



Recommendation 1434 (1999)¹

Football hooliganism

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly considers that football hooliganism is a threat to the sport and that more efforts will have to be made to reduce hooliganism and prevent the occurrence of incidents such as those at the 1998 World Cup in France.
2. It believes that the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches of 1985 is the appropriate framework for co-operation in this field. According to Article 1 of the convention, the parties are obliged to take the necessary steps to prevent and control violence and misbehaviour by spectators at football matches and other sports events in which violence or misbehaviour by spectators is to be feared.
3. Since the adoption of the convention, hooliganism has changed gradually. Changes include:
 - 3.1. a more deliberate seeking out of confrontations by hooligans. The use of weapons and drugs illustrates the deliberateness of the hooligans;
 - 3.2. an increase in the planning, mobilisation, co-ordination and organisation of hooligans. More experienced hooligans play an important role, as do modern means of communication (mobile telephones, the Internet). Groups of fans may form coalitions and representatives of rival groups of fans may contact one another to discuss arrangements;
 - 3.3. a shift in place and time. Confrontations increasingly occur outside football stadia and not always during football matches.
4. The Assembly considers that, to succeed, safety measures should be complemented by preventive social measures and an increased effort in the field of education.
5. A long-term, integrated approach, in which all parties concerned make binding arrangements, is crucial for the reduction of hooliganism. Both clubs and national and international football authorities have to assume their responsibilities.
6. Players and clubs have a responsibility to prevent any behaviour on the playing field that might provoke violence among fans.
7. For an atmosphere conducive to tolerance and fair play, a balance has to be sought between security and safety on the one hand, and friendliness and hospitality on the other.
8. Co-operation and co-ordination during international events are still far from optimal in that many countries are not able to provide the necessary information and countries with a lot of experience in dealing with hooligans often feel that their experience is not used to the full.
9. Sensationalist or exaggerated press reports, sometimes enhancing nationalist tendencies, contribute to a climate conducive to hooliganism, especially in the periods leading up to championships.

1. See [Doc. 8553](#), report of the Committee on Culture and Education, rapporteur: Mr Valk. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 4 November 1999.



10. Communication is a key factor in the prevention or escalation of incidents and this does not apply only to communication within and between those involved in security. Communication between fans and police officers, stewards and "fan coaches" contributes to the prevention of incidents, especially if people familiar to them address fans in their own language
11. An important contribution to the prevention of hooliganism is by excluding known hooligans from attending matches. Alcoholic drinks should be banned from stadia.
12. The possibilities of managing a temporary event, such as a championship, safely are constrained by the long term policies (or lack of them) in the participating countries.
13. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers continue and reinforce its work against hooliganism in sport on the basis of the European convention, in association with governments and the relevant sports bodies, clubs, associations and stadia owners, and in particular: With regard to hooliganism in general:
 - 13.1. strengthening educational, social and cultural measures and strategies to prevent hooliganism;
 - 13.2. requiring the taking of responsibilities by clubs, and national and international football authorities by making it compulsory for them to make integrated safety plans, including measures for the prevention of hooliganism, the appointment of fan coaches and a media strategy;
 - 13.3. stimulating user-friendly stadia in which social control is made easier (for example by encouraging family participation) and hospitality has priority (for example in the form of seats, shelter, sanitation and the possibility to buy food and non-alcoholic drinks);
 - 13.4. stimulating more active involvement of fans and fan clubs (for example, in the allocation of tickets);
 - 13.5. developing a European approach to fan coaching;
 - 13.6. stipulating that all football matches in national competitions, in countries where this is necessary, have to be played simultaneously;
 - 13.7. stimulating international co-operation and co-ordination along the lines of the European Union Handbook for international police-co-operation and measures to prevent and control violence and disorder around football matches;
 - 13.8. establishing permanent football intelligence units in each country and facilitating regular consultations between them;
 - 13.9. looking for ways to apply stadia bans internationally. With regard to the organisation of Euro 2000 and future international sports events:With regard to the organisation of Euro 2000 and future international sports events:
 - 13.10. stimulating international co-operation and co-ordination before and during the event by complementing arrangements made in the organising countries, by providing feedback and by a matching communications strategy;
 - 13.11. encouraging all participating countries to send stewards and fan coaches in large numbers;
 - 13.12. stimulating an active and open media policy to help prevent exaggerated and unfounded media coverage;
 - 13.13. continuing research on "best practices" and the effectiveness of measures taken to prevent hooliganism and evaluating international co-operation and co-ordination before and during the event;
 - 13.14. establishing international centres for visiting fans ("fan homes") in places where matches are to be played in order to inform and help fans in their own language;
 - 13.15. organising publicity campaigns in each participating country, with the participation of popular players, to encourage an atmosphere of festivity and tolerance.