

# COMBATING HATE OF SPEECH IN SPORT

SPAIN



Council of Europe

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# 1. HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY ADDRESS HATE OF SPEECH IN SPORT

## **a) Legal framework**

- Criminal Law: Hate of speech offences (Spanish Criminal Code).
- Administrative Law: Hate of speech in sport infringements. (Act 19/2007, 11 July, against violence, racism, xenophobia and intolerance in sport).

## **b) Current situation**

- In general terms only a few conducts have been detected in other sports different from football. Football is the environment in which most of the administrative infringements are committed.
- The Spanish "Anti-Violence Commission" works very actively sharing information regarding violence, racism, xenophobia and intolerance in different sports, especially when it comes to football. A permanent channel of information allows the Commission to evaluate the risks and challenges to be faced in this field.

## **c) Measures**

- Prevention of hate of speech through information provided to the fans within sports facilities.
- Obligation for football events organizers to install CCTV in stadiums. It helps to identify potential offenders.
- Sanction proposals adopted by the Anti-Violence Commission related to different infringements set out in Law 19/2007. Among them hate of speech is contained. Those proposals include very often accessory sanctions of entry ban from sporting events.

## **d) Positive actions**

- Press notes (i.e. acknowledging fans behaviour when attending matches or when cooperating to identify persons that have committed a hate of speech infringements).
- Educational and Training Programs organized by Security Forces and stakeholders.

## **e) Challenges**

2021-2023 Anti-Violence Commission Plan:

- Sharing information with key players/Dialogue with stakeholders.
- Elaboration of Guidelines/Protocols. Joining international forums.

## 2. WHY DID YOU JOIN THIS PROJECT

- Sharing experiences with different colleagues and stakeholders to get to know their current situation and how they work on tackling hate of speech in sport could be of great value when facing future challenges in this area.
- Learning about positive actions towards the prevention of hate speech in sport, particularly in the on-line environment since we have detected some infringements committed through this channel during the last football season.
- Spain has big expectations in the project considering the different countries and profiles of the participants. It is very relevant to have on board experts coming from sport, security forces, stakeholders, human rights etc. We consider that the conclusions to be raised after this project will provide us with an excellent basis to further develop right policies against hate of speech in sport as well as to propose the correct legislative changes needed to tackle this issue.
- The Spanish High Council for Sports will keep on carrying out its duty together with the current administrative authorities (Ministry of Culture and Sports, Security Forces, Ministry of Interior), the State General Prosecutor Office, Sports Federations and Clubs Association. It will also strengthen the international cooperation.

### 3. WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT DO YOU NEED FROM THE COE SPORT DIVISION

- Setting up a hub in which the state of play, data, examples of good practices or strategies to combat hate of speech in sport in Europe are collected in order to assess better which are the answers, tools, actions or solutions to be adopted in the future in a common framework.
- Learning about the work done so far by the COE in its fight against hate speech in sport. Indeed, it is of great interest for Spain to hear from the COE experience especially in the on-line environment.
- Providing guidance leading to the adoption of national strategies in the partner countries to combat hate speech in sport involving all key stakeholders is crucial from our point of view.
- Spain is of the opinion that this project will help not only administrative authorities but also sports organizers, supporters, athletes, coaches, technical staff, referees and others in our country to raise the awareness about the fight against hate of speech in sport. It is clear to us that initiatives coming from an international sphere are well received among everyone involved in fighting against this scourge and should be considered as a big incentive in the sport field.

**THANKS FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION**