

PRE-GAMES PAPER 2.0

**RHINE-RUHR 2025**

# **ZOOM-IN & ZOOM-OUT**

**HUMAN RIGHTS  
SUSTAINABILITY  
LEGACY**

ENGLISH



**FISU**  
WORLD  
UNIVERSITY  
GAMES  
SUMMER

# #SDGS ARE ALL-IN!



AS OF: **JANUARY 2025**

ZOOM-IN & ZOOM-OUT

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RHINE-RUHR 2025

# FOREWORD



**NIKLAS BÖRGER**  
CEO - Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU  
World University Games

**Dear readers and interested parties,  
Dear sports enthusiasts and supporters of the FISU World University Games 2025,**

In summer 2025, the eyes of the international sporting world will be on Germany, or, more precisely, on North Rhine-Westphalia and Berlin. The FISU World University Games will take place in six cities: Bochum, Duisburg, Essen, Mülheim an der Ruhr, Hagen and Berlin. Around 8,500 athletes from up to 150 nations will compete against each other over 12 days of competition.

Organising such an event is an honour and a great responsibility. Our aim is to set new standards and show that sport is not only deeply rooted in the DNA of this region, but can also be a driver for sustainable development. Of course, sport takes centre stage, but there is more to it than that: the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games are not just a major sporting event, but also a platform that embodies the spirit of intercultural community, the exchange of knowledge and ideas, and the contribution of sport to sustainable development and transformation at the local and global levels.

A central component of our sustainability strategy is the decentralised but compact staging of the FISU Games in North Rhine-Westphalia, supported by Berlin. By selecting the venues, we are also putting the spotlight on important post-industrial infrastructures in the Ruhr region that stand for sustainable transformation. In doing so, we are creating the basis for concepts that can also serve as role models for future sporting events. Our Pre-Games Paper on the sustainability pathway is an elementary component of this. It stands for transparency, for our aspiration, and for our commitment to use this major sporting event to create impetus for long-term positive effects on the environment and society.

Sustainability is a cornerstone that permeates our mission statement. We are convinced that multi-sport events such as the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games offer an opportunity to accelerate socio-ecological transformation processes. Nevertheless, we also appeal to all stakeholders and organised sport to help shape the change and drive it forward together.

Our holistic approach to the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games is based on the human rights conventions and the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. With our measures, we want to leave a legacy that has a long-term and positive impact. To achieve this, we work closely with local communities, universities, and civil society stakeholders.

Everyone can see our ideas and current planning status for themselves in this Pre-Games Paper 2.0. I cordially invite you not only to witness fantastic sporting performances and be part of the summer sports festival, but also to join us in shaping the path to a sustainable and inclusive future.

Sincerely,

Niklas Börger

# FOREWORD



**UNIV.-PROF. DR. HOLGER PREUSS**  
 Supervisor Legacy & Sustainability -  
 Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World  
 University Games

**Dear readers and interested parties,  
 Dear sports enthusiasts and supporters of the FISU World University Games 2025,**

Sustainability has undoubtedly become a key principle in the organisation of sporting events - and for good reason. While in the past the focus was often on economic sustainability - that is, the financial profit that a sporting event should generate - today's understanding has broadened considerably and now includes ecological and social aspects as well as good governance. The development of sustainability strategies and legacy plans for sporting events in Germany is therefore no longer aimed solely at the 'black zero'. Instead, the focus of our sustainability strategy for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games is on reducing the environmental impact, strengthening a regional and regenerative economy, and maximising social projects.

With these principles in mind, we have developed a framework for the most sustainable Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games possible, which should not only be a major sporting event, but also leave a significant long-term legacy - and that with limited time, financial and human resources.

Our concept is based on guidelines that set the framework for our sustainability and legacy planning. In developing these guidelines, we have drawn on extensive expertise and experience from the Legacy and Sustainability Commission of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the sustainability strategy of Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024, and the objectives of the German government's 'National Strategy for Major Sporting Events'. We have adapted these approaches specifically to the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region and Berlin, where the FISU Games are expected to deliver their greatest benefits.

The guidelines, goals, measures and indicators have been set, so now it is time to put them into practice and continuously optimise progress. Our task is to ensure that the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games are not only outstanding in sporting terms, but also have a sustainable and positive impact on the environment, society, and the regional economy.

Sincerely,

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Holger Preuß

# FOREWORD



**DUSTIN REHDER**  
 Student member of the Advisory  
 Board of the German University  
 Sports Federation (adh)

**Dear readers and interested parties,  
 Dear sports enthusiasts and supporters of the FISU World University Games 2025,**

As part of the Advisory Board of the German University Sports Federation (adh), it is a particular pleasure for me to present this Pre-Games Paper 2.0. The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games not only stand for sporting excellence and international encounters, but also embody a deep commitment to sustainability and social change. In preparation for this major event, the adh adopted a comprehensive sustainability concept in 2023, which focuses on sustainability as a central, guiding element. It has already been an integral part of the adh mission statement since 2019.

The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games mark a milestone in university sport by demonstrating how large-scale sporting events can be made sustainable and used as a catalyst for positive change. The concept, which focuses on environmental, social and economic sustainability, aims to leave a long-term positive impact on the environment, society and the local economy. This comprehensive approach is reflected in the eight focus areas of the sustainability strategy - from the use of existing sports and event venues to low-emission mobility solutions and the promotion of movement and health.

The integration of Para sport, the close involvement of universities and the creation of inclusive and safer spaces are just a few examples of how the Games promote diversity and inclusion and raise awareness of social sustainability. By combining sport, science and culture, the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games open up opportunities for innovation and sustainable development that extend far beyond the event itself.

This Pre-Games Paper 2.0 not only underlines our commitment to sustainability, but also invites you to visualise and harness the transformative power of sport. It is a call to action, participation and collaboration to realise the vision of a more sustainable and equitable world. Let's use this opportunity to leave a lasting positive impact together and establish the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games as a shining example of the interrelation between sport, education and sustainability.

I invite you to be inspired by this Pre-Games Paper and to join us on our journey towards more sustainable and inclusive university sport.

Sincerely,

Dustin Rehder

# 1 INTRO: THE SDGS ARE ALL-IN!

»Sport must take on responsibility, in order to safeguard human rights and planetary boundaries. Our sustainability motto for Rhine-Ruhr 2025 is therefore: **jointly, fairer and more sustainable - the SDGs are all-in!**«

(Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Sustainability Team, November 2024)

The mid-term review of the 2030 Agenda strongly urges more effort and a clear acceleration in the implementation of the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, always guided by the principle of leaving no one behind<sup>1</sup>. Scientists also warn that six of the nine planetary boundaries have already been exceeded, and that effective action is needed to prevent climate catastrophe and the collapse of the Earth's ecosystem<sup>2</sup>.

Sport, with its values such as fair play, tolerance, team spirit and commitment, plays a special and central role in this. However, much remains to be done to ensure that discourse is followed by actual sustainable action. All stakeholders in sport are called upon to take responsibility in order to promote sustainable development and protect human rights.

»Sustainability is everyone's job and everyone has a great responsibility here.«

(Martin Doulton, FISU EC Member, May 2023)

The Organising Committee of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games is facing up to this responsibility. With the open and powerful mentality of the Ruhr region and Berlin, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 is creating a unique summer sports festival that celebrates diversity and sets future-oriented impulses. The staging of the 18 sports in existing sports facilities and in post-industrial areas creates a unique atmosphere that opens up space for new perspectives. The event combines top sporting performance with intercultural exchange for long-term positive effects on the local and global levels.

In order to fulfil the commitment, this Pre-Games Paper 2.0 provides a transparent interim status and invites joint action. After the FISU Games, an evaluation based on this Pre-Games Paper is planned, and this should prove invaluable to future organisers.

## Structure

**Chapter 2** describes the **setting** and explains the central programme points of the event, conceptual guidelines, and the sustainability path. **Chapter 3** reveals sustainability facts about the **Organising Committee**. **Zoom-In chapter 4** sheds light on the sustainability strategy from an internal perspective. It presents **eight focus areas** with specific objectives, indicators and measures. In addition, spotlight topics are highlighted: carbon footprint as a key indicator, Wanda protection, awareness concept and complaints mechanism, and the programme points with regard to education for sustainable development (ESD). In **Zoom-Out chapter 5**, futurologist **Anja Kirig** takes an outsider's perspective. She explains the topic of legacy and analyses it on the basis of five impact dimensions. **Chapter 6** presents the **leverage effects** and the link between the internal measures (Zoom-In) and the long-term impact dimensions (Zoom-Out) and concludes the report with an assessment of the current status and an outlook.



Figure 1: SDG-Wheel © United Nations

## 2 SETTING

The following section explores how Germany's largest playing field will come to life in summer 2025. It delves into the theoretical framework shaped by key guidelines that serve as the conceptual backbone of this paper. Furthermore, it outlines the sustainability pathway, highlighting major project milestones and the essential contributions made - and planned - by universities along the way.

### 2.1 THE LARGEST PLAYING FIELD IN GERMANY

The venues for all 18 sports in the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region and Berlin have been finalised since summer 2024. The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games will thus create the largest playing field in Germany. Around 8,500 athletes and officials from up to 150 nations will characterise this intercultural sports festival.

The urban diversity of the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region offers ideal conditions with a dense university landscape and the most sports clubs in Germany. The cities of the Ruhr region in particular, which are developing from historically industrial centres into greener and more diverse and inclusive urban spaces, are inspiring people to analyse future issues. More information on transformation plans can be found in the [Green Infrastructure Charter](#) of the Ruhr region.

The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU Games combines **sport**, **culture** and **science** with a clear focus on sustainability, innovation and participation. A special highlight is the debut of Para Sport at a FISU Games Summer through the inclusion of 3x3 wheelchair basketball. The Opening Ceremony, the interactive festival programme and the Closing Ceremony provide a spectacular programme that invites everyone to get involved.

Comprehensive information brochures on the mission statement, central stakeholders, the sports and the event locations can be found at [rhineruhr2025.com/news/publications](https://rhineruhr2025.com/news/publications).

In addition to sporting and cultural highlights, the **2025 FISU World Conference** will form the scientific centrepiece. Under the title »Competing for change: exploring sustainability and (mental) health through sports«, it will shed light on the interface between physical performance and (mental) health and build a bridge to environmental sustainability, following on from the [FISU Healthy Campus programme](#). Here, urgent topics of (social) sustainable development are discussed and promoted. The 2025 FISU World Conference will be embedded at the Jahrhunderthalle in Bochum by the 3x3 basketball competition and the [Ruhr Games 2025](#). This collaboration with this youth sports event, which takes place every two years in this area, rounds off the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 programme in a modern and urban way with young talent, action sports and new Olympic Games disciplines.



The **Volunteer Programme** is a central element of the event. Volunteering is a contribution to the common good in which individuals donate and develop their time, energy and skills; especially in sport, which combines social responsibility with enthusiasm for movement. As many as 12,000 volunteers will help to realise the event and experience unique insights behind-the-scenes. In addition to free access to competitions, volunteers will receive catering, a public transport ticket and a uniform - and become part of an international team.

**No Games without U!** Become a volunteer with Rhine-Ruhr 2025. You can register as a volunteer at the following link: [rhineruhr2025.com/volunteer](https://rhineruhr2025.com/volunteer)

Further key event element is the **Flame Relay**, taking place from January to May 2025. It will serve as a symbolic kickoff to the biggest sporting event of the year. It aims to foster community and engagement by bringing people together and highlighting the relevance of sport and education for society. The Flame Relay will travel through various cities and locations nationwide raising awareness for the upcoming Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games and their values.

## 2.2 GUARD RAILS

**In line with the declaration of principles to respect human rights and sustainability (p. 103–105), the following guard rails were developed together with Prof. Dr. Holger Preuß in May 2023 and were further refined through participatory processes during the concept development. These guardrails form the conceptual foundation while also defining the understanding of sustainability.**

### GUARD RAIL 1: ALIGNMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL GUIDELINES

The concept is based on key international and national agreements, frameworks and strategies (see Figure 2). This includes the Brundtland Report's (1987) guiding principle of sustainable development: development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs<sup>3</sup>. In 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at the United Nations Climate Summit and forms a basis with its [17 global Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). Human rights are an important part of the 2030 Agenda's vision:

**»We envisage a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realisation of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity.«**

(United Nations, 2015)<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the three classic dimensions of sustainable development - ecology, society, and economy - the German UNESCO Commission also emphasises that culture should be given greater consideration and promoted as a fourth dimension<sup>5</sup>, which is why cultural sustainability objectives have also been formulated for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU Games.

The following understanding from the IOC frameworks should also be used as a basis to clarify the interrelationship between sustainability and legacy:

**»Legacy and Sustainability are interrelated and complementary, but distinct. While legacy refers to the long-term benefits, or outcomes, of putting the vision into practice, sustainability refers to the strategies and processes applied in decision-making to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative impacts in the social, economic and environmental spheres.«**

(IOC Legacy Strategic Approach, 2017, p. 17)<sup>6</sup>

International treaties	Organisational guidelines	National strategies
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (AMER)	IOC Sustainability Strategy, IOC Legacy Strategic Approach, IOC Strategic Framework on Human Rights	Germany's Sustainable Development Strategy
UN Human Rights Conventions	GRI Event Organizers Sector Discloser	Sustainability strategy of North Rhine-Westphalia
UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights	Event Management according to ISO 20121	Sustainability Strategy of Berlin
UN 2030 Agenda	German Sustainability Code (DNK)	National strategy for major sporting events
ILO Core Labour Standards	DOSB Sustainability strategy, DOSB Human rights policy	
Paris Climate Agreement	adh Sustainability concept	
European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)		
European Green Deal		

Figure 2: Central international and national guidelines



**GUARD RAIL 2: PLANETARY BOUNDARIES, TIPPING POINTS AND THE PRINCIPLE OF STRONG SUSTAINABILITY**

**Planetary boundaries** have been defined for the nine biophysical systems and processes that regulate the functioning of life-support systems on Earth and thus ultimately determine the stability and resilience of the Earth system. These planetary boundaries have been exceeded in six areas. Moreover, planetary boundaries are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, including not only climate change, loss of biodiversity and threats to the oceans, but also the disruption of material cycles, land conversion and freshwater consumption. These developments show that sustainable action is essential to ensure the resilience of the Earth and the well-being of humanity, including sport.<sup>7</sup>

Those who want to see detailed and continuous updates can do so via the so-called [Planetary Health Check](#), which has been provided by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research since September 2024.

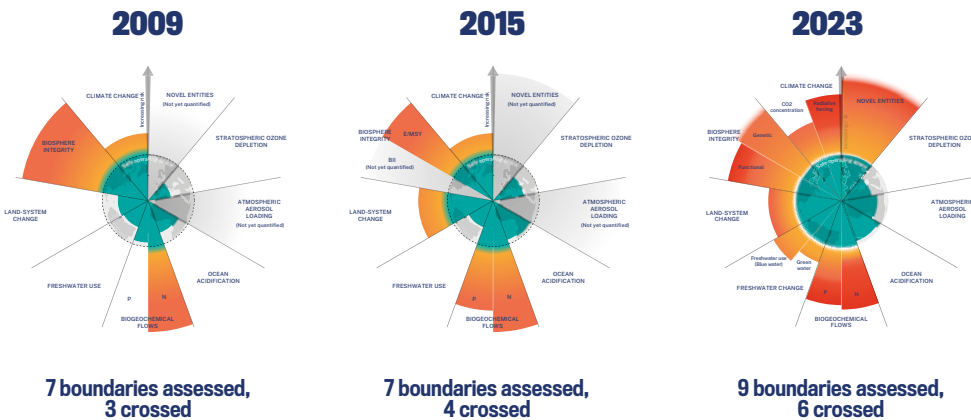


Figure 3: The nine planetary boundaries © Azote for Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University CC BY-ND 3.0, based on the analyses in Richardson et al. 2023

In addition to planetary boundaries, scientists have defined so-called **tipping points** (9 global and 16 regional). These tipping points are thresholds beyond which certain critical, large-scale components of the Earth system (tipping elements) can tip over into a qualitatively new state, often characterised by widespread changes in Earth conditions.<sup>8</sup>

The **principle of strong sustainability** (also known as the priority model of sustainability) emphasises that an intact environment is the basis for social and economic stability. Social and economic developments must remain within planetary boundaries. The 'wedding cake' representation of the SDGs illustrates this principle: the biosphere (ecological goals) forms the basis on which social and economic goals are built.

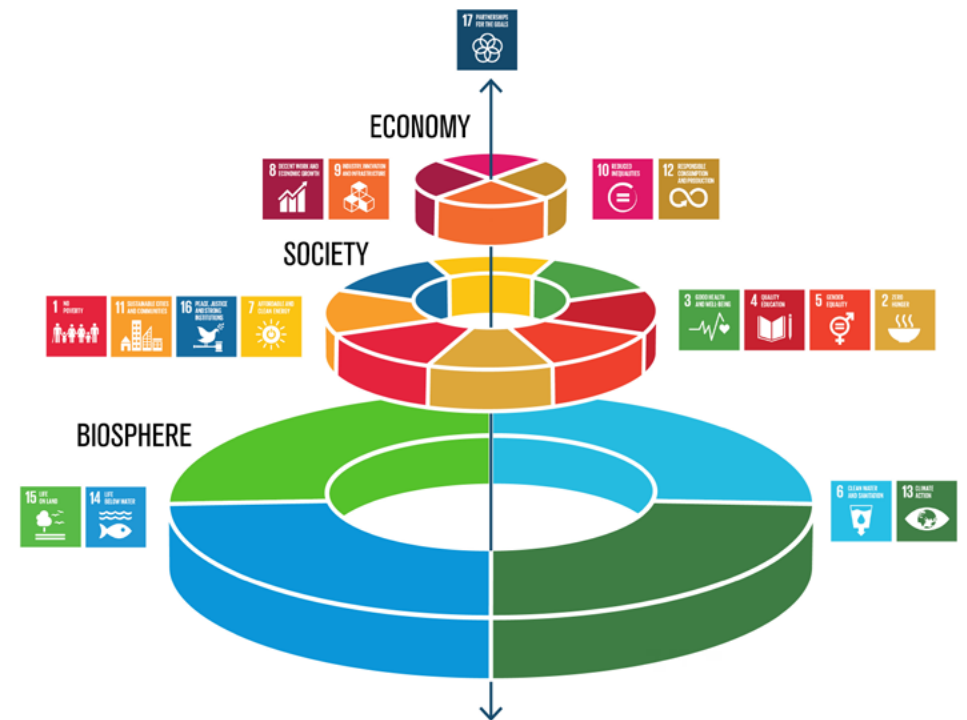


Figure 4: SDGs Wedding Cake © Azote for Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University CC BY-ND 3.0.

### GUARD RAIL 3: TRANSPARENCY AND PARTICIPATION

The active involvement and co-design of relevant stakeholder groups and transparent communication take centre stage. An open dialogue in all project phases is intended to strengthen trust and promote a collective sense of responsibility for the sustainability objectives of the sustainability strategy (see Zoom-In chapter). The sustainability team is always open to constructive dialogue, feedback and joint activities (enquiries to [info@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:info@rhineruhr2025.com)).

### GUARD RAIL 4: LEVERAGE EFFECTS AND PRIORITISATION

#### Footprint and handprint - from sustainability to legacy

The (ecological) **footprint** emphasises the negative effects of our actions. The core message is: cut back, make savings and recognise the leverage for change to minimise the footprint. In contrast, the handprint emphasises the positive impact of activities. The core message here is: bigger and more is better. The handprint appeals to everyone and invites everyone to get involved in an organisation or civil society. Sustainability becomes a joint endeavour and a challenge for society as a whole that everyone must tackle together. More information can be found here: [handabdruck.eu](http://handabdruck.eu)

**Futurologist Anja Kirig** emphasises that by encouraging organisations and people to increase their handprint, they actively contribute to reducing the (ecological) footprint, which ultimately makes a positive contribution to legacy.

*In the info boxes ›Sustainability is a joint effort‹ in chapter 4, (sports) organisations and private individuals can find (local) hints and advice on how to increase their handprint.*

In addition to anchoring sustainability in the mission statement, implementation requires targeted measures with the greatest possible leverage, as well as a comprehensive analysis of the resources used and their effects. This is why key topics and measures are prioritised in the sustainability strategy.

### GUARD RAIL 5: CONTINUOUS OPTIMISATION PROCESS, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Sustainability management is based on the **Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)** cycle to ensure that the defined **SMART** goals are achieved in the best possible way. A comprehensive evaluation is carried out after the FISU Games to highlight successes and challenges and assess long-term effects.

**These five guard rails** provide orientation on the sustainability path and concretise the understanding of sustainability. As a result, a clear roadmap for the systematic and detailed development of the sustainability strategy and the implementation phase was defined from the start of the operational work.



## 2.3 THE SUSTAINABILITY PATH

The illustrated sustainability pathway provides an overview of the eight key project phases and milestones to date. The steps within the phases and the results of the materiality and risk analysis are presented in the following three sub-chapters, alongside the documentation of the sustainability efforts of students and universities.

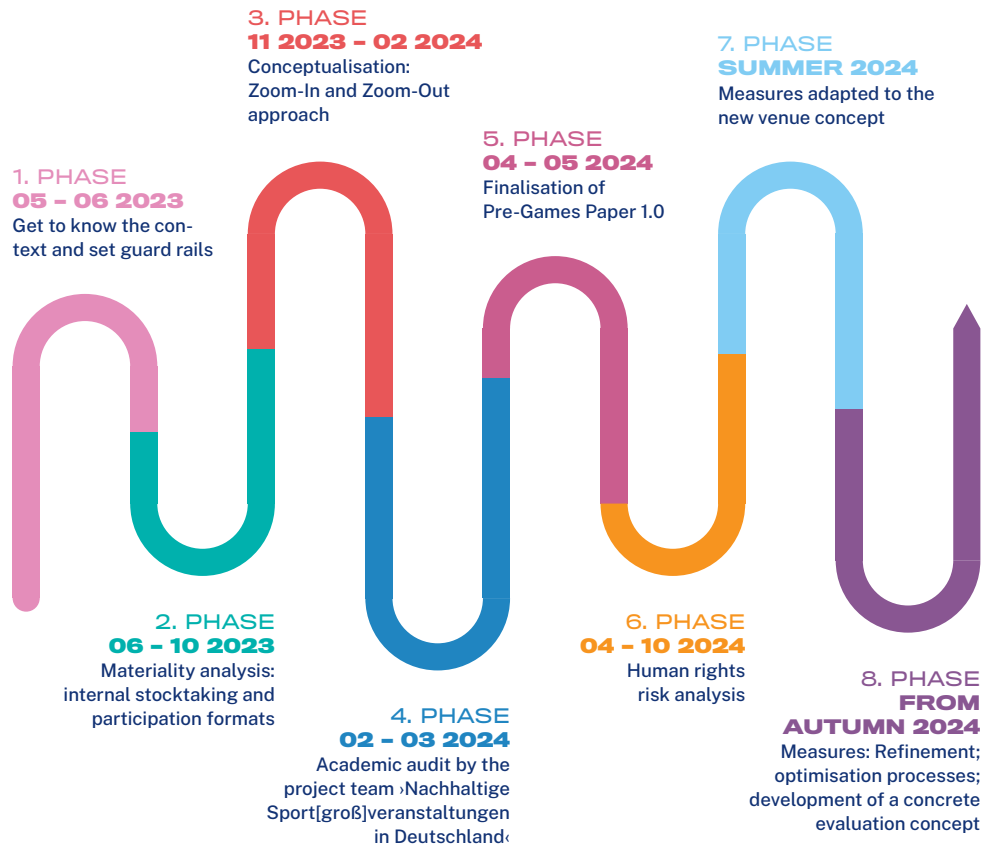


Figure 5: Overview of key project phases

### 2.3.1 CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT AND ACADEMIC AUDIT

After setting the guard rails (see previous chapter) as a conceptual basis and clear roadmap in phase one, a comprehensive stocktaking process began. At the same time, participation by universities in a workshop format and a digital survey of national sports organisations aimed to collect and discuss requirements, impetus and concrete ideas for a shared vision for Rhine-Ruhr 2025.

#### CONTENT OF THE LEGACY & SUSTAINABILITY UNIVERSITY WORKSHOP AND SPORTS FEDERATIONS SURVEY

*In collaboration with Prof. Dr. Holger Preuß, central questions were developed to jointly write an optimal but realistic vision of the future for Rhine-Ruhr 2025:*

**01 Scenario field:** Which areas are key to driving sustainability forward innovatively with the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games?

**02 Key factors:** To what extent can the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games create added value or be a catalyst in terms of environmental and social issues?

**03 Desired successes, target states and vision seeds:** What legacy and sustainability goals should the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games absolutely strive for or achieve?

**Workshop participants:** Around 150 people, including students, doctoral students and representatives of university sports from 15 universities in Germany and Switzerland.

**Survey participants:** 11 national and involved sports organisations.

The results of the status quo assessment, past event data and findings, interviews with central stakeholders and the participation formats are summarised in a materiality matrix (see Figure 6) in order to assess the relevance for internal and external stakeholders and the impact of the activities of Rhine-Ruhr 2025. This summarised assessment serves to prioritise key areas of action for the sustainability strategy, which have been designated as **focus areas**.

**MATERIALITY MATRIX**

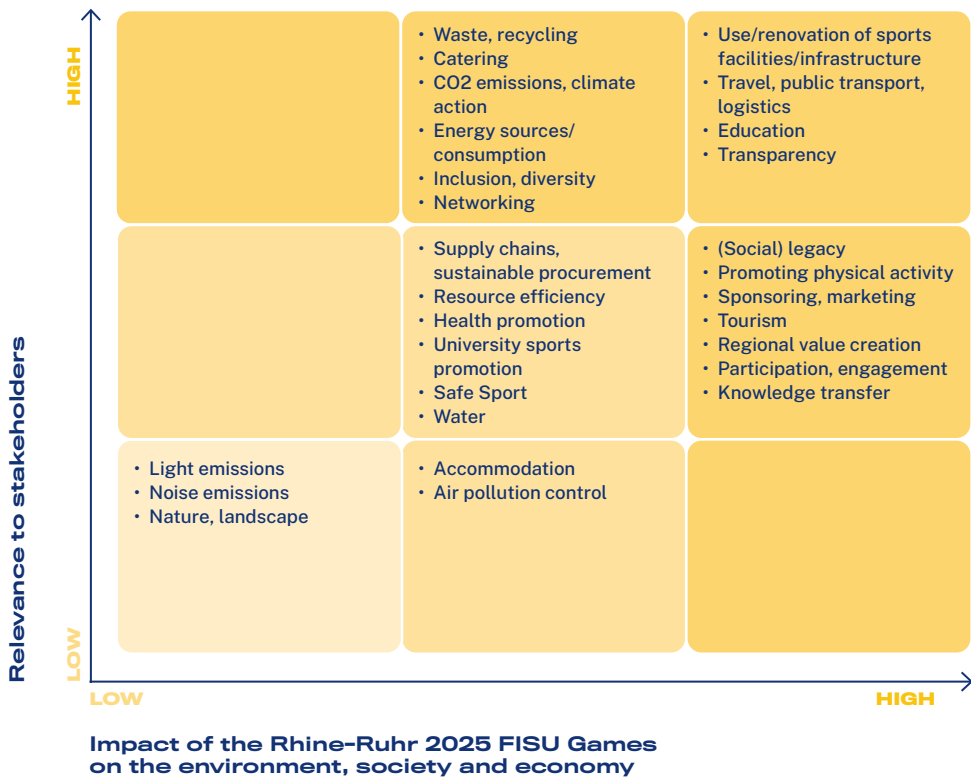


Figure 6: Materiality matrix

In a further step, objectives and indicators were defined for each focus area and a catalogue of measures was drawn up. **The eight focus areas form the core of the sustainability strategy**, which is subject to a dynamic optimisation process, for example through the exchange of knowledge with experts, following discussions with affected persons, or through participation in symposia and workshops.

In the first quarter of 2024, the project team ›Nachhaltige Sport[groß]veranstaltungen in Deutschland‹ of the German Sport University Cologne conducted an **academic audit** that critically examined the strategy's objectives and indicators. Recommendations from this audit for improving the sustainability strategy are part of the Zoom-In chapter, which presents the current status of the eight focus areas (from p. 31).

**2.3.2 HUMAN RIGHTS WORK**

A comprehensive in-depth process in the area of human rights began in spring 2024. One relevant step was the kick-off workshop led by the human rights expert Sylvia Schenk in April 2024, which trained selected internal employees as well as representatives of the adh and initiated the risk analysis in collaboration with Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz. Data collection and evaluation took place from summer to autumn 2024 with the aim of identifying the actual and potential adverse effects on human rights and developing a well-founded policy statement. Existing concepts were also validated and further preventive measures were derived in order to prevent human rights violations.



Figure 7: Central areas analysed in the risk analysis

The risk analysis identified and assessed human rights risks for the organisation of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games in six key areas (see Figure 7).

The following groups of people were considered in the risk analysis: Women, children, the LGBTQ+ community, people of colour, religious and cultural minorities, people with disabilities, athletes and officials, visitors, employees, volunteers and journalists.

The results of the analysis were presented in a risk matrix (see Figure 8). Risks in the areas of integrity, legality, safety & security and discrimination & abuse were assessed as particularly critical, as they have both an increased probability of occurrence and significant impact.

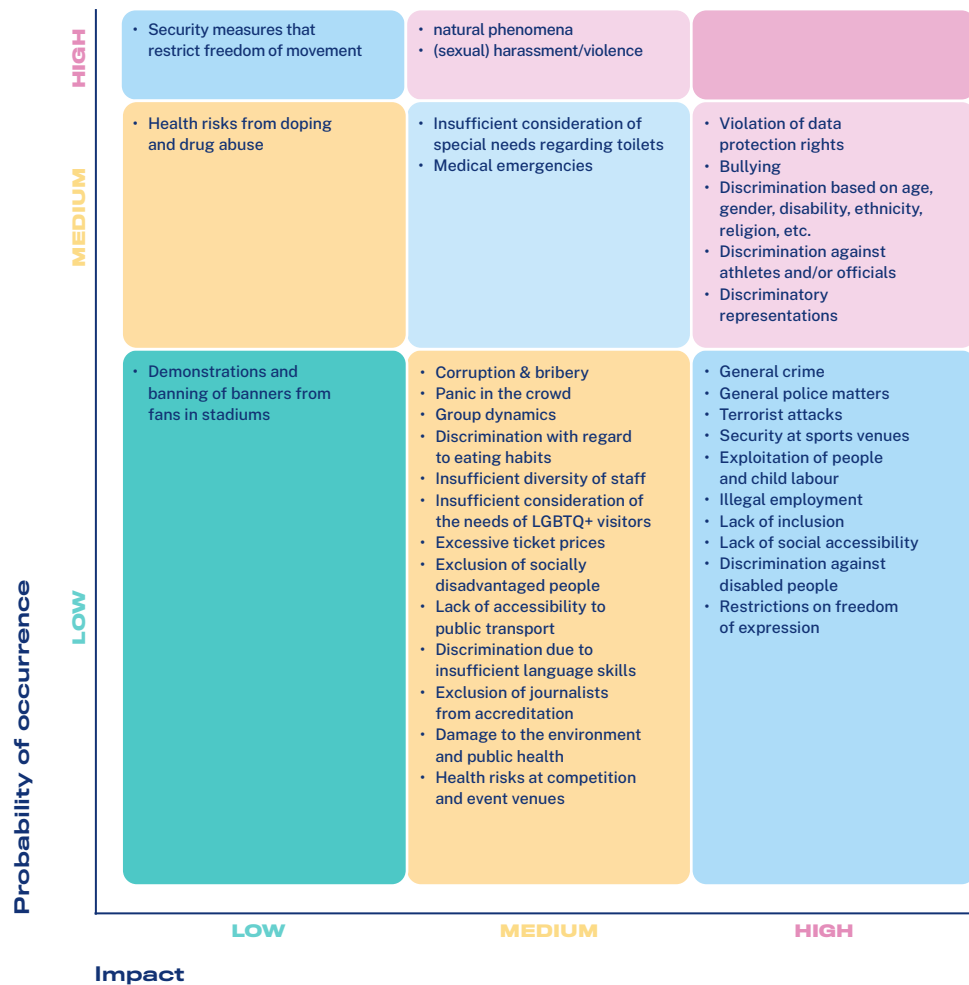


Figure 8: Risk matrix

Preventive measures to respect human rights and avoid negative impacts are essential in order to protect the rights of all stakeholders. Existing concepts (some of which are not included in the sustainability strategy, but are integral concepts of the Organising Committee) were reviewed for the six risk areas. The risk analysis identified the following six priorities for the human rights work:

**(1) Integrity, legality, safety and security:** A comprehensive security concept, compliance with European data protection standards, and targeted internal training ensure the protection of human dignity and safety in line with relevant human rights of all those involved in the event.

**(2) Violence, abuse, and discrimination and (3) equality, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion:** All forms of (online) interpersonal violence and abuse (including physical, psychological, and sexual) and discrimination (such as cultural, racial, ethnic, gender-specific, religious or structural) are opposed. Accessibility measures ensure participation, while a comprehensive awareness concept recognises the special protection needs of children, women, the LGBTQ+ community, people of colour, religious and cultural minorities and people with disabilities and ensures that all forms of discrimination, violence and abuse are actively combated (see p. 58-66).

**(4) Working conditions:** Labour standards and the rights to fair wages and safe, inclusive working conditions are strictly adhered to and actively promoted. Clear contractual regulations ensure that fair working conditions are also guaranteed for external service providers and everyone in the supply chain.

**(5) Freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, and freedom of the press:** The rights to freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and uncensored reporting are respected and actively supported. The official accreditation procedure guarantees access to the event for journalists and further supports the protection of press freedom.

**(6) Health and Well-being:** Emergency medical supplies and personnel will be provided at all sports venues and event locations. These will be supplemented by awareness-raising measures and programmes to promote health and well-being for all participants (see p. 54-57).

The risk analysis did not identify any significant measure gaps in the six areas examined, although the process of optimisation must still be considered dynamic. Following consultations with Klein (2024) and other human rights experts, an effective complaints mechanism has been planned, linked to the awareness concept, which creates a digital safe space for sensitive reports and ensures that they are processed and remedied (see p. 64-66).

### 2.3.3 ACADEMIC SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

The participation of students continues to take centre stage, and students as well as researchers make a significant contribution to sustainability management. They validate, design, advise and support with academic theses, university seminars and research projects. In addition to various other subject-specific university collaborations, the following table documents the status.

UNIVERSITY STUDY PROGRAMME / CHAIR	COOPERATION & TOPIC	STATUS
<b>Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences</b> B.A., Sustainable Tourism	Scientific thesis: Sustainability strategies and implementation at major sporting events - the case study of the European Championships Munich 2022 and recommendations for action for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games	Completed in March 2024
<b>Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences</b> B.A., Sustainable Tourism	Scientific thesis: A proposal for determining the sustainability awareness of employees at major sporting events using the example of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games	Completed in May 2024
<b>Ruhr University Bochum</b> Chair: Sports Management and Sports Consulting	Seminar paper: Waste management at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games	First seminar completed; Second seminar in progress
<b>Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz</b> M.Sc. International Sports Management	Scientific thesis: Human rights at sporting events - A human rights declaration for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games	In progress
<b>Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen</b> M.Sc. Sports Management	Scientific thesis: Sustainability Management of large sports events. A comparison of data types/data collection methods for calculating the carbon footprint of major sporting events using the example of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games	In progress
<b>Rhineland-Palatinate University of Technology</b> Master of Education	Scientific thesis: Development of an innovative format to promote education for sustainable development at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games	In progress

<b>Bielefeld University</b> M.A., Sports Science Organisational Development and Management	Scientific thesis: Sustainability of major sporting events – A qualitative analysis using the example of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games Summer	In progress
<b>Ruhr University Bochum</b> Chair: Environmental / Resource Economics and Sustainability (Prof. Dr. Andreas Löschel)	Research project: Sustainable consumption in the catering zones during the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games	In progress
<b>The Hague University of Applied Sciences</b> International Sport Management	Scientific thesis: : Research on the event's CO2 footprint	In progress
<b>The Hague University of Applied Sciences</b> International Sport Management	Scientific thesis focussing on the sustainability management of major sporting events	In progress
<b>The Hague University of Applied Sciences</b> International Sport Management	Scientific thesis focussing on inclusion of major sporting events	In progress
<b>IST University of Applied Sciences for Management</b> Master Sportbusiness Management	Scientific thesis focussing on accessibility at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games	In progress
<b>Ruhr West University of Applied Sciences Campus Mülheim</b> Institute of Natural Sciences (Prof. Dr. François Deuber)	Summer School in cooperation with Harz University of Applied Sciences and universities in Iowa and Detroit: Case study focussing on sustainability and international affairs	In progress
<b>Ruhr West University of Applied Sciences Campus Mülheim</b> Economic Institute (Prof. Dr. Julia Kristin Thalmann)	Charm-EU: (Global Challenges for Sustainability) A sustainability analysis in the capstone phase	In progress

### 3 THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

The Organising Committee (OC) was founded in 2021 as a non-profit company to organise the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games. It is advised by a Board of Trustees and an Expert Council on strategic issues. In addition, local Organising Committees (LOCs) in the host cities support the implementation on site. There is a particular focus on knowledge transfer: the OC is made up of employees from previous major international and national sporting events as well as students and graduates. The OC's sustainability team is closely integrated into an academic and civil society network that promotes exchange on sustainability in organised sport.

In order to systematically integrate sustainability into everyday office life, a **sustainability roadmap** with four focus areas - mobility, energy, resources and awareness - was developed together with the office management. In addition to regular updates, employees are encouraged to contribute their own ideas for greater sustainability in everyday office life. For the current status of the sustainability roadmap, please contact the team: [info@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:info@rhineruhr2025.com)

The regular Values and Atmosphere meeting, in which every employee is invited to participate, should also be emphasised. The following is an excerpt of highlight measures that originate from the internal implementation of values:

- **Value visuals** for an everyday presence in the office
- **Informal feedback box and feedback types**
- **Appreciation cards** that can be sent to colleagues

Regular data surveys provide insights into the sustainability and diversity performance of the OC and the current status is shown on the right.



# 4 ZOOM-IN: SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

## STRUCTURE OF THE FOCUS AREAS:

- Introduction and background information
- Objectives, including the percentage achieved to reflect the status quo of objective attainment
- Indicators for post-Games measurement with regard to the objectives
- Current status of the measures

## 4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The topic of environmental sustainability is fundamentally about recognising environmental impacts and aligning concepts and measures to minimise negative impacts on the natural environment and promote positive effects. Thus, four focus areas are conceptualised with leverage measures:

- 🏠 **Utilisation of existing sports and event venues**
- 🚗 **Low-emission mobility solutions**
- 🌱 **Renewable energy sources**
- ♻️ **Resource-friendly procurement and waste management**

In addition, two spotlights are described:

Firstly, on the **carbon footprint**, which is considered a key performance indicator for the environmental performance. Secondly, on **Wanda protection**, since NABU NRW will act as official patrons to the FISU Games mascot, a peregrine falcon named Wanda, and enable the event to highlight relevant environmental issues connected to planetary boundaries such as biodiversity and species conservation.





## UTILISATION OF EXISTING SPORTS AND EVENT VENUES

The final venue concept envisages the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU Games being held exclusively in existing sports and event venues, supplemented by temporary structures. It should be emphasised that the decision made in summer 2024 against the initially planned temporary venue for the swimming competition was made in favour of ecological sustainability. Such decisions are key to minimising the ecological footprint of this major sporting event.

Some of the existing sports facilities, for example the Regattabahn rowing venue in Duisburg and Lohrheidestadion athletics venue in Bochum (see below), are being renovated with long-term reuse plans thanks to a funding programme from the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia. Environmental aspects such as roof and façade greening are included.

Messe Essen, one of the central event venues, has its own sustainability management system and shares its sustainability efforts: [Messe Essen Sustainability Report](#).

The following objectives, indicators and measures concretise the project within this focus area and use the indicators to outline the monitoring and post-FISU Games evaluation of the objectives. The SDGs to which this focus area contributes are also shown, as well as some sports or individual hints towards joint sustainable action.

**Sustainability is a joint endeavour – local hints:** The greening of infrastructure and climate-adapted planting can be expanded locally in the Ruhr region and contributes not only to SDG 11 but also to SDGs 12 and 15. The ›Internationale Gartenschau Metropole Ruhr 2027‹ has launched an exciting ›My Garden‹ project. The focus is on participation. Local universities and sports facilities can also get involved. More information here: [iga2027.ruhr/die-drei-ebenen/mein-garten](https://iga2027.ruhr/die-drei-ebenen/mein-garten)

The environmental and sustainability department of the German Olympic Sports Confederation or municipal climate protection managers also offer a point of contact for advice on projects for sustainable action in local sports facilities.

### OBJECTIVES

- › Hosting sports and non-sports events in existing and modernised sports and event venues 100%
- › Use of rented, temporary constructions 80%
- › Highly frequented use of the competition venues 70%

### INDICATORS

- › Share of new construction, existing buildings, refurbishment, renovation, temporary buildings
- › Proportion of sports facilities with main utilisation concepts
- › Proportion of new green spaces
- › Proportion of newly sealed surfaces
- › Documentation of the modernisation measures
- › Degree of utilisation of the competition venues

With this focus area, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 contributes to the SDGs:

**6** CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES





## Measures - current status

### Rental of existing offices

The OC moved into an existing office building in Düsseldorf in 2021. Since the OC workforce continues to grow, further workplaces were established in the host cities of Duisburg, at the Landschaftspark, and Bochum, at the Jahrhunderthalle and Lohrheidestadion.

### Decentralised venue concept

The sporting competitions, the FISU World Conference, the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the Ruhr Games and the whole festival programme will be held at various sports and event venues across the Ruhr region and in Berlin. The final decentralised venue concept, published in July 2024, maximises the use of infrastructure. Other facilities such as school sports halls in the host cities will be used as training venues.



Figure 9: Final venue concept



### Modernisations including sustainability aspects and subsequent use concepts

In addition to minor renovations at various sports facilities, the renovation and expansion of the Lohrheidestadion began in autumn 2023. The stadium is being modernised in line with international standards for athletics events, with a focus on sustainability from the outset (more information can be found here: [adh.de/news](https://adh.de/news), [bochum.de/pressemeldung](https://bochum.de/pressemeldung)). The Regattabahn is being renovated and extended to include aspects of environmental compatibility and spatial accessibility. The tennis facility in Essen is also being modernised; in addition to improving the pathways with regard to accessibility, modern sanitary facilities are being installed.

### Rental of temporary buildings

Current plans indicate that for the following nine sports, the set-up involves temporary, rented structures: 3x3 basketball, archery, gymnastics, beach volleyball, fencing, judo, rhythmic gymnastics, table tennis, taekwondo. Temporary, rented event infrastructure will also be used and can be reused again at other events, for example for concert stages, tents, and backstage areas.

### Open sports facilities

There are plans to open the official competition areas for certain sports before and between the competition times, especially for junior sports and Para Sports. This will guarantee a high degree of utilisation of the official competition areas and provide an attractive sporting platform for kids, youth and (youth) athletes with disabilities.

## LOW-EMISSION MOBILITY SOLUTIONS

The mobility sector accounts for the largest share of the anticipated carbon footprint of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU Games and is therefore an extremely relevant focus area. To help mitigate this, the principle of short distances will take centre stage on site and existing infrastructures in the Ruhr region and Berlin will be used for this purpose. Low-emission mobility options, in particular rail and bus transport, will be favoured. The Statista graphic (2023) ›This is how much greenhouse gas is emitted by bus, rail & car<sup>10</sup> provides a well-founded comparison of emissions from motorised means of transport. In addition, micro-mobility such as by bicycle plays a key role. The conversion of railway lines into cycle paths offers an attractive connection across the Ruhr region. Further information on the longest cycle highway in Europe (RS1) can be found at [radrrevier.ruhr](http://radrrevier.ruhr).

The **Task Force Moving** was set as working group up to address cross-regional transport issues. It consists of representatives from all transport companies involved in the FISU Games, as well as municipal representatives. Transport concepts are developed and reviewed together.



Source: metropole.ruhr © Jochen Tack

The following objectives, indicators and measures explain the prioritisation and provide an indication of the monitoring and post-FISU Games evaluation of this focus area, as well as the contribution to the relevant SDGs.

### OBJECTIVES

- › Focus on low-emission means of transportation on site 
- › Reduction of individual shuttles 
- › Promote low-emission arrival and departure options 

### INDICATORS

- › Modal split of the means of transportation used by accredited persons, visitors and goods
- › Proportion of alternative drive systems in the transport fleet
- › Documentation shuttle service
- › Share of the mobility sector in the event

With this focus area, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 contributes to the SDGs:





## Measures - current status

### Accommodation and shuttle concept based on the principle of short distances

The decision was made to not build a new village for athletes and to instead provide decentralised accommodation in existing hotels. Participants will therefore be accommodated as close as possible to their respective training and competition venue(s) and can even reach these on foot in some places. Furthermore, a bus shuttle will take participants to their destination on time. There will also be also an on-demand shuttle service for officials.

### Free and extended public transport

A free public transport ticket is included for all those who purchase an official event ticket or have an accreditation card. This means that visitors, around 12,000 volunteers and participants can use local public transport free of charge. Furthermore, one of the aims of the Moving Task Force is to plan and increase the capacity and frequency of public transport as required, for example for the Opening Ceremony at the Schauinsland-Reisen-Arena in Duisburg.

### Co-operations with (micro) mobility providers

Discussions and negotiations are underway with Mobility Sharing providers and other mobility providers in order to jointly provide low-emission and favoured mobility solutions on site. The offers will be shared with participants and visitors before the FISU Games. Links to carpooling platforms will also be highlighted.

### Raising consciousness for the mode of transport and climate action

An individual footprint calculator is integrated in the ticketing purchasing, allowing event visitors to calculate their individual (travel) carbon footprint in advance and view a comparison of the CO2 emissions of various means of transport. Visitors can then make a voluntary contribution to a climate action project. Moreover, it is planned to share information on environmentally friendly travelling to the venues on the communication channels and in the venue guides.



### Cycle bonus

Cycling to the FISU Games – environmentally friendly, active and convenient! Incentives for cyclists are being planned. For sure, cycle paths and parking spaces will be signposted at the venues and digitally in the event app.

**Call for Participation:** If you are interested in a joint cycling initiative, please submit your ideas and send a message to [festival@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:festival@rhineruhr2025.com).

### Transport fleet with alternative drives

The aim is to use a transport fleet with a high proportion of alternative drives, such as electric, hydrogen or hybrid drives, for the transport of event materials, sports equipment, shuttles, and so on. At current, though, the organising committee's vehicle fleet has no alternative drive systems.

**Sustainability is a joint effort – local hints:** The bicycle is an exercise-promoting and low-emission means of transport - you as an organisation or individual, as well as the Organising Committee, can take part in the annual ›City Cycling - Cycling for a good climate‹. The Organising Committee cycled 3,419 kilometres in 2024 and plans to top this in 2025. In addition, the Tour de Rhine-Ruhr was launched as a team event to mark UN World Bicycle Day, with joint spinning and a cycle tour along the river Rhine.

## SPOTLIGHT: CARBON FOOTPRINT

The carbon footprint serves as a key performance indicator for a holistic view of the event's environmental impact. The calculation is made with professional support and tools from First-Climate. The following sections provide an overview of the sectors included. In addition, there is scientific support from students at the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen and The Hague University of Applied Sciences, who collect and analyse the data pre- and post-FISU Games.

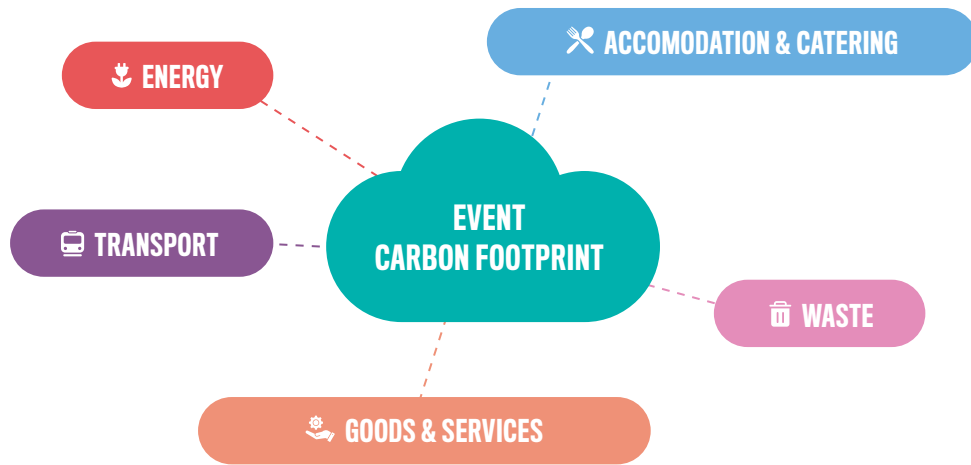


Figure 10: Planned sectors of the event carbon footprint

**Sustainability is a joint endeavour:** There is a free CO<sub>2</sub> balancing tool for sports clubs in Germany: [Club calculator](#). Also, everyone can calculate their own carbon footprint with the tool of the Umweltbundesamt: [uba.co2-rechner.de/en](#)

Furthermore, the [GRIP-Platform for Environment and Community](#) provides a place for ideas, knowledge exchange, networking and action. Young people between the ages of 18 and 27 from university and popular sports as well as youth organisations can get involved at the interface between the environment and sport. GRIP organises challenges and other event formats. The platform is made up of the Naturfreundejugend Deutschland and the adh.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

In addition to general energy-saving planning, this third focus area describes the possibilities of alternative energy sources in connection while ensuring a redundant power supply network for the various sports and event venues. Positive to note, there is already a photovoltaic system on the roof of Messe Essen and a further installation is planned for the roof of the Lohrheidestadion in Bochum as part of its modernisation.

The following objectives, indicators and measures concretise this focus area and show the post-FISU Games documentation as well as the relevant SDG.

### OBJECTIVES

- › Purchase of electricity from renewable energy sources 60%
- › Promote innovations for renewable energies 20%

### INDICATORS

- › Share of energy consumption and sources
- › Share of the energy sector in the event carbon footprint
- › Number of innovative technologies and devices

With this focus area, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 contributes to the SDG:





## Measures - current status

### Venue power check

The electricity providers of all training and competition venues are currently being reviewed. If necessary, discussions are being held with the administration regarding a switch to green electricity providers, which will ideally be retained after the FISU Games.

### Green electricity for the headquarters

A change of electricity provider took place in September 2023 and since then the OC's headquarters in Düsseldorf have been supplied with electricity by a green electricity provider.

### Limited use of back-up generators

To ensure the redundancy of the power system during competition, it is planned to have generators available. Diesel generators are kept to a minimum and back-up generators with a battery are an alternative that is currently being tested.

### Showcase of innovative technologies

The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Festival offers innovative tech start-ups a platform to present themselves. There are also plans to provide technologies that encourage movement, such as power bikes for charging mobile devices.

**Sustainability is a joint effort:** As the Organising Committee has switched to a green energy provider, everyone can check this in their private lives as well as in the sports club, and can initiate the switch to renewable energy sources.



## ♻️ RESOURCE-FRIENDLY PROCUREMENT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Within this focus area, the main aim is to procure sports equipment and other event-specific materials and products in a resource-efficient manner. After the FISU Games, the focus is on their reuse and recycling. The catering concept also plays a decisive role in terms of resource conservation.

This focus area is based on the zero-waste principle (the 5 R's: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot) with the aim of maximising efficiency, minimising the amount of waste, and achieving a high reuse and recycling rate. The following sustainable guidelines are therefore taken into account during procurement:

- What can be avoided? What is actually needed?
- What can be hired?
- Where is production taking place, what does the supply chain look like and what materials are being used?
- Is the product certified?
- Can packaging be avoided or reduced?
- How can reuse, upcycling, and the life cycle be extended?
- Are there reusable, compostable, recyclable and closed-loop alternatives and solutions?



Figure 11: Model of the circular economy  
Source: [europarl.europa](http://europarl.europa).

### OBJECTIVES

- › Considering resource-friendly and plastic-free alternatives in procurement and catering 60%
- › Total amount of waste as low as possible and as little littering as possible 40%
- › Highest possible rental, reuse and recycling rates 40%

### INDICATORS

- › Rental and reuse rates
- › Number of printed products
- › Share of the catering sector and other consumption in the event carbon footprint
- › Recycling rate
- › Waste quantities and types
- › Documentation of sustainability aspects in procurement (eventually plastic rate)
- › Proportion of certified procurements

With this focus area, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 contributes to the SDGs:





## Measures - current status

### Guidelines for sustainability in procurement

Sustainability is considered from the outset of the procurement process. Internal sustainable guidelines are integrated into the procurement documents and are explained in workshops. Specific sustainability aspects are integrated in tenders depending on the type of procurement. Support is provided by the Competence Centre for Sustainable of the Procurement of Procurement Office of the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

### Save paper - save trees: using digital solutions and recycled paper

Digital tools such as e-tickets, event apps, digital employee folders and e-business cards are used to reduce paper consumption. A paper-saving note has been added to the email signature. A limited number of printed information brochures are being produced on recycled paper and considerable efforts are being made to produce all advertising materials on recycled paper. Internally, certified recycled paper is used for all printing jobs (with the exception of job references). The attached notice ›save paper - save trees‹ is intended to draw long-term attention to resource-conserving paper consumption and, specifically, to local and global forest loss and the Amazon rainforest at an endangered tipping point.



### 3D printing and recycled materials for central event elements

The resource-saving 3D printing process was used for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 torch. Furthermore, it is planned to recycle old sports textiles as well as banner and flag materials for medal boxes, which will also be provided with a digital layer – the aim is to create an innovative and unique souvenir.

### Resource-friendly concepts for various materials and products

These measures include clothing, advertising materials, venue dressing and furnishings, promotional and merchandise items, accreditation items, and decorations. Some concepts are still in the detailed planning stage. The following table shows an interim status:

#### MATERIAL / PRODUCT

#### STATUS

##### Clothing

**Employee and promotional T-shirts:** **Stanley/Stella** provides certified organic cotton and is a member of the Fair Wear Foundation.



**Volunteer-Promo Sweatshirts:** **Promo-dis**, based in Berlin, does in-depth sourcing.

**Volunteer uniforms:** **Macron** supplies uniforms for 12,000 volunteers and employees and has the following certifications:

- ECO fabrics made from 100 % recycled PET (Global Recycled Standard, GRS).
- FSC-certified packaging and recycled polybags with QR codes for disposal.
- Durable materials and audited supply chains (ISO 14001, GRS, FSC, BCI).
- BREEAM certifications: Offices (EXCELLENT, 70.9 points), Warehouse (VERY GOOD, 65 points).

##### Branding & venue dressing materials

The focus is on resource-friendly design and circularity of the materials used as well as digital solutions (Details in planning).

##### Promo article



The focus is on practical, everyday products with minimal packaging, e.g. the ›Coole Socke‹.

##### Merch articles



Sustainability aspects such as recycled materials and organic cotton are taken into account, as well as transparent material and supply chain information in the online shop. In addition, there are plans to offer items in the merchandising shop in collaboration with Macron and a local workshop for people with disabilities.

*With regard to the Wanda items, there is a link to the Wanda protection (p. 51)*





## Measures - current status

### Sustainability workshops with local catering companies

Collaboration with local restaurants and food trucks is a priority in order to provide a diverse range of catering options for event visitors. There are plans to organise a workshop together with the Ruhr University Bochum in order to jointly agree on sustainable practices, such as the reuse of leftovers.

### Sustainability guidelines for backstage catering zones

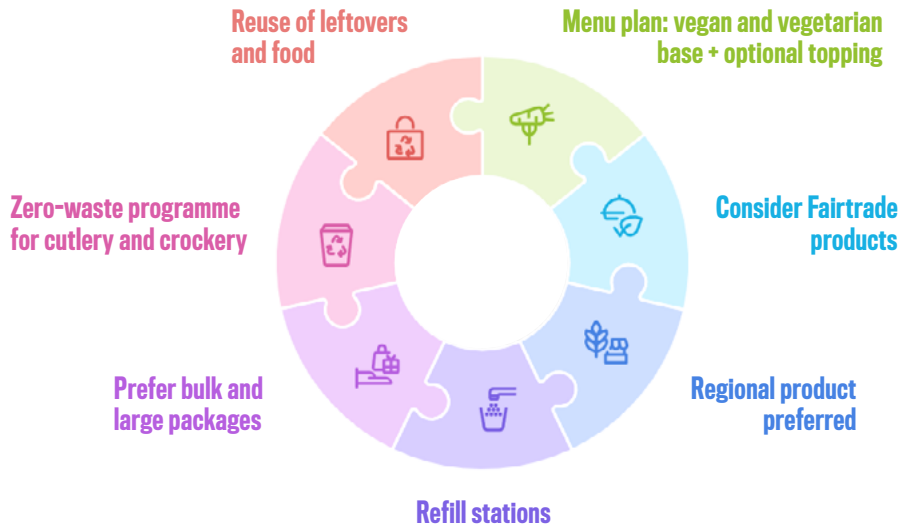


Figure 12: Planned sustainability aspects in backstage catering

An excerpt of the guidelines is shown in the graphic and the zero-waste programme is particularly in need of explanation. The temporary catering set-up for accredited guests uses cutlery and crockery that is completely biodegradable. For this purpose, special waste containers which will be completely broken down in a converter in only a few hours are planned. This is processed afterwards into new products such as toilet paper.

### Anti-littering actions

With Cleanups together with [World Cleanup Day Germany](#), the pollution crisis is to be given attention to deliver a strong anti-littering message. Furthermore, pocket ashtrays are planned to be handed out during the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Festival to raise awareness that no cigarette ends should be left in the environment.



### Efficient waste separation and recycling

In cooperation with the municipal waste disposal companies, waste separation systems are being provided for the public event sector and backstage, which allow waste to be separated according to need and type. Information will also be provided on how to separate waste and what exactly belongs in which bin.

**Sustainability is a joint effort:** Special initiatives are being planned for each sport, inspired by [badmintonearth](#). Bamintonearth was founded by two athletes, Miranda Wilson and Kai Schäfer, who are campaigning for climate action in badminton. Their recycling approach is planned to be implemented at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 badminton competitions.



## Measures - current status

### Outdoor drinking water fountain

Mobile drinking water stations are being planned for the visitors' outdoor areas, which will not only benefit the environment, but also all visitors in what is expected to be a hot month of July. The drinking fountains also represent an important heat protection measure.



### Reuse of sports equipment

If sports equipment cannot be hired, long-term use after the event is ensured through cooperation with universities, schools and social projects. This subsequent use is already planned during the procurement process. In addition, equipment from Special Olympics Berlin 2023 will be reused.

**Sustainability is a joint effort:** Like the Organising Committee, sports clubs and individuals can pay attention to conserving resources, from using second-hand goods to consuming more Fairtrade products and plant-based foods. This topic of the use of resources affects everyone's life and so everyone can make a contribution towards more environmentally friendly consumption. The »Sport handelt fair« initiative provides guidelines specifically for sports, for instance sustainable procurement in sports clubs: [sporthandeltfair.com](https://sporthandeltfair.com)

## SPOTLIGHT: WANDA PROTECTION

The mascot of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games is **Wanda, a peregrine falcon**. Wanda has the special support of the [Nature And Biodiversity Conservation Union](#) (NABU NRW) - the **official Wanda patrons** - who will provide a link to the FISU Games by highlighting relevant environmental issues such as biodiversity and species conservation.



### Environmental facts about Wanda and her species:

Bird mortality and the loss of biodiversity in general has been extremely worrying in recent decades. But there is also good news to tell: the peregrine falcon, which was once almost extinct in North Rhine-Westphalia, has been able to rebuild stable populations thanks to targeted measures and the efforts of committed conservationists. The comeback shows how effective measures and the commitment of NABU NRW can help to save endangered bird species.

**Sustainability is a joint endeavour:** Wanda the peregrine falcon symbolises a successful and excellent summer in 2025. Everyone can protect Wanda and her family as well. When you buy Wanda merchandise, 2.5 % of the purchase price goes directly to the Peregrine Falcon project of the NABU NRW.



## 4.2 SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

Social sustainability focuses on fostering social cohesion and ensuring equal rights for all. In this case, it also about proceeding in line with the results of the human rights risk analysis. Further, it places a strong emphasis on individual well-being and education. The following three key areas are prioritised and reported:

-  **Movement and health**
-  **Diversity and inclusion**
-  **Education and engagement**

Furthermore, the following two key concepts are highlighted as spotlights: The **Awareness Concept** and the **Complaints Mechanism** as well as the **[SDG] Discover Route** as a programme item that is particularly intended to promote education for sustainable development (ESD).



# Human Rights

Figure 13: Human Rights Logo, Source: [humanrightslogo.net](http://humanrightslogo.net)

## MOVEMENT AND HEALTH

According to the latest WHO Global Status Report on Physical Health<sup>11</sup>, many people are not physically active enough, especially in high-income countries. Enthusiasm for exercise and sport should therefore be awakened through active participation programmes and sporting activities should be encouraged, especially in sports clubs. While this is aimed at all age groups, there is a particular focus on children and young people, and on raising awareness of physical and mental health. Both the sports and the kids areas of the festival programme will be designed in cooperation with sports and health facilities.

Further, current studies show that competitive athletes and coaches, like the general population, can also suffer from mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, depression and eating disorders. In addition to physical health, the **2025 FISU World Conference** focuses on mental health discourses in organised sport and thus actively promotes the objectives of this focus area, which are described below, as well as the indicators and specific measures.



### OBJECTIVES

- › **Creating enthusiasm for movement, sports and health** 
- › **Promotion of grassroots sport in the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region and throughout Germany** 
- › **Active participation and involvement of university sports, sports federations, initiatives and clubs** 

### INDICATORS

- › **Number of participants in hands-on sports programmes and health-related workshops**
- › **Enthusiasm for sport and health awareness among visitors**
- › **Membership development of sports clubs**
- › **Number of sports and health organisations involved**
- › **Proportion of catering with healthy food and sugar-free drinks**

With this focus area, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 contributes to the SDGs:

**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING





## Measures - current status

### Ambassador Team Rhine-Ruhr 2025

The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games features a team of young ambassadors who present themselves on social media and at various pre-Games events, giving insights into their sporting progression and everyday lives. With one for each of the 18 sports, the aim of the Ambassador Team is to present special features of the sports included in the 2025 programme and create role models who motivate people to take part in sport. To promote sustainability as a joint endeavour, there is also a sustainability ambassador on board (see p. 73).



### Promotion of the FISU Healthy Campus Programme

With its »Healthy Campus« label, FISU supports universities worldwide in advancing their health management through targeted evaluation, thus contributing to improving the well-being of university members. As part of Rhine-Ruhr 2025 and in cooperation with the adh, FISU is enabling ten German universities to have their institutions certified free of charge. The German universities have already been made aware of the Healthy Campus initiative and motivated to join the international certification programme and network. The universities were registered on the »FISU Healthy Campus Platform« in July 2024 so that the label can be awarded to the selected universities one year later, during the event days of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU Games. All information on the ten universities can be found at [adh.de](http://adh.de), and any questions can be addressed directly to [gesundheit@adh.de](mailto:gesundheit@adh.de).

### Pre-FISU Games sport challenges

Action days are planned at schools and universities in the build-up to the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games. Exciting challenges and university sports days will provide exercise, games and fun in everyday school and university life. There will also be internal pre-FISU Games sporting challenges for all employees, where all 18 sports will be familiarised with and tried out.

**Sustainability is a joint endeavour:** The initiative »[bewegt studieren – Studieren bewegt!](#)« from the adh shows how health promotion through sport can be implemented as good practice.

### Mental health support

During the FISU Games, in addition to a daily mental health session for **delegations**, there are plans to provide a psychological contact point in the Games Neighbourhoods (such as recreation rooms for athletes). In order to support the mental health and well-being of **OC employees** during both the preparation and event periods, an external mental health contact person will be available for initial and follow-up counselling. Note that the contact person is not intended to be a substitute for comprehensive psychological support, where this is needed. In addition, a »Midweek Energiser« takes place every other Wednesday before the lunch break. This session includes movement, breathing techniques and guided meditation to promote concentration and reduce stress. There are also plans to adjust the core working hours one day a week to give employees more time for sporting activities and personal regeneration.



### Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Sports Diploma

The hands-on sports programme invites all visitors to try out the various sports at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games. Those who diligently collect stamps at the individual sports stations will complete the Sports Diploma, find themselves in the daily ranking, and can win a gift. The hands-on stations are organised and supervised by sports associations, which also provide information about their sports and about practising sports in North Rhine-Westphalia, as well as about the [German Sports Badge](#) and the [Buddy Sports Badge](#). In cooperation with sports associations for people with disabilities, it is planned to make the hands-on programmes as inclusive as possible.

### Heat and sun protection

Free-to-use drinking fountains and sun cream dispensers are being planned at all outdoor areas. In addition, educational programmes will provide information on the prevention of skin cancer and other sun and heat-related health risks. Headgear will be available in the merch shop. You can find digital tips on heat and heat protection here: [klima-mensch-gesundheit.de](http://klima-mensch-gesundheit.de)

### Healthy and fair offers in the public comfort zone

In addition to popular sports food classics in Germany such as chips and currywurst, alternative and healthier food and drink options will be on sale in the comfort zones of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Festival. These will include vegetarian, vegan, and - where possible - organically produced food, plus Fairtrade products and drinks.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games celebrate diversity and actively promote inclusion. The international sports festival creates diverse spaces for encounters and with the motto ›Everybody is all-in‹, everyone is addressed and invited to participate. In order to fulfil this claim, the aim is to break down and overcome barriers in communication and create a broad awareness of inclusion.

Integral event concepts such as a comprehensive security concept, contractually regulated working conditions and official accreditation procedures form the basis for protecting human rights and, in addition, awareness work should create an event culture that is as free of discrimination as possible.

The Event Inclusion Manager in Sport (EVI) working in the Organising Committee is committed to an inclusive working environment and offers particular support for inclusion issues. Further information on the DOSB's EVI project can be found at [inklusion.dosb.de](http://inklusion.dosb.de). In addition, the local Organising Committees were asked to appoint inclusion officers in order to work closely together on this topic at a local level. Involving people with disabilities and human rights and awareness experts in particular plays a key role in conceptualising and reviewing the effectiveness of the measures.



Kick-off meeting EVI-Project 2023 © DOSB

## OBJECTIVES

- › Create participation and event experience for as many people as possible 50%
- › Promotion of safer spaces during the event days and a non-discriminatory culture 30%
- › Involvement of various stakeholder groups with regard to diversity and inclusion 50%
- › Promoting inclusion in sport and within the university sports organisation 50%

## INDICATORS

- › Number and type of ticket categories and free tickets for social projects
- › Satisfaction and event quality of people with and without disabilities
- › Degree of accessibility of the communication channels and the event site
- › Involved organisations and people with disabilities
- › Documentation of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 anti-discrimination and inclusion activities

With this focus area, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 contributes to the SDGs:



 **Measures - current status**



**Para sport in the competition programme for the first time in the FISU Summer Games**

For the first time in the history of the FISU World University Games Summer, Para Sport is integrated into the competition programme. This means that 3x3 wheelchair basketball will celebrate its premiere in summer 2025. Eight men's and eight women's teams will compete for the medals at the Jahrhunderthalle in Bochum.

**Diversity Charter**

In September 2023, the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU Games gGmbH signed the [Diversity Charter](#), sending a clear signal in favour of diversity in the world of work.



An internal day of action was organised on German **Diversity Day 2024**: Employees organised a joint lunch under the motto »Eat the World«. With around 30 different dishes, a colourful journey through the cuisines of the world and various regions of Germany was created. In the afternoon, diversity training took place in the form of an interactive online session two external experts to further raise awareness of equality, equity, and inclusion, and to share good practice from major international sporting events.

**Tandem Volunteer Programme**

People with and without disabilities are being approached to become part of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 team. As the Special Olympics Berlin 2023 showcased, there will be a tandem option for people with disabilities for certain volunteer areas. This leads to encounters and shared experiences between people with and without disabilities. So far, the Tandem Volunteer Programme has 26 registrations.

An e-mail address has been set up for questions, suggestions and comments on inclusion and accessibility: [inclusion@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:inclusion@rhineruhr2025.com)

**Affordable tickets and discounts**

A low-price strategy is in place for the ticketing concept for sporting and cultural events in the six host cities. Discounts for families, students, senior citizens, or people with a disability card have been implemented. The marathon and the walking discipline in Bochum are also accessible free of charge. Ticket sales opened in September 2024.

**Digital accessibility**

With regard to the digital channels of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU Games-namely the website, event app, and social media - the focus is on reducing barriers and creating the best possible digital accessibility. Key accessibility standards were taken into account when developing the website. People with disabilities are also involved, for example to evaluate the digital presence and measures and provide feedback. The following status update is available:

DIGITAL MEASURES	STATUS (NOVEMBER 2024)
Eye-Able Website Assistant	Implemented
Video subtitling	Implemented
Alternative texts for images	Partially
Contrast values	Are always checked
Contents in easy language	In progress
Contents in German sign language	Partly live
Contents in International Sign Language	In planning

**Spatial accessibility**

Special attention is paid to ensuring the highest possible level of accessibility to the OC headquarters as well as to transport, media, catering and volunteer areas, and the entire public event area for visitors (routing, parking spaces, stands, wheelchair spaces, catering). Venues are visited in advance to identify and remove barriers at an early stage. A comprehensive check of the venues for spatial accessibility is planned after set-up. Visitors will be provided with information on the accessibility of the various sports and event venues in the venue guides and on the website.

## Measures - current status

### Live-inclusive services and inclusion volunteers

In addition to translation services, inclusive services will be offered live and on site at the official Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the Ruhr Games concerts and a number of sports finals to enable people with disabilities to participate and enjoy a high-quality event experience.

#### Audio descriptive commentary



This live reportage will make the sporting events available in visual language (audio description). It will be available as a live audio format on site or as an »All Ears on« radio format via an app and is aimed at people with visual impairments and anyone interested in being introduced to different types of sport.

#### Sign language interpreting



Professional sign language interpreters will be available on site to interpret the sporting events and the biggest concerts into German sign language and to act as contacts for people with hearing impairments.

#### Inductive hearing systems



This service is aimed at people with hearing aids. An audio feed of the presenter or the stadium announcement is transmitted to hearing aids via an app using an induction loop.

#### Subtitling



This service is aimed at people with language impairments. Subtitling in German and English is planned for the speeches at the Opening Ceremony.

Among the spectator service volunteers, the specific volunteer role **Inclusion Volunteers** focuses on supporting people with disabilities. Inclusion volunteers receive training to prepare them for their role and are also the direct point of contact for the Event Inclusion Manager on the Organising Committee.

### Inclusive venue planning

Everyone is invited, and so the OC wants everyone to feel as comfortable as possible. Therefore, the following elements are planned: **Safer spaces** will be set up as cosy retreats (see spotlight: awareness concept) and unisex toilets will be provided depending on the possibilities and resources of the venues. **Storage and parking spaces** for rollators or pushchairs will be available at the Infopoint. **Assistance dogs** are also welcome (security staff will be briefed accordingly). Inclusion volunteers will cater to the needs of visitors with disabilities as well as their assistance dogs. A **mobility service** in the form of e-rickshaws and golf carts is being planned for long and uneven paths to support people with limited mobility. Detailed information on this will be provided in the venue guides.

### Diversity sensitisation and inclusive festival programme

As part of the awareness concept before the FISU Games, as well as the general sensitisation during the event, diversity will be made visible and tangible with workshops and hands-on activities as well as tangible and visible elements. For example, a Para badminton match is being planned before the final of the badminton competitions, and further Para Sport try-outs will be part of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Festival. Organisations that would like to co-create towards diversity are invited to apply at the [Call for Participation](#) (see p. 76). The overarching approach is on making the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 festival programme as inclusive as possible.

### Hidden Disability Sunflower

The OC encourages people with hidden disabilities to wear the Sunflower lanyard. If you have any questions, please contact [inclusion@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:inclusion@rhineruhr2025.com) and the team will provide support.



The Hidden Disability Sunflower is a simple tool that can be used to voluntarily communicate a disability or condition that may not be immediately recognisable - and that may require a helping hand, understanding or more time in shops, at work, on transport or in public spaces. You can find more information here: [hdsunflower.com](https://hdsunflower.com).



## SPOTLIGHT: AWARENESS CONCEPT AND COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

The awareness concept and complaints mechanism act as overarching measures of the sustainability strategy and are a key human rights measures.



### What does an awareness concept mean?

An awareness concept in the event context promotes respectful interaction and establishes a safer space through clear behavioral guidelines, ensuring that misconduct or discriminatory behavior is not tolerated. It provides support, raises awareness for inclusivity, and contributes to prevention, creating an atmosphere where all participants feel respected and welcome.

The development process of the awareness concept is supported by external expertise. An awareness circle was formed for this purpose, in which experienced people - students, anti-racism officers, event psychologists and voluntary awareness workers - voluntarily participate. Materials and experiences from various other sporting and cultural events are being collected, also together with the awareness circle. Talks are also being held with organisations such as [Safe Sport e.V.](#) in order to raise awareness and communicate the necessary contact points. The status of the elementary concept modules is outlined below.

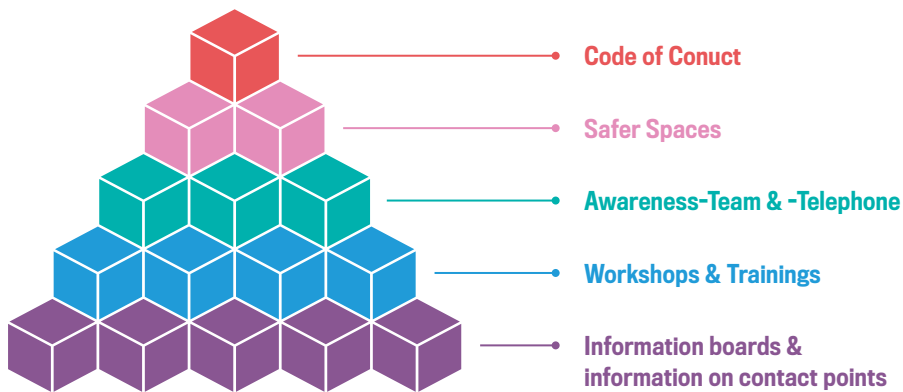


Figure 13: Central elements of the awareness concept

### Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct translates the declaration of principles on respect for human rights and sustainability into specific rules of conduct that apply to all visitors, participants, and employees. It is planned to publish the Code of Conduct at the beginning of 2025.

### Workshops and theme days for employees, and volunteer training modules

These are being designed to actively and preventively promote anti-discrimination. The topic is included in official volunteer training and in connection with security training for accredited staff. Volunteers who actively support the awareness teams during the event receive qualification training.

### OVERVIEW OF WORKSHOP-STATUS (TARGET GROUP: EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS)

24 May 2024: **Diversity Day incl. internal diversity training with Donna Fraser and Nyasha Derera**

4 Sep. 2024: **Para Sport Lounge NRW incl. hands-on workshops, presentations and panel discussion**

11 Dec 2024: **Internal Disability Awareness Workshop**

17 – 30 Mar 2025: **International Weeks against Racism - action day against racism in planning**

27 May 2025: **Diversity Day – internal Awareness Workshop in planning**

Spring 2025: **Volunteer qualification training on awareness work during events**

### Awareness teams, safer spaces, information boards

An awareness team will be on duty during the event days. This team provide preventative and situational support to counteract discriminatory or abusive behaviour and to offer support to those affected. The awareness team is made up of experienced awareness personnel and volunteers who receive training in advance. Safer spaces are set up in places with a high volume of visitors and is managed by the awareness team. These also serve as a place of retreat, for example for people with autism, breastfeeding mothers, and other people looking for a calming environment. In addition, information boards will be displayed at the event venues, providing details of the awareness hotline and digital reporting form (see p. 66) to ensure that visitors and participants know where they can report potential human rights risks and environmental issues. Sensory bags (a bag for people with sensory sensitivities to help reduce or manage sensory overload during an event) and other provisions and precautions in the Safer Space are currently being planned.

The following complaints mechanism is closely linked to the awareness concept.

### What exactly is behind the complaints mechanism?

As a central instrument of human rights work, it is a structured process that allows individuals or groups to raise concerns, complaints or conflicts regarding an event or organisation and to jointly find solutions and access to remedy. For the FISU World University Games, the mechanism is essential to ensure that potential and critical human rights or environmental issues can be resolved quickly, transparently, and fairly. However, it is important to note that this digital complaint form is not intended to function as customer support for general inquiries, or as the inclusion support related to accessibility concerns.

The introduction of this complaint management processes is intended to help strengthen the trust of participants, volunteers, employees, partners, and the general public in the event. An internal reporting office has already been introduced for employees in accordance with whistleblower protection, which can be contacted by whistleblowers who wish to report or disclose a violation of the Declaration of Principles (see p. 103-105) and the Code of Conduct.

An external complaint mechanism is intended to help identify irregularities at an early stage, improve the organisational process, and take remedial action. This external complaint form is planned to go live on the official Rhine-Ruhr 2025 website in spring 2025, which will be managed by the sustainability team of the organising committee and, depending on the case, internal departments and external experts are consulted to find fair solutions. During the event days, this digital external complaint form will be supplemented by an awareness telephone hotline.

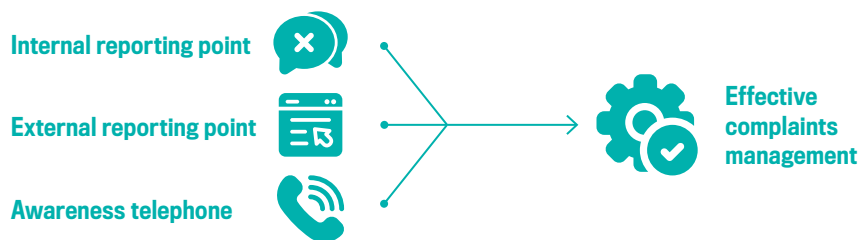


Figure 14: Central components of the grievance mechanism

**Sustainability is a joint endeavour:** If you want to find out more about accessibility and inclusion (in sport), take a look at the Aktion Mensch website: [aktion-mensch.de](https://www.aktion-mensch.de). Information on diversity and the diversity dimension is provided by the [Diversity Charter](#).

## EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games uniquely combine science and sport. With the **Discover Zone**, the event will feature a diverse edutainment programme aimed at children, young people, families, young adults, and other interested audiences. This programme, offered alongside the FISU World Conference at the Jahrhunderthalle, will actively promote education for sustainable development. Additionally, the event will foster various forms of university cooperation while prioritising educational initiatives for volunteers and delegations.

### OBJECTIVES

- > Various educational and cultural programmemes for visitors and participants 50%
- > Co-design of students and universities 80%
- > Making the 17 SDGs and values of sport visible and tangible 30%

### INDICATORS

- > Number of universities and students involved according to type of participation
- > Number and quality of educational programmemes
- > Measuring awareness of sustainability among employees, accredited staff and visitors

With this focus area, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 contributes to the SDGs:





## Measures - current status

The central stakeholder group of the event – student-athletes and representatives of universities – shape the event in many ways: as members of the Organising Committee; through joint seminars, university sports days and working groups; and in scientific research and final theses. Initially addressed by the **Legacy and Sustainability Workshops** and the **Torch Design Competition**, a series of further concrete projects for and with **students** followed. The beacon projects are described below:

### International lecture series - Rhine-Ruhr et al. (2025)

In the run-up to the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games, an international lecture series through the winter semester 2024/2025 will be followed by a podcast in the summer semester 2025. Internationally renowned lecturers from countries such as the United States, South Africa, Australia, Brazil and China will summarise the current state of research and national perspectives on university sport and the FISU World University Games. The lecture series and podcast are freely accessible, will be recorded and, where possible, kept available for the long term.

### FISU Young Sports Media Talents

Through this expansion of the [FISU Young Reporters](#) Programme, national and international students have the opportunity to apply as part of the accredited media team in the three subject areas of reporting, photography, and audio descriptive commentary. They can take part in individually designed courses, receive professional mentoring from established media professionals, and put their skills to the test over the 12 days of the programme. A recruitment and selection process began in December 2024.

### Cooperations with universities

The worldmap demonstrates the current status on cooperation with universities on various projects, seminars, joint research, theses worldwide:

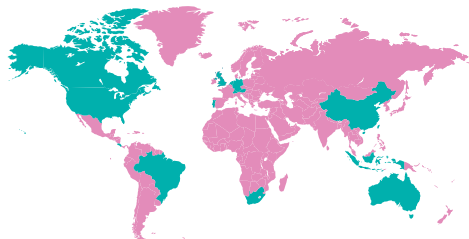


Figure 15: Number of current university cooperations

**Europa:** Germany: 25; Netherlands: 1; Portugal: 1; Austria: 1; Switzerland: 1; United Kingdom: 2  
**Oceania:** Australia: 2  
**Africa:** South Africa: 1  
**Asia:** Indonesia: 1; China: 2  
**South America:** Brazil: 1  
**North America:** Costa Rica: 1; Canada: 1; USA: 7

Under the following link, universities can get an overview of all the possibilities so far -join in and **become part of Rhine-Ruhr 2025**: [hochschulen-info](#)

The contact person and central point of contact for questions and submissions of research projects, projects and campaigns is Johannes Karsch from the Department of Education & Science: [education@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:education@rhineruhr2025.com)

### Science Slam and Science Communication Competition

Building on the momentum of the FISU World Conference, plans are underway to host a Science Slam and a Science Communication Competition. These innovative formats aim to make science more accessible and engaging by inviting students and universities to participate. With a strong focus on sustainability, both events seek to bridge the gap between academia and the public, presenting scientific ideas and research in creative and exciting ways. Whether through captivating presentations, storytelling, or interactive demonstrations, these formats aim to spark enthusiasm for science while highlighting its role in addressing global challenges.

The involvement of **children and young people** is also a priority in order to present interesting content to the next generation with and through sport and to allow them to actively participate in the FISU Games. The individual projects and activities are described below:

### Adopt A Delegation

As part of this school project, pupils from all school types and grades ›adopt‹ a delegation from the participating nations. In individually organised projects, they deal with the special features of the foreign cultures, for example with the country's typical music, cuisine, or national sport. The results are presented during the 12 days of the event. The schools are also involved in the official delegation programme, which allows the delegations to get to know each other personally and welcome them with a warmly designed programme. The pupils are also invited to greet the delegations on their arrival in Germany, providing further opportunities for encounters and points of contact. However, universities can also be part of this programme





## Measures - current status

### Promoting young commitment

In cooperation with the State Sports Association and the North Rhine-Westphalia Sports Youth, the plan is to support young commitment. A network meeting during the event period is planned as a highlight event in 2025 specifically for young people aged 15 to 27 who are actively realise their ideas and visions in local sports clubs and associations.

### Children's University

›Hands-on science‹ will not only be available for young people and adults, but in cooperation with universities and children's universities in the region, a wide range of topics will be integrated into the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Festival in target group-orientated, hands-on formats.

### International children and youth exchanges

The event offers a broad platform for international children and youth encounters. Youth camps and holiday camps run by organised sport and other youth organisations are invited. In addition, international exchange projects with the partner cities or countries of the municipalities of the Ruhr Regional Association are promoted.

Furthermore, educational training sessions for **volunteers and delegations** are also a priority.

### Edutainment for delegations and volunteers

Educational initiatives for **delegations** complete the programme around the competitions, for example the FISU Gender Equality Round Table or workshops on relevant topics such as clean performance and safe sport. Educational sessions for **Volunteers** will be provided in digital training sessions and hands-on activities, with a focus on integrating education for sustainable development.

Lastly, different engagement for social, environmental and scientific action will be awarded at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games.

### Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Awards Ceremonies

To promote and recognise scientific, environmental, and social commitment, the **Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Awards** will be presented during the FISU World Conference. These awards honour outstanding contributions made in the fields of science and sustainability. They are intended not only to recognise the commitment of the players involved, but also to serve as inspiration for future generations who will carry on the positive influence of sport on society and the environment.

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#### Outstanding Thesis Concept Award & Outstanding Thesis Award

To promote young academics, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 organises competitions for the best final thesis (Bachelor or Masters) and the best thesis concept (exposé) and awards attractive prizes. The prerequisite is a well-founded reference to university sport, major sporting events, multi-sport events, the FISU World University Games, Rhine-Ruhr 2025, FISU, or the adh.

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#### Green Delegation's Award

This award is aimed at delegations that make a significant contribution to sustainability at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games or in their home country.

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#### FISU Young Researchers Award

The Young Researchers Award is aimed at young researchers who make a significant contribution to the topics of the 2025 FISU World Conference with their innovative and interdisciplinary research projects.

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#### FISU Healthy Campus

The FISU Healthy Campus Award (see p. 56) is presented as part of Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World Conference.

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Furthermore, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 supports the application of the fifth edition of the **adh Sustainability Award** for all member universities. The award honours small and large innovative projects and concepts, as well as individual measures in the context of all dimensions of sustainability, that sustainably change university sports and develop them in a future-oriented way. Details can be found on the [adh website](#).

## SPOTLIGHT: [SDG] DISCOVER ROUTE

The SDG Discovery Route begins even before the FISU Games, involving internal staff and the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 community through workshops, hands-on activities, and themed days. These pre-event initiatives build awareness and commitment to the SDGs. Additional action days are planned ahead of the FISU Games.

During the FISU Games, the **Discover Route** will unfold across the three main festival locations in the Discover Zones: Jahrhunderthalle in Bochum, Grugapark in Essen, and Dreieckswiese in Duisburg. Each location will feature unique, site-specific themes, offering visitors interactive activities that emphasise education for sustainable development (ESD). Therefore, the Discover Route goes beyond sharing information – it's about sparking action. Visitors will participate in hands-on activities designed to inspire sustainable behaviours and strengthen their individual handprint. A dedicated map will guide participants along the route, offering insights into site-specific themes. Those who complete the route will receive not only valuable takeaways and meaningful encounters but also a surprise package as a reward for their engagement.

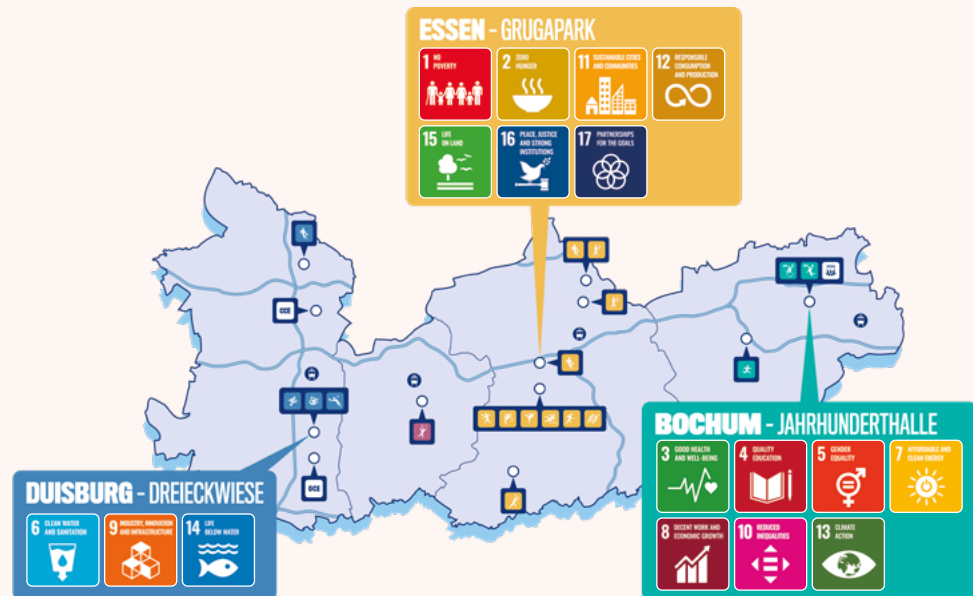


Figure 16: Current planning status of the [SDG] Discover Route

**Sustainability is a joint endeavour:** In order to jointly promote sustainable development in and through the FISU Games, the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Ambassador Team has gained active support. Together with the internationally renowned activist and greenfluencer Domitila Barros, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 wants to celebrate diversity and raise awareness of urgent environmental and social issues. The joint mission is to encourage, spread hope and dreaming as well as educate and inspire people to actively work towards a fairer and more sustainable future - in and through sport.

## ABOUT THE PERSON: DOMITILA BARROS

Domitila is an internationally recognised activist, entrepreneur and greenfluencer who is passionate about social justice, environmental awareness and diversity. Her life journey began in a favela in Brazil, where she initiated educational and engagement projects at a young age to improve the living conditions of her community. Today, she uses her platform to make topics such as sustainability, empowerment and social responsibility visible worldwide.





## 4.3 ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The focus of economic sustainability is on promoting **regional value creation**, including regenerative economic practices in particular, and positioning the event as an attractive platform for national and international networking. In addition, the aim is to strengthen links between the municipalities in the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region. The focus will also be on the Ruhr region in transition, its multicultural diversity, and its importance as a tourist destination. At the same time, the event serves as a platform for young students and offers them new perspectives, opportunities and networking possibilities.

### OBJECTIVES

- › **Positive, long-term economic effects for the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region** 30%
- › **Promoting the attractiveness of the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region as a location** 30%
- › **Creating an attractive platform, integration and networking of various local stakeholder groups** 50%

### INDICATORS

- › **Economic Impact Study of the FISU**
- › **Satisfaction of the stakeholders**    › **Recommendation rate**
- › **Proportion of regional providers, restaurateurs, creative artists and cultural workers**

With this focus area, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 contributes to the SDGs:

**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



### Local Organising Committees (LOCs)

In order to organise the smooth planning and implementation of the FISU World University Games in the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region, the Organising Committee involved the municipalities and partners in the respective cities at an early stage. The Organising Committee took the lead in convening six LOCs, which meet once a quarter to plan, discuss and coordinate.



### Call for Participation

The **Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Festival** aims to bring people together to create creative places for inspiring encounters and to showcase the diversity of the Rhine-Ruhr region. Around the sporting competitions, the festival programme offers associations, clubs, museums, schools, universities and colleges a unique opportunity to share their passion for sport, culture and science.

Through the ›Call for Participation‹, everyone can apply to organise workshops, children's and family activities, or an appearance on the official pitches. You can find all the information here: [call-for-participation](#)

### App development

The event app will not only be developed for the duration of the FISU Games, but will also remain a long-term platform for sporting and tourism purposes in the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region. It will provide visitors and participants with up-to-date information on events, leisure activities, sustainable mobility options and cultural highlights in the region. Gamification elements and interactive features will also encourage user engagement and contribute to the creation of a regional identity.

### Extended cultural programme

In addition to the sports festival, a cultural programme will be developed especially for the international delegations to present the Ruhr region as a future-oriented, cosmopolitan region. In addition to the sporting competitions, the student-athletes from all over the world will have the opportunity to experience the cultural diversity and impressive transformation of the region. The programme includes visits to post-industrial landmarks such as collieries and industrial parks, which now serve as modern cultural and innovation centres, as well as tours of sustainable urban development projects and scientific institutions.

### Knowledge Management

To ensure the best possible transfer of knowledge, employees from past national and international (major) sporting events are working on the Organising Committee, for example from the Ruhr Games, European Championships Munich 2022, Special Olympics Berlin 2023 and UEFA EURO 2024. During the planning phase, internal reports from each department are planned to accompany the process and, after the FISU Games, to provide a final report in order to pool expertise. There are also plans to retain this specific event expertise in North Rhine-Westphalia after the summer of 2025.



Participants of the Knowledge Transfer Meeting in Bochum, November 2023 © fisu.net

# 5 ZOOM-OUT: IMPACT DIMENSIONS & TRANSFORMATION DRIVERS

The previous chapter focused on the sustainability strategy, which can be seen as a Zoom-In perspective of the OC. These activities are key; they make it possible to plan and implement concrete measures on the path to an event. In contrast, the following chapter takes a broader perspective with futurologist Anja Kirig focusing on a more abstract concept: the Zoom-Out perspective.

While the Zoom-In therefore concentrates on immediate, operational measures and ideas for action within sustainability management and reports on them transparently, the Zoom-Out centres on the fundamental question of legacy.

A legacy is formed where significant developments and megatrends are addressed and the resulting transformations are actively shaped. This active participation holds great potential for sustainable effects and long-term added value. The Zoom-Out therefore appeals to readers to not only be spectators, but to be active co-creators of the future.

## ABOUT THE PERSON: ANJA KIRIG

Anja Kirig has been working as a freelance futurologist since 2005. Her focus is on observing social change processes. Central in her research is the transformation of leisure cultures. The social scientist examines how these transformations influence sports society and culture.





## MOMENTUM: LEGACY

**Sustainability will be a decisive criterion for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games. At the same time, the event also aims to leave a positive long-term impact at the venue and, ideally, in the event region, which is referred to as 'legacy'. A positive legacy should last beyond the time of the event.**

The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games have the potential to generate a positive long-term effect. To this end, not only were sustainability focus areas with measures drawn up, but also so-called impact dimensions were defined in which the long-term positive developments can become visible.

Sustainability and legacy are closely linked; it is difficult to imagine a legacy without a sustainability approach. For example, consideration of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (17 SDGs) can show how long-term positive effects can be achieved through sustainable decisions and strategies.

The legacy can be seen in various key areas - future impact dimensions. Environmental sustainability, at best, contributes to a positive environmental legacy. Economic aspects, such as strengthening the local economy and creating jobs, promote the long-term stability of the community. Civil society engagement strengthens social cohesion and a sense of responsibility. Health initiatives and socio-cultural measures contribute to public wellbeing, social change and cultural diversity.

**Defining and communicating measures within the identified key areas pursues several objectives:**

- They serve as guidelines for all players and participants in the event.
- They provide a benchmark for later evaluation of the results.
- They invite everyone to actively participate, both during and before and after the event.
- They can serve as a model for future events.

Both the location and the structure of the event were taken into account when planning the measures and defining the impact dimensions. It is important to recognise that not all approaches will be transferable to subsequent events or successful on site.

The following five impact dimensions will serve as a framework for defining and evaluating the influences and effects of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games. They enable a structured analysis of the various aspects of the expected or actual influence in dimensions such as the environment, economy, society and participation, health, socio-cultural impact and exchange of values.

With a clear vision for the future, appropriate steps can be defined to achieve the goal. This requires the interaction of all those involved and close cooperation. Good communication and targeted information are crucial.

With a sustainability strategy and legacy planning, the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games can create momentum that will reverberate - both locally and globally.

## PROCEDURE AND METHODOLOGY

A systemic method was chosen to identify the impact dimensions of the event. This method is based on the analysis of general criteria relevant to the legacy of events, including social impact, climate impact, economic benefit, infrastructural added value and cultural impact. Parallel to this analysis, current megatrends were considered, with a particular focus on the resulting socio-cultural trends. These developments offer the potential to initiate and actively shape sustainable change. By understanding these transformative drivers, a vision for the future can be developed. Subsequently, the examination is outlined how this future can be realised through sustainability approaches and measures.

The identified impact dimensions thus represent the future dreams in which the legacy of events is possible and offer a guide to achieve this future through sustainability strategies.

## IMPACT DIMENSION: ENVIRONMENT

**Global climate change as a megatrend is having a drastic impact on all areas of our lives. This development is in the process of changing the fundamental structures of society. In today's world, it is therefore essential to incorporate environmental sustainability into all corporate and organisational decisions.**

In view of climate change and the loss of biodiversity, sustainability is an unavoidable issue today. In addition to increased social awareness of this issue, the medium and long-term effects are increasingly becoming the focus of discussion. This is reflected, for example, in terms such as to ensure children inherit a liveable planet.

Today, sustainability measures often focus on minimising environmental impact and conserving resources. However, to leave a lasting positive legacy, systemic thinking is required. We need to develop strategies that adapt to change, offer ecologically compatible alternatives and also have a climate-positive effect. For major events, this means developing a multi-level approach: measures to avoid or replace negative impacts and initiatives that achieve environmental improvements on the ground.

The four focus areas developed for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games in the field of environmental sustainability start here. While some of the measures specifically pursue the 5 R's - Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot - others have legacy potential. These include measures such as re-use concepts for event venues, initiatives such as drinking fountains and the redistribution of sports equipment. A large number of measures also have a potential long-term effect through awareness-raising and nudging.

## From renunciation to replacement

A reorientation towards a systemic ecology is essential for future developments. This is a direct response to global climate change, loss of biodiversity and increasing social awareness and engagement. The challenge is to preserve modern achievements and at the same time transform them in such a way that they not only preserve our habitable planet, but ideally even improve its condition. The transformation that is being shaped here can therefore be summarised as the thesis: ›From renunciation to replacement.

Future development hence requires a shift away from pure restrictions towards a holistic ecological perspective. This includes a broad spectrum of trends and topics, including innovative green technologies (Green Tech), plant-based alternatives (Plant-based), the reduction of plastic waste (Beyond Plastic), measures to reduce the volume of traffic (Road Diet), efficient solutions for short journeys (Last-Mile-Concepts), zero-waste concepts, electromobility (E-Mobility), strategies to overcome carbon dependency (Post-Carbon) and the support of economic forms that are not geared towards constant growth (Post-Growth).

These trends offer enormous potential for major events to bring about sustainable and long-term change. By introducing and promoting these trends and concepts, organisers, organisations, start-ups, companies, politicians and civil society can make a significant contribution to environmental action and create a positive, future-oriented world. A major event such as the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games can serve as a platform to present innovative solutions and not only sensitise an even wider audience to the importance of environmental action and sustainability, but also motivate them to actively participate - beyond the narrative of renunciation and blame, but by offering practical solutions.

**Future Impact: Drivers and contexts of the impact dimensions**

DIMENSION	ENVIRONMENT	ECONOMY	SOCIETY	HEALTH	CULTURE
<b>TOPICS</b> (EXTRACT)	Waste Energy Resources	Local contribution Jobs Infrastructure	Inclusion Diversity Participation New togetherness	Awareness of exercise programmes and options Prevention	Global cultural exchange Value multiplication Destination image
<b>MEGATRENDS</b>	Climate change	Connectivity Globalisation Individualisation	Individualisation Demographic change	Health Demographic change	Urbanisation Globalisation Connectivity
<b>SUBTRENDS</b>	Green Tech Plant Based Beyond Plastic Road Diet Last-Mile-Concepts Zero Waste E-mobility Post-carbon Post-growth	Economy for the common good Sharing economy Start-up culture Collaboration Post-growth Playfulness Lifelong Learning Open Knowledge Social Business Meaningful Economy Open Innovation	Universal Design Multigraphy We-Culture Ungendered Lifestyle LGBT+ Gender Awareness Sharing Economy	Sportivity Quality of life Plant Based Corporate Health Preventive Health Resonance Holistic Health Touchless Tech	Glocalisation Regionalisation Resonance Responsive City Lifelong Learning Transparency Open Knowledge Sharing Economy Open Innovation
<b>POSSIBILITY SPACE</b>	Potential for the region, Major sporting events in general	Potential for the region and sports innovations. Knowledge transfer	Potential for democracy	Potential for health	Potentials for the image of the region, communication
<b>TRANSFORMATION SPACE</b>	Blue ecology	Next Economy	Co-individualisation	Health network	Resonance / Shared Identity
<b>COMMUNICATION SPACE</b>	From renunciation to replacement	From growth to resilience	From differentiation to heterogeneous We principle	From performance to a common health	From closed systems to open cosmopolitanism

## IMPACT DIMENSION: ECONOMY

**An economic transformation towards a sustainable ›next economy‹ can be decisively influenced by the potential of a major event such as the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games. The reach of such an event extends far beyond the immediate event itself. The event has the opportunity to act as a platform on which companies can establish themselves and realign themselves. The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games can therefore serve as a catalyst for a significant trend transformation.**

A future-oriented major event can achieve positive economic effects in the long term, especially if it creates an atmosphere for development and innovation. The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games can connect a diverse range of stakeholders on one platform before, during and after the event - from NGOs and local communities to large corporations. Both cooperation and competition-oriented collaboration (coopetition) can be promoted. These forms of synergy are crucial for creating an economic legacy that is not only geared towards growth and short-term profits but is based on a responsible and future-oriented economy. It is particularly important to involve local networks and business communities such as freelancers, the self-employed, start-ups and small to medium-sized enterprises in order to exploit the full economic potential.

All measures that focus on networks, especially those from the ›Regional value creation and networking‹ focus area, are potential legacy hubs of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games. However, projects that initiate new cycles (such as the reuse of sports equipment) also potentially offer opportunities for new economic areas.

The event also has the thematic advantage. Sport and exercise have become a spirit of the time, which is also noticeable in entrepreneurship. This development offers opportunities to use the phenomenon ›Sportivity‹ as an economic driver. Many areas are involved here - from sporting activities and equipment to safety and B2B services through to urban planning, tourism, leisure, education and health. The region can position itself as a centre and driver of innovation by strengthening the networking of stakeholders and using existing structures such as the ›Innovationsnetzwerk Sport‹ founded in 2021.

Furthermore, the option of not dissolving the Organising Committee of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games after the event, as is often the case with major events, but continuing it as a permanent organisation should be promoted. One example of this is the ARU (Agenzia regionale per l'Universiade), which was responsible for organising the 2019 World University Games in Naples. Today, the agency operates under the name ARUS (Agenzia Regionale Universiadi per lo Sport) as an important sports policy player and takes on a variety of tasks in the region. The continuation of ARU has not only secured jobs but has also kept the expertise of the employees in the region, which is now available for further development. The ARUS is available for sporting events and the promotion of sport. Last year, ARUS sponsored 130 events with 1.5 million euros - a commitment that, according to Flavio De Martino, General Director of ARUS, is unprecedented in the last 20 years, as confirmed by the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI).

### From growth to resilience

Subtrends such as the economy for the common good, the sharing economy, start-up culture, collaboration, post-growth, playfulness, lifelong learning, open knowledge, social business, the sense economy and open innovation are crucial for the economy of tomorrow. They promote sustainability, social responsibility and innovation and support an economic model, that prioritises resource efficiency, social justice and a holistic understanding of prosperity and knowledge exchange. Especially in times of multiple crises, this not only promotes the resilience of a region, but also that of a society and economy. An event that communicates and integrates these themes serves as a role model for innovative practices and drives sustainable development both in the region and beyond.

In addition to the opportunities to promote a different economy, it is relevant that current social trends such as New Work or the knowledge society are not only taken into account, but also actively involved in shaping them. As a university event, there is the potential to initiate sustainable change by involving the future shapers of society.

## IMPACT DIMENSION: SOCIETY

**Socio-cultural change processes describe the dynamic development of society, which can be seen in various areas such as culture, social structure, values and norms. These processes are crucial for understanding the impact of measures on society and shaping them accordingly. The focus here is on creating a positive, sustainable effect that picks up on and helps shape the changing values of our society.**

In this field of activity, current and future important topics such as inclusion and diversity, participation and a new way of working together are coming to the fore. These concepts aim to promote a more inclusive, equal and participatory society in which diversity is recognised and valued and all members can actively participate in the social fabric. Megatrends such as individualisation, new gender roles and the demographic development towards a society in which older people play an increasingly important role - are responsible for these changes. These phenomena influence how people see themselves and their role in society, thereby driving change.



## From differentiation to a heterogeneous ›we‹ culture

The desired transformation is to move from an individualised society, in which the individual and their needs are at the forefront, to a form of co-individualisation. In this new form of social structure, people are aware of their lifestyles and identities, which are characterised by power and participation, while at the same time a strong, emotionally driven discourse of values takes place. This co-individualisation makes it possible for everyone to live out their individuality while remaining connected as social beings and actively participating in society. It is about a movement away from differentiation and fragmentation towards more collaboration and cooperation.

Subtrends such as universal design, multigraphy, we-culture, ungendered lifestyle, LGBT+ and gender awareness are becoming increasingly important in the context of the strategy and implementation of major events. These trends support the creation of inclusive, diverse and conscious environments in which all people feel represented and recognised. Measures during the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games, which can be found in the ›Diversity and Inclusion‹ focus area, will play an important role here. Overall, the event represents an ideal opportunity to get to know each other and exchange ideas on an equal footing, as a variety of cultures and values, skills and abilities come together here. The planned cultural programme provides the launch pad for a legacy.

By playing on these trends, opening up spaces for discourse, initiating and implementing ideas, civil society and democracy can be strengthened. The result is a long-term effect that is characterised by participation, inclusion, diversity and mutual respect, thus creating a future worth living for everyone.

## IMPACT DIMENSION: HEALTH

**In the course of the health megatrend, a transformation is emerging that is broadening the understanding of health. It is no longer just about purely genetic aspects, but also about lifestyle, social, economic, structural, political and environmental aspects of health. This leads to a shift in the focus from individual health and performance to a systematic, holistic understanding of health that pursues a common quality of life goal.**

The field of health is gaining momentum due to the growing awareness of the complexity and multidimensionality of health-related issues. In the current debate, aspects such as health awareness, access and the provision of treatment options as well as prevention and knowledge transfer are of central importance. These topics offer enormous opportunities to achieve long-term, positive effects as part of the event - on an individual, economic and social level.

A sub-trend that is of enormous importance for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games in the field of health is called ›Sportivity‹. The term describes a 21st century attitude to life and implies a social debate about sport, exercise and health. However, it is not relevant whether someone is actually active in sport. Sportivity, however, requires the individual to take a clear position for or against physical activity. Sportivity is based on the desire to maximise ›quality of life‹, i.e. physical and psychological satisfaction.

Other relevant topics and subtrends in this impact dimension are phenomena such as ›Plant-based‹, the increasing interest in a plant-based diet for health reasons and the growing demand for plant-based products and ethical reasons, ›Corporate Health‹, the growing importance of health in corporate contexts, ›Preventive Health‹, the focus on disease prevention, or ›Holistic Health‹, a holistic, systemic approach to health. Another development such as ›Touchless Tech‹, technologies for contactless operation, has become more important, not least due to the recent pandemic.

## From performance to a common health goal

In the ›Physical activity and health‹ focus area of social sustainability, measures such as the promotion of the FISU Healthy Campus programme stand out. Its aim is to improve health and well-being at universities and promote exchange through an international network. Other measures such as workshops on active participation and holistic health offered in collaboration with sports venues can also generate long-term changes. Equally relevant - not only from an ecological, but also a health perspective - are the plant-based meals on offer for visitors.

By taking these developments into account and actively co-designing, communicating and creating innovation spaces for this transformation and its subtrends, an event can achieve a positive long-term effect. It creates the opportunity to generate improvements in health and quality of life on a broad basis by playing on and integrating the various aspects of the health network. This promotes a comprehensive understanding of health that goes beyond the traditional view of individual health and pursues a systematic, community-oriented health goal.



## IMPACT DIMENSION: CULTURE

**With targeted measures and initiatives in the cultural sector, the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games have a considerable chance of creating a legacy. However, this requires certain current transformations in the socio-cultural field to be taken into account.**

The growing cosmopolitan mindset and a cosmopolitan environment have brought about significant changes in recent years and decades. This approach, a combination of global diversity and local innovation, is essential for a new, future-oriented way of thinking.

Events that promote global cultural exchange offer ideal conditions for multiplying these values. Transformation through networking and relationship-building plays a central role here. In order to have a lasting impact on people and raise awareness of a shared identity (without negating the self-aware individual), it is important to create experiences. A legacy can be achieved by strengthening the image of a place, creating resonant spaces and fostering a shared identity.

Megatrends such as urbanisation, globalisation and the new work cultures are driving this development. They bring about social changes and lead to new forms of living and working together. The large number of measures within the sustainability strategy of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games, which aim for hybrid networking (e.g. International Lecture Series and FISU Young Sports Media Talents), address this issue. But projects such as ›Adopt A Delegation‹ also generate glocalisation.

Good interaction between the five host cities represents a starting point for a resource area in which a common identity can be created not only for the region, but also for the sports landscape.

## From closed systems to open cosmopolitanism

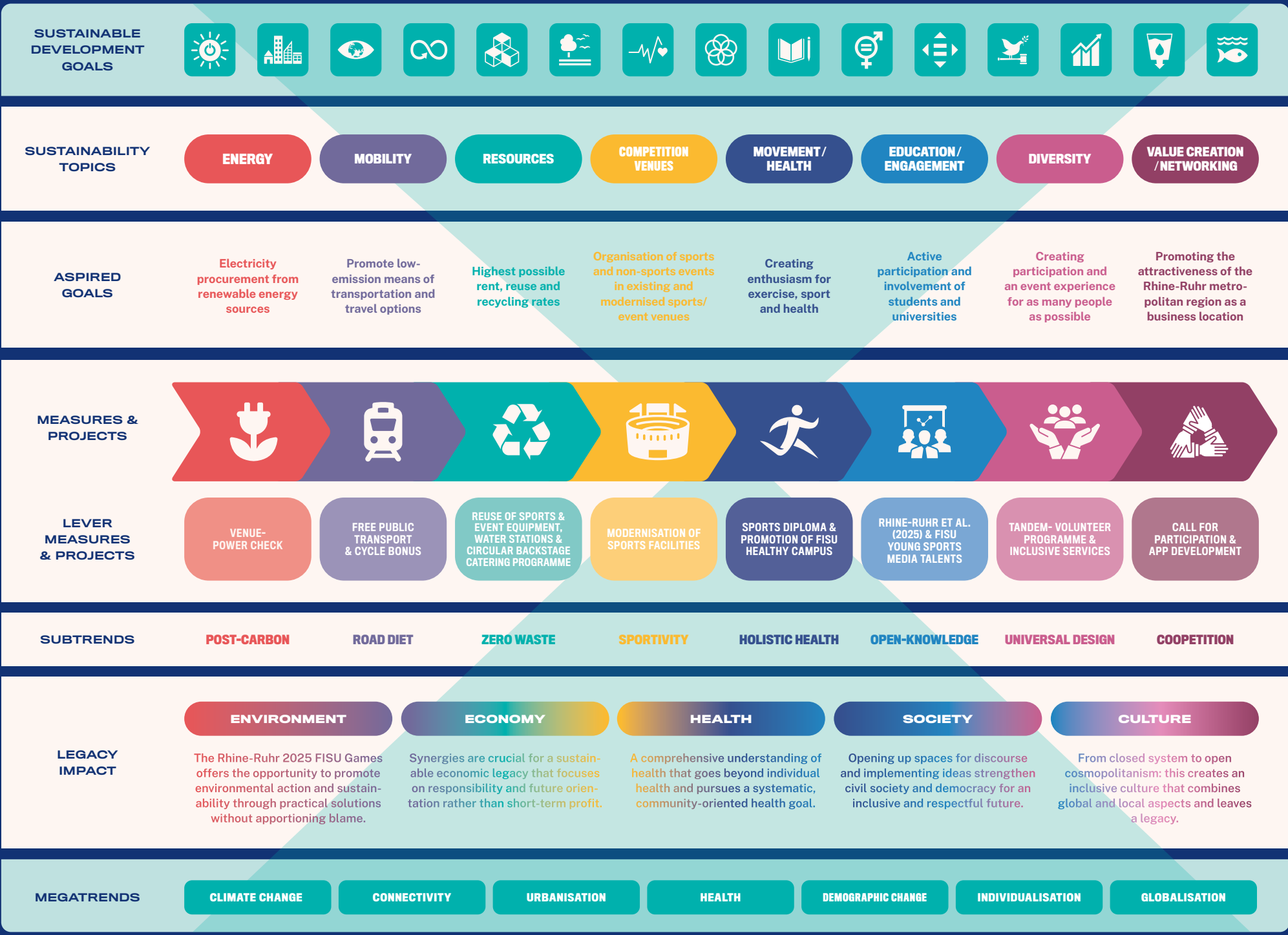
Within this field of action, aspects and sub-trends such as glocalisation, resonance, responsive city, lifelong learning, transparency, open knowledge, sharing economy and open innovation are relevant. Glocalisation combines global and local elements, while resonance stands for lively relationships. The Responsive City adapts structures to the needs of its residents. Lifelong learning emphasises the need for continuous education in a changing world. Transparency aims at openness to promote trust. Open knowledge promotes free access to information as a driver for education and innovation. The sharing economy is based on the sharing and common use of resources. Finally, Open Innovation promotes collaboration and the exchange of ideas for innovative processes.

This potential not only contributes to the region's image, but also improves communication and networking within and outside the community. The guiding principle of the transformation is therefore: from a closed system to an open cosmopolitanism, supported by the aforementioned sub- and megatrends. This transformation paves the way for an integrative culture of the future that combines global and local aspects and leaves behind a strong, sustainable legacy.



LEVER

LEVER





## 6 OUTRO

Finally, the Zoom-In and Zoom-Out perspectives are brought together: this chapter and figure presented on the previous page provides a graphical and summarised representation of the essence and systematic approach of the Pre-Games Paper. This is followed by an interim conclusion and an outlook on the intense preparation phase ahead.

### 6.1 INTERPLAY OF ZOOM-IN & ZOOM-OUT

**The summary graphic illustrates the dynamic interaction between the Zoom-In and Zoom-Out perspectives** (p. 94-95). At its core lies a systemic approach that demonstrates both the connection between specific sustainability measures and the overarching goal of contributing to sustainable development and the SDGs, as well as their catalytic leverage for the practical implementation of these global objectives.

Legacy is viewed in the context of major societal transformations, referred to as megatrends. This approach makes the future value of individual sustainability strategy measures more tangible, particularly in light of these trends. Addressing subtrends, which reflect the socio-cultural impacts of these changes, enables further development of the measures. In this way, they can be effectively applied within relevant spaces of transformation, fostering sustainable change and leaving a positive legacy.



### 6.2 CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

This updated Pre-Games Paper on human rights, sustainability, and legacy for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games offers a deeper insight into human rights work, highlights the legacy potential of this major sporting event, and outlines the current status of the sustainability strategy. It showcases how concrete sustainability measures interlink and provides a transparent snapshot of the planning progress and selected spotlights.

Suggestions, questions or constructive feedback regarding sustainability management are always welcome and can be sent to [info@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:info@rhineruhr2025.com). For specific concerns, additional points of contact are available: academic collaborations ([education@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:education@rhineruhr2025.com)), accessibility ([inclusion@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:inclusion@rhineruhr2025.com)), and partnerships ([sponsoring@rhineruhr2025.com](mailto:sponsoring@rhineruhr2025.com)).

The final months of the preparation phase bring with them a number of challenges. It must be acknowledged that sustainability performance is primarily shaped by limited human, temporal and financial resources, as well as local conditions and the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders. Nevertheless, the Organising Committee looks ahead with optimism: the critical phase of preparation is being tackled with determination to bring the world's largest playing field to life in the summer of 2025.

Clearly defined focus areas and measurable indicators serve as guiding principles for sustainability management. Their effectiveness will be evaluated afterwards to further develop sustainable event management and strengthen the event's role as a driver for current sub- and megatrends. The conclusion at this stage: the conceptual foundation is in place, the development process is well-advanced, and the focus now shifts to successfully bringing the plans into action. With this vision, Rhine-Ruhr 2025 aspires to deliver a summer that sets new standards – advancing inclusive and sustainable development in and through sport.

## TREND GLOSSARY

### **Beyond Plastic**

Initiatives to reduce plastic waste and develop plastic-free products.

### **Corporate Health**

The increasing importance of health in companies and in the workplace, both physically and mentally.

### **E-Mobility**

The spread of electric vehicles as an environmentally friendly alternative to conventional combustion engines.

### **Economy for the common good**

This form of economy focuses on the wellbeing of society and the environment as a whole, not just on financial profit.

### **Gender Awareness**

means developing an understanding of and sensitivity to gender issues in order to contribute to a more equal and fairer society.

### **Glocalisation**

The merging of global and local aspects, whereby global influences are integrated into local contexts.

### **Green Tech**

Technological innovations to reduce environmental impact and promote sustainability in various areas.

### **Holistic Health**

A holistic approach to health that integrates the physical, mental and social aspects.

### **Collaboration**

The focus here is on cooperation between different players, often across industry boundaries, to achieve common goals.

### **Last Mile Concepts**

Innovative approaches to optimising the last mile of logistics to increase efficiency and reduce environmental impact.

### **Quality of life**

The desire for physical and mental satisfaction and the longest possible health span.

### **LGBT+**

stands for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender people and other sexual and gender minorities. The aim is to promote the rights and acceptance of these people and to combat discrimination.

### **Lifelong Learning**

Continuous, lifelong education and training, which is essential in an ageing society and a rapidly changing world.

### **Multigraphy**

In contrast to a biography, which is traditionally characterised by demographic data such as age, gender or ethnicity, multigraphy emphasises the diversity of lifestyles.

### **Open Innovation**

An innovation approach based on open collaboration and the sharing of ideas.

### **Open Knowledge**

Free access to knowledge and information as well as their shared use and further development

### **Plant Based**

The trend towards plant-based alternatives, which is gaining importance beyond nutrition in material sciences and consumer goods.

### **Playfulness**

The term refers to the integration of playful elements into various areas of life and work in order to promote creativity and commitment.

### **Post-carbon**

Approaches to reducing dependence on fossil fuels and supporting renewable energies.

### **Post-growth**

A movement that advocates sustainable, environmentally friendly forms of economic activity instead of continuous economic growth.

## TREND GLOSSARY

### **Preventive Health**

Focusing on preventive measures to avoid illness.

### **Resonance**

The pursuit of a living relationship between the individual and his world.

### **Responsive City**

Cities that respond to the needs and feedback of their residents and adapt dynamically.

### **Road Diet**

Concepts for reducing road traffic and promoting alternative means of transportation such as bicycles or public transport.

### **Sharing Economy**

An economic model based on sharing and joint use of resources.

### **Sense economy**

This economic view emphasises the importance of meaningful work and products that are valuable for both individuals and society.

### **Social Business**

A social business is a company that primarily pursues social or ecological goals instead of maximising profits.

### **Sportivity**

The growing awareness of sport and exercise in society is reflected in a 21st century attitude to life. This does not necessarily imply physical activity, but reflects all aspects of the discourse.

### **Start-Up Culture**

This culture is characterised by innovation, agility and a willingness to take risks - typical of young, growth-oriented companies.

### **Touchless Tech**

Technologies that enable health interactions without physical contact, for example, through gesture control, digital applications.

### **Transparency**

The disclosure of information and processes, which promotes trust and understanding.

### **Ungendered Lifestyle**

stands for a lifestyle that transcends traditional gender roles and norms. It is about the freedom to express and live individual identities and preferences beyond gender stereotypes.

### **Universal Design**

aims to design products, environments and systems in such a way that they can be used by all people, regardless of age, ability or other factors. It is about accessibility and user-friendliness that ensure broad accessibility and usability.

### **We-culture**

Break with traditional social categories. Formation of flexible, often temporary and informal federations of individuals based on shared interests and values, whereby diversity is seen as a strength and individual identities can be preserved.

### **Zero Waste**

Strategies for avoiding or significantly reducing waste.

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# DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

## FOR RESPECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABILITY AT THE RHINE-RUHR 2025 FISU WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES

### PREAMBLE

Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU Games gGmbH („organiser“) was founded in 2021 as the Organising Committee for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games („event“). From 16 to 27 July 2025, around 8,500 student athletes and officials from up to 150 nations will compete in the host cities of Bochum, Duisburg, Essen, Mülheim an der Ruhr, Hagen, and Berlin. The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World Conference and the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 Festival are also central non-sports programme items of the event. This declaration confirms the responsible organisation of the event. As part of this event, the organiser commits to respecting and protecting human rights. In addition, the organiser recognises the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the principle of strong sustainability and commits to implementing sustainability measures in the course of the event. .

### 1. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

This declaration is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other international and national human rights standards and agreements. The organiser commits respecting human rights in the organisation and delivery of the event in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The aim is to treat all people with respect and to enable participation in the event free from discrimination.

The organiser also commits to implement sustainability measures. The understanding of sustainability is based on the principle of strong sustainability and sustainability measures are orientated towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (SDGs).

Internal participation processes have developed core values that apply, in particular, to cooperation between internal employees and serve as a basis for partnership-based cooperation with the German University Sports Federation (adh), state institutions and other stakeholders:

**Appreciation, cohesion, courage, flexibility, and transparency.**

### 2. RESPONSIBILITY TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS

Promoting sustainability, diversity and social cohesion is firmly anchored in the event's mission statement. In addition, the sustainability strategy developed with participation ensures systematic and target-orientated planning and implementation of sustainability measures.

A human rights risk analysis was conducted to identify human rights risks in the organisation and delivery of the event, taking into account in particular the following groups of people: women, children, the LGBTQ+ community, people of colour, religious and cultural minorities, people with disabilities, athletes and officials, visitors, employees, volunteers, and journalists. The risk analysis identified **the following six priorities for the human rights work:**

**(1) Integrity, legality, safety and security:**

A comprehensive security concept, compliance with European data protection standards, and targeted internal training ensure the protection of human dignity and safety in line with relevant human rights of all those involved in the event.

**(2) Violence, abuse, and discrimination and****(3) equality, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion:**

All forms of (online) interpersonal violence and abuse (including physical, psychological, and sexual) and discrimination (such as cultural, racial, ethnic, gender-specific, religious or structural) are opposed. Accessibility measures ensure participation, while a comprehensive awareness concept recognises the special protection needs of children, women, the LGBTQ+ community, people of colour, religious and cultural minorities and people with disabilities and ensures that all forms of discrimination, violence and abuse are actively combated.

**(4) Working conditions:**

Labour standards and the rights to fair wages and safe, inclusive working conditions are strictly adhered to and actively promoted. Clear contractual regulations ensure that fair working conditions are also guaranteed for external service providers and everyone in the supply chain.

**(5) Freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, and freedom of the press:**

The rights to freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and uncensored reporting are respected and actively supported. The official accreditation procedure guarantees access to the event for journalists and further supports the protection of press freedom.

**(6) Health and Well-being:**

Emergency medical supplies and personnel will be provided at all sports venues and event locations. These will be supplemented by awareness-raising measures and programmes to promote health and well-being for all participants.

The organiser commits to an effective implementation of these human rights measures in cooperation with all partners and stakeholders involved, in particular the German University Sports Federation (adh) and state institutions.

**3. SUSTAINABILITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN HARMONY**

A responsible approach to the natural environment and natural resources is an integral part of the event organisation and contributes to the protection of the human rights of future generations. The organiser commits to implement the event in a socially just and environmentally friendly manner. The organiser implements sustainability measures that contribute to the SDGs.

**4. ZERO-TOLERANCE TOWARDS DOPING AND MATCH-FIXING**

Compliance with the competition rules and fair play are essential elements of sport. The organiser has a zero-tolerance attitude towards breaches of the law and breaches of duty, in particular doping and match-fixing.

**5. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

Training and awareness-raising measures are carried out for all employees to ensure the effective implementation of human rights and sustainability measures. The results of the human rights risk analysis and the sustainability strategy, including measurable targets and a continuous optimisation process, form the basis for the implementation of this declaration.

**6. COMPLAINTS MECHANISM AND REMEDY**

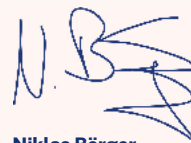
An internal and external reporting system ensures that complaints and violations are dealt with promptly and appropriately and that access to remedy is supported. This complaints management system effectively complements the due diligence process and ensures that the event is both compliant with human rights and implemented sustainably.

**7. PARTICIPATION AND CO-OPERATION**

The organiser works closely with academics in human rights and sustainability as well as further (local) civil society actors and affected persons in order to ensure continuous monitoring, co-design and a participatory optimisation process with regard to the measures. The organiser attaches particular importance to transparent communication and actively involves relevant interest groups in decision-making processes in order to jointly implement and achieve human rights and sustainability standards, measures and objectives.

**8. REPORTING OBLIGATION**

The organiser is committed to transparent reporting. A comprehensive information sheet, and pre- and post-Games papers ensure open communication on organisational topics and transparently present measures and successes in the areas of sustainability and human rights.



**Niklas Börger**  
CEO

Rhine-Ruhr 2025  
FISU Games gGmbH



**Jörg Förster**  
Chair of the Board

German University  
Sports Federation (adh)

## IMPRINT

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