

Global guide to discriminatory practices in football

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About Fare

The Fare network is an umbrella organisation of over 130 members from 40+ countries. Members are NGOs, fans, ethnic minority organisations, LGBTQI+ groups and others.

At the heart of Fare's work is tackling discrimination in football, including racism, far-right nationalism, sexism, trans- and homophobia and discrimination against disabled people and work on social inclusion initiatives using football.

Fare focuses on advancing the social inclusion of marginalised and disenfranchised groups while engaging policy makers, governing bodies and the wider public in the process.

The annual Football People weeks is one of the largest social initiatives in sport, with activities taking place in more than 60 countries in Europe and beyond.

In 2013, Fare developed and implemented an observer scheme at European level matches as part of its work to tackle and educate against discrimination and challenge far-right extremism inside football stadiums. A similar system was implemented for the men's 2018 FIFA World Cup™ qualifiers.

Fare works to promote a message of diversity at football mega events, including the men's UEFA EURO 2004™, the men's 2006 FIFA World Cup™, the men's UEFA EURO 2008™ and 2012, 2016 and 2022 editions, the FIFA Confederations Cup 2017, the men's 2018 FIFA World Cup, the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup 2019™, the FIFA Arab Cup 2021™, the UEFA Women's EURO 2022™ and the men's FIFA World Cup 2022™.

www.farenet.org

Global Guide to Discriminatory Practices in Football

Introduction

Football is played by millions of people in every corner of the world, bringing together individuals of all nations and backgrounds across communities. At the same time, football stadiums have become places where discrimination is manifested on a frequent basis – towards players, officials and fans. The practices aim to exclude or erase the dignity of other human beings based on real or perceived differences – whether they are ethnic minorities, women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+) people, or disabled people.

International human rights law, national legal frameworks and FIFA Statutes prohibit discrimination. Every person is entitled to exercise their human rights and freedoms without discrimination of any kind, such as race, skin colour, ethnic, national or social origin, sex characteristics, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, language, religion, age, political or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, or any other reason.

At football stadiums across the world, **racial discrimination** is directed in various forms against ethnic minorities and often, but not exclusively, against people of African descent. Despite greater awareness, racism remains one of the most commonly displayed forms of discrimination in football. This guide has examples from each football confederation, making it a truly global reference work.

In recent years, we have observed high levels of anti-Semitic, Islamophobic and anti-immigrant sentiment. These views are often spread by far-right extremist groups and populist right-wing movements. It should be noted that not all forms of political discourse that advocate for, or lead to, racial discrimination are perpetrated by political groups. Often, discrimination is abetted by everyday language, gestures, and ‘traditions’ which have become normalised.

Discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation can be seen around the world. This type of discrimination is often embedded in the legislation of many countries, where sexism and misogyny are prevalent, making stadiums less safe for women. For women, abuse in the stands can be coupled with institutional barriers to playing or watching football.

FIFA's regulations set out clear guidelines to protect fans and players against all forms of discrimination and provide mechanisms in the form of regulatory action to respond to any displays of discriminatory behaviour.

Article 4 of the FIFA Statutes, *Non-discrimination*, gender equality and stance against racism says that:

“Discrimination of any kind against a country, private person or group of people on account of race, skin colour, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, disability, language, religion, political opinion or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, sexual orientation or any other reason is strictly prohibited and punishable by suspension or expulsion.”

The impact of discrimination goes beyond the use of insulting words, and the patterns by which people are discriminated against in football reflect the most common forms of abuse suffered by vulnerable groups in society. The issues dealt with in this guide are part of a societal problem that affects football and uses football to perpetuate itself. As a uniquely popular social activity, football has a duty, and an opportunity, to protect its players, spectators and supporters, and anyone else involved in football, from discrimination. Football is watched by millions of TV viewers and the behaviour displayed in a stadium is likely to be seen and copied by many. The game should set a positive example of inclusivity.

About this guide

This guide contains a description of discriminatory practices displayed inside football stadiums around the world in order to help fans, governing bodies and other actors in the game to recognise and stop discriminatory abuse and effectively address it when it occurs. Furthermore, the guide raises awareness among football fans to recognise, understand and avoid intentional or unintentional discriminatory practices.

The guidance presented here outlines the most commonly displayed discriminatory practices and is far from exhaustive. As in wider society, discrimination takes many forms – in football, it includes banners, chanting, symbols and hidden codes. This guide, however, is not a list of prohibited symbols and codes upon which disciplinary proceedings would automatically be opened. Each incident should be assessed individually, including the context in which it was displayed.

This guide was compiled as a result of the submissions of many experts and on the basis of the experience of the Fare-FIFA Anti-Discrimination Monitoring System at the men's 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™ and the men's FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ preliminary competition, as well as previous Fare observer expertise at UEFA competitions. As part of this system, Fare deploys experts trained in issues of discrimination at international football matches to record and report incidents. The guide was revised prior to the men's FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

Definitions

For the purposes of this guide, the following definitions are used:

Anti-Semitism is a “perception of individuals or the Jewish community, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, towards Jewish community institutions and religious facilities”. (*Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union, 2005. A definition adopted around the world including by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.*)

Biphobia is the fear or dislike of someone who identifies as bi based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about bi people. This can also include denying somebody's bi identity or refusing to accept it. Biphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, bi. (*Stonewall UK*)

Homophobia is the fear or dislike of someone based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about lesbian, gay or bi people. Homophobic bullying may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, lesbian, gay or bi (*Stonewall UK*)

Lesbophobia is the fear or dislike of someone because they are or are perceived to be a lesbian. (*Stonewall UK*)

Transphobia is the fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are trans, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, trans. The term “trans” is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. (*Stonewall UK*)

Islamophobia is the prejudice against, hatred towards, or fear of, the religion of Islam or Muslims. (*European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) General Policy Recommendation No. 15, 2015*)

Racism is defined by the UN's International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination as “...any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life”. (*International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, OHCHR, 1965*)

Sexism is “any act, gesture, visual representation, spoken or written words, practice, or behaviour based upon the idea that a person or a group of persons is inferior because of their sex, which occurs in the public or private sphere, whether online or offline.” (*Council of Europe, 2019*)

Xenophobia is “attitudes, prejudices and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity”. (*NGO Meeting for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances, 2001.*)

Commonly used discriminatory practices

There are many discriminatory expressions and practices that are used inside stadiums across football confederations that are recurring and heard often. Most of them are directed at ethnic minorities, LGBTQI+ people and women.

Monkey noises and/or gestures

Within football, imitating monkey noises or gestures is a racist practice aimed at dehumanising the target and implying inferiority. Related to imitating monkey noises and/or gestures are actions that include fans showing, throwing or offering a banana to Black players.

Blackface

Blackface refers to the practice of painting one's face and/or body in black. It is often seen as a fun and harmless way of caricaturing Black people. The practice was widespread in theatrical performances in the US and other countries in the 19th and 20th centuries.

As harmless as it may seem, it spreads and reinforces racist stereotypes and generalisations about Black people. Regardless of the motivation, it is perceived by many as being racist.

Similar practices of portraying other ethnicities, nationalities and identities by dressing in what is imagined as their traditional costumes, or exacerbating other features attributed to the group, may be seen as, at the very least, spreading xenophobic stereotypes about the group and should be avoided.



“Gorilla/monkey”

Calling Black players or fan “gorilla” or “monkey” is a racist practice similar in character to the above-described monkey noises and/or gestures.

“N-word”

A racial slur in English-speaking countries that is derogatory towards Black people. There is no precise equivalent in Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries. The word negro, or black, can become racist in particular contexts, especially when included in phrases that refer to slavery and poverty, such as “esclavo negro,” or are directly hostile, such as “negro de mierda,” or “shitty Black person”.

“Poofter”

A derogatory term used towards gay or gender non-conforming males most commonly used in Australia, New Zealand and the UK.

“Puto”

“Puto” “Eeeeh... Puto!” is a homophobic chant usually directed at the opposition goalkeeper when taking a goal kick. “Puto” refers to a male sex worker. The word is used as a homophobic slur equivalent to the English ‘faggot’ and is discriminatory for LGBTQI+ people regardless of the sexual orientation of those it is directed at.

“Faggot (fag)”

A derogatory term used towards gay or gender non-conforming males in North America and throughout English-speaking countries.

“Dyke”

A slang term for lesbian which, when used against female players or fans in a football context, has a clear discriminatory connotation. The term has also been used by some lesbians as a word implying assertiveness and toughness, or simply as a neutral term for lesbian.

“Gypsy”

The use of the term “gypsy” often has a negative connotation and is linked to attributing to a player or fan negative characteristics as part of the racist stereotyping of Roma people.

Slant-eye gesture

The “slant-eye” gesture is widely recognised in various parts of the world and universally perceived as a racist insult targeting the human dignity of people of East Asian, Central Asian and Southeast Asian descent, regardless of whether the intent of the person performing it is to offend or not. The gesture of pulling one’s eyes to the side is performed to mock and ridicule the eye shape visually, and should be regarded as equivalent to the verbal expression “slant-eyed”.

Racist insults are often constructed to target physical appearance and facial features, whether real or perceived, as part of a stereotype against a certain racial, ethnic or other minority group. Distorting and exaggerating physical appearance of minority groups in a caricature form is a form of racist insult aimed to denigrate human dignity.



Anti-Black-Lives-Matter (anti-BLM) (or anti-taking-the-knee) symbols

In recent years, we have witnessed anti-BLM banners and booing of players taking the knee in football and sport in general. The taking-the-knee gesture in sport was first used by the NFL player Colin Kaepernick in the United States of America (USA) in 2016 and has been widely used by footballers worldwide since 2020. Banners with a crossed-out image of a person taking the knee started to appear in 2020 displayed by far-right groups in football targeting players for performing the gesture. Such banners have also been combined with “White Lives Matter” banners (*page 52*). Banners that address players and urge them not to take the knee have also been used by far-right groups.



Since 2020, the booing of players taking the knee has also been widely seen. The display of anti-taking-the-knee banners and the booing and targeting of ethnic minority players performing a symbolic anti-racist gesture creates a non-welcoming atmosphere for Black and ethnic minority players and spectators and is widely seen as racist.



Football confederations

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC)

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) covers a diverse region with significant differences between fan cultures. Discriminatory practices displayed in football in Asia include verbal abuse of Black and ethnic minority players and fans, as well as xenophobic and homophobic abuse. Throughout the region, discrimination is manifested inside stadiums and on social media around matchdays.

In East Asia, political tensions between Japan, Korea and China PR (arising from World War II) and historic revisionism are frequently manifested during football matches.

In Australia, homophobic abuse has been recorded on display at both grassroots and professional levels.

In the Middle East, discrimination manifests itself in the form of racial discrimination towards Black players and slant-eye gestures towards Asian players.

A significant imbalance in gender equality exists in the region, including an ongoing de facto ban on women attending matches in IR Iran. In both Saudi Arabia and IR Iran, women have been arrested for trying to attend football matches.

Political tensions between Saudi Arabia and IR Iran also affect the relationship between other countries in the region and can be manifested through football.

Racial discrimination of indigenous, Black and ethnic minority players and fans in the AFC region is displayed in different forms, ranging from the use of the N-word to monkey references.

Country-specific discriminatory practices

Australia

In Australia, the most commonly used discriminatory expressions include “Gorilla/monkey”, “Poofter”, “Faggot (fag)”, “Dyke” (see *Commonly used discriminatory language* page 8)

“Gypsy”

The term “gypsy”, when used as an insult, is less common: however, there have been cases reported of the use of the word by players to insult other players during the match.

Images of oral/anal sexual intercourse

Banners depicting oral/anal sexual intercourse directed against the opposing team should be regarded as homophobic.



Iran

Khar (In English: “donkey”)

The word “khar” is used in combination with the word “Turkish” as directed at Azeri fans in anti-Azeri chants. An example of a chant directed at Azeri fans is:

“Turkish donkey!” “Donkey, get lost!”

“There is no braying from the donkeys!”

“The Turkish donkeys are silent!”

Aadam khaar (In English: “cannibal”)

Racial discrimination against Black players in IR Iran is not commonly recorded. However, in one witnessed incident, a coach called a Black player from the opposing team “Aadam khaar”, which translates into English as “cannibal” and is used to label the player as primitive.

Japan

The Rising Sun flag (旭日旗 Kyokujitsu-ki)

Formerly used by the Imperial Japanese Navy and Imperial Japanese Army until 1945, variations of the Rising Sun flag are viewed as a symbol of Japanese militarism and colonialism before and during the World War II and considered discriminatory, specifically towards Korean Republic, Korea DPR, and China PR fans and fans from other countries in the region impacted during World War II.

The flag is officially used as a symbol of the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force currently and is also used in commercial advertising; nevertheless, the flag symbolism is still seen as discriminatory by the countries affected by Japanese military action during World War II.



“Japanese only”

Xenophobic banner indicating that other nationalities and ethnic groups are not welcome.



Korea Republic

Jjanggae 짱개 (In English: “chink”)

Racial slur describing Chinese people or people with a Chinese background in a derogatory way.

Kkam-dung-ee 감둥이 (In English: N-word)

Can also be written as “ggam-dung-i” and is the equivalent of the N-word, an ethnic/racial slur referring to Black people in a derogatory manner.

Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia racial discrimination manifests itself in the form of verbal abuse.

“Takrooni” (In English: N-word)

“Takrooni” is a racial slur used against Black players and is the equivalent of the N-word.

“ya abd” (In English: “you are a slave”)

This term is often used towards Saudi players with African roots.

Football confederations

The Oceania Football Confederation (OFC)

Discriminatory incidents in football across the region are mainly displayed at grassroots level. In other sports, such as rugby, discriminatory incidents are recorded at professional level.

Racial discrimination of indigenous, Black and/ or minority players and fans is displayed in different forms ranging from the N-word to monkey references.

Homophobic abuse is commonly displayed through verbal abuse by calling opposing team players or fans “faggot”.

Country-specific discriminatory practices

New Zealand

“Faggot”

(see Commonly used discriminatory language Page 8)

Homophobic abuse in New Zealand is in general witnessed at grassroots level in the form of verbal abuse towards players.

Football confederations

The Confederation of African Football (CAF)

Discriminatory practices in the Confederation of African Football (CAF) are displayed differently across the region. Homophobic abuse is commonly witnessed. Discrimination between North Africans and sub-Saharan Africans is witnessed around matches. Across Africa there is a high number of displaced persons, and on some occasions the tensions between the local population and immigrants have resulted in violent xenophobic attacks on minorities, such as those witnessed in recent years in South Africa.

Homophobic abuse is commonly displayed in African football through condemning LGBTQI+ players by directly linking homosexuality to under-performance of players and teams, leading to poor results. Africa has the highest number of countries where LGBTQI+ rights are minimal and/or homosexuality is outlawed. There are recorded examples in Nigeria of LGBTQI+ players who were not selected for or removed from their respective national team. Homophobic abuse is often witnessed online or in interviews in traditional media.

Across the region, the position of female football players and female fans is marginal. There is documented verbal abuse of female referees as well as reported incidents of the physical abuse of female fans attending matches.

In North African countries, racial discrimination is displayed by portraying Black players, fans or referees as inferior. Fans and players refer to Black players, fans or referees by describing them as monkeys or slaves.

Fans also make references to the economic status, physical or living conditions of other ethnic groups in order to enhance negative stereotypes. Referring to players from certain countries as having HIV/ AIDS as part of a xenophobic stereotyping or attributing bad smells to Black people have been recorded. Most forms of discriminatory abuse inside stadiums are in the form of verbal abuse.

¹ International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association: Carroll, A., State Sponsored Homophobia 2016: A world survey of sexual orientation laws: criminalisation, protection and recognition (Geneva; ILGA, May 2016).

Country-specific discriminatory practices

Egypt

In Egypt, the most common discriminatory practices are verbal abuse against Black players.

“Zengy”
(In English: N-word)

Zengy is the local equivalent of the N-word and is a racial slur used against Black people.

“kos omk”
(In English: “your mother is a bitch”)

“Kos omk” is a misogynist expression.

Agala

The word “agala” means bicycle and is used as a homophobic insult comparing gay men to the fact that a bicycle can be ridden.

Malawi

“Hule”
(In English: “whore”)

A Chichewa word used by fans in a misogynist manner to insult female referees in particular.

“Ya abd”
(In English: “you are a slave”)

“Ya abd” translates to “you are a slave”. This expression is used to describe Black people as inferior.

Makhaneeth/Makhnath

In English, this means gay/lesbian and is used in a derogatory way towards members of the LGBTQI+ community.

Morocco

In Morocco, most discriminatory practices are in the form of verbal abuse towards Black players.

“Wa Ikanibales”
(In English: “cannibal”)

The term “wa Ikanibales” (cannibal) is a derogatory way to describe Black people as primitive.

“El Kuard”
(In English: “monkey”)

The term “el Kuard”, meaning “monkey” in English, is a form of racist abuse towards Black players.

Tunisia

In Tunisia, verbal abuse towards Black players is the most witnessed form of discriminatory practice.

“Ya Kahlouch”
(In English: “N-word”)

“Ya Kahlouch” is the equivalent of the N-word and is used as a racial slur towards Black people.

Football confederations

Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF)

Discriminatory practices in the Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football (Concacaf) are played out differently in the Creole-, English-, French- and Spanish-speaking countries of the region.

Across the region's Hispanic countries, social attitudes may often feed off a so-called "machismo" culture. Discriminatory practices linked to this culture may not be perceived as intentional or conscious by the perpetrators, nevertheless they normalise violence towards vulnerable populations. Chants and gestures tend to be the most common forms of discriminatory practices, plus occasional banners.

Border and migrant issues also play a role in football in the region. In the United States (US), anti-migrant chants have been noted in stadiums by way of anti-Mexican/anti-Latino sentiment at grassroots level in football and in other sports, but have not been recorded in professional football. Nevertheless, existing tensions have to be closely monitored as having the potential to be manifested at football competitions. The ongoing tension between Central America and the US has spurred an increase in discriminatory behaviour towards US players, particularly when playing in El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama. Fare observers documented monkey chants aimed at African American players from the US by home fans.

The homophobic "puto" chant has continued to be a feature of matches of the Mexican national team, both at home and away. Since the men's 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil™, the chant has become widespread. Discriminatory behaviour documented by our observers emerged mostly from fans, rather than players or staff. The Mexican Football Association has acknowledged the discriminatory nature of the "p" chant, after many years of refusing to do so. They have attempted to drown out the chant in their stadiums, place anti-discriminatory banners, and warned fans that they will receive individual bans if caught performing the chant or other discriminatory chants.

²"La Bestia" is a freight train line that immigrants from across Central America catch illegally in hope of reaching the United States, with a very high risk of death in the process.

Commonly displayed discriminatory practices across Concacaf include homophobic chanting and slurs, monkey noises and gestures, plus other racist and xenophobic remarks. Afro-descendant populations are routinely targeted, and phrases such as "muerto de hambre," which literally translates to English as a starving person, are frequently racialised insults that imply both xenophobia and racism.

Homophobia

Calling the opposing team players, fans or the referee "puto", "culero", "cueco" – all Spanish for "faggot" – is common. These homophobic slurs are discriminatory towards the LGBTQI+ community and normalise violence on the basis of sexual orientation.

The word "marimacha/o" (Spanish for "lesbo" or "dyke") – a derogatory term that refers to women who look or act in what is perceived as behaviour not suitable for a woman – has also been witnessed in stadiums. It has also been perpetrated against women players.

In the Anglosphere, homophobic abuse includes the use of words such as "faggot". The use of the word "puto", influenced by the homophobic Mexican chant "eeeeeh puto!", has also been noted at football matches in the USA.

Racism

In Hispanic countries, the use of words including "mono", "simio" and "gorila" – Spanish for "monkey" and "gorilla" – along with monkey gestures are racist practices used against Black players.

Expressions including "negro", "negro de mierda", "mono negro", "simio de mierda", "esclavo de mierda" – (in English, "N-word", "shitty Black/N-word", "black monkey", "shitty monkey" and "shitty slave") – are all used to degrade Black players and diminish their worth. Another example of this is the expression "negro muerto de hambre" – roughly translated as "N-word beggar" in English.

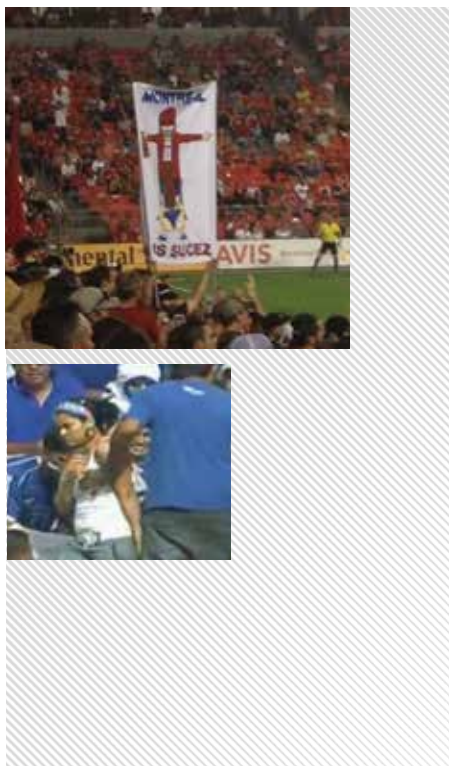
Sexism

In some of the region's Latin American countries, sexist remarks inside stadiums include “¡qué tetas!” – “nice tits” – or expressions such as “¡Qué rico eso mami!”, translating to something akin to “how sexy is that?”. Instances of extreme sexist behaviour, including sexual harassment and the groping of women, are often reported.

In Mexico, the chant “eeeeeh puta!”, which refers to a woman as a “whore”, has been used in women's football to target goalkeepers. It derives from the homophobic chant “eeeeeh puto!” used when the opposing goalkeeper takes a goal kick or clears the ball.

Disparaging comments about women can also be witnessed in expressions used by men to offend other men. It can be as simple as referring to fellow men as women or girls. Homophobia and sexism are almost always linked. In addition, insults can attack another man's partner or relationship to his partner. The word “chivo” (in English, similar to “cuckold”) has been used in Costa Rican football to refer to a man's wife as adulterous.

Although the display of sexist banners is not a common form of discrimination in the region, a sexist banner with an illustration of a woman in opposing team colours performing fellatio has been reported in Canada.



Xenophobia

Border tensions and patterns of migration between countries of the region have an impact in football fan culture, in many cases leading to xenophobic displays and comments against foreign-born players, or references to anti-migrant policies.

Country-specific discriminatory practices

El Salvador

“Culero”

“Culero” is a homophobic term directed at gay men.

“Joto”

The word “joto” is a Mexican homophobic term that discriminates against gay men. It has been used in El Salvador stadiums to abuse Mexicans at matches between the two sides. It has also been witnessed in Honduran and Mexican football.

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

“Puto”

“Puto” refers to a male sex worker. The word is used as a homophobic slur equivalent to the English ‘faggot’ and is discriminatory for LGBTQI+ people regardless of the sexual orientation of those it is directed at.

Honduras

“Culero”

“Culero” is a homophobic term that discriminates against gay men.

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

Jamaica

“Batty boy”

“Batty boy” is a homophobic term that discriminates against gay men. This chant has been documented in the US professional league, directed toward Collin Martin, one of the few openly gay players, by a Jamaican opponent.

Mexico

“Chango”

The word “chango” is, in a football context, a racist term usually used to compare a Black person to a monkey. Expressions such as “pinche chango”, “pinche simio de mierda” and “chango come plátano” – roughly equivalent to “fucking monkey”, “fucking shitty monkey” and “monkey eat a banana” in English – have been reported in stadiums.

“Eeeh puta!”

The chant is a gendered term of sexist and misogynist nature and infers that a woman is a sex worker, impugning her sexual integrity.

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

“Eeeh puto!”

“Eeeeh puto!” is a homophobic chant usually directed at the opposition goalkeeper when he is taking a goal kick. “Puto” refers to a male sex worker. The word is used as a homophobic slur equivalent to the English “faggot” and is discriminatory for LGBTQI+ people regardless of the sexual orientation of those it is directed at.

“Joto”

The word “joto” is a homophobic term that discriminates against gay men. It has been used in El Salvador stadiums to abuse Mexicans at matches between the two sides. It has also been witnessed in Honduran and Mexican football.

Panama

“Cueco”

“Cueco” is a derogatory and homophobic term used to refer to gay men.

“Eeeh puto!”

“Eeeeh puto!” is a homophobic chant usually directed at the opposition goalkeeper when taking a goal kick. “Puto” refers to a male sex worker. The word is used as a homophobic slur equivalent to the English “faggot” and is discriminatory for LGBTQI+ people regardless of the sexual orientation of those it is directed at.

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

United States of America

Anti-migrant chants

Anti-immigrant chants directed at Latin American players, including “get deported” or making reference to anti-migrant policies, have been reported at grassroots level and have the potential to spread to professional games.

Far-right displays

Overt racist and xenophobic far-right displays are not common in US football but reports have suggested demonstrations of the far-right group The Three Percenters at top-tier matches.

“Eeeh puto!”

“Eeeeh puto!” is a homophobic chant usually directed at the opposition goalkeeper when taking a goal kick. “Puto” literally refers to a man who has relationships with other men for money. The word is used as a homophobic slur equivalent to the English “faggot” and is discriminatory for LGBTQI+ people, regardless of the sexual orientation of those to whom it is directed.

“Retarded”

References to disability in chants, such as the word “retarded”, is discriminatory against people with disabilities and has been recorded in club competitions in the US.

Football Confederations

South American Football Confederation (CONMEBOL)

In the South American Football Confederation (CONMEBOL), discriminatory practices are similar to those in Concacaf countries, with some chants being transferable and replicated across the two confederations. Incidents of xenophobia and racism are amongst the most frequent types of discrimination. Hostility against immigrants, neighbouring countries, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples can be traced back to the legacy of European colonialism and are a part of football and football fan culture.

In Brazil, race relations have long been characterised by a belief in racial democracy or a post-racial society, but life opportunities have become deeply connected to exclusion based on wealth and social origin, which is also visible in football.

Far-right movements also exist in Latin America, using some of the symbolism characteristic of European neo-Nazi groups and whilst they remain rare, they have been witnessed at some matches.

Despite progress in achieving equal rights for LGBTQI+ communities in society, South American football is still affected by sexism and homophobic chanting.

Chants may vary from Spanish to Portuguese-speaking countries due to language specifics.

Discriminatory abuse on social media is also common in some countries.

Homophobia

Calling the opposing team players, fans or the referee homophobic terms, including “puto”, “maricón”, “marica” – all Spanish for “faggot” – is commonly witnessed in South American stadiums, as well as “bicha” and “viado/veado” in Brazil. The homophobic slurs refer to gay men in a derogatory way.

The chant “Poropopo, poropopo el que no salta es un (insert nationality) maricón” contains the word “maricón”, a discriminatory reference to gay men.

Racism

In Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries, the use of words, including “mono”, “simio”, “gorila” – Spanish for “monkey” and “gorilla” – or “macaco” – Portuguese for “monkey” – and monkey gestures can be observed. Other expressions include “comé banana” – Spanish for “eat a banana”. Several documented incidents of monkey gestures occurred among Argentine and Chilean fans during the 2022 Copa Libertadores.

Racially charged words and expressions including “indio”, “negro gorila”, “negro de mierda” – in English “Indian/indigenous”, “N-word gorilla”, “shitty N-word” – are used to discriminate against players of different ethnicities or nationalities.



Sexism/misogyny

Sexist and misogynist terms are used to degrade opponents by impugning the sexual integrity of their mother. Words and expressions include “puta” – “whore” in English – “hijo de puta” – “son of a whore”.

In addition, there are also examples of sexist remarks directed at female referees and coaches emphasising negative stereotypes and promoting the idea of women as risky, incompetent and unskilled.

Examples include:

“La mujer es para la casa, como el perro” – Spanish for “The woman is to stay at home, just like a dog”

“Que en el fútbol no se metan, que vayan a vender frutas” – Spanish for “They should not talk about football, they should go sell fruit”

“Que se dedique a la cocina o costurería” – Spanish for “She should spend her time in the kitchen or sewing”

“No te maquilles tanto” – Spanish for “Don’t use so much make-up”

“La mujer ha avanzado y tiene capacidad suficiente, pero ahí a entrar a un camarín masculino...no estoy de acuerdo” – Spanish for “She has gone far and is skilled enough, but from that to entering a men’s dressing room... that, I don’t agree with.”

“Futebol feminino é igual gordo comendo salada: não tem graça nenhuma” – Portuguese for “Women’s football is like a fat person eating a salad, no fun”

“Se é bonitinha, que vá posar para a Playboy, não trabalhar com futebol” – Portuguese for “If she is pretty she should go pose for Playboy instead of working in football”

Across the region, female sports journalists have spoken up about the persistent sexual harassment by football fans, colleagues and bosses. Displays of this behaviour include: women being kissed and groped during on-air broadcasts, being sent abusive messages and even receiving rape threats online.

Xenophobia

Discrimination against foreigners is experienced by immigrants from several South American countries, including Peruvians, Paraguayans and Bolivians. Venezuelans have been targeted since their exodus, beginning around 2014. Ethnic characteristics and national origin are also the basis of xenophobic behaviour witnessed in the stadiums.

Country-specific discriminatory practices

Argentina

“Dale primate”

The word “primate” has the same meaning as in English and is used as a racist term to degrade Black players and compare them to monkeys.

Discriminatory practices towards Brazilians

The football rivalry between Argentina and Brazil is one of the fiercest in the game and it goes beyond the football pitch. Cultural rivalries have always been strongly accentuated between the two countries and are a legacy of European colonialism, identity and race relations within each country. There were two documented incidents of Argentine fans mocking Brazilians with monkey gestures during recent rounds of the Copa Libertadores.

Racist and xenophobic incidents are commonly witnessed when club or national teams of Argentina and Brazil meet each other.

These include monkey chants and gestures, racist slurs, the display of banana peels or gestures simulating the peeling of bananas, and are perpetrated by Argentinian fans.



Discriminatory expressions against Bolivians and Paraguayans

Discrimination against immigrants is one of the most common forms of discrimination in society, including in football stadiums, with Bolivians, Paraguayans, and Venezuelans the most common target groups.

Expressions including “bolis” or “bolitas” – roughly “small balls” in English – and “paraguas” – “umbrella” in English – are used to refer to the Bolivian and Paraguayan communities in a derogatory way.

During an Independiente v. Boca Juniors match, Argentinian fans threw “bolas de fraile” – a sweet similar to a doughnut – onto the pitch, and “paraguaitas” – umbrella-shaped sweets – in an ethnically charged act targeting the Bolivian and Paraguayan communities.

Chants include “...que son todos negros putos de Bolivia y Paraguay” or “son todos bolivianos, paraguayos, que solo sirven para botonear”, “boliviano, boliviano, a mi cancha no entrás”, which in English roughly translate as “they are all negro faggots from Bolivia and Paraguay”, “they are all Bolivians and Paraguayans and all they can do is squeal”, and “Bolivian, Bolivian, you will not enter my stadium”.

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

“Eeeehh puto!”

Eeeehh puto!” is a homophobic chant usually directed at the opposition goalkeeper when he is taking a goal kick. “Puto” refers to a male sex worker. The word is used as a homophobic slur equivalent to the English “faggot” and is discriminatory for LGBTQI+ people regardless of the sexual orientation of those it is directed at.

“A estos putos les tenemos que ganar”

“Putos” is the plural of “puto”. “A estos putos les tenemos que ganar” – roughly translated in English as “we have to beat these faggots/ we have to win over these faggots” – refers to the opposition in a homophobic and derogatory way.

Brazil

“Bambi”

The term “bambi”, which literally translates to “baby deer” in English, is used in football as a homophobic slur. It is mainly to target São Paulo fans.

“Macaco”

The word “macaco” – “monkey” in English – is a racially charged term and is used to compare Black players with monkeys.

Expressions with similar racist connotations witnessed in football include “Não comeu banana. Tá fraco.”, “Macaco volta para o circo”, “Macaco teu lugar é na selva” – which translates in English as “He did not eat his banana. He is weak”, “Monkey go back to the circus”, “Monkey go back to the jungle”.

“Viado/ Veado”

The direct translation of the word “viado” is “deer”, but in colloquial speech and in the football context, it is used as a homophobic insult – “faggot” – similarly to “bicha”.

“Bicha”

The word “bicha” – “faggot” – is a homophobic term that discriminates on the basis of sexual identity and is used to refer in a derogatory way to gay men.

“Preto”

The word “preto” has a similar connotation to “N-word” in English, using skin colour as a characteristic. The use of the word “preto” as racially charged terms depends on the context and the way it is used. In football it tends to be discriminatory, but may not be in other contexts.

Chile

“Conchetumadre”

“Conchetumadre” is an abbreviation of “concha de tu madre”, which in English translates to “cunt of your mother”. A misogynist term referring to an individual’s mother, and the person at whom it is directed.

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

“Puta”

The word “puta” – “whore” in English – is a sexist and misogynist term that refers to a woman as a “whore” in a despising and derogatory way, focusing on impugning the sexual integrity of women. The word is chanted on its own and as part of expressions such as “este no es un arquero, es una puta de cabaret” – “this is not a goalkeeper, it is a cabaret whore” in English – directed at goalkeepers.

“Culiao”

The term “culiao” refers to someone having anal sexual intercourse. The word is a homophobic slur referring to sexual intercourse between men.

“Poropopo el que no salte es _____ maricón”

The chant “poropopo poropopo el que no salte es _____ maricón”, translated as “poropopo poropopo the one that does not jump is a (insert nationality) faggot”, is chanted to mobilise Chilean fans into jumping and referring to the opposing team’s nationality using a homophobic slur.

Colombia

“Marica”

The word “marica” – “faggot” – has the same root as the word “maricón” and is a homophobic slur used towards gay men.

“Puta de cabaret”

The expression “puta de cabaret” – “cabaret whore” – is sexist and misogynist. It refers to a woman as a “whore” in a despising and derogatory way. The chant is “que lo vengan a ver, que lo vengan a ver, ese no es un arquero, es una puta de cabaret” – in English, “come see, come see, that is not a goalkeeper, it is a cabaret whore.”

Ecuador

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

“Poropopo poropopo el que no salte es _____ maricón”

The chant “poropopo poropopo el que no cante/salte es _____ maricón” – “poropopo poropopo the one that does not sing/jump is a (insert nationality) faggot” is homophobic, as the word “maricón” (In English, “faggot”) is a homophobic slur used towards gay men. It discriminates on the grounds of sexual orientation.

Paraguay

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

“Poropopo poropopo el que no salte es _____ maricón”

The chant “poropopo poropopo el que no cante/salte es _____ maricón” – “poropopo poropopo the one that does not sing/jump is a (insert nationality) faggot”. The word “maricón” (in English, “faggot”) is a homophobic slur used towards gay men. It discriminates on the grounds of sexual orientation.

“Eeeeeh puto!”

Eeeeeh puto!” is a homophobic chant usually directed at the opposition goalkeeper when he is taking a goal kick. “Puto” refers to a male sex worker. The word is used as a homophobic slur equivalent to the English “faggot” and is discriminatory for LGBTQI+ people regardless of the sexual orientation of those it is directed at.

Peru

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

“Poropopo, el que no cante/salte es un _____ maricón”

The chant “poropopo poropopo el que no cante/salte es _____ maricón” – “poropopo poropopo the one that does not sing/jump is a (insert nationality) faggot” is homophobic, as the word “maricón” (In English, “faggot”) is a homophobic slur used towards gay men. It discriminates on the grounds of sexual orientation.

Uruguay

“Maricón”

“Maricón” is a discriminatory reference to gay men.

“Poropopo, el que no cante/salte es un _____ maricón”

The chant “poropopo poropopo el que no cante/salte es _____ maricón” – “poropopo poropopo the one that does not sing/jump is a (insert nationality) faggot” is homophobic, as the word “maricón” (In English, “faggot”) is a homophobic slur used towards gay men. It discriminates on the grounds of sexual orientation.

Football confederations

Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)

Discriminatory practices displayed in European football include verbal and symbolic abuse of Black and ethnic minority players and fans, the display of far-right and neo-Nazi symbols, homophobic and sexist abuse. In addition, anti-Semitic and, more recently, Islamophobic and anti-refugee displays, have been on the rise throughout the region and in Central and Eastern Europe in particular.

Commonly displayed discriminatory practices

Practices, signs and symbols recorded on display at football matches in multiple countries in the region, uniformly or adapted slightly, include:

Anti-Roma chanting – “Gypsy” (“Tsigani”/“Cigani”)

Discriminatory practice commonly displayed especially in Central and Eastern Europe where fans chant “Gypsy” (“Tsigani”) towards players on the pitch or directed at the referee, attributing to them negative characteristics as part of the xenophobic stereotype about Roma people. Examples include when a referee is booking a player with a yellow/red card and or when players commit or suffer a foul.

Anti-Semitic chanting – “Jews/Jude”

Calling opponent team supporters “Jews” is commonly used by far-right groups in Europe as a means of causing offence. It reflects an anti-Semitic world view which inflicts xenophobic stereotypes about Jewish people onto fans of the opposing team. It is important to take the context of the expression into consideration when determining whether it is discriminatory, i.e. in the football context directed at the opposition, it should be regarded as discriminatory.

Hissing noises

As a form of anti-Semitic abuse, groups of fans may make a hissing noise to imitate the gas chambers of the Holocaust.

Monkey noises/gestures

A form of racist abuse against Black players when an individual or group of fans imitate monkey noises or gestures targeting Black players on the pitch.



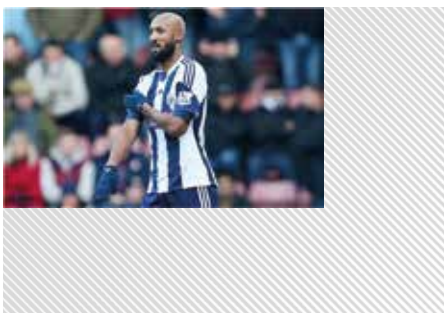
Nazi salute/Hitler salute

The gesture of extending the right arm from the chest or neck into the air with a straightened hand refers to a greeting used in Nazi Germany. The gesture may be accompanied by chanting “Sieg Heil” (in English: “Hail victory!”). Often used by far-right groups in football when the national anthem is performed before the match or generally throughout the game.



Quenelle gesture

The quenelle is an anti-Semitic gesture originating in France performed by pointing one arm diagonally downwards palm down, while touching the shoulder or elbow with the opposite hand. The gesture is often referred to as a “reverse Nazi salute”.



Offering a banana to a black or ethnic minority player

A racist practice comparing Black players to monkeys. Bananas or banana skin may be thrown onto the pitch towards a Black or ethnic minority player.



Anti-BLM (or anti-taking the knee) symbols

In recent years, we have witnessed anti-BLM banners and booing of players taking the knee in football and sport in general. Specifically, football far-right groups started to display banners with a crossed-out image of a person taking the knee in 2020. Such banners have also been combined with “White Lives Matter” banners (Page 2). There have also been banners that address players and urge them not to take the knee. Since 2020, the booing of players taking the knee has also been widely heard. The taking-the-knee gesture in sport was first used by the NFL player Colin Kaepernick in America in 2016 and has



been widely used by footballers worldwide since 2020. The display of anti-taking-the-knee banners and the booing and targeting of ethnic minority players performing a symbolic anti-racist gesture creates a non-welcoming atmosphere for Black and ethnic minority players and spectators and is widely seen as racist.

In the UEFA region, a number of far-right groups have established a presence amongst football fans and attempt to use football matches for propaganda and to project their discriminatory views.

Discriminatory messages may be displayed either directly through chanting, written messages on banners or coded with signs and symbols of far-right groups and movements.

Commonly displayed far-right signs and symbols

Swastika

The swastika was the official emblem of the National Socialist Party of Germany (NSDAP) and can be displayed on banners and clothing in a number of different ways. The original version of the swastika and altered versions of it incorporated into different banners may be seen inside football stadiums.

Some variations of the swastika deriving from pagan solar symbols were co-opted by neo-Nazis and are widely displayed inside stadiums (e.g. “Kolovrat” in Eastern Europe).



Celtic Cross

The Celtic Cross is a symbol used by neo-Nazis worldwide and denotes “the supremacy of the White race”.

It is one of the most widely used racist symbols. In football stadiums, it often appears on banners, signs, scarves or stickers.

It is often used as a replacement for the letter “O”.



Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

Racists and neo-Nazis may use different symbols of militant organisations in other countries, such as the Ku Klux Klan in the USA.

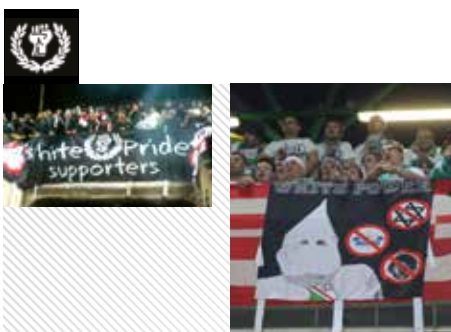
The KKK logo consists of a white cross within a red circle, and a drop of blood in the centre. Parts of the characteristic white KKK costume with pointed hoods are sometimes worn.



White Power/White Pride

The slogans “White Power” and “White Pride” are used as a term to denote the “supremacy of the white race”.

The right white fist is a symbol of the international racist white power movement.



Cogwheel

The cogwheel is used by some racist and neo-Nazi groups because it was the symbol of the “Deutsche Arbeitsfront”, a paramilitary institution during German National Socialism. The cogwheel can contain a number of different signs in its middle.

Variations of the cogwheel used in the emblems of some clubs should not be regarded as a far-right sign.



SS Adolf Hitler Division (LSSAH)

Symbols of a German Nazi SS Adolf Hitler Division can appear inside stadiums on banners or scarves.

This version of the shield is sometimes used in combination with club symbols or other far-right symbols instead of a key.



SS Division “Dirlewanger”

Emblem of a German Nazi SS Division active in World War II.

The symbol has appeared on banners of some far-right groups in Eastern Europe.



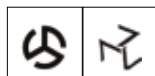
“Bergmann” Battalion

German Nazi battalion during World War II composed of Caucasian volunteers.



Triskele

The Triskele has an angular design, similar to the Swastika though only with three arms. It is also the symbol of the “Blood & Honour” movement and sometimes appears in a circular design.



Blood & Honour (B&H)

“Blood & Honour” (B&H) is an international network of neo-Nazi skinheads, founded by Skrewdriver frontman Ian Stuart Donaldson. Sections of B&H can be found in almost all European countries. “Blood & Honour” was the slogan engraved on the knives of the “Hitler Youth”. B&H uses the Triskele as one of their main symbols. Banners fashioned in a similar design to the B&H logo have been seen in stadiums across Europe.



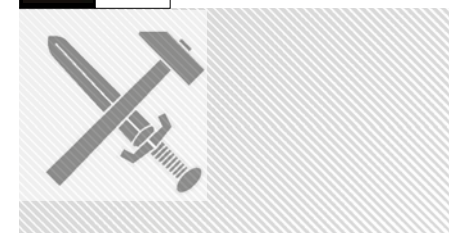
Misanthropic Division

International paramilitary neo-Nazi network originating in Eastern Europe, now with an international presence.



Hammer & Sword

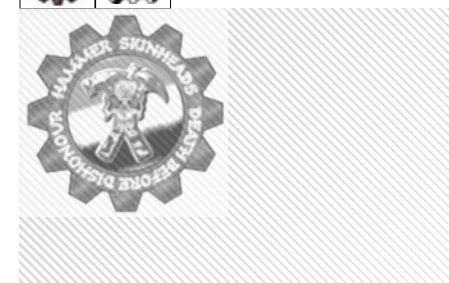
The crossed Hammer & Sword was a symbol of the “national community” of soldiers and workers used by the German Hitler Youth.



Hammerskins

Hammerskins is a paramilitary network of neo-Nazi skinheads operating in many countries. Their symbol consists of two crossed hammers which represents the “White working man”.

Sometimes crossed hammers feature in the emblems of clubs and do not have far-right connotations.



SS-Totenkopf Skull

The SS-Totenkopf skull was a symbol of special SS groups during World War II ("SS Totenkopfverbände") and was later used by groups such as Combat 18, an international neo-Nazi terrorist organisation.

The SS skull is one of the most commonly displayed neo-Nazi symbols and is often seen on banners, clothing and stickers.



Reichskriegsflagge (War flag of the German Empire)

The war flag of the German Empire, used from 1867-1921, symbolises a desire to return to pre-democratic times.

Football fans often replace the original colours with the colours of their club. The club's badge sometimes replaces the eagle in the centre of the flag.



Reichskriegsflagge (War flag of Germany under National-Socialism)

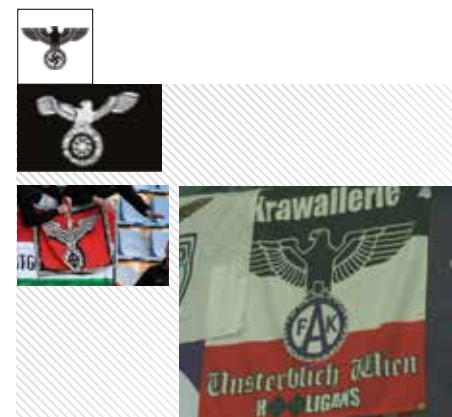
War flags used by the German army during National Socialism between 1933 and 1945.



Reichsadler (Eagle of the Nazis)

The "Reichsadler" was an emblem used in Nazi Germany between 1935 and 1945 and was often combined with a swastika or other symbol in the circle to symbolise different divisions and groups. Nowadays the swastika is often replaced by a Celtic Cross or similar symbol.

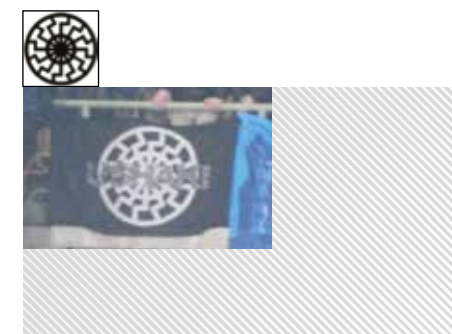
Football fans also use the former "Reichsadler" emblem in combination with their football club badge.



Black Sun

The Black Sun represents a swastika with twelve arms or a wheel made of twelve Sig-runes.

It was used by the SS ("Schutzstaffel", the security squadron of the Nazis) as a Nordic pagan symbol of religion and is often used as an alternative to the swastika.



SA Badge

The badge of the SA ("Sturmabteilung"), a paramilitary wing of the Nazi party NSDAP, represents a combination of the Sig-rune and the letter "A".



References to “Aryan” heritage or “white only”

Messages grounded on belief of the superiority of the “White race” are displayed widely among far-right groups on their banners.

Often they are combined with a Confederate flag.



Confederate flag

Although the flag is used in a variety of contexts outside the stadiums, it has been appropriated by far-right football fans and is often displayed to convey racist messages.



Good Night Left Side

This symbol openly promotes neo-Nazi violence against imagined political opponents. The image in the middle varies but it always portrays a scene of violence.



Runes

Old Nordic/Germanic symbols co-opted and widely used by the German National Socialists. Many of them are still being used by neo-Nazis and racists.

The main difference between the rune system and most other alphabets is that every letter (or rune) has got an established symbolic meaning.

Sig-Rune/SS-Emblem

Along with the SS “Totenkopf” skull, the two Sig-runes became the emblem of the Nazi German “Waffen-SS” (“security squadron”). A single Sig-rune was used as an emblem of the “Hitler Youth”.

Many far-right football fans use Sig-runes on their banners or in graffiti instead of the letter “S”.



Wolfsangel/Gibor-rune

The sign was used in Nazi Germany as a symbol of various detachments, including SS Division Das Reich and “Werwolf” plan.

The rune is extensively used by neo-Nazi football fans throughout Europe.



Tiwaz/Tyr-rune

The Tyr-rune was used as a badge of the “Sturmabteilung” (SA) training schools, the “Reichsführerschulen” in Nazi Germany. It was also used amongst “Hitler Youth” and the SS.

It appears mostly on banners in stadiums.



Odal-rune

The Odal-rune is a symbol of “Blood and Soil”. In Nazi Germany it was used as an emblem of the “Hitler Youth”. After World War II, it was used by neo-Nazi youth organisation “Wiking Youth” which is banned in Germany.

It appears on banners in stadiums.



Life-rune/Man-rune

This symbol stands for the “life power of the nation” and symbolises a human being who is stretching his arms to the Gods (signifying life, creation, birth, rebirth and renewal). The Life or Man-rune is a universal symbol of nationalist movements and used by various neo-Nazi organisations and sometimes appears on banners in stadiums.



Death-rune/Yr-rune

This is the opposite of the Life or Man-rune. The Death-rune was used on “Waffen-SS” graves along with the Life-rune and by various neo-Nazi organisations.

It is often used by the far-right groups inside stadiums to commemorate life and death of neo-Nazis or NSDAP members, as in the example of Rudolf Hess in the photo.



Letter and number codes

In many countries, certain neo-Nazi organisations are forbidden and symbols of far-right extremists are prohibited from being displayed publicly. To circumvent these bans, far-right extremist groups and individuals use codes to convey their messages and escape legal punishment.

This mechanism can very often be seen within football stadiums where fans wear t-shirts or display banners printed with such codes. The numbers often stand for the corresponding letters in the alphabet.

Below are examples of codes often used by racists and neo-Nazis.

14

14 is the code for the notorious “14 words” by American neo-Nazi David Lane (“We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children”). The “14 words” are one of the main phrases of today’s neo-Nazi ideology. It is often combined on banners with 88, i.e. 14/88.



18 (and Combat 18)

18 stands for the first and eighth letter of the alphabet = AH = Adolf Hitler. It can be found in the name of the international neo-Nazi network Combat 18.

It appears on banners, stickers or clothing.



28

28 is the code for the Nazi-skinhead network, “Blood and Honour”.



88

88 stands for the greeting “Heil Hitler”. It is often printed on football fan shirts or used as part of the name of neo-Nazi supporter groups.



Ziga-Zaga

Allegedly deriving from the British Jamaican music scene, the slogan was co-opted by neo-Nazis and is used to substitute “Sieg Heil”, a greeting that is prohibited in many countries. Often the chant is accompanied by a Nazi salute.



100%

Refers to the White supremacists’ belief in “pure” Aryan or “White” roots.



“Meine Ehre heißt Treue” (My honour is loyalty)

A slogan used by the Nazi SS forces during World War II.

It is often translated by neo-Nazis into other languages and used on banners or clothing.



“Gott mit uns”

This slogan was engraved on belt buckles of the German Wehrmacht soldiers during World War II.



B&H

Is the abbreviation of “Blood and Honour”.

NS

Abbreviation of National Socialism or National Socialist.

WPWW

“White Pride World Wide” greeting used by white supremacists

RaHoWa

The abbreviation is used by neo-Nazis to call for a “Racial Holy War” of the “White race” against ethnic minorities and Jews that would lead to “Aryan rule” over the world.

White Lives Matter/WLM

While semantically the phrase “White lives matter” does not directly imply discrimination, it has been used predominantly by extremist groups in football since 2020. It is often displayed together with other hate symbols and has become one of the new symbols of neo-Nazis targeting Black and minority players.

HH

Abbreviation of “Heil Hitler”.

WP or WPSH

Abbreviation of “White Power” and “White Power Skinhead”.

ZOG

“Zionist Occupational Government” refers to the conspiracy theory and belief of some neo-Nazis that Jews would occupy and control the state power in their country.



Clothing brands and prints

There are numerous neo-Nazi clothing brands and clothes with racist slogans and signs printed on them. The following examples are brands and prints which are predominantly sold through right-wing networks. All brands and labels in this chapter have been seen being worn by supporters in football stadiums.

Thor Steinar

A clothing brand initially with a logo which combines Wolfs-rod and Tyr-rune.

The company had to alter their logo after it was banned in several countries. The brand remains well connected to the far-right scene and is very popular among neo-Nazis.



Erik & Sons

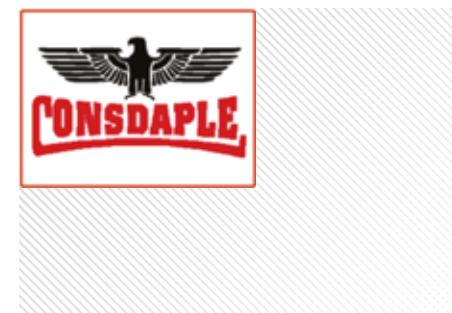
A German clothing brand using Nordic-Germanic mythology and popular with the far-right and neo-Nazis in Europe.



Consdaple

The clothing brand CONSDAPLE is popular among racists and neo-Nazis as it contains the initials of the National Socialist Party of Germany (NSDAP). The word itself is derived from “constable”.

The font resembles the logo of the clothing brand LONSDALE, which explicitly objects to any far-right or racist ideas.



Masterrace Europe

Clothes with the label “Masterrace” are sold all over Europe.



Hatecrime and HC Streetwear

“Hatecrime” is a US neo-Nazi clothing brand sold in Europe.

In the English language, a hate crime is defined as “a criminal offence committed against a person, property or society, which is motivated, fully or partly, by race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or ethnicity/ national origin”.

Don’t confuse with “Hatebreed”, a non-discriminatory US music band which uses a similar design.



Werwolf (Werewolf)

A German neo-Nazi clothing brand.



Walhall

Walhall is a myth of a pagan Viking religion where the God Odin sends fallen Nordic/ Germanic “Aryan warriors” to. Racists and neo-Nazis use this pagan symbol to show their hate for the “ruling” Christian religion. The clothing brand is popular among neo-Nazis.



Skrewdriver

Skrewdriver (written with a “k” instead of a “c”) was a notorious neo-Nazi music band.

There are hundreds of such racist bands across Europe, whose t-shirts are widely worn. Another notorious example of neo-Nazi music band is “Landser”.



ZetaZeroAlfa

Official music band of the Italian fascist organisation “CasaPound”.

It is connected to some ultra groups in Italy and popular amongst far-right football fans in several European countries.



Beloyar (Белояр)

A clothing brand distributed in neo-Nazi networks, mainly in Eastern Europe, using Nazi symbolism in their designs.



Svastone

The Ukrainian neo-Nazi sportswear brand employs a variation of the swastika as a logo and produces clothes with far-right insignia, especially aiming at football fans.

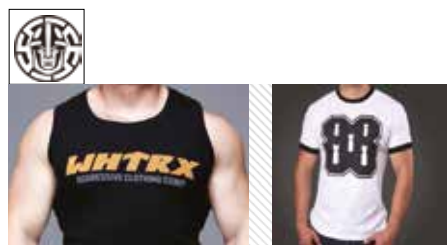
It is distributed through neo-Nazi networks, mainly in Eastern Europe.



White Rex

A Russian neo-Nazi sportswear brand reaching a wider audience through supporting sporting events to promote far-right ideas.

One product is a t-shirt with an “88” logo designed as falling bombs.



Otadzina (Отачбина)

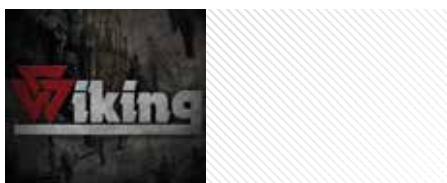
A Serbian clothing brand employing neo-Nazi imagery and distributed through far-right networks.

The brand is popular amongst some football fans in Serbia and Russia.



Wiking

A clothing brand affiliated with the international neo-Nazi network “Misanthropic Division”.



Country-specific symbols

Whilst many discriminatory signs and symbols are deployed universally by racists and neo-Nazis across the world, others are more specific and prevalent in particular countries. They often relate to the respective countries’ nationalistic movements, historical events, far-right political parties or glorifying their “leaders” and “criminal masterminds”.

All emblems and symbols in this chapter have been observed in football stadiums on flags, banners and sew-on patches, though occasionally as prints on clothing.

Bulgarian symbols

Bulgarian National Union (Български национален съюз)

A right-wing extremist organisation allegedly responsible for attacks on ethnic and other minorities in Bulgaria.

It enjoys the support of a section of far-right football fans in Bulgaria, together with a similar group, the Bulgarian Defence League



Bulgarian Nationalist Party (Националистическа партия на България (НПБ))

A far-right party formed by several extremist and neo-Nazi groups.

It is allegedly responsible for multiple physical attacks on ethnic minorities in Bulgaria.



Bulgarian National Resistance (Национална съпротива България)

An informal right-wing extremist movement popular amongst some football fans in Bulgaria.



Croatian symbols

Ustasha/Ustaše

The Ustaše (also known as “Ustashas” or “Ustashi”) was a Croatian fascist movement.

It was involved in terrorist activities before World War II and ruled a part of Yugoslavia, protected by the Nazis.



“Za Dom – Spremni” (“For the Homeland – Ready”)

A salute used by the Ustaše as an equivalent of the Nazi salute “Heil Hitler”.

May be printed on clothes or chanted by far-right fans inside the stadiums.



Srbe na vrbe!

In English, “Serbs on the willows” – a slogan inciting hate against Serbs used by the far right in Croatia and other former Yugoslav states.

English abbreviations

National Front

The National Front is a British far-right party.



British National Party (BNP)

The British National Party is a far-right political party in the United Kingdom.



English Defence League (EDL)

British far-right Islamophobic movement extensively recruiting among football fans. The formation of the EDL in the UK was followed by similar organisations in other countries.



German abbreviations

NSU

The National Socialist Underground (“Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund”), was a German neo-Nazi terrorist group uncovered in 2011. The group committed multiple racially motivated murders and terrorist crimes.

The group does not have a logo, though banners in honour of it have been on display in stadiums.

German symbols

NPD

The National Democratic Party of Germany (“Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands”) is a German far-right political party.



German Defence League

A far-right Islamophobic group popular amongst some football fans in Germany.



Die Identitären

An Islamophobic, pan-European far-right movement increasingly popular amongst some football fans in Germany.



PEGIDA

An Islamophobic political movement popular amongst football hooligans in Germany.



Greek symbols

Chrysí Avgí (Χρυσή Αυγή, Golden Dawn)

“Golden Dawn” is a Greek far-right political party closely affiliated to neo-Nazi groups and associated with attacks on migrants and visible minorities. In 2013, the leadership of the party was arrested and charged with forming a criminal organisation. After the arrests, far-right fan groups performed a series of solidarity activities in favour of “Golden Dawn” members during matches across Europe.



Hungarian symbols

“Greater Hungary” map

A revisionist concept to restore the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom to pre-World War I borders.

It is currently used by a minority of far-right groups and often displayed inside stadiums.



Arrow Cross Movement

Hungarian fascist movement, which governed Hungary in 1944-45.



Israeli symbols

Kach/Kahane Chai

An Israeli far-right party banned as a terrorist organisation and for promoting racism in Israel and several other countries worldwide.

Their flag has also been seen during away matches in Europe.



Lehava

An Israeli far-right organisation promoting religious segregation.



Italian symbols

Tricolour Flame

The Tricolour Flame Social Movement or Tricolour Flame ("Movimento Sociale Fiamma Tricolore" or "MS-FT") is an Italian neo-fascist party.



Forza Nuova (FN)

The FN is an Italian nationalist and neo-fascist movement connected to some Italian ultras groups.



Symbols of Italian fascism

Fascio flags of the Italian Social Republic and portraits of Benito Mussolini can be found on display across stadiums in Europe.



CasaPound

An Italian fascist organisation which increasingly attracts young people.

This symbol has also become popular outside Italy, and has been seen displayed at stadiums in other countries.



Polish abbreviations

NOP

Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski” – “National Rebirth of Poland” – a well-known racist extremist organisation.

ONR

“Oboz Narodowo-Radykalny” (“National Radical Camp”), an extreme-nationalist organisation which was forbidden before World War II but is currently active again, also in parts of the UK.

Polish symbols

Falanga or “Hand and Sword”

“Hand and Sword” was the symbol of ONR “Falanga”, a fascist organisation which existed before World War II. Nowadays, it is used by “National Rebirth of Poland” (“Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski”), a racist extremist organisation.



Mieczyk Chrobrego (Chrobry Sword) or Szczerbiec

A symbol of the extreme-nationalist “Camp of Greater Poland” (“Oboz Wielkiej Polski” – OWP), an organisation banned before World War II.



Toporzel

The symbol of the fascist and neo-pagan organisation “Zadruga” which is used by several nationalist neo-pagan organisations.



Romanian symbols

Iron Guard (Garda de fier)

The Iron Guard was a Romanian fascist movement and party active before and at the beginning of World War II.

Portraits of its founder, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, may be seen displayed inside the stadiums.



Noua Dreapta

A Romanian far-right political party, also active in Moldova.



Russian symbols

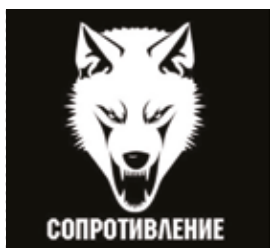
Slavic Union (Славянский Союз)

A neo-Nazi paramilitary organisation. It was judged as extremist in Russia and consequently banned in 2010.



Soprotivlenie (“Сопротивление”)

A far-right youth movement popular amongst football fans.



Russian National Unity (Русское Национальное Единство, РНЕ)

A paramilitary neo-Nazi organisation active in Russia since the 1990s.



Wotan Jugend

Until recently, one of the largest neo-Nazi networks and information platforms in Russia.

It distributes propaganda under the slogan “Hammer of National Socialism”.



Serbian symbols

“Nož, žica, Srebrenica”/
“Нож, жица, Сребреница”
 (In English: “Knife, Barbed Wire, Srebrenica”)

(In English: “Knife, Barbed Wire, Srebrenica”). This slogan is commonly used by Serbian far-right groups glorifying the genocidal killing of Bosnian Muslims by the Bosnian Serb army in 1995 in Srebrenica.

Often accompanied by portraits of Bosnian Serb military commander Ratko Mladić (Ратко Младић) and Radovan Karadžić (Радован Караџић) – convicted war criminals responsible for Srebrenica massacre and crimes against humanity.



Chetniks/ Četnici/ Четници

Serbian paramilitary nationalist movement active in the World War II and re-emerging during the Yugoslav wars that was engaged in ethnic cleansing. The original flag with the skull reads “For king and fatherland, freedom or death”, modern variations include “S verom u boga, sloboda ili smrt” (in English: “With faith in God, freedom or death”).

Portraits of Chetnik leaders such as Dragoljub Mihailovic were witnessed on display in Serbia.



Spanish symbols

Alianza Nacional

The “Alianza Nacional” (AN) was founded in 2005 and is a national socialist party in Spain.



Blue Division/Division Azul/250

The “Division Azul” was a unit of Spanish volunteers which served in the armed forces of Nazi Germany at the Eastern front during World War II.



Falange

A symbol associated with several fascist organisations which originated in the 1930s in Spain and are still active today.



Flag of Francoist Spain (1939-1975)

The official flag of Spain under the Franco dictatorship.

The flag has been seen displayed inside stadiums in Spain.



Ukrainian symbols

Flag of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (Організація українських націоналістів)

The flag of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, active during World War II, is currently being used by some far-right and nationalist political organisations in Ukraine.

On its own it can be regarded as a sign of far-right presence in the stadium. It can be an indicator for, and is often found in combination with, other discriminatory symbols.

It is specifically offensive during games against Polish teams.



Waffen SS Galizien (дивізія Ваффен СС "Галичина")

The symbol of the Nazi SS Volunteer Division "Galizien" operating in Ukraine during World War II.

The symbol, when featuring a lion on a blue background without the three crowns, is often used in Ukraine and does not bear discriminatory connotations.



Portraits of Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych

Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych were leaders of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists.



Wolfsangel

This symbol was used by the Nazis during World War II. It was the emblem of SS Panzer Division "Das Reich". In Ukraine it is often interpreted as the "Idea of a Nation" ("Ідея нації") and used in the emblems of various far-right organisations.



Other discriminatory banners and imagery

References to Nazi concentration camps

Many far-right football supporters use references to the concentration camp Auschwitz and the Holocaust as a means of causing offence.

The anti-Semitic banner on the top-left means "Auschwitz is your home country and the ovens are your homes". It refers to the ovens that the Nazis used to burn gassed Jews. Banners like this are often accompanied by hissing noises mimicking the sound of the gas chambers.

Such banners have recently re-emerged with references to refugees.



References to Adolf Hitler and less common neo-Nazi codes

Far-right groups tend to invent more subtle references to the Nazi ideology to circumvent bans and avoid sanctions.

The top photo depicts Adolf Hitler during World War I.

The text on the banner in the lower picture reads: "If 36:2 [=18=A.H.=Adolf Hitler] was alive, your team would not exist"

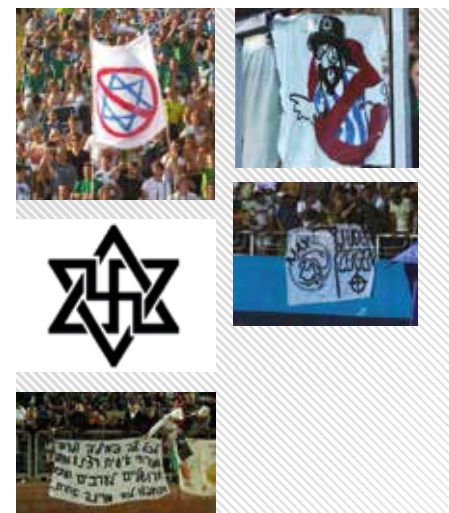


Anti-Semitic banners

Many far-right groups display anti-Semitic signs and flags. For example, a caricature of a Jewish man, wearing a hat with a Star of David on it, which has a cross through the middle of it (left photo).

Similarly, the slogan "Juden Zeigen" with gallows and a Celtic cross.

Anti-Semitic abuse may take various forms like banners or chanting "Kill the Jews". Some forms of anti-Israel messages can also be anti-Semitic i.e. mixing the Star of David with a swastika.



Islamophobic displays

Islamophobic abuse may take various forms, from offensive chants to banners. In the photo, a neo-Nazi code “88” is styled as bombs falling on a mosque.

Other examples are crossed-out mosques or other symbols associated with Islam.

Various Islamophobic banners have recently been displayed inside stadiums across Europe with references to refugees portraying all refugees as terrorists.

Islamophobic hate symbols are often accompanied by text banners reading “Stop the Islamisation of Europe” or “Europe Awake”.



Other forms of xenophobia and prejudice

Derogative and xenophobic displays such as “Rapefugees” make generalisations and promote xenophobic stereotypes.



Glorification of racist murders or terrorists

Far-right groups might also communicate their message inside the stadiums by expressing support for convicted racist murderers and terrorists.

The example on the left shows a banner in support of Janusz Waluś, a Polish-born racist murderer of one of the leaders of the African National Congress in South Africa.



References to Jihad

The banner in the photo to the left reads “Jihad”. In the context of football it often has anti-Semitic connotations when being used to refer to the violent fight against Jews.



Homophobia

The use of terms such as “poof” and “fag” on banners and flags is homophobic.

The word “gay” is not homophobic but must be interpreted as abusive when used in a pejorative sense against opponents, as in the photo on the left.

This sign is often used by far-right groups in Poland and other Eastern European countries to express their homophobic mindset.



Abuse of disabled people

This sign has been seen on stickers or sew-on patches as a form of abuse against people with disabilities.



Sexism

A number of displays use images that are sexist and degrade women, such as the image to the left, portraying women as sexual objects.



As with far-right flags and signs, abusive slogans might appear in combination to cause maximum offence.



The image to the right is both homophobic and offensive to women.

Risk of confusion

Some signs and symbols bear a close resemblance with certain discriminatory signs and symbols. It is important to distinguish between them to avoid incorrect conclusions.

The below sections contrast the most commonly confused symbols.

Skull and crossbones/ Jolly Roger



A number of symbols featuring a skull and crossbones underneath or behind the skull are used in a variety of contexts and don't bear any discriminatory connotations.



NOT TO CONFUSE WITH DISCRIMINATORY SYMBOL:



SS Totenkopf

The SS Totenkopf symbol features a skull with crossbones behind it. The skull is inclined to its right.



Fist symbols



Many variations of fist symbols can be found on banners displayed by football fans, the majority of which do not bear discriminatory connotations.



NOT TO CONFUSE WITH DISCRIMINATORY SYMBOL:



The racist White Power symbol

The symbol of the White supremacist "White Power" movement features a right arm's white fist, in most cases in white on a black background and has additional references to "whiteness".



This guide has been put together with the help and support of many experts.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed.

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