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Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS): Factsheet

On 11 May 2007, the Council of Europe adopted Resolution CM/Res(2007)8, establishing the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS), in order to give fresh momentum to pan-European sports co-operation and address the current challenges facing sport in Europe – building on more than thirty years of activity in the field.

EPAS provides a platform for intergovernmental sports co-operation between the public authorities of its member states. It also encourages dialogue between public authorities, sports federations and NGOs. This contributes to better governance, with the aim of making sport more ethical, more inclusive and safer.

EPAS aims to promote the development of any sport whose benefits are wide-reaching. It develops policies and standards, monitors them and helps with capacity-building and the exchange of good practices. It uses Council of Europe sports standards such as the European Sports Charter, the Code of Sports Ethics, the European Convention on Spectator Violence, the Anti-Doping Convention, the Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions and the Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events, as the basis for drawing up its own strategies. In 2021, EPAS is continuing its activities that were launched in 2019 to revise the European Sports Charter, which was last updated in 2001.

Different recommendations initially prepared by EPAS have been adopted by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers on issues of sports ethics, the autonomy of the sports movement, the protection of young athletes from dangers associated with migration, and gender mainstreaming. The Recommendation on the promotion of good governance in sport is the most recent and was adopted on 12 December 2018. The work done to draft a new recommendation on extreme martial arts and combat activities has finished and will be submitted to the Committee of Ministers for adoption in March 2021. Key recommendations such as the European Sports Charter are regularly monitored via evaluation visits in member states.

Since 2009, EPAS has carried out awareness-raising and co-operation activities on the promotion of diversity in and through sport, focusing successively on different groups (ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, women, children, persons in detention, and newly arrived migrants and their integration via sport). EPAS continues to work on issues of concern for the safeguard of human rights in sport at national and international level. In 2021, EPAS will focus on the theme of intersex and transgender people and their participation in sports activities and competitions, by organising a conference devoted to the topic.

Since 2014, EPAS has strengthened its operational co-operation capacity by developing joint projects with the European Union and the sports movement, for example on the topics of gender equality, child protection (in particular the fight against sexual abuse in sport), and on good governance standards.

Finally, Council of Europe Conferences of Ministers responsible for Sport continue to be organised regularly thanks to EPAS (Athens 2008, Baku 2010, Belgrade 2012, Macolin/Magglingen 2014, Budapest 2016, Tbilisi 2018 and Athens (online) 2020). The next Conference of Ministers will be held in 2022.

Forty countries are currently members: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

Twenty-five sports organisations (including ENGSO, UEFA and the EOC) are partners of EPAS making up its Consultative Committee.

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