



Strasbourg, 11 February 2019

EPAS(2019)15

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport

Seminar of the Pool of Experts

The Road Ahead

to stop child sexual abuse and harassment in sport

A seminar bringing together experts, policy-makers, practitioners, researchers/academics and victim support specialists to plan, coordinate and prioritise relevant initiatives.

[Wijnhaven Building](#)

room 3.16 (Wijnhaven building)
Turfmarkt 99
The Hague, The Netherlands

Monday, 5 November 2018
13:00 – 18:30

Working language: English

REPORT

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Michael Trinker (MT) welcomed the experts and speakers and gave a short overview of the activities of EPAS in the field of safeguarding children in sport. He reminded that this pool of experts – set up in the framework of the Pro Safe Sport+ project – is a tool/ an opportunity for peer-learning, capacity building and fostering exchanges between experts having special know-how in preventing and combating sexual violence against children in sport.

The meeting of the pool of experts intended to achieve the following objectives:

- To update participants on the status quo of Start to Talk;
- To identify and discuss concrete actions stakeholders can take to support Start to Talk and disseminate relevant information;
- To discuss challenges and possible solutions around the issue of screening/ background checks of persons working with children;
- To discuss/ sketch a plan how to involve the youth in the Start to Talk campaign;
- To exchange views/ discuss ideas on the EPAS Annual Conference on Gender Based Violence in Sport
- To prepare for the Lanzarote Committee meeting.

UPDATE ON THE [START TO TALK INITIATIVE](#)

Clotilde Talleu (CT) informed those present about the following actions in the framework of Start to Talk which EPAS proposed to its member states to implement:

Action 1: Launch a Start to Talk campaign at national level

- raise awareness to empower parents and children as well as the public at large through the production of materials and other initiatives (TV spots, videos, web pages, brochures, social media, celebrities engagement, communication during sport events, etc.);

Action 2: Develop or improve safeguarding and protection frameworks

- improve legislation and policies;
- set up strategies and codes of conduct in sport to safeguard children and improve the notification, reporting and handling of cases;

Action 3: Organise training sessions/ workshops on safe sport

- train sport professionals (coaches, managers and policy makers);
- disseminate knowledge and expertise by providing access to recent information and findings and to a network of experts.

To support these actions, EPAS offered a number of concrete services such as the Start to Talk video clip available in various languages, a training kit and other useful materials. Further information on the Start to Talk support packages can be found on the following website:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/sport/start-to-talk>

The feedback received on Start to Talk was very positive. Almost 20 member states declared their commitment to this initiative.

CT informed that the launch of national Start to Talk campaigns have been/ will be implemented in the following countries:

- 5 April 2018: Spain
- 6 November 2018: The Netherlands
- 22 November 2018: Portugal
- 29 November 2018: Norway

Regarding the communication strategy of Start to Talk, CT informed about the gallery of game changers (organisations such as FIFA, UEFA etc.) and silence breakers (famous personalities) available on the [Start to Talk action page](#) and morally supporting the initiative. Start to Talk also counts on the support of the pool of experts to promote the campaign and to disseminate relevant information.

Ms Talleu's presentation is available upon request.

SCREENING OF COACHES, YOUTH WORKERS AND YOUTH LEADERS

Havard B. Ovregard (HO), Adviser of the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF), presented the state of play with regards to screening practices of coaches, youth workers and youth leaders in Norway/ Norwegian sport.

The Norwegian legal framework "*act on treatment of information in the police and the prosecution authorities (police-register-law)*" entitles organisations to request a police attestation.

NIF demands that all persons over 15 years with a position that implies a confidence- or responsibility-relation to minors or persons with intellectual disabilities have a "clean" police attestation. The police attestation provides information whether a person was charged for or sentenced for violations of the following paragraphs in the Penal Code:

- §231, §232: Narcotics-related crimes
- §257, §258: Trafficking-related crimes
- § 274, § 275: Major bodily harm / Murder
- § 282, § 283: Maltreatment in close relations (family, etc.)
- Sexual crimes (17 paragraphs)
- § 327, § 328: Robbery

Clear procedures and responsibilities were set up to implement the screening process.

Every third year, the police attestation has to be renewed.

Mr Ovregard also identified some challenges to this system.

- Clubs organised outside of NIF are not bound by these rules.
- Crime(s) committed abroad are not shown in the Norwegian police attestation.

HO put these questions to the fore:

- How can police attestations be shared in Europe/ at international level, how can this exchange of information of relevant authorities be facilitated to warn clubs/ federations abroad.

- What about those individuals not charged/ convicted?

Mr Ovregard's presentation is available upon request.

INVOLVING THE YOUTH IN THE START TO TALK CAMPAIGN

As he was indisposed, Mr Michael Leyendecker, European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO), Youth Chair, did not hold his speech but provided the experts with his presentation on the involvement of the youth in the Start to Talk campaign.

ENGSO implemented very successfully its own project entitled "Sport respects your rights" combatting sexual violence in sport.

Mr Leyendecker's presentation is available upon request.

TOUR DE TABLE

After the presentations, the experts were invited to exchange views and share information on the topics presented.

The following points were highlighted:

- There is a database called European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS). The ECRIS database ensures that information on convictions is exchanged between EU countries in a uniform, fast and compatible way.
- Screening of persons working with children entails more processes than requesting a police record check. It consists of various phases.
 - Criminal record check for everyone in the entourage of an athlete.
 - Child protection/ safeguarding is part of the hiring policy and included/ referred to in job profiles.
 - Job interview/ induction interviews of volunteers include questions to test the prospective job holder's position on child protection.
 - Request references.
 - Code of conduct has to be signed. Some articles of the code should/ could go much further than the law.
 - A mentoring system is in place overseeing the work of new volunteers/ employees.
- Some international federations such as World Taekwondo have good systems in place to promote the safeguarding of children pursuing a global and multi-stakeholder approach.
- There is the possibility to do an enhanced criminal record check.
- Do also a "soft" intelligence check (check references) and do not only focus on convictions.
- Make it obligatory to let sign a code of conduct.
- Regarding sanctions: As a sport governing body, it has the power to adopt and implement sanctions such as the revocation of a licence.

- Conduct a risk assessment of jobs.
- To check volunteers is much more difficult and remains a challenge.
- Introduction of a strong, cohesive and international licencing system which gives out a mandate rather than a right to be able to work with children/ the youth.
- The involvement of coaches is crucial in this process.
- Regarding the background check, one participant recommended to take only sexual crimes/ offences into consideration and exclude other crimes/ offences.

Regarding Start to Talk, some participants raised the question whether there are plans in place to evaluate the initiative. The EPAS secretariat said that the Start to Talk packages developed to support the three proposed actions will be evaluated by sending out a questionnaire to collect feedback on these products. Any activity in the framework of Start to Talk depends on the availability of resources.

APPENDIX 1: PROGRAMME

Monday, 5 November 2018

12:00 Arrival

13:00 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Introduction to the seminar's objectives and expected results

Michael Trinker, EPAS Deputy Executive Secretary, Council of Europe

13:30 UPDATE ON THE START TO TALK INITIATIVE

- Start to Talk support packages
- Feedback received on the circular letter
- Dissemination

Clotilde Talleu, Senior Project Officer, Council of Europe

14:00 TOUR DE TABLE

- Brief discussions on the initiatives undertaken by the participants

14:30 SCREENING OF COACHES, YOUTH WORKERS AND YOUTH LEADERS

- Challenges
- Access to data
- Recommendations

Havard B. Ovrengard, Adviser, The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF)

15:30 COFFEE BREAK

16:00 INVOLVING THE YOUTH IN THE START TO TALK CAMPAIGN

- Stakeholders
- Approaches
- Recommendations

Michael Leyendecker, European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO), Youth Chair

17:00 EPAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SPORT

- Exchange of views
- Discussion

17:30 BRIEFING ON THE LANZAROTE COMMITTEE MEETING

George Nikolaidis, Chair of the Council of Europe Lanzarote Committee

18:00 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Objectives of the seminar

- To update participants on the status quo of Start to Talk;
- To identify and discuss concrete actions stakeholders can take to support Start to Talk and disseminate relevant information;
- To discuss challenges and possible solutions around the issue of screening/ background checks of persons working with children;
- To discuss/ sketch a plan how to involve the youth in the Start to Talk campaign;
- To exchange views on the EPAS Annual Conference 2019 on gender-based violence in sport;
- To prepare for the Lanzarote Committee meeting.

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Zrinka	GREBLO JURAKIC	University of Zagreb, Department of Psychology
Maria	PAPAEFSTATHIOU	Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus
Jan	TOFTEGAARD STOCKEL	Institute of sport and biomechanics, Active Living Research Unit, University of Southern Denmark
Arne	AERTS	
Kirsty	BURROWS	Prevention of harassment and abuse in sport – Consultant
Marianne	CENSE	RUTGERS (NGO working on Sexual and reproductive health and rights)
Rosa	DIKETMUELLER	University of Vienna, Institute for Sport Science
Mike	HARTILL	Edge Hill University
Melanie	LANG	Edge Hill University
Stefan	POPOVIC	Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Issues
Bernie	PRIESTLY	Sport Ireland
Francisco Javier	ROMEO BIEDMA	Espirales Consultoría de Infancia
Tine	VERTOMMEN	Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Satu	HEIKKINEN	Senior Ministerial Adviser - Ministry of Education and Culture / Sport Division
Colette	EDEN	Safeguarding Manager The Rugby Football League

Karen	LEACH	Ex-swimmer, Child protection advocate
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Speakers

George	NIKOLAIDIS	Centre for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
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Harvard	OVREGARD	The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF)
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EPAS Secretariat

Elda	MORENO	Head of Children Rights and Sport Values Department, Council of Europe
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Clotilde	TALLEU	Project Manager Council of Europe
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Michael	TRINKER	EPAS Deputy Executive Secretary Council of Europe
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