

Strasbourg, 7 April 2026

EPAS(2026)28rev

Meeting of the EPAS Governing Board Bureau

Monday 9 March 2026

1 pm – 2 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), Michael Landau (Monaco, MSL19)

Consultative Committee (CC):

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

Secretariat:

Stanislas Frossard, Francine Raveney, Elena Casero, Cassandra Mactavish, Caroline Dollet

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed participants. An additional item was also introduced under Any Other Business by Maria-Elena Casero, concerning the implementation of the Start to Talk roadmap in Cyprus.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The Bureau adopted the draft agenda (see Appendix).

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

The Secretariat presented an update on the preparation of the annual plenary meeting.

The general structure previously agreed by the Bureau was confirmed. The meeting will begin on 27 May with a joint session involving the Governing Board, the Consultative Committee and youth participants, linked to the youth event organised the previous day. The morning session will focus primarily on preparations for the Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport.

Separate in-camera meetings of the Governing Board and Consultative Committee will take place in the afternoon. The second day will consist of a joint meeting of both bodies.

Members were invited to express interest in contributing to specific agenda items. Antonio Parrilla indicated his willingness to prepare a presentation on artificial intelligence in sport, drawing on his expertise in the field. The Bureau welcomed this participatory approach and encouraged members to contribute actively to the discussions.

A suggestion was made by Mogens Kirkeby to consider circulating short preparatory questionnaires to members ahead of the meeting in order to facilitate interactive discussions. The Secretariat took note of this proposal and indicated that it would examine whether such an approach could add value when preparing certain agenda items.

4. Themes for the Diversity Conference 2027

The Bureau continued the preliminary discussion on the possible theme of the 2027 Diversity Conference.

The Secretariat recalled that the Bureau had previously exchanged views on potential topics and that the final decision would be taken at the May plenary meeting of the Governing Board.

A number of possible themes were mentioned, including discrimination against LGBTI+ persons in sport, which had already attracted broad support during previous exchanges.

Michael Landau suggested exploring a theme related to sport and peace or sport in the context of conflict, noting the relevance of current geopolitical developments.

The Bureau agreed that the discussion would continue in the coming weeks and that additional suggestions could be shared ahead of the next Bureau meeting. The Secretariat may circulate a recap of previously addressed themes and current proposals in order to facilitate further reflection.

5. Consultative Committee – renewals and new members

The Secretariat presented an update on the renewal of existing Consultative Committee members and the selection of new members.

Renewals

It was recalled that Consultative Committee members serve three-year terms. In 2026, 12 out of 30 members were due for renewal.

Following previous discussions within the Bureau, renewal invitations were sent to the organisations concerned:

- Eight¹ organisations were encouraged to submit renewal requests.
- Two² organisations were invited to renew, with a reminder regarding the expectations of active participation in EPAS activities.
- Two³ organisations were discouraged from seeking renewal due to sustained lack of participation, while remaining entitled to apply in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

Renewal requests are expected by 20 March 2026. The Secretariat explained that the number of renewals received will affect the number of available places for new members.

The next steps of the procedure will include:

- consultation of the Consultative Committee, which will provide a non-binding advisory vote;
- submission of the results and opinions to the Governing Board, which will take the final decision;

New members

¹ European Athletes and Players Association (formerly EU Athletes); European Athlete as Student Network; The European Olympic Committees; European Paralympic Committee; International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education; International Sport and Culture Association; Play the Game; Sports Rights Owners Coalition.

² European Physical Education Association; International School Sport Federation.

³ European Fair Play Movement; FARE Network (Football Against Racism in Europe).

The Secretariat also presented the results of the call for new members, launched following the revision of the Consultative Committee Terms of Reference allowing the membership to increase from 30 to 35 organisations.

Twelve applications were received, of which ten were deemed eligible based on the criteria set out in the Terms of Reference.

The Secretariat explained that the Bureau was not asked to select candidates at this stage, but rather to confirm the eligibility assessment carried out by the Secretariat before the process continues.

The next steps of the procedure will include:

- consultation of the Consultative Committee, which will provide a non-binding advisory vote;
- submission of the results and opinions to the Governing Board, which will examine the applications will also provide a vote;
- The Committee of Ministers, in its composition restricted to the representatives of the member States of EPAS, shall decide whether to authorise the EPAS Governing Board to invite the candidate organisation to the Consultative Committee or not.

FIFA application

Particular attention was devoted to the application submitted by FIFA, as it raised questions regarding the interpretation of the Terms of Reference relating to the coexistence of European and international organisations in the same field.

The Secretariat explained that, while UEFA already represents football within the Consultative Committee, the wording of the Terms of Reference allows some flexibility and therefore does not automatically exclude FIFA.

Members of the Bureau exchanged views on this matter. Several concerns were expressed regarding the potential overlap between FIFA and UEFA, as well as the possible precedent that such a decision might create for future applications.

After discussion, the Bureau agreed on the following approach:

- the agreement of UEFA should first be sought regarding the potential admission of FIFA as per Article 2.1.2b) of Terms of Reference of the Consultative Committee ;
- if UEFA does not agree, FIFA's candidacy should not proceed further in the process;
- if UEFA agrees, the candidacy may proceed to the next stage, including the consultation of the Consultative Committee, the vote of the governing board and the final decision of the Committee of Minister where applicable.

The Bureau also agreed to validate the draft *Opinion of the Bureau of the EPAS GB on applications for membership of the EPAS Consultative Committee*, subject to the above clarification.

Members further noted that the current discussion revealed certain ambiguities in the Terms of Reference, and that these may need to be reviewed in the future to provide greater clarity.

6. Collaboration with the European Union – feedback from meeting in Brussels

The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau of a recent meeting held in Brussels with the European Commission. The discussion focused primarily on the European Sports Model and its treatment in the context of the revised European Sports Charter. The Secretariat explained that, during the negotiation of the Charter, consensus had not been reached on certain aspects often associated with the European Sports Model, such as the pyramidal structure of sport governance or the principle of one federation per sport.

The Secretariat also highlighted the importance of ensuring that the European Commission's forthcoming communication on sport makes appropriate reference to the European Sports Charter. In addition, preliminary discussions took place on the possibility of developing more structured cooperation between the Council of Europe and the European Union, inspired by the long-standing partnership framework existing in the youth sector. Such cooperation could include policy dialogue and coordination on issues such as sport integrity.

The Bureau took note of these developments.

7. Active and Equal joint project and Breakfast Round Table

Francine Raveney reported on the launch of the "Active and Equal" joint project and the EPAS Breakfast Round Table on women and girls' participation in sport held in Strasbourg the previous week. Both events attracted strong participation, with approximately 100 participants attending in person and around 55 participants joining online.

The launch of the Active and Equal project included a technical meeting with national focal points followed by a public event. Five participating countries have already confirmed their involvement: France, Italy, Spain, Austria and Slovenia, with Iceland expected to confirm shortly.

The Breakfast Round Table focused on women and girls in sport and included presentations on data, research findings, and good practices. All presentations from both events will be made available on the EPAS website.

The Bureau welcomed the success of the events and thanked the Secretariat for the organisation.

8. Any Other Business

Under this item, Elena Casero informed the Bureau about the implementation of the Start to Talk roadmap in Cyprus, aimed at supporting the development of safeguarding policies within sport federations. Four pilot federations were selected to implement tailored safeguarding policies and procedures, with a focus on recruitment procedures, background checks and case reporting mechanisms. A final conference was held on 27 February 2026, bringing together representatives of sport federations, public authorities and safeguarding experts. The event highlighted the role of the Start to Talk initiative in supporting national safeguarding policies and promoting cooperation between public authorities and the sport movement.

The project was funded by Monaco and implemented in close cooperation with the Cyprus Sport Organisation.

The Bureau took note of the information provided.

9. Date, time and place of the next meeting

The Bureau discussed the scheduling of future meetings and agreed to meet on Tuesday 7 April from 3 pm to 4 pm CET (Strasbourg time).

The Chair thanked all participants and closed the meeting.

Appendix: Agenda

1.	Welcome	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	EPAS(2026)23
3.	Annual plenary meeting of the Governing Board & Consultative Committee ➤ Key items on the agenda	EPAS(2026)16
4.	Themes for the Diversity Conference 2027	
5.	Consultative Committee ➤ Renewals ➤ New members	Evaluation table Draft Bureau opinion + link to the Cloud (application files)
6.	Collaboration with the EU : feedback from meeting in Brussels	
7.	Active and Equal Project & Breakfast Roundtable ➤ Feedback	
8.	Any other business	
9.	Date, time and place of the next meeting	