

# Sport and the Social Inclusion of Migrants & Refugees

## - The experience of the European Sport Inclusion Network (ESPIN)

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"Newly arrived migrants and their integration via sport"  
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## Background

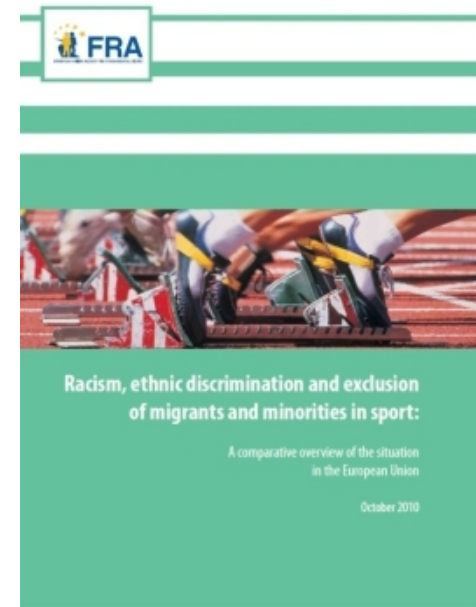
- Systematic under-representation and exclusion from positions of status & lack of advancement of minorities in non-playing positions:

*"the under-representation of minorities in many sports, particularly in positions of authority, but also as players/athletes, club members or spectators, is an 'open secret' in European sport" (FRA 2010: 45)*

- Preparatory Actions in the field of sport: *Sport Inclusion Network (SPIN)– Involving migrants in mainstream sport institutions (2011-12)*

## 7 SPIN partner organisations:

FARE founding organisation **fairplay-VIDC** Italian sport for all association **UISP**, **Football Association of Ireland (FAI)**, Portuguese FIFPro member **SJPF**, the migrant-led **MGHRO** from Hungary, the multicultural Finnish sport initiative **Liikkukaa** and **Camino** from Germany, an expert on action-oriented research on sport and youth.



## Football Refugee Day

- In 2011 we launched of a Football Refugee Day to mark the UN World Refugee Day on 20 June; simultaneous public events and multi-cultural tournaments with refugees in 7 EU-countries backed by UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres
- 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.



Fatmire Alushi (Kosovo),  
Germany & PSG



Zlatko Junuzovic (Bosnia), Austria  
& Werder Bremen



European poster



Football Refugee Day in Bicske Refugee  
Camp (Hungary)

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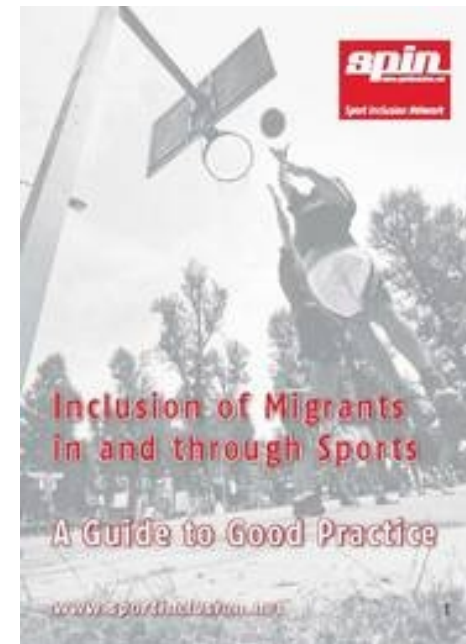


## Good Practice Guide

The Good Practice Guide brochure looked at various stakeholders in 7 EU countries (6 partner countries plus UK) and presents 45 promising good practice examples. It was designed to raise awareness and generating public support for the integration agenda among mainstream sport stakeholders.

Output: Indicators and quality criteria, which serve as a guideline for assessing the inclusion potential of sport offers, projects & programmes.

- Inclusion is a pluralist, interactive process, not a mere adaptation, therefore sports clubs require standards which promote intercultural learning & establish equality between groups of different backgrounds.



## Good Practice Guide: Criteria to assess Intercultural accessibility of clubs

- Public commitment to inter-culturalism as a value and positive role models (peers)
- Prejudice-free education, avoidance of stereotypes (including “positive” stereotypes)

### **Social framing/interaction:**

- Are social activities in the context of sport programmes tailored to the specific religious or cultural requirements of migrant groups? E.g. Religious regulations in relation to food and alcohol consumption at club events/leisure activities/travel

### **Special consideration of religious or culturally related regulations with girls/women:**

- Is sport offered in gender-homogenous groups?
- Are there female staff members as coaches, lifeguards?
- Do the times of training allow for the fact that girls/women are involved in the domestic sphere and that girls in particular are not allowed to return home late?
- Is care taken that men/boys are not able to watch the girls/women in sports or swimwear, i.e. spaces not open to public view?

### **Co-determination and participation**

- Is there an inclusion officer and are there any coaches/officials with a migration background?
- Are migrants active in supporter organisations?

### **Networking and consultations with organisations active in the migrant/ inclusion sphere:**

Community organisations, migrant associations, NGOs and social organisations, schools, nurseries, youth clubs, interest groups, media, business, etc.

## ESPIN Project

New project (2015-2016): **European Sport Inclusion Network - Promoting Equal Opportunities of Migrants and Minorities through Volunteering in Sport** (ESPIN)

Co-funded by the Commission under the ERASMUS + Sport Programme / Call EAC/S11/13 - Collaborative partnerships in the sport field and Not-for-profit European sport events

ESPIN aims to involve those who are at risk of social exclusion and to increase sports participation and the inclusion of migrants by promoting equal access to organised sport.

### Focus on Volunteering:

Organised sport across Europe is based to a very large extent on voluntary work. Crucial step towards the participation of all social groups in sport is to improve the access of migrants and minorities to volunteering.

ESPIN's key objective is to increase volunteering of migrants through the establishment of equal partnerships and training of mainstream sport organisations.



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## Expected Results

- A) to generate **evidence-based knowledge about the situation of migrants and minorities in European sport regarding access, participation and volunteering** and to make use of that knowledge to develop a European quality framework to increase volunteering and equal opportunities of migrants and minorities in sport clubs;
- B) to **capacity-build and empower migrants and ethnic minorities** to challenge exclusion and discrimination & harness their role as volunteers (coaches, administrators, refs) in sport clubs;
- C) to develop **educational tools** and raise awareness among sport stakeholders about issues of exclusion and discrimination and how to improve social inclusion in sport organisations.



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## Workstreams

- A. **Baseline Study-Access, Participation & Exclusion of migrants and minorities in Europ. Sport**  
- Qualitative study on issues of access, participation and exclusion of migrants and ethnic minorities
- B. **Supporting Volunteering of Migrants in Sports: Developing a European Quality Mark Scheme and Trainings** - Developing trainings and a handbook on sport volunteering of migrants; national round table meetings for sport clubs migrant organisations on the recruitment of volunteers; European Training Seminar in Dublin and National Training Workshops
- C. **FARE Action Weeks October 2015: Raising public awareness on exclusion**  
"Football Welcomes Refugees"-Grass roots events supporting asylum seekers
- D. **European Week of Sport (10-17 Sept. 2016): Facilitating inclusive partnership events** Facilitating inclusive partnerships. Clubs work with migrants to host inclusive events
- E. **Networking Conference: Social Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees through Sport -Challenges and Opportunities**  
(24-26 Nov. 2016, Budapest)



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## Refugee Crisis and Responses by Players



*"The refugee problem does not leave us athletes unaffected. It's frightening to see how many people have to leave their homes and in Europe they are not always welcomed with open arms. With this action I want to show my true colours against racism and xenophobia and in support of refugees, say it loud, say it clear, refugees you're welcome here!"*

**David Alaba**, Austria & FC Bayern München



**Benedikt Höwedes**, Germany & FC Schalke:  
Article 14 *"Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution"*.

## Refugee Crisis and Responses by FAs and Clubs



### DEUTSCHE VEREINE ZEIGEN SOLIDARITÄT

Der Deutsche Fußball-Bund (DFB) hat im Frühjahr angesichts wachsender Flüchtlingsströme und der großen Hilfsbereitschaft bei den Vereinen an der Amateurbasis die Initiative „1:0 für ein Willkommen“ ins Leben gerufen. Die DFB-Stiftung Egidius Braun und die deutsche Nationalmannschaft einerseits und die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Integration andererseits stellen jeweils EUR 300.000 zur Verfügung. Die UEFA hat diesen Spendentopf nun um EUR 50.000 aufgestockt, woraufhin die Regierung ihren Zuschuss ebenfalls um EUR 50.000 erhöhte. Mit dem Geld werden 800 Vereine im Jahr 2015 und 600 Vereine 2016 mit einem einmaligen Startzuschuss von EUR 500 bedacht. Bezuschusst werden Vereine, die Flüchtlingen ein Fußballangebot machen und damit Kommunen und öffentliche Träger wesentlich unterstützen. „Wer miteinander Fußball spielt, kommt auch ohne große Sprachkenntnisse ins Gespräch“, sagt DFB-Präsident Wolfgang Niersbach. „Gerade für die Kinder aus Flüchtlingsfamilien ist es oft ein großes Glück, wieder Fußball spielen

zu können. Die wichtige Arbeit an der Fußballbasis wird durch die Initiative unkompliziert und effektiv unterstützt.“

Rainer Kalb



Sprache Fußballer in Deutschland

DFB runs refugee support scheme for amateur clubs

Third division club Wiener Sportklub



Admira Wacker trains with Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM)





## Refugee Crisis and Responses by Fans



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## Action Week 2015: „Football Welcomes Refugees“ in Hungary



Stadium events in the Hungarian premier league: Diósgyöri VTK (DVTK) vs. Ferencvaros TC, 24. 10. 2015



Horgoš - Serbian-Hungarian boarder



Refugee camp in Röske (HUN)

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## Action Week 2015: „Football Welcomes Refugees“ in Italy, Ireland & Finland



Republic of Ireland. Cork City FC invited children from refugee families



Italy: Event in Voghera with Mortara Calcio



Finland:  
Former  
national coach  
Martti Kuusela

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## Action Week 2015: Football Welcomes Refugees Initiative in Portugal and Austria



Portugal: Ex-player Abel Xavier and national team player Matilde Fidalgo welcome refugees



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## Evidence Based Knowledge: Inclusion of Refugees

ESPIN partner Camino conducted a **Baseline Study** on issues of access, participation and exclusion of migrants. Preliminary results of the qualitative study based on case-studies in 7 countries led to the following practical recommendations for sport clubs and associations:

- o Developing patience, intercultural awareness and an understanding for the situation of refugees, adapting offers accordingly
- o Consulting the refugees and developing special offers based on their requirements
- o Avoiding paternalistic attitudes, ensuring that communication takes place on an equal footing and persisting in the face of setbacks
- o Encouraging refugees to engage while recognizing limitations of volunteer work by asylum seekers
- o Providing transport to and from sports events and training facilities, if necessary
- o Providing sportswear and equipment
- o Treating refugees as normal members and creating shared experiences
- o Combining sports with educational opportunities (e.g. language courses)

## Good Practice

### The case of SC Egelsbach (Germany, federal state of Hesse)

SG Egelsbach football club is a grassroots community club which has 3,000 members club it has also a cricket section. More than 100 volunteers are involved in the club, some of whom have migration family backgrounds going back to the 1960's (i. e. Italians and Spaniards)

The club near Frankfurt is very active in supporting new refugees in Egelsbach (gym for women, midnight football sessions, volunteer training for refugees etc.).

2 full-time staff in the club office. Volunteers also liase between the accommodation centres, the clubs and local authorities.

SC Egelsbach is backed by DFB.



## Challenges Ahead

- To move from charity and help to more sustainable forms of integration and inclusion; there is a need to harness the potential of refugees and asylum seekers not only as active players but also as future coaches, administrators, managers and referees
- Amateur football clubs need to take pro-active steps to open up to migrants and minorities in order to become cross-culturally accessible; this change of culture is slow and entails advise and support by governing bodies and experts
- Empower and capacity-build migrant football teams and initiatives including refugees and asylum seekers in order to participate in regular leagues and competitions
- Football programmes for refugees are overwhelmingly designed to fit boys and young men; girls / women are often not even addressed, therefore specific gender sensitive football/sport programmes are needed which consider religious or culturally related regulations
- Cooperation of all stakeholders is indispensable: local authorities, public bodies, football governing bodies, sport clubs, institutions who care for asylum seekers, self-organisations of migrants and NGOs need to work together

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**Thank you!**

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