

Strasbourg, 22 February 2022

EPAS(2022)4

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)

Meeting of the Bureau of the EPAS Governing Board

Monday 17 January 2022

9:00 am – 11:00 am CET

Via video-conference

Report

Participants:

Alexandre Husting (Chair), Andrea Carletti (Vice-Chair), Andrew Decelis, Tone Jagodic, Alexey Morozov, İnanç Özçakmak

Excused:

Kolë Gjeloshaj, François Tricarico

EPAS Secretariat:

Sophie Kwasny, Francine Hetherington Raveney, Michael Trinker, Françoise Rui, Caroline Larghi

Opening by the Chair

The meeting agenda was adopted with no modifications.

1. Sport Division: EPAS and the Sport Conventions Secretariat

The Chair welcomed Sophie Kwasny (SK) as the new EPAS Executive Secretary. She introduced herself as a lawyer who had worked at the Council of Europe for nearly 25 years in a wide range of positions, including Head of the Data Protection Unit. She had been appointed Head of the Sport Conventions Division in May 2021. She was pleased to be joining EPAS as Executive Secretary and mentioned Stanislas Frossard's valuable achievements during 12 years within EPAS.

She addressed the question of why EPAS and the Sport Conventions were being put together and explained that the aim was for there to be more synergy within both teams to avoid overlaps and to work together in a common direction with the same vision shared by all colleagues. SK would benefit from her experience in the Sport Conventions Division as many representatives in that sector were also familiar with EPAS' activities.

The GB bureau took note of SK's oral presentation.
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Governing Board

2. Programme of activities 2022

SK updated the participants on the forthcoming EPAS activities. Two main events were confirmed:
- **13 June (afternoon) - 14 June 2022 (all day):** 16th joint meeting of the EPAS Governing Board and Consultative Committee, preceded by GB in camera plenary morning of 13 June;
- **25-27 October 2022:** 17th Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport

The Programme of Activities would focus on 2022 priorities which were linked to the budget cycle adopted for two years (2022-2023). A document outlining priorities would be shared at a future bureau meeting.

The GB bureau took note of the information provided.
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3. Incoming members

SK announced that two new countries had requested to become EPAS members:

a) the Slovak Republic, which was already an Observer to EPAS, had sent a letter to the Secretary General received on 11 January 2022. The EPAS Secretariat would officially inform the Governing Board and the Consultative Committee of this new member once the Secretary General had replied officially to the letter.

b) Canada had expressed its interest to become an EPAS member as well, but the procedure was different concerning membership for a non-Council of Europe member state as a decision

needed to be adopted by the Committee of Ministers. The first step would be for the Secretariat to consult the Statutory Committee by email.

The GB bureau took note that an informal written consultation of the Statutory Committee would be carried out.

4. Bureau seats

Two vacant seats were available in Regions 1 and 4.

a) Region 1: Alexey Gorbunov, Russian Federation, express his interest to become Bureau member.

b) Region 4: two candidates, one from Ukraine and one from Cyprus, had expressed their interest.

In order to keep confidentiality and to fill the seat as soon as possible, it was decided that an online election would take place via the KUDO platform in February (date TBC).

The GB bureau noted that a specific election session would be organised to designate the bureau representatives.

5. Evaluation of North Macedonia

Michael Trinker (MT) explained the numerous steps which had taken place prior to this evaluation visit of North Macedonia carried out by videoconference. The report would be made available in February 2022.

The Chair asked for news about the planned visit to Albania. MT replied that an email had been sent in October with details of the procedure, the first exchanges in the framework of the evaluation should also be conducted online. Albania might not be ready for such an exercise because of different priorities and MT would check what would be the preferred dates to conduct the evaluation.

The GB bureau took note of the information provided.

6. Plenary GB and CC (13-14 June)

The format of the joint GB/CC plenary meeting would be decided on depending on the COVID-19 situation.

İnanç Özçakmak (IO) mentioned that the WADA symposium scheduled in Switzerland for March had been postponed until 11-12 June, but this would not affect the joint GB and CC meeting.

The GB Bureau reconfirmed the dates of the 2022 GB and CC joint plenary meeting on 13 June (afternoon) - 14 June (all day), preceded by the in camera GB plenary meeting (13 June morning).

Consultative Committee (CC)

7. Request for membership from the Centre for Sport and Human Rights (CSHR)

The Consultative Committee currently has 29 members, with a limit of 30. The CSHR's application had arrived late in 2021 and the bureau of the GB would shortly receive a consultation email from the EPAS Secretariat including (i) the CSHR's letter of interest; (ii) the EPAS terms of reference; and (iii) the draft eligibility report. If the application was approved by the GB Bureau, the report would then be sent to the CC for an informal consultation and then to the GB for official voting.

Action: The EPAS Secretariat would send information on the CSHR application to the GB bureau members

Ministerial Conference

8. Themes of the Ministerial Conference in Turkey (Antalya) (25-27 October 2022)

İnanç Özçakmak (IO) confirmed the location of the Conference. An initial discussion with a first round of proposals had been held on 15 November at the last GB bureau meeting. This was a work in progress.

SK proposed the following two key themes for the main plenary meeting of Ministers of Sport on 26 October:

- Sport for all;
- Rethinking sport and the values of sport after COVID-19.

Other topics had been suggested by the participants such as inclusion of refugees and migrants through sport, or sport for children. The revised European Sports Charter (ESC) should be the underlying thread.

The following sub-themes were also suggested by the GB bureau members:

- Gender equality;
- Inclusion of people with disabilities;
- Social integration;
- Mental health;
- Challenges in sport policies.

Francine Hetherington Raveney (FHR) informed the Bureau that a meeting would be organised by the Secretariat over the coming week to discuss the retroactive planning for the organisation of this major event, with clear timeframes and deadlines.

Action: The EPAS Secretariat would send a save the date email to the national authorities of the countries to be invited and would advance with the timeline planning.

Thematic focus / activities of interest

9. Outcome of the e-sport/e-gaming roundtable (22/11/2021) - [EPAS\(2021\)67](#)

Following an expression of interest by Portugal, a survey on e-sports/e-gaming had been launched, with replies from 23 countries who recognised the importance of this subject. Representatives from 15 countries had attended the roundtable on 22/11/2021.

Several questions were asked by the GB bureau about this subject further to the presentation on the roundtable by the Secretariat:

- Was there any link with the Macolin Convention?
- Should e-sport/e-gaming be a priority for EPAS?
- Was e-sport/e-gaming linked to violence or criminality, and is it dangerous for minors?
- What was the real link between e-sport/e-gaming and EPAS?
- What were the main responsibilities of EPAS in relation to this topic and the actions that needed to be taken?
- Was there any link with the revised ESC?

It was agreed that e-sport/e-gaming was a transversal issue. A report had been commissioned in conjunction with the Macolin Convention on this topic at national levels and this subject could be discussed further when all of the relevant information had been compiled. A strategic approach would be needed as four countries had already recognised e-sport/e-gaming.

The Chair stressed that the GB bureau with the support of the Secretariat should define whether e-sport/e-gaming is an area that falls within the competences and capacities of EPAS' where further initiatives can be taken.

Action: The EPAS Secretariat would prepare a written note explaining how e-sport/e-gaming might be a relevant area of work for EPAS

10. Feedback of the Integrity Conference (6-7/12/2021) - EPAS(2022)01

FHR reported orally on this conference in addition to the draft report provided. She mentioned that a full recording was available on the [webpage](#) and more relevant information was also available as a resource on that page.

The GB bureau took note of the report and the oral presentation.

11. IPACS update

FHR provided an update on the work of Task Force 3 and explained that the timeline had been reviewed to ensure that all those involved could provide feedback in a timely manner, with a view to ensuring greater consensus. The Task Force 3 Benchmarks would only be formally approved by end 2022.

Action: The Secretariat would prepare a brief update on the work of IPACS Task Force 3.

12. Informal Committee of Ministers meeting - 20/01/2022 - SG INF(2022)2

The Secretary General's information document on the Strategic priorities 2022-2025 of the Council of Europe in the sport sector was shared with the GB bureau members. SK explained the objective of this event which was to raise the visibility of the Council of Europe's work in the area of sport to the permanent representations in Strasbourg. The EPAS Chair would represent EPAS and the EPAS Executive Secretary would take part as well (to present two Conventions). It was important for the Permanent Representatives to have a full picture of the work carried out in the field of sport by the Council of Europe.

The GB Bureau took note of this information.

13. Sport Conventions

SK provided detailed updates about the Sport Conventions:

a) Anti-Doping Convention: The Monitoring Group (T-DO) of the Convention held its last Plenary on 13-14 December and adopted the reports of the evaluation visits carried out in the Netherlands and in the Russian Federation. Two other important achievements of the T-DO:

- The adoption of a Recommendation "on the protection of whistleblowers in the context of the fight against doping" which reaffirms Council of Europe principles on the protection of whistleblowers and adapts them to the sport and anti-doping reality. It proposes an overall

system which keeps the right balance between encouraging persons to talk, protecting them and ensuring that information provided will be appropriately circulated and used.

- The finalisation of a draft Recommendation on the “General principles of fair procedure applicable to anti-doping proceedings in sport”, which was prepared further to the International Declaration on Human Rights and Sport (“[Tbilisi Declaration](#)”, 15th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sports of 2018). This draft aims at ensuring that the essential safeguards of Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights apply fully to anti-doping proceedings. It acknowledges key ‘fair trial’ principles, including the independence of the investigation and of the competent jurisdictions, the rights to be heard and to an effective defence as well as the principle of public hearing and the necessity to publish decisions. These essential principles for justice to be rendered are adapted to the specificity of sport and carefully take into consideration the need for a balanced approach, for instance to protect the athletes’ right to private life. The draft will be submitted to the Committee of Ministers for possible adoption in April.

b) Saint-Denis Convention: The Committee of the Convention which initiated its work in 2021 with two meetings is fast-shaping the work on security, safety and service at sports events with three advisory groups working on the monitoring of the Convention, legal instruments and international cooperation. An ad hoc working Group on the FIFA world cup Qatar 2022 has also been set up. The Convention counts 22 Parties with the latest ratification by Finland. Regarding the articulation of this Convention with the 1985 one on spectators’ violence, Parties to the latter participate as observers in the Saint-Denis Committee, the work of the Standing Committee having been suspended to avoid duplication of work.

c) Macolin Convention: The Follow-up Committee of the Macolin Convention has adopted its 2022-2025 priorities (setting-up its monitoring mechanism and activating it, providing normative guidance on several matters, including data protection), adopted the list of ‘sports organisations’ covered by the Convention and has established an Advisory Group constituted by the network of national platforms, also known as the Group of Copenhagen. The Group gathers over 30 countries and its membership is open to any country that has signed the Macolin Convention. Regarding the state of ratifications, several countries have announced forthcoming ratifications and prospects of advancement at EU level have been revived further to an opinion of the Court of Justice of the European Union touching upon the practice of ‘common accord’.

Action: The Chair asked for more information about the Group of Copenhagen and information on interest from member states in acceding to the Macolin Convention, for which the Secretariat responded that specific communication would be prepared to raise the countries’ awareness on the latest developments in the Committee and Group of Copenhagen.

Co-operation projects - *EPAS (2022)INF02rev*

A document had been distributed about the following points which were presented by MT:

14. EU joint project: Child Safeguarding in Sport (CSiS)

This project which provided technical assistance in the area of child safeguarding in sport, was initially scheduled to end in 2021. However, the objective was to extend the joint project until end June 2022 to ensure that the objectives for deliverables could be met in a satisfactory manner.

15. EU joint project: Combating Hate Speech in Sport

Gabriela Matei (GM), Project Officer was currently carrying out desk research for this project which had started in January 2022. Further to this assessment of the current situation of hate

speech in the different member states she would prepare a strategy and action plan. Please see:



Annex A Description
of action_Aproved by

16. Draft: EU joint project: ALL IN

FHR gave an update on the All In 2023-2025 joint project. An application would be submitted to the EU towards end 2022. In the meantime as the idea would be to strengthen the indicators used in the previous incarnation 2022 would provide time to carefully consider how to focus this work meaningfully. One of the indicators on communication and media would be of particular focus and strengthening ties with organisations like the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) would be vital for the success of enhancing this indicator and the overall visibility of the joint project's work. A training session on unconscious bias in sport, commissioned by EPAS, had been delivered to the EBU in January 2022 and would be offered to the CC later in 2022.

17. Draft: EU joint project: Call for proposals: Start To Talk – follow-on project

The Secretariat requested the greenlight from the GB bureau concerning a follow-on project on STT. The application deadline was 14 April 2022 and the Chair gave his full support for continuing with this project.

See:



20211123-VC-3128-
Project proposal_desc

18. Voluntary contributions: Start To Talk

There had been excellent feedback on this project and two countries had provided financial support, but more funding was needed for it to continue. The Permanent Representatives in Strasbourg were fully aware of the STT initiative. EPAS could send an official letter asking them to support this initiative further with voluntary contributions, and also contact national Youth and Sport ministries.

The GB bureau took note of all these projects and actions. It supported the application for the follow-on STT project and the preparation of a support letter to be signed by the Chair.

19. AOB

N/A