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Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)

European Sports Charter (ESC) Working Group

ESC implementation methodology

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General

Annual schedule

The Governing Board will be invited on a yearly basis to approve the Support & Follow up (S&F) schedule for the following year.

The list of host countries will be drawn on the basis of the following elements:

- New EPAS members;
- Ministerial meeting hosts;
- Countries holding the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers;
- Countries who volunteer to participate;
- Major sporting event hosts;
- Outcome of the European Sports Charter questionnaire.

Based on the current membership of EPAS and an annual cycle of three visits, the rotation would equal one S&F exercise approximately every 14 years per country.

A review of previous S&F exercises will also have to be carried out, ideally by written exchanges, with the possibility of another specific focus and visit to a country which already benefited from a S&F visit, to assess advances made on the basis of the S&F report.

Contact will be maintained with these countries and support provided in their implementation of the European Sports Charter where possible.

Composition of the S&F team

The S&F team will consist of a maximum of 6 members and will be composed as follows: 2 members of the Governing Board (GB) and 1 member of the Consultative Committee (CC) and members of the Secretariat of the Council of Europe and any additional person where needed.

Each S&F team will be appointed by the Secretariat. When selecting the team members, gender and geographic balance, experience attending past visits and mentorship of new members, will be considered. A Chair will then be selected among the GB members of the S&F team by the Secretariat. The rapporteur will either be selected among CC members or be an outside expert.

S&F team responsibilities

Team members must be available and actively involved throughout the whole visit process, including participation in online preparatory meetings, on-site coordination meetings prior to the visit, participation throughout the on-site visit and in the online post-visit debriefing meeting.

The Chair

The role of the Chair is to lead the discussions during the visit, introduce EPAS, the European Sports Charter, the purpose of the visit, the team members, distribute the floor and ensure that discussions run smoothly.

The Rapporteur

The Rapporteur will draft the report and make recommendations based on their notes taken during the visit and in accordance with the template provided .

All team members

Each team member undertakes to take an active part in discussions with the invited participants . They also undertake to provide the Rapporteur with notes on specific priorities of the European Sports Charter as identified prior to the visit.

The Secretariat

The Secretariat will provide all necessary support to S&F team members and will also allocate the team responsibilities (Chair and Rapporteur) . They will liaise with the host country to ensure a smooth experience before, during and after the S&F visit.

Steps and timing

Once the visit in the host country has been confirmed, the following steps will occur:

Preparatory phase

The required documents

The host country is asked to complete the questionnaire provided sent prior to the on-site visit and a list of relevant documents (including all relevant legislation covering the core pillars of the European Sports Charter).

Preparation of the meetings with the host country

Meetings will be organised and conducted by the Secretariat and the host country's key contacts. These will include the preparation of topics to be discussed at the visit, a list of participants (see below), the collection of documents, the programme, etc.

The participants' list

In preparation for the visit, the Secretariat will provide a list of relevant stakeholders (public authorities, sports organisations, NGOs, athletes, media, academics, etc) to the host country who will then make arrangements for those stakeholders to be available according to the programme.

Onsite S&F meetings

Objective

The key objective of the S&F visits is to carry out a comprehensive and integrated assessment of the relevant national legislation, policies and practices and gain a better understanding of the implementation of the European Sports Charter in the host country, in order to provide expertise and recommendations to further advance the implementation of the Charter and its core values

Ultimately, hosting a S&F visit not only provides an external assessment of the implementation of the European Sports Charter, but also allows to benefit from the vast experience and knowledge of the experts of the Team, through a privileged exchange of information and expertise.

The programme

The duration of the visit will be determined by the EPAS Secretariat, taking into account the agenda decided jointly with the host country.

First the host will present how sport is organised within its country. Then invited participants will provide a short presentation followed by questions by the S&F team. At the end of the visit, the S&F team will conduct an informal debrief session with representatives from the host country.

In addition to the organised meetings, the programme should include visits to sports venues and sporting facilities.

Promotion of the S&F visit

The host country will ensure that the visit is promoted and visible as widely as possible.

After the S&F visit

Drafting of the report

The report will be based on the responses to the questionnaire provided by the host country and on information collected during the S&F visit. Key conclusions should include the state of the implementation of the European Sports Charter, some successes and shortcomings and key recommendations. The draft report will be prepared by the Rapporteur on the basis of notes and the contributions of each team member.

The Secretariat then sends the draft report to the host country inviting it to comment in general terms on the draft report within a month. Such official comments will, where appropriate, constitute a specific appendix to the final report.

The final report will be sent to the authorities of the host country and shared with the Governing Board for validation before its publication on the Council of Europe website.