the principle of political neutrality by Sports Governing Bodies (Grix & James, 2024). For direct involvement, public bodies ought to be proactive, in sustaining local communities, by encouraging engagement through sport activities (Morgan et al. 2026), thus related in favouring physical activities for health, and social interactions for inclusion and wellbeing (COM, 2007). These actively contribute to the improvement of citizen’s health (Geidne et al., 2025); to the creation of safer and stronger communities (Coyle et al., 2026); and in improving youngsters’ education (Simwanza, 2026). It can even be useful in addressing social and economic inequalities within different localities (Skinner et al., 2008).
The indirect involvement sees them engaged in assuring proper implementation of both professional and amateur sport events, dealing with several responsibilities, including safety, security for traffic management, and collaboration on the construction of institutional facilities for events (Hossain, 2026). These deal also with aspects related to social, economic, and environmental sustainability, being all these factors linked to the general theme of the legacy of the sport events, especially international ones, first of all Olympic Games (Thomson et al., 2019).
Moreover, grassroot sport could be considered as a lever for public policy to support citizens’ relationships and their quality of life. Just to make an example, according to the Council of Europe (2006), sport is the largest voluntary non-governmental organisational activity throughout Europe, with more volunteers than any other activity.
To address all these aspects related to nowadays public role of sport it is therefore required to investigate and implement new models in public administration (Figus & Pisaniello, 2025).
General Objectives

Above mentioned features of sport policy show fundamental issues and unlimited possibilities of sport policy itself: many of you have worked on one of the above cited policy issues from various perspectives, but not from sport policy point of view, and thus, if you encounter “sport policy” as crossroads of what you have studied and rethink and redefine sport policy from different perspectives, we can build an interesting new community of sport policy.
Sport policy is not yet well established as a public policy research topic. However, several themes – from the governance of sport through hybrid organisations, to the creation of public value and its measurement (from people wellbeing through sport to the legacy of big sport events), not forgetting aspects related to sustainability – should be handled by public policy researchers.
That is why we decided to propose this panel, which specific, but not exclusive, themes are reported below.
Scientific relevance

The panel's scientific relevance its not only in the above reported aspects but especially in the aim of creating debate within the panel participants, engage public policy researchers, in both theory and in practice.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

This panel will seek both theoretical and empirical contributions that tackle the issues connected with Sport Public Policy, in its all-different facets.

Recommended topics include, but are not limited to, the followings:

- The different aspects concerning the governance of sport policy
- Social and/or economic outcomes of public sector involvement in sport
- Realisation of Mega Sport Events through ESG perspectives
- Planning and realising Sport facilities for grassroots and professional sports from urban regeneration perspective
- How can sport add "public and social value"?
- How other public policy fields relate to sport policy for creating sustainable communities and community well-being/healthy living?
- Sport and the resolution of social and community issues and equality and inclusion through sport
- The capacity of sport to address social and economic inequalities within different localities
- Sport as lever for reducing gender gap
- Active ageing through the support of sport and physical activities
- Sport in UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'s perspective

**References**


COM (2007). White Paper on Sport, European Commission. Available at the link: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52007DC0391 (last accessed: Sept 2024).

Council of Europe (2006) Feasibility Study on the Proposed Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport: Background Document: MSL-IM17 (2006) 1

Coyle, B., Murray, C., Morgan, H., Breslin, G., & Parker, A. (2026). From Conflict to Connection: Examining the Use of Sport as a Mechanism for Cross-Community Engagement and Youth Crime Prevention in Northern Ireland. *Youth Justice*, 26(2), 266-286. https://doi.org/10.1177/14732254251413403

De Bock, T., Scheerder, J., Theeboom, M. et al. (2022) Stuck between medals and participation: an institutional theory perspective on why sport federations struggle to reach Sport-for-All goals. *BMC Public Health* 22, 1891 (2022). doi: https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-14230-5

de Dycker, S. (2019) Good governance in Sport: comparative law aspects, The International Sports Law Journal, 19(1-2), pp. 116-128. doi: https://doi.org/10.1007/s40318-019-00153-8

Dowling, M., Leopkey, B., & Smith, L. (2018). Governance in Sport: A Scoping Review. *Journal of Sport Management*, 32(5), 438-451. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2018-0032

Figus, A., & Pisaniello, A. (2025). The policy of sport and the public function of sport. *Geopolitical, Social Security and Freedom Journal*, 7(2), 12-25. https://doi.org/10.2478/gssfj-2024-0009

Geidne, S., Ericson, H., Quennerstedt, M., Van Hoye, A. (2025). Health Promotion and Sports. In: Liamputtong, P. (eds) *Handbook of Concepts in Health, Health Behavior and Environmental Health*. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-0821-5_84-1

Grix, J., James, M. (2024) The politicisation of sport and the principle of political neutrality: a contradiction in terms?. International Sports Law Journal 24, 68–77. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s40318-024-00273-w

Houlihan, B., & Green, M. (Eds.). (2007). Comparative Elite Sport Development (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780080554426

Hossain, S. T., Yigitcanlar, T., Crutzen, N., Herold, D. M., Ostern, N. K., & Wu, P. P.-Y. (2026). SAFE-CITY-AI: Responsible governance of AI-enabled surveillance for mega sporting events. *Cities*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2026.107520

IOC (2024) Olympic Games London 1948, International Olympic Committee. Available at the link https://olympics.com/en/olympic-games/london-1948 (last accessed: Oct 2024).

Morgan, H., Manley, A., & Bush, A. (2026). Promoting physical activity participation: the importance of place-belonging within inclusive community sports clubs. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* , 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2026.2735001

Simwanza, A. (2026) Influence of sports participation on youth development among secondary school

students. *Discover Education* 5, 300. https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-026-01326-y

Skinner, J., Zakus, D. H., & Cowell, J. (2008). Development through Sport: Building Social Capital in Disadvantaged Communities. *Sport Management Review*, *11*(3), 253–275. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523(08)70112-8

Thomson, A., Cuskelly, G., Toohey, K., Kennelly, M., Burton, P., Fredline, L. (2019) Sport event legacy: A systematic quantitative review of literature, *Sport Management Review*, 22(3), pp. 295–321. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2018.06.011