

More than a game: Empowerment of female sport coaches

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E U R O P E A N
N E T W O R K
OF THE ACADEMIES OF SPORTS

Relevance (1)

- Whereas almost half of the participants is female, only 13% of the coaches in [Tokyo Olympic Games](#) was female.
- In Paris, only 52 of the head coaches were female. Despite attempts to increase the number of female coaches, it hasn't resulted in a higher number compared to Tokyo.
- At the winter Beijing Olympics 10% of the coaches was female.
- Regardless nation, in Europe the number of females working as a coach is low in most sports. Especially in higher levels/ elite sport environments female coaches are rare.



Relevance (2)

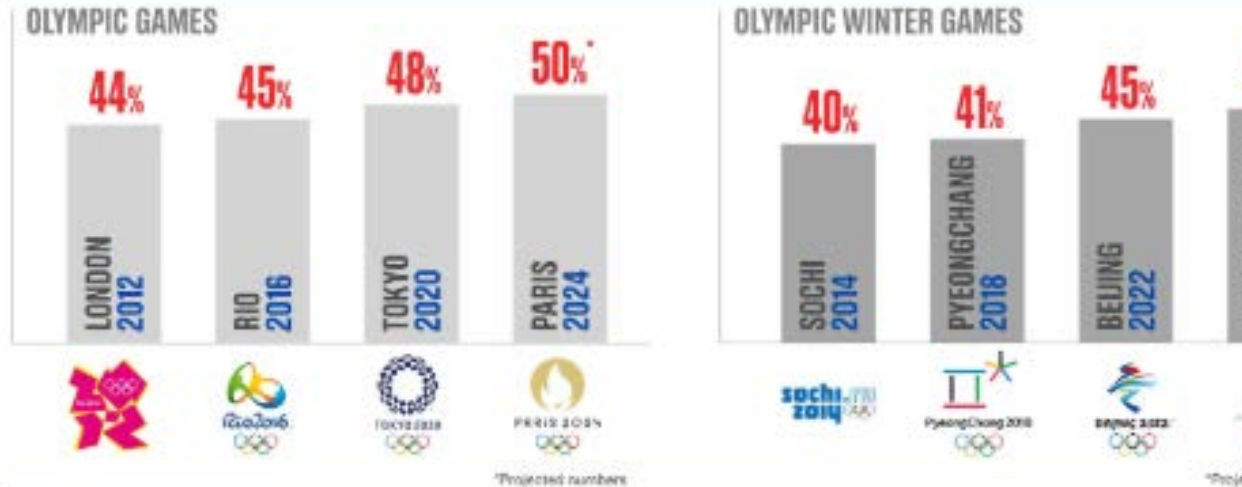
“Women coaches matter for a variety of reasons. Research shows that same sex role models positively influence self-perceptions. They challenge stereotypes about gender and leadership and offer diverse perspectives, insight and advice to their athletes. **One hundred percent of male athletes have had a male coach. Coaching role model during their athletic careers, to their benefit; young women likewise need and deserve more same sex role models.**”

#WomanCoach

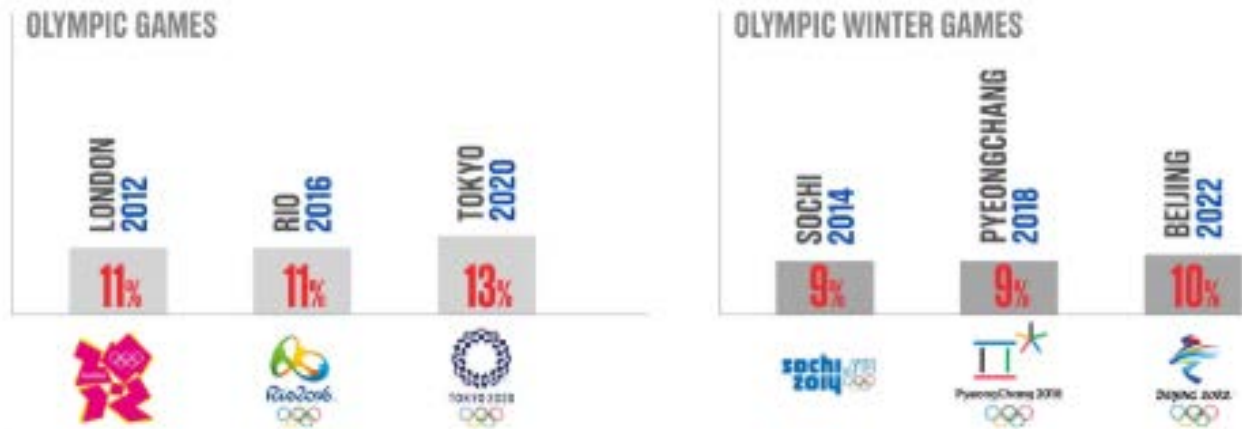
FORGING PATHWAYS FOR WOMEN COACHES



FEMALE ATHLETES AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES



FEMALE COACHES AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES



Attention increases

Analysing gender disparities in youth sports coaching: an international survey (FEMCoach project)

Diaz et al 2025

Some differences were found between women and men coaches' perceptions regarding barriers or stigmas that women face in practice. Most women's [80% ($\pm 5\%$)] and approximately half of men's [54% ($\pm 5\%$)] believe that women coaches sometimes face discrimination and/or mistrust and most of the women's [78% ($\pm 6\%$)] and the majority of men's [64% ($\pm 5\%$)] recognize different opportunities for coaches between genders. Considering the presence of topics related to female biology in coaches' education process the majority of women [72% ($\pm 5\%$)] and men [63% ($\pm 5\%$)] considered that they were not approached enough, agreeing most of the coaches, women [92% ($\pm 3\%$)] and men [87% ($\pm 4\%$)], that coach education programmes should be more expanded to cover it. In open-ended questions coaches agreed that educational programmes can promote gender equality and mentioned a lack of contents related to equity, identity and female biology.

The under representation of women coaches in high-performance sport

August 2023 · [International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching](#) 18(4):1320-1332

DOI: [10.1177/17479541231160229](https://doi.org/10.1177/17479541231160229)

The experiences of women coaches in community sport

Russell Hoye , Pam Kappelides  & Haley Baxter 

This study examined the experiences of community-level women coaches in three sports. Data collection included a content analysis of the policies and practices of each sport organisation in relation to the governance of sport coaching and their recruitment and support strategies for women coaches, semi-structured interviews with managers and staff who support their coaching workforce, and community-level women coaches. Data were analysed using an iterative reflexive thematic analysis process. We found a lack of representation of women in the governance of sport coaching that women coaches are on the periphery of the coaching ranks within sport clubs and face unique time pressures to pursue coaching roles. This study highlights how women coaches' experiences can be impacted by the behaviour of others. We conclude that there is a need for more purposeful and intentional interventions from state sport associations and community sport clubs to improve the experiences of women coaches.

The IOC is committed to addressing the challenge and to supporting Olympic Movement stakeholders to find pathways for more women to reach the highest levels of coaching. Increasing the visibility of elite coaches who have broken those barriers and who are role models for more women to follow their lead is itself a goal.

Quality: design & implementation

Main objective:

- Determine why females are less active as a sport coach and which barriers and enablers female coaches experience to develop as a coach to higher sport levels

Method

- Desk research
- Interviews with female athletes and coaches to barriers and possible solutions

Result

A tool for sport federations and educational organizations to improve female coach developmental programs

#amsterdamsevoetbalagenda
#MeidenhubsAmsterdam

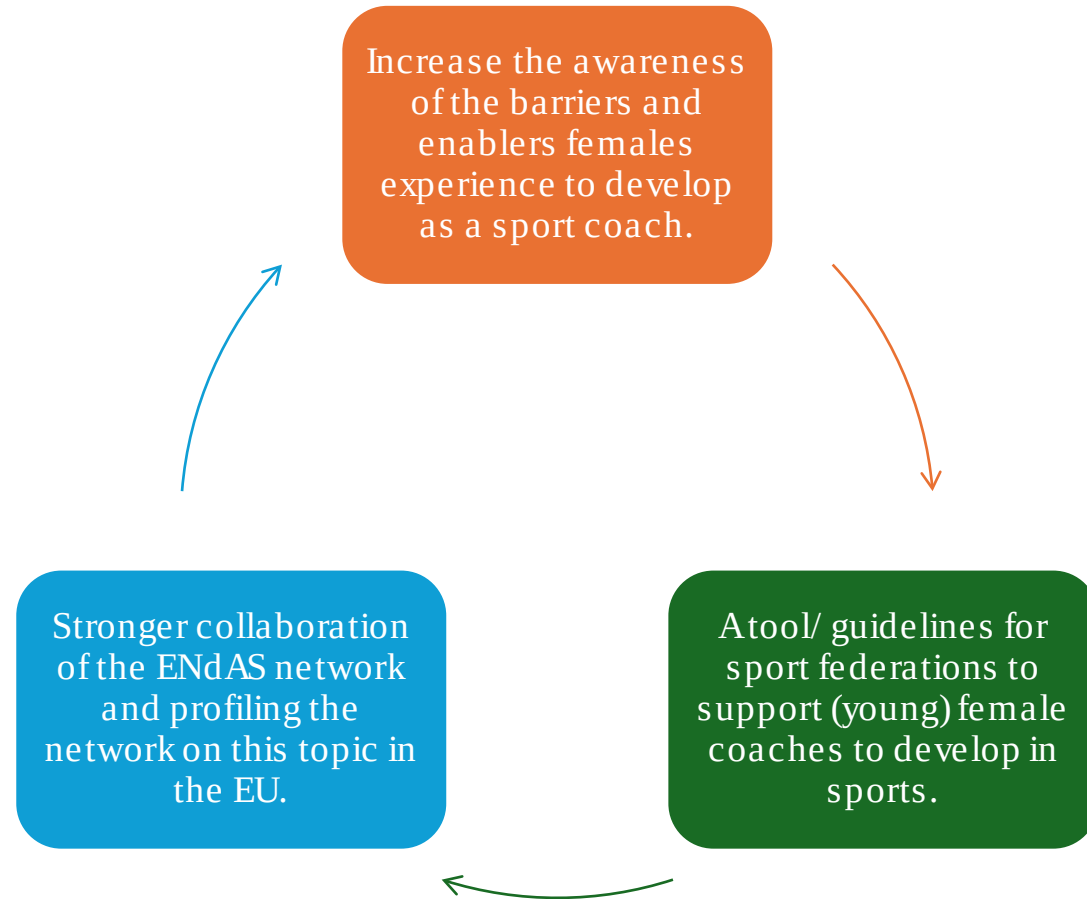
Show translation



Quality: partnership & cooperation arrangements

- The European network of sport academies is the central organization
- HAN (NL) will be the project leader.
- Partners: FHSMP (Ger), LSFS (Poland), RF-SISU Skane (Swed), Palestra Uni (Czech rep), NOC COSL (Lux), Min der Deuts (Bel) – Other partners required, south of Europe
- A two-year project, 250K funding – Go for the 400k, 3 year project

Impact



What could be a next step

Start with a literature and desk study
– Autumn 2026

Student assignments – Autumn 2026

Apply again in 2027 to ERASMUS+
with other partners - Winter 2027

Official start of the project in 2028





EUROPEAN NETWORK OF THE ACADEMIES OF SPORTS

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Questions and/or suggestions?