Transnational advocacy through FARE Network’s Eastern European Development Program: A case of EURO 2012

N J V Wirawan¹*, and R A Elias¹
¹International Relations Department, Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia

Abstract. Football, a beloved game that is enjoyed by people of all races, ethnicities, genders, and orientations, is unfortunately marred by racism and discrimination. To combat this, the Eastern European Development Program was launched during EURO 2012 to build infrastructure in the two host countries. This paper examines the implementation of the transnational advocacy network in conducting the Eastern European Development Program, and how the FARE Network used it to build capacity, launch projects, and host celebratory ceremonies. Through literature studies focusing on racism, discrimination, and the Eastern European Development Program, a framework was created to illustrate the success of the FARE Network in implementing the transnational advocacy network. The research shows that the FARE Network was successful in involving important stakeholders and global audiences, and ultimately achieved its goal of creating a more equitable and inclusive, transnational advocacy.

1. Introduction

Football is one of the most beloved sports in the world, often referred to as the “beautiful game” due to its ability to reflect the conditions of society. This sport is open to people of all genders, ages, cultures, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds, providing equal opportunities and a way to break down barriers (Sonntag et al., 2015). Football emphasizes solidarity, teamwork, discipline, and respect through its set of rules and regulations. However, it is also a game that can resemble war, with a mentality of “us” versus “them” and a desire to win at all costs. Unfortunately, this can lead to fear, pressure, and intimidation, as well as taunts and racial degradation (Sonntag et al., 2015).

Football has evolved itself as a multibillion-euro industry that is affected by various stakeholders. Therefore, it continues to resonate its massive impact on the society (Yiapanas, Thrassou & Vrontis, 2023). Racism and discrimination have been a part of football since the 1970s in Europe, where multi-ethnic teams have been subject to intimidation and abuse from hooligans and fanbases using racial slurs and symbols (Sonntag et al., 2015). This lack of tolerance and inclusion has created a hostile environment for players, with the sole purpose of demonstrating which group is superior. Football being a male dominated industry is one of the strongest reasons among these racial and xenophobic behavior (Adu, 2022).

Racism and discrimination have been a part of football since the 1970s in Europe, where multi-ethnic teams have been subject to intimidation and abuse from hooligans and fanbases using racial slurs and symbols (Sonntag et al., 2015). This lack of tolerance and inclusion has created a hostile environment for players, with the sole purpose of demonstrating which group is superior. Football being a male dominated industry is one of the strongest reasons among these racial and xenophobic behavior (Adu, 2022). The development of the digital era has not exactly made it easy to combat racism. Like a double-edged sword, it can either become the medium to achieve successful campaigns of anti-racism, or become the very medium to widespread and reinforce hatred and racism (Adu, 2022). Fortunately, the twentieth century has seen a greater understanding of the impact of racism and discrimination, with players, directors, managers, and fans all taking a stand against it (Sonntag et al., 2015). As multiculturalism becomes increasingly important in the sport, many organizations and parties are taking proactive steps to combat racism and discrimination, both from the top-down and the bottom-up.

Football is a sport that is regulated by the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) alongside beach soccer and futsal. FIFA is essential in establishing regulations and policies to promote and develop the game of football. As the 2022 Qatar World Cup approaches, FIFA’s commitment to sustainability is evident through their reports on inclusivity, which demonstrate their dedication to creating a safe and discrimination-free World Cup (FIFA, 2022). At the regional level, the Union of European Football Association (UEFA) serves a similar purpose to FIFA in terms of policy-making. UEFA has taken a strong stance against racism, implementing a zero-tolerance policy in 2013 (UEFA, 2013).

FIFA and UEFA are not the only organizations that can bring about change in regards to racism and discrimination in football. A more focused group or organization is needed to effectively eradicate racism and discrimination in football. One of the leading networks for this is the Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) Network. FARE is an NGO that consists of other NGOs that are devoted to tackling racism and discrimination in football (Football Against Racism in Europe, 2009). Some of its members include Kick It Out, Show Racism the Red Card, and Football Unites.

The successful collaboration between a football association and a focused NGO may be the answer to tackling contemporary issues. This is evidenced by...
UFSA and FARE’s commitment to solving discrimination through the Eastern European Development (EED) Project during UEFA EURO 2012. This was the first UEFA EURO tournament to be held in Eastern Europe since the end of the Cold War. The project focused on preparing for the tournament through capacity building programs and partnerships with governing bodies, as well as coordinating with delivery partners to develop and execute programs. Racism and discrimination have been on the rise, threatening to ruin the beautiful game.

This article seeks to understand how FARE Network’s transnational advocacy of racism and discrimination is conducted through the Eastern European Development Project in UEFA EURO 2012. Furthermore, the article aims to draw the ideal movement that can provide a framework for Non-Governmental Organizations and other non-state actors to conduct their programs, especially for these non-state actors that have been struggling to execute similar projects. This article will provide an introduction, literature review, methods, discussion, and conclusion.

2. Literature Review

This section is divided into two main parts. Firstly, this section explores racism, discrimination, and football in Europe to provide context for the main agenda of advocacy, with football being the medium. Secondly, we delve into Transnational Advocacy Network Theory and how it is applied in various case studies to gain an understanding of its relevance and implementation.

2.1. Racism, Discrimination, and Football in Europe

Racism is a term that emerged during the interwar period, and as Michel Wieviorka (2002) explains, it is a European invention that reflects the modern, individualistic societies of Western Europe during the Middle Ages. This ideology is based on the idea of an egalitarian society, and throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, proto-racists and writers began to explain how physical differences caused by climate or culture were signs of the inferiority of whites over others.

Racism in Europe is expressed in a variety of ways, such as prejudice, opinions, stereotypes, racist rumors, segregation, hierarchization, harassment, violence, and political and ideological movements. Forms of racism vary from country to country; for example, the United Kingdom has the highest rate of racial harassment and violence among other European countries (Wieviorka, 2002). In some cases, antisemitism is the main racial problem of the country. Each country has its own political culture based on its history, traditions, and general categories of thought, which also varies depending on philosophical values and shared foundations of the society. In general, cultural differences are restricted to the private sphere, meaning that any attempt to define an individual or group by their culture, ethnicity, or religion can be seen as racist.

Every rise of cultural identities contributes to the renewal of racism (Wieviorka, 2002).

David K. Wiggins and John Nauright (2017) argued that race and ethnicity are a critical factor in modern sport, particularly in terms of black and white skin color. This concept has been used since the age of Empires. Historically, black athletes have been largely excluded from sports, and in the latter decades of the twentieth century, they faced segregation due to the perception of them as primitive and their perceived inability to compete with what was considered a superior race. Football was the first sport to demonstrate the emergence of a globalized sporting culture and to uncover black sporting talent (Wiggins and Nauright, 2017).

Racism in football has never been a minor issue. In July 2015, Emmanuel Frimpong was sent off for responding to racist chants directed at him, and in January 2013, Kevin-Prince Boateng walked off the pitch during a friendly match after being subjected to racist abuse from the home fans of Pro Patria. Mario Balotelli, during his time at Manchester City, received more than 8,000 racial tweets. These examples demonstrate how racism in Europe has been a long-standing problem, and has found new ways to express itself (Wiggins and Nauright, 2017).

Racial abuse in European football is often linked to nationalism and localism, as football is seen as an opportunity to wage war and celebrate using their culture and symbols. However, not all racial abuse and other forms of abuse stem from political and ideological motives. According to Mark Doidge (2017), when it is politically and ideologically motivated, these abuses come from fans who are driven to promote their ideological beliefs, most commonly from far-right organizations using football as a platform. This is known as instrumental or real racism. On the other hand, there is what is known as organic or accidental racism, which is based heavily on an emotional reaction to a situation. While this is still considered racist, it does not contain political intent. The history of culture in Europe is important in understanding racism, as Europe is a diverse continent with historical and geographical distinctions. In addition to abuse of black people, racism can be extended to include antisemitism, anti-jews, anti-Romany, and many more.

Richie Moran’s book chapter, "Racism in Football: A Victim’s Perspective" (2000), provides a powerful insight into racism through the lens of a victim. Moran, a black ex-professional footballer who quit the sport due to institutionalized racism, was adopted by a white family in South-East London and attended schools in Bermondsey and New Cross with a diverse mix of ethnicities. He has also lived in Tokyo, Tenerife, and Birmingham, travelling extensively throughout Britain and abroad. Moran’s worst experience of racism was in Portsmouth, where he was subjected to racial slurs, monkey noises, and asked if he had drugs to sell. He was even called a "black c***t" by children. This literature paints a vivid picture of the pervasive racism in European Football and the psychological toll it takes on its victims. From jokes and banter to a daily
struggle, Moran's story is a stark reminder of the reality of racism in the modern world.

Racism in football is manifested through different actions. Tarmanidis, Tsaples, and Papathanasiou (2023) in their research divided them into 5 categories as follows: verbal abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, others, and none of the mentioned. In the 6 countries examined including Italy, Romania, Greece, Hungary, Serbia, and Bulgaria, it is found that verbal abuse is the most frequent form of racism in football, followed next is emotional abuse and physical abuse. These insults are not limited to the types of skin color, ethnic origin, and religion. These actions are examined and what the author has find is that these racism acts are performed by people that are not properly educated in an education institution and are mainly influenced by the likes of social media where they speak their minds in their own online platforms. The research was conducted by providing an online and offline questionnaire, obtaining 672 respondents from 6 countries. Among these respondents, campaigns such as “Say no to racism”, “Respect”, and “UNITE” are 3 of the most famous campaigns in Europe.

### 2.2. Transnational Advocacy Network

The Transnational Advocacy Network (TAN) has previously been applied to case studies such as the Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CaAC) Network Agenda. This network is a subset of the human rights network that focuses on the protection of children affected by armed conflict, and is supported by UNICEF. The issue of protecting children affected by armed conflict was raised and recognized during the World Summit for Children in 1990, and in 1994 the United Nations General Assembly commissioned a study on the impacts of armed conflict on children. These efforts sparked a debate and resolutions in 1999 by several Security Councils (Carpenter, 2007). The CaAC Network consists of UNICEF, CRIN, OSRSG, WCRWC, Watchlist, WarAffectChild, CanPeaceFund, and many other organizations.

The CaAC Network is dedicated to advocacy and raising awareness among donor publics, local actors, civil society organizations, governments, and global policy makers. These actors are essential in creating awareness and taking action to protect children's rights and build a sustainable network (Carpenter, 2007). By working together, the CaAC Network is striving to create a world where children affected by armed conflict are protected and their rights are respected. Jennifer Hadden and Lorien Jasny (2017) explain how transnational advocacy networks can shape the strategies of NGOs when it comes to climate change. Every NGO has its own unique tactics and strategies for promoting a cause or issue. For example, Greenpeace International may protest outside of major energy companies, while the Union of Concerned Scientists may produce research reports on specific issues and cases. These two institutions have different approaches to addressing their issue, which is caused by two factors: the characteristics of the context and the attributes of the organization itself.

When considering the characteristics of the context, NGOs must consider the contracting environment, media environment, and opportunities to work with other organizations. All of these characteristics must be taken into account when deciding on a certain tactic or strategy. Additionally, the attributes of the organization must be taken into account, such as the type and amount of resources available, the organizational structure, and the organizational ideology. It is essential that the strategies of the organization remain in line with all of these factors in order to stay true to their purpose and context (Hadden and Jasny, 2017).

According to Hadden and Jasny (2017), network analysis allows for the exploration and quantification of network structures, which are patterns of relationships among them that can be used to enable, define, and constrain. This reveals how network embeddedness is essential in devising the optimal strategy for transnational advocacy. They refer to their actions on social influence, reference groups, ego behavior, and processes of peer influence. Furthermore, these references are not divorced from the roles of the network itself, which comprises of various parties and stakeholders. Strategies cannot be perfected without leveraging the network.

### 3. Research Method

This section delves further into the theory used to analyze how FARE Network conducted advocacy on racism and discrimination through their Eastern European Development Project during Euro 2012. Additionally, it provides the method of the research, including the data used, the methods of data collection, and the techniques used to analyze the data. By examining the efficacy of FARE Network's advocacy efforts, this research seeks to shed light on the effectiveness of their strategies and the impact they had on the Euro 2012 tournament.

According to Keck and Sikkink (1999), Transnational Advocacy Network Theory is a theory that emphasizes lobbying, standard setting, monitoring of compliance, and shaming norm violators. Networks are composed of non-governmental organizations, organizations, governments, and individuals that are characterized by voluntary, reciprocal, and horizontal patterns of communication and exchange. As a result, advocacy networks are formed when advocates plead for the cause of other parties or defend a proposition. Establishing the advocacy agenda requires a problem to be identified, broken down, and defined, which is then adopted and emerged. Subsequently, a campaign is discussed to produce a new norm (Carpenter, 2007). It is essential to comprehend the dynamics of the issues to evaluate the role and effectiveness of Transnational Advocacy Networks. The emergence of Transnational Advocacy Networks is also due to transnational activism, which strives to bring important issues to the public for political, social, and cultural purposes (Bob, 2013).

There are five distinct stages to assess the influence of advocacy networks, as outlined by Keck and...
Sikkink (1999). Firstly, issue creation and agenda setting is essential for generating attention to new issues and setting agendas, as the core of advocacy networks is based on values. Secondly, influence on the discursive position of states and regional/international organizations is key in persuading them to support the same cause, which could bring about changes to policies. Thirdly, influence on institutional procedures can be achieved by attempting to bind other states to participate in the same cause, by emphasizing the importance of the issue. Fourthly, influence on policy change is considered successful when it not only brings about concrete change to the target states, but also to other states or international institutions. Finally, influence on state behavior is the fifth and final stage. Even though changes to policies may be made, this does not necessarily reflect a state’s behavior. Carpenter (2007) further explains the difference between problems, issues, and campaigns. Problems are pre-existing and may not have been defined as issues, yet issues emerge when an advocate names a problem as a human rights violation and when human rights NGOs start to reference the issue in advocacy materials. Campaigns involve the efforts of multiple organizations lobbying for a specific outcome on a specific issue.

Advocacy networks have been instrumental in debates surrounding human rights, the environment, women’s rights, infant health, and indigenous peoples. The major players in advocacy are international and domestic NGOs, research and advocacy organizations, local social movements, foundations, media outlets, trade unions, churches, consumer organizations, regional and intergovernmental organizations, and parts of the government. These are what we refer to as the variables of this theory, as they are the actors and key factors that define a transnational advocacy network (Keck and Sikkink, 1999). The actors of advocacy networks tend to be diverse due to the variety of issues that are important to different people around the world. Anyone who promotes a cause and raises awareness is advocating. The network is what matters; an individual creating an individual campaign will have a different impact than an organization with connections to other NGOs with similar interests.

According to Keck and Sikkink (1999), Transnational Advocacy Network Theory is composed of four distinct indicators: information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics, and accountability politics. Information politics involves the dissemination of politically relevant information to a wide audience, often through various media outlets. For example, the United Nations released a report on world hunger and poverty to raise awareness of the issue. Symbolic politics, on the other hand, involves the use of stories, symbols, and actions to convey a sense of a situation and to reach distant audiences. Issues are framed by identifying and explaining powerful and symbolic events. For instance, when AIDS became a global concern, fundraising events such as concerts and commemorative dates were held to raise awareness and funds for the cause. Leverage politics is the ability to draw upon influential actors to influence a situation where some members of the network are weaker or less influential than others. Network members often question the political efficacy of such a move, but when a ‘big’ actor is pushed to act, it provides both tangible and moral leverage for ‘smaller’ network members to act. A prime example of this is the Black Lives Matter movement, which saw black people around the world using various media to express their thoughts on discrimination and its global implications. Accountability politics, on the other hand, is the effort to compel more powerful actors to act on policies and principles that have been formally endorsed. Powerful actors who can commit to a cause systematically or create and implement new policies are the primary targets, as they are most likely to have a lasting impact on the issue. For instance, holding conferences to discuss a certain topic or issue is a great way to hold powerful actors accountable.

The present research utilizes a qualitative research method to gain a better understanding of the meaning and experience of human lives and social worlds (Fossey et al., 2002). This approach is particularly well-suited to exploring racism and discrimination in the contemporary world, as it allows for a thorough examination of the variables at play and a deeper analysis of the theories involved. Furthermore, the effectiveness of any project aimed at advocating against racism can be more accurately gauged when using this methodology, as it is closely linked to the way in which the social world operates.

This research utilizes two types of data: primary and secondary. Primary data is collected firsthand by the researchers, while secondary data is sourced from existing data generated by institutions and other researchers that provide pertinent information for the research. In this case, the primary data consists of official statements and statistics released by FIFA, UEFA, FARE Network, and other related organizations. Additionally, the secondary data used to analyze the research question includes books published by experts in racism and sports, as well as journal articles on FARE Network and their Eastern European Development Project. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the research question, this study employs a multi-faceted approach, including media tracking of official statements and statistics, empirical dynamics to trace the timeline of events related to FARE Network and the Eastern European Development Project, and a literature review to provide an overview of racism, discrimination, football in Europe, the FARE Network, and how the Transnational Advocacy Network theory is applied to various case studies.

The research begins with identifying the issue that needs to be addressed. To gain a comprehensive understanding of racism in football, the researchers gathered data specifically from Europe, where the sport is most developed. This data was then analyzed using empirical dynamics to create a timeline that could be filtered by history, organization, and programs. This enabled us to focus on the Eastern European Development Project, which was conducted in preparation for UEFA Euro 2012 in Poland and
Ukraine. After narrowing down to specific projects and organizations, media tracking was used to provide us with all the relevant information about the project and the actors involved. Once all methods had been applied, the research question was formulated. To gain a deeper understanding of the topic and the theories that could provide answers, a literature review was conducted.

4. Analysis

During the Second World War, regimes began to discriminate against certain groups, with the Nazis leading the charge in their mission to eradicate Jewish people, whom they deemed a weak race. Adolf Hitler believed that eliminating these "weak links" would lead to human superiority. As a result, 90% of Jewish populations in Poland and 60% of Jewish populations in Ukraine were brutally tortured and murdered, leading to the Holocaust. In modern times, this type of discrimination has evolved into xenophobia, where people fear the involvement and existence of those outside of their own kind. This has been a major issue, with the Yugoslavian crisis of the 1990s and the Syrian Civil War of 2008 serving as two of the most prominent examples. Countries such as the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary have even gone so far as to reject refugees fleeing from war.

The manifestation of antisemitism, discrimination, racism, and xenophobia has been a long-standing issue in football, particularly among Ultras, a group of hooligans known for creating an intimidating stadium environment through their chants, yells, and symbols of racism. In 2009, a match held in Kielce saw a particularly disturbing incident, with the walls of the stadium written with the words "Ziości Twórcy Fani Rasisci" - meaning "Golden Blooded Racist Fans" - directed towards Korona Kielce. On August 26, 2010, during a Champions League match in Kyiv, Dynamo Kyiv and Ajax Amsterdam faced off, with home fans displaying a banner with an antisemitic slogan "Juden Zeigen" - a Nazi propaganda towards the Jewish people. These cases were reported by the Eastern Europe Monitoring Centre as a legacy program. The program released "Euro 2012: Stadiums of Hate", which marked a major turning point for the program. UEFA provided significant support leading the establishment of the East Europe Monitoring Centre as a legacy program. The center continues to operate, collecting documents and reports of racism in Poland, Ukraine, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Belarus, and Russia. Prior to the project, the BBC current affairs program released "Euro 2012: Stadiums of Hate", which marked a major turning point for the program. This was followed by a riot between Russian and Poland fans ahead of a group match in Warsaw on 12 June 2012 (Jurczyszyn, 2015). The EED Project has since become a beacon of hope for the promotion of diversity and respect in Eastern Europe, and has been instrumental in the fight against racism and discrimination in the region.

The FARE Network has established a variety of activities to combat racism and discrimination in Eastern Europe during EURO 2012. These activities include capacity building workshops, seminars, festivals, conferences, Streetkick, Inclusive Zones, and Watchdogs. With local NGOs lacking the necessary funds to provide such activities, the FARE Network and Never Again have stepped in to provide training programs to 8,400 stewards of varying ages and backgrounds. In addition, the EED Project has given a guest lecture at the People's University of Ukraine and trained local authorities as spotters.

Streetkick is a mobile football game that invites anyone to join in a friendly game. This game has been a part of previous tournaments since EURO 2004, but has
faced bureaucratic barriers in Poland, where the government has been unable to provide the necessary space for Streetkick in some areas. Inclusive Zones are designated areas that are safe from racism and discrimination, providing a place for fans to gather and watch games together. By the end of EURO 2012, Never Again had nominated a total of 2,462 places as Inclusive Zones. The Watchdog program is a monitoring team that supervises racial acts and symbols in games. Through an app, anyone can report racial actions inside the stadium, which will be forwarded to the Watchdog. To raise awareness of anti-racism, each captain of the semi-finalists of EURO 2012 gave a speech. Furthermore, major football figures such as Ruud Gullit, Paul Elliot, and Dariusz Dziekanowski delivered speeches promoting the cause.

FARE Network has been successful in establishing conferences and seminars that involve local authorities, universities, and government departments such as Poland’s equalities minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, and the Ministry of Sports and Tourism of Poland. These events have been widely covered by international media outlets such as BBC, CNN, Euronews, SVT, The Guardian, Le Monde, and many more, as well as national and local media (Jurczyszyn, 2015). Furthermore, FARE Network and Never Again have gained credibility for their programs by involving professional footballers, governing bodies, and stakeholders to deliver messages, develop policy, and provide training for those involved in the program.

In general, networks or advocacy networks have been essential in leading debates, fights, and studies to address contemporary issues such as the environment, human rights, women, infant health, and indigenous people (Keck and Sikkink, 1999). Thus, the Eastern European Development Project, a part of FARE Network’s program, is designed to address contemporary issues of racism, radicalism, and discrimination (FARE Network, 2022). This project consists of three main agendas: capacity building, monitoring, and celebratory activities. Through this project, FARE Network seeks to not only target a domestic audience, but also to reach a wider global audience to plead their cause and defend certain propositions. The involvement of major actors to boost these activities to serve the main purpose. These actors include international and domestic NGOs, research and advocacy organizations, local social movements, foundations, regional governments, intergovernmental organizations, and the government.

The FARE Network, consisting of the Centre for Access to Football in Europe (United Kingdom), European Football for Development Network (Netherlands), FairPlay Initiative (Austria), Football Unites Racism Divides (United Kingdom), Fundacja dla Wolnosci (Poland), and many more, defines itself as a transnational advocacy network (FARE Network, 2022). These organizations come together under a single umbrella organization/network to combat discrimination in football. Members from different parts of the world, united by one main cause, already demonstrate the power of a transnational advocacy network. Through the transnational advocacy network theory, FARE Network’s Eastern European Development project has successfully addressed a serious issue in society. The approach used various methods involving the government, education system, developing people, and global actors of the sport to promote the campaign, ultimately leading to positive change.

4.1. Information Politics

The use of information politics was reported case by case in a published report titled “Hateful: Monitoring Racism, Discrimination and Hate Crime in Polish and Ukrainian Football 2009-2011” which was released in 2011 by the East Europe Monitoring Centre. This 65-page report breaks down every single case of racism in East Europe football matches by month and year.

Table 1. Reported Cases in Poland Ukraine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reported Cases</th>
<th>Poland</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racist/fascist symbols</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Semitic</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Black</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homophobic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Roma</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Muslim</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Disabled</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hateful: Monitoring Racism, Discrimination and Hate Crime in Polish and Ukrainian Football 2009-2011

Table 1 reports incidents from both Poland and Ukraine. Poland having total of 133 cases consist of 56 racist/fascist symbols, 36 anti-semitic incidents, 20 anti-black incidents, 8 homophobic incidents, 2 anti-roma incidents, 1 anti-muslim incidents, 2 anti-disabled incidents, and 8 other cases that falls under no category. Meanwhile, Ukraine has 62 reported incidents with having 51 racist/fascist symbols, 2 anti-semitic incidents, 7 anti-muslim incidents, and 2 other cases falling under no category. In total, throughout 2009-2011, there are 195 cases coming from both Poland and Ukraine prior to the 2012 UEFA EURO tournament. The report becomes one of the mediums to provide and distribute valuable information on the issues that exist in Eastern Europe Football. Data in the report provided conclusive information of the issue, and it is valuable in pressuring the target audiences with the awareness of racism and discrimination in football.

4.2. Symbolic Politics

The symbolic politics of the FARE Network's project have been highly successful in providing a visualization of how fans of all races, nationalities, orientations, and ethnicities can enjoy the tournament
in a discrimination-free zone. The Watchdogs program, which involves thousands of well-trained individuals acting as unofficial law enforcers specializing in racial incidents and discriminatory actions, has been particularly effective. These actions include racial and homophobic taunts, as well as the use of symbols associated with right-wing extremism.

In addition to the thousands of well-prepared discrimination enforcers, the Watchdogs program also encourages football fans to report any discriminatory and racial abuses or harassment they witness within the stadium. This program has been a resounding success, with 2,462 inclusive zones established across Poland and Ukraine, and 13 racial incidents captured in Poland (9) and Ukraine (4). Through these events, the project has been able to demonstrate the tangible changes it has made in tackling discrimination.

4.3. Leverage Politics

The dissemination of information and utilization of symbols are not enough to effectively tackle the issue of discrimination and racism. The importance of influential figures will play a pivotal role in endorsing the cause. To this end, the program provided leverage politics through prominent actors in the industry. Various programs such as training programs, capacity building seminars, lectures, streetkick, speeches, and others involve professional football players. These footballers are involved because the network recognizes the value of their audiences. Actors that support the cause are expected to influence their fans and to join in supporting the cause. During the 2012 UEFA EURO semi-finals, the captains of each semi-finalist country delivered a powerful and moving speech to promote the fight against discrimination and racism. Messages delivered by influential actors with a wide reach increases the effectiveness of the message delivery, acting as a lever to put more pressure on governments and international institutions to take serious action and consideration for the issue. These leverages made by powerful actors encourage the 'smaller' members of the FARE Network and society to be brave in providing a voice and to take action against racial and discrimination issues.

4.4. Accountability Politics

After the involvement of influential figures and actors, systematic changes have been a key factor in the program's success. Conferences such as "Monitoring and Counteracting Racism in Football and Beyond", "No to Racism in Sport", and more have been attended by governmental institutions and relevant organizations, including the Ministry of Sports and Tourism of Poland, the Ministry of Administration and Interior of Poland, the Polish Olympic Committee, the Congress of National Minorities of Ukraine, the National Council of Youth Organizations of Ukraine, the East European Development Institute, the Youth Human Rights Movement of Ukraine, and more. Through academic discussions and the endorsement of new policies from governments and activists, accountability politics have been created to promote the issue and raise awareness. Governments and international organizations that have been the end-recipients of pressure and information about a cause have been the actors with the most influence to create changes. When a state government or international organization commits itself, it will push other entities with similar power and structure to follow suit.

According to Rafal Pankowski, institutions are visibly starting to react adequately to these situations. For example, the publication of reports by the East Europe Monitoring Center has been recognized by the Ukrainian Football Association, which has continued the report by gathering factual data to provide insight on the source of the issues surrounding racism and neo-fascism within Ukrainian Football. Additionally, both host countries of the 2012 UEFA EURO have released a list of forbidden racist and fascist symbols that can be reported when used.

5. Conclusion

Network members come from a variety of backgrounds, industries, and sectors, allowing the project to leverage the unique resources each actor brings to the table. These resources are interdependent, and the project will not reach its full potential if one resource is missing. For example, the distribution of information can be spread through multiple channels, but if the media is not popular enough or endorsed by an actor that is not relevant to the market, it will reduce the effectiveness of the promotion. On the other hand, enlisting the help of professional athletes, inviting large and relevant media groups to promote the project, engaging activists from relevant domestic or international NGOs, and involving the government and the public can lead to a faster and more widespread distribution of information and a greater chance of achieving a meaningful systemic change or policy endorsement.

The Eastern European Development Project has been successful in delivering its message to a global audience through one of the world's major sporting tournaments. Resources from the FARE Network and the Never Again Association provided the project with a wealth of media to spread the cause. Conferences, Street Kick, inclusive zones, watchdogs, and the East Europe Monitoring Center have all been instrumental in achieving the project's key objectives. Inter-actor relations between individuals, groups, organizations, societies, and governments have all helped to emphasize the importance of collective action. Mainstream media have been eager to share the project's message of multicultural inclusivity, with foreign media such as BBC, CNN, The Guardian, and Euronews, as well as local and national media like Polsat, ONTV, Rzeczpospolita, and Wprost, all covering the stories and agendas of the Eastern European Development Project. Before the project's existence, many people were unaware of the severity of the issue. Activists and organizations introducing the
crucial state of the matter were not met with the reception they had hoped for. However, the FARE Network's Eastern European Development Project has been successful in sparking policy changes and additions in line with its objectives.

In order to showcase its commitment to a sustainable program FARE Network was able to hold an annual event every October called Football People Action Week, FARE Observer Scheme which provides information on how we could be active in spotting racism, FARE Network has more than 11 on-going EU dedicated projects with more than 18 completed by the time this research is conducted, and finally their campaigns such as Football v Homophobia, Mondiali Antirazzisti, and Refugees and Football.

This research is implicated in similar research of football as a diplomacy and advocacy platform for human rights movement not limited to racism, xenophobia, gender discrimination, and any form of discriminations and violation of human rights. The limitation of this research is European football as the scope of the research. We believe that European football has a larger audience, and its football federation is more established and well-structured than other leagues in Asian countries or American countries. Moreover, among other regional national team tournaments, UEFA EURO is one of the more diverse tournaments besides the FIFA World Cup. Our recommendation is to conduct further research on future football tournaments Corporate Social Responsibility programs or advocacy programs regarding racism such as in UEFA EURO 2024 and FIFA World Cup 2026. This research will provide us a comparison of the effectiveness of these programs in advocating human rights through a similar platform.

Acknowledgment

This research is part of a student publication initiative by the Center for Business and Diplomatic Studies (CBDS), Department of International Relations, funded by the Research and Technology Transfer Office (RTTO), BINUS University.

References


