



## REPORT ON THE 21ST CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT “SPORT AND THE WORLD IN CRISIS: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS”

Warsaw, Poland, 25–27 June 2025

This was the second time the European Association of Sociology of sport (EASS) conference was held in Poland, following the 2004 conference in Rzeszów. Its return after more than twenty years was particularly meaningful, given the country’s importance to the organization’s founding. The main conference theme, “*Sport and the World in Crisis: Challenges and Solutions,*” highlights how sport intersects with global politics, ethics, and issues of (in) equality. EASS conferences offer a key platform for sport sociologists to present and debate research on the social roles and significance of sport, physical activity, and exercise in society.

This year’s keynote speakers addressed a rich and diverse set of themes, each shedding light on the complex challenges and lived realities confronting sports in the contemporary moment. Topics ranged from the datafication and automation of sport, and the implications of artificial intelligence (Prof. Brad



Millington), to examinations of sports clubs as vital spaces for community organization, political mobilization, and belonging (Prof. Dorota Woroniecka-Krzyzanowska). Looking ahead, reflections on the future of sport amid digital transformation, climate change, geopolitical instability, and demographic change (Prof. Holger Preuss) underscored the extent to which sport is deeply entangled with the most pressing social, political, and economic issues of our time.

Parallel Sessions and Poster Presentations: The wide range (over 150) of oral and poster presentations was very rich. At this conference, Ana Cikač, MSc, and I presented the paper “*Perfectionism and Injuries in Women’s Team Sports: Preliminary Findings*,” reporting selected results from the project “*Machine Learning to Reduce Injury Gaps in Women’s Team Sports*,” co-funded by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency. With multiple parallel sessions, choosing was challenging, but the talks offered fresh perspectives rather than ready-made answers.

The 2025 Young Researcher Award was awarded to Marit Hiemstra (PhD Candidate) for “*Knowing More Than Rationally in Guided Running*,” which examines how safety and enjoyment are experienced in partnerships between runners with sight loss and their guides, and how standardized training can limit embodied trust and relational ways of knowing.

Social Programme: A city walking tour offered our first introduction to Warsaw, with the guide’s vivid account of its layered history leaving a lasting impression. Chopin’s music, embedded in the city through sound benches, added a unique sensory dimension. The conference dinner, with its beautiful view over the square, was equally enjoyable, and we are already looking forward to the next, 22nd conference in Jyväskylä, Finland, from 15–18 June 2026.

Saša Pišot

## POROČILO Z 21. KONFERENCE EVROPSKEGA ZDRUŽENJA ZA SOCIOLOGIJO ŠPORTA *ŠPORT IN SVET V KRIZI: IZZIVI IN REŠITVE*

Varšava, Poljska, 25.–27. junij 2025

To je bila druga konferenca Evropskega združenja za sociologijo športa (EASS), ki je potekala na Poljskem, po prvotni konferenci leta 2004 v Rzeszówu. Vrnitev tja po več kot dvajsetih letih je bila še posebej pomembna, saj ima Poljska ključno vlogo pri ustanovitvi združenja EASS. Glavna tema konference *Šport in svet v krizi: izzivi in rešitve* poudarja, da je šport povezan z globalno politiko, etiko in vprašanji (ne)enakosti. Konference EASS so zato pomembna platforma za športne sociologe, ki lahko tam predstavijo teme, ki osvetljujejo družbeno vlogo in pomen športa, gibalne dejavnosti in vadbe, in razpravljajo o njih.

Letošnji glavni vabljeni predavatelji so predstavili bogat in raznolik nabor tem, vsaka pa je osvetlila kompleksne izzive in realnosti, s katerimi se danes sooča šport. Teme so segale od podatkovne obdelave in avtomatizacije športa ter vplivov umetne inteligence (prof. Brad Millington) do raziskovanja športnih



klubov kot ključnih prostorov za organizacijo skupnosti, politično mobilizacijo in občutek pripadnosti (prof. Dorota Woroniecka-Krzyzanowska). Pogledi v prihodnost športa ob upoštevanju digitalne preobrazbe, podnebnih sprememb, geopolitične nestabilnosti in demografskih sprememb, ki jih je predstavil prof. Holger Preussa, pa so poudarili, kako tesno je šport povezan z najnujnejšimi družbenimi, političnimi in gospodarskimi vprašanji našega časa.

Nabor več kot 150 prispevkov in predstavitev posterjev je bil zelo širok in raznolik. Na tej konferenci sva z mag. Ano Cikač predstavili prispevek *Perfectionism and Injuries in Women's Team Sports: Preliminary Findings*, ki prinaša del rezultatov projekta *Machine Learning to Reduce Injury Gaps in Women's Team Sports*, sofinanciranega s strani Agencije za raziskave in inovacije RS. Zaradi številnih sočasnih predstavitev je bilo te sicer težko izbrati, vendar so ponujale nove perspektive in vpoglede ter ne samo vnaprej pripravljenih odgovorov.

Nagrada mladega\_ e raziskovalca\_ ke 2025 je prejela Marit Hiemstra za prispevek *Knowing More Than Rationally in Guided Running*, ki raziskuje, kako se varnost in užitek doživljata v partnerskih odnosih med tekači z okvaro vida in njihovimi vodniki ter kako standardizirano usposabljanje lahko omejuje utelešeno zaupanje in relacijske načine dojemanja.

Družabni program: Sprehod po mestu je ponudil naš prvi stik z Varšavo, pri čemer je vodnikova živahna predstavitev njene dramatične zgodovine pustila močen vtis. Chopinova glasba, vgrajena v mesto prek zvočnih klopi, je dodala posebno senzorično dimenzijo. Konferenčna večerja s čudovitim razgledom na trg je bila prav tako zelo prijetna. Zelo se že veselimo naslednje 22. konference v kraju Jyväskylä na Finskem, ki bo potekala od 15. do 18. junija 2026.

Saša Pišot