

### What does the Saint-Denis Convention establish?

■ The Saint-Denis Convention, in Article 4 (National co-ordination arrangements), paragraph 5, states that “The Parties shall ensure that national legal, regulatory or administrative frameworks clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the relevant agencies and that these roles are complementary, consistent with an integrated approach and widely understood at strategic and operational levels.”

■ Therefore, the national co-ordination structure plays a key role in drafting, proposing, monitoring the effective implementation and regularly evaluating and updating the legislation and regulations on security, safety and service at football matches and other sports events.

■ The Convention further calls Parties to “ensure that national legal, regulatory or administrative frameworks require event organisers to provide a safe, secure and welcoming environment for all participants and spectators”, and that all personnel, from the public or private sectors, are properly equipped and trained (Article 5, paragraphs 1 and 6).



The national co-ordination arrangements are essential to develop and implement a multi-agency integrated approach to sports events

” All personnel, including stewards, should be properly trained, equipped and co-ordinated



Effective crowd control, both inside and outside of stadia, is one of the main challenges for public and private stakeholders

## A recommendation to support State Parties on legislation matters

■ Aiming at developing these binding provisions, Recommendation Rec(2021)1 recalls the need for Governments “to ensure that a comprehensive legislative and regulatory framework is in place with appropriate and clear provisions designed to provide clarity on roles and responsibilities and empower the relevant authorities to undertake their tasks effectively” (paragraph 22).

■ The same Recommendation further reminds that “European experience demonstrates that the legislative and regulatory framework should encompass a diverse range of themes (including stadium licensing and safety certification; police enabling measures; exclusion arrangements for supporters who have caused or contributed to violence and disorder)” (paragraph 23).



Safety licensing, certification and inspection of sports venues by an independent and competent body are key to ensure safe infrastructures and effective safety management

## A model for a national permanent law

■ In order to assist States Parties in effectively implementing the Saint-Denis Convention, through the adoption or enhancement of their legal and regulatory framework, the Saint-Denis Committee provides them with a model of a permanent law on safety, security and service at football and other sporting events, which should then be developed by other specific laws and regulations on the three pillars: safety, security and service.

## A model for a national regulation on stewarding

■ At the same time, the Committee also decided to provide States Parties with a model national regulation guidelines on stewarding at football matches and other sports events.

■ These model law and regulation should then be adapted to the constitutional, judicial, policing, cultural, and historical circumstances, as well as the varied character and severity of sport-related incidents of each country.

” This model national legislative and regulatory framework was adopted by the Saint-Denis Committee as Recommendation T-S4 Rec (2022)2

## What should the national legal and regulatory framework comprise?

■ The model legal and regulatory framework adopted by the Saint-Denis Committee is a good practice for implementing the Saint-Denis Convention in a structured and coherent way. In fact, it enables to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the relevant public and private stakeholders and, through a specific regulation on stewarding, it emphasises the importance of the safety pillar and the venue safety management structure.

■ The Recommendation comprises the following two annexes:

- ▶ in annex 1, a comprehensive model permanent law, which provides relevant provisions on the three pillars of the Saint-Denis Convention – safety, security and service –, including an appendix with legal types of crimes and sanctions; and
- ▶ in annex 2, model regulation guidelines on stewarding at football matches and other sports events.

■ With regard to the recommended model law, it provides for possible safety, security and service measures to be adopted at national level during professional football matches and other sports events, with a view to guaranteeing high safety, security and service standards, both inside and outside sports venues, as well as making it possible for sports events to take place in accordance with the inherent values and ethical principles of the practice of sport.



Adequate inclusion and exclusion strategies are complementary to ensure safe, secure and welcoming sporting events



Ensuring safety, security and service at public places, namely at fan-zones, is a key element of the overall strategy of the organisation of a sporting event

## A robust legal framework

■ The structure and the composition of this model law recall the need for Parties to adopt a robust legal framework that underpins the establishment and consolidation of an effective integrated multi-agency approach:

- ▶ the safety provisions cover relevant issues like safety responsibilities, safety certification and inspection, venue safety requirements, disaster management, stewarding and inclusiveness;
- ▶ the security provisions embrace topics like police strategy, risk categorisation of supporters, exclusion strategy, crimes, misdemeanours and disciplinary offences, and international police co-operation; and
- ▶ the service provisions comprise subjects like supporter dialogue strategy, supporters' Charters, supporter liaison officer (SLO) and disability access officer (DAO), prevention of hate speech and discrimination, inclusion policy, community engagement, communication and media strategy, fan embassies, fan coaching and fan projects.

” States Parties are expected to adopt a robust and effective legal and regulatory framework in the S4 field

## Comprehensive guidelines on stewarding

■ As for the model national regulation guidelines on stewarding at football matches and other sports events, it establishes the possibility for the relevant competent national authorities to decide that the staging of events at sports venues be dependent also on a private security system which includes safety staff, also known as stewards.

■ These guidelines on stewarding are based on the experience gained in several countries at national competitions and at recent international major sporting events, addressing new issues like counter-terrorism awareness and biosecurity.

” This model will assist States Parties in adopting or improving their own national legal and regulatory frameworks

■ Based on this international experience, the stewarding guidelines recommend that:

- ▶ organisers of sports events may hire duly trained and qualified personnel who, operationally depending upon the security structure, cooperate and support the organisation of sports events, ensuring that they take place in a safe, secure and comfortable environment, in perfectly normal and orderly conditions;
- ▶ stewards should have specific duties, obligations, code of conduct and competences, as well as their identification, documentation and records; and
- ▶ appropriate regular background screening (also known as vetting) should be conducted by the employer to ensure only persons of a good character are providing safety and security services in the venue.

■ These guidelines further establish the recommended duration and contents of the training course and of the evaluation system of the candidates to steward, as well as the specific training modules focused on the knowledge adequate to the particular features and requirements of the tasks to perform.

■ These model regulation guidelines on stewarding are just an example of the various specific regulations that Parties are required to adopt in order to effectively develop and enforce their permanent law on safety, security and service at football matches and other sports events.



” The Saint-Denis Convention is the only legally-binding international instrument on safety, security and service at sports events

## The Saint-Denis Convention

The Council of Europe Convention on an integrated approach to safety, security and service at football matches and other sports events was opened for signature on 3 July 2016 in Saint-Denis (France), on the occasion of the UEFA EURO 2016 championship. It entered into force on 1st November 2017 after 3 ratifications – France, Monaco and Poland – and now has a large number of [States Parties](#).

It promotes an integrated multi-agency approach, covering three complementary and interdependent pillars: safety, security and service. It is the only legally-binding international instrument establishing institutional co-operation between all relevant stakeholders to make football matches and other sports events safer, more secure and more welcoming.

## Useful links

1. **Saint-Denis Convention**  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/sport/safety-security-and-service-approach-convention>
2. **Recommendations T-S4:**
  - i. Rec(2021)1: Recommended good practices on safety, security and service
  - ii. Rec(2022)1: Model structure of a national strategy on safety, security and service
  - iii. Rec(2022)2: Model national legislative and regulatory framework on safety, security and service<https://www.coe.int/en/web/sport/t-s4-recommendations>
3. To learn more about the Convention and Recommendation Rec(2021)1, you can register for the following open online courses:
  - i. MOOC on Human Rights in Sport (available in English, Russian, Slovak and Spanish)  
<http://help.elearning.ext.coe.int/course/index.php?categoryid=590>
  - ii. MOOC on Safety, Security and Service at Sports Events (available in English, Polish and Portuguese)  
<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/security-safety-sport/pros4-e-learning-enrolment-form>