

EGLSF

European Gay & Lesbian
Sport Federation

off side

**European document
on discrimination of
gays & lesbians in Sport**



European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation

Preface

The first edition of the "EGLSF blackbook on discrimination of gays and lesbians in sports" was published in October, 1994. Nearly five years later, we are very proud of the updated version. Within five years many things have changed in the federation and in the European gay and lesbian sport scene: The number of member clubs has more than doubled, we could celebrate three more EuroGames (Frankfurt, 1995; Berlin, 1996; Paris, 1997) and had the pleasure to have GayGames on the European continent, in Amsterdam, 1998. Means of communication have greatly improved, so that today many people, no matter where they live, have the chance to get in contact with the EGLSF and are able to utilize the structures of an established European network.

Nevertheless, some things have not changed. One of them is the discrimination of lesbian and gay sports people. We are still being confronted with all kinds of discrimination - in many European countries including those renowned for being liberal. Of course, there has been a lot of improvements made during the last five years concerning lesbian and gay rights, but not in all regions of Europe. In countries like France, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany or Switzerland it is no problem anymore for people of the same sex to openly demonstrate their affection for each other. In part of Southern Europe homosexuals cannot openly live out their sexuality as in East Europe they have to be afraid of prosecution.

Although, there seems to be an increasing gay-lesbian friendly climate existing in various regions in Europe, the EGLSF has noticed two serious developments. The first is that there is still a high tendency of people joining or setting up lesbian and/or gay sport clubs. Among different motivations, the escape from the macho culture, which is still dominant in many regular sport clubs, is an important one.

Defining discrimination of lesbians and gays has always been a difficult thing. Where does discrimination start? How far can people go? Are homosexuals just a bit too sensitive? Every person has got her/his own style of living and everybody feels discriminated by different words and actions. Discriminatory actions take place against private persons, whole teams and even big clubs; sometimes open and sometimes of quite subtle nature. The more famous a sportsclub, the more violent discrimination sometimes is, compared to the smaller and private clubs. Discrimination knows no rules, is always unfair and disrespectful.

We do not want to make an evaluation about the different kinds of discrimination, just a classification to show the many faces of discrimination and exclusion in sports; illustrated by a long list of cases which have actually happened.

The following list of cases is not meant to be used as a code of conduct for people dealing with lesbian and gay sportspeople, teaching them what is better not to say and how not to behave like.

The aim of this document is to sensitize policymakers and decisionmakers in Europe, and in its regions. Make people aware about the problems and trouble lesbian and gay people often have to cope with. We do not want you to close the document and feel pity for us. We want you to forget the rumours you have ever heard about homosexuality and sport and support all people working for Fair Play and tolerance in sport.

The Board of the
European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation,
March 1999

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1 The special role of sport in the emancipation process of lesbian women and gay men

One out of twenty persons is lesbian or gay (GISAH & NCS, 1996). Gays and lesbians have to experience many challenges in daily life, particularly in sports. Sport has one comparative advantage over other sectors of society, in that it contributes to building a bridge between the different cultures (B. Baks & E. Fabistas, 1997). Sport can bring people together, can lead to identification with elite athletes and can contribute to social cohesiveness of a social group, a team, a town or a whole country. Because of its low threshold, its uniform character and its international standardised rules, sport can be seen as being one of the few boundless, non verbal means of communication (A. Elling, 1998).

In this function sport is considered to play a crucial role in the emancipation of gays and lesbians.

2 List of cases

2.1 Institutional discrimination

Today, some of the European gay-lesbian sportclubs are already more than five years old. They were founded in times, when gay and lesbian people wanted to share their free time, playing volleyball or soccer or going swimming. Nowadays, many sportswomen and -men feel comfortable about their homosexuality and strive for a more competitive style of sport. They want to play in ordinary leagues, and participate in official tournaments, sanctioned by official national, European or world sport federations like FINA (World Swimming Federation).

This provides a completely new opportunity to express f lesbian and gay needs. But this public demands on local, national and international platforms offer an easy target for discrimination, too.

Some associations however do their utmost to exclude homosexuality from the world of sport. In some cases they mention that gays and lesbians do not perform their particular kind of sport. Others are of the opinion that homosexuality is a social problem and that as a sport organizations it is not their duty to solve social problems. Some think that homosexuality should not be a problem, if only homosexuals would behave like heterosexuals (J. Schuyf PHD & L. Stoepler, 1997). They simply ignore that one out of twenty is lesbian or gay.

Listed below are a number of cases, where more or less renowned federations refused membership of gay-lesbian sportclubs or similar cases.

1998 – Düsseldorf, Germany

The West German Basketball Federation (Westdeutscher Basketball Verband e.V.) refuses the membership of the lesbian sportclub "Weiberkram Düsseldorf e.V." because of the explicit aim to promote the goals of the lesbian emancipation movement and to support lesbian visibility.

(source: EGLSF-investigation)

1998 – Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The ISU (International Skating Union) threatens to ban skaters who participate in Gay Games from future competitions. Although protest is coming from all (gay and straight press, politics, EGLSF, private persons via hundreds of letters and emails), the ISU does not want to change its opinion.

The figure skating competition during the Gay Games was cancelled and turned into a so called „public training“. Some skaters participated wearing masks on their faces.

(source: EGLSF-mailinglist, 1998)

1998 - Berlin, Germany

*The Berlin track and field federation (BLV) refuses membership to the gay sportclub SSV Vorspiel Berlin. After being denied membership in 1990 and 1997 a third attempt to gain membership is supported by the press spokesman of the German track and field federation (DLV), and finally was successful.
(source: EGLSF-investigation)*

2.2 The shower lie

Taken from an interview with an ex-professional handball player from Bayer Leverkusen, Germany:

Question (?): *What were your reasons for changing to Bayer Leverkusen?*

Answer (!): *At that time, Leverkusen was one of the top women's handball teams in Germany and a great challenge in my sports career. When I went there, I became aware that many of the players were lesbians. I have been warned and the people around me tried to keep me separated from them. For example, I was not allowed to shower with them. Although I had been told incredible stories about lesbians, I was quite curious to know more. I have personally never experienced that older teammates seduced younger girls. Later, when I was established in the team, younger players were warned of me. Hearing this much later I felt very discriminated against.*

What are the most widespread conceptions heterosexual people have about a gay-lesbian sportclubs? Naked sportswomen and -men, having hot sex in the showers and lockerrooms. Men with big muscles cruising around the swimming pool - a also potential danger for every "ordinary" person and a scandal, as well. Gays and lesbians are said to bring an unwanted sense of erotic into sport.

Is the erotic element of sport which makes straights wary if there are any gays or lesbians about. Sport often requires physical effort including close contact with teammates and trainers.

Due to the spreading of erroneous rumours, many gays and lesbians are threatened with ridicule possessing an image of being „sexual monsters“ by a great majority of people as the following list of instances will prove.

1997 - Cologne, Germany

*A women's handball team does not want to share the shower room with the open lesbian handball team of SC Janus Köln e.V. After a league qualifying game, where gay cheerleaders of SC Janus cheer the lesbian handball team on, the two male referees share the shower with the cheerleaders - wearing their underpants.
(source: EGLSF-investigation)*

1997 - Cologne, Germany

*A lesbian children's tennis-teacher was recommended to better quit her job, because some parents had found out that she was lesbian
(source: personal contact)*

1995 - Brescia, Italy

„Too many lesbian footballers“ – The president of the Italian football club „Club Azzurra Brescia“, Michele de Caminata, disbands team.

De Caminata, who took over the women's soccer team in 1991 realized quickly that he had entered the „world of female homosexuality“. He asked the girls not to mix sport with their private lives, but as not all players „obeyed“, he dismissed 28 of the 36 girls for „homosexual behaviour“. In the following year the team changed its name to „Azzurra Brescia“.

In the 1993-94 season the relationship between the team and their trainer totally deteriorated and the spokeswoman of the team complained about the situation.

De Caminata breaks up the team. He wants the team „to be punished by the federation“. He said, „I hope that a lot of other managers follow my example. Otherwise, women's soccer will never get off the ground.“

(source: „La Repubblica“, 28.01.95)

1997 - Brescia, Italy

An Italian court threw out a lawsuit brought about by an amateur women's soccer team (Azzurra Brescia) over allegations that they were lesbians, ruling that it was no crime to call someone homosexual.

Judge Luca Pistorelli said in his ruling: „The idea that attributing homosexuality to someone is an insult to the honour, in the sense of an assault on the dignity of their person, must be rejected decisively.“ He upbraided De Caminata (former president of the club) and Il Giorno (Italian newspaper) for bad taste, saying that privacy should be respected whatever a person's sexual orientation, but ruled that they had not committed an offence.
(source: Reuters World Report, 09.01.97)

1998 - Paris, France

The gay swimming club „Aqua Homo“ is not accepted by a neighbour group in the swimming pool. They have to change training days.
(source: EGLSF-investigation)

1997 - Trier, Germany

Trainer of a women's handball team permanently molests the women in his team. In cooperation with sponsors, he forces his players to wear sexy dresses for official occasions.

In the local newspaper he states that „women's handball without male trainers is impossible“. He describes the sportive women as sexual objects and underlines the meaning of the connection between smart women and sport for him.
Letters to the editor (written by straight and lesbian women) were not published. Many lesbians left the team in the following months, because they could not stand the atmosphere created by their trainer, anymore.
(source: personal contact / Trierischer Volksfreund, 1997)

1996 - Hamburg, Germany

Alsterpavillon in Hamburg does not allow the participants of a gay volleyball tournament, organized by „Startschuss Hamburg“, to have brunch in their restaurant. They refuse to serve gay people.
(source: EGLSF-investigation)

1998 - Great Britain

A gay wrestler is badly treated by a straight wrestling club that he had been coaching when they discovered he was gay.
(source: Donald Black; donblack@pb.clara.net)

1980 - The Netherlands

There is the case of a soccer referee L. who, in the opinion of many spectators makes wrong judgements. A number of spectators start booing him, using words like "jaggor" and "bello darling". The referee organization ignores this incident completely. While the referee walks on to the pitch at the start of a Eurocup Match, his colleagues tell him jokingly that he should have himself photographed so that everyone could see that he was "a real man". During a match the same referee helps one of the players who had been tackled to his feet. The report on the match states: "He has done a fine job although he should keep his hands off the players."
(source: Studies on Homosexuality, Utrecht)

1980 - The Netherlands

A student's boy friend is barred from the students' sports facilities by the university council, while girlfriends of his fellow students are admitted.
(source: Studies on Homosexuality, Utrecht)

1980 - South-Holland

A lesbian gym-teacher is being confronted by one of her pupils who insists that she should keep her hands off the other children even while helping them to their feet after a jump. Neither should she be allowed into the changing rooms.
(source: Studies on Homosexuality, Utrecht)

1981 - The Netherlands

The football magazine "V" publishes an advertisement in a leaflet using a caricature of a transvestite with the caption: "We have discovered the last man who doesn't like football." And further on: "Arthur 'Lola' Van Ballengoyen(...) rather fancies football players than football. Luckily, exceptions acknowledge the rule. Afterall, men do love football."
(source: Study on Homosexuality, Utrecht)

1981 - The Netherlands

A sixteen year old boy detests physics at school. When he misses the ball twice, the gym-teacher comments: "That is twice that you have missed, Jos; go and stand with the girls". Jos skips physics during the last term, pretending to have back trouble. At the beginning of every gym-lesson the teacher says jokingly: "Where is Jos? He's not having one of his periods again." In response everybody giggles.
(source: *Studies on Homosexuality*, Utrecht)

1981 - The Netherlands

Another teenage boy: "When I am in the shower after gym, some boys cover anxiously their scrotum with their towel. Some boys won't sit next to me or play football with me."
(source: *Studies on Homosexuality*, Utrecht)

1981 - The Netherlands

In an article in the gossip Privé Magazine young female tennisplayers are being alerted about aggressive seduction methods allegedly used by lesbian top-players in trying to force the girls to have sex with them.
(source: *Studies on Homosexuality*, Utrecht)

1982 - The Netherlands

For years an elderly man and his wife have been visiting the yearly new-year's party of the walking club of which he is chairman. At one particular party he is accompanied by his friend with whom he has lived for years. He is promptly dismissed from the board.
(source: *Studies on Homosexuality*, Utrecht)

1982 - The Netherlands

The popular magazine 'De Nieuwe Revue', who had previously published an article about homosexuals in San Francisco, requests football coach R for an interview. He declines since he doesn't "like the idea of appearing in the same magazine as 'all these girls'".
(source: *Studies on Homosexuality*, Utrecht)

1983 - The Hague, The Netherlands

A man called S. appeals in a magazine to enthusiasts to help him in setting up a gay-sports school. He has changed sports schools twice already due to the fact that as a gay he wasn't made feel welcome there.
(source: *Studies on Homosexuality*, Utrecht)

1988 - Haarlem, The Netherlands

A top sportsman's sponsor decides to quit after a photo report publication featuring the sportsman in a gay paper.
(source: *De Gay Krant*)

1988 - The Netherlands

In response to an article in the Gay-krant on sports and homosexuality one reader comments: "When a trainer of a boys football team who happens to be gay decides to come out, it's obvious that he risks ben thrown out. That's just the way it is."
(source: *De Gay Krant*)

1988 - Best, The Netherlands

At a meeting initiated by the 'Gay Krant' in the town of Best, many sportspeople fail to turn up for fear of being revealed to be gay. A head coach of the Royal Dutch Football Association says that his superiors threatened to sack him if he should come out. Only one of the invited organizations is represented at the meeting.

1988 - The Netherlands

Top football coach R lives a double life, anxiously concealing his homosexuality in order to safeguard his career. For example, he books his holiday separately from his lover.
(source: *GIS.AH*)

1989 - The Hague, The Netherlands

Former top sportsman A. is somewhat hesitant in rendering assistance to a discussion on the position of gay sportspeople and their integration in society in Europe.
(source: GLSAH)

1989 - The Netherlands

A handball player who is selected for an international tournament is being thwarted and pestered after revealing that she is lesbian.
(source: GLSAH)

1989 - The Netherlands

Offensive comments about homosexuals in a changing room after a badminton match.
(source: CAdH)

1990 - The Netherlands

A korfbal player is banned from his sports club after making comments about a fellow sports member's son who, he found, looked like a homosexual.
(source: CAdH)

1991 - The Hague, The Netherlands

A lesbian student at the sports academy overhears fellow students laughing behind her back about a call on the notice board appealing to gays and straights to take part in a sports tournament. There is initially no response to the call. Another student decides not to come out for fear of being hindered in her studies.

1992 - The Hague, The Netherlands

After it was revealed that a member of a billiards club is HIV-positive, he is banned from the club. The club's members fear the risk of infection. After the club's management had been properly advised about the risk of infection it reversed its decision and also apologized to the man involved.
(source: Haagse Courant)

1990 - North Brabant, Belgium

The manager of a fitness centre discriminates against gay couples by denying them discounts that are normally granted to all members.

1990 - Nijmegen., The Netherlands

A rugby player who has been selected for the national team states in an article in 'De Gay Krant': "No one actually addressed me on the issue, although I was aware that they talked about it amongst themselves. It is typical of the top to be anxious not to talk about it".

2.3 Persecution and criminal actions

As mentioned above, discrimination of lesbian and gay sportspeople can happen in different variations. So far, we have listed a number of cases dealing with ignorance and refusal. People have been insulted, sexually intimidated or excluded by other sportspeople, just for being gay. However, discrimination can also manifest itself in a violent and brutal manner (Elich & Maso, 1984). In Romania, for example, in 1997 it was still a criminal act to show one's homosexuality in public, and lesbian and gay people were punished with five years in jail. Furthermore, we unfortunately we have recieved a case, were somebody was killed, presumably for just being gay. Have a look at the following sad list of cases.

1995 - Sweden

The famous gay ice-hockey player Peter Karlsson was stabbed to death with more than 60 stabbings from a knife, on his way home from a local disco.

About a week later, a 19 year old skinhead confessed that he had murdered Karlsson, because the ice-hockey player had tried to date him. The media hve now for the first time revealed that Karlsson was gay.

A protest march, with more than 2000 participants was arranged by Karlssons's ice-hockey team. It was probably the first time that so many Swedish heterosexuals were taking part in a protest manifestation against a murder of a gay man.
(source: Björn Skolander; bjorn.skolander@nordiska.uu.se)

1998 - Great Britain

On May, 2 Justin Fashanu was found hanged to death in London. Justin Fashanu was a trailblazer. He was Britain's first black footballer to be signed for 31 million contract, and the first (and only) professional player in Britain to come out as gay. Aged 19, he was signed to Nottingham Forest football club in 1980. In 1981 he realized he was gay, but didn't come out until 10 years later. During that decade of leading a double life, he found it immensely difficult to cope with the strain of hiding his gayness in the macho world of football on the one hand, and the stress of living a secret gay life while constantly in the media spotlight on the other hand.
(source: The Washington Blade, September 11, 1998)

1990 - North Brabant, Belgium

A riding-school owner shamelessly and openly expresses towards a client that he hates homosexuals.

1989 - The Hague, The Netherlands

In a letter to all sports associations, councillor for Sports, Verduyn Lunel, stresses the need of a working group to work out a policy on the integration of gay and lesbian sportspeople. Furthermore, he invited all associations involved to a presentation that was held during the European Festivities. At this presentation the Gay Games was a topic of discussion. The NSF responded by saying that "also in view of the experiences with two projects, 'Women and Sports' and 'nonnatives and Sports', we have the opinion that integration will be far more effective by encouraging gays and lesbian sportspeople to pursue their activities within the existing sports associations." The KNVB club for football amateurs states that in their branch "there is already complete integration".

The Royal Dutch Water Sport Association states that in their view "there is no need for separate sports meetings on this issue since the integration of gays in sports had already fully been realised." The majority of the sports clubs failed to respond.

3 Research results in Europe

The first serious national research project in Europe, about sport and homosexuality, was initiated in the Netherlands. That national research project explored the discrimination of gay men and lesbian women (Hekma, 1994). It was part of a broader research project of the national government and the national sport federation, NOC*NSF, focussing on sport and discrimination.

The attention was more or less triggered off by the paradox of an increase in the number of gay and lesbian sport clubs in a society where the integration of homosexual men and women seemed near completion.

One of the aims of this research project was to find out the reasons for lesbians and gays joining lesbian/gay sports clubs.

On the one hand, people become members of gay and lesbian sports clubs, primarily for purely social reasons: Gay and lesbians want to be among their own kind, and have a domain in their sparetime where they can be themselves. On the other hand, bad experiences in the past, when playing sport with or among dominantly heterosexual sport clubs, has also led to many gays and lesbians either giving up sports completely, or joining a gay/lesbian sports club.

Five years of collecting cases on discrimination have formed quite a long list, although, an early estimation led us to expect many more cases, especially from countries in the Southern and Eastern parts of Europe. This document just reveals the tip of an iceberg.

A comparison of the list above with the rare literature available on the topic of homosexuality and sport reveals that there is no correlation between the frequency and intensity of discrimination and the actual status quo of the emancipation of the lesbian and gay people in a country.

Additionally, the number of returned questionnaires stating the existence of discrimination and those people who openly talk about their bad experiences do not reflect the real situation, because many people are not sensitive against discriminatory acts, or even worse, they hide their sexual preferences, in order to escape discrimination. This brings us to one of the striking analysis about sport and homosexuality in the following chapter.

3.1 Prisoner`s dilemma in sport

The prisoner`s dilemma explains one of the current mechanisms in society in general and in sports in particular. The prisoner`s dilemma shows that discrimination can only take place, if people come out of the closet and participate as lesbian and gay athletes in sportclubs and tournaments. The danger of experiencing a hostile atmosphere causes many people to remain deeply in the closet. As a consequence, straight sport clubs and associations sometimes deny the existence of lesbian and gay sports people (Hekma, 1994), which does not help to come out. The existence of gay/lesbian sport clubs has made lesbian and gay sportspeople more visible and improved the situation already, although every new step bears new risks. Many achievements have been made, and especially those people who come out and fight in the first row, do not mention personal discrimination, because they like to be successful examples. This prisoner`s dilemma leads to enormous difficulties in collecting information about discrimination of gays and lesbians in the field of sport.

Another interesting outcome of the above mentioned research study is about the different pattern of strategic behaviour between men and women in sport. This pattern will be explained in chapter 3.2.

3.2 Differences between men and women

In chapter 3.1 the discrimination of lesbians and gays and the dilemma related to it, has been reported. So far no difference has been made between men and women in sport. Nevertheless it should be mentioned that there are striking differences between gay discrimination and lesbian discrimination, as well as there are different reasons for lesbians to join a homo-sportclub than there are for gay men.

As sports reflects the existing stereotypes of gays and lesbians in society - gays are seen as effeminate while lesbians have a masculine reputation - their attitude towards sport is different, too. For many young gay men, being good in sports and being gay are mutually exclusive according to macho ideology. They will leave sports or remain in the closet, whereas lesbians are more active and visible in sports, because they are thought to be masculine (Hekma, 1994).

Hekma`s study revealed that a lot of gay men sport again, today, thanks to the existence of gay clubs. They had a strong dislike for sports and gymnastics, before, because of competitive and macho behaviour.

For lesbians it is the reverse, because they succeed quite well in the rough games of sport.

The investigations did also show that the choice of sport changed for both, gay men and lesbian women, after joining a gay/lesbian sport club. The male respondents showed a strong tendency to get away from all team sports, except for volleyball. Lesbians are strongly attracted by football and (Asiatic) combat sports.

The choices gay men and lesbian women make are influenced by their experiences and could have been quite different without discrimination.

4 Conclusions and outlook to the future

Discrimination and exclusion of gays and lesbians in sport, although common, is very difficult to define and is also experienced differently by every person. It also depends on the local or national setting (religion, social economic standard and supply of sport infrastructure).

Depending on gender, personal background and origin, it is difficult as well, to develop successful strategies in order to combat discrimination and getting a better understanding of gays and lesbians and respect to both sides.

Although only few national research studies and only few European (EGLSF) statistics are available on discrimination and integration of gays/lesbians in sport, some conclusions can be drawn from this material. These conclusions and recommendations are relevant for policymakers and decision-makers in the Europe of sport.

I Discrimination of gays and lesbians in sport in Europe is eminent. The prisoner's dilemma helps us to understand the mechanism of exclusion and ignorance. Breaking out the dilemma should be a challenge for both sides. Further monitoring of the development of the human rights in Europe on this subject is necessary. European institutions should facilitate this.

II One out of twenty is lesbian or gay. Many gays and lesbians chose not to participate in sport, because the regular (dominantly heterosexual) sport does not appeal to them. This should be worked upon from both sides.

III Research in other regions of Europe and on Europe as a whole is necessary for a better understanding of the situation of gays and lesbians in sport. The European institutions should initiate further projects and research on this subject.

IV Results of good practices on integration and emancipation of gays and lesbians (for example the pilot project in the Netherlands) should be made available to sport organisations in Europe. Other countries should follow these good practices. Preferably these projects should be executed as a co-production of national sport organisations/governmental organisations and representatives of gay/lesbian sport. European institutions should facilitate the exchange of good practices.

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C Miscellaneous

Presentation first edition of the European document

the first edition of this European blackbook was presented the State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport in the Netherlands and the Swiss Ambassador to The Netherlands - The Hague, 5 March 1999

Draft declaration on Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play

to be submitted to the Round Table on Sport, Tolerance and Fair play (Amsterdam, 11 April 1996) by the Committee for Development of Sport (CDDS) of the Council of Europe - 27 February 1996 [cdds96.10r]

Press release on the occasion of the Round Table on Sport Tolerance, and Fair Play

*issued by the Directorate of Information of the Council of Europe,
8 March 1996*

Press release about the declaration: regrettable: no recognition of gays and lesbians sport

issued by The European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation - 11 April 1996

Motion for a resolution to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

presented by Mrs. Karlsson, MEP and others parliament members - 10 February 1999

Addresses of relevant European institutions

Short introductions on EGLSF and GISAH

Presentation first edition of the European document



From left to right: Mrs. C. Bucher – Mrs. M. Vliegenthart – Mr. H. Reimann

The first edition of this European blackbook was presented by EGLSF board member Mrs. C. Bucher to Mrs. M. Vliegenthart (State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport in the Netherlands) and Mr. H. Reimann (Swiss Ambassador to The Netherlands)

About 75 people witnessed this presentation at the conference "Building Bridges between regular sport and gay/ lesbian sport" (organised by GISAH and EGLSF on the occasion of EGLSF's 10th anniversary).



Strasbourg, 27 February 1996
[cdds96.10r]

CDDS (96) 10 rev
Tolerance

COMMITTEE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPORT (CDDS)

STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION
ON SPECTATOR VIOLENCE AND MISBEHAVIOUR AT SPORTS EVENTS
AND IN PARTICULAR AT FOOTBALL MATCHES

Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play

19th Meeting of the CDDS, Strasbourg
6-7 March 1996

Draft Declaration
on Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play

to be submitted to the Round Table on
Sport, Tolerance & Fair Play
Amsterdam, 11 April 1996

Revised following the meeting of the Drafting Group on 16 February 1996

Draft declaration on Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play

We, participants at the Round Table on Sport, Tolerance, and Fair Play, meeting in Amsterdam on 11th April 1996,

Having in mind

- the Vienna Declaration and the Plan of Action against racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe in Vienna in October 1993;
- the Resolution on Tolerance and Sport adopted by the European Ministers responsible for Sport at their 8th Conference in Lisbon in May 1995;
- the European Sports Charter adopted by the European Ministers responsible for Sport at their 7th Conference in Rhodes in May 1992 and subsequently adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe as Recommendation N° R (92) 13,

declare as follows:

I. We are confident that sport offers a vast potential to society as a ground for intercultural encounters and understanding, as a workshop for socialisation and integration - not least for disadvantaged groups - and as a school for democracy. We fully agree in this respect with the Declaration on the Significance of Sport for Society adopted at the Lisbon Conference of Sport Ministers. Sport is a vital area of education, particularly for young people.

II. We also believe in sport's ability, notably through the intense media coverage which brings it to a broad and enthusiastic public, to project an image of fair play, team spirit and solidarity and to promote mutual understanding and respect. Major sporting events, at world and European level, with very large television audiences, provide a rich opportunity to bring home the message of tolerance. In addition, hundreds of thousands of smaller but no less important competitions for all ages, all levels and all sports are organised each year throughout Europe and the world. Each represents an opportunity for implementing new initiatives with regard to tolerance and fair play.

III. We emphasise the important responsibility borne by well-known teams and sports stars as role-models - especially for the young - and consider that it is very important that every individual and organisation involved in sport, whether governmental or non-governmental, amateur or professional, should combat intolerance and violence at sporting events by all appropriate means.

IV. We welcome the very valuable work that has been done by individuals, by the sports movement, by governments and by European institutions concerning the universality of sport and the need to keep it free of discrimination in all its forms, and express our support for all those national and international sports organisations which have drawn up and implemented plans of action to promote tolerance and fair play in sport.

V. We regret the fact that some forms of sport have too often provided a pretext for outbreaks of intolerance and violence, sometimes racist or xenophobic in character, as well as for showing those tendencies, such as the incidence of foul play, lack of discipline, doping and corruption which are in contradiction with the fundamental values of sport and undermine its effectiveness as a positive influence in society.

VI. We believe that the following are the most important ways of creating a climate of tolerance:

EDUCATION

Just as intolerance is born of ignorance and misunderstanding, tolerance is engendered by knowledge and understanding. It follows that everything begins amongst the young: at home, in classrooms, on playing fields and in sports clubs.

AWARENESS

No opportunity should be missed to ensure that all sporting events, and any media coverage associated with them, raise awareness of the message of tolerance.

PARTICIPATION

One of the most basic guarantees of fair play and tolerance is to ensure that as many people as possible practise sport regularly within a sound ethical framework.

INCENTIVES

Rewards for outstanding examples of fair and tolerant behaviour are one way of helping people to understand the importance of positive attitudes to the success of their sport as well as of harmony and justice in society.

SANCTIONS

In the last resort, dispositions must exist in law and in the rules of sport to sanction unacceptable discrimination and incitement to racial hatred by appropriate means.

COMMUNICATION

Most of these elements depend for their effectiveness on communication of clear and unambiguous information amongst all individuals and organisations concerned.

In this context, we recommend to all potential partners the guidelines set out in the Appendix to this Declaration.

With this in mind, we

1. encourage all countries to find ways, at national level:
 - to ensure that sport plays its full role in campaigns to promote tolerance in society as a whole;
 - to devise national plans of action on sport, tolerance and fair play using the guidelines in the Appendix to this Declaration;
 - to consider organising joint sports projects with neighbouring countries and/or countries of origin of minority groups to promote tolerance and help dispel prejudice between different groups;
2. invite all governmental and non-governmental organisations to share their experience through exchanges of information concerning their efforts to promote tolerance and fair play;
3. invite all sports organisations which have not yet done so to adopt action plans on tolerance and fair play;
4. invite the media to give their support to the promotion of tolerance and fair play and to consider ways of giving more prominence to the subject, as well as to events and campaigns organised to promote it;
5. invite the organisers of forthcoming major international sports events to work out initiatives for promoting tolerance and fair play through these events;
6. invite sponsors of sporting events and sport organisations to include clauses in sponsorship agreements whereby the sponsored organisations or persons undertake to support the aims of tolerance and fair play to the best of their ability;
7. appeal to sports stars to use their influence to help promote tolerance and fair play;
8. invite the Council of Europe to give appropriate follow-up to this Declaration;
9. invite all national and international organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, which have influence in the domains of activity covered by this Declaration, including:
 - The European Union (Parliament, Commission and Committee of the Regions)
 - Unesco
 - The International Olympic Committee
 - National and international sports organisations

to bear the aims of this Declaration in mind in the conduct of their activities and, if they have not already done so, to take appropriate action.

APPENDIX

Guidelines for action programmes on Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play

The following guidelines are divided into two parts, each having its own aims and needs:

1. *Encouraging national programmes to promote Tolerance and Fair Play and eliminate discrimination and racism*
2. *Encouraging international programmes aimed at strengthening the positive values of each sport, and promoting the principles of tolerance and fair play at major international events*

Aims

With the support and close co-operation of all concerned:

- to promote tolerance and fair play in and through sport using concrete measures and activities;
- to create and consolidate, in and around sport, a morality which maintains and strengthens the positive values of sport for individuals and society.

1. *National programmes to promote Tolerance and Fair Play and eliminate discrimination and racism*

Governments, regional and local authorities, national, regional and local sports organisations should support, in their respective fields of competence, action to promote tolerance and fair play, each country stressing the aspects relevant to its national situation.

National campaigns against discrimination and in favour of tolerance could make use of sport in their efforts to raise awareness and modify behaviour.

All programmes aimed at promoting tolerance and fairness in sport or society should embody, as a basic prerequisite, equitable treatment for and participation by women at all levels in the organisation and practice of sport.

1.1 *Children and young people*

Priority could be given to encouraging training for sports administrators and trainers and others involved in the fight against discrimination and intolerance. For this purpose, training and information material should be prepared for parents, coaches and teachers on tolerance and fair play in sport as proposed in the Council of Europe's Code of Sports Ethics.

- 1.1.1 Schools could be encouraged to educate pupils in sports ethics from an early age, and teachers, including physical education teachers, could be helped to draw up appropriate course material.
- 1.1.2 Sports clubs, especially those who work with schools, could be encouraged to consider education in tolerance and fair play as part of their role.
- 1.1.3 Activities could be devised to raise parents' awareness of the importance of fairness and tolerance in their children's sporting lives.
- 1.1.4 Rules could be re-examined to see whether they sufficiently reflect the principles of Fair Play and Tolerance, make games and sport more attractive, particularly for young people, and encourage the practice of sport on a social level.

1.2 *Sport for All and amateur sport in general*

More effort is needed to remove obstacles to participation in sport on all levels for all groups in society, most particularly for women, and for those groups which are not equally represented in sport, or excluded by custom or practice. The aim should be to promote conditions in which everyone can, within reason, participate or be involved fully in the sport of their choice on an equal basis.

The practice of sport can be encouraged and developed by improving the availability and attractiveness of sports facilities, particularly in districts where intolerance poses a particular problem.

1.3 *Spectator sport and professional sport*

Sport can be a focus for tensions, but it can also be the means of creating a climate of tolerance for the benefit of society as a whole¹.

- 1.3.1 National federations, clubs, organisers and the media could work together, with the support of public authorities, to draw up and implement action plans in favour of tolerance and fair play as part of countries' national sporting life. These plans could involve coaches, trainers, sports participants and players, teams and clubs, schools, young people, and parents.
- 1.3.2 Players and athletes have great potential influence on spectators, especially young people, and this influence could be used to support actions in the field of tolerance and fair play.

¹ Projects in professional and spectator sport such as "Fairstandnis" (Germany), "Discrimination offside" (Netherlands), "Kick racism out of football" (United Kingdom) have already proved their worth, as have other, more general fair play promotion experiments such as "Schools without racism" (Belgium), the "Blue Card" (France) or the "Green Card" (Finland and others).

- 1.3.3 Stress should be laid on encouraging positive behaviour rather than merely repressing unacceptable conduct. Nevertheless, plans can only be credible if they are backed up by appropriate, effective sanctions.
- 1.3.4 Sports organisations, sports clubs and their officials could consider adopting policies for treating all sportsmen/women equally in recruitment and selection for positions at all levels in their clubs.
- 1.3.5 One board or committee member could be given responsibility for matters of Tolerance and Fair Play in his or her club. He or she would then be the person to whom people could turn to for all activities in this field.
- 1.3.6 In order to prevent unacceptable behaviour in the long term, sports organisations could develop an approach geared to the needs of their "customers" - i.e members / supporters. In larger clubs or associations, an extensive network of stewards could be part of this approach.
- 1.4 Sports organisations are recommended to consider the following as part of their plans of action for tolerance:
 - 1.4.1 examining the wording of their codes of conduct and ethics;
 - 1.4.2 preparing guidelines and plans for competitions and major events which stimulate fair and tolerant attitudes amongst spectators and supporters;
 - 1.4.3 ensuring that spectators are fully informed about the rules of games and sports as well as the regulations applicable in stadia and the law concerning discrimination and racist behaviour;
 - 1.4.4 providing appropriate sanctions for unacceptable behaviour;
 - 1.4.5 creating and publicising schemes to reward fair play and proper behaviour by sportspeople, clubs, teams and spectators;
 - 1.4.6 educating spectators and the media to respect the decisions of officials, and examining the potential of technological means to provide umpires, judges and referees with more objective data. The transparency of decisions is a major factor in maintaining a sporting atmosphere.

2. *Encouraging international programmes aimed at strengthening the positive values of each sport, and promoting the principles of tolerance and fair play at major international events*

2.1 *Introduction*

Many international sports organisations have acknowledged their great responsibility in the fight against intolerance and violence in sport and for the promotion of Tolerance and Fair Play. They can guide and support their member organisations in tackling the problems by drawing up comprehensive rules which include positive and negative sanctions.

2.2 *Promotion of Tolerance and Fair Play*

2.2.1 International sports organisations could examine the rules of their game or sport and their competitions, including the role and powers of referees, umpires and officials to see what more can be done to promote the principles of tolerance and fair play, particularly with regard to disciplinary codes and the terms of reference of disciplinary commissions.

2.2.2 They could encourage their member associations to adapt their own rules to exclude any unacceptable discrimination.

2.2.3 Clubs and officials could be helped to be more aware of, and to know how to deal with discrimination and intolerance amongst spectators and/or players.

2.2.4 Rules could ensure that, where sanctions are imposed on clubs or individuals, they should be applied rapidly and effectively.

2.2.5 The media could consider ways in which the impact of the portrayal of outbreaks of unacceptable behaviour can be reduced, and more prominence given to examples of good practice.

2.3 Organisers of sports events could make use of the measures laid down in the European Convention on Spectator Violence and the recommendations of its Standing Committee.

2.4 *Special characteristics of major international events*

Major events, such as the 1996 European Football Championships in England and the Olympic Games in Atlanta, USA and the 1998 Football World Cup in France and Winter Olympics in Japan can be used to reinforce the promotion of Tolerance and Fair Play and to fight intolerance and violence. The same applies to other international events extensively covered by the media, such as tennis, volley-ball, golf, ski-ing, cycling, motor-racing and football.

The relevant international sports organisations, participating countries and all participants, officials and spectators are encouraged to become actively involved in this action.

- 2.4.1 Every means of information (television and press advertising, hoardings, display screens, public address systems, leaflets, etc.) can be used to raise awareness of the values of tolerance and fair play and the existence, and the aims and the mechanics of tolerance and fair play programmes.
- 2.4.2 All participants could make a declaration on tolerance and fair play before or at the start of the event, either before leaving their countries or at the opening; media coverage could increase impact.
- 2.4.3 Schemes to reward good, fair and tolerant behaviour could be further developed.
- 2.4.4 The regulations governing participation in international sport events could provide for a Fair Play clause (anti-violence/anti-discrimination). Sanctions for intolerant or discriminatory behaviour by players, officials or supporters could be incorporated in contracts (where appropriate) or rules.
- 2.4.5 Following the example of UEFA, Fair Play competitions could be extended to cover spectators' behaviour and plans drawn up to avoid unacceptable behaviour in sports venues. Spectators and clubs, etc. should then be well informed about the consequences of any shortcomings in this respect.
- 2.4.6 Spectators could take part in selecting winners of Tolerance and Fair Play prizes for participants.



Tolerance in sport : the Council of Europe goes into action

STRASBOURG, 08.03.96 - The 39 nation COUNCIL OF EUROPE and the Netherlands authorities will be organising an **International Round Table on Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play** in Amsterdam on 11 April 1996.

Originally proposed by the Netherlands Sports Minister, Enca TERPSTRA, the Round Table will be held on the eve of the "Euro '96" football championship. It will be attended by young people, sports stars, media representatives and officials from more than 40 European countries and will give the European public a panoramic survey of projects and initiatives aimed at promoting tolerance in sport. A television programme ("European Sports Night"), recorded on the night of 11 April and shown on various European channels the following day, will show how things can go wrong - and what the cures are.

This event is one of the first results of the Council of Europe's 8th Conference of Ministers of Sport (Lisbon, May 1995), which called for an end to violence in sport, both off and on the field. In a resolution on tolerance and sport, the Ministers stressed that "well-known teams and sports stars have a particular responsibility because they represent role models, especially for the young".

It is also part of the European Youth Campaign against Intolerance, launched by the Council of Europe's Heads of State and Government at the Vienna Summit (October 1993), which calls on groups, individuals and particularly young people to commit themselves to the fight against all forms of intolerance.

A press conference introducing the Round Table will be held at 16 h 30 on Monday 11 March at the Netherlands Ministry of Health, Fitness and Sport, Churchilllaan 368, RIJSWIJK.

Press contact in Strasbourg: **Francesc X. FERRER**, Council of Europe Press Service (Tel. +33/88.41.28.96; Fax +33/88.41.27.89)
In Rijswijk: **Gert RIPHAGEN**, Ministry of Health, Fitness and Sport (Tel. +31.70/340.51.63; Fax +31.70/340.62.92)

Ref. 115(96)

The Council of Europe and Sport

The Council of Europe's sports policy is formulated by the **Committee for the Development of Sport**, which meets once a year. It comprises representatives of governments and private organisations, and co-ordinates activities. It is a part of the work of the **European Cultural Convention**, which has been signed by the 39 member states, as well as Belarus, Croatia, the Holy See, Monaco and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The **European Sports Charter** lays down the Council of Europe's sports policy in outline. Its purpose is to promote sport, both professional and amateur. It is based on the concept of sport for all, and emphasises the importance of safety, respect for the environment and adequate funding. It is supplemented by a **Code of Sports Ethics**, which highlights fair play as one of the basic values of sport.

The **European Convention on Spectator Violence** introduces measures to guarantee crowd safety at major fixtures.

EGLSF European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation

European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation (EGLSF) about the declaration: regrettable: no recognition of gays & lesbians in sport

Although the draft declaration implicitly fights all forms of discrimination and is against unfair play, the inclusion of gay sportsmen and women is not explicitly accepted. Since one in twenty sportsmen or women is gay, a considerable part of the sport-community is still feeling unrecognized.

The European federation (EGLSF) with about 60 organisations in 10 CE (Council of Europe) countries is very disappointed with this result. With this draft declaration the CE missed a chance. Despite constructive attempts by some delegates in the making of this draft declaration to include fair play towards gay & lesbians in sport, explicit recognition of tolerance towards gays in the draft declaration has not been successful.

The EGLSF hopes, that the Dutch project on emancipation and integration of gays in sport will be followed by other NGO's and Governmental sportorganisations in the CE-countries. This bi-annual project is implemented by the Dutch Cultural Sportfederation (NCS) and the Foundation Gay Integration through Sports & Activities Holland (GISAH). This project is financially supported by the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS). EGLSF welcomes this kind of projects.

EGLSF also welcomes people to attend EGLSF's EURO-GAMES. It's an european sportevent where more than 3000 gayfriendly and gay sportsmen and women meet and compete in 18 sports. This event takes place in Berlin from May 16th to 19th.

The European Federation will stimulate its members to initiate processes in regard of the making of national actionplans on Fair Play and Tolerance which includes acceptance of gay sportsmen and women. We kindly invite other European Sport Associations to co-operate on this issue. Together we can achieve a step forward in TOLERANCE and FAIRPLAY in the deepest meanings of these words.

Ben Baks
President &
Member of the Dutch Steering
committee on Fair Play, Tolerance and Sport

Urs Fankhauser
General Secretary

11 april 1996, Amsterdam,

Urs Fankhauser
General Secretary

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Member of the
Federation Of Gay Games

Chamber of Commerce
Den Haag, no. V 415152



4



Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

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Doc. 8319

10 February 1999

Situation of lesbians and gays in the member states of the Council of Europe

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mrs Karlsson and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

1. In the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the rights of homosexuals were last discussed in the early eighties. The discussion centred mainly on the decriminalisation of homosexuality between consenting adults in private.

2. With the enlargement of the Council of Europe in the nineties, short discussions took place in relation to the accession criteria for new members and to the situation in Romania. These again centred on the criminal law. But the European Convention on Human Rights and its protocols encompass a much broader range of issues. There is surprisingly little information on the situation of lesbians and gays in many Council of Europe member states. Unfortunately, this is not because there is no discrimination, but rather because homosexuality is taboo in many member states and discriminatory attitudes are widely prevalent.

3. In order to help bring about a Europe in which lesbians and gays can live free from discrimination, the Assembly decides :

- to compile a report on discrimination against lesbians and gays in Council of Europe member states and, based on this report,
- to draw up a common framework of recommendations to serve as a basis for legislation and non-discriminatory practices in this field in member states.

Signed : ¹

Karlsson, Austria, SOC
Behrendt, Germany, SOC
Etherington, United Kingdom, SOC
Freitag, Germany, SOC
Gelderblom-Lankhout, Netherlands, LDR
Jäger, Germany, SOC
Judd, United Kingdom, SOC
Langthaler, Austria, NR
Lörcher, Germany, SOC
Roth, Germany, SOC
Schloten, Germany, SOC
Schütz, Germany, SOC
Wodarg, Germany, SOC

SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
EDG: European Democratic Group
LDR : Liberal, Democratic and Reformers' Group
UEL : Group of the Unified European Left
NR : Not registered in a group

Addresses of relevant European institutions

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Short introductions on EGLSF and GISAH

EGLSF

EGLSF stands for European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation. Countless sports groups from different European countries have joined the Federation. The EGLSF strives towards an improvement in the sport climate within European countries. Bringing sportsmen and sportswomen together, emancipation and integration are important objectives. For this reason the EGLSF gives out information about gay/lesbian sport & clubs and sporting events in their quarterly magazine 'Network' along with the European Tournament Calendar. The EGLSF has access to an extensive sports club directory. Together with GISAH, the EGLSF manage an internet site <http://www.gaysport.org>. Under the auspices of the EGLSF, the annual, EuroGames are held in a European city. EuroGames is a multi sport event where thousands of sportsmen and sportswomen, gay/lesbian people, and gay/lesbian friendly people, meet. In principle, anybody can take part in this fair play event. As well as this, the EGLSF collects complaints about discrimination towards gay/lesbian sportsmen and women within Europe, these are put together in a European 'black book'. The EGLSF was founded in 1989 in The Hague, The Netherlands.

GISAH

The foundation Gay Integration through Sports & Activities Holland (GISAH) is the Dutch advocate for gay sportsmen and women in the Netherlands. About 40 gay/lesbian sportclubs are linked to this platform. The mission of this platform is to strive for a sport climate in Holland, where there is place for everyone. This is done, amongst others, by improving the participation of gays & lesbians in sport. To reach its objectives, GISAH is co-operating with other Dutch sportorganizations and initiates national and local projects. Projects that vary from publicity and research to educational projects. Beside these projects, GISAH also provides the Dutch network of gay sportclubs with information by its [gaysport.org](http://www.gaysport.org) website. The projects of GISAH are supported by national and local authorities. A black book on discrimination was published in 1992. Since 1988, GISAH is based in The Hague.

**... and don't forget to also visit [Gaysport.Org](http://www.gaysport.org):
our joint information service on the world-wide-web**

Extensive information on gay and lesbian sports all over the world, International Tournament Calendar, SportMates service, EuroGames information, Gay Games Amsterdam and Sydney, Research & Politics on Sports and much more!

www.gaysport.org

The Council of Europe's declaration on Fair Play & Tolerance in Sport and the European Union's Amsterdam Treaty on Sport and against discrimination marks a growing awareness of the importance of sport in society. It also makes National and European sport and (non-)governmental organisations aware of its potential to build bridges between regular and gay/lesbian sport. One out of Twenty sportsmen and sportswomen is gay or lesbian. Discrimination of gays & lesbians in society and in sports in particular is omnipresent in many European countries. That is why in many regions of Europe gays & lesbians are (still) left off side.

This situation brings problems that need to be faced and 'bridges that need to be built' to overcome these problems. A Europe of Sport without any discrimination and intolerance is a common goal that has been set several times by sport organisations and various administrations in Europe and in its regions. Sport as an instrument for fair play, tolerance and integration is a real challenge for the future. A challenge to both sides, the 'regular sport' and governmental organisations and institutions in Europe, but also for the 'gay sport'.

This European document OFF SIDE is to contribute to a better understanding between all parties, who strive for a better sport climate in Europe and an integration process for gay sportsmen and lesbian sportswomen and a better understanding of athletes with a different background than most other athletes.

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