

Strasbourg, 28 November 2025

EPAS(2025)81

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)

Meeting of the EPAS Governing Board Bureau

Tuesday 18 November 2025

1 pm – 2.15 pm CET

Online (Teams platform)

Working language: English

REPORT

Participants

Governing Board (GB): Solène Charuau (France, Chair), Ioanna Paraskevopoulou (Cyprus, Vice-Chair), Simon De Coster (Belgium, Member), Elnur Mammadov (Azerbaijan, Member), Antonio Parrilla (Italy, Member), Marija Jurčević (Croatia, Member), Michael Landau (Monaco, MSL19), Chrystel Chanteloube (Monaco, MSL19)

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

Secretariat: Stanislas Frossard (Executive Secretary of EPAS), Francine Hetherington Raveney (Deputy Executive Secretary of EPAS), Elena Casero (Programme Manager), Cassandra Mactavish (Senior Project Officer), Caroline Dollet (Administrative Assistant)

Apologies: Florian Botto (Monaco, MSL19), Catherine Farneti (Monaco, MSL19)

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Chair, Solène Charuau, opened the meeting and welcomed participants. The agenda was adopted without amendment (see Appendix). It was agreed that the meeting would follow the practical sequence of discussion items, beginning with feedback from recent events.

2. Feedback on the Statutory Committee meeting (12 November 2025)

Stanislas Frossard briefed the Bureau on the Statutory Committee meeting held the previous week. The Committee adopted the EPAS budget for 2026. Attendance from Permanent Representations was strong despite the proximity of a French public holiday, and the debate remained constructive.

In the extended session, Francine Hetherington Raveney highlighted the excellent contributions of the two invited speakers:

- Ann-Sophie Duyck, a Belgian former professional cyclist now active in athlete advocacy, delivered a compelling account of mental-health challenges experienced during her athletic career, including the pressures, stigma, and organisational shortcomings that can prevent athletes from seeking help. Delegations engaged actively, with the United Kingdom and Sweden particularly vocal during the exchange that followed.
- Marie Agostinucci of the University of Strasbourg presented an academic overview of how sport can both support and compromise psychological well-being. Her analysis offered a useful conceptual framing for the broader discussion.

The Chair noted the strong engagement of delegations and the overall quality of the session. A cocktail reception followed and facilitated further informal discussion among attendees.

3. Annual meeting of the Pool of international experts on safe sport (13-14 November 2025)

Elena Casero provided an update on the annual meeting of the Pool of international experts on safe sport held in Paris on 13 and 14 November. The first day was dedicated to an in-camera session focusing on the internal functioning of the Pool, clarification of working methods, and identification of priority deliverables for 2026, including the consolidation of research on safeguarding practices and data needs to support the preparations for the 2026 Ministerial Conference. The second day took place in co-operation with the French National Olympic and Sports Committee and brought together representatives of French sports federations in a hybrid format. Discussions addressed safer recruitment, reporting mechanisms, support to victims, safeguarding in international sport, and updates from the IOC. Participation included experts from Europe and beyond, illustrating significant global interest in the Council of Europe's work on child safeguarding. The meeting reaffirmed the Pool's role in supporting member states and in contributing expertise to ongoing EPAS initiatives, including the "Start to Talk" project and future capacity-building activities.

4. EPAS Forum on Sport and Human Rights (Paris, 16 December 2025)

Francine Hetherington Raveney provided an update on preparations for the Forum. The event will combine a morning webinar with more focused, technical workshops in the afternoon. The two primary themes are women's health in sport and mental health in sport, each covered separately through expert panels.

Speakers include representatives from INSEP and several medical specialists in athlete health. The Secretariat has incorporated feedback from the Diversity Conference by ensuring that interventions will be visually supported, clearly structured and of manageable length to maintain the attention of both in-person and online participants.

The Chair noted the importance of maintaining conceptual clarity between the two themes and avoiding unintentional merging of women's health with mental-health questions. The Secretariat will ensure this is reflected in the programme design and communications.

Workshops will aim to produce practical insights to feed into future EPAS programming, including potential contributions to the EU-CoE joint project on women's health in sport currently under negotiation.

5. Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance (17 December 2025)

Stanislas Frossard reported on preparations for the first meeting of the Working Group. Ahmed Temurci (Türkiye) has been approached as candidate Chair; his appointment remains pending. The Vice-Chair position is still open, and members were invited to propose suitable candidates, particularly in consideration of gender balance and geographical representation.

Cassandra Mactavish outlined the method foreseen for the first meeting. Interventions will be time-limited to ensure equal participation from all members. The Group is expected to deliver

a recommendation on the autonomy of sport in 2026, followed by a recommendation on good governance in 2027. Given the scope and complexity of the tasks, an extension of the Working Group's mandate may be requested later.

With regard to the replacement of Sara Massini who left the position of Secretary General of ENGSO, two candidates have been proposed (Theo Neyenhuis from ENGSO and Mark Lichtenhein from SROC). As both are male and Category B organisations, gender-balance and categorisation criteria cannot distinguish between them. The Bureau agreed to take a decision by written procedure following a one-week reflection period.

6. Working Group on the European Sports Charter (ESC)

The Chair, Solène Charuau, reported that the Group has advanced its work on the ESC questionnaire and on the national three-page summaries prepared on the basis of member-states responses. Nearly 30 states have already replied, and the quality of submissions is generally high.

The last meeting of the Group will take place in early 2026 and will determine the publication approach for the national summaries - either individually or via consolidated thematic reporting. The Group will also review the appropriate rhythm for updating the questionnaires. Cassandra Mactavish noted that the current two-year cycle is unrealistic in light of administrative workload. A three- or four-year cycle would better reflect the realities faced by governments and ensure stability. This view was supported by Simon De Coster and Michael Landau, who emphasised the complexity of coordinating inputs across multiple national actors.

ESC Support and Follow-up Visits (2026–2027)

Cassandra Mactavish presented the outline for the next cycle of visits. Four visits are planned in 2026:

- Monaco (March) – to include an IPACS workshop facilitated by the IOC;
- Armenia (June) – at the request of the authorities;
- Denmark (December) – prioritised as a new EPAS member;
- Montenegro – date pending.

A further four visits are expected in 2027, with initial expressions of interest already received. Detailed planning will be presented at the next Bureau meeting.

7. 19th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for Sport (Monaco, 3–4 November 2026)

Stanislas Frossard summarised the revised programme, developed on the basis of Scenario 3 presented at the previous Bureau meeting. This scenario offers the most balanced solution given the requirements of Monaco, the Saint-Denis Convention Secretariat and EPAS.

Day 1 (3 November) will include meetings of the Saint-Denis Committee and the Consultative Committee as well as the Youth Event, followed by the Senior Officials meeting. A two-hour session marking the 10th anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention will take place late afternoon. A welcome dinner and, if appropriate, a signing ceremony of the Saint-Denis Convention will close the day.

Day 2 (4 November) will be dedicated to the Ministerial Conference itself, including a restitution of the work done during the different Youth sessions and concluding with the EPAS restricted ministerial gathering. In the evening, the Gala dinner would take place in the Fairmont hotel.

Chrystel Chanteloube sought clarification on the CC schedule. It was agreed that the CC will retain a morning slot for both its Bureau meeting and its full meeting.

On the Youth Event, Michael Landau and the Secretariat reflected on lessons from Porto, highlighting that the structured exchange with the CC had been particularly successful. Further internal consultation will refine the model for Monaco, especially in view of Council of Europe commitments to youth mainstreaming.

8. Enlargement of the Consultative Committee

Cassandra Mactavish reported that four organisations have submitted applications to join the CC: World ParaVolley, the International Dart Federation, FIFA, and the European Federation for Company Sport.

In addition, several organisations have been identified for proactive outreach in view of diversifying CC membership: EuropeActive, the European Network of Outdoor Sports, the European Cyclists' Federation, the European Judo Union, and the International Biathlon Union. These organisations correspond to the strategic directions discussed previously by the GB Bureau and CC Bureau.

9. Follow-up to the European Commission Consultation on the European Sport Model

Stanislas Frossard outlined initial reflections on the European Commission's consultation on the European Sport Model. He recalled that EPAS member states rejected the inclusion of the European Sport Model concept during the ESC revision due to its political sensitivities and lack of shared definition. The Secretariat continues to analyse the emerging debate and will prepare a short written contribution for the Bureau.

He emphasised two structural principles that were deliberately excluded from the ESC due to lack of consensus:

- a mandatory pyramid linking all sport levels within a single federation;
- a universal "one federation per sport per country" model.

These principles do not reflect the diversity of sport organisation in Europe and risk being interpreted as encroaching on EU competence in competition policy.

10. Any other business

No additional items were raised.

11. Date and place of the next meeting

The Bureau agreed to meet again on 7 January 2026, online at the same hour.

Appendix: Agenda

1.	Welcome	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	EPAS(2025)79
3.	Annual meeting of the Statutory Committee (12 Nov. 25) ➤ Feedback	EPAS-SC(2025)2 EPAS-SC(2025)3
4.	Annual meeting of the Pool of international experts on safe sport (Paris, 13-14 Nov. 25) ➤ Update	EPAS(2025)65rev2
5.	EPAS Human Rights Forum (Paris, 16 Dec. 25) ➤ Update	EPAS(2025)66rev
6.	First meeting of the Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance (Paris, 17 Dec. 25) ➤ Update	EPAS(2025)73
7.	Last meeting of the Working Group on the European Sports Charter (Paris, 17 Dec. 25) ➤ Update	
8.	19 th CoE Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport (Monaco, 3-4 Nov. 2026) ➤ Update	
9.	Consultative Committee ➤ Update on its enlargement	
10.	Follow-up to the EPAS' contribution to the consultation launched by the European Commission 'A Strategic vision for sport in Europe: reinforcing the European Sport Model'	
11.	Any other business	
12.	Date and place of the next meeting	