

Strasbourg, 6 May 2025

EPAS(2025)46

## **Meeting of the EPAS Bureau**

**Tuesday 15 April 2025**

1.00pm – 2.15pm CET

Online (Teams platform)

Working language: English

## **REPORT**

## **Participants**

Governing Board (GB): Alexandre Husting (Luxembourg, Chair), Ioanna Paraskevopoulou (Cyprus), Bram van Houten (Netherlands), Andrew Decelis (Malta), Florian Botto (Monaco, MSL19), Michael Landau (Monaco, MSL19)

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

Apologies: Solène Charuau (France)

Secretariat: Sophie Kwasny, Francine Hetherington Raveney, Elena Casero, Cassandra Mactavish, Caroline Larghi

### **1. Welcome**

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the GB.

### **2. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted with the following items for consideration:

- A. 19th annual plenary meeting of the EPAS Governing Board and joint meeting with the Consultative Committee, 14-15 May 2025
  - Draft agenda
- B. 19th CoE Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, Monaco, 3-4 November 2026
- C. Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance
  - Draft Terms of Reference
- D. Draft guidelines on safer recruitment in sport
- E. Consultative Committee
- F. Parliamentary Alliance for Good Governance and Integrity in Sport
- G. Any other business
- H. Date and place of the next meeting

The Chair apologised for the late sending of the last three documents by the Secretariat. However, these documents remain open for written comments after the Bureau meeting.

### **3. 19th annual plenary meeting of the EPAS Governing Board and joint meeting with the Consultative Committee, 14-15 May 2025**

The draft agenda of the plenary meeting as approved by the Bureau was circulated to Delegations with the invitation letters. A number of changes will have to be included, notably regarding the afternoon of 14 May, with an item on sport in Ukraine since the Russian Federation's war of aggression against this country and especially because of the destroyed or damaged infrastructure. Additionally, some small changes will be made to the wording of the "Action" parts, which the Chair invited to simplify/shorten.

The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that the cocktail offered at lunch time on 15 May will be hosted by the Monegasque authorities, and she thanked the Monegasque representatives. She also informed the Bureau that a cecifoot session will be organised just before the cocktail on the lawn in front of the Palais de l'Europe (subject to final confirmation).

Michael Landau suggested to insert some colour codes in the agenda for more clarity. For example: "For decision" in red, "For information" in blue.

The Executive Secretary indicated that the request to share the meeting documents via a sharepoint was analysed and discussed with the secretariats of the Sport Conventions and the Youth department, and the decision not to create a sharepoint was taken as it is too time-consuming and complicated to use (different passwords and access issues). The Secretariat decided to go on sharing the documents using a Cloud, but offered to improve the structure of the Cloud.

The Secretariat will aim at sending out the final version of the draft agenda at the beginning of May.

#### **4. 19th CoE Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, Monaco, 3-4 November 2026**

Florian Botto introduced a revised version of the working document on the possible themes of the next ministerial conference.

Under subtopic 1, the dichotomy between the title and the content was clarified. A reference to referees, doctors and administrators was added.

Under subtopic 2, a reference was added to recreational doping in sport, based on the need to have a comprehensive discussion.

Michael Landau added that all comments made at the latest Bureau meeting were taken on board. He explained that the suggested subtitles were broad enough to cover all forms of violence, including sexual violence. He reckoned that the Monegasque authorities did not have much data and expertise on the topic of sexual violence and would therefore need the support of EPAS.

Elena Casero asked if a reference to child safeguarding officers could be added.

Sophie Kwasny explained that the EPAS Secretariat discussed the possibility of collecting information on child violence and abuse in sport before the Ministerial but that this would have to be confirmed based on the themes / needs of the conference.

The Chair suggested to clarify the term "children", namely to specify an age limit. He proposed to include the children's entourage (family, doctors, coaches, ...) and the protection of mental health, which is not mentioned so far. Andrew Decelis suggested to use the word "minors". Elena Casero added that, according to the Council of Europe legal framework, a child shall mean any person under the age of 18 years.

Subtopic 2: Sophie Kwasny wondered if the angle chosen was the right one given that problematics go way beyond the issue of doping.

The Chair shared his opinion on the proposed title, which could be seen as negative. The Executive Secretary agreed and invited the Secretariat, responsible for the programme and the content of the Conference, to come up with a more positive wording.

## **5. Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good governance**

The Chair referred to the Draft Terms of Reference for a Working Group (WG) on the Autonomy of Sport and Good governance (document EPAS(2025)44), which was shared with the Bureau before the meeting. The constitution of such a WG is a follow up action to the Resolution adopted by the Ministers in Porto. After the Ministerial Conference, Clémentine Legendre, an external consultant, was called upon to prepare a report containing an analysis of Recommendations [CM/Rec\(2018\)12](#) and [CM/Rec\(2011\)3](#) in order to examine the relevance of these two texts in the light of current realities and new challenges. Her report mentions a number of revisions and complements that could be brought to these Recommendations. The Draft Terms of Reference present the deliverables, the proposed timeline and the composition of the WG (a maximum of 20 delegates from the GB, the CC and consultants). The work shall be completed by December 2026. The Bureau is invited to send their comments within two weeks in order to allow for the revised version of the draft Terms of Reference to be shared with Delegations before the plenary meeting in May.

Mogens Kirkeby expressed some doubts on the fact that one single Working Group is due to work on two different topics. In this case, the choice should be given to the members to work on subject 1 or 2.

The Executive Secretary answered that the two subjects being interrelated, the idea is to treat them as a whole. She added that the meetings of the WG will be mainly online, shall occur monthly and last for two hours. The drafting will be done by the Secretariat, with the help of an external consultant, and the members of the WG will be asked to provide inputs and contribute to the achievement of the Group's mandate.

The Chair enquired about the selection of the members in case more than 20 applications are received. The subject being of great interest, the Bureau feared that a lot of applications will reach the Secretariat and requested that a specific Rule be added for the selection of the members.

Sophie Kwasny proposed that, should there be many applications, the Bureau would decide according to balancing criteria (gender balance criteria and the 4 Regions included within EPAS).

## **6. Draft Guidelines on Safer Recruitment in Sport**

Draft Guidelines on Safer Recruitment in Sport: human rights-compliant screening of professionals and volunteers in contact with children (EPAS(2025)37) have been prepared

by an expert based on the work of the Pool of international experts on safe sport. These guidelines follow on the invitation in the Resolution adopted at the Antalya Ministerial Conference to “continue supporting States and sports organisations in the design and implementation of child safeguarding policies (...), notably in the context of the Start to Talk initiative to stop violence and abuse of children in sport and support exploratory work on human rights-compliant sharing of information on criminal and disciplinary records of staff and volunteers working with children in the context of sport.” The Bureau is invited to send their comments on this draft document to the Secretariat by Tuesday 29 April 2025. They will then be shared with the GB for discussion at the plenary meeting.

Elena Casero referred to the two seminars on this topic organised by EPAS as a follow up on the abovementioned ministerial mandate. She also explained that, in order to develop the guidelines, a questionnaire had been prepared and circulated among members of the Pool of international Experts on Safe Sport, and members of the Network of Magistrates / Prosecutors responsible for sports (the MARS Network). The draft guidelines had been sent for feedback to the Secretariats of the Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Committee), and of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), the Data Protection Unit and the Secretariat of the European Court of Human Rights.

## **7. Consultative Committee**

Cassandra Mactavish presented the results of the procedure for renewal of the membership of the three organisations whose term of office expires in 2025: Centre for Sport and Human Rights, European Association for Sport Management and International Dance Organization. The Secretariat received 19 votes out of 41 member States. The term of office of all of the three organisations will be renewed.

## **8. Parliamentary Alliance for Good Governance and Integrity in Sport**

The Chair informed the Bureau that he and the Chair of the CC had received a letter from Ms Linda Hofstad Helleland, Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), inviting the EPAS CC and GB to appoint two representatives to the Parliamentary Alliance for Good Governance and Integrity in Sport. The first meeting of the Alliance will take place in June 2025 in Norway. Considering the status of ‘institutional partners’ in the Terms of Reference of the Alliance, it is proposed that representation of the GB and CC be insured by the respective Chairs. As GB Bureau elections will take place in May 2025, the Chair will send a reply after the elections. No invitation was received so far for the meeting in June.

## **9. Any other Business**

No other matter was raised.

## **10. Date and place of the next meeting**

The next meeting will take place online on the Teams platform after the plenary meeting.