

Strasbourg, 8 December 2023

EPAS(2023)72

Meeting of the EPAS GB Bureau

Thursday 7 December 2023

12.45pm – 2pm CET

Online (Teams platform)

Working language: English

REPORT

Participants

Governing Board (GB): Alexandre Husting (Luxembourg, Chair), Andrea Carletti (Italy, Vice-Chair), Solène Charuau (France), Ioanna Paraskevopoulou (Cyprus), Benthe Tanghe (Netherlands), Andrew Decelis (Malta), Diana Santos (Portugal, MSL18)

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

Secretariat: Sophie Kwasny, Francine Raveney, Cassandra Mactavish, Caroline Larghi, Emma Zanichelli

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the GB.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with the following items for consideration:

- 1) Welcome and adoption of the agenda
- 2) EPAS membership
- 3) 18th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for sport (MSL18)
- 4) Update on recent activities (Diversity Conference, Statutory Committee, Annual meeting of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport)
- 5) Start to Talk
- 6) 2024 calendar of activities
- 7) AOB
- 8) Date and place of the next meeting

2. EPAS membership

Sophie Kwasny shared that two EPAS member States (MS) have announced their withdrawal from the Partial Agreement at the end of the year: Belarus and Canada. Therefore, as of 1 January 2024, EPAS will count 39 member States. However, two other Council of Europe member States are more than likely to join the Partial Agreement in 2024 and the Secretariat is interacting with a further two countries.

Regarding the Consultative Committee, three seats are currently vacant as the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF) ceased to exist legally in 2023, Special Olympics Europe Eurasia (SOEE) didn't request for its membership to be renewed at the end of its mandate on 21 August 2023 and the GB decided on 2 June 2023 not to renew the membership of the International SAMBO Federation (FIAS) to the Consultative Committee. The Secretariat is currently analysing the requests it has received from other organisations, notably in light of the balance in the types of organisations composing the Consultative Committee.

The Chair mentioned that the work and the role of EPAS and the Council of Europe has been increasingly given greater recognition, especially at European Union meetings, notably within the Working Party on Sport. He stated that this momentum and opportunity should be used to promote EPAS and attract new countries. A letter to inform non-EPAS member States about EPAS' activities and promote EPAS' work could be sent to non-EPAS member States as communication has shown that they are not always aware about the immense scope of EPAS' activities.

The Secretariat agreed on the idea of sending a targeted letter and a detailed factsheet to non-EPAS member States at the beginning of 2024, after the possible accession of new states is confirmed.

Sophie Kwasny recalled that being an EPAS MS offers a certain number of advantages including being part of the MARS Network for example (non-EPAS member states solely attending as observers).

3. 18th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for sport (MSL18)

Diana Santos informed the Bureau that a Working Group including all involved national authorities (Ministry, Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth (IPDJ), municipalities etc.) has started working on the event. Halls and hotels have been preselected in Porto, Matosinhos and Vila Nova da Gaia, and need to be validated as soon as possible by the EPAS Secretariat. Therefore, a recognition visit is being organised on 18 December in order to validate the selection made by the Portuguese authorities and to clarify any issues that may arise concerning accommodation, travel, premises, equipment, transfers etc. Once these factors have been clarified, the EPAS Secretariat will start promoting the Conference.

The Portuguese authorities have foreseen that delegations will arrive on 7 October 2024. All participants will be invited to attend the Sports Merit Awards Ceremony, a prestigious national annual event. On 8 October in the morning, a ceremony could take place to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Macolin Convention (tbc), followed by the meeting of Senior Officials in Matosinhos. The Conference itself would take place on 9 October, with “Governing and governance in sport” as the main theme. On 10 October the Portuguese authorities would like to organise a discussion on the European Sports Charter (ESC) with young people from Portugal and abroad. There would be three panels: an overview of the ESC, one on gender equality and one on dual careers. Departures would be organised on 10 October in the afternoon.

4. Update on recent activities (Diversity Conference, Statutory Committee, Annual meeting of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport)

a) 2023 Conference on Diversity, 28-29 November 2023 in Schaan, Liechtenstein, and online

The Chair underlined the high quality of the organisation, the programme and the speakers. He noted the low number of participants in the room and that two sets of discussions on 29 November may be a format that is too long and discourages active participation.

Cassandra Mactavish underlined the broad spectrum of expertise of the debates. The report will be available soon.

b) 18th meeting of the EPAS Statutory Committee, 4 December morning, Strasbourg

The first part of the meeting was restricted to Permanent Representations of EPAS member States and dedicated to statutory items, with the EPAS’ programme for 2024-2027 and the scale of contributions for 2024 already having been approved by written procedure.

This was followed by an extended session open to Permanent Representations from non-EPAS member states, which put the spotlight on EPAS' work in the area of sport integrity and good governance. Four guest speakers were invited in order to share their experience and expertise in the field: André Villas-Boas, Football Manager and coach from Portugal, Mariam Bolkvadze, professional tennis player from Georgia, Pâquerette Girard-Zappelli, Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer at the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and Jean-Yves Lourgouilloux, Chair of the MARS Network and Deputy Public Prosecutor at the Judicial Court of Marseille. Alexandre Husting, Chair of the EPAS Governing Board, also contributed to the event and gave an overview of EPAS' deliverables in 2023. The meeting was followed by a standing lunch offered by the Permanent Representation of the Principality of Monaco.

c) Annual meeting of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport, 5 December, Strasbourg and online

The Chair reported that the meeting was interesting and involved real experts, with high-level exchanges. He raised the possible duplication of some of the work of the Pool with other initiatives.

Sophie Kwasny added that the Pool's potential will be further exploited and developed in 2024.

5. Start to Talk

The Secretariat was pleased to announce that work will be implemented in Cyprus and Quebec as of 2024. Thanks to the funding provided by Monaco as of 2024, activities will also be carried out in Morocco.

In accordance with the Bureau's decision at its last meeting, the GB will be consulted by written procedure regarding the use of part of the special account to finance the employment of the project officer in 2024.

Voluntary contributions may be available to support this project in 2024.

6. 2024 calendar of activities

The activities foreseen for 2024 were presented on the basis of the document in Appendix and participants were invited to consult the [calendar of activities](#) published on the EPAS website. Given the restricted team in the EPAS Secretariat and the high number of events including a Ministerial Conference, it was decided that a Forum on Sport and Human Rights would not be organised in 2024.

The future EPAS strategy would enable to identify priority topics on which EPAS' resources should focus.

7. AOB

No items were added under AOB.

8. Date and place of the next meeting

The meeting ended at 2pm. The next Bureau meeting will take place online in January 2024 (date to be decided).

APPENDIX: EPAS CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES 2024

Date	Event	Location	Comments
February 2024 tbc	European Sports Charter Support and Follow-up visit	Morocco <u>tbc</u>	
8 March 2024 tbc	Breakfast Roundtable on Women in Sport	Hybrid (Strasbourg and online)	Focus on gender equality and officiating. AVB already confirmed as a speaker remote. Good time to focus on All In Plus.
April 17-18 2024	European Sports Charter Support and Follow-up visit	Finland	
29-30 May 2024	Annual joint meeting of the EPAS Governing Board and Consultative Committee	Strasbourg	
Week 18--21 June 2024	MARS Network 3rd annual meeting	Strasbourg Lyon TBC	
8-9-10 October 2024	18th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport	Porto	

November 2024 (exact date tbc)	Start to Talk national launch, Quebec	Tbc	
3-4 December 2024	Annual Meeting of the Pool of International Experts in Safe Sport	Hybrid (City TBC and online)	
November/December 2024 (exact date tbc)	European Sports Charter Support and Follow-up visit	Tbc	3 rd visit for 2024 to be confirmed at a later date
2024 (exact date tbc)	Start to Talk national launch and training course, Cyprus	Tbc	
2024 (exact date tbc)	Start to Talk national launch and training course, Morocco	Tbc	
2024 (exact date tbc)	Ukraine and sport initiative	Tbc	
2024 (exact date tbc)	CC webinar (Democratic citizenship for children through sport)	Tbc	