

## Conference Conclusions: Bringing European NADOs Together to Strengthen the National Systems - The Role of European NADOs in the Global Anti-Doping Ecosystem

European NADOs call upon concerted action to strengthen the national and international anti-doping systems. It is asserted that such actions should engender enhanced cooperation and dialogue between European NADOs and collaboration between European NADOs and WADA, as well as other partners, especially the governments of Council of Europe member States, as well as with the Observers to both the Monitoring Group to the Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention (T-DO) and Ad-hoc European Committee for the World Anti-Doping Agency (CAHAMA), hereinafter referred to as “Partners”.

To elaborate further, the National Anti-Doping Organisations (NADOs) of the member States of the Council of Europe are calling upon the global anti-doping ecosystem to take action on the following themes:

- Opportunities and Challenges with International and European Sports Organizations
- Navigating Government Relations
- Cooperation with WADA.

These Conference Conclusions draw on the outcomes of the discussions held between European NADOs during the High-Level Conference that took place in Bergen, Norway, on 12 June 2025. The conclusions follow the event’s main themes and key questions, which aimed at identifying specific opportunities, practices, and potential solutions for NADOs and partners to consider.

### Opportunities and Challenges with International and European Sports Organisations

*How can NADOs navigate the expectations from international federations while maintaining their Operational Independence?*

European NADOs will:

- Engage in strong coordination, communication and collaboration with international federations, International Testing Agency (ITA), major event organisers, and national sport federations in order to ensure that as much as possible is solved through dialogue, combined efforts and balancing expectations;
- Plan as far ahead for major events as possible, notably when it comes to the Olympic Games and the recommendations from the pre-games task force, and bring those recommendations into the dialogue with the ITA.

European NADOs invite:

- Partners, to join in these efforts to establish stronger collaboration;
- Partners and stakeholders to bear in mind the respective roles and responsibilities in the anti-doping eco-system, particularly with regards to ensuring the operational independence of NADOs;
- International federations to consult and have direct dialogue with relevant NADOs and national sports federations on issues and rules which may impact the national anti-doping programs and priorities with the aim of:

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- enhancing joint anti-doping efforts;
- increasing flexibility on requirements and recommendations, and where possible provide recommendations rather than issue requirements;
- International federations and WADA to look for more harmonised definitions, for instance in relation to key concepts such as “international level athletes” and “international events”;
- International federations and ITA to inform NADOs of their needs in advance of major sport events, and to be more precise in their recommendations, with a view to making it easier for NADOs to budget, plan and organise logistics.

*How can we improve the cooperation between NADOs and ITA? Should we distinguish between third party service providers as ITA and private service providers? What role can NADOs play in enhancing the quality of Doping Controls?*

European NADOs will:

- Recognise that private service providers can be used to overcome geographical or financial difficulties, or to assist with ‘starting’ a testing programme;
- Work together with service providers to address issues and avoid conflicts, making sure there are clear expectations and good contractual practices;
- Support a shift from a focus on quantity to one that also ensures quality in sample collection;
- Seek ways to develop minimum quality standards for service providers, including clear criteria as to when to use NADOs in the home country or service providers from foreign jurisdictions;
- Welcome the efforts of ITA to improve the overall quality of testing at the international level;
- Seek solutions for cooperation-related challenges, for instance in relation to international federations having only certain remits covered by ITA, or problems relating to timelines for sharing information and requests for testing;
- Work to resolve difficulties relating to sharing intelligence and information with entities that are not Code Signatories;
- Coordinate with regional and international bodies, such as the Institute of National Anti-Doping Organisations (iNADO), to centralise NADO positions, and to organise further testing-centric conferences/seminars to allow for the sharing of information and good practices.

European NADOs invite:

- International federations and ITA to where reasonably possible to use NADOs as their preferred sample collection service providers;
- International federations and ITA to emphasise quality over quantity when planning and procuring sample collection.

*How should NADOs position themselves in relation to International Event Testing?*

European NADOs will:

- Develop formal cooperation agreements between NADOs, international federations, and the ITA;
- Promote and make use of the unique value that each NADO brings, from trained doping control officers (DCOs) and local chaperones, to logistical expertise and institutional connections;
- Promote shared training and certification to ensure quality and consistency across organisations;
- Facilitate national-level coordination, led by NADOs, involving public authorities such as customs, health, and law enforcement.

European NADOs invite:

- Partners to recognize and activate the unique value NADOs bring to International Event Testing, from trained DCOs and local chaperones, to logistical expertise and institutional connections;
- ITA and European and International Federations to use, where possible, NADOs to support their event testing, and include them early in the Test Distribution Plan, especially when events take place on home soil.

## Navigating Government Relations

*How can we ensure a sound balance between on the one hand setting expectations of activities and reporting with a view to ensuring NADO accountability, and on the other hand that this neither undermines the NADO operational independence nor the predictability and integrity of the national antidoping programmes?*

European NADOs will:

- Support the further development and refinement of an improved definition of NADO Operational Independence in the World Anti-Doping Code;
- Support WADA's Working Group on National Anti-Doping Organization Operational Independence, particularly in regard to fundamental questions relating to the importance of independence and means to achieve it;
- Review their safeguards aimed at ensuring operational independence after the new definition is agreed in the 2027 World Anti-Doping Code, and introduce the necessary changes in co-operation with relevant public authorities;
- Communicate and coordinate with WADA and T-DO well in advance of any potential issues that may emerge related to operational independence.

European NADOs invite:

- T-DO and WADA to support European NADOs that may face difficulties in implementing a new definition of operational independence, including through appropriate technical assistance such as legal advice, online consultations, or onsite visits as needed;
- T-DO and WADA to approach in writing, if requested, relevant public authorities in a country to explain importance of NADO operational independence and encourage them to take necessary legal or financial steps to meet the relevant requirements;
- Governments and T-DO to consider amending relevant Recommendations at the level of the T-DO or Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to strengthen NADO operational independence;
- Governments to consider amending the UNESCO Convention to better ensure the operational independence of NADOs.

*From a NADO-perspective, how can governments support the NADOs in ensuring their framework conditions (legal, financial, human resources), including the legal basis for antidoping activities?*

European NADOs will:

- Encourage governments to start consultations on legislative processes relevant for anti-doping early in order to address any unexpected potential obstacles which may occur;
- Clearly identify areas of the law which may need to be changed, and inform and coordinate with relevant authorities, particularly ministries responsible for sport in order to facilitate a smooth adaptation to new requirements to the national anti-doping programs;
- As far as possible, proactively search for other sources of funding, such as from National Federations or private actors;
- Search to improve their visibility in the public domain to showcase their relevance and achievements.

European NADOs invite:

- Governments to ensure that there are key people in the ministry and/or to the office of the competent Minister responsible for antidoping who are knowledgeable and can act as focal points for NADOs;

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- National authorities to ensure that the applicable legal framework is appropriately detailed, yet avoids as far as legally possible a need to adopt new laws or revisions every time there are changes to the World Anti-Doping Code or International Standards;
- Governments to recall the need to adapt their legislation by also referring, in addition to the Code, to international instruments such as the Council of Europe Anti-Doping Convention (ETS 135) and UNESCO's International Convention Against Doping in Sport;
- National authorities to help NADOs to impose certain anti-doping obligations on national federations, and to better facilitate cooperation between national sports federations and NADOs;
- Governments to ensure sufficient funding for NADOs, and to consider adopting laws or measures which stipulate that a certain percentage of the sport budget would be, by default, secured for anti-doping activities.

*From a NADO-perspective, how can governments ensure sufficient cooperation and the effective exchange of information between relevant national authorities and NADOs?*

European NADOs will:

- Seek an effective legal framework and memoranda of understanding for cooperation with law enforcement entities, such as police, customs and other national authorities;
- Encourage two-way, structured cooperation where NADOs can provide information to law enforcement agencies but also as far as legally possible receive feedback and follow-up;
- Promote international cooperation between NADOs and international law enforcement entities;
- Contribute to a system of cooperation that is based on mutual trust, flexibility, and an understanding of respective roles and responsibilities.

European NADOs invite Governments to:

- Ensure that NADOs have appropriate powers to carry out their functions or be given more powers if needed, while equally ensuring there is a suitable balance with law enforcement powers.

## Cooperation with WADA

*How can WADA support NADOs effort for strengthening the national anti-doping systems? And how can NADOs support the efforts of the Council of Europe in strengthening European relations with WADA?*

European NADOs will:

- Recognise WADA's dual role as both enabler and a regulator, and play a constructive role in compliance efforts such as audits;
- Commit to open, honest and direct communication with WADA to solve problems and issues in a cooperative manner, and to respect different perspectives and differences of opinion;
- Support efforts to strengthen the trust in the anti-doping system with a view to ensure the credibility of joint efforts for clean sports;
- Reconfirm their commitment to clean sport and distance from events that promote doping, such as the so-called "Enhanced Games".

European NADOs invite WADA to:

- Ensure a balance between their role as an enabler and a regulator, to support further development while also enforcing compliance and harmonisation in anti-doping programmes and actions;
- Recognise the support NADOs give to WADA activities and efforts, while also recognising that the lack of open support on particular issues does not reflect a lack of commitment in the fight against doping in sport;
- Commit to open, honest and direct communication with NADOs to solve problems and issues in a cooperative manner, and to respect different perspectives and differences of opinion.

## Closing remarks

These Conference Conclusions will be circulated to all European NADOs. With a view to eventual follow-up, European NADOs would also like to invite the Council of Europe, and relevant partners to ensure a continuation of events and activities of this nature with a view to find means to bring European NADOs together, to strengthening national systems, and ensure that European NADOs continue to innovate and lead in global anti-doping activities.

## List of Participating NADOs

NADOs from the following Council of Europe member States took part in the Conference:

Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

## Conference Programme

<b>8:30-8:59</b>	<b>Arrival and Registration</b>
<b>9:00-10:00</b>	<b>1. Opening of the Conference</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rune Andersen, Anti-Doping Norway</li><li>• Erlend Hanstveit, State Secretary, the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Culture and Equality</li><li>• Bjørn Berge, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe</li><li>• Witold Banka, President of WADA</li><li>• Q&amp;A</li></ul>
<b>10:00-10:30</b>	<i>Coffee and Networking Break</i>
<b>10:30-12:30</b>	<b>2. Theme 1: Opportunities and Challenges with International and European Sports Organisations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Presentation: Setting the Scene<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. International Federations' (IF) Influence on National Anti-Doping Programmes</li><li>b. Cooperation with ITA and Private Service Providers</li><li>c. Role of NADOs in International Event Testing.</li></ul></li><li>b) Breakout discussions at the tables</li><li>c) Presentation and discussion of outcomes in plenary</li></ul>
<b>12:30-13:30</b>	<i>Lunch</i>
<b>13:30-15:30</b>	<b>3. Theme 2: Navigating Government Relations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Presentation: Setting the Scene<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Balancing NADO Operational Independence and Accountability vis-à-vis Governments</li><li>b. Providing the legal and Financial Framework for NADOs</li><li>c. Cooperation with Police, Customs and Other Public Authorities</li></ul></li><li>b) Breakout discussions</li><li>c) Presentation and discussions of outcomes in plenary</li></ul>
<b>15:30-16:00</b>	<i>Coffee and Networking Break</i>
<b>16:00-16:45</b>	<b>4. Theme 3: Panel Debate - Cooperation with WADA</b>
<b>16:45-17:00</b>	<b>5. Concluding Remarks</b> <b>6. Closing of the Conference</b>