

Strasbourg, 21 June 2002

T-RV (2002) 9

**European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour
at Sport Events and in particular at Football Matches (T-RV)**

22nd meeting of the Standing Committee
Strasbourg, 4-5 July 2002

Baltic Round Table on the implementation of the Convention
6-7 November (Riga), 8 November (Ventspils) 2001

Summary Report by the Secretariat

There were 26 participants at this round table. This number included the lecturers mandated by the Council of Europe (J. de Quidt, Chair of the T-RV, R. Bures, vice-Chair and Secretary to the T-RV). There was only one participant each from Estonia and Lithuania.

The visit and round table was well organised. The host country had collected some data by means of a questionnaire in the three countries.

The programme started with a visit to Skonto Stadia in Riga. This stadium has recently been rebuilt on the structure of the old one. Its current capacity is 8,500 persons. The stadium is well designed and seemed to fulfil most of the basic criteria for safety and security. However, we only saw it while it was empty.

The programme continued as a seminar and round table on Tuesday evening and on Wednesday.

On Thursday the consultative team members were driven to Ventspils (a city about 180 km from Riga on the west coast of the Baltic). A round table was also organised there with the city authorities and sports officials in charge of security, etc., and the team visited the Olympic Centre "Ventspils," which is a multifunctional sports hall, including a small football stadium.

The whole programme was not a consultative visit in the "usual form" but rather a seminar and forum of exchange. The team members served as lecturers and as advisers during discussions at the round table. The discussions were not limited to the question of violence in football. It seems that there are only a small number of minor incidents in football. Football is not the most popular sport in these three Baltic countries. The most popular sports are basketball, ice-hockey and auto-moto. For the latter, the discussions focused on the question of safety rather than security.

Taking into account the situation in the three Baltic countries, the solution of a round table was the better option. This allowed contact with those responsible directly on the field and also an in-depth exchange of views. The main input was that an action plan will be elaborated by each Baltic country for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. Lithuania ratified the Convention last year. Estonia had signed in 1993 and has already an ongoing procedure for the ratification of the Convention. The Latvia Sport Council Board has agreed on the undertaking of the ratification of the Convention.

In conclusion, the round table was quite a worthy and good start for further steps for the ratification and the implementation of the Convention.