

Strasbourg, 18 September 2026

EPAS(2026)67

Meeting of the EPAS Governing Board Bureau

Wednesday 9 September 2026

10 am – 12 noon CET

Online (Teams platform)

Working language: English

REPORT

Participants

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

Consultative Committee (CC): Charlotte Girard-Fabre (IFSO, Chair), Patrik Perosa (IDO, Vice-Chair)

Secretariat: Stanislas Frossard, Roman Chlapak, Elena Casero, Céline Guth, Caroline Dollet, Kateryna Lavryk

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed participants to the meeting, expressing pleasure at reconvening after the summer break. She extended a particular welcome to recent additions to the Secretariat: Roman Chlapak, the new Deputy Executive Secretary, and Céline Guth, the new Senior Project Officer. Both introduced themselves, outlining their previous experience within the Council of Europe in areas relevant to good governance, anti-corruption, youth, and sports projects. Kateryna Lavryk, Junior Project Officer, present in a temporary capacity, was also welcomed. The Secretariat confirmed the replacement process for two team members, namely for administrative support and communications roles.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda for the meeting was adopted as circulated.

3. Adoption of the draft report of previous meetings

The Chair noted that the draft reports from the previous meetings (EPAS(2026)61 and EPAS(2026)62) had been reviewed. It was agreed to adopt the reports and move forward.

4. Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance

The Executive Secretary provided an overview of the validation process for the draft recommendation on the autonomy of sport, contextualising the significant amendments received after summer consultations, notably from Germany and Italy, and referencing the influence of the FIFA governance issue during the summer. The draft recommendation was presented with amendments highlighted in different colours to indicate their origin.

Several substantive issues remained under discussion:

- **Transparency and accountability obligations:**

A sensitive point concerned the language stating the sports movement may be bound by appropriate transparency and accountability obligations. Germany suggested replacing "may" with "should," but the Secretariat recommended retaining the softer "may" to avoid controversy and resistance from some sports organisations. After

discussion, broad consensus supported keeping "may", balancing transparency expectations while mitigating political risk.

- **Estonian amendment on Human Rights/Peace:**

A further amendment from Estonia stated that "autonomous decision-making is not to facilitate, endorse or disregard action that violates international law, undermines human rights or threatens peace and security", motivated by the Russian Federation's armed aggression against Ukraine. While members recognised the intent, they considered the language potentially too political and broad for this context. The idea of moving this content to the preamble, or refining it to reference "massive violation," was raised.

The Executive Secretary undertook to consult bilaterally with the Italian and Estonian representatives to draft a proposal that would secure consensus.

- **Interference by states or third parties (undue interference):**

The final open issue related to the language regarding democratic selection of sport leaders without interference. While Germany proposed adding "undue" to qualify "interference," discussion revealed diverging views on balancing protection from state interference with rare, legitimate interventions (e.g., relating to criminal convictions). Consensus emerged to keep the general principle of autonomy in the main text but provide further clarification in the explanatory memorandum, rather than adopting the "undue interference" wording in the recommendation itself.

The Executive Secretary agreed to revise the draft recommendation in light of these discussions and circulate it for a final review before submission to the Governing Board. It was confirmed that the document would not revert to the Working Group, but the group would be kept informed of developments.

Céline Guth then provided a report on the first meeting of the Working Group on Good Governance, which took place online on 1 September. Key priorities emerged: making good governance more operational, ensuring proportionality in applying standards, strengthening capacity-building, and monitoring and accountability. Stakeholder participation and the role of public authorities were also identified as central. The group determined that the existing recommendation remained relevant but should be reinforced, with the next meeting scheduled for 11 December.

5. 19th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for Sport (MSL19), Monaco, 4 November 2026

The Secretariat updated on the preparations for the Monaco ministerial conference, confirming that invitation letters had been sent in August to states and relevant organisations, with responses coming in from a number of delegations. Efforts to boost registrations were

described, such as follow-up at the forthcoming GR-C meeting, special events in Strasbourg, and through permanent representations, especially involving France and Monaco.

The Executive Secretary led a discussion on whether to invite to the ministerial conference representatives from the Council of Europe Conference of INGOs and the Advisory Council on Youth, which are Observers to the Consultative Committee, but were not identified at the time the list of invitees was established. Some initial reluctance was expressed, mainly concerning the administrative complications of adding new invited bodies as the list was already shared with the CM, but it was agreed to await relevant feedback from the CC Bureau before making a final decision.

Regarding the draft programme, the Secretariat outlined the evolving list of panellists and keynote speakers for the opening, main sessions, luncheon, and closing. Gender balance and youth representation were emphasised for the opening session. The structure of thematic sessions and the challenge of time management - balancing presentations and interventions from Heads of delegations - were thoroughly discussed, with a commitment to carefully brief delegations so as to avoid overload and ensure effective participation in both sessions.

Elena Casero gave an update on the draft resolution, summarising the feedback received and the main issues raised (e.g., terminology around children and young athletes, inclusion of vulnerable adults, explicit references to specific groups, and anti-trafficking language). Several points were flagged for further discussion or consultation with relevant experts within the Council of Europe. It was agreed that the Secretariat would circulate an updated draft to the Bureau ahead of the GR-C, with clear highlighting of any issues requiring further attention or decision, and that these issues would be discussed with the Bureau during an online meeting organised for 18 September at 11 am.

6. IPACS Annual General Meeting

The Executive Secretary provided information on the upcoming IPACS Annual Meeting (2 October), open to all interested governmental experts from member states. He stressed the importance of Bureau members' engagement in this process to help bridge gaps between reported good governance assessments and recent controversies and to maintain alignment with ongoing revisions to the good governance recommendation.

7. Any other business

- **Proposal for a "Third Half" with FIFA:**

The Executive Secretary outlined a recent initiative by the Secretary General, published via Council of Europe channels, to propose a new "third half" dialogue with FIFA on integrity and good governance. Consultations are ongoing with FIFA, UEFA, and the IOC to explore how best to address governance and betting issues raised by recent events.

- **ESC visit in Armenia and questionnaire:**

Céline Guth delivered a brief report on the recent follow-up visit regarding the European Sports Charter in Armenia, noting the authorities' strong involvement and identifying the need for a greater balance between elite sport and broader sport for all.

The process for updating the questionnaire on the implementation of the European Sports Charter (ESC) was also explained: member states would be receiving the forms to be updated imminently, with a request for timely completion and return to enable proper analysis and preparation for the Monaco conference.

- **Other announcements:**

Antonio Parrilla notified the Bureau of his participation in the first meeting of the Drafting Committee on Risks and Harms of Online and Digital Addictions (BIO-ALN) in Strasbourg on 7 and 8 October 2026.

The Secretariat confirmed that the next Bureau meeting would be scheduled for 18 September at 11:00, ahead of the GR-C and the European Week of Sports.

Conclusion

The Chair thanked all participants for their active contribution to the detailed discussions and closed the meeting.

Appendix

Agenda

1.	Welcome	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	EPAS(2026)63
3.	Adoption of the draft report of the previous meetings	EPAS(2026)61 EPAS(2026)62
4.	Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance ➤ Draft recommendation and next steps ➤ First meeting of the WG on Good Governance	Draft Recommendation
5.	19th Council of Europe Conference of ministers responsible for sport (MSL19), Monaco, 4 November 2026 ➤ Invitation letters and PIN ➤ Follow-up and promotion of registrations (Governments, other organisations, young participants) ➤ Conference of INGOs and the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) ➤ Draft programme ➤ Draft Resolution	MSL19(2026)6 MSL19(2026)2 MSL19(2026)5
6.	IPACS Annual General Meeting ➤ Participation of governmental experts from CoE member states	
7.	Any other business ➤ SG proposal on “3rd half with FIFA” ➤ ESC Visit in Armenia ➤ Questionnaire ESC	
8.	Date, time and place of the next meeting	