

Strasbourg, 20 May 2026

EPAS(2026)40

Meeting of the EPAS Governing Board Bureau

Thursday 30 April 2026

10 am – 11 am CET

Online (Teams platform)

Working language: English

REPORT

Participants

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

Consultative Committee (CC): Mogens Kirkeby (ISCA, Vice-Chair), Charlotte Girard Fabre (IFSO, Chair)

Secretariat: Stanislas Frossard, Francine Hetherington Raveney, Cassandra Mactavish, Elena Casero, Caroline Dollet

1. Welcome

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the Governing Board, Solène Charuau, who welcomed participants and noted the packed agenda, focusing primarily on preparations for the upcoming plenary meetings and the Conference of Ministers.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda was adopted without any amendments.

3. Adoption of the draft report of the previous meeting

The Bureau adopted the draft report of the meeting of 7 April 2026 without any comments.

4. Annual plenary meeting of the Governing Board and Consultative Committee

The Secretariat presented the updated draft agenda, highlighting its overall structure and key components:

- a joint session (GB–CC–youth participants) on the morning of 27 May;
- in camera meetings (GB and CC separately) in the afternoon of 27 May;
- a second day (28 May) structured around reporting, thematic priorities, and co-operation topics.

The Bureau welcomed the inclusion of youth participants in the opening session, noting that their reflections would directly inform discussions on the draft resolution. This was seen as an important step in strengthening youth mainstreaming in EPAS processes.

The Secretariat outlined key sensitive items to be discussed at the in camera discussions (27 May afternoon):

- follow-up on good governance in sport organisations (including IPACS-related work);
- decision on the theme of the 2027 Diversity Conference;
- discussion on the IOC policy on the female category (information item).

The Bureau agreed that the in camera format was appropriate given the potentially divergent views among stakeholders.

Several members expressed concern regarding the limited time allocated to certain agenda items (particularly 5-minute slots) and the risk that discussions may be overly reduced to information sharing rather than substantive debate.

The Secretariat clarified that some items (e.g. website, showcasing tool) are intended as brief updates and greater discussion time could be allocated to key topics if needed.

The Bureau agreed that additional time should be prioritised for artificial intelligence in sport and co-operation with the European Union, particularly the future framework for co-operation.

Members underlined the importance of political debate in the joint GB–CC setting, especially given the diversity of perspectives between EU and non-EU members.

It was suggested to establish mechanisms allowing continued exchange beyond the plenary (e.g. informal working groups or thematic exchanges), particularly on emerging issues such as AI.

In conclusion, the Secretariat will revise the time allocation to strengthen discussion-oriented items, maintain balance across the agenda and ensure realistic timing for exchanges.

5. Youth gathering on 26 May

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the selection process was nearly finalised:

- 48 participants were selected:
 - 11 nominated by GB members;
 - 17 nominated by CC members;
 - 20 selected via an open call;
- Representation from up to 31 member states, ensuring strong geographical balance.

All candidates had been informed of the outcome, and formal invitations were being issued. Participation (travel and accommodation) is covered by EPAS. Participants will be hosted at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg. Visa processes to be handled urgently due to short timelines.

Bureau members welcomed the strong interest and diversity of candidates; they requested further information on the detailed programme and possible observer access.

The Bureau took note of the progress and invited the Secretariat to continue updates, particularly on programme development and participation modalities.

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

The Secretariat presented a proposal to introduce more interactive formats, including breakout groups, in line with guidance from the Secretary General.

The Bureau expressed some reservations and several members, including the Monaco representatives, raised concerns:

- Proposal introduced at a late stage in preparations;
- Logistical challenges (room set-up, cost, interpretation);
- Risk of limited participation due to language constraints;
- Concerns regarding ministers' willingness to engage in informal formats.

While Bureau members recognised the value of more interactive discussions, there was no support for full breakout groups at this stage, and a strong preference for maintaining a plenary format.

In conclusion, the Bureau agreed on a “middle-ground” approach:

- Maintain plenary setting;
- Introduce moderated, question-based discussions;
- Encourage more dynamic exchanges (rather than sequential prepared statements);
- Possibly structure discussions around targeted guiding questions.

The Secretariat was invited to continue consultations with the Monaco authorities, and to develop a compromise proposal maintaining the plenary format but with enhanced interactivity. The Secretariat was also invited to present a revised approach to the Bureau prior to the plenary meeting.

7. Consultative Committee

Regarding renewals of membership, the Secretariat stressed the urgency of the ongoing voting procedure, as the quorum had not yet been reached. Bureau members were urged to submit votes before the deadline.

Regarding new members, GB members were informed that a similar voting process would follow for new memberships.

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that a new CC Bureau would be elected in 2026. Appreciation was expressed for the contribution of the outgoing Vice-Chair, Mogens Kirkeby.

The Bureau took note and committed to completing voting procedures in a timely manner.

8. Annual meeting of the Pool of international experts on safe sport (11–12 June 2026)

The Secretariat presented the objectives of the upcoming meeting:

- Review of the functioning and renewal of the Pool (2026 cycle);
- Presentation of the HELP e-learning module on child safeguarding in sport;
- Discussion of research compilation linked to Ministerial Conference themes.
- Discussion of the Ministerial contents and resolution

The HELP module includes legal frameworks (CoE and international), relevant ECHR case law and practical safeguarding examples. It was developed with contributions from multiple CoE bodies and funded by Monaco.

The Secretariat mentioned the contribution of the Pool to the Ministerial Conference preparations and informed the Bureau that the annual meeting will include a tribute to Mathilde Grenet, a deceased member of the Pool.

The annual meeting will be held under the Presidency of Monaco of the Committee of Ministers.

The Bureau took note and welcomed the progress, underlining the importance of this workstream.

9. Update on the Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance

The Secretariat reported that a draft revised recommendation had been circulated to Working Group members. Members were invited (optionally) to submit short written amendments by early May. At the third meeting of the WG on 26 May, a dedicated session will focus on finalising the text.

The Bureau took note of the progress and welcomed the efficient advancement of the work.

10. Debrief on the annual meeting of the Network of Magistrates and Prosecutors Responsible for Sports (the MARS Network) on 28-29 April in Strasbourg

The Secretariat reported on a successful meeting, highlighting discussions on legal frameworks and co-operation between disciplinary, administrative and judicial bodies, use of artificial intelligence in investigations, challenges in evidence gathering and strengthened cooperation with Interpol, national authorities and other CoE mechanisms.

A joint session with the Saint-Denis Committee was noted as a key success, demonstrating practical co-operation at national level (e.g. Portugal case).

The Bureau took note and acknowledged the strategic relevance of the MARS Network for EPAS and the sports-related Conventions work.

11. Any other business

No additional items were raised.

12. Date and time of the next meeting

The Bureau agreed to hold a meeting on 20 May 2026 at 2 pm, ahead of the plenary meeting.

Appendix: Agenda

1.	Welcome	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	EPAS(2026)36
3.	Adoption of the draft report of the previous meeting	EPAS(2026)37
4.	Annual plenary meeting of the Governing Board and Consultative Committee ➤ Key items on the agenda (+ possible new item e.g. IOC policy on female category)	EPAS(2026)16rev
5.	Youth event on 26 May	
6.	19 th Council of Europe Conference of ministers responsible for sport (MSL19), Monaco, 4 November 2026 ➤ Draft Programme	MSL19(2026)2
7.	Consultative Committee ➤ Renewals ➤ New members	
8.	Annual meeting of the Pool of international experts on safe sport, 11-12 June, Strasbourg	
9.	Update on the works of the Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance	
10.	Debrief on the annual meeting of the MARS Network, 28-29 April, Strasbourg	
11.	Any other business	
12.	Date, time and place of the next meeting	