

Strasbourg, 8 June 2023

EPAS(2023)32

**NETWORK OF  
MAGISTRATES/PROSECUTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR SPORTS  
(MARS)**

**Mandate**

## INTRODUCTION

- For five decades, the Council of Europe has advocated fair play and respect in sport, tackling corruption and helping make sport safe, ethical, and accessible to all. This work is today mainly articulated around the following intergovernmental structures:
  - The Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport ([EPAS](#));
  - The Ad hoc European Committee for the World Anti-Doping Agency ([CAHAMA](#));
  - The Monitoring Group of the Anti-doping Convention ([T-DO](#));
  - The Follow-up Committee ([T-MC](#)) of the Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (the Macolin Convention) and its Advisory Group forming the Network of National Platforms (the [Group of Copenhagen](#));
  - The Committee on Safety and Security at Sports Events ([T-S4](#)).
- Threats and challenges to sport integrity are not new. They are diverse, complex and have evolved significantly in recent years due to multiple factors, some being external to the world of sports and national borders. Sport is affected by corruption organised and financial crime, too often with seldom investigation, prosecution and sanctions, thus making sport corruption a low-risk crime and high-reward activity for criminals.
- The transborder dimension of the threats and challenges to sport integrity requires coordinated international cooperation of many actors and intergovernmental action. Prosecutors have an essential role in the protection of sport integrity at the level of investigations, trials and sanctioning procedures, however few prosecutors are aware of the seriousness of the threats and often lacking the necessary financial and human resources and international network to work effectively.

## OBJECTIVES

- The Network of Magistrates/Prosecutors Responsible for Sports (MARS) set up under the authority of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)<sup>1</sup> of the Council of Europe shall strengthen international co-operation and exchange of information in the protection of the integrity of sport.
- The Network will:
  - Promote the exchange of information and good practices among its members, in partnership with the concerned entities and international organisations (such as the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE), the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) or INTERPOL).
  - Provide an international "forum" (reference body) devoted to investigation and criminal proceedings; capable of responding to sectorial expectations and facilitating the cooperation between prosecutors and relevant stakeholders, law enforcement and judiciary, integrity agencies, National Platforms, anti-doping agencies, sport movement, sports betting representatives, etc.
  - Mobilise the Prosecutors in a maximum of countries, enabling them to know their counterparts in other jurisdictions and have direct contacts;

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with Article 10.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board of EPAS.

- Provide practical, educational and operational tools to facilitate the work of Prosecutors;
- Serve as a knowledge hub on the specific legal and institutional situations in the different countries regarding criminal cases related to sports integrity,

## MEMBERS

- Representatives of the prosecution system from member States of EPAS are members of MARS.
- Members shall be nominated by the national authorities responsible for managing the prosecution service. They shall be selected among serving prosecutors having a thorough knowledge of questions relating to the functioning of the prosecution system and where possible of sport integrity cases.
- EPAS will allocate resources to the Network based on the programme of activities and will, subject to their availability bear the travel and subsistence expenses for the participation of one representative per member State in Network meetings.
- Each member shall have one vote. Where more than one representative is nominated to attend the meeting, only one of them shall be entitled to take part in the voting.

## OBSERVERS AND INVITED PARTNERS

- The Network may invite observers, including representatives of the prosecution system from other member States of the Council of Europe, from other States Parties to one of the sport-related conventions ([ETS No. 135](#), [CETS No. 215](#) and [CETS No. 218](#)), from Observers States to the Council of Europe and of other Council of Europe bodies or external organisations, to attend its meetings and participate in its work, without the right to defrayal of expenses nor right to vote.

The Network establishes its working methods.