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**Report**

**European Networking Conference:**

# **Equal Access and Volunteering of Migrants, Minorities and Refugees in Sport**

**Central European University, Budapest**

## Report

### European Networking Conference:

# Equal Access and Volunteering of Migrants, Minorities and Refugees in Sport

Budapest, 25-26 November 2016

Central European University Conference Center, Budapest

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## Executive Summary

The recent refugees crossing into the European Union sparked a political crisis as member countries struggled to cope with the influx. At the same time, civil society actors are showing massive solidarity with asylum seekers. Actors of the organised sport movement as well as many new initiatives started providing sport and leisure activities to the newly arrived migrants. While many sport clubs and informal solidarity initiatives still feel enthusiastic about helping and getting involved, some of them are facing challenges to continue their operations. Moreover, migrant communities and ethnic minorities including Roma are also still struggling to enjoy equal access to sport across Europe.

What is the current situation regarding the social inclusion of (newly arrived) migrants across Europe? What are the barriers and enablers for participation of marginalised groups in sport? Is the key to integration increased involvement of migrants and minorities in sport? What kind of strategy is needed on a local, national and European level?

To address these and other questions, the ESPIN network organised the **European networking conference "Equal Access and Volunteering of Migrants, Minorities and Refugees in Sport" (25–26 November, 2016) in Budapest.**

More than 70 delegates from 23 countries including sport and football organisations, human rights NGOs, public institutions and universities met in Budapest to discuss ways of using sport to integrate migrants and refugees.

The conference was held at the Central European University Conference Center and was hosted by the migrant-led NGO, Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization (MGHRO), and marked the final event of the project "European Sport Inclusion Network (ESPIN)". The two-day event focused on questions and issues concerning the social inclusion of migrants. In face of the recent influx of migrants, many actors in the organised sport movement and new grassroots initiatives have started to organise sport and leisure activities for the newly arrived migrants to facilitate and fuel their social inclusion.

In his opening statement the chairman of the grassroots fair play and minorities committee at the Hungarian Football Federation (MLSZ), **Tibor Vámos**, said that sport, especially football, is a great tool to connect people, as he explained in his speech *"football makes friendships"*. The former FIFA referee also stressed the "Zero Tolerance" policy of his organisation when it comes to racism. **Clarisse Bonjean**, representing the Council of Europe, emphasised the responsibility of large sport federations and public authorities to support initiatives at the grassroots level.

**Gibril Deen**, chair of Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization underlined the importance of such cooperation and events, which are bringing together the different actors and strengthening the partnership between them.

**Kurt Wachter**, ESPIN coordinator from the fairplay initiative in Vienna, Austria said, *"sport is a tremendous power, which brings people together, people who are in difficult situations, the ones who are hard to integrate. We can show good examples and we can prove that integration of refugees, Roma people or other minorities is possible using all the forms of sport."*

The event on the inclusion of migrants and refugees in and through sport used plenary sessions and interactive workshops to address the following themes:

- Identifying good practice in the context of the promotion of equal access and volunteering of migrants and minorities in sport
- New approaches to communication and awareness regarding combating the exclusion of immigrants and minorities in sport
- Self-organisation, capacity building and empowerment of migrant groups and minorities in sport
- Bringing together the results and findings of the ESPIN project and drawing conclusions and recommendations for future action

### About ESPIN

The overall vision of the project "European Sport Inclusion Network—Promoting Equal Opportunities of Migrants and Minorities through Volunteering in Sport" is to involve those who are at risk of social exclusion. This will be attempted by increasing sport participation of disadvantaged



groups by promoting equal access to organised sport. A key objective is to increase volunteering of migrants and minorities through establishing equal partnerships and training mainstream sport organisations. The ESPIN initiative is a partnership of organisations in 7 EU countries and is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. In 2017 the ESPIN partners together with the Greek NGO Faros will launch the new ERASMUS + sport project "Sport Welcomes Refugees".

## Day One: Friday, 25 November 2016

### Welcome

**Gibril Deen**, *Chairman, Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization*

The main points in Mr. Deen's opening speech were integrating minorities and refugees into Hungarian society and highlighting different Hungarian organisations that are trying to help them. Many asylum seekers arrive in Hungary. NGOs help them contact the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which functions as an umbrella organisation for asylum seekers and refugees.

He emphasised the fact that it is not an easy task, because it requires self-sacrifice. The African Stars Football Team was founded with the signing of a document on 6 February 1994; the team played a key role in integrating refugees into Hungarian society. It used football as a tool for reform, as a tool for propaganda to fight all forms of racism such as xenophobia or homophobia, which is powerful in society.

He mentioned József Magyari, whom he works with. He mentioned that he is a very powerful man in Hungary, who uses sport as a means to create awareness of this issue. He thanked different organisations that contributed to the conference and who work hard for society, refugees and their integration.

Mr. Deen emphasised the importance of involving asylum seekers, migrants, minorities, refugees and volunteers in sport and the important role they play in it. Finally, he highlighted the importance of lifelong peace and tranquillity, lifelong solidarity, lifelong human rights.

**Kurt Wachter**, *ESPIN Coordinator, fairplay-VIDC*

Firstly, Mr. Wachter talked about the history of the ESPIN project. He mentioned that in the autumn of 2015 the EU faced so many challenges, there were so many refugees, men and women with children, who came from war zones. He pointed out that ESPIN aims to involve those who are at risk of social exclusion and to increase sport participation and inclusion of migrants by promoting equal access to organised sport.





Secondly, he talked about the background of the European initiative. The partnership started in 2011 as a "Sport Inclusion Network" (SPIN) and the main focus was on addressing the under-representation of ethnic minorities and migrants in running organised sport. Across European cities diversity in sport is very much a reality in terms of the active athletes and players, but what about the people who are not active in the field of play, the managers, the coaches, the referees, the chairmen? He commented that the partnership comprised NGOs, such as the fairplay initiative at VIDC, but also sport organisations like the Football Association of Ireland. Mr. Wachter also mentioned the positive role of the other partner organisations in Italy, Finland, Portugal, Germany and last but not least Hungary.

In 2011 the European initiative "Football Refugee Day" was launched. He said, "the idea was to highlight the contribution of footballers who leave their country and seek safety. The aim was to celebrate the power of football to overcome the exclusion of refugees and asylum seekers and to highlight their contribution to the game."

As one example of a footballer and refugee, Wachter mentioned Ferenc Puskás. The legendary captain of the Hungarian national team and best player of the FIFA World Cup 1954 fled the country after the 1956 Hungarian Uprising. Puskás organised an association of exiled Hungarian players in Vienna before he emigrated to Spain. The focus of ESPIN now is on volunteering, because this is the basis of European sport, 95 % of EU sport is organised on a voluntary basis. He also highlighted the importance of migrants being involved in sport and in sport clubs. "We want to see them as sport managers, referees, team managers."

On the other hand, he pointed out that one idea is to collect knowledge because "we don't really know what the actual situation is of these people." The other idea is empowering migrants and minorities, thus he highlighted the importance of training and qualifications.

After talking about the refugee crisis one year ago, he said, "I think there has been a wonderful response from players, fans, sport associations. In my opinion, one year later this situation is different and the public discourse about refugees has changed." He also showed the audience last year's situation using pictures and examples. He stated that the attitude toward refugees is different in Austria. "They respect refugees and they are welcomed there."

Finally, he said that he is optimistic today, but there are still many challenges. In his opinion, the challenge today is to help refugees get support and assimilate. "Supporters need to be cognisant and build capacities. They have to be gender-sensitive, not to organise events just for men, but also for women. They need to work together and help NGOs in their work."

## **Opening Session: Social Inclusion in and through Sport—opportunities and challenges across Europe**

Moderation: **Máté Hajba, Polgári Platform**

**Tibor Vámos, Chairman Grassroots, Fair Play and Minorities Committee, Hungarian Football Federation**

First of all, he thanked the organisers for inviting him to the event and welcomed the participants. In introducing himself, he highlighted that he was a FIFA assistant football referee for 40 years and in Hungary for 30 years. He also mentioned that last year he became chairman of the Grassroots Fairplay programme run by the UEFA. "This programme supports minorities, women, Roma, professional and amateur players as well." He pointed out that fair play and equality is very important to the Grassroots programme. He said their principle is that football is free of discrimination with regard to faith, creed, colour, gender and social situation.

Secondly, he mentioned the Hungarian Football Federation (MLSZ). MLSZ mainly follows FIFA's and UEFA's principles. He listed some Hungarian Football Federation members and talked about their initiatives. One football organisation that he mentioned is the Farkas János Foundation, which supports Roma players in three ways. First, they support players with terms, with material support they try to integrate Roma people in Hungarian society through football.



He also underscored the Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization. He talked about the chairman of the Foundation, Mr. Gibril Deen. "Mahatma Gandhi Foundation's supporter is István Mezei, who is the president of Farkas János Foundation, so the two federations work together in several projects on tolerance and respect for human and minority rights."

He mentioned that the Hungarian Football Federation has a campaign against racism, in Hungarian "A győletem nem pálya", which translates as "Racism is not a field of play". He stated that they fight racism with UEFA and racism is not tolerated. The campaign includes a short film in two parts, one with the professional players and the other with children. He also showed a small schedule booklet for their games, with an advertisement for the campaign.

All in all, he pointed out that the Hungarian Football Federation and UEFA supports women in football, as he said "these things are a very important part and it is a development for UEFA and for the Hungarian Football Federation." He spoke of "one lady who is a member of one of the boards of the Hungarian Football Federation." Lastly, he talked about the fact that they have common fields associated with fair play, minorities, and grassroots, and that it is key to cooperate with each other. After that he expressed his thanks and concluded his talk.

**Clarisse Bonjean**, *programme manager, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) Secretariat, Council of Europe*

Firstly, she genuinely thanked the organisers for inviting her and hosting the event. She said, "It is a delight to be part of these continuing important discussions surrounding one of the biggest challenges facing Europe today." On one hand, the Council of Europe's central mission is to protect and promote fundamental values: human rights, democracy and the rule of law. As part of this mission, she said that the Council of Europe and the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport aim to reduce abuse in sport. As part of the Council of Europe Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies, they are also concentrating on the roles sport can play in creating pathways to social conclusion. On the other hand, the Council takes an intercultural approach to managing diversity through which they aim for respectful co-existence of different cultures, ideas and beliefs. As a result, people try to develop inclusive societies.

After that she pointed out that "to this end we held a conference in Vienna on integrating newly arrived migrants through sport, attended by some of you who are here. And we explored the opportunities and challenges presented. We saw and see so much good work taking place across the continent, work that allows refugees and migrants [to participate] in local communities, bonds made and skills learned." She wants this to have a transformative affect both on the refugees and on the community. In her opinion, sport also presents opportunities to help recent arrivals in a country acquire skills and assets which will further their integration. "It is necessary to create the right circumstances and opportunities so that migrants can channel those skills, energy, ideas and experience into useful initiatives and activities in their new country."

Sport programmes and clubs need to be accessible and welcoming and to treat both migrants and members of the host society equally and positively."

She also pointed out that the Council of Europe is "taking steps to found a living network of organisations from the hyperlocal to the national and international sport federations and even other associations and federations and networks." Launched in the spring of 2017, it will provide visibility to projects across the continent and give practitioners a forum to exchange knowledge and expertise. At the end of her speech, she said farewell and stated that she was looking forward to the rest of the day's discussions and "hope[s] that through dialogue, shared practice and reflection, we can continue to strengthen the role of sport in building inclusive societies across Europe."

**Vilmos Hanti**, *Chairman, Hungarian Federation of Resistance Fighters and Antifascists— Alliance for Democracy*

Mr. Hanti is active internationally, having been the president of the International Federation of Resistance fighters (FIR) for five years. He talked about the main issues like racism and xenophobia and where we can find them. He has participated in conferences like this a few times now and his opinion is quite simple: he thinks people nowadays don't really pay attention to these topics. That is why he was grateful to participate in and attend the event in order to develop this network. He wanted to show the audience that this is a very important topic for the European Union. It is





interesting that Hungarian people make a distinction between the word refugee and migrant, because it is almost the same word in translation.

Hungarians see this from a different perspective because refugees are the ones who have been forced to cross national boundaries and who cannot return home safely and migrants leave their country with the intent to settle elsewhere in a peaceful place. He also talked about last year's refugee crisis and the government's poster campaign. He stated that it was an extremely xenophobic campaign about the refugees. "But even so, there were volunteers who helped them, approximately 10,000 people."

He said that it is dangerous for Hungary to be xenophobic and that the refugees will think of Hungary as a racist country. Vilmos mentioned the referendum as well. He said, "We all knew that it was a bluff." On one hand he pointed out that being this xenophobic, civil organisations cannot have the support they need from the state, which could actually help with this issue.

On the other hand, this phenomenon is not only in Hungary but in the USA as well, as an example he talked about the US election. Furthermore, he mentioned that even the antifascist organisation in the Czech Republic is not in favour of migration, due to the influence of the president. All in all, he emphasised that integration is a two-way process, and it is not only refugees who have to adopt to their new environment, but their hosts also have to be tolerant, paying attention to their backgrounds. It is also interesting to note that long ago when Chinese people came to our country, the government did not campaign against them, and consequently they were welcomed by the Hungarian people and could easily integrate into society. He thinks that in the future "civil organisations should act more effectively to make a more peaceful area for refugees and we need to overcome this to successfully help with this issue."

**Des Tomlinson**, *Intercultural National Coordinator of the Football Association of Ireland*

Ireland is a small country with a population of 4.5 million, with 0.5 million "non-Irish nationals", to use the terminology from the last census. Sometimes when we talk about migrants and minorities, we fail to identify the differences between people. There are economic migrants, educational

migrants and those fleeing persecution. It is important, when considering the challenges, to understand those differences.

He added that sometimes when we think about sport or football, we have this view that football alone can make the world a nice place. "Sometimes it's true, football can play a role, sport can play a role, but not necessarily by itself. It needs partners. What does football know about engaging certain community groups? Maybe not a lot, which is why we need NGOs. Having educational partners, community partners, or state partners is all very helpful in the football team line-up to try to have some impact on social inclusion," he said. He pointed out that everyone who takes part in this process is important.

On one hand, like anywhere else in Europe, migration to the Republic of Ireland is focused on the two major cities in the country, Dublin and Cork. People migrate there for economic or other purposes. He said that Ireland has been involved in the new crisis at a limited level, but the country has long history of taking refugees from other countries. After that, he asked, "what role can football play in supporting integration in this migration?"

On the other hand, he commented that it is important to recognise the fact that we have this migration. At the time, the government had a national campaign against racism. When we talk about integration we also have to talk about the other side of the coin: the need to challenge xenophobia. We developed a strategy which was linked to the government's strategy, called Migration Nation, so that was the beginning of his role. He talked about what they are doing and about the EU's White Paper on Sport, which underscores the social role that sport can play in society.

What role can sport play in social inclusion? He said that they, the Association, developed a plan called the National Action Plan Against Racism. Furthermore, he mentioned that football has a benefit for society and also adds value to the community. With their programmes, they try to provide opportunities to make a bridge between their particular situations, they tend to have programmes that focus on either bridging or bonding, the latter being programmes to establish bonds within asylum centres. He talked about a school programme to connect children to clubs. But he also pointed out that we have to talk about challenges when we talk about opportunities, and racism is certainly one of them.



### Q&A Session

After his speech, he asked for questions. One person from the audience asked Mr. Tomlinson about how his organisation integrates girls and women into the intercultural programmes. He said that these programmes are open to both males and females, but they don't have specific programmes for women. However, the Football Association of Ireland runs a women's programme designed to encourage women to participate in football, for example the programme Soccer Sisters for girls between ages 11 and 15 (52 girls participate in it in an asylum centre in Dublin). It also has a women's participation strategy, which provides guidelines for all the programmes of FAI. In answer to another question he replied that the association has access to asylum centres through partnerships with NGOs and the Office for Promotion of Migrant Integration and the association doesn't have a problem accessing these centres.

To the question addressed to the representatives of national football associations regarding whether refugees can play in sport clubs in their respective countries, Mr. Tomlinson answered they can play in Ireland, "as long as they fulfil some criteria [set out by FIFA], which is not different for anybody who wishes to play." He added: "The challenge for people playing is more around the ability to pay." Regarding the Hungarian context, Gibril Deen said that the Geneva Convention of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol stipulated that if an asylum seeker is accepted, they have the right to be integrated into society. This also means that they have the right to play in football clubs, noted Mr. Deen.

### **Panel Session: Europe and the Refugee Crisis—what role can sport organisations play in the integration of newly arrived refugees and migrants?**

Moderation: **Máté Hajba**, *Polgári Platform*

**Orsolya Tolnay**, *Policy and Communication Officer, European Non-Governmental Sport Organisation (ENGSO)*

Orsolya Tolnay participated in the conference as the representative of the European Non-Governmental Sport Organisation. In her presentation she mainly spoke about the past and current issues her organisation deals with. In addition, she mentioned what plans her NGO has for the future. Ms. Tolnay started her presentation by presenting the exact duties of her organisation. She mentioned that as the European Non-Governmental Sport Organisation is an umbrella organisation of 34 members, it has public responsibilities. Mainly it deals with the social role of sport and how the power of sport can have an effect on society, as well as how it can activate people via sport and how sport can contribute to education and gender equality.

Ms. Tolnay presented a project from her NGO that was implemented between 2011 and 2012. In connection with this she spoke about the results of the project and how it affected the development of social inclusion. She presented the booklet they made on good practices in social inclusion based on experiences gathered through 15 projects across Europe. Ms. Tolnay mentioned that this booklet can serve as a basis for other sport organisations by providing ideas and motivation for social inclusion through sport. In addition, she underlined that their booklet also gives recommendations to national, regional and local policy makers on what needs to be done to make a project successful in the field of social inclusion.

At the end of her presentation Ms. Tolnay spoke about one future project her NGO is planning. This upcoming project deals with how refugees





and migrants can be integrated through sport activities. European Non-Governmental Sport Organisation is planning to do a scientific report and a handbook about how to address social inclusion and how to handle the issues connected to it. They also wish to expand knowledge on how to work with refugees on their social inclusion.

#### **Zsolt Balla, UN HCR Hungary**

As the representative of UNHCR Hungary, Zsolt Balla first spoke about the situation of refugees and migrants in Europe and Hungary, comparing European crisis management with the African and Middle-Eastern approaches. In addition, he presented sport as a tool for improving living conditions of refugees and migrants currently staying in refugee camps. Mr. Balla underlined that UNHCR is not participating in projects in Europe focused on social integration through sport due to lack of capacity, but it welcomes and supports any projects run by other NGOs.

Mr. Balla mentioned his personal experiences with the role of sport among refugees, sharing the example of the Röszke refugee camp in Hungary, where refugees were playing cricket in their free time. Mr. Balla said cricket and sport in general can serve as a “healing tool” for people who have suffered serious trauma in the past and can also address the conflicts among people at the camp. The problem is that refugees in camps have different ethnic and personal backgrounds, so they often have conflicts on several issues. In Mr. Balla’s opinion, sport can help people work through these problems and help the participants build friendships. Making friends becomes much easier through sport and is an important factor for community building. Even if language complications occur, sport can be the medium for participants. From this perspective, sport functions as a therapy tool for specialists dealing with refugees and it has to be used as it has the needed effects. Mr. Balla underlined that Europe fortunately has the necessary NGO system to build a network that could help use research results to achieve a higher level of social integration through sport activities.

Mr. Balla also spoke about Röszke from another perspective. At Röszke, isolation was the main problem that occurred while refugees were waiting to cross the border. In this isolation sport was the only thing that could help people handle frustration and stress, and it played a therapeutic role while hundreds of people were waiting locked up together. Mr. Balla used

another example to prove the therapeutic role of sport. He mentioned the transit centre in Timisoara, Romania as a good example of applying sport as a therapeutic tool. Refugees and migrants had different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and it led to many conflicts, but during sport activities these differences disappeared and were not a problem anymore. This began community building among refugees and helped them forget the traumas of the past.

Mr. Balla presented the creation of the Refugee Olympic Team as one of the greatest achievements of UNHCR in 2016. UNHCR teamed up with the International Olympic Committee to send a team of refugees to the Olympic Games in Rio and the initiative was realized: the Olympic Refugee Team officially competed under the Olympic flag in Rio. Mr. Balla said it was a symbolic moment and played an important role in raising awareness of the situation of migrants and refugees worldwide. It also increased acceptance of refugees in general. The participation of the Refugee Team in the Olympic Games shows that success can be achieved even in the worst situations. At the end of his presentation, Mr. Balla underlined that no matter how desperate one’s situation is, sport can help people get through hard times.

#### **Harley Hamdani, Diversity & Inclusion Officer, Scottish Football Association**

Harley Hamdani from Scotland is the Football Equity Officer at the Scottish Football Academy. Their Academy has a programme to involve refugees and migrants in the community through sport. According to their mission it doesn’t matter where someone comes from. Their objectives are to increase awareness of accessibility and the inclusive participation of migrants and refugees within the country. Through the new relocation plan in the country many small communities will face the challenge of refugees and migrant inclusion, which can be made easier with the help of sport. There is a big risk that the migrants may form a small separated society within the cities, so they have to be encouraged to participate. The football trainings help everybody, especially children, to interact with people outside of school. Even language is not a barrier on the football pitch.

Playing together and socializing with the locals can develop the participants’ language skills. It is also important to involve local schools and



teachers who can follow up on their needs and development. A shared passion and interest—in this case football—brings people together and gives them some normalcy in their life, which has been extremely traumatic. Meeting the other groups plays a key role in getting involved in a new community. A further step is that people get to know each other, not only in the local community, but also in the region. Parents are sometimes afraid to let their children out on the football field, but as they see their smiles and successes, they adjust. These experiences can also encourage them to socialise. The participants' biggest benefit is to have a sense of belonging somewhere, and experience a normalcy that did not seem to exist before.

**Catherine Enoredia Odorige**, *Researcher, National University of Public Service, Budapest*

Ms. Odorige's presentation focused on deconstructing the stereotypes about migrant and refugee communities, rooted in "single stories" about their places of origin, a notion she borrowed from Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Ms. Odorige pointed out that there is a tendency to perceive migrants as though they came from one particular village or community. In arguing for an approach to integration that acknowledges the diversity of refugees and focuses on the individual, she cited a number of examples that highlighted how different groups of migrants and refugees represent different cultures and religions. This, as her cases showed, sometimes even leads to intergroup conflicts. One example was a piece of news from April 2015 about Muslim refugees allegedly murdering Christian ones while crossing the Mediterranean by boat, the other came from her own consultations with NGO workers, who told her about conflicts between groups in refugee camps, some even leading to physical violence.

A key idea of Ms. Odorige's presentation was that to avoid conflicts either within refugee communities or between refugees and host societies, it is necessary to look at refugees as a diverse group. Stereotypes and prejudices against refugees are grounded in "single-story ideas of what a particular set of people is" and these ideas are shaped by dominant representational traditions in art and culture. After offering a scholarly definition of stereotype, Ms. Odorige suggested that it can be broken down by platforms that allow space for interaction and dialogue. Through a per-

sonal example, she highlighted that we are all guilty of stereotyping and offered a quote from Adichie: "When we reject the single story, when we realise that there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise."

Sport can be a means to deconstruct such "single stories" and to advance social inclusion, said Ms. Odorige. "Sport is not just about competition and exercise, but also regulates behaviour and creates a feeling of belonging. Sport can bridge the gap in society, and change the way people think and look at the world," she proclaimed. She recommended involving migrants and refugees in sport as early as possible, starting in the reception camps. To bridge the cultural differences between various refugee groups, it is important not to put them in rival positions through sport (e.g. by organising separate teams for Afghans and Syrians). Instead, teams should be composed of different and diverse people, regardless of place of origin, culture or religion. "When we get people to interact with one another, you [can] deconstruct the single story. When we put people in teams, there's bonding, so you bring about intercultural adaptation," she explained.

Besides popular sports like football and basketball, she also finds "fun sports" among the most suitable for engaging refugees in sport activities. Regarding the importance of the latter, she emphasised that the experience of trauma is common to refugees: "We talked about the traumatised nature of people at the reception centres. If they are able to do these fun sports, like sack races and catching the train, it can bring some form of laughter among them." A further aspect to consider when involving refugees, especially refugee women, in sport is the convenience of combining various sport types with traditions such as religious dress code. Sport types that do not violate the Muslim dress code, including canoeing, shooting and table tennis, have a special significance for reaching out to Muslim women.

As an example, she mentioned that Ibtihaj Muhammad (USA), the 2011 bronze medallist in the World Fencing Championships, once admitted that she was attracted to fencing because "did not compromise [her] desire to dress modestly as a Muslim woman." Role models like her or Tahmina Kohistani, Afghan female sprinter in the 2012 Olympics in London, also play a key role in mobilizing Muslim women. To address the challenges posed





by traditions, Ms. Odorige also recommends talking to the parents of young Muslim women, as they have an important influence over their children's involvement in sport activities.

**Csaba Schuller, Social Worker, Menedék Association for Migrants**

As the last participant of Panel Session I, Csaba Schuller spoke about his experiences as a social worker helping migrants and refugees in the field of social integration. Menedék Association for Migrants has recently set up a programme which is based on Mr. Schuller's observations as a soldier. The idea is to use boxing as an experience-based therapy for those who have suffered (war) trauma or had difficult experiences during the journey to Hungary. Participation is open to anybody, but the programme is specialised for migrants and refugees.

The main purpose was to create a therapy group that can help the participants work through the negative experiences they had in the past or during their journeys to Hungary. This therapy group is not meant to give professional help to the participants but rather to give them positive impulses and the opportunity to build new relationships. By applying this technique, Menedék Association for Migrants expects participants to integrate easier into the local community and Hungarian society.

The Association is now trying to reach more people who can be involved in the project. Now the majority of the group are from Hungary. Therefore, Mr. Schuller wishes to increase the number of migrant and refugee participants, but it is not easy to persuade them to come, as they are in a difficult life situation. The task is hard, but Menedék Association is hopeful and constantly trying to be as effective as possible.

## Q&A Session

During the Q&A session at the end of the panel, two guests made contributions. One addressed Zolt Balla with the statement that UNHCR used to support sport activities for integration around 2000, when it was led by Stefan Berglund, but this policy has since been abandoned. The suggestion to Mr. Balla was that UNHCR should try to revive this tradition. Mr. Balla replied that over the past years, UNHCR was forced to focus its capacities on emergency issues but noted that there are successful integration

programmes through sport activities run by their NGO partners, including Menedék Association for Migrants. Another guest noted that during the panel he heard the most specific examples in Harley Hamdani's presentation regarding the question about what sport organisations can do to integrate migrants. According to him, the question remains how NGOs can make organisations in other sectors participate or take action.

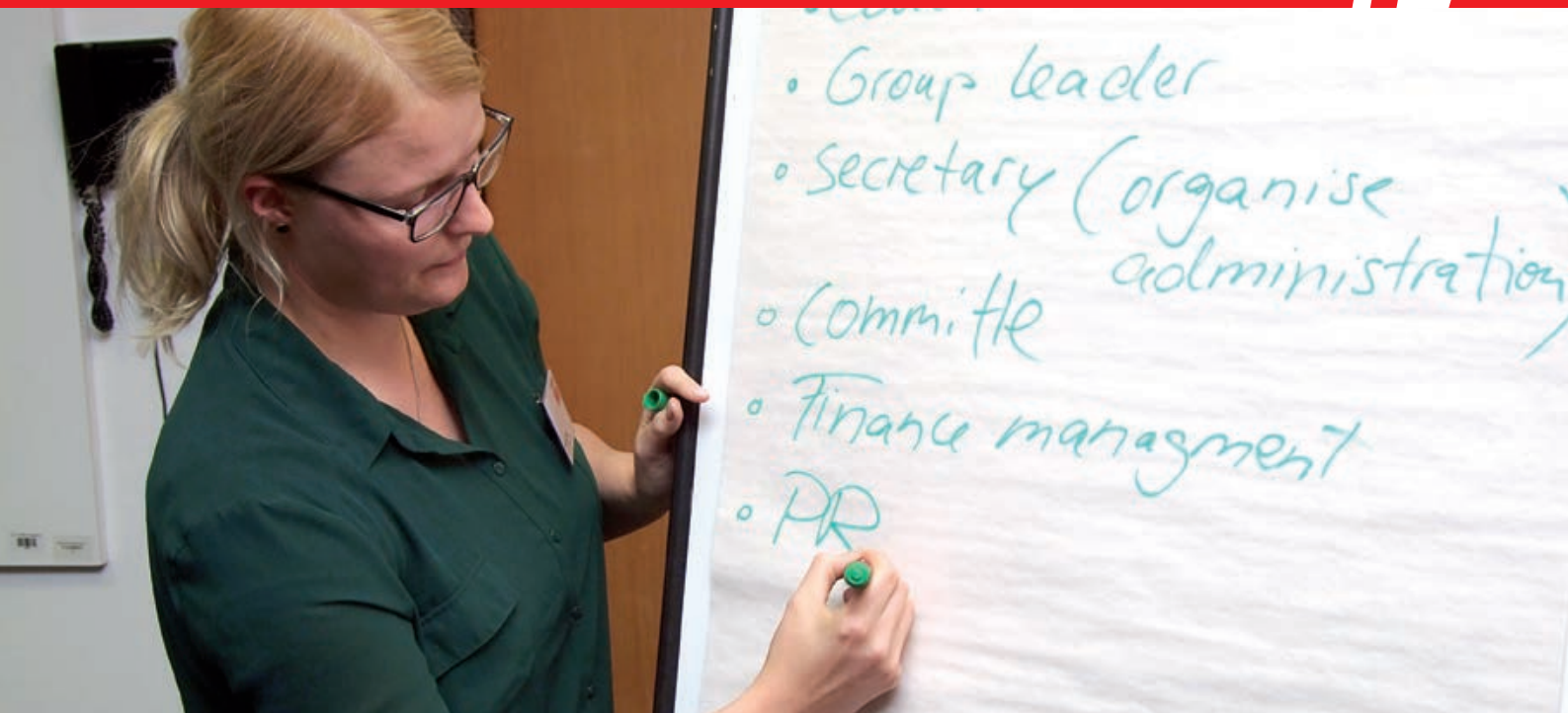
## Workshop A: Sport Volunteering of Migrants and Minorities: Barriers and Good Practice in the EU

Chair: Des Tomlinson, *Intercultural National Coordinator for Football Association of Ireland*

**Franziska Fehr, Dublin City Voluntary Centre**

The first part, led by Franziska Fehr from Dublin City Voluntary Centre, was a kind of group activity in which everybody had to participate. It is an important experience for everybody to have the opportunity work with someone, even for this short task. For everyone who works or volunteers in this field, with migrants and asylum-seekers, this is a special chance to meet and get to know each other, and bonds can be made through working together.

The first part of the exercise was to create several smaller groups that were formed by separating the people according to their interests in Olympic sports or football. Then these groups had to compile different kinds of barriers or problems, when someone is a migrant, either legal or with papers in progress, wants to take part in any kind of sport activities, as a volunteer or as an employee. There are a lot of obstacles to cope with for someone newly arrived in a country and yet not integrated into the society, but who actually wants to take part in sport events. These can be a lot of different things, some easier to deal with and some much harder. External obstacles such as language, information, knowledge about how sport systems function or legal restrictions are somewhat easier to solve, more or less. It is only matter of time and bureaucracy. But there are different kinds of obstacles, internal problems, like motivation, culture, cul-



tural norms, or gender, which are much harder to solve, sometimes even impossible. As the second part of this exercise, the participants had to find solutions for the problems they identified, and because most of the people who took part were from different countries, cultures, religions, and men and women were equally represented, with different ages, many kinds of solutions were found for these problems, and it became clear that most of them can be solved by working together. In the end, most of the cards with problems were symbolically thrown to the ground, to show that these are just mere excuses.

#### **BARRIERS** (both sides: clubs and migrants)

Internal: e.g. motivation, culture, gender (cultural norms, etc.), age

External: e.g. language, information/knowledge about how sport systems function, understanding how volunteering and sport works in different countries, negative attitude of a club/lack of inclusive values, general atmosphere in society, legal restrictions, finances (clubs & migrants)

#### **SOLUTIONS**

Provide information e.g. on the structure of sport club/organisation

Testimonials from beneficiaries/clubs given to volunteers

Equal policies and procedures to deal with negative attitude/behaviour

Language/orientation training programme

Inclusive programme both for locals and "new arrivals"

#### **Helmut Winkler, SG Egelsbach, Germany**

The second part of the workshop was more of a progress report on a functioning solution: a small German village called Egelsbach. Represented by Helmut Winkler—SG Egelsbach. This sport club has active volunteer migrants working as coaches or assistants for the club. Helmut Winkler presented the learning program that they created without any financial assistance. They help the migrants learn about the German football system, the way it works, give them the opportunity to learn how to manage a football club, and get to know the culture in depth. As part of their education program they have created a multilevel way to learn the German language. On the first level, they learn about basic football vocabulary to

help them navigate the field, to be able to play with and against German players. On the next level the students can learn a wider spectrum, basic sport vocabulary, and with this, they can move from one sport to another, once they have the basic knowledge to make themselves understood. On the third level, they get an even broader set of vocabulary. This way, not only is sport used to further inclusion of migrants, but also this educational system will help them to integrate and understand the culture and norms of the people helping them. It must be understood that it's not enough to give the migrants, whether youth or adult, man or woman, some sort of exercise. They need to become team players and value the opportunity, making the most of it by learning and educating themselves.

### **Workshop B: Empowerment of Refugees, Migrants and Minority Groups in Sport: Where are we and what is needed?**

Chair: Kenneth Hansen, *programme Manager, FAROS supporting Refugee Minors, Greece*

#### **Amir Sahil, Afghan Youth – New Start in Austria**

Amir is the current PRO-AM European Champion in Kickboxing. He briefly spoke about the large number of Afghan refugees seeking asylum in Austria. Amir shed light on the Austrian chapter of the World Kickboxing Federation (WKF) focus on helping Afghan asylum seekers by providing assistance, orientation, and consultancy to make their integration process easier in their residence countries with the cooperation of relevant organisations and agencies.

Since January 2015, more than 130,000 Afghans have arrived in Europe. The ongoing violence in Afghanistan, target killings, and kidnappings of various ethnic groups are the biggest factors pushing Afghans to Europe. At the end of his speech, Amir focused on European policy makers and how they can cooperate with Afghan communities and institutions to overcome this crisis in the long term.





#### **Simon Thieule, Kraainem FC**

The second speaker in this workshop was Simon Thieule, a professional player and volunteer from Kraainem FC from Belgium, who introduced their programme called "We Welcome Refugees". This voluntary work-based programme aims to help the integration of two refugee centres. One is temporary and hosts refugees only until they get placed somewhere else; the other is a permanent centre.

The greatest challenge they faced was contacting, finding and working with these centres that could not be handled without the central government's help. The help of NGOs was required too and eventually they got the central government's support in another crucial part as well: promoting them to a "club and foundation" category. Their aim is not to train the "next Messi", but to take the shared group activities with local people to a deeper level. They do not participate in any kind of nationwide or organised championship as a team, the focus is on participation.

Currently they are working with people of 42 nationalities in a multicultural community. Last year they had more than 700 refugees under their care for different periods of time depending on their current situation as refugees. Next year's plan includes a change of perspective from quantity to quality. The policies against violence are clear: people caught participating in any violent act are banned from the team and the programme.

The programme also targets other non-sport activities, including French language courses taught by volunteers a couple of times a week and dinners that give opportunities to learn about each others' culture and to build personal relationships. They receive no fiscal support from the government, they emphasise maintaining a volunteer-based vision.

The "We Welcome Refugees" programme was chosen by the European Commission to increase the visibility of sport related inclusion programmes and to "lead by example". Their goal is to include other football clubs and to introduce their mindset and discipline to other sports like hockey or rugby.

#### **Alberto Urbinati, Liberi Nantes**

The third speaker was Alberto Urbinati, representing the Liberi Nantes football club from Rome, Italy. The core of the football club is made up of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. They cannot participate officially in

the regional leagues, since they are not permitted to register nine foreigners at the same time.

This raises a legal issue concerning human rights. The main problem is raised by the requirement that the home countries permit their citizens to participate. Asylum seekers are seen as having "their chains broken" from their country of origin and sometimes the permit cannot and will not be granted certainly for political reasons. The organisation also places great emphasis on teaching their players the beauty of the Italian language. There were around 250 participants in the previous year.

The other challenge was to lease/rent facilities that could be used to practice and hold classes. They do not have their own facilities and were required to renovate an old unused space. The renovation took place with the coordinated help of both migrants and local volunteers. Their key words and aspects are: respect, relationship and responsibility, respecting themselves, each other, referees and opponents. Relationships on the team and with other players are focused on a shared understanding of values and culture. Their responsibility is to protect what they have built and will build.

In the last 7 years they have won the "Award for Fair Play" three times and realised many more achievements throughout the years. In their view every human deserves a blank page, everyone, on the individual level is a new project. Answering the question: "Why sport?" Alberto recalled a picture of multiple children playing football with a burning building in the background, concluding that football can bring us together in the darkest moments.

#### **Raymond Irambo, African Hungarian Union**

Last but not least, the fourth speaker Raymond Irambo addressed the importance of the will of national governments and the help they can provide with assistance from NGOs. Mr. Irambo is the head and founding father of the African Hungarian Union, an expatriate who came to Hungary on a scholarship 34 years ago.

After the collapse of the Berlin Wall, Hungarians started blaming people of colour for the lack of the expected social change, turning Hungary into a non-target country that cut off ties with the old system, whether it was useful or not. Social inclusion is a crucial factor in solving the problems



migration has caused recently. People have to be taught certain skills and by holding language courses the language barrier could be broken down.

The panel discussion ended with a question and answer session, where participants raised questions and shared their comments.

### **Workshop C: Intolerance and Nationalism on the Rise? Innovative Approaches to Challenge Exclusion and Discrimination in Sport**

Chair: David Hudelist, *fairplay-VIDC, Austria*

The input in Workshop C came from four people who mostly work as football coaches and try to increasingly involve migrants, helping them play football, learn the rules, and simply let off steam, while also giving them perspective, teaching them to play on a team, and in the end, advancing inclusion and integration into society, whether it be Macedonian, German or Hungarian. It takes great effort, and sometimes the coaches can't just simply "take the kids out". There are restrictions or barriers, as discussed in Workshop A, and everyone who wants to help these kids, or even adults, has to deal with them, such as paperwork, cultural differences, etc.

**Aleksandar Mishevski**, *Youth Forum Bitola, Macedonia*

The first speaker, Aleksandar Mishevski, came from Macedonia where he teaches kids football and is involved in journalism and activism. Unlike Western countries, Macedonia is much closer to the "fire" in terms of the migration "crisis". But most of the people trying to get into Europe, asylum-seekers running from war and destruction are just passing through this country, and it is very difficult to help them when they spend so little time there on their journey to the heart of Europe.

They not only work with migrants, but also help children living in poverty and those who are stranded on the periphery, by teaching and training them and also helping them in various fields, such as art, culture and human rights. The children work and play in mixed groups, so they learn to work together and put aside their differences. Football is the main

tool. Having started with only t-shirts with the same logo, now they even have matching outfits.

The goal is to institutionalise this whole operation. There were several improvements over the last 10 years; teachers and trainers joined the campaign to help the children. There is even help on an international level. They get equipment, balls, jerseys, and other useful things from Germany and other countries. And the number of participants grows every year. They use sport and football as a tool to integrate. Immigrants take part too, but as mentioned earlier, because of the location of Macedonia, most of the people are just passing through the country, so most of them only stay there temporarily. But among these immigrants there are people from several countries and several backgrounds, like people from poverty or people from middle-class from Syria.

**Junaid Olalekan and Mbo Ekale**, *Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization, Hungary*

Junaid Olalekan and Mbo Ekale are working to help immigrants and anyone who wants to play football with the team, to integrate them successfully into the society. Junaid Olalekan introduced the current situation in Hungary and emphasised the problems and mistakes in the country. There is serious propaganda in Hungary against migrants and immigration in general.

And it is increasing since the peak of the "migrant crisis" that took place during the summer of 2015. Anti-migration and racism is not a new problem in the country, and Hungary has had a problem integrating the Roma people into society, though this is not unique in Europe.

The growth of the far-right political party Jobbik, the biggest opposition party in Hungary, is an alarming message, because of its divisive opinions and anti-Semitism. Recently, on 2 October, the Hungarian government had a referendum with the question: "Do you want the European Union to be able to mandate the obligatory resettlement of non-Hungarian citizens into Hungary even without the approval of the National Assembly?" Although this referendum did not pass—only 44.04 % showed up to vote—the ruling party, Fidesz, took the high count of NO votes, 98.36 %, as a sign and suggested turning the result of the referendum into a constitutional amendment, but this was not passed either, because the opposition did





not vote in favour of the new amendment. Nevertheless, this is a sign that the anti-migration policies are strong in Hungary.

Mbo Ekale, the coach of the Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization football team, talked about the current status of their team and their successes. The football club has only 25% Hungarian players, the other players are all migrants. The biggest problems he raised include situations when the referee favours the opponent, because of the high percentage of non-Hungarian players.

This can lead to losses if the referee does not acknowledge a foul and does not give a free kick during the match. In the end, they say that in everyday life the situation in Hungary is not as dark as it seems, the Hungarian people are no strangers to immigration and are willing to help and accept migrants, but since last year's big migration wave from the East, the situation is a bit less bright.

- Populism: partner can be afraid, growing negative attitude
- Use sport as a tool, but it is not the only tool (food, art, schools...)
- Use long-term approach, never give up (project impact grows year after year)
- Racism and hate speech are on the rise
- Use the approach "everyone can come"
- Use tandem men-women as leaders, mixed groups/teams, encourage refugees to become coaches/leaders
- What can we do if the "propaganda" is proven to be false? How do we fight propaganda?
- Meetings/exchanges are useful, role models, good practices
- Everyone can take action, also small efforts count

**Juliane Schlickerrieder**, *Champions ohne Grenzen, Germany*

The last speaker of this session was Juliane Schlickerrieder. Her programme is called Champions Without Borders. She works in Berlin, Germany. They use football to help children and adult asylum seekers by playing football with them, teaching them to work with each other and everyone, and teaching society to accept them. Since 2012, they have open training. In the beginning, they just did it for fun, to pass the time with the children from the refugee camps, and help them let off steam. But later it had a larger purpose, to fight social segregation.

In 2016, Juliane proudly said that they have at least 10 practices a week, not only for children, but also for men and women; they train about 200 people. They have mixed trainings, and in every session they use two trainers, a man and a woman, to help everyone from other cultures to understand and develop a sense of equality. This also helps the children, who are then raised with the same attitude, making it easier to integrate them into society later, when they acquire legal status and actually can participate in more activities. They have a championship called the Kick out Racism Cup.

They have several problems to deal with: because of the lack of money, they often have to walk and take public transport instead of minibuses to move the children from the camps to the field. And also, football is not enough to integrate these people. They have activities outside the field, a programme called Education and Encounter, which consists of trips to explore Berlin.

It is important to teach them football and give them role models. They use the term: "everyone can come", to reinforce the idea of equality and inclusion. Everyone can participate in these events, even as a viewer, you also support the idea. The most important is to inform everyone who might be interested, using flyers or the internet.

## **Panel Session II: Reports from the workshops**

### **Workshop A: Sport Volunteering of Migrants and Minorities: Barriers and Good Practice in the EU**

Chair: **Layla Mousa**, *UISP, Italy*

Ms. Mousa summarised the barriers that the participants identified affecting both migrant volunteers and clubs, as well as the solutions that emerged at the workshop. Barriers can be divided into internal and



external. **Internal barriers** include motivation, culture and gender—i.e. cultural norms that can affect female participation in sport activities—and age. The most common **external barriers** are language, knowledge about how sport systems function, understanding how volunteering and sport works in different countries, negative attitude of a club, general atmosphere in society, legal restrictions and financial limits. Ms. Mousa pointed out that in some countries the sport system rules are very complicated, but each country also varies on how common it is to volunteer or what percentage of the population does sport. If a club has a negative attitude toward migrants, it may not have a real awareness about issues related to social inclusion and integration, and a society generally characterised by fear can make migrants feel that they would not be welcome in a sport club. Legal restrictions can also keep migrants away from sport clubs, and their participation as volunteers can be hindered by their having to earn an income. For clubs, financial limitations can result in a lack of investment in training or campaigns.

The workshop tried to identify some possible solutions to overcome these barriers. The solutions that surfaced include providing information on the structure of sport and club organisation (e.g. flyers, posters, website) in multiple languages. A way to attract migrants and minorities to sport clubs is to provide testimonials that show how volunteering is empowering. The negative attitudes of clubs toward inclusive values can be challenged by the introduction of an equality policy and related awareness raising programmes. A good practice discussed at the workshop was a language programme at a football club in Germany, which taught words in German related to the sport to migrants and refugees using cards. "Last but not least, develop an inclusive programme not just for the newly arrived people, but also for locals, i.e. people who have probably been in your club for many years," added Ms. Mousa.

## **Workshop B: Empowerment of Refugees, Migrants and Minority Groups in Sport: Where Are We and What Is Needed?**

Chair: Charles Nforbin, *Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization*

The workshop sought answers to the question in its title by examining the cases in four countries (Austria, Belgium, Italy and Hungary), representing different approaches. In the Scottish case, there is a partnership between the football federation and local clubs trying to integrate refugees. The Belgian approach also started from a grassroots initiative, then in cooperation with asylum authorities they managed to expand it further. The Italian example, which is perhaps a typical one, is also a grassroots initiative with little support from many official federations or from local authorities. It is tolerated but is not really supported in any substantive or structured way. Many of these initiatives are independent, and in Europe there is no systematic integration through sport or policy framework for it.

Therefore, the recommendation of the workshop is to connect the good examples on a political level and ensure that the sport federations play a key role in the countrywide implementation of social inclusion schemes.

Also, volunteers at sport clubs already working for the social inclusion of migrants and minorities often lack the proper professional background. "Good intention can go very far, but at some point, in order to make it a little bit broader than just doing something for the 50 kids living in the area, you have to bring in some people who can take it further", Mr. Nforbin summarised the conclusion of the workshop. From the case studies discussed, he mentioned an example that indicated a further challenge for social integration initiatives: when refugees and migrants outperform the host society, such as when a refugee team wins, as in one of the cases discussed, it can create a backlash. "When they are too successful, it is not always popular," he noted.

Finally, Mr. Nforbin mentioned another example showing the opposite, referring to a multiple kick boxing champion from Austria, who arrived in the country as a refugee. "Many Austrians must be very proud that he





came to their country, and through sport, he's making the whole country proud. So this can also be achieved on the other side", said Mr. Nforbin.

### **Workshop C: Intolerance and Nationalism on the Rise? Innovative Approaches to Challenge Exclusion and Discrimination in Sport**

Chair: **Antonio Saccone**, *Radio Capodistria, Slovenia*

The experience of workshop participants shows that partners may sometimes be afraid to work with them, due to society's growing hostile attitude to migrants and refugees.

The participants in the workshop recommend the use of sport as a tool for social integration, but its role should not be overestimated. Instead of thinking about sport alone, it can be used for integration in combination with other fields, such as gastronomy, art, school activities, and non-formal education. "Use a long-term approach and never give up, since the impact of the projects and the projects themselves grow year after year and with the time," Mr. Saccone encouraged the audience. He noted that racism and hate speech are on the rise, highlighting the campaign of the referendum in Hungary against the EU refugee quota system and also mentioning that there was an attempt to transform populism into a law in the country. "It failed, but what stayed somehow this hate speech," he commented.

The solutions the participants propose include the introduction of inclusive policies by sport organisations, offer joint leadership positions to men and women, support diversity within sport teams and encourage refugees to become coaches, referees and take on other leadership positions. To counterbalance the effect of propaganda, meetings and professional exchanges are important tools for self-empowerment. He also emphasised the power of role models and the importance of good practices and argued for ongoing commitment instead of standalone actions. Furthermore, he expounded: "An important statement is that everyone can take action and also small actions are important, they count."

### **Day Two: Saturday, 26 November 2016**

### **Minority-Focused Sport Programmes: Local Hungarian Initiatives**

**István Mezei**, *Farkas János Foundation, Hungary*

Mr. Mezei started his presentation with a special welcome to the women in the audience. The Farkas János Foundation was established in 1992 and named after János Farkas (1942–1989), a Hungarian Olympic champion footballer of Roma origin. The foundation works to help disadvantaged Roma and non-Roma have access to sport.

The most important activity of the Farkas János Foundation is running the Hungarian Roma National Football Team. István Mezei is the president of the foundation and the manager of the football team. The foundation also participated in the football tournament "Football Against Racism" in Végegyháza, a village in southeast Hungary, and regularly organises talent scout sport events throughout the country, reaching out to underprivileged areas within and outside Hungary.

The team was founded in 1995, receiving advocacy from legendary Hungarian footballer Ferenc Puskás, in Balassagyarmat, a town in northern Hungary. It has won 139 international matches out of the 152 in which it participated, including three tournaments in Brazil. "We fought together with the Hungarians," he asserted, meaning that the team included 11 Roma and 11 non-Roma players.

"We got on well with together. We proved that we can struggle and fight for this country. When we go abroad, we take an oath for our country. I think it depends on nothing else but you, how we can be good Hungarians, how we will be accepted," said Mr. Mezei, calling his mostly non-Roma audience's attention to its responsibility.

He added: "Let us take care of migrants who fled war. They came to us so that we will help them."

Out of the team's major victories, Mr. Mezei highlighted the following:



- Austria, 1996: the first international match, against the Austrian Roma national team (visitors included legendary Hungarian footballer Ferenc Puskás and representatives of the Hungarian Football Federation), result: both the adult and youth teams won
- Belgium, 1995–2000: The team won the Brussels Tournament each year between 1995 and 2000
- Brazil, 2006: Ubatuba Beach Cup
- Finland, 2006: Helsinki Cup
- Recent achievements:
- 1st place in the European cup of Roma football teams, Slovenia, 2006
- 1st place in the international cup of youth teams, Bulgaria, 2012
- 1st place, minority tournament, Austria, 2012
- Silver Medal, the football championship of linguistic minorities (Europeada), Germany, as the only Roma team
- Practice match with the national team of Gabon and the United Arab Emirates, preparing for the Olympics, Austria, 2012
- Group winner, Norway Cup (youth soccer tournament), Norway, 2013
- 3rd placement: ConIFA World Football Cup (organiser: Confederation of Independent Football Associations), Hungary, 2015

Mr. Mezei also mentioned the team's cooperation with the Vatican City national football team, which started in 2010. It was in that year that the Pontifical Swiss Guard, founded in 1506, was permitted to go abroad for the first time, upon the invitation of the Hungarian Roma National Football Team. The papal team has played against the Hungarian Roma team several times (the presentation slides highlighted six matches), and both Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis met representatives of the team.

Mr. Mezei's other activities for advancing the social acceptance of the Roma include laying a wreath on the plaque of the Roma heroes at the Museum of Military History, Budapest, on the national holiday of 15 March every year. The plaque, presented in 2008, pays tribute to the contribution of the Roma community to the country's struggle for freedom. Recent supporters of the team include the Hungarian Football Federation, Hungarian Olympic fencer and politician Pál Schmitt and his wife, Katalin Makray, Ministry of Human Resources, German Football Association.

#### **József Bacsárdi, President, Áhi Yoga Association, Hungary**

As the leader of a health protection organisation, Mr. Bacsárdi invited the audience to join a breathing exercise called "immortal breathing", supposed to extend lifespan if done slowly. Then he invited the audience to participate in an energizing exercise that involved spinning the hands up from a "chakra point" below.

According to a cooperation agreement, the Mahatma Gandhi Association and Áhi Yoga Association jointly organise cultural, sport and health programmes. The participants of these international sport programmes include Africans, Nepalese as well as disabled people. The sports represented range from football and bowling to darts and archery. The cultural part of the programme includes folk dancing and singing. There is an emphasis on disabled and able-bodied people doing sport together, and sometimes disabled people outperform their able-bodied peers. However, achievements are not of central concern, the major aim is to make people feel happy through participation and to facilitate the social integration of participants.

Áhi Yoga Association was founded ten years ago and registered six years ago. Its members are health visitors, physicians, manual labourers, teachers, people from minority groups such as disabled people, Mongols and Roma. Disabled people practice special yoga and breathing exercises. Among the major achievements of the organisation, Mr. Bacsárdi mentioned that Zoltán Jakab and Róbert Barna, two disabled people working with the association, ranked in the top of the national bowling championship, with Róbert Barna becoming a national champion.

The association organises programmes at nursing homes, hospitals, participates in campaign days for equal opportunity and health and organises sport days with the participation of people from diverse backgrounds. In 2014 the organisation founded the Association of International Cultural and Health Preservation Organisations, with members from Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. Its aim is knowing and accepting each other through sport and culture. In 2015, the organisation also founded the Hungarian–Nepalese Friendly Society. Áhi Yoga Association has professional relationships with sport associations and vocational schools throughout the country, organising sport and cultural programmes together. His examples for these included a football game between the teams from Mándy Iván Vocational School, Budapest.





At the end of the presentation, the participants stood up and made a circle by holding hands. Mr. Bacsárdi called it "The circle of love and friendship" and commented: "We prove with deeds that we do something for each other and others with the programmes discussed here." Finally, he presented a plaque for Gibril Deen from Áhi Yoga Association and the Hungarian-Nepalese Friendly Society as recognition of his work.

#### **Aladár Horváth, Roma Civil Rights Association, Hungary**

Mr. Horváth is one of the founders of the Roma civil rights movement in Hungary, which dates back to the post-communist era in the country. It attempts to give civil answers to questions that meet disinterest, refusal or a discriminative attitude from the state or municipalities. In the 1990ies Mr. Horváth was one the first Roma representatives in the Hungarian Parliament.

His presentation addressed sport activities in Kálló, a village in northern Hungary, 55 km from Budapest. The proportion of the Roma population of Kálló is rising and the village is in a disadvantaged position, with a high unemployment rate. Today every other inhabitant of Kálló is Roma and in 15-20 years the whole population is expected to be Roma. He has done volunteer social work in the village for six years, attempting to get the local population involved in social activism at a sufficient level, instead of waiting for help in vain.

The Roma Civil Rights Association surveyed local needs and developed a programme accordingly. The local branch of the association was founded, headed by István Diviák. He is of mixed origin, with both Roma and non-Roma in his ancestry, but he defines himself as Roma. In Hungary, Roma and non-Roma people have different definitions of Roma. Kálló is often described as a Roma village, despite the mixed composition of its population, and its Roma football team Kálló FC also includes non-Roma people.

Achievements of the association:

- A social programme for land cultivation. Mr. Horváth asked local inhabitants to dig up their gardens. Gábor Iványi Methodist pastor and human rights activist as well as German supporters provided seeds for 102 families.
- A community centre was launched by renovating an unused cultural centre.

- A training programme was launched at the community centre.
- A sport association was established.
- The sport association renovated the unused football field, helped by the German antifascist group Leipzig Korrektiv.

Leipzig Korrektiv also provided sport clothes and corner markers for the sport association. It started its work independently, relying on its own resources. The captain of the football team is István Diviák. The team plays among the top 3 of the county, last year it ranked third. Two years ago the team received media attention when it walked off the football field during a match against the team from Erd kört, a village in Northern Hungary, because of racist remarks from the other team's linesman that the referee ignored. As a response, the county football league punished only the Kálló FC team by deducting point, denying the claims of racist remarks.

The local municipality provided 150,000 HUFs (477 EUR) to the football team in the last four years. The leadership of the village still does not regard the team as its own, despite the mixed ethnic composition of the players. It is identified as a team from a Roma organisation, which is a disadvantage for them. The Hungarian state is indifferent to racism in the football stands. In Hungary, these groups (football fans) are used for political purposes, to intimidate political rivals. A conference like this is a good opportunity to call attention to the responsibility of the state and society to challenge racism. Finally, Mr. Horváth argued that more funding needs to be channelled to Roma, disadvantaged groups and those with a reduced capacity to work, both at the national and EU level.

#### **Q&A Session**

- 1) Toti Dedic, Croatian Roma football coach, praised István Mezei as an important leader of the Roma worldwide. They organised the first Roma football games in Split together, supported by FIFA, UEFA, the government of Croatia and institutions from Croatia and Europe. They also participated in three football championships, for which he thanked FIFA and José Manuel Barroso. They opened a football association for Roma all over Europe based in Zagreb; they would like to train all Roma in Europe together. At the end of his comments, Mr.



Dedic handed a t-shirt to Gibril Deen.

- 2) The presenters were asked whether they had any recommendations for reaching out to minorities and refugees to involve more of them in volunteering in spite of the current political tendencies and the dangers they pose.
- 3) Answer 1 (Aladár Horváth): Only strong communities are capable of countering political segregation and providing protection for individuals. The task is to create strong small communities and strengthen them, network them through sport, culture and all the other fields. People have to develop mechanisms of self-defence against the increasingly frightening expressions from the far right. An autocratic, illiberal system is being built, which makes a large part of society dependent on it existentially (for example, through the system of public work for the poorest), thus the system is pacified to avoid resistance. Vulnerable groups need to have strong communities and their own publicity; sport can be the means to this.
- 4) Answer 2 (István Mezei): We have to appreciate Hungary. It is our country. Hungarian citizens, including the Roma, have to work together with those who are open to it. It's important that everyone works toward this. It solves everything. Sport has an important role in community building. Aladár Horváth and Toti Dedic are good examples of responsible Roma leaders. Roma leaders have to face their responsibility. He referred to Flórián Farkas, former head of the National Roma Self Government, who was recently caught misappropriating public resources, taking these resources away from the Roma community. It is important to make investments in schooling and sport activities for the Roma. Self-confidence is needed for the Roma to succeed, Roma leaders and society have an important role in its advancement.

## Presentations:

### The Inclusive Role of Sport

**Victoria Schwenzer**, *researcher, Camino, Germany*

Ms. Schwenzer presented selected results from the baseline study "Equal Access for Migrant Volunteers to Sport Clubs in Europe", conducted by the Berlin-based research organisation Camino as part of the European Sport Inclusion Network. It tries to identify barriers preventing equal access for migrant volunteers to grassroots sport clubs, to identify successful strategies, good practice examples and aims to give research-based recommendations for sport clubs.

The research focuses on volunteering, which is a shift of perspective: migrants are not only seen as target groups, but also as active members of sport clubs, which is an unusual perspective. Methodology: analysis of quantitative pan-European and national surveys, conducted 10 interviews with experts from seven countries, investigation of case studies of three sport clubs in Budapest, Rome and Egelsbach, Germany.

Migrant refers to groups of diverse backgrounds, but one thing they share is the experience of exclusion and discrimination. Volunteering in sport clubs is a form of social recognition. Pan-European studies found that volunteering is one of the cornerstones of European grassroots sport. If you already play a sport, you are more likely to volunteer in sport. The majority of volunteers in the sport sector are male, thus volunteering in sport is dominated by men, and socially disadvantaged groups are less likely to volunteer. No data are available on migrant volunteering at a pan-European level, the few national studies available state that migrants are underrepresented in grassroots sport.

Barriers preventing equal access:

- Administrative: In some member states, there are quota regulations for players from outside the EU or legal restrictions regarding the legal status of the person, especially for asylum seekers.
- Social: Migrants are at a disadvantage on the labour market, which means that the cost of membership in a sport club (or special clothes, equipment) could constitute a barrier as well. Moreover, migrants





have to concentrate to work long hours; they are not able to spend time volunteering.

- Language: Migrants with limited language often feel ashamed, so they don't consider certain volunteer tasks.
- Sport culture: Some sports are popular in the country of origin of a person, but not popular in the new country, there might also be differences in the concept of volunteering in different countries.
- Gender-specific barriers: a) A male-dominated club culture is not attractive for women, esp. if it is characterised by sexist attitudes. b) Women and girls are bound to family obligations, especially in traditional families.
- Club cultures: There is a tendency for sport clubs to isolate themselves from external influences, e.g. volunteer positions are handed from one family member to another, which was especially reported from countryside areas; a special club culture connected to drinking alcohol and eating pork sausages could be unattractive to Muslim migrants.
- Discrimination: Migrants are considered good players, but leadership volunteer positions are often not granted to migrants.

Ms. Schwenzer provided a short overview of the Egelsbach case study. The club has about 3000 members in 15 sport sections, about one third of them have migrant background. Respecting diversity is a core value of the club. The club developed a mission statement during a process of two years, involving all the members through interviews, questionnaires and discussions. The club has many activities to involve migrants, the presenter focused on special activities for newly arrived migrants (refugees). The club participated in a programme for regional sport associations, to support the inclusion of refugees and sport clubs.

Under this programme, it appointed intercultural officers, linking refugee organisations and local authorities. In Egelsbach, the network surveyed the needs of refugees and developed special activities for them. Based on the findings, they established a gymnastics group for women and midnight football sessions for young men. They are running a qualification course for refugees and asylum seekers in volunteer training supervision. The idea behind the qualification course was to combine sport and language education.

Recommendations for the inclusion of migrant volunteers in general:

- 1) Promoting the club's intercultural openness in public relations, such as announcing that the sport club welcomes people from diverse backgrounds. Symbolic actions: the use of diverse pictures and different languages on the websites of sport clubs, publishing the mission statement on the website.
- 2) Identifying the cultural particularities of all members: taking special requirements into account, like not eating pork and not drinking alcohol.
- 3) Targeting women and girls, taking their needs into account, e.g. a balanced ratio of types of sport, accepting religious sport clothes, organising childcare during training sessions.
- 4) Appointing volunteer officers and mentors for new volunteers can also reduce language barriers, for example.
- 5) Avoiding excessive demands on volunteers and furthering the recognition of volunteer work. It's very important to limit the tasks of volunteers so that they don't feel overburdened.
- 6) Training migrants as coaches, training supervisors and referees: the club should be open to sharing power by placing migrant volunteers in positions of responsibility, migrants should be encouraged to participate in trainings.
- 7) Assistance should be sought from key migrant players and organisations to gain new members and volunteers.

#### **Recommendations specifically for the inclusion of and participation of refugees in grassroots sport clubs:**

- 1) Consulting refugees and developing offers based on their requirements, e.g. the type of sport activity they would like to be engaged in.
- 2) Avoiding paternalistic attitudes: Refugees must be addressed as partners, the sport club Liberi Nantes (Rome, Italy) is a good example of this partnership approach.
- 3) Encouraging refugees to engage while recognizing the limitations of volunteer work: It is essential to keep in mind that certain barriers affect refugees in particular, like an uncertain social and economic situation.
- 4) Creating shared experiences, such as an excursion. It is also important to document it with photos, as photos can be particularly significant for people who have lost everything.



- 5) Combining sport with educational opportunities: e.g. using facilities to offer language training or making language acquisition part of the sport activities themselves, as in Egelsbach, Germany.
- 6) Promoting inclusion and avoiding rivalries: internal communication can be used to avoid rivalries between different groups within the club regarding time slots, communication with the public is also important, the club needs to explain why it supports refugees.

**Willie Westerhof and Anita Vlasveld, Knowledge Centre for Sport, Netherlands**

The two representatives of the Knowledge Centre for Sport from the Netherlands delivered a joint presentation. Ms. Vlasveld provided a brief introduction of the institution. The aim of the Knowledge Centre for Sport is to make everyone participate in sport and physical activities, with a range of societal goals, such as health, participation and empowerment. They focus on all different target groups, including older people, youth and migrants. It's a national institute that does not directly address the population. It has people working in the field and its task is to ensure that everybody has the right knowledge about how to get people to participate or how to organise sport locally. They facilitate knowledge transfer among various stakeholders in the field of sport.

Ms. Westerhof referred to research results indicating that sitting is just as unhealthy as smoking and invited the audience to stand up and put the chairs aside for the rest of the presentation. An empty area in the middle of the floor was formed for an interactive quiz conducted by Ms. Vlasveld and Ms. Westerhof.

The quiz investigated whether the members of the audience know the target groups they are working for. For each question, the members of the audience indicated their answer by moving to zones on the floor representing "yes", "no" or "unsure".

Ms. **Vlasveld** and Ms. Westerhof addressed these two questions to the audience:

- 1) What is the number of refugees worldwide? Possible answers were: a) 6.5 million, b) 65 million, c) 650 million, and the correct answer was: a). Most of the participants guessed b) one person chose a), and some chose c).

- 2) What percentage of refugees worldwide comes to Europe? Possible answers were: a) 2 %, b) 5 %, c) 10 %, and the correct answer was: a). Most of the participants guessed a) two people chose c), one person chose b).

Ms. Westerhof then presented the IOC project of the Knowledge Centre for Sport. It is a national programme, with some national partners, such as the National Olympic Committee and the National Sport Federation (NOC-NSF), the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA) and the international organisation Right to Play. The aim of the project is to build sustainable networks in the vicinity of the reception centres in Holland. At the beginning of 2016 the country had about 100 reception centres in Holland, now it's about 80, with news of one closing down every week, due to the lower influx.

Since the beginning of 2015, COA employed sport professionals in all the reception centres with the task of building partnerships with sport clubs. They are employed on a project-base for two years only. The Knowledge Centre for Sport works with 20 centres, with the long-term aim of implementing the knowledge they gain with the rest of the centres later. Their tasks also include the monitoring and evaluation of the project. They did a survey of all the reception centres in the country based on a questionnaire with the following results:

Two-thirds of the refugees who do sport do it in the centres themselves, one third play sport in the neighbourhood with sport clubs. The types of sport they do are soccer, gymnastics, volleyball, basketball and swimming. This means that activities offered in the centres (soccer, gymnastics, volleyball and swimming) fit well with what the people want to do in the centres.

In almost all the centres there are cycling projects. The people around the centres give old bicycles to the centres. At the centres they repair bicycles and also teach refugees how to repair bicycles. They (the refugees) are very mobile; they can go to the sport clubs and other clubs in the villages.

The survey also revealed that about 20 % of the refugees participate in sport. The majority of the activities that are organised are open to everyone (men, women, youth, children), there are activities focused on men (the majority of refugees), but there are no activities for adolescent girls from 13 to 18 years old. The reason is unknown, but one possible explanation is





that there are too few of them. However, it could be that members of this group do sport at school (all children in refugee centres attend school).

It is mostly the employees of the refugee centres who organise sport activities, but sometimes refugees themselves also help organise them. Volunteers at the sport clubs might also be involved, but community sport coaches, who represent municipalities, are not, because refugees living in the centres are not considered local inhabitants.

Ms. Vasfeld and Ms. Westerhof invited the members of the audience to another activity. The presenters read out statements and audience members could indicate their agreement or disagreement by choosing their location on the floor. Members from groups representing different answers were asked to defend their opinion.

**1) Statement: Organisers of sport activities in your country pay too little attention to women and girls.**

**Result:** Most of the audience thought it's true, but a significant minority (about 10 people) thought it is not true.

A question to the group who did not agree with the statement: *Why do you think so?*

**Answer 1:** In some countries it is true (e.g. Italy), but in Finland it is not. To the question why this is so, he replied: In Finland women are very active. Not only in sport, but also, for example, in politics or business. To the follow-up question "When you go back to Italy, what would you do to change the situation? What would you recommend?" he answered: Women have to speak out. They want to have opportunities in sport and beyond and be proactive. Pro-activeness is the key.

**Answer 2:** The question is about what kind of sport. He is from an organisation with over a million members in Italy, half of whom are women. In gymnastics or volleyball there are a lot of women. There are more "male" sports than "female" sports.

A question to the group who agreed with the statement: *What could be a solution?*

**Answer 1:** There are a lot of sports that are not welcoming to women,

especially football. People often say women aren't interested in these sports (while others associate these sports with aggressive masculinity.) This is culturally embedded, it starts with what type of shoes people put on their young children (example: young girls trying to play football with young boys, unsuccessfully).

**Answer 2:** Sometimes sport centres should have something to encourage women, especially if they have children to take care of. Sometimes there is no baby parking at the sport centre.

**Answer 3:** Using the term physical activity might be helpful. In the past day it was all about sport and all about soccer. She appreciates that the presenters talked about those concepts. Reply from Ms. Vlasveld: The IOC requires that the money for the projects go to the sport clubs. They don't have a vision of what the refugees need, they have a vision that they have to increase their membership (the local sport clubs and the national Olympic committees.) The consequence is that women may like Zumba lessons, do fitness or go to the gym, but that is commercial, that is not a sport club. The money from the project goes more to sport clubs and activities for men.

**Remark from the audience:** It depends on the sport club, many sport clubs are multi-sport, and they also have a gym. Some women also like competitive sport, some don't. We should not position women as a homogenous group.

**2) Statement: Sport organisations make too little effort to welcome refugees. (The discussion of the statement was chosen over the discussion of another one: Volunteering is worthwhile for refugees with a residence permit.)**

**Result:** Most agree with the statement, with quite a few in the middle (undecided) and about five have the opposite opinion.

A question to the group in the middle: *Why are you [standing] here?*

**Answer 1:** In Germany he saw many sport organisations that made a great effort to welcome refugees. In Turkey there is not the same infrastructure in place at the communal level, that's why he stands in the middle.



A question to the group who did not agree with the statement: *Why do you think so?*

**Answer 1 (Germany):** I cannot say that we can do anything more, because we already do a lot [in Germany]. Many organisations are trying to do something, and very often they are left on their own because funding is lacking. Local authorities can also be a barrier.

**Answer 2 (Austria):** Thousands of organisations welcome refugees, but funding is lacking. We can't do more than we are doing right now.

A question to the group who agree with the statement: *Why do you think so?*

**Answer 1 (Finland):** Mainstream clubs don't consider migrants at all. No activity is connected to the migrant or asylum seeker centre.

**Answer 2 (Austria):** There are so many clubs that welcome refugees, but refugees are in refugee camps. The capacity of sport organisations in many countries is too low to support all the refugees.

**Answer 3 (Hungary):** Due to the Hungarian government's negative attitude towards migrants, a lot of Hungarian sport organisations are not very welcoming to migrants. There have been several hate campaigns against migrants and refugees, so in Hungary this attitude is also visible in sport organisations. A lot of effort needs to be made to make changes in Hungary concerning this.

## **Closing Session:**

### **Towards a European Social Network: Which Way Forward?**

**Kurt Wachter, ESPIN coordinator, fairplay-VIDC, Austria**

Mr. Wachter started his speech by providing a brief summary of the SPIN network's history, which was formed in 2010 as a group of NGOs and sport organisations from 7 EU countries. Its aim was to think beyond the usual antiracist messages in sport and to work on inclusion and involvement of migrants, ethnic minorities and asylum seekers. In 2011 they received funding from the EU and from there they evolved into something like a network. Key players include the Portuguese Players' Union, which could not send a representative to the conference, due to cancellation of flights.

The project ran until 2012, and the partners kept organising activities together—for example, a training seminar—before they were granted EU funding in 2014 to re-launch the project, called "European Sport Inclusion Network" (2015–2016). Their project "Sport Welcomes Refugees" was also selected for funding this year under the Erasmus+ programme. Starting in January 2017, its activities are aimed at refugees and asylum seekers and address how to facilitate sport participation and how to support small initiatives by refugees and migrants themselves. It also has elements of awareness-raising and study elements, and a closing conference will be organised in 2018 in Lisbon, Portugal.

The groups they worked with during their activities, such as trainings, the Fair Action Weeks, the European Week of Sport, are also interested in becoming part of the network. The core partner group agreed to find a way to open up the ESPIN network. Mr. Wachter also mentioned that the mass movements of refugees and asylum seekers have recently created a new context for the work done by the network. Civil society organisations need to work together to come up with answers to this situation, which also includes the rise of nationalism in Europe. "There should be a response from a European civil society, we can't leave it to the nationalist forces and to the far right," told Mr. Wachter his audience.





Returning to the issue of transforming this project-oriented formal network into a wider network, he expounded: "The idea is not to come up with something just for the sake of it. I think we have to be clear that it has to be of added value to those who become members. It needs to be needs-driven." For example, duplication of the work of other networks, such as Football Against Racism in Europe, needs to be avoided. ESPIN partners are also members of the FARE network, but FARE has limitations, as its work is focused only on football. "If we want to have a wider outreach, we can't leave out other sport", he said. The network also has a focus on certain functions and methods, e.g. previously they were quite strong on training and education. There is a continued need for training methods that are grounded in empirical research. Another recurrent issue is the support of grassroots initiatives, because small clubs feel left on their own. They want to do good work, but need more support and exchange of experiences.

When thinking about integration, aside from migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, forms of exclusion affecting other groups also have to be addressed, such as gender-based exclusion. The task is not only involving refugees in sport, but sport also has to transform itself by, for example, eliminating hypermasculinity and homophobia, which are issues in sport, and sometimes we still have an ideology of able bodies.

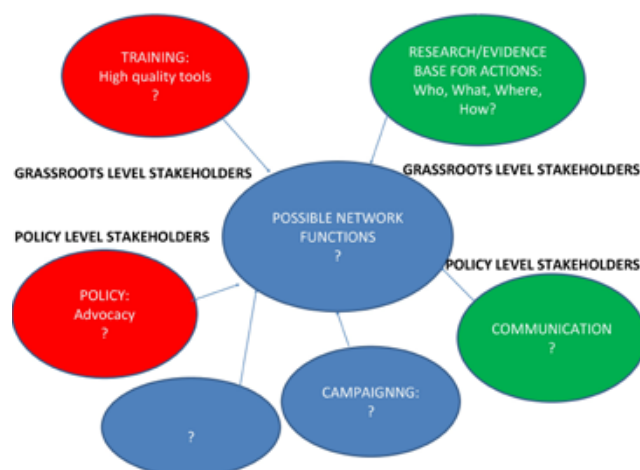
Finally, Mr. Wachter provided a summary of the potential core functions of the new network, based on the previous work of the project partners:

- A. Developing and delivering high quality training and educational tools for sport stakeholders
- B. Reflection, analysis and research: creating an evidence-base for social inclusion through sport interventions and practice
- C. Facilitating action at a grassroots level (lending practical support to small groups and promoting migrant and minority self-organised groups as key agents for social change)
- D. Advocacy / lobbying for policy change at a European and national level
- E. Raising public awareness through public interventions and campaigning (influencing public discourse, developing counter narratives)

#### Des Tomlinson, *Intercultural National Coordinator of the Football Association of Ireland*

Mr. Tomlinson invited the audience to contribute their ideas to the debate on what a new network should look like. He emphasised the fact, also mentioned by the previous speaker, Mr. Wachter, that the intention of the core project members is to establish a network that is need-based. Mr. Wachter added that there would be multiple ways to provide feedback on this discourse, one being the subsequent 30-40 minute interactive session with the audience, followed by an online consultation after the conference, in the form of an online questionnaire published on the website sportinclusion.net, to be evaluated by project partners in February, 2017.

To facilitate the dialogue, Mr. Tomlinson presented a diagram to the audience summarizing the proposed core functions of the future European sport inclusion network, as previously described by Mr. Wachter (see image below). Mr. Tomlinson supplemented Mr. Wachter's summary of the proposed five core functions by adding "Communication" as a sixth area of activity that may also require a common strategy. Besides the six core functions, Mr. Tomlinson also included the key stakeholders in the chart, which can be grouped into grassroots level and policy level stakeholders, the former level constituting the primary one.





### Interactive session with participants

- 1) Anita Vlasveld: She would add "practice-based" to the chart, as, for example her organisation (Knowledge Centre for Sport, Netherlands) positions its activities between policy, research and practice-based knowledge.
- 2) Willie Westerhof: Training is difficult to organise from a certain place, so perhaps we could think about e-learning, digital learning.
- 3) Academia could also be included as a partner. Students of sport are not really told that sport might be a tool for social inclusion. There is a gap between academia and NGOs that needs to be closed.
- 4) The training of referees can also be addressed.
- 5) Exchange activities, such as youth exchanges, study visits and international mobility could be included among the activities.
- 6) The evaluation criteria of impact measurement have to be agreed on.
- 7) Grassroots-level associations face problems with funding. The network has to lobby for their interests, with other international sport organisations (UEFA and FIFA).
- 8) To avoid duplication of activities, it is important to identify problems not addressed before.
- 9) The network can also generally promote social inclusion as a "brand".
- 10) Fund-raising and financial sustainability can be included in trainings as a topic.
- 11) "Branding" perhaps best fits the core function "campaign".
- 12) "Sport and physical activity" could be more open; it could offer freedom. The project partners also have to answer questions about why they are moving in this direction, why the network is needed. The aim of the network should be defined from the perspective of the problem.
- 13) The SPIN network has existed for 4-5 years. The aim is to broaden the network to include more players. The questions that emerge include: Who is putting what into the network? How can an organisation make use of it? Des Tomlinson & Kurt Wachter: It might be premature to answer the question at the present stage of the project.
- 14) Someone asks about seeing good practices. How can they be accessed? Des Tomlinson: A series of consultations is needed to decide which ones might be considered good practices.
- 15) A forum is needed for dialogue among the network partners, reflecting their needs. If one has a question, one can open a topic for it and country profiles could also be added.
- 16) How will the funding be secured and spent? Des Tomlinson: The question has to be discussed soon, but not now.
- 17) In order to make a network sustainable, a longer-term commitment is needed than the 2-year project funding (e.g. a 5-year commitment would be preferable).
- 18) Members should use their combined power to bring about changes in specific national contexts. For example, Hungary is one of the places where the need for support is greater than in the speaker's country.
- 19) Religious organisations are important sources of funding activities combating racism.
- 20) What will the platform of communication be among the members? Is there going to be a mailing list? Des Tomlinson: It depends on the needs of the people.
- 21) The launch of a newsletter was suggested to report on the progress of projects and discuss issues of common interest.
- 22) It has been suggested that all the core functions be connected on the chart. Regarding funding, public authorities in our countries should acknowledge the importance of our work. They can force local football and sport associations to devote some of their resources to promoting the organisations that use sport as a key tool for inclusion. Working toward such a goal would be important for all the core functions.
- 23) Funding could also include private donations from members. For example, "free meals" at a conference should be funded by the participants themselves.
- 24) The network should be made available to grassroots initiatives; members should share their knowledge with them.
- 25) The grassroots movement has to be supported in a way that does not institutionalise it.





## Final Remarks and Next Steps

**Willie Westerhof and Anita Vlasveld**, *Knowledge Centre for Sport, Netherlands*

Ms. Westerhof and Ms. Vlasveld summed up the key insights of the conference as follows:

Ms. Westerhof reminded the audience that different countries have different situations, which she illustrated with a few examples discussed at the conference: while Greece, Turkey and Italy have large influxes of refugees, Scotland and Ireland are quite controlled environments. Germany alone hosts one million of the 1.2 million refugees that have recently arrived to the EU, and then we've got some countries with fences along their borders and almost no refugees. These are quite incomparable situations.

However, as Ms. Vlasveld pointed out, we can also conclude that there are a lot of similarities. "As soon as you are working on the ground and start sport activities with people from all kinds of backgrounds, we all face the same issues on how to promote sport and how to involve refugees in sport", she said.

As another major conclusion, Ms. Westerhof cited the observation that when you aim to connect sport activities with social goals, you need to collaborate with institutions that have relevant expertise. Ms. Vlasveld added: It has been observed that along with helping to get fit, sport can be a means for women to participate and empower themselves and she hopes that participants will take this lesson home with them.

As one of the most remarkable statements, Ms. Westerhof quoted one of the participants from a session on Friday: "Let's look at them as individuals and empower them in a way that matches their personal needs." Ms. Vlasveld chose a sentence from her fellow presenter to highlight the idea that integration is a two-way process: "We are enriched by the contribution of migrants, we have learned from each other." From the inspiring stories, Syrian swimmer Yusra Mardini's case was mentioned, who saved the lives of 18 fellow refugees by swimming behind and pushing their leaking boat on the open sea for three hours – later to be included in the Refugee Olympic Athletes Team.

## Farewell

**Gibril Deen**, *Chairman, Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization, Hungary*

In his brief farewell note, Mr. Deen also emphasised that countries in Europe offer different contexts due to their various historical and political backgrounds. As an example, he pointed out that the funding of sport clubs and NGOs in Hungary is in the same legal category and, finally, he recommended that minority sport organisations turn to religious organisations such as the World Council of Churches and Caritas for funding.

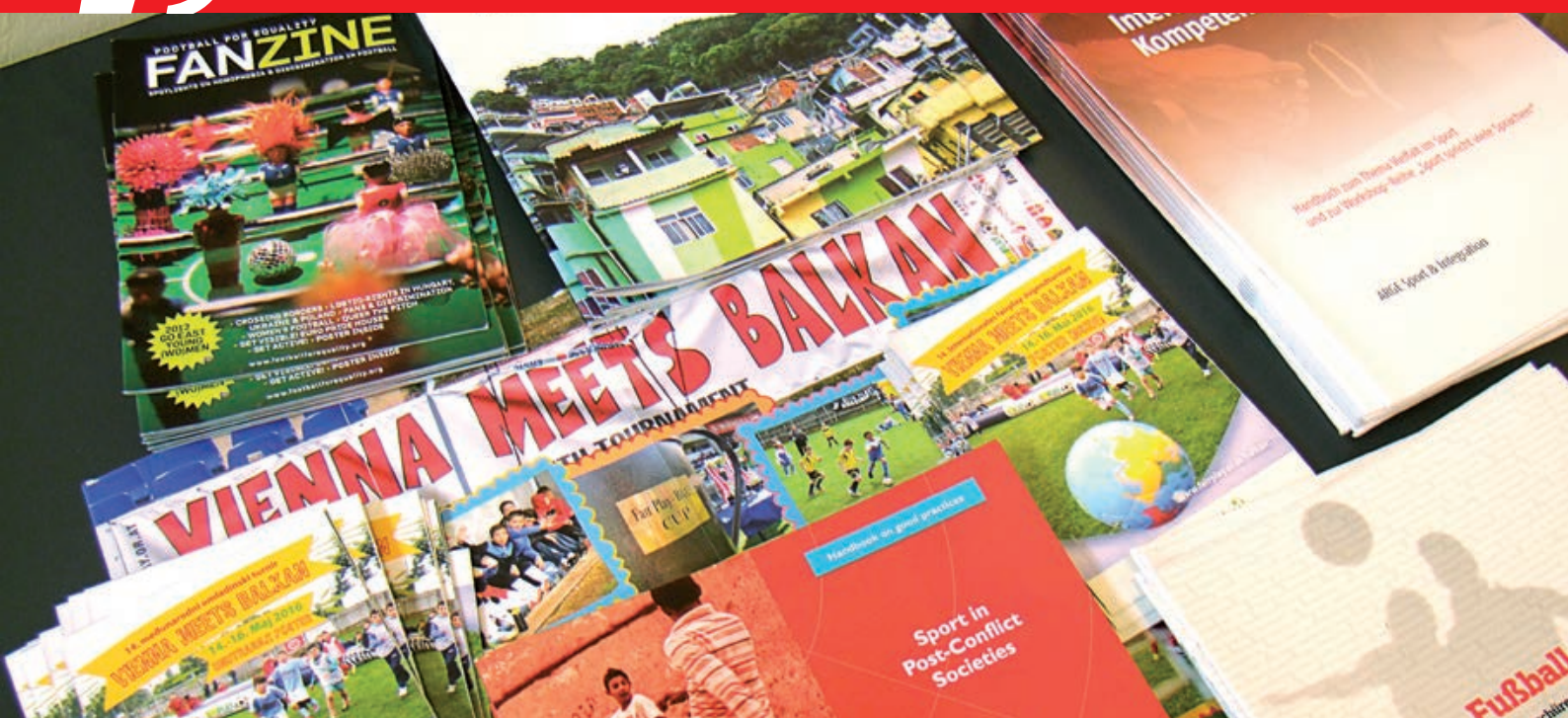


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