

**COMMITTEE ON SAFETY AND SECURITY
AT SPORTS EVENTS (T-S4)**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON AN INTEGRATED
SAFETY, SECURITY AND SERVICE APPROACH AT FOOTBALL
MATCHES AND OTHER SPORTS EVENTS

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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MONITORING REPORT
OF THE SAINT-DENIS CONVENTION

2021-2022 SEASON / YEAR 2022

Executive summary

Adopted by the Committee by written procedure on 30 November 2023

1. General overview

The Saint-Denis Convention aims at promoting a safety, security and service multi-agency integrated approach at football matches and other sports events, and providing standards based on the highest safety, security and service standards developed across Europe. It also promotes cooperation between all relevant public and private stakeholders, including supporters and local communities.

The general idea behind monitoring was to typify the status of compliance with each provision and standard of the Convention, seeking to understand:

- (i) whether there are differences in the extent to which provisions/standards are complied with, and identify which provisions/standards are more complied with and which ones are less complied with;
- (ii) the implementation stage of the provisions/standards (more advanced or delayed) of the different countries; and
- iii) which provisions/standards and countries require greater attention from the Committee.

It can be understood that the progressive and widespread adoption of the Saint Denis Convention's requirements corresponds to a social change that expresses the strengthening of the capacity for institutional and situational prevention of disruptive events that jeopardise sport. This path is thus opposed to the negative transformations that explain the need for a Convention such as the Saint-Denis Convention and drive its implementation.

Findings of the monitoring survey should by no means be interpreted as a form of ranking of compliance levels as the core objective is to support States better implement the Convention.

Regarding the 2022 edition of the monitoring survey, it should be stressed that:

1. it summarises the procedures adopted for collecting information, characterises the data collection instrument adopted (substantially different from the previous ones), and the data set built up from the variables in the questionnaire (altogether, there were 36 questions).
2. Data were collected from 23rd November 2022 to the end of February 2023, a long period justified by the running of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and the recognition that new data were being requested and needed to be collected.
3. The questionnaire could be completed online (86,7%) or on a paper version (13,3%) - in both cases, in English or French, as preferred.
4. All these procedures resulted in a data set of quantitative data and a very rich corpus of information (on legislation, good practices and projects, among others).
5. 21 State Parties and 9 Observer States participated and thus enabled the objectives of this survey to be achieved.
6. Respondents were mainly Heads of the National Football Information Point (NFIP) in their countries.

7. Most of the respondents (63,3%) chose the football season 2021/2022 as the related period, and 1/3 (36,7%) the year of 2022.

2. Main issues

The report of the monitoring survey covers the following issues:

- SUBSET A - Country & respondent's information, including the profile of NFIP;
- SUBSET B - Saint-Denis Convention: the current state of progress in each country;
- SUBSET C - Statistics & Figures of incidents and judicial orders; and
- SUBSET D - Best practices, new legislation, challenges & comments.

Indicators were produced for each of these issues, complemented with an exhaustive description of the answers obtained with the open-ended questions, and in some cases seeking some kind of comparison with the results of the previous year:

- The 2022 monitoring questionnaire respondents' performance;
- The multi-agency integrated approach of the Convention;
- Evaluation of the three risks identified in the Convention;
- Evaluation of the situation inside and outside stadia;
- Capacity-building and modes of social action to prevent and protect;
- Police strategies and operations;
- Prevention and sanctioning of offending behaviour; and
- International cooperation and NFIPs.

3. Main results

To assess the current level of implementation of the Saint-Denis Convention by States, the monitoring report presents the main results according to two types of criteria: the "compliance index", which measures the level of compliance with the Convention; and the "degree of consensualness", which measures the level of convergence of States on the same type of answer for each question.

3.1. The Saint-Denis Convention compliance index

The Saint-Denis Convention Compliance Index measures the degree of implementation of the Convention's provisions. Compliance with all the recommendations signalled in the questionnaire corresponds to a value of

100 (i.e., maximum). The mean value was 79,2, with a level of convergence of 90%¹. Although this average figure is higher than the previous year (72,5) and may illustrate a trend towards realising the Convention's provisions/standards, caution is required when making a direct comparison between the two figures.

The results also indicate that there is still a margin for progress towards the compliance with the Convention.

3.2. Degree of consensualness

One of the possible options to characterise the data obtained consists in making available the data which, in each question, deserved a broad consensus among countries with regard to the evaluation of the different articles of the Convention. It is about the convergence of responses towards the Convention's compliance and/or the implementation stage of the provisions/standards.

It was considered that mainstream answers, in each question, corresponding to percentages equal to or greater than $\frac{2}{3}$ (66%), could be considered consensual, and thus help build a profile of this set. In 17 of the 23 items of the questionnaire, the degree of consensus varied between 66,7% and 100%, which represents a remarkable convergence between countries in their evaluation and progress towards the Convention's provisions.

3.3. Disruptive occurrences (incidents and arrests)

Football is undoubtedly the sporting phenomenon that attracts the largest number of fans, requires more complex police action in terms of situational prevention and generates more disturbances (e.g. confrontations and arrests). Although there are notable differences between countries, there is a common pattern that leads to believe that the reported incidents within football (inside and outside sports venues) also vary greatly between the different levels of competition (within professional football matches). 'Violent behaviour' and the 'use of pyrotechnics' bring together 53% of reported incidents.

The (seven) different types of incidents considered establish strong correlations with each other, meaning that antisocial behaviour is generative and multidimensional, all contributing to the same risk of disruption around European competitions.

The number of arrests, in particular in football top tier leagues, are considerable and can be considered a growing issue when organising sporting events.

4. Final remarks

The thorough analysis of both the compliance index and the degree of consensualness is a relevant tool to enable the Saint-Denis Committee, through its Advisory Group on Monitoring, identifying the priority topics for its future work, covering each of its four main areas of activity: standard-setting, monitoring, technical assistance

¹ The level of convergence corresponds to the inverse value of the coefficient of variation. Thus, a convergence level of 90% means that the variation in the answers obtained was only 10%, which can be considered a very high convergence.

and international cooperation, the final aim being to assist States in effectively implementing the provisions/standards of the Saint-Denis Convention.

The social changes manifest in contemporary societies pose new challenges to the entities and stakeholders responsible for the organisation of major events, public or private (but in both cases always requiring some regulation). Such transformations result from the evolution occurred in the conditions in which the events take place, not forgetting that their own meaning and symbolic value also change, but clearly impact on individual and group behaviour in the public space, especially at mass, sporting and other events.

Challenges to people's safety and security, the safeguarding of property (infrastructures, equipment), and the preservation of public, semi-public and private space are seen as among the main concerns.

In this survey, the differences perceived between States Parties and Observer States were not as evident as in the previous year, which we interpret as the result of slow-motion changes that are underway, but all in the same direction. In a sense, what is perceived is that countries seem to be facing increasingly identical challenges and have an increasingly common approach to tackling them.

Even with gaps in information, the reality is complex in view of the numbers and types of incidents reported, and also the number of arrests made. Football is by far the most problematic sport, but there are worrying signs in other sports.

In other words, the progress made in terms of legislation, the capacity to organise sports events, the technological advances in the field, do not allow us to consider that the problem of security and safety at mass sporting events is solved: far from it. In 2022, both in Europe and the rest of the world, there were too many and too serious occurrences.