

Strasbourg, 10 November 2025

EPAS(2025)77

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)

Consultative Committee (CC) Bureau Meeting

Strasbourg, 20 October 2025
16.30 – 18.00

Council of Europe
Avenue de l'Europe, Strasbourg
Room 6

Working language: English

Meeting report

1. Opening of the meeting

Charlotte Girard-Fabre, Chair of the Consultative Committee, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants – online and in person.

The Chair congratulated *Guido Battaglia* (GB) on his new role.

The quorum was confirmed by the Secretariat. The list of participants is appended to this report (see Appendix II).

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without any modifications (see Appendix I).

3. Discussion of future events

The Chair gave the floor to the Secretariat to provide information and additional insights into upcoming events.

3.1. Diversity Conference

The first event discussed was the Diversity Conference on “Sport and Intergenerational Challenges for Young People and Older Persons” to be held the following day, 21 October.

The Secretariat described how the nature of this conference would be different to previous meetings, with an emphasis on providing tangible solutions to the challenges faced by member states. The Diversity Conference will discuss best practice examples and how to implement them. Furthermore, they referenced the high registration among members of the Governing Board and Consultative Committee (CC) members, and the high-level speakers involved in the conference.

The Secretariat further discussed the programme, describing the composition of the three panels, the speakers and the moderators. This year’s Diversity Conference will also feature a ‘walking football’ demonstration by local clubs.

There were no comments or questions on the Diversity Conference.

3.2. EPAS Statutory Committee meeting

The second event concerned the 20th meeting of the EPAS Statutory Committee, scheduled for 12 November in Strasbourg. The subject matter of the Statutory Committee Meeting will be mental health and sport.

The Secretariat further called for assistance with finding a high-level elite sportsperson to speak at the meeting to encourage participation from the EPAS member and non-member states.

Annamarie Phelps offered to seek out an international rower that has advocated for mental health.

3.3. Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport

Another event presented was the Annual meeting of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport to be held in Paris on 13-14 November. The Secretariat outlined the agenda of the meeting. The pool is a working group that meets annually to develop draft guidelines for safer recruitment in sport and safeguarding children in sport. CC members were encouraged to attend the open webinar on the second day.

GB endorsed the importance of creating a harmonised framework for co-operation.

3.4. Forum on Sport and Human rights

Another highlight was the upcoming Forum on Sport and Human Rights, scheduled for 16 December in Paris. The event will take place in the Council of Europe's Paris office and will consist of two parts, a webinar in the morning and two working groups in the afternoon. This year's themes are "mental health" and "women's health in sport".

This forum is partially in line with the preparation for a new EU-Council of Europe joint project that is in the process of being finalised: the "Equal and Active" project following the joint EC-CoE "All in Plus" project that ended this year. The theme on mental health and sport was at the request of many of the EPAS member states and will be the focus of the next presidency of the Council of the European Union, i.e. Cyprus.

The Secretariat outlined the draft programme for the webinar and called for CC members to follow on the day.

The Chair highlighted that including referees in discussions on mental health would be important, and to consider possible referees who would be willing to speak at the event.

Annamarie Phelps (AMP) endorsed this opinion, invoking research carried out by the Football Association that highlighted how officials face the greatest issues with mental health in sport due to abuse.

The Chair further suggested the German athlete, Fabian Hambüchen, that has advocated for mental health in the past. Andrej Pisl (AP) endorsed this suggestion.

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

Finally, the last event discussed was the meeting of the Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance to be held in Paris on 17 December, with the Secretariat thanking the four present CC bureau members that are also members of the working group.

The Secretariat outlined the other members of the working group at the request of the CC. The full working group is composed of ten CC organisations:

- Centre for Sport and Human Rights
- European Athletes as Students (EAS)
- European Association for Sport Management (EASM)
- European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO)
- European Olympic Committees (EOC)
- EU Athletes
- International Dance Organization (IDO)
- International Sport and Cultural Association (ISCA)
- Play the Game (PTG)
- Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)

And ten Governing Board members:

- Austria
- Denmark
- France
- Italy
- Liechtenstein
- Luxembourg
- Monaco
- Portugal
- Slovenia
- Türkiye

The Secretariat advised that CC members attending the Forum should book a refundable hotel room as they were not sure if a hotel contract would be made available to participants. All participants attending the above-mentioned Forum and the Working Group would be eligible for their travel and subsistence expenses to be reimbursed.

The Secretariat briefly discussed the agenda of the Working Group, highlighting that a Chair would be elected among the Governing Board members. The recommendations that would be discussed were also raised, highlighting that it would be a framework discussion. The Secretariat further announced that they can be the point of contact for any questions.

Mogens Kirkeby (MK) and AMP endorsed the opinion that an external member to the group also partake in the working group in some form.

The mandate and timeline for the recommendations of the Working Group was discussed. The Secretariat highlighted that following the first meeting, a clearer picture of the timeframe will be formed.

4. CC membership

The Secretariat reminded the Bureau that a maximum of five new organisations could apply for membership to the CC. They also added that there are 12 current CC members up for renewal in 2026.

So far, the Secretariat has received three formal applications to join the CC:

- International Federation of Association Football (FIFA)
- World ParaVolley – note minimal issues with the application that should be easily resolved
- International Dart Federation (IDF) - note that this was the second time the IDF has applied the Terms of Reference does not in any way prevent multiple applications by the same organisation.

The Chair mentioned that two more applications were imminent:

- European Federation for Sport in the Workplace;
- European Federation of Squash.

At the last Governing Board Bureau meeting possible candidates were discussed including: the private sector and gym fitness centres, local level community sport, organisations involved in sport infrastructure at local or higher level, the inclusion of martial arts to discuss violence in sport, and winter sport.

The Secretariat reminded the CC that applications have to fulfil the criteria laid out in the updated Terms of Reference of the CC.

AMP highlighted the importance of discussing the principles and value of new members taking into account the European framework of EPAS versus their international bodies. It is also important to consider what benefit aspiring members believe they will gain in joining the CC.

5. Future vision of the Consultative Committee

The Chair called for an open discussion on the future of the CC, proposing three possible prompts to guide the discussion:

1. How can the CC remain the voice of diversity and inclusion in EPAS?
2. How does the CC want to collaborate with the Governing Board, in particular the new president, and the Secretariat?
3. What vision do CC members have for the CC over the next few years?

The Chair opened the discussion by referring to positive exchanges with the International Ski and Snowboard Federation regarding potential involvement, noting, however, that the federation expressed reservations due to the lack of a European-level framework.

MK highlighted that the Consultative Committee (CC) could strengthen its impact on the Governing Board by overcoming its current fragmentation. They proposed grouping members thematically to prepare joint recommendations, noting members' willingness to work in clusters. The Chair acknowledged this proposal, recalling previous attempts to establish such clusters and stressing the need for a coherent shared vision.

Patrik Perosa (PP) supported the idea of broader engagement, suggesting ways to involve members beyond those on the Bureau and beyond the single annual Plenary meeting. AMP agreed in principle but underlined that diversity within the CC is a strength, referencing the UK model where sports are divided into thematic groups. MK clarified that clusters could form around relevant political themes, allowing the CC to channel the contributions of the most representative and goal-driven organisations.

The Secretariat reminded members that the CC's Terms of Reference (ToR) allow only one organisation per sport and that certain applications did not comply with this rule. They encouraged focusing the discussion on the CC's long-term structure rather than individual applicants. AMP and AP warned against overrepresentation by major federations and noted the risk of political influence by large actors. Both supported creating more opportunities for CC interaction between meetings.

GB enquired about rules on overarching bodies to ensure balanced representation, and the Secretariat confirmed that such a balance currently exists. The Secretariat reaffirmed EPAS's commitment to ensuring each organisation's voice is heard, noting that 70–80% of members are active in some way. They invited reflection on how CC members could feel more involved and achieve tangible impact.

Andrej Pisl (AP) proposed that working or thematic groups could also promote members' expertise, feeding into Ministerial Conference themes. MK suggested collecting one-page inputs from each member as a basis for CC contributions, an idea supported by the Secretariat for consideration at the next meeting. MK further proposed that the Secretariat act as a filter

for CC submissions to the Governing Board, while PP recommended conducting a survey to gather members' activities and proposals. The Chair added that compiling a single document summarising members' annual work could be useful.

The Secretariat noted that many of these functions are covered in the annual Plenary report and suggested producing a document summarising CC contributions, similar to those used for monitoring conventions.

Additional points included:

MK raised the potential benefit of engaging with non-European states, given EPAS's openness beyond Europe.

AMP proposed that applications include the name of the individual directly representing the organisation, given that much of the CC's work depends on personal engagement. She also identified gaps in representation on climate action and corruption in sport.

GB reflected on the need to link convening and programming, proposing that future site visits could better connect CC and Governing Board members.

The Chair thanked members for the constructive discussion, noting that the topic would be revisited at a future meeting.

6. Promotion of CC members' activities

The Chair opened the roundtable discussion on the activities of each CC bureau member.

GB, on behalf of the Centre for Sport and Human Rights, highlighted the difficulties in the area of human rights with regards the geopolitical climate worldwide; however, this has granted an opportunity to reflect on possible changes to improve their impact. He shared that following successful consultations at the beginning of the year, the new report for 2025-2030 period has been launched, focusing on women's rights in sport.

AMP, on behalf of the European Olympic Committees, shared that they are in the post-Paris Olympics phase with elections and the changing of commissions. She pointed out that they are no longer in the gender equality and inclusion commission, they are now on the sustainability and society commission. She highlighted the difficulties and positives with the European Youth Olympic Festival. The next event will be the European Games in 2027 to be hosted by Türkiye but also faces difficulties with a challenging political climate. She further referenced the challenging political climate with regards Russia and Belarus, and Israel and Palestine, as well as difficulties with NOCs in countries like Bulgaria.

AP, on behalf of the European University Sports Association, shared that they had great success with regards steps towards gender equality and age equality and the General Assembly. He further celebrated the large number of European students – over 1900 – that participated in the Ljubljana marathon that took place the previous weekend. He discussed

the upcoming Winter Championships and the Winter Forum where the focus will be on mental health.

PP, on behalf of the International Dance Organization, celebrated that this year will be another record-breaking year with over 30,000 participants at IDO events, composed mostly of younger persons. They highlighted the preparations for the new five-year strategy and the discussions that are taking place around preparing regulations to make dance events more climate friendly, noting the difficulty with the high energy-consuming necessary elements such as music and lights. He went on to highlight the success of the recently implemented safeguarding measures, which have led to a rise in individuals coming forward to share stories that had previously remained unspoken.

MK, on behalf of the International Sport and Culture Association, shared that the organisation has just celebrated 30 years. He referenced attempts that have been made to broaden fundraising efforts into specific sports but also health and other areas. He noted that the organisation now has 27 employees. He also discussed the tender launched a few years ago by the International Platform on Sport and Development to identify a new administrative host, which was ultimately awarded to ISCA. As a result, the Platform is now managed by ISCA, included in its accounts, and benefits from both administrative and political support from the organisation. However, the Platform still has their own board and leadership. MK also stated that they would be open to doing this for other like-minded organisations.

MK highlighted that ISCA has implemented over 80 international collaboration efforts. The upcoming Move Congress will have 850 participants from 200+ organisations and 62 countries. There is an interest to do more in other continents, in particularly Africa. He regrettably noted that the Move Congress will no longer occur at the size to which it has grown as no member will be able to host it. They are exploring the idea of hosting multiple simultaneous events in the future perhaps in each continent.

The Chair, on behalf of the International Federation for Sports Officials, announced the signature of the FIA Convention against Online Abuse in Stockholm, now including sport officials. They are working on their strategy to convince international federations to become members and bring all sport officials together. The most effective means of achieving this is to convince each NOC to have an official sport official commission, citing those in Belgium and the Netherlands. They celebrated the launch of the campaign on gender equality in November, highlighting the slogan for the event: “give a whistle to a little girl and she will learn to say stop, to say no, and will find her place in the world and society”.

7. Any other business

No further items were discussed.

8. Date and place of the next Bureau meeting

The next bureau meeting will be held on 6 March 2026 in Strasbourg, in the afternoon following the Breakfast Roundtable.

9. Closing

The Chair thanked all CC bureau members for their active participation in the discussions, highlighting the valuable contributions made.

Appendix I - Agenda

1.	Opening of the meeting
2.	Adoption of the draft agenda
3.	<p>Events</p> <p>1.1. Diversity Conference on Sport and intergenerational challenges for young people and older persons, 21 October 2025</p> <p>1.2. 20th meeting of the EPAS Statutory Committee, 12 November, Strasbourg</p> <p>1.3. Annual meeting of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport, 13-14 November, Paris</p> <p>1.4. Forum on Sport and Human Rights, 16 December, Paris</p> <p>1.5. Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance, 17 December, Paris</p>
4.	<p>CC membership</p> <p>4.1 Overview of the CC membership</p>
5.	The future vision of the Consultative Committee – open discussion
6.	<p>Promotion of CC members' activities</p> <p>6.1 CC activities</p>
7.	AOB
8.	Date and place of the next Bureau meeting – 5 mars 2026
9.	Closing

Appendix II – List of Participants

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE BUREAU/BUREAU DU COMITÉ CONSULTATIF

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