



Strasbourg, 11 September 2025

EPAS(2025)36

**Mapping of sports facilities:
Meeting 4 – “Social sustainability and sports facilities –
best practice and policy developments”**

Organised jointly by the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)
and the Mulier Institute

Friday 12 September
9.30am – 12.30pm

Hybrid meeting:
Strasbourg, Council of Europe, meeting room No.8 and online

Concept note and draft programme

Background

The 2025 Mulier Institute/Council of Europe *White Paper on Social Sustainability and Sports Facilities* states that:

“the social sustainability of sports facilities is about facilitating social relations, bringing all groups in society to the facilities. Sports facilities should also support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and liveable communities. This requires access to sports facilities and use of sports facilities by all groups in society. Furthermore, sustainable funding models for sports facilities are essential to make them affordable and financially sustainable for the future. In addition, attention should be paid to the more topical areas to which social sustainability is often linked: sustainability itself (e.g. the climate).”

However, to date no extensive work has been done mapping the situation of social sustainability and sports facilities across EPAS/Council of Europe member states and there is no uniform over-arching policy in this area. Insight into different ways of ensuring social sustainability of sport facilities is therefore of vital relevance. Especially in light of Article 9 of the [European Sports Charter](#) which states that:

“Article 9 – Sustainability

1. The principle of sustainability in sport requires all activities to be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable, in particular:

a. when planning, implementing and evaluating their activities, **organisers of sports activities and events should pay due consideration to sustainability, be it economic, social or environmental;**

b. whereas the growing consumption of sporting goods can generate a positive impact on the global economy, the industry should take responsibility for developing and integrating practices that are **satisfactory in social terms** and are environmentally friendly;

c. indoor and outdoor activities should be carried out responsibly, in other words the precautionary principle (resource conservation and risk prevention) should be implemented. Owners of sports infrastructure have to act proactively to identify the effects and consequences of their facilities, avoid potential damage to nature and, where necessary, take counter- and protective measures against such risks;

d. the organisation of major sports events should ensure a sustainable legacy for the hosting communities with regard to their economic, social and environmental impact, in particular to balance the financial cost of the infrastructure with its post-event use and the effect on participation in sport.

2. All stakeholders should take responsibility to reduce their carbon footprint and pursue commitments and partnerships for climate action in recognition of the increasingly negative impact of climate change on society and on sport.”

In this context, EPAS and the Mulier Instituut will host an online technical meeting on the mapping of sports facilities directly pertaining to the issue of social sustainability and sport facilities.

Objectives

This online meeting aims to:

- share information on the policy relevance of sport facilities and its contribution to social sustainability;
- gain insights into what mapping work is currently being carried out in relation to social sustainability and sports facilities and find out what key indicators already exist in this area;
- find out more about the different practices pertaining to social sustainability and sports facilities;
- bring together researchers and national level policy-making experts to identify solutions to keep sport facilities affordable for all groups in society and thus more inclusive.

Thematic scope

The forthcoming online meeting on **Friday 12 September 2025** explores the following aspects:

- to what extent and in which way have social sustainability and sports facilities been mapped across Europe so far and by whom? (Researchers will be invited to share the kind of policy information they can produce based on their databases and other data collections.) The meeting can also explore whether or not any projects are foreseen to carry out this benchmarking work?
- What best practice examples and exemplary working mechanisms exist in relation to social sustainability and sports facilities? This can include sports facilities that have a high financial value or impactful societal value.
- What indicators would be useful for policy makers in this area at local, regional and national level?
- What financial investments exist to support social sustainability and sports facilities?
- What next steps can be taken and with which partners?

Speakers

The online meeting will be co-chaired and co-moderated by Prof. Dr. Remco Hoekman, Director of the Mulier Institute and Francine Hetherington Raveney, Deputy Executive Secretary of EPAS.

Speakers will include researchers, policy-making experts and other experts in this field as well as the wider sports movement.

Draft agenda

- 9.30-9.40am Opening words (Remco Hoekman and Francine Hetherington Raveney)*
- 9.40am-10.20am Reflections on social sustainability and sports facilities*
- Presentation by *Remco Hoekman* on the “White Paper and Social sustainability of sport facilities”
 - Presentation by *James Ogilvie*, Head of European Affairs at UEFA, on “UEFA experiences and initiatives: social sustainability and sports facilities”
- 10.20-10.40am Questions and answers*
- 10.40-10.55am Break*
- 10.55am-11.55am Best practice examples of mapping of sports facilities and social sustainability*
- Presentation by *Kairis Ulp*, Head of the Estonian Sport Register (Estonia) *preceded by a short video clip*
 - Presentation by *Evald Bundgaard Iversen*, Associate Professor, Head of Centre, University of Southern Denmark (Denmark)
 - Presentation by *Flavio La Porta*, Official of the Department for Sport of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (Italy)
 - Presentation by *Canelle Daniel*, Project Manager - Technological Innovations, Centre for Resources, Expertise and Sporting Performance (CREPS), Pays de la Loire (France)
- 11.55am-12.20pm Questions and answers*
Sharing good examples, best practices and ongoing work from other countries (round the table and online participants).
- 12.20pm-12.30pm Conclusions and information about follow-on work and the next online meeting in 2026 on equal access to sports facilities*

(Remco Hoekman and Francine Hetherington Raveney)

Structure and practical arrangements of the webinar

The online meeting is scheduled to last three hours with a fifteen-minute break. As this is an online meeting, participants will be invited to pose questions through the chat function of the online platform to be asked to speakers at the end of each section.

The working language of the online meeting will be English.