

Strasbourg, 1st of December 2023

EPAS(2023)66

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)

Annual meeting of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport

Tuesday, 5 December 2023

9.00am-1.00pm (in camera meeting) and 2.30pm-5.00pm (round table)

Hybrid meeting

Room G4 - AGORA building

Online on the Kudo platform

Concept note and agenda

Background

The [Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport](#) (the “Pool”) is a unique group of multidisciplinary experts covering all forms of violence and abuse against children in sport. The Pool provides opportunities for peer-learning, capacity building and opportunities for exchange of information and dialogue amongst those who have a role to play in combating and preventing violence and abuse in sport. The Pool brings together policy-makers, researchers and academics, specialists supporting people with lived experience, (child) safeguarding officers, trainers/consultants and agents of change.

The Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport was set up within the context of the European Union-Council of Europe joint project [“Child Safeguarding in Sport”](#) (CSiS). Since the end of the CSiS project in June 2022, the Secretariat support for the Pool has been provided by [“Start to Talk”](#), a project of the [Council of Europe’s Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport \(EPAS\)](#) that aims to protect children against harassment and abuse in sport.

In accordance with the mandate of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport, its members meet once a year to address topical challenges, share their experiences, network, discuss their annual work programme, and provide an insight into EPAS’ activities. The 2022 annual meeting included a roundtable on “Children’s participation in policymaking”. High-level experts on child participation had an exchange of views and know-how with the Pool members on the benefits and risks of children’s participation in the development of child safeguarding policies in sport, as well as the reasons why sport is often a challenging environment for children to have their voices heard and how they can have an impact in decision making. The success of last year’s edition has encouraged the Secretariat to propose the same format for 2023, with an *in camera* Pool meeting in the morning and a roundtable in the afternoon of 5 December. The members of the EPAS Governing Board and Consultative Committee, the “Start to Talk” focal points, as well as representatives from sport organisations members of the EPAS Consultative Committee will be invited to participate in the afternoon session of the annual meeting of the Pool.

Objectives of the meeting

The objectives of the **morning *in camera* meeting**:

- Exchange information on activities relating to safe sport by providing updates on:
 - o the activities of the Pool members;
 - o the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of safe sport;
- Working on the 2023 deliverables, specifically through a group discussion;
- Discussing relevant points pertaining to the procedure and running of the Pool.

The objectives of the **afternoon roundtable**, which will be attended by a broader audience, is to create an opportunity for an exchange of opinions and know-how between professionals from different sectors, to address emerging human rights challenges in the national and international sharing of criminal and disciplinary backgrounds of employees and volunteers in regular contact with children in sport. Following the presentations, the members of the Pool of experts and other participants will be invited to share their views as to how to enable human rights-compliant information sharing, and to explore avenues for further action.

For further information, please see the concept note and programme of the roundtable on: “Safer recruitment in sport: human rights-compliant screening of criminal and disciplinary records”.

Preparing for the meeting

For the **morning session**, Pool members are invited to:

- Present an update on their relevant activities in the area of safe sport during 2023 and present upcoming events in 2024 that might be of interest to other experts. Kindly limit your intervention to **one minute maximum**. **If you would like to present an update on your relevant activities, please let the “Start to Talk” Secretariat know by sending an email to sport.epas@coe.int by 30 November 2023** end of the day.
- Provide your feedback on the two 2023 deliverables: draft glossary and draft tool compilation. **If you would like to provide feedback on the two deliverables during the meeting, please let the “Start to Talk” Secretariat know by sending an email to sport.epas@coe.int by 30 November 2023** end of the day.

For the **afternoon roundtable** Pool members are invited to present their opinions and views on the following questions:

- What are the human rights challenges in the screening of the criminal and disciplinary backgrounds of professionals and volunteers who are in contact with children in sport?
- What can we do to help sport organisations effectively ensure that professionals and volunteers in regular contact with children are properly screened?

If you would like to intervene and provide your views on these questions during the afternoon session, please, let the “Start to Talk” Secretariat know by sending an email to sport.epas@coe.int by 30 November 2023 end of the day.

Practical arrangements

The meeting will be held in Room G4 of the AGORA building, Avenue de l'Europe, Strasbourg. Please allow enough time for identification and security access to the building – December can be particularly busy - and bring with you your passport or identity document, which you will be required to show at the entrance of the Council of Europe premises. For those unable to attend in person, a hybrid option is available on the kudo online platform.

The working languages will be English and French with simultaneous EN/FR interpretation provided.

Agenda

	MORNING SESSION (hybrid – Pool members only)	
1.	Welcome Irena GUIDIKOVA, Head of the Children's Rights and Sport Values Department, Council of Europe	9.00am-9.10am
2.	Adoption of the agenda	9.10am-9.15am
3.	Tour de table Pool members will briefly present an update on their work (maximum 1 minute per speaker)	9.15am-9.45am
4.	CoE work relevant to safeguarding in sport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start to Talk, including a presentation on the Child consultation on safeguarding in sport in Bulgaria, by Melanie LANG, Reader (Associate Professor) in child protection in sport, Edge Hill University, United Kingdom 	9.45am-10.00am
5.	Presentation on Tackling cases of violence in sport - an independent trauma informed approach. Joyce COOK CBE, OBE, Senior Advisor to the President's Office, Fédération Internationale de Football Association Presentation on The IOC Safeguarding Regional Hub Model Gloria VISERAS, OLY, Senior Project Manager, IOC Safe Sport Unit	10.00am-10.20am
6.	Pool procedures	10.20am-10.30am
	Coffee break	10.30am-10.45am
7.	Working group session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the tasks • Group discussion on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2023 deliverables and ○ working programme for 2024 (including a presentation on Trauma informed practice by Paul BERCEA, Associate trainer and consultant, UK Barnado's and Terres des Homes, United Kingdom) 	10.45am-12.55pm
8.	Any other business	12.55pm-13.00pm

	Buffet lunch	1.00pm-2.30pm
	AFTERNOON SESSION (hybrid - open)	
9.	WELCOME	2.30pm-2.35pm
10.	<p>Roundtable: “Safer recruitment in sport: human rights-compliant screening of criminal and disciplinary records”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: Francine HETHERINGTON RAVENEY, Deputy Executive Secretary, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS), Council of Europe • Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> George NIKOLAIDIS, Psychiatrist and Research Director of the Department of Mental Health and Social Welfare, Institute of Child Health, Greece Iris JANSSEN, Policy officer, Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security, The Netherlands Håvard B. ØVREGÅRD, Senior Adviser, Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF), Norway Ieuan WATKINS, Safeguarding Consultant, Sport Safeguarding Limited, Wales, United Kingdom Sébastien BOUEILH, General Director, Association Colosse Aux Pieds D'Argile, France Caroline NOGUERAS-FLAVIGNY, Journalist and producer of investigative reports and documentaries, France • Roundtable: participants are invited to present their opinions and views on the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the human rights challenges in the screening of criminal and disciplinary backgrounds of professional and volunteers in contact with children in sport? ○ What can we do to help sport organisations effectively ensure that professionals and volunteers in regular contact with children are properly screened? 	2.35pm-4.55pm (inc. 15m break)
10.	<p>Closing words</p> <p>Sophie KWASNY, Head of the Sport Division, Executive Secretary of EPAS, Council of Europe</p>	4.55pm-5.00pm