



**Sport & discrimination:
the media perspective**

**SPEAK OUT
AGAINST
DISCRIMINATION**

**Council of Europe
campaign**



Sport and discrimination: the media perspective

The texts of this publication have been written by Virginie Sassoon on the request of the Speak out against discrimination Campaign secretariat of the Council of Europe. The various articles published here are extracted from the results of the Sport and Discrimination: the media perspective seminar.

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Contents

Introduction	5
The Council of Europe, Intercultural dialogue and Sport in Europe ...	7
Football in the media spotlight	9
Identity issues: everyday racism and the stadium as a place for letting off steam	11
Regionalism, nationalism ... and Europe?	13
Sport as an entertainment industry. Sports media under the influence of business	15
Lilian Thuram launches his foundation 'Education against racism' ...	19
Sexist sport	21
Combating racism in football. The FARE network's experience	23
More preventive action, more sanctions, more media coverage ... and more self-questioning	25

Introduction

If, from a cultural standpoint, the 1960s and the 1970s were the era of rock music, since the 1990s our societies have entered the “Age of Sport”.¹ Over-mediatised, globalised, sport - especially football - brings together millions of spectators. Although it enjoys exceptional public popularity and reinforces national cohesion, sport at the same time allows some incredibly racist and violent events to be played out.

How can sports journalists contribute to fairer, more balanced coverage of the competition between nations which sports fixtures frequently involve? How can sports journalism engage in intercultural dialogue? How can the press and media professionals relay information about anti-discrimination initiatives in their sports reporting? What role can sponsors and their communication strategies play in this area?

These are the questions which the Council of Europe put to the participants in the seminar “Sport and discrimination: the media perspective”, which took place at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg on 20 November 2008. This event, held in the context of the Council of Europe campaign “Speak out against discrimination”, brought together European sports journalists, professional organisations, representatives of NGOs (Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et l’Antisémitisme, Football Against Racism in Europe, etc.), and lobby groups (Sport et citoyeneté, etc.).

This seminar, organised with and for the sports media, took place in two parts. The first of the afternoon sessions was entitled “Intercultural awareness and sports journalism” and the second “The media and combating discrimination: an approach through sport”. Lilian Thuram was the special guest at this seminar, during which he officially presented his Foundation “Education against racism”.

The proceedings constituted an opportunity to pool ideas and to present various initiatives. This report sets out the main themes addressed across

1. An expression coined by the columnist Martin Jacques, cited by Kurt Wachter, co-ordinator of *Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE)* project.

the board, on the basis of both the participants' statements and the background documents they provided.

Sport and discrimination: the media perspective

Strasbourg, 20 November 2008

The *Sport and discrimination: the media perspective* seminar was held with and for sports media professionals. This event took place within the framework of the activities of the Council of Europe's *Speak out against Discrimination* campaign during the European encounters on *Sport and diversity* which was organised by the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) with the Agency for Education through Sport (Apes). The sport and discrimination seminar focused on two aspects of the theme which links *Sport, discrimination and the media*. On one hand, it dealt with the relations between *Intercultural awareness, racism and sports journalism* and, on the other hand, on those between *the media and fight against discrimination*. The main contributors to this seminar were: Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Director General Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport, Coordinator for Intercultural Dialogue, Council of Europe; Jonathan Hill, Head of Brussels Office, Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), Kurt Wachter, Project Coordinator, Football against Racism in Europe (Fare) and Lilian Thuram, President, *Education against racism Foundation*.

The Council of Europe, Intercultural dialogue and Sport in Europe

The seminar took place in the context of the "Speak out against discrimination" campaign conducted by the Council of Europe under its policy of fostering intercultural dialogue and has been held in partnership with the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport of the Council of Europe. What are the main thrusts of the Council's action in these fields?

In her opening address, Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Director General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport, explained why intercultural dialogue was at the very core of the Council of Europe's agenda: "It builds a bridge that enables us to move forward together and to recognise our different identities in a constructive, democratic way".

Whereas, from its foundation in 1949, the Council of Europe sought to promote cultural diversity, by defending values such as human rights, the rule of law and democracy, it was in 2005 that intercultural dialogue really became one of the organisation's priorities, with the launch of the drafting of a White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue.

Published in 2008 - the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue - the White Paper clearly showed that intercultural dialogue could contribute to an appreciation of diversity while preserving social cohesion. The aim was to provide a conceptual framework and guidance for policy-makers and practitioners. The campaign "Speak out against discrimination", the outcome of a tangible recommendation made in the White Paper, aims to buttress the efforts already made by the media to play a constructive role in an increasingly multicultural environment. The campaign has three separate objectives, which Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni reiterated in the following terms: firstly "encouraging the media to disseminate information on discrimination and action to counter discrimination to the general public and potential victims"; secondly "giving media professionals a better grounding for doing their job in a multicultural Europe"; and thirdly "facilitating access to all sectors of the media industry for professionals from minority backgrounds".

The media have a vital role in shaping how we perceive the world. Their involvement in this campaign is a means of reaching out to the general public and putting the fight against discrimination on the agenda. Through this seminar focusing on sport, the Council of Europe proposed a frame of reference and a forum for a debate bringing together policy-makers, representatives of associations and media professionals with sometimes diverging interests.

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) – Council of Europe

On May 2007, the Council of Europe adopted Resolution CM/Res(2007)8, establishing the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS), in order to give fresh momentum to pan-European sports co-operation and address the current challenges facing sport in Europe – building on more than 30 years of activity in the field. The EPAS provides a platform for intergovernmental sports co-operation between the public authorities of member states of the agreement. It also encourages dialogue between public authorities, sports federations and NGOs. This contributes to better governance, with the aim of making sport healthier and fairer and ensuring that it conforms to high ethical standards. The EPAS aims to promote the development of sport in modern society, while emphasising its positive values. It develops policies and standards, monitors them and helps with capacity building and the exchange of good practice. It uses Council of Europe sports standards such as the European Sports Charter, the Code of Sports Ethics, the European Convention on Spectator Violence and the Anti-Doping Convention as the basis for drawing up its own strategies. Thirty-three countries are currently members (Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”) and seven sports organisations (including ENGSO and UEFA) are non-governmental partners of the EPAS.

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport



Accord Partiel Élargi sur le Sport

Football in the media spotlight



Marc Chevrier, L'Équipe, November 2008 seminar, Strasbourg.

Football is one of the most popular sports world-wide. From the favelas of Brazil to the slums of Africa, via the giant stadiums of Europe, football is played, inspiring dreams, becoming a ritual and eradicating cultural and social barriers. Some players are raised to the status of super stars and icons. However, no championship is free of racist incidents, since football is the sport in which the majority of these problems occur.

The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) has made combating racism a priority. "It's a sad fact of life" said Jonathan Hill, Head of UEFA's Brussels office, who nonetheless expressed the view that a positive change had taken place over the last ten years: "For a long time football was in a state of denial. People said racism was a social problem, and football positioned itself as a victim of racism. Today things have changed, people have become aware of football's responsibility, of our duty to combat racism and discrimination."

The huge media coverage of football has made racist events all the more visible. The web-site of the network Football against Racism in Europe (FARE) reports incidents virtually on a daily basis and from all over Europe. The most recent example dates from 6 January 2009, when the Oxford United midfielder Sam Deering (21 years old), who had broken a leg, published comments on Facebook calling the nurses who treated him "f***ing Pakis" (Pakistanis). The football club's management have fined him and he will doubtless also be required to participate in the club's pro-minority campaigns.

Although Jonathan Hill believed things had taken a turn for the better, there was still a long way to go before everyone felt concerned by the problem. A huge awareness-raising effort was needed, notably with regard to professional sports players, who had a significant impact on public opinion. At the same time, improved representation of ethnic minorities in the stadiums, among the fans and within the professional leagues and the media, should be a key priority.

Identity issues: everyday racism and the stadium as a place for letting off steam

Gangs of fans are behind most racist and anti-Semitic incidents and attacks. Are football grounds a magnifying glass for our social ills? How can this ailment be cured?

"The way in which black footballers are welcomed in some European stadiums (fans throw bananas at them while uttering guttural sounds, a way of comparing them to apes and setting them apart from human beings) is a reminder that the era of the 'human zoo' is not so distant" wrote the researcher and historian Pap Ndiaye in his latest book "La condition noire. Essai sur une minorité française".² As Carine Bloch, Vice-Chair of the Ligue internationale contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme (LICRA), pointed out: although the universal dimension of French football appeared self-evident, that did not prevent the extremists, fascists and neo-Nazis from making their presence felt. To reach them, vast media coverage with an international dimension was necessary. This work was now being done by the LICRA, but also by the FARE network and the Council of Europe.

Rejection of difference, fear of others, self-isolation ... racist acts showed the contradictions inherent in sport, whose values were those of a universal language promoting respect and openness to others. However, as Fabien Wille, a lecturer at Lille University, said "You can't ask sport to be better-behaved than society itself, while knowing that it brings out the worst of certain tendencies." He also drew attention to the way in which politicians exploited racist incidents - such as the offensive banner against the "Ch'tis" (people from northern France) recently unfurled in the crowd at a football game - thereby indirectly legitimising racist discourse. Politicians accordingly had a key responsibility in this area.

Wins were also instrumentalised for political reasons. Jacques Chirac had turned to considerable advantage the euphoria generated by France's World

2. Pap Ndiaye, "La condition noire. Essai sur une minorité française", Editions Calmann-Lévy, 2008.

Cup victory in 1998. However, the myth of a “black blanc beur” (black, white, Arab) France, which accepted - and loved - itself as such, had quickly crumbled away.



November 2008 seminar, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg.

“Sport proposes a discourse about the nation, what it means to be French (or English or German). In this context sports players take on a special importance: they embody the nation”, explained Pap Ndiaye in his book. Racist incidents accordingly revealed the tensions between an imagined nation and the diversity of a team which represented it. Sport could be said to function as a metaphor for the inner conflicts and the identity issues of our societies.

Although it is the ruling sport in Europe, can it be claimed that football is a reflection of our society? “If we feel so passionately about this business of striking goals with feet, heads and chests, it is not just because it is a spectacle which plays on our emotions, but also because, like an exaggerated drama, it brings to the fore the symbolic values of our societies”, wrote Christian Bromberger on the subject in “Football, La bagatelle la plus sérieuse du monde”.³

3. Christian Bromberger, “Football, la bagatelle la plus sérieuse du monde”, Essai, Editions Bayard, 1998.

Regionalism, nationalism ... and Europe?

How can Europe, as a supranational entity, make sense when regional or national sentiments are exacerbated by sports competitions? Does football contribute to the emergence of a European public area?

Sport offers a varied range of senses of identity. For example, a person from an immigrant background can support both a local team, the national team and also the team of his or her country of origin, or certain players who have joined teams elsewhere ... sport is a means of expressing a plurality of identities and of feelings of belonging.-

Although the sense of national pride awakened by sport was often criticised, Jérôme Le Fauconnier, a journalist from the sports newspaper "L'Equipe", considered it important to bear in mind that regional allegiances were also very strong, in particular the inter-club "racism" that existed in football. A good illustration was to be found in the following anecdote: In 1990, Italy hosted the football world championship. One semi-final, between Italy and Argentina, took place in Naples. The Argentinean, Diego Maradona, played during the year for the local club, the SSC Naples, and, at this match, the Naples fans cheered on Argentina's star player, who also defended their club's colours, against their national team!

"Does football represent European integration in microcosm? How can European football reflect, or even shape, the development of our European identity? What can be learned from the Champions League, the principal professional competition for football clubs?" asked Jonathan Hill, Head of UEFA's Brussels office. He had noted some particularly telling phenomena. Firstly, players' exceptional job mobility. Freeing up of the transfer market for players (following the European Court of Justice's Bosman ruling in 1995) encouraged them to change clubs and countries to secure the most advantageous deals. As a result, the richest clubs always had the best players. At all events, the growing internationalisation of the clubs influenced people's perception of national territory, and also of Europe. Jonathan Hill also thought we were seeing the gradual emergence of a European public area. "It would be absurd to suggest that the Champions League is succeeding

where the European Parliament has often failed, but the fact that millions of Europeans watch the same game at the same time must count for something. According to Anthony King, the author of 'The European ritual: football in the new Europe', the Champions League symbol is one of the best known in Europe."

Although it was debateable whether football was leading to the emergence of a European public area, the efforts to combat racism and discrimination must unquestionably be pursued on a European scale. As Jérôme le Fauconnier pointed out: "It is interesting to note that people turn to UEFA every time a disciplinary board fails to impose strong enough sanctions." There is accordingly a real need to deal with these issues at European level.

Sport as an entertainment industry. Sports media under the influence of business

With the income from television, football has become a big business, generating enormous profits. How can sports journalists talk about the intercultural dimension of sport when they are expected to focus first and foremost on the results? How can cultural diversity be addressed in a context where the press is primarily concerned with selling itself?



Murat M. AGCA, Sport Sport, Milliyet Gazetesi, November 2008 seminar, Strasbourg.

“Football’s domination of European sports policies can be explained by its popularity” said Jonathan Hill. This remark also applied to the seminar, which also primarily focused on the soccer pitch! The reasons for this success lay mainly in the simplicity of football’s rules and the low cost of practising the sport. Football’s success stories of players

from humble backgrounds who attained fame and fortune also allowed people to dream. However, for Kurt Wachter, co-ordinator of the Fairplay project and of the FARE network, football was no longer a working class sport. With the television revenues, it had now become a global entertainment industry which recruited its work force all over the world.

Football had evolved from a “live” form of entertainment to a primarily televised spectacle, scoring record viewing figures. Television rights had risen exponentially in value since the late 1970s, generating millions in profits. Players and managers therefore commanded huge salaries, and the top clubs had become companies listed on the stock exchange.

In this context, how can sports journalists become mediators relaying values of respect for others? At the newspaper L’Equipe there was no real policy of speaking out against racism, since, according to Jérôme Le Fauconnier, the entire editorial staff implicitly subscribed to this position. He had been

a member of the football news team for eight years and wrote articles about the sport's negative aspects, principally discrimination, racism and corruption. He fought to have a space in the newspaper on a daily basis, but had to defend his slot against breaking news stories, which always came first. As an illustration of the difficulties he had to overcome he had brought along a number of his articles, which had systematically appeared at the bottom of the page. He also spoke about a particularly interesting experience: "Some years ago I infiltrated the circles of the far-right and other extremist fans in Nice for six months. I was astonished that many people claimed there was no racism or extremism in France. I wrote a series of articles, which were published over two days and which caused an uproar. I know that at my newspaper they no longer want to hear about the subject because they can't handle it. A balance must be struck, that is the problem. Our work also consists in showing the complexities of the struggle against racism, of making it comprehensible for the public at large. At the same time, the easy option is solely to report the events and to use caricature."

Margot Dunne, a free lance journalist for the BBC, said the channel gave some explicit guidelines: Britain's multicultural diversity must be reflected both in the content and in the news team. Human resources was a key issue: "Showing news items about diversity is not enough, we must also show the richness of our talents" she said.

Luis Nieto, Director of *AS.COM*, an on-line sports magazine based in Madrid, said his editorial staff were paying growing attention to these issues, although there were no formal "guidelines".

Fabio Monti, a journalist with "*Corriere della Sera*", described a somewhat worrying situation: "Racism is very powerful in Italy through the pressures exerted by fans and club managements. It is a very racist society. This is reflected inside the stadiums. The problem is not with the media but with society." It remained to be seen what action the professional players and the clubs' managers, shareholders and leading members, as well as the media, would take to break the law of silence.

Carine Bloch, Vice-Chair of the LICRA, said another important point was treating all racist incidents on an equal footing: "When there are incidents against white people, like the anti-Ch'ti banner or whistling of the national anthem, they make the headlines. However, attacks on visible minorities don't receive the same media treatment. This difference poses problems."

The dominance of business logic in the media made it difficult to present initiatives aimed at combating discrimination and racism. Christophe Gaignebet, a journalist and an active member of the Sport and Citizenship

network, saw communication as a genuine challenge for the institutions, NGOs, federations and politicians committed to this cause. It was a question of finding simple, effective, original, easily assimilated means of getting the messages across, with the support of the stars, of well-known or former players.

Europe's diversity was also reflected in its media patchwork. The variety of the media - local, regional, national and, with the Internet, now cross-border - showed the differences that existed between Europeans. "In the context of international sports contests, the media exploit these differences because they allow them to resort to sensationalism as a means of increasing their sales" said UEFA's Jonathan Hill. He had grown up in England and he remembered that, during the 1990s, when the national team was playing against Germany the tabloid newspapers had produced photomontages using military symbols associated with the Second World War. Similar composite photographs had recently been published in a Polish newspaper. This was a good illustration of the point that competitions involving national teams continued to stir up extremely strong feelings of nationalist identity. That being the case, "What room could be found for intercultural dialogue?" asked Jonathan Hill, before pointing out that the tabloids were not the only press outlets and that articles on cultural identity in sport were published in the Financial Times, for example. However, that brought us back to the question of access to this type of relatively elitist journalism.

The answer was to be found elsewhere, in appealing directly to the fans, the sports lovers, and absolutely all the media must get involved. However, to persuade them to disseminate such public-spirited messages, the policy-makers, organisations and NGOs must develop communication vehicles suited to the endless flow of information and images, like the 30-second TV spot produced by the FARE network entitled "Different languages, one goal: No to racism".

Lilian Thuram launches his foundation “Education against racism”

Since his football career came to a brutal end in 2008, when it was discovered that he had a cardiac malformation, the former world champion, originating from Guadeloupe, has intensified his action against racism, going so far as to create his own foundation, which he presented officially at the seminar.

“How many people know who Gobineau was?”⁴ Lilian Thuram often asks during interviews, convinced that ignorance is the root of many evils. Having made a special visit to the Council of Europe to present his foundation, which had adopted the slogan “There is only one race, the human race”, he described its three lines of action: educating children and young people, raising public awareness and performing research into racism. In all these areas, the foundation would be advised by a committee of experts.

For this citizen with a cause, a member of France’s High Council for Integration, condemning racism is not enough: it is necessary to understand where it comes from. “Take the example of racism against Blacks. It is easy to explain when you know that, during 400 years of slavery, black people were regarded as sub-human, or even animals. The worst is that even the Enlightenment philosophers, such as Montesquieu or Voltaire, condoned racism. Even later on, Victor Hugo, who was such a genius, said ‘The white man made the black man human’.”⁵ For Lilian Thuram knowledge of history is the only way forward, the only means of eradicating the racist prejudice that many people, in a way, inherit. Education must in particular expose the causes of the differences in treatment between black and white people, which were in fact economic in nature and not an ethnic issue.

“There are still people who find it hard to accept that a black man can be French. During the World Cup there was a debate about whether the French

4. Gobineau, (1816-1882), author of “An essay on the inequality of the human races”.

5. Jérôme Le Fauconnier, “Citoyen Thuram”, L’Equipe, 07/10/2006.



Lilian Thuram, November 2008 seminar, Strasbourg.

Lilian Thuram to conveying this message unquestionably allows faster progress to be made.

people recognised themselves in their national team. This is a real problem. Sport is extraordinary in that it allows significant progress to be made in the acceptance of minorities. However, this progress can be put on a firmer footing only through education. Although people can accept that black people are part of the sports scene, at the level of society as a whole the acceptance is not yet there.”⁶ To bring about a change of attitudes, the media therefore had a vital role to play in relaying the preventive action taken. Not putting ethnic minorities in pigeon-holes and giving a true picture of our societies’ diversity were priority fields of work so as to reinforce social cohesion. The commitment of leading public figures such as

6. Jérôme Le Fauconnier, “Thuram, D’une vie à l’autre”, series of articles in L’Equipe, 06/12/2008.



Sexist sport

The sporting performances of women command increasing recognition. Women aspire to the same responsibilities as men, at all levels. Yet, there are still inequalities and access problems, and the media still do not give women's competitions enough coverage.

Sport and Citizenship is the "first European 'think tank' in the field of sport." The association conducts in-depth studies and aims to relay the different, sometimes complex, European sports policies. In October 2008 it produced a series of articles on the theme "Women and sport". They include an interview with Emine Bozkurt, a Dutch politician and member of the European Parliament (the interview can be consulted on the association's web-site). She expressed the view that although some differences, such as separate competitions for men and women, were acceptable, others were less so, citing the fact that sportswomen earned less. During the interview Emine Bozkurt also denounced the under-representation of women in senior position within the major federations.

There is also an interview with Nawal El Moutawakel, Morocco's Minister for Youth and Sport (which can also be consulted on the web-site). A former athlete and the first woman from a Muslim country to have won an Olympic gold medal, she observed that, since the 1990s, international bodies had been taking a growing interest in women's sport and pointed out that "the female presence in the sports movement has grown from 10% in the 1990s to 20% a few years later." She also said "By eliminating marginalisation, poverty, negative thinking and many other ills, by fostering integration in society and self-confidence, sport plays a role in women's emancipation."

Carine Bloch, Vice-Chair of the LICRA, who was present at the seminar, underlined the problem of women's active participation in sport. At the Beijing Olympic games, only seven of France's forty medals had been won by women. This was mainly because there were too few female athletes. The LICRA's annual survey on racist tendencies in French municipalities had shown that women's access to sport was a major cause for concern in 25% of towns or cities. Carine Bloch explained that "this conceals family, cultural

and even religious pressures.” Whereas sport was a status-raising factor of emancipation, fraternity and equality and women no longer needed to prove their ability to succeed, women’s sport remained less popular and received less media coverage.

What action are the European institutions taking in this field? Various policy or legal instruments have been adopted. Examples are the article on sport in the Treaty of Lisbon or the White Paper on Sport, which states “the European Commission will encourage the mainstreaming of gender issues into all its sports-related activities, with a specific focus on access to sport for immigrant women and women from ethnic minorities, women’s access to decision-making positions in sport ...”. The media also had a key role to play in changing people’s attitudes, enhancing coverage of women’s sports competitions and supporting positive action.

Sport and Citizenship

Sport et Citoyenneté (Sport and Citizenship) is an independent think tank that aims to stimulate the study and debate of sports role in society, and promote its basic values. The origins of the association are Franco-Belgian but its ambitions and structure are designed for the European stage. A diverse network of athletes, policy-makers, academics, and governmental and non-governmental institutions at both European and national level is driving the work forward. But most of all we are open to the general public: any citizen who wants to contribute to our work and spread it is welcome. The main objectives of the association is to convince decisions-makers (whether they are coming from the sphere of politics, private sector or public institutions) as well as a maximum of citizens of the fundamental values of sport and the useful and beneficial contribution it can make for the whole society. Sport et Citoyenneté offers a forum for new thinking and a vehicle for advocacy vis-à-vis the political and corporate communities as well as private sector and associative world. Our think tank is offering its services to the sport movement from the athletes and trainers to the academics and executives so that the social dimension of sport can enrich their work. <http://www.sportetcitoyennete.org/version3/>

**Sport and
Citizenship**
Sport serving society



**Sport et
Citoyenneté**
Le Sport au service de la société

Combating racism in football. The FARE network's experience

FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe) was set up in Vienna in February 1999 at the initiative of various European supporter groups campaigning against racism. Nowadays FARE has active partners in 40 European countries and works with over 300 organisations concerned with football at all levels.

The network's members are active in and around the stadiums, and also denounce institutionalised racism, a more hidden aspect of the problem, and minorities' exclusion from the game at different levels. They alert public opinion to incidents and call for sanctions. For example, in 2004, Otto Baric, Albania's Croatian coach, had stated in an interview that he did not want homosexuals in his team. FARE had filed a complaint and Otto Baric had had to pay 3,000 Swiss francs to UEFA. This was the first time an official was penalised for homophobia.

FARE has well understood the crucial role of the media. To get them interested and involve them in its action, the network worked closely with football's governing bodies and the stars of the game, the players. Kurt Wachter, co-ordinator of the Fairplay project and of FARE, mentioned a number of significant dates. In 2001 UEFA had awarded FARE the Monaco Prize, giving it a cheque for one million Swiss francs. The organisation had become a member of the UEFA Social Responsibility portfolio. In 2002 FARE had received the "Free Your Mind" prize at the MTV Europe Music Awards in Barcelona. Lastly, another important event of recent years was the conclusion of a strategic anti-discrimination alliance between FIFA and FARE in 2006.

Every year FARE held an Action Week, an opportunity to tackle local problems at club level while presenting a united front against racism in football. In October 2008 the Action Week had generated more than 1,000 events all over Europe. A key instrument of FARE's "Unite Against Racism" campaign in 2008 was the clip "Different languages, one goal: No to racism". The work of the American Director, John Buché, the Munich-based produc-

tion house, Embassy of Dreams, and European actors from across the continent, this 30-second spot, backed by UEFA and the European Commission, had been broadcast before, during and after each Euro 2008 fixture. "Everything in the film is symbolic. Romanian actors represented eastern Europe, we used Dutch actors as a reference to colonial times, and Turkish actors were involved to signify their omnipresence throughout many parts of Europe at this point in time" says the director in an interview on the FARE web-site. The film captures the emotions of fans, at home in front of their televisions or in a stadium or bar setting, just before and during a goal. The aim was to show that the emotions are universal.

FARE also uses other means of communication: fanzines, web-sites, DVDs and posters, which all of the network's supporters can utilise.

Football Against Racism in Europe - FARE

We want to see the 'beautiful game' played without the cancer of racism. Football is the biggest sport in the world and belongs to us all. It should be the right of every person to play, watch and discuss freely, without fear. Unfortunately, at all levels of the game, from amateur to international, there are incidents of racism. Be it from fans, players, clubs or other football bodies, FARE believes that such behaviour, on and off the field, is unacceptable and unwanted by the majority of fans and players. FARE aims to rid the game of racism by combining the resources of anti-racist football organisations throughout Europe. It helps to support and to nurture groups and coordinates efforts on a European scale. By working together, FARE helps organisations to share good practice and to present a united front against racism in football.

<http://www.farenet.org/>

www.farenet.org
fare

More preventive action, more sanctions, more media coverage ... and more self-questioning

"You don't fight racism with good intentions and gadgets (anti-racism anthems and T-shirts) but with education and by applying the existing legislation, which is amply sufficient (the Criminal Code, the Sports Code, regulations, rules, codes of ethics, etc.)".⁷ Reinforcing anti-racism education for young people, systematically applying the law, involving the media and calling on everyone to take responsibility for these matters are the main pointers for action identified during the proceedings.

Jonathan Hill, the Head of UEFA's Brussels office, described the two thrusts of the organisation's strategy. In the short term, the aim was to take more severe sanctions against clubs and players who committed acts of discrimination or racism (fines, suspensions for five matches, etc.). In the long term, the focus would be on education, which was the reason why the organisation was working with FARE, which had a vast field network.

Margot Dunne, a free lance journalist with the BBC, stressed the importance of the place given to these subjects in the media. She thought that they must be headline news: "It's the only way you can get rid of the problem. There has been a fantastic improvement in Britain over the last ten years, because we haven't stopped talking about racism, watching out for it and drawing attention to incidents. Every time something happened it received front page coverage. These items must always make the headlines so that the public feel more concerned." Jérôme Le Fauconnier spoke about the situation in France and the crisis that the printed sports press was undergoing: "Competition to sell newspapers is fierce, and fighting discrimination is not a selling point. From time to time we do something to ease our consciences. But rarely does a newspaper boss allow you the time to seek out the information and travel to fixtures to discuss the situation on the ground. We

7. Marc Chevrier, "Des annonces et peu d'actes", L'Equipe, 22 /02/2008.

therefore have to be constantly on the lookout." He considered that the European institutions had a vital role to play in facilitating journalists' work by providing them with news in an easily "communicable" form. His statements echoed those of Margot Dunne, who explained that the progress made in the UK would not have been possible without close co-operation between the institutions, NGOs and the media. Another important point was under-representation of ethnic minorities in the sports media. A diversity of faces and voices in presenting sports events was necessary to get the message across to the fans. Carine Bloch, Vice-Chair of the LICRA concurred with this viewpoint.

Prevention, sanctions and media coverage were therefore the watchwords. However, as Jonathan Hill suggested, apart from making statements and individual commitments, each one of us must ask ourselves "Why is racism still so rife?"

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

47 MEMBER STATES. 800 MILLION EUROPEANS.

The Council of Europe is an international organisation set up on 5 May 1949 to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law across Europe. It is based in Strasbourg, France.

IN THE 47 COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEMBER STATES **DISCRIMINATION IS A CRIME**

**YOU MAY BE THE NEXT VICTIM OR THE NEXT WITNESS, SO
SPEAK OUT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION !**

This is the main message of the Council of Europe's anti-discrimination campaign, which primarily targets media industry professionals and has three main objectives:

1. to train media professionals on how to treat news relating to discrimination and intercultural dialogue;
2. to help people with a minority background to make their voices heard by facilitating their access to media professions and productions;
3. to inform public opinion about policies that combat discrimination.

The campaign, which focuses on the role of the media in a multicultural Europe, derives its mandate from the Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "Living together as equals in dignity".



Council of Europe

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