

Strasbourg, 9 March 2026

EPAS(2026)19

Meeting of the EPAS Governing Board Bureau

Tuesday 10 February 2026

1 pm – 2.15 pm CET

Online (Teams platform)

Working language: English

REPORT

Participants

Governing Board (GB):

Solène Charuau (France, Chair), Ioanna Paraskevopoulou (Cyprus, Vice-Chair), Simon De Coster (Belgium, Member), Antonio Parrilla (Italy, Member), Marija Jurčević (Croatia, Member), Florian Botto (Monaco, MSL19), Michael Landau (Monaco, MSL19)

Consultative Committee (CC):

Charlotte Girard Fabre (IFSO, Chair)
Mogens Kirkeby (ISCA, Vice-Chair)

Apologies:

Elnur Mammadov (Azerbaijan, Member)

Secretariat:

Stanislas Frossard, Cassandra Mactavish, Francine Raveney, Caroline Dollet

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed members of the Bureau. Reference was made to recent EPAS activities and meetings, including exchanges held in Cyprus. Apologies were noted.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda was adopted (see Appendix). An additional information point was included by Ioanna Paraskevopoulou under Any Other Business concerning recent discussions at the EU Sport Directors General meeting in Nicosia, Cyprus.

3. Annual plenary meeting of the Governing Board and Consultative Committee (27–28 May 2026, Strasbourg)

Stanislas Frossard presented the proposed structure and methodology for the annual plenary meeting, which will take place over two full days. The objective is to ensure sufficient time for in-depth discussion and interaction between Governing Board and Consultative Committee members.

The first day (27 May) will include a joint session with youth delegates in the morning, allowing young participants to contribute to reflections on the forthcoming Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport. This session will be opened by DGI Director General. Separate in-camera sessions of the Governing Board and Consultative Committee are foreseen in the afternoon to allow each body to prepare for the joint meeting.

The second day (28 May) will be devoted to the joint meeting of both bodies, with an emphasis on interactive discussions rather than lengthy presentations.

Key themes proposed for discussion include:

- Toolkit on intersex athletes;
- IPACS and good governance, including the use and dissemination of the IPACS handbook;
- Support to Ukraine, as a cross-cutting Council of Europe priority;
- Diversity issues, including follow-up to the 2025 Diversity Conference and preparation of the 2027 edition;
- Consultative Committee membership (new members and renewals, with a decision to be taken regarding FIFA's application);
- Preparation of the 19th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport (Monaco, 3–4 November 2026);
- Exchanges on the impact of artificial intelligence on sport policies and sport integrity, in coordination with other Council of Europe sectors (impact of these new technologies on the manipulation of sport competitions, doping, crowd management, prevention of violence in sports events etc.);
- Working Group on Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance;
- Recurrent items (adoption of the programme of activities, presentations from the Sport Conventions units etc.).

Regarding the item on artificial intelligence, Michael Landau mentioned that the Education and Youth sectors of the Council of Europe are currently working on a recommendation. It could be interesting to have interventions from those sectors as they are advanced in this area.

Mogens Kirkeby mentioned that the International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA) and partners kick off an AI in grassroots sport project this month (https://www.isca.org/news-detail/1539/AI_MOVE_Intelligent_Tools_for_Grassroots_Sport). ISCA would be pleased to contribute to the debates in this area in May, and should have a mapping of AI tools/ initiatives in sport by then.

Mogens Kirkeby also shared a selection of information resources relevant to the work of the European Commission: <https://ec-europa-eu.libguides.com/sport/eu-publications/selected>

Antonio Parrilla mentioned that the European Union also developed an interesting book on artificial intelligence in the sports sector.

The Bureau welcomed the proposed approach, in particular the intention to ensure active participation of members of both the Governing Board and Consultative Committee. It was agreed that members may be invited to contribute inputs or short presentations on specific agenda items, in order to strengthen ownership and peer exchange.

4. “Active and Equal” joint project and Breakfast Round Table (5–6 March 2026)

The Secretariat provided an update on the EU–Council of Europe joint project “Active and Equal”, focusing on women's and girls' health in sport across the life course. The project will run for two years and is structured around three pillars: mapping of policies and legal

frameworks in participating countries; development of a training toolkit for coaches and referees; and visibility and awareness-raising activities.

The six partner countries involved in the project were presented (Austria, Spain, France, Ireland, Norway and Slovenia). A launch event will take place on 5 March 2026, combining a technical meeting with national focal points in the morning and a public event in the afternoon. The Bureau took note of the programme outline and the high-level participation foreseen.

The Secretariat also presented the draft programme of the EPAS Breakfast Round Table on 6 March 2026, organised in the framework of International Women's Day and focusing on women's and girls' participation in sport. The event will address data and trends, best practices, media representation and inclusion of girls and women facing multiple forms of discrimination.

Members welcomed the quality and relevance of the programme. The importance of balanced representation among speakers was underlined.

5. Consultative Committee – renewals and new members

The Secretariat presented an update on the ongoing process for the renewal of Consultative Committee members and the selection of new members. It was recalled that, following the revision of the Terms of Reference, the Consultative Committee may include up to 35 members.

With regard to new members, the Secretariat outlined the timetable and the intention to present a preliminary shortlist at the May plenary meeting, before submission to the Committee of Ministers. The Bureau took note of the good level of interest and the diversity of applications received so far.

Regarding renewals, the Secretariat proposed a more discerning approach, based on objective criteria such as participation in plenary meetings and overall engagement in EPAS activities. The Secretariat indicated that, in two cases, renewal would be discouraged due to sustained lack of participation, while two further members would be invited to renew with a clear reminder of expectations regarding active engagement.

The Bureau supported the proposed approach, underlining the importance of ensuring an active, committed and balanced Consultative Committee. It was recalled that renewal is not automatic and that a degree of turnover can strengthen the dynamism and representativeness of the body.

6. 19th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport (Monaco, 3–4 November 2026)

The Secretariat informed the Bureau of recent discussions with the private office of the Secretary General and the Monaco authorities concerning the organisation of the Conference. It was confirmed that the overall structure and dates of the Conference remain unchanged.

It was noted that, due to scheduling constraints, the Secretary General may not be present for the opening session of the Conference on 4 November but is expected to attend the welcome dinner on 3 November. The Monaco authorities confirmed the participation of H.S.H. Prince Albert II at the opening of the Conference and the gala dinner (closing).

Further discussion took place on the timing of the Consultative Committee meeting in Monaco, including whether it could be held in parallel with the meeting of senior officials. The Secretariat undertook to consult internally, including with the Chair of the Consultative Committee, and to revert with a proposal.

With regard to youth participation, the Secretariat recalled that the intention is to integrate young delegates into the substantive discussions of the Ministerial Conference, rather than organising a separate stand-alone slot after the ministerial debates. Modalities for identifying and involving youth participants will be further clarified and presented at the next Bureau meeting.

7. Gender Equality questionnaire

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that two short questionnaires on gender equality in sport are being prepared: one for countries that participated in the “All In Plus” project and one for those that did not. The objective is to collect concise policy-oriented information without replicating the extensive data collection carried out under the project.

The results are intended to be shared at the May plenary meeting, in order to ensure continuity and follow-up to the “All In Plus” project. The questionnaires are expected to be circulated to member states in March 2026.

8. 2027 Diversity Conference

The Secretariat recalled that a decision on the theme of the 2027 Diversity Conference will be required at the May plenary meeting. Members were invited to reflect on possible topics, taking into account themes addressed in previous years (including young people, older people and intergenerational challenges, migrants and refugees, racism and violence, disability, and LGBTI+ inclusion in sport).

Initial suggestions included:

- discrimination and inclusion of LGBTI+ persons in sport;
- representation of diversity in media and sports communication.

It was agreed to continue the brainstorming at the next Bureau meeting.

9. Decision on the use of the special account to finance a B1/B2 administrative assistant

The Executive Secretary explained that he proposed to restructure staff expenditure by charging permanent staff costs to the EPAS budget and, in principle, to use the Special Account for temporary contracts or extraordinary need.

Therefore, the Secretariat proposed to use part of the EPAS Special Account – previously earmarked for six months' employment of an A2-A3 grade staff member responsible for overseeing the implementation of EPAS project extra-budgetary activities – who will as from now be covered by the annual budget, to finance a nine-month administrative assistant post, in view of the preparation for the Ministerial Conference and the related workload.

The Bureau approved this approach and the resulting change in allocation. The Bureau considered that a written procedure decision of the plenary was not necessary at this stage, as the proposal remains within the already approved financial envelope and the purpose of the original allocation is otherwise fulfilled. The Secretariat will report back to the Governing Board, which will update its decision accordingly at the annual meeting.

10. Any Other Business

Under this item, information was provided by Ioanna Paraskevopoulou on the recent meeting of EU Sport Directors General in Nicosia (Cyprus), which focused inter alia on health-enhancing physical activity, mental health of athletes and coaches, and the possible establishment of a Mediterranean Sports Council. The Bureau took note of these developments and of the relevance of mental health as an emerging priority at European level.

11. Date and place of the next meeting

The Bureau agreed to hold its next meeting on **Monday 9 March 2026 at 1pm**, online (Teams platform).

The Chair thanked all participants and closed the meeting.

Appendix: Agenda

1.	Welcome	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	EPAS(2026)10
3.	Annual plenary meeting of the Governing Board & Consultative Committee ➤ Programme ➤ Key items on the agenda	
4.	Active and Equal Project ➤ Countries involved ➤ Launch event ➤ Breakfast roundtable	A&E(2026)2 EPAS(2026)9
5.	Consultative Committee ➤ New members ➤ Renewals	
6.	19 th CoE Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport (Monaco, 3-4 Nov. 2026) ➤ Update on Programme	
7.	GER questionnaire ➤ Two versions - update	
8.	2027 Diversity Conference ➤ Preliminary brainstorming	
9.	Decision on the use of the special account to finance a B1/B2 administrative assistant	
10.	Any other business	
11.	Date and place of the next meeting (end of February)	