

26th Annual International Conference on Sports: Economic, Management, Marketing & Social Aspects

Tentative Program (Athens Local Time)

11-16 May 2026

9 Chalkokondili Street, 10677 Athens, Greece

(Note 1: the program is organized along time slots and not according to common theme)

(Note 2: at the end of each session questions and discussions will follow)

Monday 11 May 2026

08:30-09:00

Registration

09:00-09:45 Opening Speech and Welcoming Remarks

Speaker: Gregory T. Papanikos, President, Athens Institute & Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.

09:45-11:30 Session 1

Moderator: Dr. Spiro Doukas, Deputy Head, Sports Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, American Public University, USA.

1. **Amit Gayer**, Lecturer, University of Kiryat Shmona in the Galilee, Israel.
Title: Strategic Ordering in Multi-Player Settings.
2. **Theodore Trafalis**, Professor, The University of Oklahoma, USA.
Dana Guzman F., Graduate Student, The University of Oklahoma, USA.
Title: Nonlinear Optimization of Weekly Training Plans for Competitive Tennis Players.
3. **Seppo Suominen**, Senior Lecturer, Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, Finland.
Title: Outdoor Temperature and Attendance at Indoor Swimming Centres: Evidence from Hourly Administrative Data.

11:30-13:30 Session 2

Moderator: Theodore Trafalis, Professor, The University of Oklahoma, USA.

1. **Maryam Hethnawi**, Supervisor, Ministry of Education, Palestine.
Title: The Impact of Israeli Incursions on the Social and Athletic Situation of Members of Sports Academies in Jenin Governorate.
2. **Daniel Marinho**, Professor, University of Beira Interior/CIDESD, Portugal.
Diogo Marques, Assistant Professor, University of Beira Interior/CIDESD, Portugal.
Henrique Neiva, Associate Professor, University of Beira Interior/CIDESD, Portugal.
Mário Marques, Professor, University of Beira Interior/CIDESD, Portugal.
Title: The Impact of Different Resistance Training Volumes on Physical Frailty in Institutionalized Older Adults – Preliminary Findings of the TrackFrailty Project.
3. **Miglena Zhiyanski**, Professor, Forest Research Institute – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria.
Elena Todorova, Assistant Professor, Forest Research Institute – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria.
Title: Integrating Socio-Ecological Approach for Recognizing Sport Activities as Cultural Ecosystem Services Provided by Forest Ecosystems.

11:30-13:30 Session 3

Moderator TBA

1. **Gregory T. Papanikos**, President, Athens Institute & Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.
Title: Population, GDP per Capita, and Qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup: Evidence from UEFA Men's National Teams.
2. **Emma Jakovljevic**, MS Oec., Austria.
Title: How the Croatian Government Uses Sports and Individual Athletes to Promote Tourism.

13:30-14:30 Session 4 – A Symposium on “Sports, Media and Wars I”

Moderator: John V. Pavlik, Professor, Department of Journalism and Media Studies, School of Communication & Information, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, USA.

1. **Maria Petrova Bakardjieva**, Professor, University of Calgary, Canada.
Title: Politics by Other Means: Identity, Affect and Spectacle in Sport and War.
2. **Naila Hamdy**, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, The American University in Cairo, Egypt.
Title: From Stadiums to Battlefields: Sports, Media, and the Making of War Narratives in the Middle East.
3. **Theodore Trafalis**, Professor, The University of Oklahoma, USA.
Title: Sports Gambling and Geopolitical Intelligence.
4. **Laura Trujillo**, Professor & Researcher, Universidad Panamericana, Mexico.
Title: Sport, Power, and Narrative: A Media Ecology Approach to the Case of Iran.
5. **Gregory T. Papanikos**, Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.
Title: Goals and Geopolitics: How Media Frames Iran, the U.S., and the 2026 World Cup.

14:30-15:30 Lunch

18:00-20:00 Session 5 – Visit Aristotle's Lyceum

It requires pre-booking

20:30-22:30

An Ancient Athenian Symposium: Continuous Dialogues, Timeless Flavors (featuring authentic ancient Athenian dishes, local wine, and sweet delicacies from ancient Athens)

09:00-10:30 Session 6

Moderator: Chris Ulasi, Professor & Chair, Department of Radio, Television and Film, Texas Southern University, USA.

1. **Faith Valente**, Professor, North Idaho College, USA.
Carl Bozman, Professor, Gonzaga University, USA.
Title: The Relative Influence of Brand Trust Dimensions.
2. **Brian Massey**, Professor, East Carolina University, USA.
Title: Unifying Theories of Journalism Through the Principles of Quantum Physics.
3. **Amani Ismail**, Associate Dean, School of Humanities and Creative Arts & Mass Communications Program Lead, University of Hertfordshire hosted by Global Academic Foundation, Egypt.
Gayane Torosyan, Professor, State University of New York at Oneonta, USA.
Title: The Internet, Academic Integrity, and College Student Practices: A Contemporary Perspective.
4. **Memory Mabika**, Lecturer, University of Venda, South Africa.
Title: A Netnographic Analysis of TikTok Interactions in Indigenous Languages: The Case of Tshivenda and ChiShona.

10:30-12:00 Session 7

Moderator: Brian Massey, Professor, East Carolina University, USA.

1. **Yen-Jung Chang**, Professor, National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan.
Ching-Yi Peng, Assistant Professor, National Taipei University of Nursing and Health Sciences, Taiwan.
Title: A Qualitative Study on Hypertensive Patients' Perceptions of Marketing Strategies in Food and Supplement Advertising in Taiwan.
2. **Hande Bilsel**, Associate Professor, Bahçeşehir University, Türkiye.
Murat Copcu, Assistant Professor, Bahçeşehir University, Türkiye.
Title: From Monsters to Mascots: Anthropomorphized Germs in Hygiene Advertising.
3. **Kevin Onyenankyea**, Senior Lecturer, University of Fort Hare, South Africa.
Title: Improving Functional and Interactive Health Literacy at the Community Level: The Nexus of Indigenous Language Radio Programming.
4. **Lusie Ende**, Researcher, University of Kassel, Germany.
Title: Executional Greenwashing by Natural Sounds? The Impact of Product Color and Background Sound on the Sustainability Rating of Online Presented Fashion.

12:00-13:30 Session 8

Moderator: Elsa G. Sánchez Huerta Villalba, Professor, Universidad Panamericana, México.

1. **Maria Bakardjieva**, Professor, University of Calgary, Canada.
Title: Two Shades of Grassroots Illiberalism: Investigating the Discursive Construction of a Global Phenomenon.
2. **Mariam Adamashvili**, Assistant Professor, Georgian National University SEU, Georgia.
Title: Media Ethics in the Context of Covering Religious Issues According to the Guidelines and Ethical Coverage Manuals of Western and Georgian Media Organizations.
3. **Diana Liparteliani**, Assistant Professor, Georgian National University SEU, Georgia.
Title: Media Polarization, Manipulative Practices and Democratic Vulnerability in Small States (The Case of Georgia).
4. **Anastasija Tetarenko-Supe**, PhD Candidate & Researcher, University of Latvia, Latvia.
Title: How to Win the Attention War? Politically Motivated Discreditation of Media in Latvia.

13:30-14:30 Session 9 – A Symposium on “Sports, Media and Wars II”

Moderator: Gregory T. Papanikos, Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.

1. **Brian Massey**, Professor, East Carolina University, USA.
Title: Trivializing War: Performance Politics and U.S.-Iran Football Spat.
2. **John V. Pavlik**, Professor, Department of Journalism and Media Studies, School of Communication & Information, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, USA.
Title: From Prediction Markets to Artificial Intelligence: How Emerging Technology Is Reshaping the Landscape of Sports, Media and War.
3. **Corina Barbaros**, Associate Professor, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, Romania.
Title: Sport as a Strategic Communication Arena in Times of War.
4. **Amani Ismail**, Associate Dean, School of Humanities and Creative Arts & Mass Communications Program Lead, University of Hertfordshire hosted by Global Academic Foundation, Egypt.
Title: Media Narratives on Warring Nations and Access to Global Sports.

14:30-15:30 Lunch

16:30-19:30 Session 10

Old and New-An Educational Urban Walk

The urban walk ticket is not included as part of your registration fee. It includes transportation costs and the cost to enter the Parthenon and the other monuments on the Acropolis Hill. The urban walk tour includes the broader area of Athens. Among other sites, it includes: Zappion, Syntagma Square, Temple of Olympian Zeus, Ancient Roman Agora and on Acropolis Hill: the Propylaea, the Temple of Athena Nike, the Erechtheion, and the Parthenon. The program of the tour may be adjusted, if there is a need beyond our control. This is a private event organized by the Athens Institute exclusively for the conference participants.

20:30-22:30

Athenian Early Evening Symposium (Sequence of Events: Ongoing Academic Discussions, Dinner, Wine and Water, Music, Dance)