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ProS4 – Promoting the Council of Europe standards to safety, security and service
at football matches and other sport events (Erasmus+)

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Annual/Season report 2015

Violence, disorder and other prohibited activity
in connection with professional football matches in Europe
(and, where appropriate, other sports events)

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Introduction

The attached report is the product of a joint project "*promoting the Council of Europe standards to safety, security and service at football matches and other sport events (ProS4)*" co-founded by the European Commission and the Council of Europe and implemented by the Council of Europe.

The project incorporates a number of sub-projects, including one focused on establishing a process for gathering authoritative data and information in respect of football related incidents of violence, disorder and other related criminality across Europe. The aim is to provide a sound factual basis for undertaking an annual quantitative and qualitative analysis of current trends, identifying emergent challenges and determining work priorities.

To achieve this task, it is imperative that a source of comprehensive data and other information is established along with a format for gathering the data necessary to fulfil the aims and objectives of the initiative. Consequently a questionnaire was drafted and sent to the NFIP network in March 2016 for consultation and after that in April 2016 for completion.

At present no comprehensive and authoritative source of data exists in respect of all national and international football matches played in European countries. Some partial sources exist and these will be taken into account in the preparation of annual assessments.

Two important provisions supports the introduction of this questionnaire, on a yearly/season basis:

- it is included within the article 2, section b, point 6 of the Council Decision 2002/348/JHA concerning security in connection with football matches with an international dimension, as amended by the Council Decision 2007/412/JHA of 12 of June 2007, which states: "National football information points shall produce and circulate for the benefit or other national football information points regular generic and/or thematic national football disorder assessments."
- the Article 7 on "provision of information" of the 1985 European Convention on Spectator Violence requires that each Party shall forward to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, all relevant information concerning legislative and other measures taken by it for the purpose of complying with the terms of this convention, whether with regard to football or other sports"¹.

¹ Article 12 on provision of information of the Council of Europe Convention on an integrated Safety Security and Service Approach at football matches and other sports events foresees the same provision.

1. Role of NFIPs

The view of both the Council of Europe and the European Union is that the only potential and viable source of such data is provided by the European network of National Football Information Points (NFIPs). At present, the data collection roles of NFIPs varies considerably across Europe and to implement this important initiative it will be necessary to introduce a more harmonised approach to data collection.

The attached draft questionnaire aims to provide a flexible format which NFIPs should be able to complete without generating a significant amount of additional work or completely transforming their current data collection activity. For example, the questionnaire has been designed to enable each NFIP to provide data gathered on the basis of an annual period or on the basis of a football season (depending upon current practice or preference).

The questionnaire also seeks information on matters like the number of arrests, convictions and exclusion measures imposed in accordance with national law, along with other relevant material such as attendance figures and stadium bans imposed by national football associations and/or football clubs. In requesting this information, it is anticipated that some NFIPs will need to liaise with other relevant authorities or partner agencies who are responsible for recording the information concerned.

2. Format of Questionnaire

Section A of the questionnaire focuses on incidents, etc. in connection with national and international professional football matches played in the national State of the NFIP. However, it is recognised that some, but not all, NFIPs also record comparable data in respect of other sports events. Section B of the questionnaire, therefore, provides each NFIP with the (voluntary) option of supplying data on incidents, etc. committed in connection with other sports, if any, where such data is routinely recorded. Section C provides opportunity to highlight any national trends or emerging challenges and to propose work streams for detailed consideration.

Each NFIP should fill in this questionnaire with the available data at this moment and try to adapt their procedures in the future in order to provide a comprehensive and complete overview of their national football disorder assessments as regards this document.

3. Findings of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was forwarded to all State Parties to the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sport Events and in particular at Football Matches

- using first the NFIP network, it was sent to 34 Member and non-Member States and
- where no NFIP has been set up, it was sent to the delegations of the Standing Committee, this concerned 11 further countries parties to the European Convention on Spectator Violence.

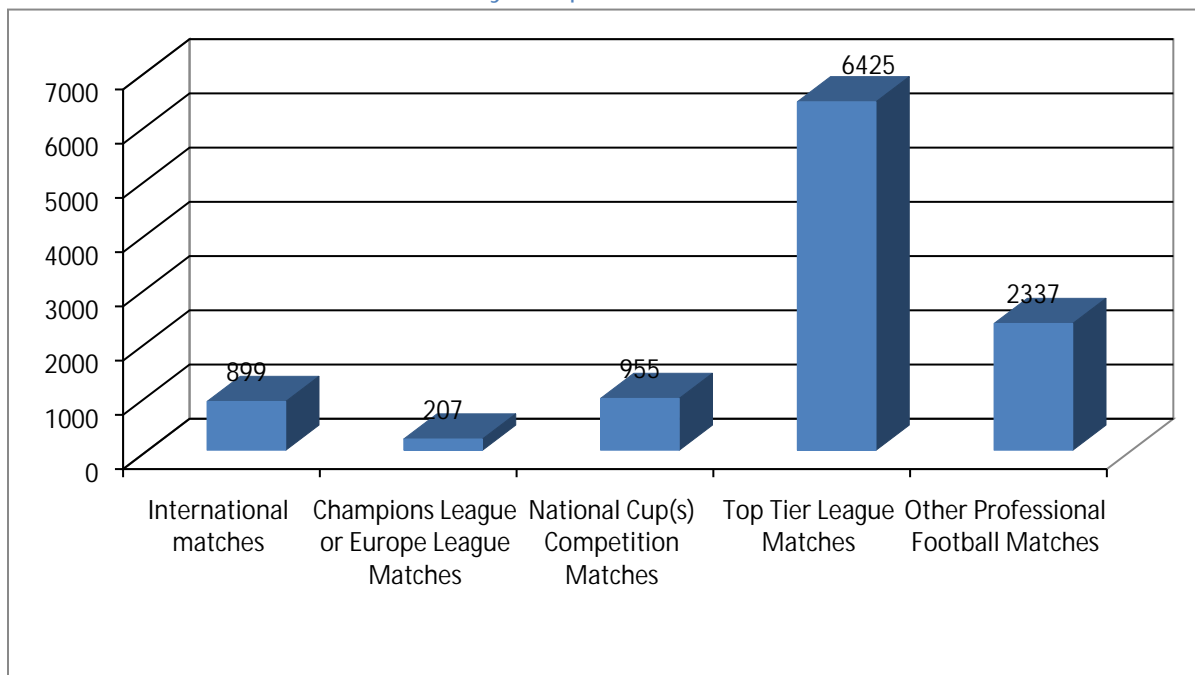
17 replies were received from the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Finland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Switzerland.

Reply rate to the questionnaire was heavily affected by the extremely busy period faced by the NFIP's, especially those involved in the European Football Championship UEFA EURO 2016 to be hosted by France. Also, being a premiere in this area of work it will take time for all the partners to get acquainted with the content of the questionnaire and its requirements.

This report is not aimed at criticising any of the responding States, but it is aimed at delivering a snapshot of the current status and emerging trends as regarding violence, disorder and other prohibited activity in connection with professional football matches (and, where appropriate, other sports events) in Europe, for the benefit of all the interested stakeholders and practitioners.

Section A. Professional Football Matches

Question 1: Number of football matches by competition for which data was collected?



The total number of matches reported by the responding States is 10.823, during one season or year. 90% of this total are represented by the national matches and 10% for international matches.

Question 2: Total attendances at football matches for which data was collected during the season/year?



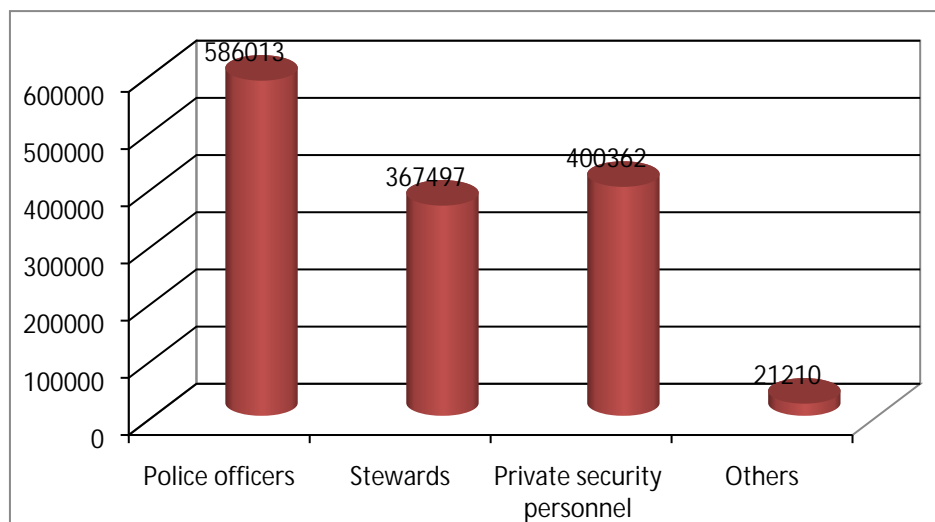
The overall attendance of football matches in the responding States is approximately 51 million fans is showing the magnitude and importance of this kind of events. 86% of that amount is recorded at the national matches and 14% at international fixtures.

The average attendance is 5137 persons/match which is underlining the fact that the responding countries focused on policing the top tier and international fixtures; with this average attendance, football matches are one of the most important public gatherings that occur on a recurrent time basis and require special attention and dedicated police deployment.

The highest attendance by far is recorded in Germany - 18.244.000 persons, which represents 35% of the overall attendances, followed by Italy – 14.231.194 (27%) and Belgium (8%). Lowest attendances in Slovakia (400.000), Estonia (130.277) and Latvia (91.000). These results are not a surprise, taking into consideration the country's size and population, as well as the level of development of its national football competitions.

The highest average attendance is in Germany (36.634 spectators/match), Italy (7264 spectators/match) and Belgium (6711 spectators/match), whilst the lowest are in Latvia (520), Bosnia-Herzegovina (486) and Estonia (337).

Question 3: Number of security personnel used for football matches during the previous season/year?



Responding countries	Police officers	Total matches	Total attendances	Average ratio police officers/match	Average ratio police officers/fans	Average attendance/match
Austria	28579	1186	2507729	24.10	87.75	2114.44
Belgium	36242	621	4167968	58.36	115.00	6711.70
Bosnia-Herzegovina	15848	1434	697720	11.05	44.03	486.56
Bulgaria	30294	441	777038	68.69	25.65	1761.99
Czech Republic	31977	300	1959215	106.59	61.27	6530.72
Denmark	4851	472	1936839	10.28	399.27	4103.47
Estonia	1020	386	130277	2.64	127.72	337.51
Germany	152118	498	18244000	305.46	119.93	36634.54
Ireland	1180	229	644700	5.15	546.36	2815.28
Italy	189114	1959	14231194	96.54	75.25	7264.52
Finland	2200	220	620000	10.00	281.82	2818.18
Latvia		175	91000			520.00
Liechtenstein		28	0			
Romania	68590	1606	1656400	42.71	24.15	1031.38
Serbia		401	847490			2113.44
Slovakia		404	400000			990.10
Switzerland	24000	463	2763680	51.84	115.15	5969.07
				61.03	155.64	5137.68

The total number of security personnel used for football matches is 1.375.082: 586.013 police officers, 367.497 stewards, 400.362 private security personnel and 21.210 others. This shows the extensive efforts that need to be put in place by the states and other stakeholders in order to secure

football fixtures across Europe. The costs associated to these safety and security measures are considerably high and certainly affect the policing budgets in Europe, but they are mandatory for the success of assuring the well-being, safety and security of the participating fans.

The average ratio of security personnel (police personnel+stewards+private security personnel)/match is 127.

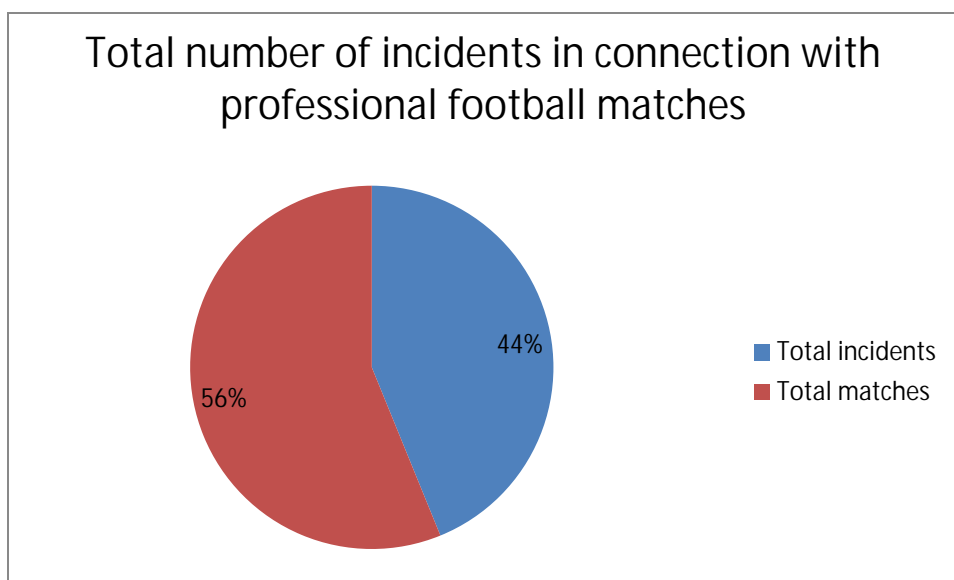
The average ratio of police personnel/match is 61. High level of police deployment is recorded in Germany (an average of 305 police officers/match), Czech Republic (106) and Italy (96). Low levels were reported by Finland (10 officers/match), Ireland (5) and Estonia (2).

The average ratio of police officers/total attendance is 1 police officer to 155 spectators. Low level of police deployment is recorded in Ireland (an average of 1 police officer to 546 fans), Denmark (1:399) and Finland (1:281). High levels were reported by Romania (1 officer to 24 fans attending), Bulgaria (1:25) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (1:44). The average ratio of 1 police officer to 155 spectators shouldn't be considered as a standard to be met by the European countries, an adequate police deployment should be based only on a proper risk assessment.

Question 4: Total number of incidents in connection with professional football matches?

The total number of incidents in connection with professional football matches is 8447. Consequently, incidents are recorded at 78% of the matches played in responding countries (both at national and international level), a higher percentage than the one recorded by UEFA at European competitions (approximately 51%).

Responding countries	Total incidents	Total matches	Ratio incidents/match
Austria	1259	1186	1.06
Belgium	864	621	1.39
Bosnia-Herzegovina	80	1434	0.06
Bulgaria	1436	441	3.26
Czech Republic	109	300	0.36
Denmark	103	472	0.22
Estonia	23	386	0.06
Germany	3824	498	7.68
Ireland	80	229	0.35
Italy	39	1959	0.02
Finland	131	220	0.60
Latvia	12	175	0.07
Liechtenstein	10	28	0.36
Romania	36	1606	0.02
Serbia	104	401	0.26
Slovakia	111	404	0.27
Switzerland	226	463	0.49



Some of the figures reported by the countries in connection with the incidents occurred at football fixtures don't match 100% when comparing replies to questions 4 to 9, but they are sufficient to create a snapshot of the current situation.

Question 5: Severity of incidents?

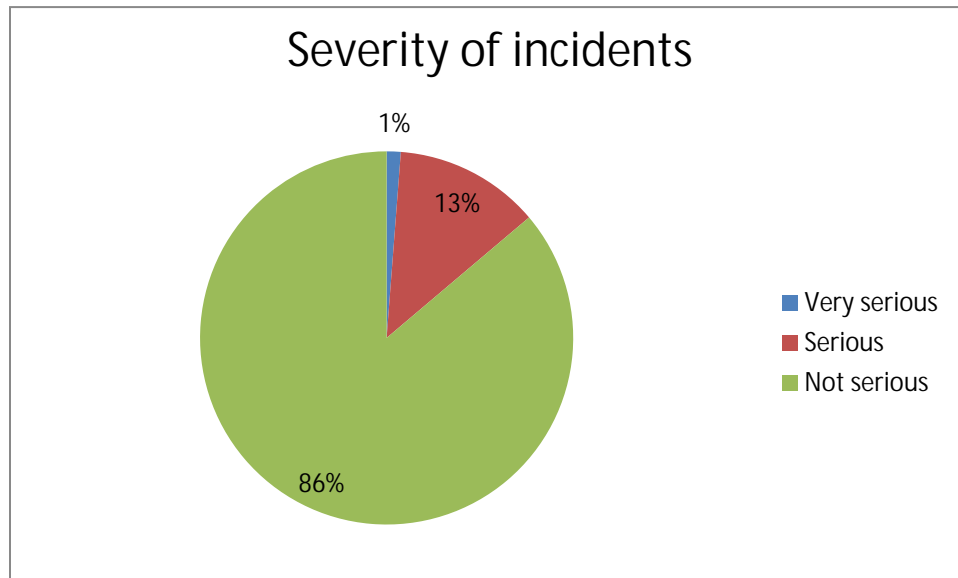
Defining the severity of incidents can be subjective; however we tried to use the following criteria as indicator:

Very Serious	<i>Incidents generating significant media coverage, involving a large number of persons engaged in violence or disorder, or resulting in serious injury to persons or major damage to property.</i>
Serious	<i>Incidents generating some media or no media coverage and involving low numbers of persons engaged in violence or significant disorder resulting in serious injuries or significant damage to property.</i>
Not Serious	<i>Isolated incidents of disorder involving few number of people and no significant damage to persons or property.</i>

The result is that the severity of incidents is divided as following: 1,22% are very serious, 12,60% serious and 86,18% are considered "not serious".

The reduced number of "very serious" and "serious" incidents reported is salutary, and it suggests that the effectiveness of the integrated approach adopted by the relevant stakeholders in the responding States.

Still, the figures reported can be influenced by the subjectivity of the local or central police forces, for various reasons, which can affect the overall results of the report.



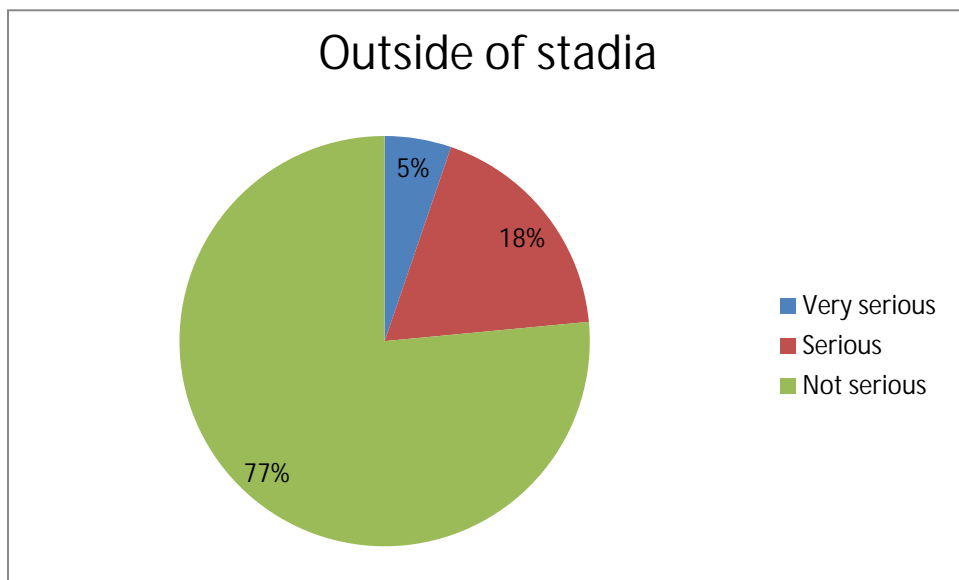
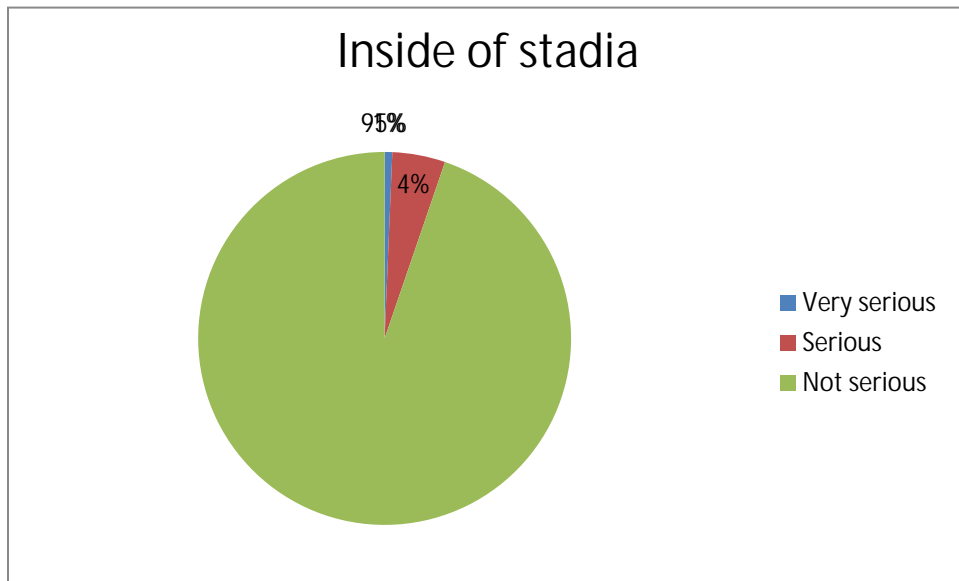
Question 6: Criteria applied in determining severity (if different from above)?

As seen above the criteria applied in determining severity varies from country to country in terms of reference and national perception. Whilst some of the countries adopt a very strict policy and report all the minor offences as incidents, resulting in a high number of incidents, other countries consider only the high profile incidents/disorders and select them very carefully before reporting.

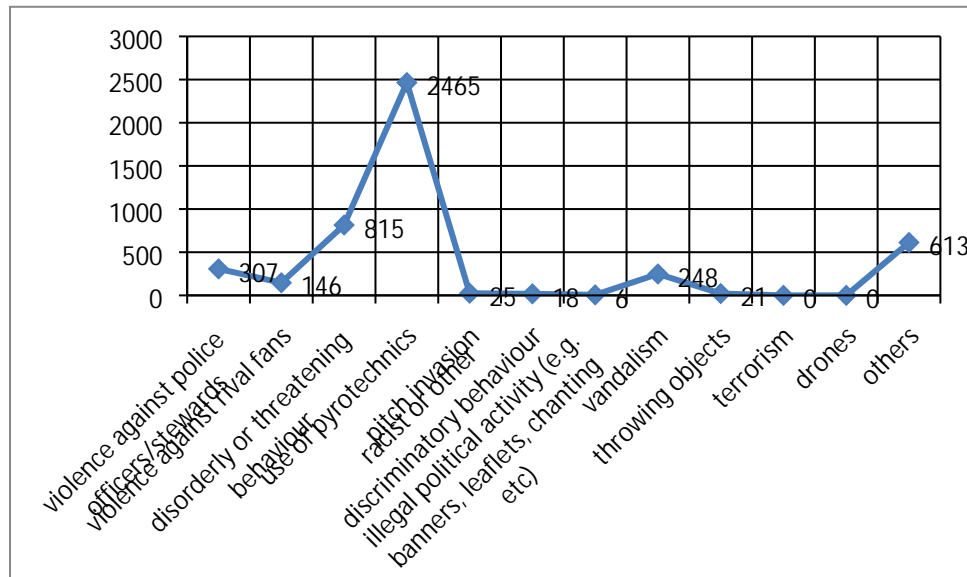
Question 7: Number of Incidents by Location and Severity?

2723 incidents were recorded inside of stadia and 400 outside. From those inside, 18 were "very serious", 125 "serious" and 2580 "not serious", whilst outside 21 were "very serious", 73 "serious" and 306 "not serious".

The very serious incidents recorded outside of the stadia (21), which are slightly more consistent than the similar ones inside of the stadia (18), show the tendency of fans to act more violent in an environment which is less controlled or secured than the stadia.



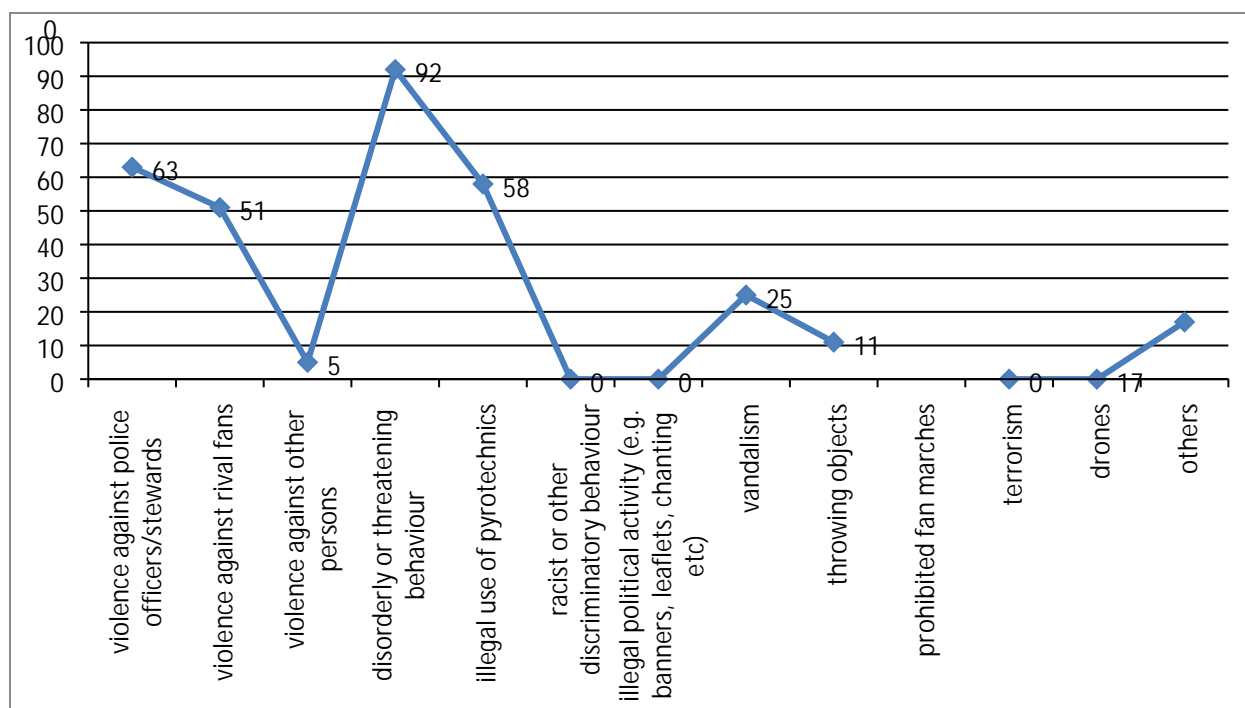
Question 8: Type of incidents inside stadia?



The use of pyrotechnics is the most important incident reported by far – 2465 (52% of the total). This figure is even higher than the one reported by UEFA for the same category of incidents in connection with European fixtures (30%).

Violent behaviour of the fans is reported in the following category of incidents: disorderly or threatening behaviour - 815 cases (17%), violence against police – 307 (6%), vandalism – 248 (5%) and violence against rival fans – 146 (3%).

Question 9: Type of incidents outside of stadium?



Different from the incidents inside the stadia, the ones outside are marked by the violent behaviour of fans (disorderly or threatening behaviour – 92 (28%), violence against the police – 63 (19%), violence against rival fans – 51 (15%), vandalism – 25 (7%), whilst the use of pyrotechnics is not a first front figure.

This shows the fact that the use of pyro's is mainly focused inside of the stadia, as a part of the ultras culture, but with high risks concerning the health of all the individuals who get in contact with this kind of forbidden and dangerous materials.

Question 10: Number of arrests?

5718 people were arrested during the matches reported by the contributing States (4670 inside and 1048 outside), with an average of 0,52 arrests/match.

The arrests are focused on the incidents produced inside of stadia (81%), whilst the ones outside are only reaching 19%.

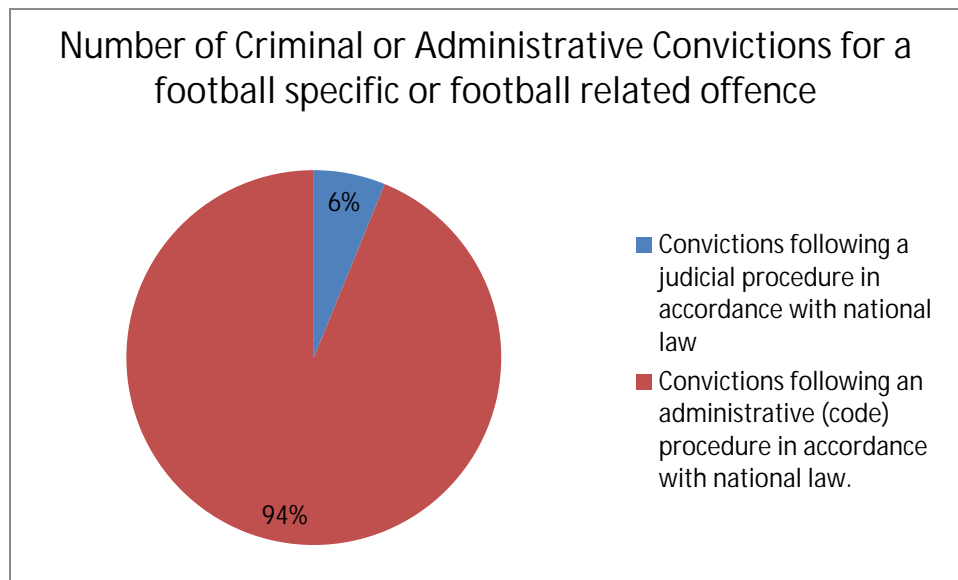
Question 11: Number of preventative detentions?

With only 6 countries responding to this question, the figures are not relevant. One of the reason for this situation is the fact that preventative detentions are very easily mistaken for arrests by many of the police forces.

Due to such identified problem, maybe it would be better to erase this question from the next version of the questionnaire, for ease of reference.

Question 12: Number of Criminal or Administrative Convictions for a football specific or football related offence?

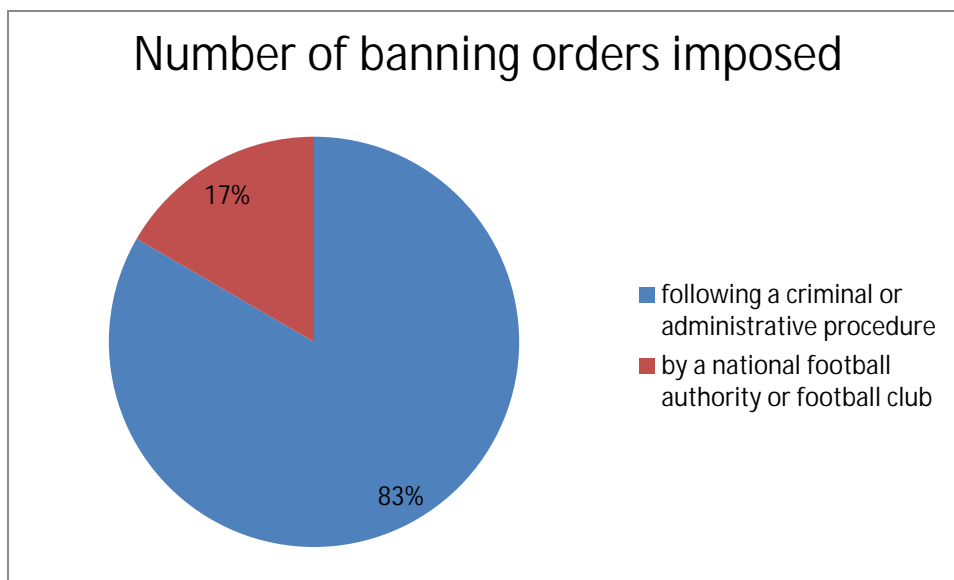
1214 Criminal or Administrative Convictions for football specific or football related offences were issued by courts in the responding States, from which 75 (6%) were Convictions following a judicial procedure in accordance with national law and 1139 (94%) were Convictions following an administrative (code) procedure in accordance with national law.



Question 13: Number of banning orders imposed?

4784 banning orders were imposed in the above mentioned period (3989 – 83% were issued following a criminal or administrative procedure and 795 – 17% by a national football authority or football club).

Comparing to the total attendance in Europe, the rate of banned individuals is 1 to 10.801 fans attending.



Question 14: Number of banning orders imposed with geographical or other constraints on behaviour?

From the total of 4784 banning orders imposed, 482 (approximately 10%) were imposed with geographical or other constraints on behaviour.

Question 15: Number of banning orders imposed with a prohibition on travelling to football matches in another State?

Only 58 banning orders were imposed with a prohibition on travelling to football matches in another State. This low number is determined by the national legislative provisions which make this measure being very difficult to impose.

Section B. Other Sports

Only 6 countries responded to this Section, with references mainly to ice hockey and basketball (total attendances 7.188.566).

The incidents in connection with these sports are lower scaled than the ones referring to football (due to the technical design of the sports arenas² or the different spectators profiles), but with the same trends associated – usage of pyrotechnics and disorderly and violent behaviour of the fans.

In some of the Eastern Europe countries (e.g. Romania) some of the risk football fans of the big club teams, migrate to other sports played by the teams of the same club and consequently cause similar problems.

² Different than of the open air stadiums.

Other sports remain in the spotlight also and have to be properly policed, due to a consistent attendance of fans, most of them with a different profile than those involved in football, but with the potential of generating some particular risks to public order and safety.

Section C. General Remarks

The emerging trends identified by the responding countries refer to:

- the use of pyrotechnics both inside and outside football and other sports grounds continue to be one of the most important challenges for police forces across Europe. Supporters adapt their tactics to make it difficult for police services to proceed to identifications of the offenders. UEFA in cooperation with the EU Think Tank of football policing experts set up a working group in order to deal and find solutions to this important safety and security issue, which is reported to affect each year approximately 30% of the European fixtures. A medical clinical study is currently underway with the aim of identifying the potential health risks for the individuals that use this kind of devices inside and outside of the stadia³;
- the migrants crisis created the grounds for the groups of risk fans (especially the far right ones) to engage in racist behaviour (illegal use of banners, demonstrations and very rarely attacking the migrants, far right groups to recruit more supporters);
- as fights between the biggest rival groups inside or nearby the stadiums is difficult for them to arrange due to infrastructural measures, police presence, some travel restriction (bubble matches), the fans try to arrange confrontations far from the stadium or during a match in a lower league/other sports;
- the reports of unauthorized usage of drones at sports events are increasing, due to this kind of devices being available to the consumers at accesible prices; also, the new legal provisions that regulate the illegal use of drones in countries across Europe (Air Code) didn't determine the decrease of such incidents;
- extensive media exposure of the low level incidents misleads the public to believe that the respective situation was more dangerous that it really was in reality, making the public feel more unsafe;

4. Conclusions

The questionnaire's most important output consists on showing the scale of resources used by the responding States to secure the sport events who are attended by more than 50 million people on an annual basis or season. This is a huge task for the police forces across Europe and of the most importance, especially in the current difficult financial climate which determined major budget cuts in policing budgets.

³ Please complete: Give details on this study if possible: who, when ...

Acknowledging the importance of football policing is one of the challenges for political decision makers in Europe, in order to properly resource the states agencies which are involved in dealing with this phenomenon.

Both at a national level and further more at the international level, the movement of millions of fans is an important challenge for the State authorities and other stakeholders, who have the responsibility for providing the safety and well-being of their citizens and transit individuals/visitors.

This report is a first step in the process of identifying and analysing the wider phenomenon of sports related violence across Europe in an integrated approach, via the contribution of the member States of the NFIP network.

The questionnaire was welcomed and highly appreciated by many responding countries, who are seriously considering adapting their national reporting procedures in order to comply with the requirements of this reporting instrument.

Further promotion of the questionnaire during the Council of Europe and EU Think Tank meetings is required, as well yearly refinement based on the feedback of the responders.

This year's questionnaire was considered as a pilot project. The Council of Europe wishes to benefit from this experience and to establish this questionnaire on a yearly basis as from 2017 to be able to collect relevant data and present an annual overview of European current trends and emerging challenges.

A way forward identified was to include the questionnaire into an on-line tool which will provide an easy to use and user friendly interface, based on the Council of Europe website.

The authors of the report would like to thank the responding countries for their important contribution to this document and consequently to a comprehensive and integrated European approach.