

Strasbourg, 13 September 2024

EPAS(2024)53

Meeting of the EPAS GB Bureau

Thursday 5 September 2024

1 pm – 2.15 pm CET

Online (Teams platform)

Working language: English

REPORT

Participants

Governing Board (GB): Alexandre Husting (Luxembourg, Chair), Solène Charuau (France), Andrew Decelis (Malta), Filipa Cavaleri (MSL18)

Consultative Committee (CC): Charlotte Girard-Fabre (IFSO, Chair)

Secretariat: Sophie Kwasny, Cassandra Mactavish, Caroline Larghi

Apologised: Bram van Houten (The Netherlands), Ioanna Paraskevopoulou (Cyprus), Mogens Kirkeby (ISCA)

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:

- Debriefing of the joint annual plenary meeting of the GB and CC (29-30 May) - Tour de table;
- Update on the Ministerial Conference including the draft Resolution;
- Update on the theme of the 2025 Diversity Conference;
- AOB.

3. Debriefing of the joint annual plenary meeting of the GB (29-30 May) - Tour de table

The Bureau felt that the meeting was well organised and had a nice dynamic, with a good level of participation. The Consultative Committee was more effectively involved than in the past and a prominent place was given to the European Sports Charter.

The presentation of good practices by the delegations was assessed as a good initiative, even though some members found that this part of the meeting was too long and monotonous and could benefit from a more energetic exchange. It was suggested that a clearer framework be set next time.

The objectives of the meeting were met, but time management remained an issue.

The Secretariat expressed the need to work on the level of participation of the European Union (EU) in the GB in the future, which would better reflect their longstanding partnership and the number of joint projects implemented by the Sport Division. The EU is typically represented by the Head of the European Union Delegation to the Council of Europe. The EPAS Secretariat shall seek the participation of its counterparts in the European Commission at the DG EAC in order for this item of the agenda to better reflect the close cooperation between the European Commission and the Sport Division.

Further to a request from Norway, it was decided to improve the agenda of the next plenary meeting in order to indicate if the different items are “for information”, “for decision”, “for action”, etc.

The EPAS Executive Secretary and the Chair thanked everyone for their massive investment in the preparation of the meeting.

The list of Decisions has been finalised in English. It will now be sent to the Chair for comments and validation before being circulated to the GB and CC for approval.

The 2024-2025 strategy for EPAS has also been finalised and will be circulated soon for final validation.

4. Update on the Ministerial Conference including the draft Resolution

The EPAS Executive Secretary informed that weekly preparatory meetings are organised, and the preparation of the Conference is progressing smoothly. On 6 September an updated version of the programme and a reminder to register will be sent to all invitees.

The number of registrations is not very high at the moment, but this has often been the case at this time for past Ministerial conferences. A special effort should be made to attract ministers, in particular from EU countries since the host is an EU member State, to this major event.

Filipa Cavalleri informed the Bureau that a Working Breakfast organised by the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the Council of Europe would be held on 12 September to promote the event among all Permanent Representations and Observers to the Council of Europe. Bjørn Berge, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and Pedro Dias, Portuguese Secretary of State of Sport, will be present and will speak at the event.

Besides, the Bureau suggested that the event be promoted at the upcoming Working Party on Sport in Brussels.

The draft Resolution was presented at the joint plenary meeting in May, and non-EPAS member states were informed and consulted via the GR-C.

The GB and the CC were consulted on the draft Resolution during summer. The Secretariat has taken into account the comments sent by the deadline and included the proposed modifications, and the new draft document was discussed by the Bureau. The major changes were the following:

- Ukraine requested the addition of a paragraph (§9) to condemn the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against their country. The wording of the paragraph was adopted by the Ministers at the 17th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for sport in Antalya.
- EU Athletes proposed to add a reference to collective bargaining in the sentence “acknowledge the importance of social dialogue [and collective bargaining] in the sport sector to ensure democracy, fairness, respect for human rights and good governance”. The Bureau suggested to replace this wording with the following sentence: “acknowledge the importance of social dialogue and any other form of

dialogue between all stakeholders in order to take into account the rights and interests of athletes”.

- On page 2, in subparagraph 2, Slovenia proposed to add “including with the European Union” in the sentence “to strengthen an inclusive dialogue between public authorities, including with the European Union, sports organisations, ...”.
- On page 2, in subparagraph 5, it was proposed to add “and empowering women in sport” in the sentence “continue supporting greater gender equality in sport and empowering women in sport”.
- On page 2, in subparagraph 5, it was proposed to end the sentence with “and by integrating gender mainstreaming across all levels of sport governance and policy-making”.
- On page 3, it was proposed to add an explicit reference to all EPAS bodies.

The revised version of the draft Resolution in English and French will be shared with the Bureau as shortly as possible in order to circulate the revised draft Resolution to all invited delegations ahead of Porto. The draft Resolution will then be finalised at the Senior Officials meeting in Porto on 8 October.

5. Update on the theme of the 2025 Diversity Conference

The theme of the 2025 Diversity Conference was discussed at the joint plenary meeting in May. Three themes were previously put to the GB for vote:

- 1) Youth in sport
- 2) The silver generation in sport
- 3) Sport and intergenerational challenges, for youth as for the silver generation

Theme 1 obtained 3 votes. Theme 2 obtained 2 votes and theme 3 obtained 5 votes. The Bureau discussed whether it was necessary to launch a new consultation given the low number of responses.

Considering that the Conference might be taking place in Malta, as they will hold the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers in autumn 2025, it was decided to firstly check the position of Maltese authority for a conference on topic 3.

6. AoB

The Chair of the Governing Board informed the Bureau that Andrea Carletti, the Italian representative in the GB and Vice-Chair left the ministry over the summer. He was replaced by Antonio Parilla in the GB. However, the position of Vice-chair remains vacant until a new election is carried out. The Chair regrets not having been able to officially thank Andrea Carletti in person. Andrea was an active member of the GB and the Bureau. He dedicated a lot of time to the work of EPAS, was a very involved and a pleasant collaborator. The Bureau would like to warmly thank him for his contribution and wishes him a lot of success and satisfaction in his new activities and thank the Italian authorities for their constant support for the work of EPAS.