

Strasbourg, 27 February 2023

EPAS(2023)14

Meeting of the EPAS GB Bureau

Monday 6 February 2023

9.00am – 10.30am CET

Online (Teams platform)

Working language: English

REPORT

Participants

Governing Board (GB): Alexandre Husting (Luxembourg, Chair), Andrea Carletti (Italy, Vice-chair), Andrew Decelis (Malta), Ioanna Paraskevopoulou (Cyprus, Gender Equality Rapporteur), François Tricarico (Belgium), Solène Charuau (France), Diana Santos (Portugal, MSL18)

Consultative Committee (CC): Mogens Kirkeby (ISCA)

Secretariat: Sophie Kwasny, Francine Hetherington Raveney, Cassandra Mactavish, Caroline Larghi

Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the Governing Board.

Inanç Ozcakmak had been invited to the meeting for his last participation as the representative of the MSL 17 host country, but was excused in light of the emergency situation linked to the terrible earthquake that had just hit his country.

The Consultative Committee was represented by Mogens Kirkeby as Kolë Gjelošhaj had ceased his duties as CC Chair following the nomination of a new representative by the ISF.

Salsabila Afekhar (Morocco) has changed duties and is no longer a member of the EPAS Bureau.

The Chair welcomed Diana Santos as a new Bureau member representing the next ministerial conference (MSL 18) host country: Portugal.

Alexandre Husting expressed his sincere condolences further to the passing away of Françoise Rui, a highly esteemed colleague, and noted that everyone's deepest thoughts went out to her family.

Adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda was adopted with no modifications.

Council of Europe Conference of ministers responsible for sport (MSL17 and MSL18)

Sophie Kwasny shared the results of a survey carried out after the MSL17 Ministerial Conference. 43 responses to the survey had been collected, representing feedback from 18 countries.

The questions asked were of a general order (date, location, social agenda, quality of service, topics, etc...). A choice was offered between "satisfied" and "not satisfied". There was a high rate of satisfaction. Some suggestions were made as to how the overall conference could be improved. This feedback would be taken into account for the organisation of the next ministerial conference (MSL18).

Further to a request by the Chair to share the results of the survey with delegations, Sophie Kwasny explained that they would be part of the Secretary General's report on MSL17, which would be sent to delegations early April.

Alexandre Husting welcomed Diana Santos and gave her the floor. Diana explained that preliminary contacts had been made with the cities of Porto and Vila Nova da Gaia. The conference could take place in October 2024. The Ministry was thinking about organising different parallel events to encourage member states to register.

On 7 February 2023, Portugal would present its national strategy for gender equality in the hall pre-booked for the conference. The Ministry would soon meet to start organising the conference.

2023 calendar of activities

Sophie Kwasny presented the online calendar of activities and commented on the different events organised by the various entities of the Sport Division. She underlined the fact that filters could be applied to show EPAS events only, starting on 8 March with the Breakfast Roundtable which would focus on combating gender-based violence in sport. The event would have simultaneous interpretation in FR/EN and would be opened by the French Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe, Ambassador Marie Fontanel.

In April, a webinar to be followed by a restricted working group meeting would be held on protecting and promoting the rights of intersex and transgender athletes in sport under (in Paris and in hybrid format).

On 10 May the All In Plus project would be launched at an official conference; the actual project would start on 1 March. On 8-9 June the GB/CC in camera and joint plenary meetings would be held in Strasbourg. On 30 June the third edition of the Forum on Sport and Human Rights would be held with a focus on data protection, an important matter in the context of sport. In September 2023, there would be a webinar on risks to health from sport, including concussion. In October 2023 there would be the annual meeting of the Pool of International Experts in Safe Sport.

In November 2023 there would be a meeting on the mapping of sports facilities and the Diversity Conference on the inclusion of child migrants and refugees would also be held that month (dates to be confirmed).

Bureau members were invited to consult the calendars regularly and to point out any potential clashes of the dates. They were informed that the calendar was regularly updated by the Secretariat.

Update on the Russian Federation and Belarus

Further to the exclusion of the Russian Federation (RF) by the CoE, the question of its participation in the CoE Committees was raised. The Committee of Ministers (CM) had tasked all Committees of open Conventions to examine the restriction of the country's participation. All Committees had now decided on this issue and so the rights of the RF had been restricted in the Saint-Denis and Anti-doping Committees as well.

Belarus had notified the EPAS Secretariat of its withdrawal from the partial agreement, as a consequence of its suspension in March 2022. However, there was an issue as Belarus considered itself no longer to be a member of EPAS as of 1 January 2023 whereas in accordance with the applicable Resolution, its membership would actually end on 31 December 2023.

2022 Activity report

The report would follow the same format as previous editions, i.e. a summary of what had been done in 2022 comprising an institutional section and then grouped according to the 3 pillars of work: inclusive, ethical and safe sport. The draft report will be finalised based on

comments from the Bureau and its approval will be submitted to the GB by written procedure with a two-week deadline, before being sent out to the GR-C. The aim being to disseminate it prior to the GB meeting in June.

Working Group on the implementation of the European Sports Charter (ESC)

At the plenary meeting last year, it was decided that the methodology of the implementation of the ESC would be re-examined. The first meeting of the Working Group (WG) took place on 14 November 2022 in Paris with Alexandre Husting, Solène Charuau, Diana Santos, Namig Novrusov and Kolë Gjelošhaj from the CC as an Observer.

The objective of the WG was to look at the methodology. The next meeting of the WG would take place on 30 March in Paris in order to finalise the proposed methodology and to look at a questionnaire prepared last year. A pilot visit aimed at testing the new methodology would be held in Portugal end of May.

Update on the evaluation visits in Albania and North Macedonia

Sophie Kwasny reported on the evaluation visits carried out in Albania and North Macedonia at the end of 2022.

The two implementation exercises had been conducted online first and then on site with the CC.

The reports would now be finalised and shared with the experts and then officially with the two states concerned. They would then be presented to the GB in June for its validation.

These two exercises were very valuable as many examples of good practice had been identified.

Update on projects (launch of All In Plus, Start to Talk, Combating Hate Speech in Sport)

Francine Raveney gave an update on the new All In Plus joint EU/CoE project and explained that it built on the March 2018-October 2019 All In project, with an additional angle of a wider range of countries involved in the data collection and a new pillar focusing on media sensitisation. The project would start on 1 March 2023 and would be officially launched in Strasbourg on 10 May (1 full-day event). Particular attention would be paid to the data collection angle to see whether the situation had improved or not since 2018, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, and whether women had been more negatively impacted by this than men as many recent studies in this area had concluded.

Sophie Kwasny gave an update on the Start to Talk (STT) project. Despite various calls for financial contributions, the project did not have any confirmed extra funding. For the moment the STT activities were covered by the EPAS budget, but many requests had been received from member states and it would be good to carry out more activities. Activities were currently running in Bulgaria, and contacts had been established in this subject area with Malta and Poland. The unspent balance of the 2022 budget having been transferred to the special account, the Secretariat was seeking authorisation to progress on this project with part of the funds from the special account. Bureau members are in favour of financing STT with funds from the special account. Andrew Decelis added that this was the right way forward so that many countries could benefit from this important work. The corresponding

budgetary proposal would be submitted to the Governing Board for decision at its June meeting.

The two-year Combating hate Speech in Sport project would come to an end at the end of 2023. Countries involved include France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Montenegro and Spain. The work with Montenegro had been delayed owing to a cyberattack and changes in the government. There had also been a slight delay in Italy because of changes in the government, but a meeting with all stakeholders had been organised for end of March and the project was advancing well.

17th joint meeting of the EPAS Governing Board & Consultative Committee (Strasbourg, 8-9 June 2023)

A draft agenda to be approved by the Bureau would be prepared in the near future. There would be a half-day in camera meeting (GB only) and then a one-and-a-half-day joint plenary meeting with the CC. The Bureau decided that the EPAS Governing Board & Consultative Committee meeting would be held in-person only.

In mid-May the CoE would be holding its 4th Summit in order to define general priorities for the organisation, particularly in the light of Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Each sector would then have to identify and set priorities for the period 2024-2027, as will be the case for EPAS.

Furthermore, Sophie Kwasny informed the Bureau of the proposal to address a focus subject area during the joint plenary meeting, which this year could be Sport integrity (scheduled for the afternoon of 8 June). EPAS was involved in IPACS and a new network of prosecutors had also been set up by the CoE (MARS Network). The question would be how these projects, including the work on DACCS, together with the Macolin Convention could be integrated.

The network of prosecutors – MARS – was set up in November and was the brainchild of the prosecutor Eric Bisschop, who had died at the end of January. It was noted that his passing was a great loss.

Alexandre Husting reminded the Bureau that last year, namely in Antalya, there had been a strong demand from colleagues to hear about national priorities and activities. It was agreed that delegations would be invited to present their work under each of the relevant items of the agenda.

Last year it has also been decided that the CC members would do a *tour de table* allowing each organisation to report on its activities. There would also be Bureau elections during the meeting.

Statutory Committee (SC)

Sophie Kwasny mentioned that the Chair of the SC, Ambassador Rémi Mortier, had passed away at the end of 2022. The SC is composed of permanent representatives from EPAS member states in Strasbourg and meets once a year, under the current Presidency of Monaco.

Update from the Gender Equality Rapporteur (GER)

Both GERs, Ioanna Paraskevopoulou for the GB and Marie Denitton for the CC, took part in a Council of Europe training course on 29 and 30 November 2022 in Strasbourg. They were thankful to EPAS for this opportunity. The training course was deemed very constructive and had helped them to realise the amount of work required in the role.

A roadmap outlining their possible contributions as GERs had been prepared after a meeting with the Secretariat. Ideas of work they might carry out included:

- specific involvement in the All In Plus project;
- participation in some national focal points meetings;
- preparation of a sport specific terminology factsheet, update of the GB rules of procedure and terms of reference to ensure gender equality;
- ensuring gender mainstreaming in the GB and the CC meetings;
- creation of content on gender equality on the EPAS website;
- Spanish Presidency of the EU: gender equality could be promoted at the Working Group meeting on sport or other events.

The need to organise an unconscious bias training for the GB and the CC, ideally on 7 June 2023, one day before the plenary meeting was also highlighted by the GER.

Consultative Committee

Cassandra Mactavish gave a quick update on the renewals for 2023. 14 member organisations were concerned: EFPM, ISCA, EOC, ICSSPE, EPC, FIAS, EUPEA, SROC, EU Athletes, EAS, FARE, PTG, ISF, SOEE. FIAS, currently suspended, is among the 14 organisations and shall receive the information and be invited to request the renewal of its mandate.

First an internal consultation would take place. Organisations would be asked to provide a letter of intent if they wished to renew their term of office. Then a circular letter would be sent to the GB. The final decision would be sent to each organisation via a formal letter and would be announced at the plenary meeting in June.

The CC Presidency was vacant. The CC Bureau would meet on 8 February to discuss how to advance. Mogens Kirkeby explained that in some organisations the Vice-Chair would take over when the Chair's seat was vacant. However, this was not officially stated in the CC ToR and the procedure needed to be clarified.

Any other business

Sophie Kwasny informed the Bureau that the Portuguese Ambassador was hosting a working session on the Saint-Denis Convention on 10 February. All Ambassadors had been invited. This would be a good opportunity to mention EPAS' work as well.

Date and place of the next meeting

Late March or early April (tbc)