

Breakfast Roundtable on women and girls' participation in sport

6 March 2026, Strasbourg (France) / Online

Speakers' biographies

***Disclaimer:** Each speaker has provided their own picture and short biography which are published hereunder.*

Hanne Juncher

Director, Directorate of Security, Integrity and Rule of Law, Council of Europe



Statement

Before becoming Director of Security, Integrity and Rule of Law, Hanne was the Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and in charge of the Council of Europe's action against economic crime, including MONEYVAL and large-scale technical assistance programmes on economic crime.

Before that she headed the Council of Europe's work on justice and legal co-operation, including the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), on private and public law, and on judicial reform.

Prior to that, she worked for the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), represented the Council of Europe in North Macedonia, and headed the Council of Europe's human rights support and awareness-raising work.

Hanne joined the Council of Europe as a legal adviser in 1997. She also worked for the Ministries of Defence of Denmark and the United Kingdom. She has postgraduate degrees in law from Copenhagen and Essex Universities.

Charlotte Girard-Fabre

Chair, EPAS Consultative Committee



Statement (in English and French)

I am 44 years old, I have been a high-level sportswoman since the age of 13, and I wish to represent this new generation of committed women. The quest for excellence and the requirement of performance led me to referee at the Olympic Games in Sochi (Russia) 2014 and Pyeongchang (South Korea) 2018, and I sharpen my skills and expertise every day to honor my 10 Olympic rings.

A fighter at heart and an explorer of new horizons, I push my limits in sport as well as in my professional life today and tomorrow. Decision-making,

time management and conflict management are among my areas of expertise. Resolutely focused on excellence and performance, I accompany your teams collectively to develop a disruptive and pragmatic approach.

An ardent defender of gender diversity and the place of women in our society, I am also passionate about civic engagement: elected Secretary General of the International Federation for Sports Officials, Secretary General of the French Association of Multisport Referees and Ambassador of several think-tanks, I have also chosen to act at the highest institutional level (Ministries, UNSS, FFHB, ...). A civil servant, after holding positions at national and local level within the Ministry of Sport, she has been Ministerial Delegate for Combating Violence in Sport since 2020. Appointed Director of Sports in July 2022, she served as Ministerial Delegate for Major Sports Events from December 2023 to October 2024.

Marie Denitton

Gender Equality Rapporteur, EPAS Consultative Committee; Office Director, ENGSO



Presentation

Marie Denitton is the International coordinator of the Swedish Sports Confederation, the Office Director of ENGSO, the European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation, and the Gender Equality Rapporteur in the EPAS Consultative Committee. Marie has always been engaged in sports – as leader, member of the board, coach, employee and last but not least, as an engaged parent. She has been active in several sports, but equestrian is her main sport and she was a judge in dressage for more than 20 years. Her education is in business and marketing in her hometown, Linköping in Sweden. Marie believes in the power of grassroots sports, the importance of sport in society and the joy that sports bring into the life of so many people!

Lombe Mwambwa

CEO, Global Observatory for Gender Equality & Sport



Presentation

Dr Lombe Mwambwa, PhD is the CEO of the Global Observatory for Gender Equality and Sport and a member of the University of Lausanne (UNIL) Institute of Sport Sciences. For about 20 years, she has worked with leaders of sport organisations and sport policy makers in Africa, Asia, and Europe. She is an Alum of the University of Zambia, the University of Zimbabwe, and the University of Chichester, UK. Dr Mwambwa is also Secretary General at the National Organisation for Women in Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation (NOWSPAR) in Zambia. She currently leads the work of the Global Observatory to establish a knowledge pool and repository to facilitate monitoring of progress on women, physical education, physical activity, and sport.

Sarah Bellew

Head of Communications & Engagement, Women in Sport UK



[Presentation](#)

[Video](#)

Sarah Bellew is Head of Communications and Engagement at Women in Sport, where she leads the organisation's strategy to shift culture, influence policy and grow support by shining a light on gender inequality in sport.

An award-winning journalist with 20 years' experience across national and international media, Sarah specialises in turning research and evidence into powerful public narratives that drive debate and action. She leads integrated communications, partnerships and income strategies that strengthen both the charity's influence and sustainability.

Under her leadership, Women in Sport has delivered bold, agenda-setting campaigns including Mini Allies and Black Girls and Sport: A Breakup Story, sparking national conversation, securing widespread media coverage and building cross-sector partnerships to address systemic barriers facing women and girls.

She is also a co-founder of Northern Grit, an annual Manchester-based event designed to showcase how the city region does things differently - convening business, civic and sporting leaders to drive greater corporate investment into women's and girls' sport.

As an athlete, Sarah currently represents England in Touch rugby and has won two European gold medals and two World Cup bronze medals. She also serves as a Non-Executive Director at England Touch.

Nadia Bonjour

Founder, NB Communication; Gender equality advocate in sport



[Presentation](#)

[Video](#)

As a strategic communicator and storyteller, Nadia has navigated between the private and public sector from corporate to media, PR agency to Olympic sport in both a local and international context. After six years at the International Olympic Committee (IOC) heading the Institutional Communications unit, she founded NB communication in 2019 — an independent consultancy based in Lausanne, Switzerland, providing creative, inclusive and strategic communication services and advisory. A keen wordsmith and portrayal & sport specialist, Nadia was raised on the premise that it's not what you say, but how you say it, spurring her to put her passion for language and her fifteen years of communication experience to good use by leading educational seminars on portrayal & sport and advocating for more equality and inclusion through language.

Caroline Henry

Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Sports, CANAL+



Presentation

A graduate of ESJ Paris (with a double degree in Information/Communication and Education Sciences), Caroline Henry joined the TF1 Group in 1997, first working in the sports department at LCI and then at TF1 for 25 years. During those years, she rose through the ranks of TF1's sports department, covering numerous sporting events such as the Football and Rugby World Cups, the Olympic Games, etc. (live on the news / regular reports on major competitions). In 2018, she was appointed editor-in-chief of TF1's 1 p.m. news programme. Caroline Henry joined CANAL+ in 2022 as deputy director of sports editorial, in charge of reporting. Her mission is to support the development of sports reporting, internal productions and external co-productions.

Päivi Tolppanen

Vice-President, Finnish Paralympic Committee; Para judo coach



Presentation

Päivi Tolppanen (FIN) is a former parasport athlete in judo and goalball. In judo, she has achieved bronze twice in European Championships and fifth place in the Paralympics 2012. In goalball, she is both European and World Champion and took 4th place in the Paralympics 2000 and 2004. As a coach, she has led the way for the Finnish women's national goalball team. In judo, she has coached both VI and able-bodied judokas. Currently, she is also a vice president of the Finnish Paralympic Committee and a member of the classification Committee of IBSA (International Blind Sports Association).

Conny Kreuter

Professional dancer and international champion, Austria



Conny is a multifaceted professional whose career spans elite sports, high-stakes communication, and mental coaching. Born in Vienna, she developed a foundation in competitive swimming before transitioning into the world of Professional Latin American Dance in 2005. Her athletic career is marked by multiple Austrian Championship titles in both individual and formation dance, as well as two runner-up finishes on the prominent ORF show, Dancing Stars.

Beyond her own performances, Conny is a highly accomplished coach and choreographer. She holds a degree in Sports Science from the University of Vienna and has guided Latin formation teams to three World

Championship Silver medals. In 2021, she made history as the first female Head Choreographer at ORF.

Since 2010, Conny has been a fixture in the Austrian media landscape, serving as a host and moderator across TV, radio, and various digital platforms. She leverages this expertise as a PCM (Process Communication Model) Trainer, specializing in personality development and effective communication. As a Mental and Energy Coach for professional athletes since 2012, she bridges the gap between physical performance and psychological resilience.

Jane Dennehy

Research and Advisory Director, The Gender Hub



Dr. Jane Dennehy is a social science researcher and consultant specialising in gender equality and inclusion in sport and media. She holds a PhD in Gender and Management from the London School of Economics and a Master of Laws from the University of Law. Jane has designed evidence-based equality frameworks, contributed to strategic reviews, and developed and delivered training to sports organisations across Europe. Her research spans gender mainstreaming, media representation of women athletes, bias, and widening access. She has recently completed three years lecturing at the University of London on international sport development to Olympians and former professional athletes from over 30 countries.

Bárbara Butragueño

Assistant Director-General, Women and Sport, Spain



Presentation

Bárbara Butragueño Madrid is Deputy Director General for Women and Sport at Spain's High Council for Sports (CSD), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports. She provides strategic leadership and oversees the design and delivery of national policies, programmes, funding schemes and institutional cooperation to promote gender equality in sport. Her current priorities include strengthening women's and girls' participation and visibility in sports, and advancing comprehensive, evidence-based approaches to women's health in sport across generations.

Before joining CSD, she held senior public service roles in equality and non-discrimination. As Deputy Director General for Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination at Spain's Ministry of the Presidency, she represented Spain in European and international equality networks and working groups, including the EU High Level Group on Equality, the Governmental Focal Points Network, the European Network of Equality Bodies (EQUINET), the Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) and the Ibero-American Network against Discrimination (RIOOD). She coordinated and participated in inter-institutional bodies addressing discrimination, racism and inclusion, serving as Secretary of Spain's Council for the Elimination of Racial or Ethnic Discrimination and contributing to

monitoring structures for Spain's Hate Crime Action Plan, as well as UNHCR-related working groups on non-discrimination and institutional cooperation against racism. She has also coordinated major institutional campaigns and programmes in the area of gender-based violence prevention.

She is First Vice-President of the Observatory for Equality in Sport and a member of Spain's Observatory against Violence, Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance in Sport and the ONCE Observatory on Sports Practice and Physical Activity.

Evert Verhagen

Senior Expert, Health and Performance, UEFA



Presentation

Evert Verhagen (1976) is a Human Movement Scientist and Epidemiologist with extensive expertise in sports medicine and injury prevention. He serves as a senior research expert in the Medical and Anti-Doping Department of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA). In addition to this role, he is a professor at the Department of Public and Occupational Health at Amsterdam UMC, Netherlands, and the editor-in-chief of BMJ Open Sports & Exercise Medicine. His work focuses on the prevention of injuries related to sports and physical activity, with particular emphasis on monitoring, cost-effectiveness, and implementation strategies. He has supervised numerous national and international PhD candidates and postdoctoral researchers and has (co-)authored an extensive portfolio of peer-reviewed publications in these areas.

Luca De Simoni

EU Project Manager, National Amateur League of the Italian Football Federation, Italy



Head of CSR - Sustainability and Social Impact at the National Amateur League of the Italian Football Federation.

Previously working for European and international organizations, obtained a Law Master Degree in Rome, along with 2 Erasmus programs completed in Malta and Brussels. Consequently obtained a Master Degree in Global Economics and Social Affairs at the University of Venice Ca' Foscari and a Diploma in Sustainability and social impact management at Luiss Business School. Beside the position as Head of CSR currently collaborates with SkySport Tv as a contributor and as a Guest Lecturer at the University of Milano Bicocca (Maspes) and Bologna University.

Francine Hetherington Raveney

Deputy Executive Secretary of EPAS, Council of Europe



Francine Hetherington Raveney is an expert in the fields of: sport policy, gender equality, diversity, project management, script analysis, audiovisual co-productions, and communication, amongst others. She obtained a Masters Degree in English and French Literature at The Queen's College, Oxford University (1992-1996), a Masters Degree in Women's Studies at The Queen's College, Oxford University (1996-1997) and then carried out doctoral studies in France in politics and literature at Strasbourg University (1997-1998).

Since 2000, she has worked in a number of international organisations, including the Council of Europe, where she was a project manager for the Eurimages film fund for 11 years (2009-2020), and WHO Europe (2004-2005) where she was a Managing Editor. She is the founder, former Executive Director and currently an Honorary Member of the European Women's Audiovisual (EWA) Network. She is also a member of the New Dawn Film Fund jury and regularly teaches pitching and gives presentations at festivals and universities throughout Europe.

Since April 2021 she has worked as the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS), where she oversees resources, works with the Governing Board and partner organisations to ensure that topical thematic activities (such as gender equality, diversity, integrity and good governance in sport) and conferences (e.g. on combating gender-based violence in sport) are dealt with smoothly and effectively.

Stanislas Frossard

Head of the Sport Division and Executive Secretary of EPAS, Council of Europe



Stanislas has served as Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport ([EPAS](#)) following its creation in 2007. Since 2025 he is also responsible for the [Sport Conventions](#). During his tenure he has led key initiatives, co-ordinated the negotiation of numerous standards and overseen the drafting of the Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (the "Macolin Convention") as well as the organisation of Ministerial Conferences. From 2021 to 2025 he chaired the Council of Europe's Staff Committee. He joined the Council in 2003, working on the Anti-Doping and Spectator Violence Conventions, and liaising with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), UNESCO and international sports federations, among others. Prior to this, he worked as an NGO leader, trainer and consultant in the youth, refugee and environmental sectors.

Caterina Bolognese

Head of the Gender Equality Division, Directorate of Equal Rights and Dignity, Council of Europe



Caterina Bolognese's background is in languages and law, including feminist legal theory, and she has worked in comparative criminal law research at the Max-Planck-Institut in Freiburg (Germany). She joined the Council of Europe in 1997, working on constitutional and criminal law reforms, monitoring trafficking for sexual exploitation, then for many years with the anti-torture monitoring team, where she focused on various topics, including push-backs in the high sea and women in prison. From 2011 to 2015 she directed the Office in Georgia. Since 2018 Caterina manages the gender equality cooperation and policies team supporting the Gender Equality Commission in developing the Council of Europe's [Gender Equality Strategy](#), recommendations on [sexism](#), [the rights of migrant women and girls](#), equality and AI and tech-facilitated violence against women and girls, as well as [guidelines on the place of men and boys in gender equality policies and in policies to combat violence against women](#).

Charlotte Girard-Fabre

Chair, EPAS Consultative Committee

[Statement](#) (only available in French)

See short biography on page 1.