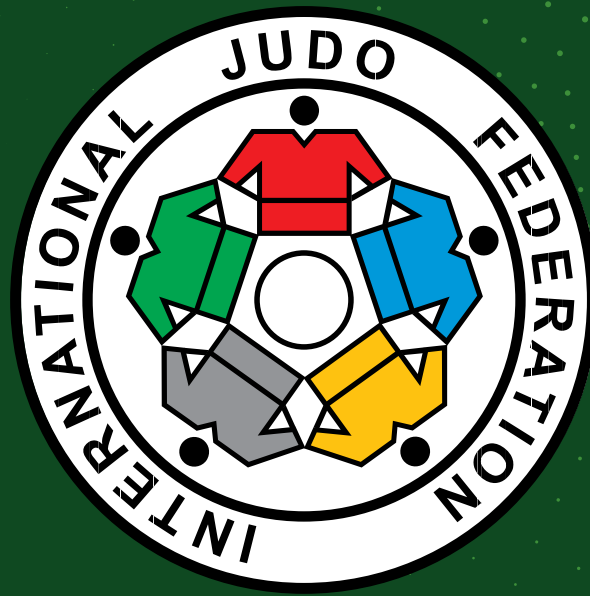


International Judo Federation



IJF ATHLETES' COMMISSION

Annual Report 2025 – Looking Ahead to 2026

February 2026



Chair: POLLING Kim

Members: GJAKOVA Nora, HAGA Ryunosuke, HEYDAROV Hidayat, KATZ Nathan, KELDIYOROVA Diyora, KRPALEK Lukas, MARTIN Jasmine, SILVA MORALES Ivan Felipe

Dear athletes and all those interested in this report,

Since the summer of 2025, a newly formed Athletes' Commission has been in place within the International Judo Federation. On behalf of all IJF Athletes' Commission members, I would like to sincerely thank you for the trust you have placed in us through your votes. We feel honoured to represent you and your interests.

One of my personal goals as Chair has been to make the IJF Athletes' Commission more visible and accessible, to ensure it is easier for athletes to reach us, and to provide greater transparency about who we are, what we do, and how we can support you. With the launch of our Telegram channel and the presence of the IJF Athletes' Commission poster at IJF events, we have already made a strong start.

In this report, we further outline what we have achieved so far and share our main goals and priorities for 2026.

Finally, I would like to emphasise that your feedback is essential to our work. We strongly encourage athletes to share their ideas, concerns, and experiences directly with the IJF Athletes' Commission, so that we can continue to represent the athlete voice in the best possible way. Feedback can, of course, also be shared through coaches, team managers, or other members of an athlete's support team.

Kim Polling

Chair of the IJF Athletes' Commission



Summary of 2025 – Key Points

Launch of the IJF Athletes' Telegram channel

The idea for this Telegram channel was initiated by Ms. Sabrina Filzmoser, Chair of the previous IJF Athletes' Commission. We are pleased to have officially launched the channel at the beginning of 2026.

The channel is created to enable direct communication with athletes and to keep them informed in a fast, accessible, and transparent way about topics, initiatives, and opportunities that are relevant to judokas worldwide.

Introduction of the IJF Athletes' Commission poster at IJF events

Aimed at increasing the visibility of the IJF Athletes' Commission and making it easier for athletes to identify and contact us, both on-site and through available communication tools.

Participation in the International Judo Federation Executive Committee meetings

As the Chair of the IJF Athletes' Commission is also a member of the IJF Executive Committee, the Chair takes part in Executive Committee meetings and provides direct athlete input at executive level, strengthening the link between athletes and IJF decision-making.

This structure also enables the Athletes' Commission to stay well informed about initiatives affecting athletes, as shared by the IJF President, Secretary General, Executive Committee members, and IJF Commissions, while maintaining direct contact with the relevant persons.

Meetings held with various IJF Commissions

Held to exchange information and explore opportunities for cooperation between different IJF structures, identifying areas where initiatives could create added value for athletes and the IJF, as well as for example judo fans.

Participation in International Olympic Committee Athletes' Commission calls

Through these calls, the IJF Athletes' Commission stays informed about initiatives from the IOC and Athlete365 that may be beneficial for judokas.



Plans of the IJF Athletes' Commission for 2026

In 2026, one of the key priorities of the IJF Athletes' Commission is athlete wellbeing, with a particular focus on mental health. More information on this and other planned initiatives can be found below.

Athlete Wellbeing & Mental Health

The IJF Athletes' Commission is committed to improving mental health awareness, support, and accessibility within the judo community. Planned initiatives include:

- Exploring the possibility of offering free mental health support for judoka participating in the IJF World Tour.
- Encouraging more open discussion of mental health within judo.

Athlete wellbeing is also closely linked to life beyond competition. In this context, the IJF Athletes' Commission is working on the following initiatives:

- Exploration of dual career and second career opportunities in cooperation with the IJF Academy.
- Identification of additional dual career opportunities within the IJF structure.
- Supporting preparation for life after elite sport, including the exploration of podcast initiatives focusing on athletes' experiences during and after their competitive careers.
- Continued promotion of existing resources, such as Athlete365 courses, to ensure athletes are aware of available support and educational opportunities.

The IJF Athletes' Commission has also been in contact with Ms. Veronika Jakl, IJF Mental Health Officer, who informed us about several ongoing projects that we strongly support:

- The first implementation of a Mind Dojo during the Grand Prix in Linz: a dedicated mental recovery space designed for athletes to relax, reset, and access low-threshold support services.
- A Mental Health Survey, aimed at identifying concrete challenges and gaining a better understanding of where athletes experience mental health difficulties.



Communication & Information for Athletes

Clear, accessible, and transparent communication remains a key priority. Planned actions include:

- Continued use and further development of the IJF Athletes' Telegram channel as the main communication tool for athletes.
- Making key athlete-related information easier to find and more visible on the IJF website.
- Increasing transparency by explaining the background and reasoning behind IJF decisions where relevant.
- Development of a guidance document on IJF support measures for athletes returning to competition after maternity leave.
- Development of additional informational documents addressing common athlete questions where needed.

Other Ideas & Projects

In addition to the above priorities, the IJF Athletes' Commission is exploring the following initiatives:

- Further exploration of podcast initiatives, with a stronger focus on life after judo, and Athlete365-related topics.
- Organisation of referee seminars for athletes during training camps across all continents.
- Encouraging athletes to approach IJF Athletes' Commission members directly, whether at events or online. Feedback is welcomed not only from athletes themselves, but also via coaches, team managers, or other members of an athlete's support team. Feedback can also be provided anonymously, if desired.

Contact and Closing

Thank you for taking the time to read this overview. We hope everything is clear, and we would like to once again emphasise how important it is for us to hear from athletes. You can contact the IJF Athletes' Commission via email at athletes@ijf.org, during IJF events, or through the IJF Athletes' Telegram channel. We wish all athletes the very best for 2026.



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