



## MARS – MEDIA AGAINST RACISM IN SPORT

### NATIONAL MEDIA ENCOUNTER

#### *Media Cross-Production for Inclusive Coverage*

Enlargement of the Ice Hockey League in Austria  
By Daniela Errenst (Radio AGORA) and Michael Gams (Radio FRO)

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### MARS - Media Against Racism in Sport

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Partly embedded in the alps, in Austria winter sports play a big role. Apart from very popular outdoor-based wintersports such as alpine skiing, ice hockey is one of Austrians favourite indoor winter sports. Besides this, ice hockey is also one of the most popular team sports in this country since almost 100 years. Nowadays, the major league consisting of eleven teams is the „Erste Bank Eishockey Liga“ (EBEL). During the last years this league became more international: five of eleven teams are from abroad. This enlargement of the league had mainly commercial reasons. Nevertheless, with this goes also a difference in case of sympathy – not only in the field of sports itself but also in the field of how to understand and accept other cultures, languages and traditions. Especially in Carinthia - the southern part of Austria which is known as the problematical province when it comes to accepting and tolerating bilingual and monolingual minorities, migrants or refugees – the enlargement of the EBEL - league caused some positive changes. With the help of ice-hockey players, scouts and fans, Daniela Errenst of Radio AGORA and Michael Gams of Radio FRO try point out how this new idea of the league-enlargement changed the way of thinking about the Austrian ice hockey-culture. For Daniela, coming from a radio station that deals with minority issues on a daily basis, the change of focus from "there is a problem" to a genuine topic where the "problem" becomes secondary, was an interesting experience. She said, she would not have chosen such an approach without the MARS seminar. They, too, heard that the topic they chose had never been dealt with in the media concerning ice hockey. With more than an hour material they are considering to create a larger feature. In the future they would like to be able to work more on this especially as it is a sensitive topic.

*Im Alpenland Österreich spielt Wintersport eine große Rolle. Abseits von populären Outdoor-Wintersportarten wie Skifahren ist Eishockey eine der beliebtesten Indoor-Wintersportarten. Nebenbei sei erwähnt, dass Eishockey in diesem Land bereits eine 100-jährige Tradition vorweisen kann. Aktuell spielen in der hierzulande höchsten Liga, der "Erste Bank Eishockey Liga" (EBEL) elf Teams. Während der letzten Jahre internationalisierte sich diese Liga: fünf von elf Teams sind nicht aus Österreich. Diese Erweiterung hatte großteils ökonomische Gründe. Trotzdem geht damit auch eine neue, wechselseitige Sympathie einher. Nicht nur, was das gestiegene sportliche Niveau der Liga betrifft, sondern auch den Umgang mit den jeweils anderen Kulturen, Sprachen und Traditionen. Speziell in Kärnten, Österreichs südlichem Bundesland, das als problematisch wahrgenommen wird, wenn es um den offenen Umgang mit zwei- oder einsprachigen Minderheiten, Migranten und Flüchtlingen geht, hat die Liga zumindest teilweise positive Veränderungen herbeigeführt. Mit Hilfe eines Eishockeyprofis, eines Fans und eines Eishockeyscouts versuchen Daniela Errenst (Radio Agora) und Michael Gams (Radio FRO 105.0) hörbar zu machen, wie die Liga-Erweiterung das Denken über Eishockey-Kultur in Österreich verändert hat.*