



UNITED WORLD WRESTLING

Ordinary Congress 2026

**23 October 2026
Astana (Kazakhstan)**

**2024 – 2026
ACTIVITY REPORTS**

by the

UWW Departments

Sports

Development

General Affairs

Commercial Operations & Communication

&

Safeguarding Report

Sustainability & Social Inclusion Reports



SPORTS DEPARTMENT REPORT 2025 - 2026

The 2025-2026 period was marked by continued development, consolidation and professionalization across United World Wrestling's sporting activities. While the Sport Department maintained the coordination of the international competition calendar and the preparation of major events, the various Commissions and Committees continued to strengthen their technical structures, develop new disciplines, improve education and officiating systems, and prepare the organization for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic cycle.

The period also saw stronger cooperation with National Federations and international sport organizations, and the continued expansion of UWW activities beyond the Olympic wrestling disciplines.

You will find below a brief overview of what was covered during this period. Detailed reports from the respective Commissions and Committees are attached for further reference.

UWW Sports Department "daily work"

Our Department continued to coordinate and oversee the full range of UWW competitions and related sporting activities, from U15, U17, U20, U23, Senior and Veterans World and Continental Championships to Regional and Continental Games, international tournaments and major multi-sport events. Its responsibilities covered the full event cycle, including calendar planning, mat licensing program, bidding procedures, inspection visits, event assignments, event creation and preparation, registration, daily support to Organizers and National Federations, coordination with Competition Managers and Technical Delegates, possible reallocation of Medals or Cups, and post-event follow-up.

We also reported all the feedbacks (negative or positive) received at each event in a big database. This document is helping us when an event is again allocated to one National Wrestling Federation. It allows us to correct what went wrong and improve the overall quality of the competition.

A particular focus remained on the preparation for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games, including inspection visits, regular coordination meetings and the review of key organizational documents. The Department also continued its coordination with the Refereeing Commission, Technical Commission, School & University Sports Commission, Beach Wrestling Committee and Associated Styles Committee.

Several projects were developed to further improve the efficiency and digitalization of event management, including enhancements to Athena, synchronization between the UWW Calendar and Athena, a new inspection-report form, ticket sales / spectator report, and organizational checklists for smaller Games. We were also part of the improvement and structural changes on the UWW Website. Some changes in the Requirements and Regulations were also made.



Refereeing Commission

That period saw continued progress in the development of the UWW refereeing system, with particular attention to professionalism, transparency, education and referee welfare.

In 2025, the Refereeing Commission reported a significant improvement in the working environment for referees, supported by more constructive communication, improved workload management, rest periods and more efficient rotation systems. Decision-making within the Commission also became more transparent and collective, while cooperation with the Sport Department, Technical Delegates, Educators, IT Team and Development Department was strengthened.

The International Refereeing Regulations were updated and published, interpretations were further harmonized, and educational materials were progressively unified. The UWW Academy is increasingly being integrated into referee education, with candidates now required to complete specific modules before attending a Level 1 clinic.

The Commission also began preparing the referee selection process for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games, using the World Championships as progressive observation and evaluation stages. Development initiatives included scouting promising refereeing talent in Africa, cooperation with the Development Department, and the continued development of the Women's Development Programme and Mat Chairman Programme.



Key priorities moving forward include strengthening integrity and fairness, centralizing education and evaluation, expanding mentoring and onboarding, and continuing to improve referee working conditions and well-being.

Technical Commission

During 2025-2026, the UWW Technical Commission continued to review wrestling rules, competition formats, athlete welfare and the Olympic qualification pathway, with the objective of improving clarity, fairness, safety and the overall attractiveness of wrestling.

Rule-related work focused on targeted improvements rather than frequent major changes. Test events and practical evaluations were used to clarify interpretations, including the application of technical actions versus passivity in Greco-Roman Wrestling.

Athlete health and safety remained a key priority. The existing morning weigh-in system was maintained, while stronger application of rules relating to weight management, medical safety and injury simulation was emphasized.

A major project was the development of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Qualification System. The Commission worked on a modernized system based on ranking events, subsequently approved by the UWW Bureau. Further work focused on establishing a fair qualification calendar for all continents and developing an appropriate points allocation system, with the final proposal prepared for communication to National Federations.

School & University Sports Commission

The UWW School & University Sports Commission was established in February 2025 with the objective of strengthening the development of wrestling within school and university sport.

During 2025-2026, the Commission focused on defining its mandate, developing cooperation with international educational sport organizations and identifying practical measures to increase university wrestling participation.

A worldwide survey of National Federations highlighted strong interest in school and university wrestling, while also identifying recurring challenges such as insufficient funding, limited awareness and weak coordination between wrestling federations and national school and university sports structures.

Increasing participation in FISU (Fédération Internationale du Sport Universitaire) events was identified as a priority. The Commission also strengthened institutional cooperation with FISU and, following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the European University Sports Association (EUSA) in May 2026, began working towards the inclusion of wrestling in the 2027 EUSA Combat Games in La Nucia, Spain.

These initiatives provide an important basis for strengthening the presence of wrestling within international school and university sport. I use that opportunity to keep encouraging



you to stay in close contact with your National School or University Entity because we need that collaboration if we want to develop Wrestling in a maximum of countries.

Development and International Cooperation

A common element across the activities of the different Commissions and Committees was the strengthening of cooperation with National Federation and international sport organizations.

The Development Department played an increasingly important role, particularly in referee development, youth engagement and the expansion/promotion of Beach Wrestling. I would like to take that opportunity to thank my colleagues from the Development Department for this close collaboration.

Cooperation with external organizations such as the IOC, the CISM, the Islamic Solidarity Association, the Mediterranean Games Federation, the Commonwealth Games Federation, The Francophonie Federation, The International Deaf Federation, FISU, ISF, also created new opportunities for wrestling within these movements.

Across the different disciplines, the objective has increasingly shifted from simply expanding participation numbers towards sustainable international development, with greater attention to geographical diversity, quality of participation, education, technical expertise and long-term structures.

During the last years we still organized the Organizers' Workshops. As underlined in the last activity report, this seminar opens to the potential host covered all the main topics related to a Wrestling Organization (preparation, accommodation, transportation, venue, ceremonies, accreditation, medias,...). The participants had the opportunity to exchange with each other and talk with the various departments and UWW staff in charge of these matters.

Beach Wrestling

Beach Wrestling continued its international development during 2025-2026, with the Committee overseeing the Beach Wrestling World Series, Continental Championships and age-group World events.

Development was particularly positive in Africa, Asia and youth competitions. The Committee continued to emphasize the importance of engaging National Federations, National Olympic Committees and Regional Games organizers, while identifying travel costs, visas, accommodation and competition formats as key challenges to further expansion.

The regulatory framework was also further developed, including clarification of refereeing procedures, updates to competition requirements, the removal of the "knee rule" from the International Rules, adjustments to referee uniforms and continued efforts to improve the challenge system.



In 2026, preparations for the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026 became a major priority and affected the availability of resources for the Beach Wrestling World Series. Despite these challenges, new hosts joined the series, with Da Nang welcoming the tour for the first time and Batumi and Baku also hosting events.

Having Beach Wrestling in the program of the Youth Olympic Games showed us that more NFs were interested to develop Beach Wrestling within their country. We clearly hope that these Games will provide enthusiasm for the years to come as Brisbane 2032 could potentially include this discipline at the Olympic Games.

Grappling, Pankration & Amateur MMA

These last two years represented an important transitional phase for Grappling following the establishment of the new UWW Grappling & Pankration Committee. Dedicated Technical and Refereeing Working Groups were created to provide more structured expertise and coordination in areas including competition formats, uniforms, technical regulations, passivity management and referee education.

Although no Continental Grappling Championships were held in 2025 due to a lack of bids and the time required to establish the new committee structure, international activity resumed through the Andijan Open and the European Open in Warsaw.

Participation was affected by late event announcements and increased accommodation costs, resulting in an overall decrease compared with the previous year. Nevertheless, the U15 category continued to show positive development. The international network also expanded, with 24 additional National Federations expressing their intention to manage Grappling, bringing the total to 87 federations.

The work undertaken during the period established a stronger organizational and technical foundation for the continued international development of Grappling.

A major development during the period was the integration of Amateur MMA (AMMA) alongside Pankration, creating a progressive competition pathway between the two disciplines.

Under the new structure, Pankration covers the U11 to U17 age categories, while Amateur MMA provides a pathway for U20, U23 and Senior athletes with a full-contact format. The new rules and competition structure were progressively tested and subsequently implemented at the Senior World Championships.

The first European and Asian Championships under the developing structure were held in 2026, with Yerevan hosting the European Championships and Da Nang hosting the Asian Championships. These events represented an important step in establishing the disciplines within the UWW international competition structure.

The refereeing structure was also strengthened through a combination of experienced wrestling referees and international MMA referees, supported by dedicated technical leadership and education.



The creation of a dedicated Lausanne Office for Grappling and Amateur MMA further strengthened operational coordination and international development.

The structure was reinforced through new Committee appointments and the appointment of a Director for Grappling and Amateur MMA.

The main priorities for the next phase are to broaden country representation, promote sustainable participation, and further consolidate the technical and refereeing structures.



Traditional Wrestling

Traditional Wrestling continued to expand its international presence during 2025-2026, with a growing number of World and Continental Championships organized under the UWW framework.

A significant milestone in 2025 was the first Karakucak World Championships held under the auspices of UWW. The programme also included the Belt Wrestling - Qazaq Kuresi World Championships and Continental Championships in Kyrgyz Alysh and Qazaq Kuresi.

Growth continued strongly in 2026, with the Asian Belt Wrestling Championships in Bishkek, the Karakucak World Championships in Ankara and the Qazaq Kuresi World Championships



in Baku. Increased participation and significant prize-money investment contributed to the growing international visibility of these disciplines.

Looking ahead, UWW Associated Styles intends to further broaden the programme through the potential inclusion of additional traditional wrestling disciplines, including Indian Kushti and Oil Wrestling, as well as the reactivation of the Pahlawani Championships.

The international network of National Federations managing Associated Styles also continued to expand, providing a strong foundation for further diversification and development.

Looking Ahead to 2027 and Los Angeles 2028

The activities undertaken during 2025-2026 provide a strong foundation for the next years and before the upcoming Olympic Games.

The Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games remain the principal strategic reference for the Olympic disciplines, influencing the qualification system, referee selection, technical planning and long-term performance evaluation.

At the same time, UWW Associated Styles and emerging disciplines are entering an important phase of consolidation. Grappling, Pankration, Amateur MMA, Beach Wrestling and Traditional Wrestling are developing broader international networks, more structured competition systems and increasingly professional technical and refereeing frameworks.

For the upcoming years, the Department will continue to support the Competition Managers who are dedicating a lot of energy to ease the life of our organizers. Such cooperation will be the key for the future successes of the United World Wrestling events.

I would like to take that opportunity to thank all the UWW Sports Department Colleagues and the other UWW Departments for their continuous support and serious work during these two years. I'm proud to lead these strong Competition and Sports Managers. These people put everything they have to help and provide the answers to our NFs and Host Countries.

We still have a lot to do to keep improving the standard of our competitions and serve our athletes better. I'm confident that with such a team, we are moving into that direction.

Jean-Daniel Rey
Sports Director
United World Wrestling

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DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT REPORT 2025 - 2026

1. OLYMPIC SOLIDARITY & UNITED WORLD WRESTLING COLLABORATION

Olympic Solidarity World Programs are initiatives developed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to support the development of sports and athletes around the world, especially in countries with limited resources. The goal is to promote global sports development, strengthen the Olympic Movement, and ensure that athletes from all nations have the opportunity to compete at a high level.

Key areas that wrestling collaborates with the Olympic Solidarity on:

- **Athlete Support:** Provides financial assistance, training, and scholarships to athletes to help them prepare and qualify for the Olympic Games.

As of today, a total of 102 applications has been received. Of these, 88 were approved or are currently undergoing final review, 14 were rejected/cancelled. The allocation of funds was managed by the respective National Olympic Committees (NOCs), the athletes, or United World Wrestling (UWW).

UWW also reached an agreement with the Olympic Solidarity (OS) program to manage and support selected OS scholarship athletes. This initiative primarily benefited athletes from the African continent, where limited training facilities and infrastructure posed significant challenges. These athletes were provided with training opportunities at UWW Training Centres.

- **Coaching and Technical Development:** Offers courses, training programs, and funding to develop high-quality coaches and referees.

A total of 31 Technical Courses for Coaches were held across all five continents: 13 in Africa, 3 in Pan-America, 8 in Asia, 4 in Europe, and 3 in Oceania. Over 1'000 coaches and referees took part in the trainings. These courses received an estimated total funding of 482'000 USD* from Olympic Solidarity.

Con.	No. courses	National Federations/National Olympic Committees
Africa	13	Zambia, Namibia, Mauritius (2), Kenya, Burundi (2), Libya, Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Algeria, Congo (Republic)
Asia	8	Armenian (2), Iraq, North Korea, Jordan, Vietnam, Thailand, Afghanistan
Europe	4	Croatia, Italy, Lithuania, Moldova
Pan-America	3	Colombia, Brazil, Chile
Oceania	3	American Samoa, Australia, Samoa
Total	31	



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17 OS scholarships for coaches were awarded to individuals from the following countries: ALG, ANG, AZE, BEN, CAN, CHI, ESA, JOR, KEN, NGR, NZL, SRI, TUN, VEN and ZAM.

Continent	Total	Male	Female
Africa	8	4	4
America	5	1	4
Asia	2	2	0
Europe	1	1	0
Oceania	1	0	1
Total	17	8	9

Through the Olympic Solidarity Coaches Scholarship Programme, UWW supported four (4) **Greco-Roman** coaches to attend the International Coaching Course (ICC) at the Hungarian University of Sports Science (HUSS).

The programme focused on scientific coaching methods, youth development and structured coach education, while allowing participants to apply their learning within a wrestling-specific environment. The four participating coaches, representing El Salvador, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Zambia, successfully completed the course and graduated on 28 May.

In 2025-2026, five (5) female coaches received Olympic Solidarity scholarships to participate in the **Women in Sport High-Performance (WISH) Programme**. Further details are provided in Section 7.

- **Sport Development:** Provides funding and resources for projects aimed at improving sports facilities, organizing training camps, and developing sports programs at the grassroots level. 7 Development of National Sports System programs were awarded, details as shown below:

NOC/NF	Continent	Name
PLE*	Asia	PLE / 2026 Wrestling Development Program: Athlete & Coach Training Initiative
PUR	America	PUR / DNSS Lucha 2026 -2027
SLE	Africa	SLE/2025 DNSS - Wrestling Development Plan
AUT	Europe	AUT/2025-2026 DNSS in Wrestling - Proactive IF - Encourage Grassroots Development or Further Develop Existing Initiatives - Development plan - all styles (Age groups U15/U17/U20)
MGL	Asia	MGL / 2025-2026 Wrestling DNSS
RSA	Africa	RSA / 2025-2026 DNSS - Project in Wrestling
ITA	Europe	ITA - 2025 DNSS - Wrestling

*PLE - collaboration with the OS and the JOR NF/NOC

In addition, the **Youth Athletes Development Program - UWW Training Opportunities** for 2025 and 2026 conducted regional training and educational activities in Sydney (AUS) in 2025, as well



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as four (4) regional training and educational activities under the **Road to Dakar 2026 initiative**, taking place from March to October 2026.

Working closely with Olympic Solidarity provides significant advantages for athletes, coaches, and national federations. The training programs offered enhance overall performance, promote best practices, and elevate sports programs to a higher standard. This partnership fosters a comprehensive approach to wrestling development, paving the way for future success on the international stage.

2. UNITED WORLD WRESTLING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The UWW Technical Assistance program is committed to providing technical guidance and financial support to member federations, with priority given to those facing significant challenges and lacking technical expertise. This approach ensures that assistance is effectively directed to areas where it is most needed, fostering growth and development within the wrestling community.

- **Technical Assistance for Competitions:** with the athletes at heart, the Technical Assistance for Competitions provides direct financial support for National Federations to send their athletes to important competitions, particularly the continental and world championships.

In total, approx. 500 athletes and their coaches benefited from the program (excluding Senior World Championships 2026). Detailed lists are available on the official UWW website.

Competition	No. NF	No. Athletes & Coaches
2025 Senior World Championships	41	113
2025 African Championships U17, U20, & seniors	17	50
2025 Senior Asian Championships	15	44
2025 Senior American Championships	9	35
2025 Oceania Championships U17, U20 & seniors	1	2
2025 Central American & Caribbean Championships	2	8
Total 2025	126	365
Competition	No. NF	No. Athletes & Coaches
2026 African Championships U17, U20, & seniors	21	72
2026 Senior Asian Championships	6	21
2026 U20 American Championships	1	1
2026 Oceania Championships U17, U20 & seniors	7	20
2026 U17 World Championships	1	1
2026 Senior World Championships*	<i>In progress</i>	
Total 2026	36	114

- **Wrestling Mats Donations:** In partnership with Taishan Sports Ltd., 53 wrestling mats were donated to 21 countries, supporting the development of wrestling programs worldwide.



Country	No. mats	Mats cost	Estimated Shipping cost	Total cost	Annual total
IRQ	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	188'100
MAR	3	22'500	6'000	28'500	
GBS	2	15'000	9'600	24'600	
VEN	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
PLW	2	15'000	N/A	15'000	
VIE	3	22'500	6'000	28'500	
THA	3	22'500	6'000	28'500	
ARM	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
ALB	3	22'500	6'000	28'500	341'000
JOR	3	22'500	6'000	28'500	
GUA	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
PUR	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
PAK	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
PRK	2	15'000	3'000	18'000	
ALG	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
ESP	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
MRI	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
BDI	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
BRA	2	15'000	6'000	21'000	
BEN*	6	45'000	12'000	57'000	
MNE**	4	29'000	12'000	41'000	
Grand total	53	396'500	132'600	529'100	

*3 mats will be further delivered to BUR

** 2 sets of competition mats and 2 sets of training mats are donated

3. TRAINING CAMPS

A total of 20 camps were organized and funded by the UWW Development Department, with a focus on regional development, youth training, and the growth of women's wrestling.

Partnerships with continental sports organizations, such as the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) and Panam Sports, have also brought significant investment and contributed to the continued development and growth of wrestling.

- **More Than Medals U17 Training Camps**

The Development Department, in collaboration with the host nations of the U17 Continental and World Championships, organizes the annual More than Medals training camps following the competitions. The programme is co-funded by the IOC Sports Department.



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Between 2025 and 2026, a total of 5 More than Medals camps were organized and delivered by the UWW Development Department, bringing together over 380 participants altogether.

The week-long programme, dedicated to the U17 age category, combines high-quality wrestling training with educational, cultural, and social activities. It supports the objectives of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promotes the Olympic Values of respect, tolerance, friendship, and solidarity.

By bringing young athletes from around the world together in an immersive learning and sporting environment, the programme fosters international exchange, strengthens collaboration among wrestling communities, and contributes to the holistic development of young athletes beyond sporting performance.

- **Elite Women's Wrestling Training Camp, Nagoya, Japan**

UWW partnered with Shigakkan University to expand global wrestling training opportunities, providing a high-performance training programme for 25 elite women's wrestlers from 13 nations.

- **Collaboration With Continental Sports Governing Bodies**
 - **OCA/UWW Youth Athletes Training Camp & Course for Coaches, Guangzhou, China**

In collaboration with the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), UWW successfully delivered a Youth Athletes Training Camp (U17) and Coaches Education Course in Guangzhou, China, from 8 to 15 July. The event brought together participants from 30 Asian nations, with more than 100 athletes and coaches supported by their respective National Olympic Committees (NOCs).

- **Panam Sports U20 Freestyle and Greco-Roman Camp, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

In partnership with Panam Sports and the Brazilian Olympic Committee, UWW delivered a U20 Olympic Wrestling Training Camp in Rio de Janeiro from 12-21 July 2026, bringing together 45 athletes and 15 coaches from 14 countries across the Americas. The programme combined high-level technical training with education on sports psychology, anti-doping, recovery, and Safe Sport, successfully achieving all technical objectives.

Year	Date	Country	City	Age Cat.	Event
2025	20 - 27 Apr	MAR	Casablanca	U17, U20 & seniors	African Championships Training Camp
	23-29 Jun	BRA	Rio de Janeiro	U17	More than Medals Training Camp - Americas
	27 Jun - 2 Jul	VIE	Vung Tau	U17	More than Medals Training Camp -Asia
	3-13 July	IND	Vijayanagar	WW	WW training camp
	5 - 12 Sep	CRO	Porec	Seniors	World Championships Training Camp
	20 - 25 Oct	AUS	Sydney	All ages	Regional Educational Development Camp
	31 Oct - 11 Nov	JPN	Nagoya	Seniors	Elite Women's Wrestling Training Camp
	10 -15 Dec	THA		Seniors	Southeast Asia Training Camp
2026	21-26 Apr	EGY	Alexandria	U17, U20 & seniors	African Championships Training Camp



6-12 April	GBS	Bissau	U17 & senior	REDP - Road to Dakar (west Africa)
8 -14 June	CGO	Brazzaville	U17 & senior	REDP - Road to Dakar (central Africa)
17 -23 AUG	BDI	Bujumbura	U17 & senior	REDP - Road to Dakar
9 -18 Oct	MRI	Port Louis	U17 & senior	REDP - Road to Dakar
23 -29 Nov	BEN	Cotonou	U17 & senior	Regional Educational Development Camp
31 May - 5 Jun	GUA	Guatemala City	U17	Regional Educational Development Camp
12 -21 Jul	BRA	Rio de Janeiro	U20	Panam Sports/UWW U20 FS & GR Camp - Americas
6 -11 Apr	PAN	Panama City	U17	More than Medals Training Camp - Americas
2-7 Jun	VIE	Da Nang	U17	More than Medals Training Camp - Asia
3 -5 Aug	AZE	Baku	U17	More than Medals Training Camp - World
8 -15 Jul	CHN	Guangzhou	U17	OCA/UWW Youth Camp - Asia

4. NATIONAL FEDERATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUNDING PROGRAMME

15 national federations received the UWW funding and implemented the development programmes with a mid-long-term impact focusing on engaging future generations to practice wrestling in a safe and healthy environment.

The areas of focus managed by the UWW Development Department are:

1. School and Youth Engagement
2. Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
3. High-Performance through coaching/mentorship/consultancy, expertise assistance for the NFs based on their objectives, in line with the UWW strategy and requirements.
4. Leadership, Governance and Administrative Excellence: Professional Exchange Programs for National Federation
5. Scholarship programs for athletes, coaches, and referees

Country	Activities	Approved budget (CHF)
CRO	International training camps (U15-Seniors), Wrestling Festival Tournaments (U15/U17), Adriatic Trophy (U20), UWW Level 3 Coaching & Referee Courses, Erasmus+ Admin Education, Gala Ceremony	10'000
ESP	Level 2 Referee & Coaching Course in Madrid, national integration of certified referees/coaches, support of ongoing training programs and women's wrestling	10'000
GBS	Introduction of wrestling in 10 rural schools, teacher and coach training, competitions, facilities setup, awareness campaigns, inclusion of girls, adapted uniforms and mentorship	10'000
MAD	School-based wrestling training cycles, coaching education, cultural integration with traditional wrestling, medical support, social inclusion, equipment and media engagement	10'000



PHI	Coaching & referee courses, regional hubs, online platform, scholarships for athletes, wrestling in schools and community centers, free youth clinics and mentorship, equipment purchase, mentorship networks, M&E framework, long-term sustainability planning	10'000
THA	Thai Open Wrestling Tournament (Aug 5-9, 2025), international training camp, participation of elite wrestlers from Japan, China, Central Asia; technical assistance request (mats), development of school wrestling programs and gender equality projects in partnership with schools	10'000
CAN	Intro events, coaching development, training for learning facilitators & coach developers, workshops in 6+ provinces	10'000
KOS	5-day camp and educational seminar in Pristina, technical and theoretical training, gender inclusion, coach mentoring, social activities, certification	5'000
EST	Creation of a dedicated national training centre with wrestling mats, gym equipment and support areas to improve training conditions for national team athletes and support inclusive development for male and female wrestlers.	15'000
GUA	School and youth programme for children aged 10-16 in vulnerable communities, promoting Olympic wrestling, healthy behaviour, discipline, values, talent identification and greater participation of girls and women.	15'000
KOS	Development camp and educational seminar focused on youth development, promotion of girls' participation and strengthening coaching capacities at grassroots level.	5'000
MKD	Promotion of wrestling among school-aged girls and boys through school visits, educational materials, athlete engagement and a municipal school wrestling championship.	5'000
NAM	Grassroots development project introducing wrestling across regions, implementing Wrestling-4-Fun in schools, training teachers and coaches, procuring equipment and supporting the creation of clubs.	10'000
SLO	Scholarship and mentorship programme to expand the coaching base, support UWW Level 1 and Level 2 certification, practical club work and the inclusion of women in coaching and leadership.	5'000
PRK**	To enable their referees, athletes and coaches to participate in UWW international competitions.	15'000
Total		145'000

** Funds administered directly by UWW

5. REFEREE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMMES

The objective of the Referee Scholarship Programme is to support referees from developing countries and provide targeted financial assistance, particularly to women referees, enabling them to participate in required competitions. This support allows referees to fulfil category requirements, pursue promotion to higher categories, and increase their opportunities for selection to the Olympic Games.

Over the past two years, the programme has reached a record number of referees, providing increased opportunities for development and international exposure.



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- **2025 Referee Scholarship Programme**

In 2025, financial assistance was provided to 33 referees from 27 Member Federations.

Among them:

- 7 referees received a full scholarship covering flight tickets and accommodation;
- 26 referees received a half scholarship covering accommodation only;
- 15 women referees benefited from the programme.

Five (5) Member Federations received multiple scholarships: Canada (CAN), Cuba (CUB), Greece (GRE), South Africa (RSA), and Sri Lanka (SRI).

Two (2) selected referees were unable to utilise their scholarships due to unforeseen circumstances: one due to maternity leave and one due to a serious injury (broken leg).

The continental breakdown was as follows:

- Africa: 4 scholarships (1 full + 3 half), including 2 women referees;
- Americas: 7 scholarships (3 full + 4 half), including 3 women referees;
- Asia: 8 scholarships (1 full + 7 half), including 3 women referees;
- Europe: 10 scholarships (2 full + 8 half), including 5 women referees (1 unable to attend);
- Oceania: 4 scholarships (4 half), including 2 women referees (1 unable to attend).

- **2026 Referee Scholarship Programme**

In 2026, the programme continued to expand, providing assistance to 44 referees representing 43 different Member Federations.

Among the selected referees:

- 5 referees received a full scholarship;
- 39 referees received a half scholarship;
- 17 women referees benefited from the programme.

The increased use of half scholarships allowed UWW to extend financial support to a greater number of referees. This year, particular attention was given to providing opportunities to new referees, while continuing to support the development of the referee pathway.

Sri Lanka was the only Member Federation to receive two scholarships in 2026.

Two (2) selected referees were unable to utilise their scholarships due to unforeseen circumstances: one following a change in professional commitments and one due to pregnancy, which prevented participation in the competition.

The continental breakdown was as follows:

- Africa: 6 scholarships (1 full + 5 half), including 2 women referees;
- Americas: 6 scholarships (6 half), including 4 women referees (1 unable to attend);



- Asia: 10 scholarships (3 full + 7 half), including 4 women referees;
- Europe: 18 scholarships (1 full + 17 half), including 5 women referees;
- Oceania: 4 scholarships (4 half), including 2 women referees (1 unable to attend).

6. REGIONAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Since its establishment in 2022, the Regional Education Development Programme (REDP) has become a key driver of development across the wrestling community. Wrestling is now practised across all five continents and at all levels of development.

Each REDP initiative combines tournaments, training camps, and educational activities, creating a comprehensive approach to developing athletes, coaches, and officials.

Overall, the REDP programme is dedicated to supporting the grassroots development of UWW National Federations (NFs), with a particular focus on those regions facing the greatest development needs.

Year	Dates	Continent	NF
2025	23-30 Nov	Africa	BEN
	7-12 Oct	America	BRA
	20-25 Oct	Oceania	AUS
	10-15 Dec	Asia	THA
	4-10 Aug	Africa	KEN
	26-30 May	America	GUA
	30 Jun - 5 Jul	Africa	NAM
2026	6-12 Apr	Africa	GBS
	8 -14 Jun	Africa	CGO
	17 -23 Aug	Africa	BDI
	9 -18 Oct	Africa	MRI
	23 -29 Nov	Africa	BEN
	31 May - 5 Jun	Americas	GUA
	29 Nov - 2 Dec	Americas	BRA
Total		14	

7. GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PROGRAMMES

UWW continues to strengthen its commitment to gender equality, diversity, and inclusion through targeted development and leadership initiatives. Key activities include:

- Participation in the ASOIF Women in Leadership Programme in Lausanne
- Funding of women's wrestling training camps in Japan to support the development of female athletes
- Women's coaching and education initiatives, including the High-Performance Women's Coaches Course planned for 30 November-5 December 2026 in Switzerland, aimed at strengthening the coaching skills and leadership capacity of women coaches



- **Olympic Solidarity Scholarships for Coaches -Women in Sport High-Performance (WISH) Programme**

The WISH Programme, funded by Olympic Solidarity and delivered in collaboration with International Federations, aims to support the development of women coaches by providing leadership and coaching education opportunities to former athletes transitioning into coaching.

UWW has participated in the programme since its pilot edition and has had representatives in all seven cohorts. The programme continues to provide valuable support to women coaches on their pathway towards becoming high-level coaches within the Olympic Movement.

UWW has 2 coaches participating in Cohort 5, 1 coach in Cohort 6, and 2 coaches that are starting Cohort 7.

The coaches are from the following federations.

- Cohort 5 - Nigeria and Algeria
- Cohort 6 - New Zealand
- Cohort 7 - Tunisia and Canada

8. TRAINING CENTERS

The partner training centers delivered training camps and educational courses in collaboration with the UWW Development Department. Technical Assistance is provided to the participating nations covering their expenses for full boarding and lodging.

UWW Activities at Izabekov Wrestling Academy in 2026							
#	Activity / Delegation	Participants	Programme Type	Activities	Duration	Notes	Support
1	African Continental Team	7	International training camp / long-term training programme	Training programme hosted at Izabekov Wrestling Academy; Academy provided the necessary conditions for the long-term training process.	21 Feb - 5 Apr 2026	UWW-sponsored stay; Academy provided facilities and organizational support.	UWW
2	Raul Trujillo	1 expert	International coaching exchange	Specialists stay at the Academy with access to sports facilities and organizational support.	23 Apr - 30 Jun 2026	International travel covered by UWW; accommodation and meals provided by the Academy.	Travel - UWW; accommodation & meals - Academy
3	Algerian Team	41	International training camp	International delegation hosted for training activities; Academy provided training facilities, accommodation, meals and organizational support.	28 Jun - 1 Aug 2026	Large delegation hosted at the Academy as part of UWW-supported cooperation.	UWW



4	African Continental Team	6	International training camp / long-term training programme	Long-term training process hosted at the Academy with daily support and necessary conditions provided by the Academy.	20 Jul - 19 Oct 2026	Ongoing UWW-supported stay during the reporting period.	UWW
5	Coaches & Referees Seminar + Competitions	Planned	Education / professional development / competitions	Planned international seminar for referees and coaches, practical educational sessions and wrestling competitions within the framework of the seminar.	Sep - Oct 2026	Further cooperation planned between UWW and the Academy.	UWW / Academy

9. EDUCATION and UWW ACADEMY

Education remains a key pillar of UWW's development strategy, supporting the continuous development of athletes, coaches, referees, educators, and other wrestling stakeholders. Through the UWW Academy, as well as a wide range of online and in-person educational programmes, UWW provides accessible learning opportunities across all regions and levels of development.

Beyond the technical courses funded through Olympic Solidarity (OS), UWW also works closely with National Federations and strategic partners to fund and organize educational courses and development activities worldwide. These partnerships enable UWW to address specific regional and development needs while expanding access to quality education and strengthening the capacity of coaches, referees, educators, and other wrestling stakeholders.

The programmes delivered in 2025 and 2026 focused on strengthening technical knowledge, coaching and officiating skills, athlete development, safeguarding, and broader professional competencies. By combining digital learning through the UWW Academy with face-to-face courses, regional activities, and partner-led initiatives, UWW continues to build sustainable educational pathways and contribute to the long-term development of wrestling worldwide.

- **UWW Academy**

The Academy continues to serve as a hub for educational resources. The Academy is referenced in all coaching and referee courses delivered by the Federation, with participants encouraged to use it to further develop their knowledge of wrestling.

Over the past year, efforts have focused on increasing the number of referee and wrestling rules courses available on the Academy.

In 2025, there were three new courses added to help with the explanation of the rules. One of those courses was Evaluation of Takedown and Control. That course replaced the existing course so that it would be updated with the correct information and similar format to the other courses. In



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addition, updates were made to the Beach Wrestling Course due to changes in the rules. Here is the list of complete courses.

- Evaluation of Holds
- Out of Bounds
- Takedown and Control
- Beach Wrestling update

In 2026, with the recent rule changes, two of the existing courses had to be updated to reflect those changes. Those courses were Out of Bounds and Evaluation of Holds. Those were done earlier in the year. The most recent course that was developed was over Risk vs No Risk. The following courses are expected to be created over the next year.

- UWW Referee Vocabulary
- Being a Mat Chairman
- Passivity
- Negative Wrestling
- Unsporting Behaviors

The Referee Commission has also agreed to start using some of the courses as requirements for referees who are trying to obtain a UWW referee license. For 2026, the Evaluation of Holds course that is on the Academy is required for all the participants who are attending a Level 1 course to earn their UWW referee license. It is likely more courses will be used in the upcoming years.

- **Coach Education Programme**

Over the past 2 years, an online certification programme for coaching education has been developed. This programme was launched in August of 2026 and is designed to provide coaches with a system for continuing their education and development as a coach. The programme works by the following process.

The coaches must submit an application on the Academy. The applications will be reviewed by coaching experts from around the world. Those experts have been divided by their different language skills. Applications can be submitted in one of 5 languages.

After the review of the application, the experts will determine which level the coach should start. Then the coaches must complete specific requirements to earn points to be promoted to higher levels.

The programme also incorporates relevant Academy online courses, with direct links provided according to participants' levels. It places a strong emphasis on athlete safeguarding training, which is a mandatory requirement at all levels.

This programme should help provide federations with a coaching education system if they do not currently have one. How the programme is used within federations will be decided by the



federation. The role of the programme is to provide an education system that could be used and would promote education and growth among coaches

- **UWW Educators Course**

Starting at the end of 2024 and early 2025, selected coaches and referees took part in Educator training. The goal of the Educator course is to train high-level coaches and referees to deliver UWW education courses. The training provides them with skills and strategies to help them deliver interactive courses. This training certified them for 2025-2026.

The first Educator course was held in Guatemala in November of 2024. This course was for the educators in the Americas with a focus on Spanish. There were 11 educators from 5 countries that were trained and successfully passed the course.

The second educator course was held in Serbia in January of 2025. This course was for the remaining educators around the world. This course was delivered in English. There were 30 educators from 20 countries that attended and successfully passed the course.

- **UWW/National Education Courses**

There are a number of courses each year that are organized and funded by the National Federation, United World Wrestling, or a combination of both. Below is a list of those courses that have been completed each year.

2025

27 June - 1 July	Asia	India	Inspire Institute - Level 2 Coaching Course
23-29 March	Africa	Morocco	UWW Africa Seminar - Level 1 Coach Course
25-29 March	Africa	Morocco	UWW Africa Seminar - Introduction to Refereeing
18-21 December	Asia	India	Level 1 Coaching Course
24-28 August	Asia	Saudi Arabia	Level 1 Coaching Course
26-30 September	Asia	Saudi Arabia	Level 2 Coaching Course
10-14 November	Asia	Saudi Arabia	Introduction to Refereeing Course
21-26 July	Africa	Cameroon	Level 1 Coaching Course

2026

20-24 March	Asia	India	Level 3 Coaching Course
25-29 March	Asia	India	Level 2 Coaching Course
23-26 March	Oceania	Samoa	Level 1 Coaching Course
23-26 March	Oceania	Samoa	Introduction to Refereeing Course
18-24 April	Asia	Malaysia	Level 1 Coaching Course
16-20 May	Asia	Saudi Arabia	Level 1 Coaching Course
8 -10 September	Africa	Nigeria	Beach Wrestling Coaching Course
4 -6 September	Asia	UAE	Level 1 Coaching Course



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- ISF /UWW partnership -PE Teacher Programme, IND (Pilot)

UWW has continued its collaboration with the International School Sport Federation (ISF) to promote grassroots wrestling development. Following previous cooperation around the Gymnasiades, UWW and ISF developed a more targeted approach focused on training physical education (PE) teachers in the Wrestle4Fun programme.

In 2026, a pilot Level 1 Coaching Course adapted for PE teachers was successfully delivered in India, reaching 88 PE teachers and introducing them to wrestling fundamentals and grassroots coaching methods.

The successful pilot provides a strong foundation for future collaboration and expansion of PE teacher training initiatives to support grassroots wrestling development.

- International Testing Agency (ITA)

In addition to the online webinars, an in-person educational session was held in Poreč, Croatia, prior to the Senior World Championships, providing participants with an opportunity to engage directly with ITA experts on Anti-Doping education and related matters.

10. REFUGEE ATHLETES SUPPORT

In collaboration with the International Olympic Committee Refugee Foundation, UWW counts 4 refugee scholarship holders from FRA, GBR and GER in view of the LA 2028 Olympic Games.

- Mr. Jamal VALIZADEH (UWW/FRA)
- Mr. Arman KARAPETYAN (UWW/FRA)
- Mr. Farhan NOURIKHORJESTAN (UWW/GBR)
- Mr. Mohammad Namjou Motlagh PASKEH (UWW/GER)

As agreed with each host National Federation and National Olympic Committee, the athletes followed their national training programmes, focusing on technical, physical and mental preparation.

NOURIKHORJESTAN won a bronze medal at the European Championships in Tirana, ALB, which, together with VALIZADEH, entitles him to participate in the 2026 Senior World Championships. Unfortunately, KARAPETYAN sustained an injury prior to the European Championships, while PASKEH was recently added to the list of scholarship recipients in August 2026.

The management and registration for the events of the UWW Refugee Scholarship holders is directly managed by the NOC, NF and UWW Development Department. The NOC manages the payment of scholarships to the athletes, the NF is responsible for the training and preparation while UWW Development Department is responsible for the Athena registration and assistance to the athletes well-being.

The selection of the athletes participation at the LA 2028 Olympic Games is at the discretion of the IOC Executive Board. Final selection is announced in spring of 2028.



11. MISCELLANEOUS

- **Integrity Education**

Integrity education is an integral component of all UWW educational courses and training camps. Dedicated sessions on Anti-Doping, Safeguarding, and the Prevention of Competition Manipulation are incorporated throughout UWW education programmes, ensuring that athletes, coaches, referees, and other participants understand their responsibilities and the importance of maintaining a safe, fair, and ethical sporting environment.

UWW also strengthened its collaboration with the International Testing Agency (ITA) through on-site education at the pre-Senior World Championships training activities. These sessions provided participants with practical information on anti-doping rules, clean sport, testing procedures, and their rights and responsibilities. By integrating integrity education into all educational activities, UWW continues to promote a strong culture of integrity and responsible behaviour across the wrestling community.

- **Sports For All and Para-Wrestling Survey 2025**

In 2025, UWW surveyed its national federations to assess the global state of Para-Wrestling for visually impaired athletes. Of 190 affiliated federations, 48 (25%) responded, representing all five continental regions. Results showed strong global interest, with 80% of respondents keen to establish or expand programs, though only 27% currently have active structures – concentrated mainly in Europe and Pan-America. Key barriers identified were limited funding, insufficient coaching expertise, and unclear classification systems. Building on these findings, UWW is developing a strategic roadmap centered on financial support, coaching education, a clear classification framework, and competitive pathways toward Paralympic inclusion.

- **UWW World Conference 2025, Zagreb, Croatia**

United World Wrestling held its inaugural World Conference in Zagreb, Croatia, from 17 to 19 September 2025, alongside the World Championships. The three-day event brought together federations, athletes, and stakeholders to discuss key topics including artificial intelligence in wrestling, injury prevention, weight management, career transitions for athletes, and the growth of women's wrestling. A dedicated National Federations workshop also addressed capacity building, finance, and event organization, with case studies presented by Azerbaijan, Brazil, Spain, and Thailand. Given the success of this first edition, UWW is considering holding the Conference on a recurring basis going forward.

***Note:** The final figures for 2026 are still to be finalized. This report focuses primarily on the period from January 2025 to September 2026.*

END



GENERAL AFFAIRS REPORT (2024-2026)

1. Governance & members relations

Continental Councils' elective general assemblies

The Secretary General oversaw the **elective process of the UWW Continental Councils**, which all five held their elective General Assemblies in 2025.

In Asia, Mohamad AL-AWAMLEH of Jordan was elected President of UWW Asia after elections involving 38 national federations, succeeding a council that included both newly elected and returning members. In Europe, Karl-Martin DITTMANN was re-elected President of the UWW European Council, while in Africa, Fouad MESKOUT secured a another term as President of the UWW Africa Council. In the Americas, Francisco Eduardo LEE LOPEZ was re-elected President of the UWW Pan-American Council. In Oceania, Mr. Ethan Lake was elected a the new President of UWW-Oceania.



Together, these elections confirmed the presidents who would sit on the UWW Bureau for the 2025-2029 cycle, reinforcing institutional stability across the continental structure while introducing several new council members, particularly in Asia, to help guide wrestling development and governance on their respective continents.

Athletes Commission Elections

The Secretary General also oversaw the **election of the Athletes' Commission** and its chairperson.

At the 2025 World Championships in Zagreb, wrestlers elected a new nine-member UWW Athletes' Commission for the 2025-2029 term, with nearly 400 athletes participating in the process and ensuring broad continental and gender representation. The elected members included prominent Olympic and world champions such as Arsen Julfalakyan, Yui Susaki, Hassan Yazdani and Aisuluu Tynybekova.





Following the election, the Commission selected its leadership and **Arsen Julfalakyan**, the only candidate for the position, was re-elected President for a second term, continuing as the athletes' representative within UWW governance and before international sports bodies.

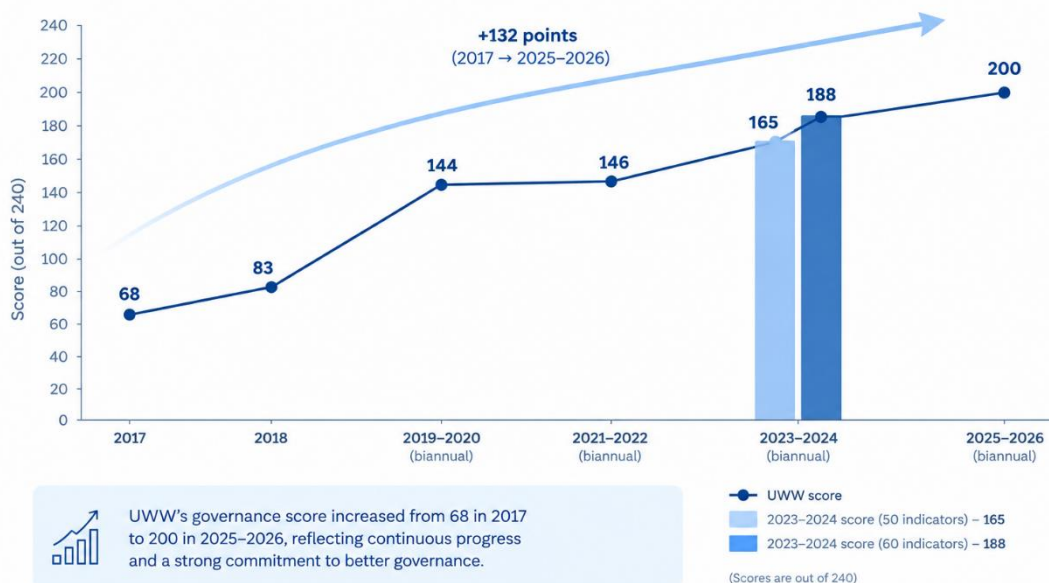
ASOIF Governance Assessment

Compared with the 5th ASOIF Governance Review (2023-24), where UWW scored 188 and moved from Group B to Group A2, the 6th Review (2025-26) confirms UWW's continued position in Group A2 with a score of 200, indicating that the governance improvements achieved in the previous cycle have largely been consolidated rather than resulting in a further move into A1.

The sixth review retained the same 60 indicators, allowing a meaningful comparison, and overall ASOIF reports continued progress among International Federations, particularly in integrity, human-rights policies, anti-corruption, environmental impact, election processes and event allocation, while transparency remained the strongest area and development/sustainability and control mechanisms continued to show comparatively greater room for improvement.

UWW Governance Assessment – Evolution of Scores

A steady and significant improvement since 2017



For UWW, therefore, the key message is one of consolidation at a relatively strong governance level, with the challenge now being to turn the reforms introduced around 2023-24—such as the strengthened Code of Ethics, increased female representation on the Bureau and improved governance policies—into fully established and consistently implemented practices, particularly in sustainability/carbon-footprint monitoring, anti-corruption training and internal control mechanisms.

2. Meetings and Conferences

The General Affairs Department organized the UWW Bureau meetings:

- 2024: 7x Bureau meetings (online and in person)
- 2024 Extraordinary Congress, 24 June 2024 (online)
- 2024: Ordinary Congress, Tirana (SRB), 9 September 2024
- 2025: 5x Bureau meetings (online and in person)



- 2026: 8x Bureau meetings (online and in person)
- 2026 Extraordinary Congress, 7 September 2026 (online)
- 2026 Ordinary Congress, 23 October 2024 (in person)

The Secretary General attended to the following meetings & conferences:

- UWW Continental Councils Assemblies (Bucharest 2024, Amman 2025, Casablanca 2025, Bratislava 2025, Tirana 2026, Coralville 2026)
- 2024 142nd IOC Session in Paris
- 2025 144th IOC Session in Costa Navarino, March 2025, Greece
- 2026 145th IOC Session Milan, Italy
- 2026 146th IOC Session, Lausanne, Switzerland
- ASOIF General Assemblies 2025 and 2026
- SportAccord International Federations Forums 2024, 2025, 2026
- 2024 WADA Symposiums for Anti-Doping Organizations, Lausanne, Switzerland
- 2025 WADA World Conference on Doping in Sport, 1-5 December 2025, Busan (KOR)

3. Legal, Ethics & Disciplinary

UWW Disciplinary

Between 2024 and 2026, the General Affairs Department continued to oversee breaches of UWW regulations, including administrative warnings, financial penalties, suspensions and referrals for disciplinary proceedings.

The Department recorded a total of 102 cases during the period covered by the current register, including 91 cases in 2024 and 11 cases in 2025.

The violations concerned mainly:

- Non-compliant singlets used by athletes at UWW events
- Assaults and improper conduct against opponents or referees
- Refereeing mistakes and breaches of refereeing standards
- Misconduct and breaches of the obligations applicable to National Federations and event organisers
- Other breaches of UWW regulations, including false declarations and inappropriate behaviour

The Department also continued to monitor cases involving the conduct of athletes, coaches, referees and National Federation representatives, with sanctions ranging from warning letters and reprimands to financial penalties, suspension and disqualification of results.

In particular, during 2024, the Department followed a significant number of cases relating to non-compliant singlets identified at Olympic qualification events and other UWW competitions. Depending on the circumstances and recurrence, these cases resulted in warnings or were recorded without the opening of formal disciplinary proceedings.

During 2025, disciplinary matters included cases of assault against opponents, misconduct towards referees, breaches of event-organisation requirements and a case involving a false declaration concerning an athlete's age. Sanctions included suspensions, financial penalties, reprimands, warnings and disqualification of results. In 2024, five (5) non-doping cases have been opened before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) where UWW was a party. Three cases were won by UWW, one was withdrawn by the claimant and one is pending.

Non-doping cases at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)

In 2024, two disputes related to the Paris Olympic Games were referred to CAS against UWW/IOC. One was dismissed. For the other case, CAS had no jurisdiction.



In 2025, two statements of appeal were filed with CAS against UWW, one of which concerned a change of nationality and was **dismissed by CAS**. The other one is still pending.

In 2026, proceedings were initiated against UWW to dispute the eligibility of candidates for the 2026 elections. The cases are about to be closed without further action at the moment of writing this report.

4. Medical & Anti-doping

In parallel to their assignment and work as Official Doctors in UWW events, the Medical Commission has been active during the 2024-2026 period with the publication of research on the OG 2016 and 2020 OG injuries (published in the renowned [British Journal of Sports Medicine](#)) and guidelines on the protection of athletes' health.

Original research

Wrestling injuries during the 2016 Rio and 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games

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Accepted 5 June 2024

ABSTRACT
Objectives To evaluate and compare the injuries of Olympic wrestlers during the 2016 Rio and 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games held in August 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Methods In this descriptive epidemiological study, injury report forms were used to collect and analyse injury data during the competitions.
Results During 410 matches in the Rio Olympic Games, 21 injuries were recorded among 346 wrestlers (112=men), a rate of 5.1 injuries/100 bouts and 6.1 injuries/100 athletes. During 322 matches in the Tokyo Olympic Games, 28 injuries were recorded among 287 wrestlers (96=men), with 8.7 injuries/100 bouts and 9.8 injuries/100 athletes. However, these apparent differences in injury rates between Tokyo and Rio were not statistically significant (injuries/bout: $p=0.057$, 95% CI: 0.31 to 1.02; injuries/athlete: $p=0.087$, 95% CI: 0.33 to 1.08). Mild injuries comprised the greatest proportion of injuries in both Olympic Games. Severe injuries accounted for 0%, 16.7% and 36.4% of injuries in Greco-Roman, Freestyle and Women's wrestling.

WHAT IS ALREADY KNOWN ON THIS TOPIC
⇒ Olympic-style wrestling, as a contact sport, is associated with a variety of soft tissue and musculoskeletal injuries; therefore, injury prevention is crucial for the health of athletes.

WHAT THIS STUDY ADDS
⇒ The rate of wrestling injuries was recorded at 6.1 per 100 athletes at the 2016 Rio Olympics and 9.8 per 100 athletes at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
⇒ Athlete sex did not emerge as a risk factor; however, wrestlers in lower weight categories had a higher likelihood of injury.
⇒ No critical injuries occurred during the recent Olympic Games' wrestling competitions. Although infrequent, shoulder and elbow joint dislocations were the most concerning injuries in wrestling.

HOW THIS STUDY MIGHT AFFECT RESEARCH, PRACTICE OR POLICY

Guidelines for the Prevention, Detection, and Management of Skin Conditions in Wrestlers

United World Wrestling
Medical, Prevention & Anti-Doping Commission
Dr. B.J. Anderson, Dr. Babak Shadgan

The UWW Medical Commission has developed a comprehensive program to address skin conditions in wrestling. Skin infections account for more lost training and competition time than any other medical problem in the sport. Effective management, therefore, serves two purposes: it treats the affected wrestler and reduces the risk of transmission to teammates and opponents.

There is no definitive data that precisely defines when every type of lesion has stopped shedding infectious organisms. However, a consensus on safe participation has been reached through consultation with dermatology, infectious disease, public health, and primary care experts, combined with an extensive review of the literature on the communicability of specific skin conditions at different stages of disease. On this basis, practical prevention, treatment, and return-to-play regimens have been

In 2026, the commission published guidelines on *Mouthguard Use in Wrestling*.

The Chair of the UWW Medical, Prevention & Anti-doping Commission, Dr Babak Shadgan was also appointed as Member of the ASOIF Medical & Science Commission in December 2024.

Anti-doping

The department monitors the activities run by the International Testing Agency (ITA) on behalf of UWW and collaborates on various topics such as testing plans, results management as well as intelligence and investigation.

The International Testing Agency (ITA) has implemented a comprehensive intelligence-led and risk-based testing program on behalf of the United World Wrestling (UWW) throughout the period 2024 and 2026.

Year	# of individual athletes tested	# of completed tests	# of urine sample	# of blood sample	In-comp. (completed)	Out-of comp. (completed)
2024	811	1223	1169	120	748	344
2025	639	981	916	105	707	274
2026*	593	802	760	70	610	192

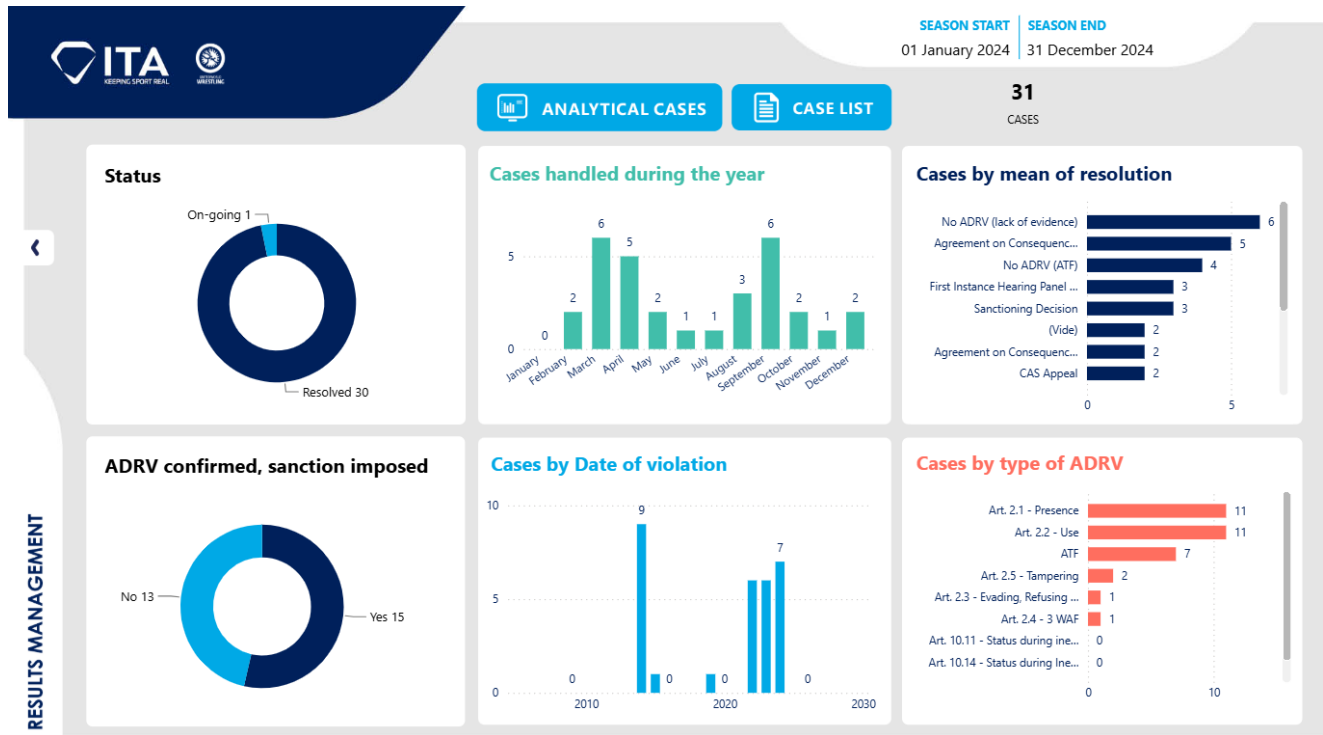
(* As of 18 September 2026)





Results Management:

2024: 31 cases



2025: 34 cases





2026*: 25 cases



(*as of 18 September 2026)

Anti-Doping Education (2024-2025)

As part of its partnership with the ITA, UWW continued to strengthen its anti-doping education programme in 2024 and 2025 through the ITA IF Webinar Series, delivered in six languages. The programme was highly valued by participants, with 90% of respondents in 2024 and 94% in 2025 confirming the usefulness of the sessions. The ITA monitored attendance and certification, resulting in **405 certificates awarded in 2024** and **1,906 participants successfully completing the programme in 2025**.

In line with its commitment to clean sport, UWW required participants in major World Championships, as well as athletes included in the Registered Testing Pool (RTP), to hold a valid **anti-doping education certificate** before participation. Certificates issued by the ITA, WADA or the athletes' respective National Anti-Doping Organizations (NADOs) were accepted. In 2025, this requirement applied to participants in the U17, U23 and Senior World Championships and was expanded for the first time to athletes competing in UWW's associated styles, including **Grappling and Pankration/Amateur MMA**. National Federations were regularly informed and encouraged to support these education initiatives.

The **2025 ITA IF Webinar Series** consisted of three online sessions delivered by anti-doping experts and former Olympians. UWW was among the leading International Federations in terms of participation, with **1,906 wrestlers, coaches and support personnel obtaining certificates** upon completion of the programme. This represented a significant increase compared to 2024 and reflected UWW's growing efforts to educate and empower the entire wrestling community on anti-doping rights, responsibilities and clean sport values.



Educational activities were also reinforced through event-specific initiatives, including a **Clean Sport** booth and presentations during the **2025 Senior World Championships** Acclimatization Camp, as well as regular guidance and support provided to National Federations to strengthen their anti-doping education efforts.

In 2026, UWW and the ITA further expanded their outreach through a dedicated anti-doping webinar for coaches, which attracted 547 participants from across the wrestling community. The session focused on coaches' responsibilities in promoting clean sport, anti-doping rules, therapeutic use exemptions (TUEs), medication and supplement risks, testing procedures, reporting mechanisms and athlete welfare. Through interactive presentations, polls and discussions, the webinar highlighted the critical role of coaches in shaping athletes' values and fostering a strong culture of clean sport throughout the wrestling movement.

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COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS

DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT 2024 – 2026

Submitted to the Ordinary Congress, Astana (KAZ), 23 October 2026

Executive Summary

Between the Ordinary Congress of Tirana in October 2024 and the Ordinary Congress of Astana in October 2026, United World Wrestling continued to grow its audience, as it has in every cycle, and strengthened its standing as one of the leading International Federations in the Olympic Movement for the reach and quality of its communications. Over the same period the Commercial Operations & Communications Department did more than sustain the growth of the previous cycle: it converted that growth into revenue, into direct ownership of the federation's relationship with its audience, and into a commercial portfolio renewed on materially stronger terms. UWW's own audience database reached 280,000 active subscribers, 92% of them consented to receive marketing communications, a direct line to the fans that does not depend on platforms the federation does not control. The television portfolio advanced in both footprint and value, with the sale of media rights brought in-house, and the largest partnerships in the portfolio were renewed or replaced on improved terms.

On social media, wrestling continued to perform far above its weight. In the Redtorch SportOnSocial study, the benchmark ranking of the sector, United World Wrestling has been a fixture of the top ten of all International Federations measured over the past five years, ahead of federations with far larger commercial resources. On Instagram, the platform that carries the greatest commercial weight for International Federations, wrestling finished second of all forty-four federations in the 2026 study, behind only the International Ski and Snowboard Federation in a Winter Olympic year, making UWW the leading Summer International Federation on the platform, ahead of both FIFA and World Athletics. On the Chinese platforms, UWW advanced nine places overall and thirteen places on WeChat, rising to fifth of all International Federations, the largest single-year movement recorded in the WeChat top ten. At the Olympic Games in Paris 2024, wrestling ranked among the top three of all Olympic disciplines by social media engagement and second by video views. Across the last twelve months UWW's channels generated 1.8 billion impressions and reached 1.1 billion users, and the federation's total following passed 6.7 million.

The period also saw the digital transformation programme move into its decisive phase. Its most significant result is one that many federations have found difficult to achieve: building a paid platform of their own without losing the free audience that sustains the sport. Putting the best content behind a subscription normally costs reach, and leaves the value with platforms such as YouTube. Wrestling grew both at once. UWW+ became the principal engine of digital revenue: 88% of digital income in the first quarter of 2026, with more than 30,700 paying users since launch, while in the same quarter YouTube views rose 54% and YouTube revenue 39%, and the federation's total following continued to grow. The two now work together by design: social media tells the story of the sport, and UWW+ is where fans go to watch the wrestling itself. This was a deliberate, strategic choice. The reach and engagement of a sport's free channels are among the markers the IOC weighs when it evaluates the sports on the Olympic programme, and they could not be traded away for revenue. At the same time, an audience that UWW reaches directly, and that is willing to pay to watch, gives the federation a more sustainable business model, one it can build on, and one less dependent on any single platform, broadcaster or partner. UWW+ is how the federation secures both. Looking ahead, that direct audience is likely to matter even more. With the IOC's new discipline-based evaluation of the Olympic programme applying from Brisbane 2032, the department expects the assessment of a sport's appeal to look increasingly at the audiences a federation genuinely owns (its own platforms and its own database) and not only at its following on third-party social media. UWW is already building



that evidence. At the same time, the web and application platform was rebuilt on new foundations, and the federation began taking direct ownership of a digital ecosystem that had until now been delivered largely by external partners.

Across the two years the broadcast footprint of the sport was broadened: new territories were signed, in most cases at values above those achieved in the previous cycle, while full country coverage of the major championships was maintained alongside continued distribution through FloWrestling and UWW+. Independent measurement confirmed the strength of that reach, with the 2025 World Championships generating a cross-media value of €68.4 million and the 2025 European Championships recording the best cross-media performance of any European Championships monitored to date. That growth was not confined to Europe. In Asia, the 2025 Continental Championships recorded a 45% increase in reach, a 122% increase in media contacts and a 173% increase in media value year on year, supported by the highest volume of dedicated television coverage in Iran of the last five editions and a marked rise in coverage by reach-strong Indian media; on UWW+, India was among the fastest-growing markets of the cycle, with total viewing time more than doubling against the 2023 World Championships. Over the same period the department renewed or replaced every major global partnership in the portfolio and secured a title sponsor for a World Championship event.

Taken together, these results have measurably strengthened the image of wrestling: as a sport that is visible in more markets, that is judged by independent research to be among the strongest performers of any International Federation on social media, and that is increasingly attractive to international brands. The Wrestling House at Paris 2024, widely recognised across the Olympic Movement as one of the standout activations of the Games, and its successor at the Grammy Museum for Los Angeles 2028 gave that image a physical home at the centre of the Olympic world.

These results were achieved against a more difficult market backdrop than in any previous cycle. The emergence of privately organised professional leagues and events staged outside the UWW calendar has begun to fragment the competitive landscape of the sport, with direct consequences for how the department sells, promotes and protects the value of UWW's own championships. Section 15 sets those consequences out.

Highlights of the period

- Second of all 44 International Federations on Instagram in the Redtorch SportOnSocial League Table 2026, the leading Summer International Federation on the platform, ahead of both FIFA and World Athletics, and the leading combat sport on the Olympic programme in the overall rankings.
- A top-three placing by engagement and second place by video views among all Olympic disciplines at Paris 2024.
- The strongest Chinese-platform performance in the federation's history: up nine places overall and thirteen places on WeChat to fifth of all International Federations, the largest single-year movement recorded in the WeChat top ten.
- A total social media following of 6.7 million, with 1.8 billion impressions and 1.1 billion users reached over the last twelve months and more than 40 million video views on YouTube.
- Broadcast footprint significantly extended: rights takers for the 2026 European Championships grew from three markets to nine, adding TRT Spor (Türkiye), MTVA (Hungary), Fastmedia and AMPTV (Armenia), Match TV (Russia) and YLE (Finland) alongside continuing partners Silknet (Georgia), BNT (Bulgaria), ITV (Azerbaijan) and FloWrestling (USA), with a global signal through UWW+.
- A cross-media value of €68.4 million generated by the 2025 World Championships, and the best-performing European Championships ever monitored, with media value up 120% year on year.



- A new eight-year global apparel partnership with RUDIS (2025–2032), a 140% increase in annual partner value and a 221% increase in annual cash fees over the final terms of the outgoing Nike/APS agreement, extended in 2026 to the UWW Beach Wrestling World Series.
- Renewal of the global equipment partnership with Taishan for the 2025–2028 cycle.
- New commercial leads well beyond the traditional categories, automotive, betting, fintech, payments, technology, tourism, construction, mining.
- UWW+ confirmed as the primary engine of digital revenue: 88% of digital income in Q1 2026, with revenue up 12.3% and overall digital revenue up 16% year on year, while YouTube views rose 54% and YouTube revenue 39% in the same quarter, with paid and free audiences growing together.
- More than 30,700 paying users on UWW+ since launch and 10,500 during 2026, with more than 4,600 unique Annual Pass subscribers, 12% ahead of the same point in 2025.
- An audience database of 280,000 active subscribers, 257,000 of them consented for marketing communications.
- The Wrestling House delivered from Paris 2024 through to a signed and opened activation at the Grammy Museum for Los Angeles 2028, within walking distance of the wrestling venue.
- A new social responsibility partnership with the Snow Leopard Foundation in Kyrgyzstan, established as a template for future host countries.

PART I: COMMUNICATIONS

1. Digital footprint and audience growth

The scale of wrestling's digital footprint grew substantially over the reporting period. Across the last twelve months UWW's channels generated 1.8 billion impressions and reached 1.1 billion users, while YouTube alone delivered more than 40 million video views.

The federation's total social media following now stands at 6.7 million, having grown in every year of the cycle:

Period	New followers
2024 (Olympic year)	+2,000,000
2025	+700,000
2026 (year to date)	+500,000
Total following	6.7 million

The shape of that growth matters as much as its scale. The two million followers gained during the Olympic year of 2024 were not only retained but built upon in the years that followed, with 700,000 added during 2025 and a further 500,000 in the opening months of 2026. That is the real test of an Olympic audience: whether it becomes a permanent asset of the sport or a temporary spike. On this evidence, wrestling has converted the visibility of Paris 2024 into a lasting base, and enters the Los Angeles 2028 cycle from a materially higher starting point than it held four years ago.

The audience database. UWW's own audience database reached 280,000 active subscribers during the period, of whom 257,000 (92%) have consented to receive marketing communications. This is a directly addressable audience owned by the federation rather than rented from a platform: it is the channel through which UWW



promotes UWW+ subscriptions, its events and its partners' campaigns without intermediation, and both its size and its high consent rate carry direct commercial as well as communications value.

2. Social media performance and international benchmarking

United World Wrestling is measured every year against every other International Federation in the Redtorch SportOnSocial study, the benchmark analysis of the sector, which in its 2026 edition ranked forty-four federations. UWW has held a place among the top ten of that table over the past five years. Second place on Instagram is the standout result of the period. Only one federation ranked higher (FIS, carried to the top by the Milano Cortina build-up in an Olympic winter year), which makes wrestling the leading Summer International Federation on the platform. UWW finished ahead of FIFA and World Athletics, the two federations at the head of the overall league table. The result confirms the value of the department's decision to concentrate effort on the platform that carries the greatest commercial weight for International Federations. Redtorch specifically identified UWW's Instagram video output, and in particular its celebration-driven formats, as distinctive relative to other International Federations, an editorial signature that belongs to wrestling and that few other sports have managed to establish.

The platform-level results of the 2026 study were stronger still:

Result	Position	Movement
Instagram: 2nd of all IFs, ahead of FIFA and World Athletics	2nd	+2
WeChat: 5th of all IFs, largest rise in the top ten	5th	+13
Chinese platforms overall: highest placing recorded	16th	+9
YouTube	11th	+2

In the overall league table, wrestling has been a fixture of the top ten International Federations over the past five years, placing tenth in 2025, and is consistently the leading combat sport on the Olympic programme, ahead of taekwondo, judo, boxing and fencing. That UWW sustains a position of this kind, year after year, alongside the largest and best-funded federations in the Olympic Movement is the single most useful piece of independent evidence the department can place in front of a prospective partner.

3. Olympic Games Paris 2024

Wrestling performed exceptionally well against the other Olympic disciplines at Paris 2024. Across owned and earned channels combined, wrestling ranked third of fifty disciplines by total engagement and second by total video views. UWW's own channels ranked third by total engagement, second by video views and seventh by volume of posts, out-performing several federations in higher revenue categories, and generated 320 million video views and 19.5 million engagements from 1,210 posts.

The subsequent independent assessment identified consistent top rankings across metrics, strong follower growth on Facebook and Instagram during the Games, a strong position on the commercially valuable Instagram platform, and exceptional engagement on owned channels as the defining characteristics of wrestling's Olympic digital performance. The same analysis pointed to clear room for further growth in short-form video and on emerging platforms, which is where the department has directed its development effort since.



4. Chinese platforms

Chinese platforms are becoming steadily more important for International Federations, and the Olympic Movement is placing growing weight on reaching audiences in the market. Redtorch scored Chinese platforms in its overall league table for the first time in 2026

The Chinese-platform channels launched ahead of Paris 2024 matured into a fully managed operation during the reporting period, supported by a specialist agency and monthly performance reporting across WeChat, Weibo and Douyin.

The results are the clearest single success story of the cycle. In the 2026 Redtorch study UWW advanced nine places on the aggregate Chinese-platform ranking and thirteen places on WeChat, to fifth of all International Federations, the largest single-year movement recorded anywhere in the WeChat top ten. Wrestling now sits immediately behind Volleyball World, World Table Tennis, FIFA and the International Skating Union on that platform, and ahead of World Athletics, the International Tennis Federation, the Fédération Equestre Internationale, World Archery and the Union Cycliste Internationale.

The significance of that result is easily understated. Redtorch's own analysis observes that the Chinese platforms are dominated by sports with deep-rooted domestic followings, established professional leagues and long-standing broadcast visibility in China. Wrestling has none of those advantages, and reached the WeChat top five in a little over two years on the strength of consistent, locally produced content and disciplined channel management alone. It is the clearest evidence in the period of the return available from focused investment in a single strategic market, one that is also of direct interest to several of the prospects in the commercial pipeline, and the approach is now being extended from WeChat to Weibo and Douyin.

5. Event media performance

At the 2025 World Championships in Zagreb, monitoring recorded 19,264 media items across television and streaming, social media and online, generating a combined reach of 1,342 million, 3,487 million media contacts and a media value of €68.4 million. Social media accounted for €39.9 million of that value, television and streaming for €17.0 million and online media for €11.5 million.

The performance of UWW's owned channels is the department's strongest commercial argument. At the World Championships, UWW's own channels published 907 posts against 8,438 from third parties, yet delivered greater reach (677.28 million against 488.63 million), more video views (239.22 million against 181.81 million) and higher total engagement (11.49 million against 9.56 million). Average engagement per post on owned channels was more than eleven times the third-party figure. The same pattern appeared at the Asian Championships, where owned channels significantly improved engagement (+49%), video views (+7%) and reach (+36%) from approximately the same number of posts as the previous year.

6. Content strategy and the value of UWW+

A significant strategic decision taken in 2026 was to align the content strategy behind UWW's subscription product. The department is moving away from publishing full match highlights on social channels and towards a photo-led and storytelling-led approach (behind the scenes, warm-ups and walk-outs) that builds the narrative of the sport on social media and directs fans to UWW+ to watch the wrestling itself. Supported by the new video archive integrated into the website, this positions UWW's digital output to build both audience and revenue, rather than one at the expense of the other. The evidence of the period already points the same way: in the first



quarter of 2026, as UWW+ revenue rose 12.3%, YouTube views rose 54% and YouTube revenue 39%, the subscription platform has grown without drawing audience away from the free channels.

PART II: COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

7. Broadcasting and media distribution

Broadcasting remains the foundation of wrestling's international visibility, and the department worked throughout the period to widen and secure the sport's distribution. During the period the agreement with Two Circles was terminated by mutual agreement and the sale of media rights was brought in-house, a change that has already delivered better results, greater control, direct contact with broadcasters and a growing body of know-how within the department. The clearest measure is the European Championships: coverage grew from three markets in 2025 to nine in 2026, with new agreements concluded for TRT Spor (Türkiye), MTVA (Hungary), Fastmedia and AMPTV (Armenia), Match TV (Russia) and YLE (Finland), alongside continuing partners Silknet (Georgia), BNT (Bulgaria) and ITV (Azerbaijan). Distribution was also secured for the Ranking Series and continental events, including IRIB (Iran), NTRC (Kyrgyzstan) and Kazakh partners in Asia. In the United States, distribution continued through FloWrestling, while UWW+ carried the global signal in all markets without a local rights holder, ensuring that every major championship of the period was accessible to fans.

Independent cross-media measurement by IRIS confirmed the results:

Event (2025)	Reach (m)	Media contacts (m)	Media value (€m)
World Championships, Zagreb	1,342.21	3,487.16	68.432
European Championships	1,151.32	489.17	23.285
Asian Championships	398.51	1,892.44	22.582

The 2025 European Championships were the best-performing edition monitored to date in terms of cross-media reach and media value, with media value up 120% and reach up 54% on the previous year. This positive trend continued in 2026 with reach up another 12%. In 2025 television and OTT coverage of the event grew by 163 hours year on year. At the Asian Championships, television and OTT accounted for 70% of total media value. At the World Championships in Zagreb, television and streaming delivered 673 hours of dedicated coverage mainly across twelve markets and a television media value of €16.2 million.

Value delivered to partners. Independent measurement recorded increased advertising-equivalent values for both the host cities and RUDIS at the 2025 Asian and European Championships, relative to the values recorded during the previous years.

8. UWW+ and direct-to-consumer revenue

UWW+ is now the primary engine of UWW's digital revenue, representing 88% of total digital income in the first quarter of 2026. Revenue for Q1 2026 reached €54,800, an increase of 12.3% on Q1 2025, with 3,300 annual passes sold, up 10.5% year on year. Overall digital revenue grew 16% over the same period. YouTube performed strongly alongside it, with views up 54% to more than 15.2 million and platform revenue up 39% in Q1 2026.

Beyond the quarterly picture, the cumulative scale of the platform is now significant. More than 30,700 paying users have subscribed to UWW+ since its launch, 10,500 of them during 2026. Annual Passes (the most committed segment of the audience, and the most valuable to the federation) accounted for more than 4,600



unique subscribers during 2026, 12% ahead of the same point in 2025. Across 2026 as a whole the platform delivered more than 3.4 million video views and more than 18.8 million viewed minutes, confirming that the depth of engagement recorded at individual championships is sustained across the competition calendar.

At the 2025 World Championships, UWW+ delivered nearly one million video views and more than eight million viewed minutes across all live and on-demand content. The most striking feature of the data is the depth of engagement: viewers watched for an average of more than eight minutes per view, a substantial increase on previous editions and a clear indication that UWW+ is attracting a genuinely committed audience rather than incidental traffic. The platform reached audiences across every continent, with Ukraine, Germany, India, France and Azerbaijan the leading markets by views.

India and Azerbaijan stand out as growth markets: total viewing time in India more than doubled against the 2023 edition, rising 104%, while Azerbaijan grew 28%, an encouraging result in two priority markets for the sport. Across several leading markets, viewing time per user rose sharply.

9. Digital transformation

The digital transformation programme entered its second and decisive phase during the reporting period. Having built the platform with the support of external partners since 2021, UWW is now taking direct ownership of it. The objectives are straightforward: to give UWW the ability to run and develop the whole digital ecosystem itself, to reduce dependence on outside contractors and agencies, and to lower the running cost of the ecosystem over time.

The principal work delivered and under way includes:

- A rebuild of the website and mobile application on a new, modular front end connected directly to UWW's own content management system, replacing dependence on the previous supplier's technology.
- The replacement of the payment and subscription platform behind UWW+ with a more flexible solution, improving subscriber management and creating a stronger foundation for revenue growth.
- A restructuring of fan support, with defined workflows and clear prioritisation; during the U23 European Championships, 95% of support issues were resolved within 48 hours, and user feedback on the improved service was positive.
- A review and renegotiation of the contracts covering the digital asset management, customer relationship management and email marketing tools.
- A new pricing approach for UWW+ and clearer financial reporting on digital costs and revenues, so that decisions on which events to broadcast and how to package subscriptions can be taken on evidence.
- The development of a dedicated video archive integrated into the new website, designed to attract subscriptions outside the competition season.
- Identification of the roles UWW needs to bring in-house to complete the transition, principally a front-end developer and dedicated fan support, with further digital and growth roles under consideration.

The 2026 World Championships in Astana will serve as the first full test of UWW's capacity to run the ecosystem independently.



10. Global sponsorship partnerships

RUDIS: Official Apparel Partner. UWW signed a new eight-year global apparel partnership with RUDIS, succeeding the previous APS/Nike agreement. Following RUDIS's proposal, the department ran a data-led evaluation against the incumbent's value delivery and formally invited the incumbent to exercise its right to match. Measured against the outgoing terms, the new agreement delivers a 221% increase in annual cash fees and a 140% increase in total annual partner value, rising to a 181% uplift across the full term once the upfront merchandising investment is taken into account, alongside ongoing marketing spend and a dedicated staff team. Clauses that had constrained UWW, including the automatic matching right, were removed, and the partnership was subsequently extended to the UWW Beach Wrestling World Series.

Taishan: Official Equipment Partner. UWW renewed its long-standing equipment partnership with Taishan for a further four-year cycle. Beyond the commercial terms, Taishan places clear value on UWW's ability to open doors, drawing on the federation's network to secure introductions to National Federations and national sports authorities in key markets.

Title sponsorship trial: 2026 U23 World Championships. Working jointly with USA Wrestling, the department secured a title sponsor for the 2026 U23 World Championships in June 2026, with UWW contributing the rights and assets and the LOC the sponsor relationship.

Wrestling House partners. Arimex was signed as a global supplier partner and activated on site at the Paris 2024 Wrestling House, alongside partner activations by Nike and Pernod Ricard.

11. Commercial pipeline development

Rising commercial interest in wrestling has allowed the department to build a broader prospect pipeline than in any previous cycle, reaching well beyond the sport's traditional partner categories and into new markets across the Americas, Asia and Europe. Every approach is now built on the federation's own audience, broadcast and UWW+ data (evidence UWW could not have offered a partner in 2021) and supported by tailored partnership proposals, event calendars and direct presentations to decision-makers. Propositions were also developed for whole sectors, allowing the department to approach emerging categories systematically rather than brand by brand.

The approach has already delivered results, most visibly in the RUDIS apparel partnership, which was concluded after a data-led evaluation of the market. Conversations with prospective partners in several further categories are now under way at senior level, and the priority for the coming cycle is to convert them into signed partnerships, with Los Angeles 2028 as a central focus.

Brand protection. The department also acted to protect UWW's intellectual property during the period, including identifying and declining unauthorised licensing requests.

12. The Wrestling House: Paris 2024 and Los Angeles 2028

The Wrestling House at Paris 2024, known as the Maison de la Lutte, was judged across the Olympic Movement to be one of the standout activations of the Games. Benjamin Cohen, Director General of the International Testing Agency, described it as one of the highlights of Paris 2024. Scott Jernigan, Chief Commercial Officer of On Location & IMG Experiences, said it stole the spotlight at the Games and became the talk of the Olympics. Olympic champions said the same: Henry Cejudo pointed to how it brought the wrestling community together from



around the world beside one of the most iconic symbols in sport, and Aline Rotter-Focken likened it to a reunion of the best sport in the world. That external verdict, from partners, officials and athletes alike, is the clearest measure of what the venue achieved.

Located aboard Le Gustave, moored on the Seine directly beneath the Eiffel Tower, the venue operated throughout the Games as the meeting point of the global wrestling community. It welcomed and celebrated the Olympic champions of Paris 2024 (among them Mijain López of Cuba, on the night of his historic fifth Olympic title), with gold medallists carried through the crowd beneath the illuminated Eiffel Tower. It served at the same time as a place of business, hosting partnership signings and meetings with partners including APS/Nike, IIS, Arimex and Pernod Ricard, who used the space to activate their partnerships with branded merchandise and guest hospitality. The 2024 Hall of Fame induction was held there, honouring Levon Julfalakyan, Steeve Guenot, Mavlet Batirov, Tonya Verbeek and Vassilis Pagonis, and the Memorandum of Understanding with the Inspire Institute of Sport, advancing wrestling development in India, was signed there during the Games.

Los Angeles 2028. UWW has secured the Grammy Museum rooftop as Wrestling House at LA 2028, one of the most significant venues in downtown Los Angeles, within walking distance of the wrestling competition venue. It gives the global wrestling community a home at the heart of the Games for a second consecutive Olympics. Partner-facing materials featuring the new venue are already in preparation for the next wave of sponsor outreach.

13. Support to Member Federations and Local Organising Committees

Across every continent, the department provides Member National Federations and Local Organising Committees with hands-on support so that they can deliver best-in-class sponsorship and branding execution at their events. This includes working with them on combined sponsorship opportunities that bring UWW and local partners together on the same platform; providing tailored marketing reference documents and sponsorship decks; giving detailed on-site placement guidance covering A-frames, LED screens, backdrops and trophies; handling branding and logo approvals; and sharing UWW's own audience, broadcast and marketing data so that federations can hold well-informed conversations with their own local sponsors. This support is provided in writing and through regular calls with each organising committee in the months before an event.

This coordination is not only a service to the hosts. It is the mechanism through which UWW delivers its own contractual obligations to its global partners: sponsor visibility, placement and activation rights are executed at event level, and it is the close working relationship between the department and each organising committee that ensures those commitments are met to the standard the partners are entitled to expect.

Beyond event delivery, the department is developing longer-term education initiatives for Member Federations, including training to help National Federations use social media more effectively and to help athletes build and manage their personal brands, with the intention of extending the model across the membership.

14. Social responsibility

A new social responsibility partnership was launched with the Snow Leopard Foundation in Kyrgyzstan around the 2026 Senior Asian Championships in Bishkek. What began as the incorporation of the snow leopard, the national symbol, into the Championships' visual identity developed, on the department's initiative, into a full conservation partnership: the Championships carried snow leopard branding, and UWW and the Foundation ran a coordinated awareness campaign across the UWW website, newsletter and social channels, highlighting the approximately 300 snow leopards remaining in the country. The initiative generated strong positive coverage and demonstrated



how UWW events can meaningfully support local culture and conservation causes in host countries. It is intended as a template for similar partnerships with future hosts.

15. Calendar fragmentation and unsanctioned events

A development of the period that bears directly on the department's work is the emergence of privately organised professional leagues and events staged outside the UWW competition calendar. The governance and eligibility questions these ventures raise are addressed elsewhere. This report records their commercial and communications consequences, because those consequences are already being felt in the department's day-to-day work.

Three effects matter most:

- **Protecting the value of the competition calendar.** UWW's calendar is deliberately built as a narrative: the Ranking Series and Continental Championships drive rankings, seedings and rivalries towards the World Championships as the pinnacle of the season. That architecture is what makes the season saleable: it is the reason broadcasters and partners commit to a full run of events rather than a single championship, and it underpins the growth in rights takers achieved during the period. External, unsanctioned competitions draw on the same athletes without feeding qualification, and if left unaddressed would dilute the structure the department has built and weaken the season finale for partners and broadcasters. Safeguarding the integrity of the sanctioned calendar is therefore a commercial priority as well as a sporting one, and the department is working to ensure the pathway to the World Championships remains the sport's defining storyline.
- **Maintaining a coordinated calendar.** A clean, predictable annual structure is one of the department's most valuable commercial assets: it is what allows campaigns to be planned well in advance, star athletes to be guaranteed on the dates sold, and broadcasters to build slots around wrestling with confidence, and it is a significant part of what partners are buying. Events announced outside the UWW calendar are not coordinated with the championship schedule, with broadcast windows or with the Ranking Series, which makes that planning harder to sustain. The department has so far absorbed this without loss of coverage, but keeping the sanctioned calendar coherent and communicated early is essential to protecting the commercial framework built over the period.
- **Managing market clarity.** Commercial partners need to know which events are the pinnacle of the sport and which title is the definitive world championship. Where that is unclear, decisions get deferred and valuations soften. The department has kept the answer unambiguous (one sanctioned pathway, with the World Championships at its summit), and this holds whether or not any rival property succeeds.

The department's response is to make the UWW calendar unambiguously the centre of the sport: to concentrate promotional and production investment on the World and Continental Championships and the Ranking Series, to keep the leading athletes visible on UWW's own channels and on UWW+, and to hold consistently to a single message: that the world title in wrestling is won at the UWW World Championships. Sustaining that clarity is not a task for this department alone. It requires the whole federation, Member Federations included, to stand behind one protected international calendar.

16. Strategic assessment

The cross-media data from the period shows a solid base. Coverage of the major championships reaches every country, with reach and broadcasting time spread evenly across time zones and no reliance on any single market. Wrestling ranks strongly against comparable federations on Instagram and YouTube, particularly on video, and



independent measurement has repeatedly confirmed that engagement on UWW's owned channels is well above the sector average.

The opportunities follow from that base. OTT coverage and net reach are still growing, and the OTT audience is younger, better educated and more affluent than the average sports audience, the profile partners pay most for. Owned channels now outperform earned, which gives the department something few federations can offer. Short-form video and emerging platforms leave further room to grow, and the results on Chinese platforms show what focused investment in one market delivers. Turning this into revenue depends on the sport presenting one coherent competitive structure. A clear UWW calendar is now worth as much to the department's results as any single partnership.

Conclusion: Delivering the 2021 Strategic Plan

This report covers the period between the Congresses of Tirana and Astana, but the work it describes did not begin in 2024. At the 2021 Congress, United World Wrestling launched a strategic plan built on five pillars: women's development, associated styles, the brand and image of wrestling, digital transformation and youth engagement. Tirana marked the midpoint of that plan; Astana marks five years of delivery. No single department owns these pillars (each is shared across the federation), but the work of the Commercial Operations & Communications Department over the period has advanced every one of them.

Digital transformation. The programme launched in 2021 has moved from building to owning. UWW+ is now the federation's principal source of digital revenue, the audience database gives UWW a direct relationship with its fans, and the website, application and subscription platform are being brought under the federation's own control.

Youth engagement. The department has grown wrestling's audience on the channels the next generation actually uses, including short-form video and the Chinese platforms, and the audience watching wrestling through OTT is younger than the average sports audience. The planned education programme for National Federations and athletes, on social media and personal branding, will carry this work across the membership.

Women's development. Women's wrestling has been kept consistently and assertively in view across the department's channels, broadcast coverage and storytelling, so that the growth of the sport is shared by its women athletes.

Associated styles. The department has helped broaden wrestling's fan base beyond its Olympic styles on two fronts. Commercially, the RUDIS partnership was extended to the Beach Wrestling World Series. In communications, newly established dedicated social media pages for the other associated styles are building audiences of their own, bringing more styles, and more fans, into the wrestling ecosystem.

Brand and image. Brand and image is the pillar through which the others become visible. Wrestling is now consistently ranked among the strongest International Federations on social media, and second of all federations on Instagram in 2026. The Wrestling House in Paris and Los Angeles, a renewed partner portfolio and partnerships such as the one with the Snow Leopard Foundation have given the sport an image that is modern, visible and attractive to partners.

Taken together, the period shows a department that has delivered on its own objectives while carrying the federation's wider strategy forward. The foundations laid since 2021 (an owned audience, an owned platform and a stronger brand) are what the next cycle will build on.



Priorities for 2026 – 2028

- Build on the second place on Instagram by strengthening short-form video output across YouTube and emerging platforms.
- Consolidate the gains made on Chinese platforms and extend the approach from WeChat to Weibo and Douyin.
- Continue to grow the audience database and its consented share, and use it more systematically to convert followers and viewers into UWW+ subscribers.
- Complete the new website and UWW+ platform, migrate to the new payment and subscription provider, and implement the revised UWW+ pricing approach.
- Complete the transition to internal ownership of the digital ecosystem, including the roles identified, using the Astana 2026 World Championships as the operational test.
- Extend the broadcast footprint for the 2026–2028 cycle and continue to grow coverage and net reach on OTT.
- Protect the primacy and clarity of the UWW calendar in the market, positioning the World and Continental Championships and the Ranking Series unambiguously as the pinnacle of the sport in all partner, broadcaster and fan-facing communication.
- Convert the commercial pipeline into signed partnerships, prioritising the live conversations already underway with prospective sponsors across several categories and markets, reconfirming next steps with parties where discussions have stalled, and exploring the extension of existing partnerships towards Los Angeles 2028.
- Deliver the Wrestling House at the Grammy Museum for Los Angeles 2028 and use it as the centrepiece of the next wave of partner engagement.
- Extend the social responsibility model established with the Snow Leopard Foundation to future host countries.
- Roll out the National Federation and athlete education programme across the membership.

Gordon Templeman

Director, Commercial Operations & Communications



United World Wrestling Safeguarding Activities Report 2025-2026

Introduction

United World Wrestling (UWW) remains committed to ensuring the safety, well-being, and protection of all athletes, coaches, officials, and participants across all its activities. In 2025, UWW continued to strengthen its safeguarding framework through **education, competitions on-site measures, and accessible reporting mechanisms**, ensuring a safe sporting environment in line with international best practices.

I. Safeguarding Education and Awareness

1. Safeguarding in Coach Education

All UWW and Olympic Solidarity (OS) courses for coaches in 2025 included a mandatory one-hour safeguarding session, delivered through a total of 18 sessions across 5 continents in 18 countries:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>
21-31 March	ARM	Yerevan
25 -30 May	IRQ	Baghdad
18 - 24 March	ASA	Pago pago
16 - 22 June	ZAM	Lusaka
15 - 19 April	COL	Medeline
21 -25 May	CRO	Porec
30 Jun - 5 July	NAM	Windhoek
19 - 24 AUG	MRI	Port Louis.
4 -10 August	KEN	Nairobi
23 -30 July	BDI	Gitega
20 - 25 Oct	AUS	Sydney
28 Sep - 2 Oct	JOR	Amman
24 - 31 Oct	LBA	Tripoli
24 - 29 Nov	MDA	Chisinau
22 - 30 Nov	BEN	Porto-Novo
10 - 15 Dec	THA	Sriracha
7 - 12 Oct	BRA	Rio
3- 8 Nov	CHI	Santiago
Total		18

** The OS PRK online course in 2025 did not include the Safeguarding session due to specific technical requirements that needed to be delivered within the limited internet time available for the course.*



These sessions focused on introducing safeguarding concepts, preventing and reporting safeguarding concerns, and ensuring that coaches are equipped to uphold athlete welfare at all levels. Course participants received guidance on UWW safeguarding policies, safe sport practices, and the importance of fostering an inclusive and secure environment. In total, over 400 wrestling coaches completed the safeguarding training sessions.

2. Athlete Awareness and Engagement

Safeguarding education sessions were also offered to athletes at UWW training camps, particularly centered on youth camps (U17):

<i>Date</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Age Cat.</i>	<i>Event</i>
20 - 27 Apr	MRO	Casablanca	U17, U20 & seniors	African Championships Training Camp
23-29 Jun	BRA	Rio de Janeiro	U17	More than Medals Training Camp - Americas
27 Jun - 2 Jul	VIE	Vung Tau	U17	More than Medals Training Camp -Asia
5 - 12 Sep	CRO	Poreč	Seniors	World Championships Training Camp

In addition, at the 2025 Senior World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia, UWW produced safeguarding roll-ups and giveaways, alongside materials on Anti-Doping and the prevention of competition manipulation.

<i>Items/description</i>	<i>Number</i>
<i>Giveaways - Rubber wrist bands</i>	400 (200 for safeguarding; 200 for Anti-Doping)
<i>Safeguarding awareness rollups</i>	8 (2 each language)
<i>UWW safeguarding rules and regulations (large posters)</i>	4 (1 language each)

The giveaways were distributed in the warm-up areas, while the roll-ups were strategically placed in all athlete corridors and at athlete entrances to raise awareness among senior athletes and reinforce the importance of a safe, fair, and ethical sporting environment.

3. Safeguarding Training for UWW Educators

As UWW Educators are the primary workforce responsible for delivering UWW education and training courses for coaches and referees worldwide, it is essential that safeguarding principles are clearly understood and consistently respected, regardless of nationality. The UWW Educator Course held from 23-26 January in Divčibare, Croatia, included a **dedicated safeguarding training session** to ensure that all 43 UWW Educators are fully equipped to work responsibly with athletes and coaches.



II. Safeguarding Officers at UWW Competitions

UWW implemented enhanced safeguarding measures at 22 sanctioned competitions throughout 2025.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Competition</i>	<i>Age cat.</i>	<i>Safeguarding Officer</i>
05 - 09 Jan	CRO	Zagreb	Zagreb Open	Seniors	Ramil Ahmadov
26 Jan - 02 Feb	ALB	Tirana	Muhamet Malo	Seniors	Betim Vrenezi
08 - 14 Mar	ALB	Tirana	U23 European Championships	U23	Betim Vrenezi
20 - 22 Mar	ASA	Pago Pago	U17, U20, Seniors Oceania Championships	Seniors, U20, U17	Carrisa Holland
25 - 30 Mar	JOR	Amman	Seniors Asian Championships	Seniors	Jane Menhel
07 - 13 Apr	SVK	Bratislava	Seniors European Championships	Seniors	Ramil Ahmadov
10 - 12 Apr	MEX	Queretaro	U23 Pan-American Championships	U23	Jesus Salazar
29 Apr - 04 May	MOR	Casablanca	U17, U20, Seniors African Championships	Seniors, U20, U17	Jane Menhel
08 - 11 May	MEX	Monterrey	Seniors Pan-American Championships	Seniors	Jesus Salazar
29 May - 01 Jun	MGL	Ulaanbaatar	3rd Ranking Series	Seniors	Betim Vrenezi
09 - 15 Jun	MKD	Skopje	U17 European Championships	U17	Jane Menhel
18 - 27 Jun	VIE	Vung Tau	U17, U23 Asian Championships	U23, U17	Ender Yaksi
19 - 22 Jun	BRA	Rio de Janeiro	U17 Pan-American Championships	U17	Jesus Salazar
25 - 28 Jun	ITA	Caorle	U15 European Championships	U15	Betim Vrenezi
30 - 06 Jun	ITA	Caorle	U20 European Championships	U20	Betim Vrenezi
05 - 13 Jul	KGZ	Bishkek	U15, U20 Asian Championships	U20, U15	Jane Menhel
10 - 13 Jul	PER	Lima	U20 Pan-American Championships	U20	Jesus Salazar
17 - 20 Jul	HUN	Budapest	Polyák Imre & Varga János Memorial	Seniors	Betim Vrenezi
28 Jul - 03 Aug	GRE	Athens	U17 World Championships	U17	Betim Vrenezi
17 - 24 Aug	BUL	Samokov	U20 World Championships	U20	Jane Menhel
13 - 21 Sep	CRO	Zagreb	Seniors World Championships	Seniors	Lei Liang/Yuri Maier
20 - 27 Oct	SRB	Novi Sad	U23 World Championships	U23	Betim Vrenezi
Total	22				

Safeguarding officers were present at the above-listed UWW Championships and Ranking Series, providing on-site support, assisting with reporting guidance for athletes, coaches, and officials, and ensuring compliance with safeguarding protocols.

III. Reporting Mechanisms - launch of the anonymous reporting platform

To strengthen safeguarding reporting mechanisms, UWW developed an anonymous online reporting platform in 2025, providing athletes, coaches, and stakeholders with a safe and confidential way to report concerns.



It is listed on UWW official website, under Governance/Athlete Safeguard report section:

[Integrity & Safeguarding Reporting Form](#)

This system encourages reporting by protecting identities, enables timely intervention, promotes transparency and accountability, and allows the organization to identify patterns and take preventive action to ensure a safer sporting environment.

Continuation into 2026

Building on the framework established since 2021, UWW maintains its safeguarding activities throughout 2026 with a continued focus on education, on-site protection, and accessible reporting. Safeguarding sessions remains a mandatory component of UWW and Olympic Solidarity coach education courses, and safeguarding awareness materials continues to be distributed at major UWW events, ensuring consistent messaging to athletes, coaches, and officials across all continents.

A key development in 2026 is the reinforcement of the network of on-site points of contact for safeguarding, with Sport Managers formally appointed as focal points at UWW-sanctioned competitions alongside dedicated Safeguarding Officers. This appointment structure ensures that athletes and coaches have a clear, identifiable and readily accessible contact for safeguarding concerns at every event, complementing the anonymous online reporting platform launched in 2025 and reinforcing UWW's zero-tolerance approach to abuse and misconduct across all levels of competition.

Conclusion

UWW's safeguarding initiatives demonstrates its ongoing commitment to protecting the rights and welfare of all participants. By focusing on **education**, **competition on-site oversight**, and **accessible reporting mechanisms**, UWW continues to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for wrestling worldwide.

Sustainability & Social Inclusion Report 2025

Events



UNITED WORLD WRESTLING

1. Introduction

United World Wrestling (UWW) recognizes the responsibility of international sport federations to contribute positively to sustainability and social inclusion through the way sport is organized and delivered. As a global federation operating across diverse cultural, economic, and geographical contexts, UWW approaches sustainability as a practical, context-aware process embedded within event organization rather than as a one-size-fits-all model.

In line with the values of the Olympic Movement and the principles promoted within the ASOIF framework, UWW integrates sustainability and social inclusion considerations into its events with a focus on feasibility, inclusiveness, and continuous improvement. This approach builds on previous initiatives developed between 2022 and 2024, reinforcing a progressive pathway rather than isolated actions.

UWW events serve not only as platforms for sporting excellence but also as opportunities to promote responsible practices, awareness, and positive behaviors among athletes, officials, organizers, and local communities. Within this framework, sustainability is understood as a shared responsibility, shaped by collaboration between UWW, local organizing committees, and competition stakeholders.

This report outlines how sustainability and social inclusion principles were applied across UWW events in 2025, with particular attention to organizational decision-making processes and practical implementation at event level.



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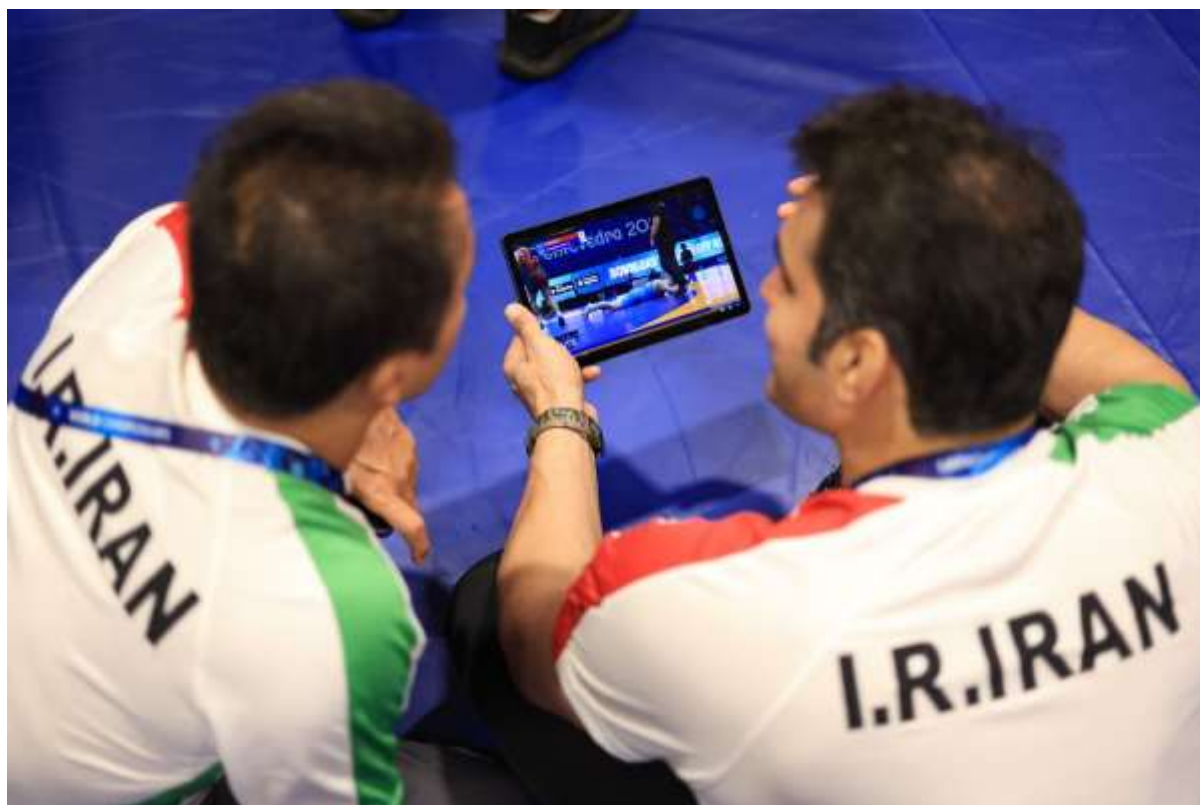
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2. Governance and Framework for UWW Events

Sustainability and social inclusion considerations are integrated into the governance framework of UWW events through structured yet adaptable tools designed to support organizers across different contexts. Rather than prescribing uniform solutions, UWW promotes a common framework that allows for contextual interpretation based on local realities, event scale, and available resources.

Competition managers and local organizing committees play a central role in applying these principles throughout the lifecycle of an event — from planning and logistics to on-site delivery and post-event review. Sustainability and social inclusion reporting tools are used as a reference point to encourage reflection on key operational areas, support consistency across events, and facilitate internal learning.

This framework emphasizes informed decision-making over rigid metrics, recognizing that meaningful sustainability outcomes often emerge from practical choices made on the ground. By embedding these considerations into event preparation and execution, UWW aims to foster a culture of responsibility and awareness that evolves progressively across its event portfolio.



3. Key Areas of Action at UWW Events

Sustainability and social inclusion considerations are integrated into UWW events through a set of key operational areas that reflect both organizational priorities and on-the-ground realities. Across different event formats and regions, these areas guide decision-making processes while allowing flexibility in implementation based on local conditions.

Rather than focusing on prescriptive measures, UWW emphasizes practical approaches that support responsible event delivery, efficiency, and inclusiveness.

3.1 Venue and Infrastructure

Venue selection and infrastructure planning play a central role in the sustainable delivery of UWW events. Given the nature of the sport of wrestling, competitions can be delivered within existing sports facilities without the need for purpose-built stages, extensive temporary constructions, or large-scale structural adaptations.

Whenever possible, events are hosted in venues that are already equipped to meet competition requirements, allowing organizers to minimize additional installations and reduce the operational footprint associated with event setup and dismantling.

Operational decisions related to space usage are guided by efficiency and functionality, with particular attention to optimizing athlete flow, competition areas, and support spaces. This approach supports both environmental considerations and the overall quality of the event experience for participants and officials.



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By adapting event layouts to the specific characteristics of each venue, UWW events aim to balance operational effectiveness with responsible resource use.

3.2 Transport and Mobility

Transportation planning is approached as both a logistical and sustainability-related consideration, closely linked to venue selection and accommodation arrangements. Across UWW events, transport-related decisions are shaped by local infrastructure, safety requirements, and the overall scale of each competition.

While walking-distance solutions are prioritized whenever feasible, transport operations are adapted to context-specific realities. Key considerations guiding transport planning included:

- Centralization of competition, training, and accommodation venues to limit travel distances where possible
- Optimization of transport schedules to reduce unnecessary trips and improve vehicle occupancy
- Coordination with local organizing committees to align transport solutions with local infrastructure and operational capacity

Through this approach, transport operations supported efficiency, accessibility, and participant well-being while contributing to responsible resource use within the constraints of each event context.



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3.3 Waste Reduction and Materials Management

Waste reduction and materials management are addressed through practical operational choices that prioritize necessity, functionality, and local feasibility. Rather than applying uniform solutions, UWW events adopt context-aware approaches aligned with venue capabilities and service structures.

Across events in 2025, materials-related decisions were guided by the following considerations:

- Limiting excessive printed materials by prioritizing digital communication and operational tools where appropriate
- Reducing the use of single-use items when feasible, in coordination with venue and service providers
- Favoring locally available resources and services to support logistical efficiency and reduce unnecessary transport

Food and materials-related practices varied depending on regional and venue-specific conditions; however, the overarching objective remained consistent: to minimize avoidable waste while maintaining operational quality and participant experience.

Awareness among organizers, staff, and participants was considered a key component of these efforts, reinforcing the role of UWW events as platforms for responsible practices through daily operational behavior.



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3.4 Accessibility and Social Inclusion

Accessibility and social inclusion are integral considerations in the planning and delivery of UWW events, shaping how spaces, services, and operations are organized. These principles are applied with the objective of creating safe, respectful, and equitable environments for all participants.

While implementation varies according to venue characteristics and local context, inclusive practices across events in 2025 were guided by the following considerations:

- Ensuring equitable access to competition and support areas for athletes, officials, and accredited participants
- Promoting safe and respectful environments through clear operational procedures and stakeholder awareness
- Supporting fair participation conditions regardless of gender, nationality, or background

Event operations are designed to respond to diverse participant needs within the practical constraints of each venue and host context. Through close collaboration with competition managers and local organizing committees, inclusion is embedded as a practical dimension of event delivery rather than a standalone initiative.



4. 2025 Event Highlights

Throughout 2025, sustainability and social inclusion principles were applied consistently across UWW events of different scales and formats, including World Championships and continental competitions held across multiple regions.

While operational contexts varied significantly depending on location, infrastructure, and local capacity, a common approach guided event delivery. Key patterns observed across events included:

- Prioritization of existing venues and infrastructures to support efficient and responsible event delivery
- Logistical planning designed to optimize transportation and reduce operational complexity
- Integration of inclusive practices into daily event operations for athletes, officials, and stakeholders

The application of shared organizational principles, combined with flexible local implementation, allowed events to maintain operational quality while adapting sustainability-related decisions to regional realities. This consistency across diverse contexts reflects UWW's commitment to integrating responsible practices as a standard component of event organization rather than as isolated initiatives.



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5. Lessons Learned and Continuous Improvement

Experience gained from the delivery of UWW events in 2025 reinforced the importance of adopting a structured yet flexible approach to sustainability and social inclusion within an international sporting context. Experience across different regions and event formats highlighted that meaningful progress is best achieved through informed decision-making and close collaboration.

Key lessons identified during the 2025 event cycle include:

- The value of integrating sustainability and social inclusion considerations at early stages of event planning
- The importance of close coordination with local organizing committees to adapt practices to local realities
- The effectiveness of flexible frameworks that support consistency while allowing contextual interpretation
- The role of awareness and shared responsibility in embedding responsible practices into daily event operations

Building on these learnings, UWW remains committed to refining its tools and guidance, strengthening stakeholder awareness, and promoting incremental improvements across its event portfolio. This approach reflects an understanding that sustainability is a continuous process, shaped by experience, dialogue, and adaptation over time.

Conclusion

UWW events provide an opportunity to demonstrate how international sport competitions can be delivered responsibly while maintaining operational excellence and inclusiveness. Through pragmatic decision-making, collaboration with local organizers, and attention to context-specific realities, sustainability and social inclusion principles are integrated into event delivery in a practical and scalable manner.

By building on existing frameworks and experiences, UWW remains committed to strengthening its approach to sustainable event organization, contributing positively to the broader objectives of the Olympic Movement and the international sporting community.



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Sustainability & Social Inclusion Report 2025

Development



UNITED WORLD WRESTLING

1. Introduction

The Development Department of United World Wrestling (UWW) plays a central role in advancing sustainability and social inclusion across the sport. Through its programs and initiatives, development is approached not only as a mechanism for sporting growth, but as a means to foster equitable access, education, and long-term positive impact within wrestling communities worldwide.

Operating across diverse social, cultural, and economic contexts, UWW's development activities are designed to address structural inequalities and support emerging wrestling nations. This approach aligns with the values of the Olympic Movement and the broader objectives promoted within the ASOIF framework, recognizing sport as a powerful tool for social development.

In this context, sustainability is understood primarily through its human and social dimensions. Development initiatives aim to strengthen individual capacities, promote inclusive participation, and support safe and supportive environments, ensuring that opportunities within wrestling are accessible and meaningful over time.

This report outlines how sustainability and social inclusion principles were integrated into UWW's development activities in 2025, with a focus on strategic intent, program design, and long-term value rather than isolated outcomes.



2. Development as a Driver of Sustainability

Within UWW, development initiatives represent a key driver of sustainability by placing people, communities, and education at the center of sporting activity. Rather than focusing on infrastructure-heavy interventions, development programs prioritize human capital, knowledge transfer, and inclusive participation, resulting in a low environmental footprint and a high social impact.

This approach is characterized by:

- Prioritization of human capital over infrastructure-intensive investment
- Knowledge transfer as a driver of long-term autonomy and resilience
- Inclusive participation models adapted to diverse regional contexts

By investing in athletes, coaches, officials, and young leaders from diverse backgrounds, UWW development activities contribute to the long-term resilience of the sport. These initiatives support not only athletic performance, but also personal growth, cultural exchange, and the establishment of safe and respectful sporting environments.

Development programs are designed to be adaptable and context-sensitive, allowing them to respond to local needs while maintaining consistent organizational principles. This flexibility enables sustainable engagement across regions with varying levels of resources, infrastructure, and institutional capacity.

Through education, mentorship, and structured participation pathways, UWW development initiatives contribute to social inclusion by expanding access to wrestling opportunities, promoting gender equality, and reinforcing the role of sport as a platform for positive social change.



3. Flagship Development Programs

UWW's development strategy is implemented through a series of flagship programs designed to promote access, education, and inclusion while strengthening the long-term sustainability of wrestling worldwide. These programs are structured to respond to diverse regional realities while maintaining a consistent focus on human development, safe sport, and equitable participation.

Among these initiatives, More Than Medals represents a central pillar of UWW's development approach, embodying the integration of sporting excellence with broader social and educational objectives.

3.1 More Than Medals

The More Than Medals program reflects UWW's commitment to placing athletes and communities at the center of development efforts. Designed as a holistic initiative, the program goes beyond competitive performance by combining technical training with education, cultural exchange, and social awareness.

Implemented across different regions and contexts, More Than Medals provides young athletes and coaches from developing wrestling nations with access to high-level expertise, structured learning environments, and international exposure. By bringing together participants from diverse cultural and geographical backgrounds, the program fosters inclusion, mutual understanding, and respect.

A key feature of More Than Medals is its emphasis on education as a foundation for sustainable development. Training sessions are complemented by workshops addressing topics such as safe sport, anti-doping awareness, ethics, and athlete welfare. This integrated approach supports participants not only as competitors, but as individuals equipped with knowledge and values that extend beyond the field of play.



The program is structured around four core pillars:

- Technical excellence through access to high-level training and international exposure
- Education and values, including safe sport, ethics, anti-doping, and athlete welfare
- Gender equality, promoting the active participation of women as athletes, coaches, and leaders
- Cultural exchange, fostering mutual respect and intercultural dialogue

Gender equality and inclusive participation are embedded within the design of the program. More Than Medals actively promotes balanced representation and encourages the involvement of women as athletes, coaches, and role models. Through targeted outreach and structured participation, the program contributes to creating pathways for women within wrestling and reinforcing inclusive environments.

Cultural exchange represents another essential dimension of the initiative. By exposing participants to new environments, training methodologies, and perspectives, More Than Medals strengthens intercultural dialogue and broadens participants' understanding of the global wrestling community. These experiences support long-term engagement with the sport and reinforce its role as a connector across cultures.

From a sustainability perspective, More Than Medals prioritizes human-centered investment over infrastructure-heavy interventions. By focusing on education, mentorship, and capacity building, the program achieves meaningful social impact while maintaining a limited environmental footprint. This approach aligns with UWW's broader sustainability objectives and the principles promoted within the Olympic Movement.

Through More Than Medals, UWW demonstrates how development initiatives can simultaneously strengthen sporting performance, promote social inclusion, and contribute to the sustainable growth of wrestling worldwide.



3.2 Capacity Building and Education

Capacity building and education are fundamental components of UWW's development strategy and play a critical role in advancing sustainability and social inclusion within the sport. By strengthening knowledge, skills, and institutional capacity, UWW development programs aim to create long-term impact that extends beyond individual events or short-term interventions.

Educational initiatives target a wide range of stakeholders, including athletes, coaches, referees, and administrators. Through structured courses, workshops, and mentorship opportunities, these programs support the professional development of individuals who serve as multipliers within their national federations and local communities.

Key focus areas include:

- Education and certification of coaches, referees, and administrators
- Knowledge transfer to strengthen institutional capacity at national level
- Integration of safe sport, ethics, and governance principles

UWW places particular emphasis on knowledge transfer and shared learning, recognizing that sustainable development within sport depends on the ability of national federations to operate independently and effectively. By providing standardized educational content while allowing for contextual adaptation, capacity-building initiatives respond to diverse regional needs and resource environments.

In addition to technical instruction, educational programs incorporate themes related to athlete welfare, safe sport, ethics, and good governance. This holistic approach reinforces responsible practices and supports the creation of safe, inclusive, and well-managed sporting environments.

Through investment in education and capacity building, UWW contributes to the resilience and sustainability of wrestling structures worldwide, ensuring that development efforts generate lasting value for individuals, institutions, and communities.



4. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Gender equality and social inclusion are core priorities within UWW's development framework and are integrated across programs and initiatives rather than treated as standalone objectives. Development activities are designed to promote equitable access to opportunities, encourage diverse participation, and foster environments in which all individuals are respected and supported.

UWW development programs actively support the participation of women in wrestling, both on and off the mat. This includes promoting access for female athletes, encouraging the involvement of women as coaches and officials, and supporting pathways toward leadership roles within national federations and regional structures.

Development initiatives support inclusion through:

- Expanded access for women as athletes, coaches, and officials
- Leadership pathways within national federations and regional structures
- Safe sport education and awareness embedded across programs

Social inclusion efforts extend beyond gender and address broader dimensions of diversity, including cultural background, geographic representation, and levels of access to resources. By engaging participants from developing and emerging wrestling nations, UWW development initiatives help reduce structural barriers and expand participation across regions.

Safe sport principles are embedded within development programming, reinforcing UWW's commitment to athlete protection and ethical conduct. Educational sessions, awareness activities, and clear standards contribute to the creation of environments in which participants can train, learn, and compete with confidence.



5. Community Impact and Long-Term Value

UWW's development initiatives are designed to generate impact that extends beyond the duration of individual programs and activities. By engaging local stakeholders, national federations, and young participants, development efforts contribute to strengthening wrestling communities and supporting long-term social value.

Community impact is fostered through direct engagement with local environments in which development programs are delivered. Activities such as training camps, workshops, and educational sessions create opportunities for interaction, cultural exchange, and shared learning between participants and host communities. These interactions reinforce mutual understanding and support positive perceptions of sport as a tool for development.

Long-term value is achieved by prioritizing sustainability in its social and human dimensions. By equipping participants with knowledge, skills, and values, UWW development initiatives support continued engagement with wrestling after programs conclude. Participants often return to their national contexts as ambassadors of best practices, contributing to the growth and quality of wrestling within their communities.

Through collaboration with national federations and regional partners, development programs strengthen local capacity and encourage continuity. This approach ensures that development initiatives contribute not only to immediate outcomes, but also to lasting institutional and social benefits.



5.1 Beach Wrestling Events and Environmental Awareness

Beach Wrestling events offer a unique opportunity to integrate environmental awareness into the delivery of sport, placing natural settings — particularly coastal environments — at the center of the participant experience. The beach, as both a competition venue and a shared public space, naturally reinforces the importance of environmental responsibility and collective stewardship.

Within UWW's development framework, Beach Wrestling events are leveraged as platforms to promote sustainability-related awareness through practical engagement rather than abstract messaging. Activities linked to beach environments encourage participants to recognize the value of preserving natural sites and respecting local ecosystems.

By organizing competitions and development activities in open natural settings, UWW fosters direct interaction between athletes, local communities, and the environment. This proximity creates opportunities for awareness-building actions, such as responsible use of shared spaces, waste reduction practices, and collaboration with local stakeholders on environmental initiatives.

Beach Wrestling also supports community engagement by involving local authorities, volunteers, and residents in event delivery. This collaborative approach strengthens the connection between sport and community while reinforcing the role of wrestling as a respectful and responsible user of natural spaces.

Through Beach Wrestling events, UWW demonstrates how development initiatives can integrate environmental awareness organically, using sport as a tool to promote responsible behavior, education, and long-term respect for natural environments.



6. Conclusion

The Development Department plays a central role in advancing sustainability and social inclusion within United World Wrestling. Through human-centered programs, educational initiatives, and inclusive participation pathways, development activities translate organizational values into tangible action.

By focusing on people, education, and communities, UWW development initiatives achieve meaningful social impact while maintaining a pragmatic and adaptable approach. This strategy aligns with the principles of the Olympic Movement and supports the long-term sustainability of wrestling worldwide.

Building on established frameworks and continued collaboration with stakeholders, UWW remains committed to strengthening its development efforts and ensuring that wrestling serves as a platform for inclusion, opportunity, and positive social change.

Through these integrated efforts, UWW development activities contribute to strengthening inclusion, fairness, and equality within the sport, supporting its sustainable growth at all levels.

