

Strasbourg, 18 February 2025

EPAS(2025)15

Meeting of the EPAS Governing Board Bureau

Tuesday 21 January 2025

1pm - 2pm CET

Online (Teams platform)

Working language: English

REPORT

Participants

Governing Board (GB): Alexandre Husting (Luxembourg, Chair), Solène Charuau (France), Bram van Houten (Netherlands), Andrew Decelis (Malta), Florian Botto (Monaco, MSL19), Catherine Farneti (Monaco, MSL19), Michael Landau (Monaco, MSL19)

Consultative Committee (CC): Charlotte Girard-Fabre (IFSO, Chair), Mogens Kirkeby (ISCA, Vice-Chair)

Apologies: Ioanna Paraskevopoulou (Cyprus)

Secretariat: Sophie Kwasny, Francine Hetherington Raveney, Elena Casero, Cassandra Mactavish, Emma Zanichelli

1. Welcome

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the GB, who invited the participants from Monaco to introduce themselves.

Florian Botto is First Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Monaco. He participated in the 18th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport on 8-10 October 2024 in Porto, Portugal, and looks forward to further collaboration with EPAS in the framework of the organisation of the 19th Conference of Ministers (MSL19) that will take place in Monaco in 2026.

Michael Landau is the EPAS GB representative for Monaco. He is very pleased to work with the Bureau in the framework of the organisation of MSL19.

Catherine Farneti works at Department of Education, Youth and Sports as of Monaco as responsible of the Sport Service.

In this context, Monaco will create a steering committee and hopes to be able to count on the GB Bureau to receive feedback on the organisation. Ms Farneti is looking forward to this collaboration to organise MSL19 in the best possible conditions.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with the following items for consideration:

- A. Calendar of activities 2025
- B. 19th CoE Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, Monaco, 3-4 November 2026
- C. Consultative Committee
 - a. Revision of the Terms of Reference
 - b. Renewals 2025
- D. Any other business
- E. Date and place of the next meeting

3. Calendar of activities 2025

The EPAS Executive Secretary reminded the GB Bureau that the GB and the CC had received around mid-December 2024 a summary of the Sport Division's highlights of 2024 and the calendar of activities for 2025. She invited members to consult the [calendar](#) on the Sport website and highlighted the Secretariat's enthusiasm towards upcoming activities. She also gave a more in-depth overview of the next events that will concern EPAS, namely the closing event of the All In Plus joint European Union - Council of Europe project, which will take place on 12-13 February in Luxembourg, and the Breakfast Roundtable on Women in Sport, which will take place on 7 March in Strasbourg on the occasion of International Women's Day and which will focus on women's health and sport. Both events are open for registration for either online or on-site participation. Finally, she mentioned the upcoming European Sports Charter Support & Follow up visit to take place in Ireland in March.

Solène Charuau asked for more information on the "Sport For All" project that will be launched on 15 May during the EPAS annual plenary meeting. The EPAS Executive Secretary explained that the project will focus on promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in sport and indicated that the project concept note would be shared shortly.

Andrew Decelis invited the Secretariat to send a "save the date" email for the EPAS plenary meeting as soon as possible so that GB and CC members can book their travel and accommodation well in advance.

4. 19th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, Monaco, 3-4 November 2026 (MSL19)

The EPAS Executive Secretary presented a document containing the draft schedule of the preparatory work to be carried out ahead of MSL19. During the EPAS plenary meeting in May, the host delegation will present the organisational aspects of the event, and the GB and CC will debate possible themes, as proposed and elaborated by the GB Bureau. According to this schedule, the GB Bureau will start preparing MSL19 documents – including the concept note, programme, reference document and draft resolution – in February 2026. There is a possibility that the 10th anniversary of the Council of Europe Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (the Saint-Denis Convention) may be celebrated prior to the Conference on 3 November 2026. The meetings held ahead of the Conference will also take place on 3 November, while the Conference itself will be held on 4 November. 5 November could be dedicated to possible side events if there are any that the Monaco authorities would wish to organise. The Secretariat will share the draft schedule document with the GB Bureau.

Michael Landau emphasised the importance of the support and advice of the GB Bureau and the Secretariat to identify the themes to be discussed during the Conference.

Florian Botto expressed Monaco's wish for a collaborative approach in the organisation and underlined the usefulness of the schedule document detailing main steps. On the logistical side, he explained that the dates had to be confirmed around two years in advance to be able

to book the event venue, which is modern and well equipped. In addition, he confirmed that a Council of Europe recognition visit could be held in March. Concerning the substance, Monaco was considering themes linked to children and/or youth, and in particular the protection of their rights and ability to practise sport and benefit from it. The Conference could be an opportunity to highlight the importance of sport in providing children and young people with tools and values, and the need to protect them from harm, including violence and abuse as well as behaviours that children should be educated to avoid from an early age, including doping. He underlined that these themes are linked to the priorities of Monaco's Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (May-November 2026), and that MSL19 will be the highlight of the Presidency.

Bram van Houten mentioned that he considered the children and youth angle as interesting and on point. These topics correspond to the Netherlands's priorities in the field of sport, and protecting children from dangers is also currently at the centre of the public debate. He suggested that the theme could also be broadened to include the psychological dimension of abuse and of the misuse of substances by young people.

Mogens Kirkeby brought the problem of recreational doping, including doping in fitness centres, to the GB Bureau's attention. He also pointed out that this topic can easily become too wide.

Michael Landau agreed with Mogen Kirkeby's comment and emphasised the need to choose a specific topic during the discussions at the EPAS plenary meeting in May. He wondered if sports and the ageing population was still an area of interest for EPAS.

The EPAS Executive Secretary underlined that children's rights have always been a priority for EPAS and the Council of Europe in general. Preventing substance abuse is also in line with the work of the Sport Division. She advised the GB Bureau to always make sure that Conference of Ministers themes do not overlap with work already in progress under other Council of Europe bodies, for example the Monitoring Group of the Anti-Doping Convention (T-DO) which is already preparing a recommendation on children's rights in anti-doping and doping in recreational sports. She mentioned that many specific topics would be interesting to examine, including children and young people's education on human rights through sport. The Secretariat looks forward to the discussions that will take place during the EPAS plenary meeting. She also replied to Michael Landau's question pointing out that "sport and intergenerational challenges for both youth and the silver generation" will be the theme of the Diversity Conference in October 2025.

The EPAS Chair warned the GB Bureau of the need to avoid focusing on topics that fall under the aegis of a ministry other than the ministry responsible for sport at national level (for instance, Ministry of Education). He also highlighted the importance of finding a theme that concerns sport ministries first and foremost to foster fruitful debates and ensure the interest and attendance of ministers.

Florian Botto acknowledged the need to centre MSL19 around a sport-specific theme.

Michael Landau highlighted the need to take into account, when choosing the themes of Ministerial Conferences, that the holistic approach between sports, youth and education that is often present in smaller countries does not exist everywhere.

Andrew Decelis mentioned that Malta would come back to the EPAS Secretariat soon to confirm the date and location of the 2025 Diversity Conference.

The EPAS Executive Secretary informed the GB Bureau that the report on the 18th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport had been presented by the Deputy Executive Secretary to the Council of Europe's Group of Rapporteurs on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment (GR-C) on 21 January and that it was on the agenda of the Committee of Ministers meeting on 22 January. It will then be shared with the GB and the CC.

5. Consultative Committee

5.1 Revision of the Terms of Reference (ToR)

The EPAS Chair congratulated the Chair of the CC on being awarded the *Ordre national du Mérite* by France.

The Chair of the CC underlined the importance of this recognition to sports officiating in France and thanked all those present for their support.

The EPAS Chair informed the GB Bureau members that they had already received the Terms of Reference document with proposals of changes and amendments.

The Chair of the CC praised the work of the CC Bureau and the EPAS Secretariat in preparing these proposals on which the CC Bureau has reached consensus. After approval by the GB Bureau, the document will be sent to the whole CC via a circular letter for their approval.

The EPAS Executive Secretary reminded the GB Bureau of the procedure that requires the ToR to be renewed regularly. One of the proposals contained in the document is to abolish this regular renewal, which would be replaced by an "amendments" section. Many of the proposals concern procedural changes adapted from the ToR of the GB. She called the GB Bureau's attention to article 2.1.2.a: "The CC shall be composed by up to thirty members", explaining that proposals had been made to extend this capacity and, although the CC Bureau has now reached consensus that the current maximum capacity is an acceptable number, they still deemed it appropriate to bring this issue to the GB Bureau for advice.

The Chair of the CC emphasised the positive trend of the growing interest for CC membership but believes that quality of CC members should always be favoured to quantity.

Mogens Kirkeby recalled that the maximum capacity of CC members had been growing gradually throughout the years.

The EPAS Chair has noticed that some sports organisations and federations adhere to EPAS to obtain international recognition but that they then do not participate actively in EPAS activities. He expressed his desire to keep the current maximum capacity. He noted that article 3.4.h of the ToR should be clarified and suggested to rephrase it as follows: “If the Chair is no longer appointed by their organisation or ...”.

GB Bureau members have until 24 January to make any additional comments on the proposed ToR document at which time it will be sent to the CC for feedback.

5.2 Renewals in 2025

Cassandra Mactavish reminded the GB Bureau that three organisations (the Centre for Sport and Human Rights – CSHR, the European Association for Sport Management – EASM, and the International Dance Organization – IDO) are up for renewal this year. The Secretariat will proceed with the standard process for renewal with final approval by the Governing Board.

6. Any other business

No items on the agenda.

7. Date and place of the next meeting

The next meeting will take place on 18 February 2025 from 1 to 2.15pm, online on the Teams platform.