



Monitoring discrimination and racism in sport

The case of Italy



edited by





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By



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1. Introduction

This report presents the results of a qualitative study that aimed to analyze the official and unofficial, formal and informal systems of monitoring discrimination and racism in the world of sports experienced in Italy.

The report is divided into three sections.

The introductory section briefly reviews the evolution of racism in Italy, presents some available official data on the phenomenon, reconstructs the main trends in the public debate on the subject, and, in the final part, proposes an in-depth look at the forms of discrimination and racism that run through the world of sports.

The second section presents the main results of the qualitative analysis conducted by carrying out twenty interviews with key stakeholders selected among sports operators and managers, journalists, researchers, and anti-discrimination service providers. The main objective of the analysis is to gather data and information useful to identify strengths and weaknesses of the experiences that are present in Italy in monitoring, preventing, and mitigating discrimination and racist violence in the world of sports.

The third and final section presents a summary of the study results.

1.1 *The socio-political context*

Racism in Italy has deep historical, cultural and religious roots: Italian history has been traversed by forms of anti-Semitism and anti-Gypsyism at least since the 1500s. Cesare Lombroso was one of the main exponents of the tradition of thought that postulated the existence of a connection between the physical and psychic aspects of human beings and, on the basis of these, he built a system of hierarchy and the legitimization of differences between human groups considered "natural". Anti-Slavism inspired Italian irredentism in the late 1800s just as Italian colonialism in Africa at the turn of the 19th and early 20th centuries was based on the idea of "civilizing backward and inferior populations." The fascist regime passed the Racial Laws in 1938, while (internal) anti-Southern racism continued to divide Italy until the mid-20th century.¹ Italy's transformation from a country of emigration to a country of immigration (officially traced back to 1974, when the number of foreign immigrants in Italy exceeded the number of Italian emigrants abroad for the first time) marked a turning point by establishing a close connection between new forms of xenophobia and racism and the evolution of the migration phenomenon. Since the 1980s, racist discrimination and violence have mainly affected migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees from third countries. Since then, racism has been accompanied by Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and anti-Gypsyism², but it is mainly the relations with migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees that have hegemonized and polarized the public debate, inspired the creation of a form of "special law" governing the legal

¹ See: Alberto Burgio, Gianluca Gabrielli, *Il razzismo*, Ediesse, 2012

² For an in-depth look on the evolution of racism in Italy see Rivera A. (in collaboration with Andrisani P.), *Estranei e nemici. Discriminazione e violenza razzista in Italia*, (*Strangers and Enemies. Racist discrimination and violence in Italy*,) DeriveApprodi, 2003; Rivera A., *La guerra dei simboli. Veli postcoloniali e retoriche sull'alterità*, (*Symbol warfare. Postcolonial veils and rhetorics on otherness*), Dedalo, 2005; Rivera A., *Regole e roghi. Metamorfosi del razzismo* (*Rules and burnings. Metamorphosis of racism*), Dedalo, 2009 and the White Books on racism in Italy published by Lunaria between 2009 and 2020 and available here: <http://www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org/il-rapporto-sul-razzismo/>

status of foreign nationals from third countries³ in Italy, and the spread of verbal and physical violence motivated by a discriminatory motive.

Some of the most serious cases of racism carried out in the last two decades⁴ include the arson attack on the Ponticelli Roma camp on May 14, 2008; the murder of Abdul Guibre in Milan on August 24, 2008 and the beating by some traffic policemen of Emmanuel Bonsu in Parma on September 29 of the same year; the arson attack on Navtej Singh in Nettuno station on February 2, 2009; the gunfire unleashed against foreign laborers in Rosarno in 2010, 2015 and 2018; the burning of the Roma settlement at Continassa in Turin and the racist massacre in which five Senegalese citizens died in Florence in December 2011; the storms of sexist and racist insults directed against former Afro-descendant minister Cecile Kyenge and former President of the Chamber of Deputies Laura Boldrini in 2013 and beyond. Romaphobia and Islamophobia entered the campaign for the municipal elections in Milan (2011) in the form of election slogans conveyed through posters and public speeches. On July 4, 2016, a Nigerian asylum seeker, Emmanuel Chidi Nnadi, was killed on the street in Fermo during an argument that followed the utterance of racist slurs. Territorial demonstrations for the closure of reception centers for asylum seekers and refugees were organized in Gorino in 2016, as in Tor Sapienza (2014), Casal Bruciato, and Torre Maura (2019, in Rome).

Since 2017, the criminalization of any form of solidarity with migrants has become increasingly explicit. In 2018, on February 3, a far-right exponent attempted a massacre in Macerata, Italy, injuring eight African citizens in the street; on June 2, laborer Soumaila Sako was shot dead in San Ferdinando, Reggio Calabria.

In 2019, the pandemic crisis has resurfaced already well-known forms of verbal and physical violence related to the health emergency directed against citizens of Asian descent and local protests against the reception of migrants arriving by sea.

Among the many forms of institutional racism, the violations of rights (and unfortunately also the deaths) of migrants "held" in detention centers stand out, as in the case of Moussa Balde, who was first attacked and beaten to a pulp by three men in the streets of Ventimiglia, then transported to the Turin CPR (repatriation stay center) in an isolation area, where he later committed suicide on May 25, 2021. Numerous anti-discrimination appeals have been brought and often won by the national association ASGI (Association for Legal Studies on Immigration) against discriminatory municipal resolutions, regional laws, and public tenders.⁵

Prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination still persist even in the world of culture, entertainment and sports: from the revival of blackface in entertainment broadcasts on public TV, to the still limited presence of foreign-born journalists in mainstream media editorial offices, to the multiple manifestations of racism directed against foreign and foreign-born sports figures that we will discuss later.

³ See Caputo A., "Immigrazione e politiche del diritto dal testo unico del 1998 ai recenti interventi sulla sicurezza" ("Immigration and the politics of law from the 1998 Consolidated Act to recent security interventions"), Naletto G. (a cura di), in *Rapporto sul razzismo in Italia (Report on racism in Italy)*, manifestolibri 2009.

⁴ More than 8 thousand incidents of xenophobic and racist discrimination and violence are documented on the website: <https://www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org/il-razzismo-quotidiano/>

⁵ For further details see www.asgi.it

The myth of "Italians are good people" is thus not only a false narrative, but also a device of removal that has long allowed the structural character of racism in Italy to be disregarded and ignored, starting with the erasure of the memory of the atrocities committed under the fascist regime and throughout the short history of Italian colonialism. On the contrary, particularly from 2008 onward, after the onset of the global economic-financial crisis, a process of social, cultural and often even institutional legitimization of xenophobia and racism has favored its trivialization, normalization and, in some phases, even its explicit display and vindication.⁶

To date, the analysis of such a complex, multifaceted and widespread phenomenon cannot rest on the systematic collection of statistical and administrative data.

As noted by Ecri (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance) in its latest Report on Italy, Italy does not yet have a coordinated, official and transparent national data collection system on discrimination, crime and hate speech (ECRI, 2016).⁷

Official data on discrimination and racism, made available by Unar (National Office Against "Racial" Discrimination), Oscad (Observatory for Security Against Discriminatory Acts), the SDI (the database of the Judicial Police Investigation System), the Ministry of Justice and ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics), differ in their purposes, the survey methodologies adopted, the heterogeneity of the field of observation and the classification systems used. On the other hand, the last official statistical survey conducted by the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), specifically aimed at investigating the prevalence of discrimination in the country, dates back to 2011/2012⁸; the results of a new survey conducted on data from 2022, are still awaiting publication.

Leaving aside the gaps and deficiencies that characterize official survey and monitoring systems,

it is worth remembering that by definition 'measuring' the extent of racist discrimination and violence is particularly difficult because they remain largely invisible. The causes of the so-called 'under-reporting' are primarily identifiable in the victims' reluctance to report, due to: the fear of retaliation by the aggressors; the lack of a territorially articulated national system to guarantee the victims of these crimes adequate legal, social and psychological protection; the poor knowledge of their rights and the mistrust or fear of the police on the part of racialized people. Then there are definitely contextual elements that certainly do not favor the denunciation and emergence of discrimination and racist crimes: a cultural, social and political climate that is hostile towards migrants and refugees and racialized communities, first and foremost the Roma minorities; the lack of specific training that still characterizes a large part of law enforcement officers and protection bodies; the fragmentation of prevention, monitoring and protection interventions, which even at local level reveals an insufficient effort to plan and network institutional subjects, civil society organizations and associations representing racialised groups.

⁶ Rivera A, 2009, cit.

⁷ The Report is available here: <https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Italy/ITA-CbC-V-2016-019-ITA.pdf>

⁸See: House of Representatives, Joe Cox Commission on Intolerance, Xenophobia, Racism and Hate Phenomena, *Final Report*, available here: https://www.camera.it/application/xmanager/projects/leg17/attachments/uploadfile_commissione_intolleranza/files/000/000/001/RELAZIONE_FINALE.pdf

The data we show below should therefore be considered with great caution and with the awareness that they provide a partial picture, moreover based on administrative data, of a phenomenon that is certainly broader.

One of the official reference sources on discrimination is offered by UNAR (National Anti-Racial Discrimination Office).⁹ Data on relevant reports received by the office for the years 2018-2022 show an irregular trend that can be attributed to the pandemic crisis. Relevant cases processed by the office amounted to 2,305 in 2018, dropped to 918 in 2020 and then rose again to 2,840 in 2022. Over the five-year period, the incidence of discrimination cases handled in sports increased from 4.1 % in 2018 to 7.5 % in 2022.

**Relevant cases related to the sports sector out of the total number of discrimination cases
Years 2018-2022 - Absolute values and percentage incidence on the total number of cases
collected by the contact center**

Area	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	VA	%	VA	%	VA	%	VA	%	VA	%
Sport	94	4,10%	88	6,00%	29	3,20%	85	5,80%	213	7,50%
Total cases	2.305	-	1.477	-	913	-	1.460	-	2.840	-
(Alli grounds)										

*Source: Unar Contact Center*¹⁰

As it happens for the whole of the cases dealt with, the most recurrent motive of the cases of discrimination in sports turns out to be the "ethnic-racial" one during the period under consideration.

⁹ The office, established in 2003 by Legislative Decree 215/2003, which transposed Directive 2000/43/EC into Italian law, is located in the Department of Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council, and is tasked with guaranteeing the right to equal treatment and combating discrimination by collecting reports, providing assistance to victims, conducting research and analysis, promoting awareness-raising activities, and reporting to the government and parliament. See: <https://www.unar.it/portale/web/guest/che-cos-e-unar>

¹⁰ The data shown were provided upon request by the Office to the research team. The data were extracted from UNAR's Case Management platform and refer to reports received through the different channels (toll-free number 800 901010, e-mail, unar.it website, press monitoring and research carried out by the expert) and deemed relevant to the Office by the Contact Center operators.

Relevant cases related to the field of sports by ground - Years 2018-2022
Absolute values and percentages

GROUND/SOTTOGROUND	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	VA	%	VA	%	VA	%	VA	%	VA	%
"Ethnic racial"	88	93,6%	83	94,3%	27	93,1%	63	74,1%	137	64,3%
Religion or personal beliefs	4	4,3%	1	1,1%	1	3,4%	8	9,4%	19	8,9%
Disability	1	1,1%	3	3,4%	-	-	2	2,4%	14	6,6%
Sexual orientation and gender identity	-	-	1	1,1%	1	3,4%	6	7,1%	7	3,3%
Age	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0,5%
Elderly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0,5%
Multiple	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,2%	2	0,9%
Other	1	1,1%	-	-	-	-	5	5,9%	33	15,5%
Total	94	100%	88	100%	29	100%	85	100%	213	100%

Source: Unar Contact Center

Skin color and foreign status are the specific motives most often behind "ethnic-racial" discrimination dealt with in sports.

Relevant cases related to the field of sports by "ethnic-racial" ground and subground
Years 2018-2022 - Absolute values and percentages

GROUND/SOTTOGROUND	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	VA	%	VA	%	VA	%	VA	%	VA	%
"Ethnic racial"	88	93,6%	83	94,3%	27	93,1%	63	74,1%	137	64,3%
Skin color	49	52,1%	47	53,4%	14	48,3%	41	48,2%	65	30,5%
Foreigner	34	36,2%	31	35,2%	12	41,4%	20	23,5%	62	29,1%
Roma sinti and caminanti	4	4,3%	3	3,4%	1	3,4%	2	2,4%	7	3,3%
Somatic features	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1,4%
Refugees and international protection seekers	1	1,1%	1	1,1%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Multiple	-	-	1	1,1%	-	-	-	-	-	-

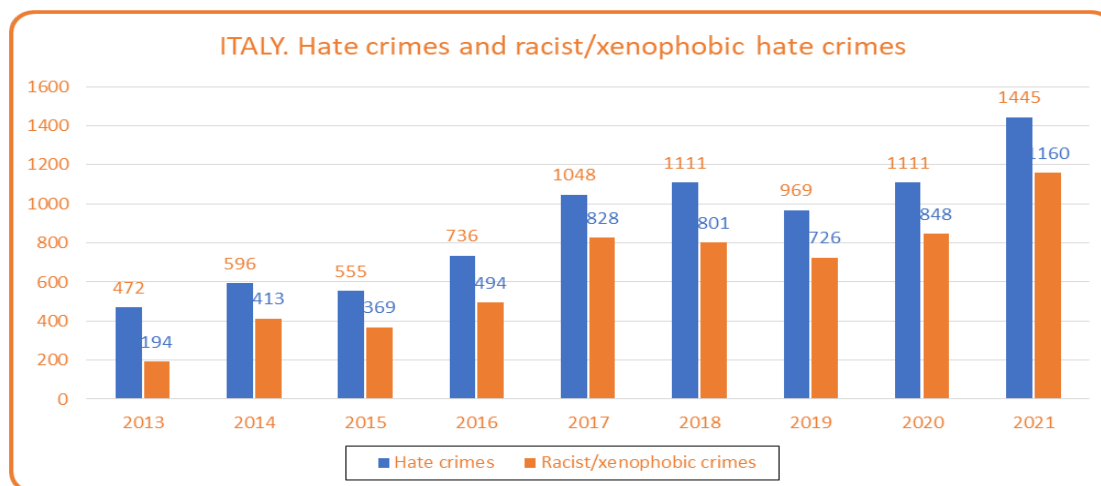
Source: Unar Contact Center

One of the most widely used sources on so-called hate crimes is offered by the ODIHR/OSCE Observatory, which publishes an international report every year.¹¹ As far as Italy is concerned, the report is supplied with official data from the police forces and OSCAD (Observatory for

¹¹ It should be noted that Odihr defines 'hate crimes' as ordinary crimes that have a discriminatory motive. Italy lacks a specific law on the subject, but Article 604-ter of the Criminal Code, which transposed the provisions of Law No. 205/1993 known as the 'Mancino Law', provides for an aggravated penalty of up to half for offenses committed 'for the purpose of discrimination or ethnic, national, racial or religious hatred'. Racist propaganda is also punished in Italy: Article 604-bis punishes propaganda of ideas based on superiority or 'racial or ethnic hatred' and incitement to commit discrimination and violence for 'racial, ethnic, national or religious' reasons.

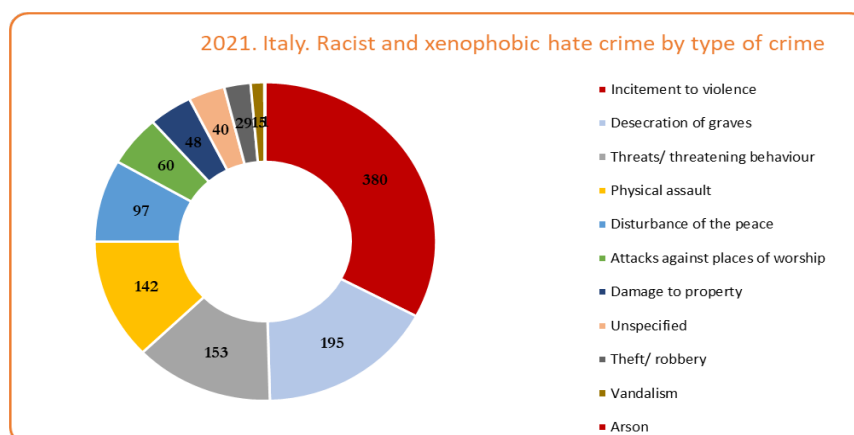
Security Against Discriminatory Acts), supplemented with information collected by civil society organizations.¹²

The graph below shows a trending (albeit discontinuous) growth in the number of documented discriminatory crimes in Italy over the period 2013-2021 and the increasing incidence of racist/xenophobic crimes on the total: in fact, the latter increased from an incidence of 41.1% in 2013 to 80.3% in 2021.



Source: Lunaria elaborations on Odihr/OSCE data (2013-2021)

In 2021¹³, the last year for which data are available, in Italy, there were a total of 1,445 discriminatory crimes reported by the police to Odihr, out of which 1,160 were xenophobic and racist crimes, 83 related to gender or sexual orientation and 202 to disability status. Of the reported xenophobic and racist crimes in 2021, the most common were incitement to violence (380), grave robbing (195), threatening behavior (153) and physical violence (142).



Source: Data Odihr/OSCE 2021

¹² The official data for Italy are provided to Odihr by combining the data of the 'Investigation System - SDI' (extracted from the inter-force CED) concerning crimes with discriminatory purposes that have 'normative coverage' (i.e. relating to 'race', ethnicity, nationality, religion and belonging to national linguistic minorities), with the reports of OSCAD-Observatory for Security Against Discriminatory Acts - which concern discriminatory offenses without specific regulatory coverage (relating to sexual orientation and gender identity).

¹³ The latest available report can be found here: <https://hatecrime.osce.org/italy>

1.2. Public opinion and political debate

The public debate on racism in Italy has been intertwined and overlapping, at least since the 1980s, with the debate on migration and migration policies. It is possible to identify five key recurring elements that have characterized it over the past two decades: a) superficiality; b) discontinuity; c) polarization; d) prevalent hetero-representation; and e) instrumentality.

The *superficiality* is primarily determined by the substantial removal and/or denial of the structural character of the phenomenon, indulged by the lack of a coordinated institutional system of monitoring, analysis and mitigation of it. The peaks of the Italian public debate specifically devoted to the analysis of racism often concern events that occurred abroad. For instance, we refer to the extraordinary media visibility reserved to the killing of George Floyd by the police in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020¹⁴, or to the debate developed following the riots in the French *banlieues* following the killing of a 17-year-old young man in Nanterre by a police officer on June 27, 2023¹⁵. Instead, the many serious acts of violence across our country tend to be interpreted as "isolated cases" or "acts of madness."¹⁶

The *discontinuity* is expressed in the form of the continuous alternation between the total absence of the topic in the public debate and its, sometimes sensationalistic, over-representation in conjunction with crime cases involving foreign nationals or people of foreign origin in the role of perpetrators or alleged perpetrators¹⁷, episodes of racism of particular gravity, or at times when migrant arrivals by sea become more intense.¹⁸

Polarization is another key element: commentary on news reports of racist violence, especially when it results in the death of those attacked, as well as the periodic intensifications of migrant arrivals by sea, are accompanied by the onset of outright flare-ups of *discourse* (political, mediatic, but also "popular") that tend to take on assertive and polemical tones, when not violent. The prevailing logic among the contenders is that of *siding* and *opposing*, which tends to exclude any form of discussion and dialogue between the parties.

The *voices of racialized groups* and anti-racist movements are poorly represented in the Italian public debate, where the politicians, journalists, and experts called upon are predominantly "white." The numerous experiences of self-organization of migrants and refugees, as well as movements of young people of foreign origin (which in recent years have developed a very interesting reflection on the intertwining of racism, classism and forms of social injustice), are rarely represented in the *mainstream media*¹⁹ and still have few opportunities to directly

¹⁴ See Carta di Roma, *Notizie di transito (News in transit)*, 2020, pp. 59-63.

¹⁵ The news has had wide visibility in the Italian media. While in many cases the narrative has been focused on the management of law and order during the protests, in some cases the murder has been contextualized within the long history of discriminatory practices that have characterized the actions of French law enforcement against young people of foreign origin since the 1970s.

¹⁶ This thesis was proposed, for example, after the 2008 murder of Abdou Guibre in Milan; the racist massacre in Florence on Dec. 9, 2011; the beating of Emmanuel Bonsu in Parma in September 2008; the attempted massacre in Macerata on Feb. 3, 2018; the murder of Alike Ogorchukwu in Civitanova Marche on July 30, 2022; and the murder of Javier Alfredo Romero Miranda in Genoa on Nov. 2, 2022.

¹⁷ Many examples could be cited. Some case studies are presented in Lunaria (ed.), *Chronicles of Ordinary Racism. Fifth White Paper on Racism in Italy*, 2020, pp. 157-212. Available here: <https://www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org/wp-content/uploads/english-version.pdf>

¹⁸ Indeed, as we have anticipated in the previous section, contemporary forms of neo-racism are particularly frequently expressed in Italy towards migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

¹⁹ According to the latest report by Carta di Roma, *Notizie dal fronte, (News from the front lines)*, 2022, p. 30, over the past decade, the voices of racialized people are present in an average of 6-7% of television reports dealing with migration; the higher recurrence recorded in 2022, 20%, is largely due to the

interact with institutional actors²⁰. Instead, these voices are more present on the web and social networks.

In Italy, more than elsewhere, mainstream information privileges domestic politics; this means that the media agenda is often conditioned by the political agenda and the positioning of individual editors. The overrepresentation of the voices of political and institutional actors often fuels the instrumentality of the representation and narration of *sensitive* social phenomena such as, precisely, racism. As one of the interviewees effectively summarized, "The problem is that everything becomes politics, everything becomes political confrontation."²¹ The centrality of the role of political, institutional and media actors in guiding public debate thus remains central. The fleeting visibility offered to individual personalities from the worlds of entertainment, culture and sports, which continue to be exceptions to this day, are not effective in altering this "imbalance."²²

The widespread use of social-network has not fundamentally changed these characteristics, if anything, it has amplified them on the web by providing a further driving force for xenophobia, racism, and more generally hostile and violent rhetoric.²³

But what are the "arguments" most frequently used by what anthropologist Annamaria Rivera very effectively termed "political entrepreneurs of racism"?²⁴

According to a monitoring conducted on the public debate in 2018, some of the most recurrent forms of stigmatization that fuel xenophobic and racist discourses and violence include: the identification of migration as a threat to security and borders, the health scare, the social and economic unsustainability of migration (and reception policies), and the issue of identity.²⁵

attention devoted to the conflict in Ukraine. And, although no official data on this is available, the absence of foreign-born professionals in media staff appears very evident.

According to the results of another study carried out to analyze "diversity" in the media from monitoring seven prime-time newscasts: TG1 8:00 p.m. (Rai 1), TG2 8:30 p.m. (Rai 2), TG3 7:00 p.m. (Rai 3), TG4 6:55 p.m. (Rete 4), TG5 8:00 p.m. (Channel 5), Studio Aperto 6:30 p.m. (Italia 1), TGLa7 8:00 p.m. (La7), during 2022 the monitored newscasts have broadcast a total of 42. 271 news items. Among them, 5201 news items were classified as pertaining to the "Ethnicity" category. Among the latter, 695 news stories were found to be focused on migration flows, 500 on refugees and displaced persons, 110 on cases of anti-Semitism, and 88 on cases of racism. See Fondazione Diversity, *Media Research Report 2023*, pp. 57-62.

²⁰Somewhat exceptions are the young people with migrant backgrounds who have been engaged in recent years in advocacy actions aimed at reforming Law No. 91/92 governing the acquisition of Italian citizenship, such as the #italianisenzacittadinanza (#italianswithoutcitizenship) movement and the young promoters of the "Dalla parte giusta della storia" ("On the right side of history") campaign, who have succeeded with their initiatives in attracting the attention of both politics and the media.

²¹ Interview IT4.

²² See Fondazione Diversity, *Media Research Report*, 2023.

²³A systematic monitoring on online hate speech has been carried out for many years now by Amnesty International with its *Barometro dell'odio* (*Hate Barometer*) (<https://www.amnesty.it/barometro-dellodio-2022-senza-cittadinanza-online-la-nostra-nuova-ricerca/>) and by Vox Diritti with its *Mappa dell'Intolleranza* (*Intolerance Map*) (<http://www.voxdiritti.it/la-nuova-mappa-dellintolleranza-7/>) to which we refer.

²⁴ See: Rivera A., *Estranei e nemici. Discriminazione e violenza razzista in Italia* (*Strangers and Enemies. Racist discrimination and violence in Italy*), DeriveApprodi, Roma 2003, p. 49.

²⁵Lunaria (ed.), *Words are Stones. Hate speech in the public debate of six European countries*, 2019, available here: https://www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org/wp-content/uploads/2WASINTERNATIONALREPORT_GRAPHIC_SINGLE_PAGES-1.pdf

These *topics*, which have been introduced into the public debate agenda by Italy's right-wing parties and movements since the early 1990s²⁶ and were at first considered marginal and uninfluential *boutades*, have gradually gained acceptance even in some areas of the moderate public opinion²⁷, to the extent that they have now become politically and culturally hegemonic.

According to one of the interviewees, the novelty compared to the past appears to be represented by a political and institutional strategy of the current majority that instead of dramatizing the debate on migration and fueling the perception of the emergency connected to it, as has often been done in the past, it seeks to govern it.²⁸

On a symbolic level, the use of a divisive and strongly identity-based vocabulary has helped to condition and steer the public debate in a strongly regressive direction in terms of guaranteeing citizenship rights and equal opportunities. Concepts such as those of "nation," "ethnicity," "race," and "ethnic substitution" are evoked too by senior politicians²⁹, and indeed "the theme of identity now seems to have become a mainstream issue" shared even by a large part of moderate public opinion.³⁰ Words such as "clandestino" ("illegal immigrant"), "badante" ("caregiver"), "extracomunitario" ("third-country immigrant"), "invasione" ("invasion") (referring to migrants), "zingaro" ("gypsy") or "nomade" ("nomad") (lemmas referring to the Roma, Xinti and Caminanti communities), initially used by minorities, have, on the other hand, become recurring locutions in common language.³¹

Hence, in the public discourse everything seems to be allowed³²: ideas and discourses that were once strongly stigmatized can be expressed explicitly following what we might call a system of communicating vessels. Those with power have greater media visibility and thus a greater ability to influence public opinion. However, the opposite may also occur if, last June 29, some Deputies could shout *boos* very similar to the racist chants uttered in stadiums during the speech in the Chamber of Deputies hall by the Afro-descendant Congressman Aboubakar Soumahoro. Which, to bring us closer to the central theme of this paper, seems to corroborate the thesis advanced by some of the people interviewed that stadiums are anything but "separate spaces" from society, but, on the contrary, represent "laboratories of social and political experimentation."³³

It is therefore not surprising that many of those interviewed identified the gradual *trivialization* and *normalization* of racism that also runs through the world of sports as one of

²⁶The parties and movements most active on this level include Lega Nord, Fratelli d'Italia, Casa Pound and Forza Nuova.

²⁷This has led some scholars to coin the term "democratic racism." See for example: Palidda S. (ed.), *Razzismo democratico. La persecuzione degli stranieri in Europa*, (Democratic Racism. The persecution of foreigners in Europe), Agenzia X, 2009

²⁸ Interview IT7.

²⁹See Lunaria, (ed.), *Il razzismo nell'anno del ritorno delle destre al potere*, (Racism in the year of the return of the Right to power), 2023, <https://www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org/wp-content/uploads/Focus-Razzismo-Giugno-2023.pdf>

³⁰Interview IT7.

³¹A very effective reconstruction of the performative role of lexical choices is proposed in Faso G., *Lessico del razzismo democratico. Le parole che escludono*, (Lexicon of democratic racism. Words that exclude), DeriveApprodi, 2008, but see also Redattore Sociale (ed.), *Parlare civile. Comunicare senza discriminare*, (Civil Speaking. Communicating without discriminating), Bruno Mondadori, 2013.

³² Interview IT5.

³³ Interview IT7

the main elements hindering its prevention and countering³⁴, as insults and racist chants are often downgraded as "taunting" or, at best, as examples of rudeness by sports officials and sometimes even by journalists.³⁵ This did not happen, fortunately, in the latest incident involving two sports journalists from RaiPlay 2 during the World Swimming Championships on July 17, 2023. The various sexist and racist comments uttered by the two journalists were in fact noticed and reported by some viewers and strongly stigmatized, to the point of prompting Rai to recall its correspondents to Italy and initiate a disciplinary procedure against them.³⁶

The narrative on racism that runs through the world of sports thus seems to present in Italy at the same time similar characteristics to those that distinguish the public debate on racism as a whole and characteristics of its own. According to some of those interviewed³⁷, the attention that sport attracts from a very large part of public opinion could be a formidable tool to delegitimize the various forms of discrimination and racism inside and outside sports facilities, if all the main actors involved (starting with athletes, managers, clubs and sports journalists) took charge of it, even taking a public stand.

1.3 Discrimination and racism in sports

Sport is a "*social fact*" that encompasses local and global elements.³⁸ Today, more than ever, it serves as a valuable telltale for understanding the deep orientations of our society. Discrimination in Italian sports is evident in all sports disciplines and at all levels even if we often dwell excessively on elite football (Serie A). Nevertheless, it is beyond doubt that in Italy the most popular sport is football. This implies that, in our country, the discriminatory dynamics to be studied and countered in sports lurk mainly, thus not only, in this sport. It follows that if the most popular sport in a country mirrors even in the slightest degree the trends, habits and customs of that community, then understanding how discrimination catches on football in Italy allows us to unravel to some extent the typical dynamics of discrimination in Italian society.³⁹ The dominant role of football in Italian sports culture and not only, however, makes it challenging to analyze this phenomenon by placing it on an equal footing with any other sports discipline. Indeed, another theme that emerged from the interviews is what one interviewee⁴⁰ called the "*remote dimension of football*." This is an approach that many interviewees described as having become widespread among all components of the Italian football world (players, sports managers and journalists) for whom football would represent a phenomenon detached from contemporary society since it is

³⁴Interviews IT4, IT7, IT2 and IT1.

³⁵Regarding the characteristics of the media narrative of racism occurring in sports, the opinions of those interviewed varied. For example, according to interview IT1, racist insults and chants in stadiums now tend to be stigmatized in mainstream media while sports institutions are not sufficiently proactive. According to interview IT2, the media still play a central role in determining the low visibility of racism in sports, especially at the local and territorial level. According to interview IT7 in recent years the media seem to be showing greater attention to the phenomenon.

³⁶ See Ferrigo N. "*Commenti razzisti e sessisti nella telecronaca dei tuffi, la Rai sospende Leonarduzzi e Mazzucchi. Il giornalista: "Una battuta da bar, chiedo scusa"*" ("*Racist and sexist comments in the telecast of diving, Rai suspends Leonarduzzi and Mazzucchi. Journalist: 'A bar joke, I apologize'*"), La Stampa, July 17, 2023.

³⁷ Interviews IT13, IT1 and IT7.

³⁸ Barba B. (2021)

³⁹ Valeri, M. (2010)

⁴⁰ Interview IT10 cit.

conceived as a microcosm endowed with rules and traditions alternative to it. Such a conception of football risks that some negative dynamics of it (such as precisely racism or fan violence) are essentialized in the belief that they are "part of the game" and therefore such phenomena, although negative, are not sanctionable because they are "natural." In such a view, the football game represents a battle in which anything is allowed in order to overcome the opponent/enemy.⁴¹ This approach does not openly take sides against potential anti-discriminatory actions but aprioristically defines them as unnecessary because they are contrary to the "nature" of football, for which the match would be a battle and the stadium the arena in which everything is allowed (even discriminatory insults). Two interviewees⁴² claim that this outlook originated from Italy's peculiar sports culture. According to them, sports, and football in particular, is the phenomenon that has most successfully channeled identity elements that in Italy's history, however, were localistic and not national.⁴³ Thereby, membership in the team was membership in one's city, in a peasant-localist logic that was later shaped only by the advent of fascism. Contrary to the Anglo-Saxon world, Italy thus approached sport first as a peasant culture permeated by localism and then under fascism as an elite and propaganda sport.⁴⁴ It is in this drastic historical transition that the birth and sedimentation of a sports culture in Italy falls short. A lack that according to one respondent not even republican Italy has been able to fill. There has indeed been a lack of a real process of alternative "*sports literacy*"⁴⁵ to the performance-focused and elite athlete training brought about by fascism. Also as a consequence of this absence of an Italian sports culture is a tendency toward extremes (you are either phenomenal or you are failure) that makes it even more difficult to create a culture of fair-play or solidarity since the only thing that matters is winning, excellence, and therefore performance.

One of the obstacles that emerged in several interviews with respect to the implementation of discrimination monitoring and awareness-raising campaigns is the narrative that the media (sports but not only) brings forth when incidents of discrimination occur. Some interviewees⁴⁶ noted how the tendency in Italian football is to downplay negative incidents, especially if they involve racism, in a marketing logic, including television, for which football "*must be pure entertainment in which there is no room for social issues or issues outside of tactics*" (as one interviewee reported). Accordingly, it is often the choice of some television networks not to air anything that happens in the stands (violence, banners or political symbols). However, this choice is contrary to the right to news and information because it still produces a censored narrative of what happens during the game (what happens in the stands should have the same relevance as what happens on the field) because it hides the sentiment of the spectators in the stadium, and thus of a part of society. One respondent notes that the sports media in Italy only talk about discrimination when there are sensational incidents involving elite athletes. In this way, the topic of racism is addressed exclusively after episodes involving prominent athletes. However, in addition to the issue of the visibility that Italian sports media often do not give to events concerning incidents of discrimination, there is another observation made

⁴¹ Dal Lago, A. (1990)

⁴² Interviews IT14 and IT13

⁴³ Dietschy, P. and Pivato, S. (2019)

⁴⁴ Porro, N. (2001)

⁴⁵ Dietschy, P. and Pivato, S. (2019)

⁴⁶ Interviews IT12 and IT15

by an interviewee:⁴⁷ the way they give visibility to a given incident. In fact, the aforementioned tendency to conceive football as unrelated to society and its rules is one of the obstacles to a correct account of racist incidents in football. This was evident in the case of some of the reactions that followed the racist insults directed by Atalanta fans against Dusan Vlahovic, Juventus center forward, in the Atalanta-Juventus match on May 7, 2023. The Serbian-born player was pelted with racist insults such as "you are a gypsy" throughout the match. Initially Vlahovic tried to ignore what was happening, hoping that the rival fans would quiet down. The game continued, however, until the situation became so serious that it was no longer possible to ignore it. At this point, the Serbian striker approached the referee, spread his arms and asked him, "Can't you hear that?" From the stadium loudspeaker, the audience was asked to stop the racist insults and the game was stopped. When the match resumed, the racist insults also resumed. The Juventus player then scored late in the game and brought his index finger to his mouth as an exultation (and as a response to the insults he had received throughout the match). The referee Doveri cautioned him for "excessive jubilation." In Vlahovic's case, however, in addition to the seriousness of the act itself, there is the response of Gian Piero Gasperini, Atalanta's coach, regarding the racism shown by his fans toward the Juventus striker. The coach of the Bergamo team stated:

*"In the Atalanta team Pasalic and Djimsiti are playing, Ilicic played, and sometimes the insults are aimed at the individual, maybe for other things. Racism is a very serious thing, it should be countered and there is no doubt about it. But it should not be confused, because otherwise it would also affect our players."*⁴⁸

According to Gasperini, insults such as "you are a gypsy" directed at Vlahovic would be a sign of rudeness and not racism on the part of Bergamasque fans because they were directed specifically at an individual (Vlahovic) and because other footballers from former Yugoslav countries play in Atalanta (so for Gasperini if Bergamasque fans were racist they would have to insult these players of theirs as well). This is a nonsensical justification intended to minimize the seriousness of racism. An attempt that is not new from Gasperini who even in 2018, as Inter coach, in the presence of racist howls during Inter-Napoli against Senegalese defender Koulibaly declared:

*"The idea of suspending matches is a big stupidity, this is not the way to take action," he said. "It is not a problem of racism, that they pass us off as such is wrong. Then there is some rudeness that is part of our culture: I have heard insulting the best players in the world, without imagining derbies in the North and South. We can fight it, but not by closing stadiums and leaving people at home."*⁴⁹

What happened to Vlahovic is symptomatic of an Italian sport (football above all) that struggles to take serious action for countless reasons. The reactions to what happened, especially Gasperini's, which nonetheless found favor amongst the sports public, confirm that the belief that football is a world apart from contemporary society is a widespread thought even at the highest levels of the sport.

⁴⁷ Interview IT10.

⁴⁸ < <https://www.gazzetta.it/Calcio/Serie-A/Atalanta/07-05-2023/atalanta-juve-gasperini-vlahovic-razzismo-non-va-confuso-4601470019346.shtml>>

⁴⁹ < https://www.repubblica.it/sport/calcio/serie-a/juventus/2023/05/07/news/allegri_cori_razzisti_atalanta_juventus-399138609/>

In April 2023, about a month before the incident involving Vlahovic, there had been another racist incident in Italian football. It was a case with an international media echo due to the relevance of the two teams and the tournament (Coppa Italia semifinal). During Juventus-Inter, the first leg match of the Coppa Italia semifinal, Inter's Belgian striker Romelu Lukaku was pelted with racist insults such as "fu** off you fu***** monkey" by Juventus fans. Lukaku scored the penalty late in the match allowing Inter to tie the game. After scoring, he received even more insults and cheered by bringing his index finger to his mouth to silence the opposing fans. The Belgian had already been cautioned and the exultation was judged by the referee as "provocative" toward Juventus fans. The player was sanctioned with a second yellow card sealing his absence in the semi-final return match against Juventus in Milan. The referee's decision has been interpreted by many as a form of "victim blaming,"⁵⁰ whereby the focus of culpability is directed not toward the aggressor but toward the victim who is required to justify his actions and justify his choices. This is a phenomenon that does not only affect victims of racism, and in the world of football it is also often repeated by match judges and sports journalists.⁵¹ However, this is also a widespread tendency among part of the sports public, which in fact shared referee Davide Massa's decision to condemn Lukaku's exultation as "provocative." According to this reasoning those who suffer discriminatory epithets should "ignore them" or at any rate should not "respond to them." At the end of the match, the Sport Judge had decided to sanction Juventus with the obligation to play a match with the sector called the South Stand, first ring, without spectators because of the "boorish and insulting chants and shouting of racial discrimination" against Lukaku and "because of the seriousness, size and real perception of the phenomenon as well as its repetitiveness." However, the National Sports Court Section I remanded the decision of the appeal filed by Juventus allowing the club to play its matches without spectator restrictions. On the other hand, Inter filed an appeal for the disqualification of its player, but this was rejected by the Sport Court of Appeals. The scenario that was unfolding was thus a paroxysm of "victim blaming" whereby the only person who actually paid for the consequences of discriminatory acts was the victim who suffered them. Lukaku's case, however, had an interesting twist: his disqualification was overturned directly by Federcalcio president Gabriele Gravina, who decided to "pardon" Lukaku on an exceptional basis. In this way, the Inter striker was able to play the return match in Milan. The epilogue of this episode probably has more to do with the extraordinary media echo it had reached, and with the very poor picture that Serie A was displaying to the world, than with any real will to combat racism. The story had made headlines in major international newspapers, and the paradox of a victim of racism being condemned for responding to it had displeased many football fans around the world.⁵²

Another theme that emerged in the interviews is the general tendency of institutions in the Italian sports world not to take action against discrimination. However, this is a habit that in

⁵⁰ Cole, A. (2007).

⁵¹ <<https://pallionateinfaccia.com/2023/04/09/sfogo-contro-il-vittimismo-dei-tifosi-italiani/>>

⁵² <<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/04/sports/romelu-lukaku-inter-milan-racist-chants.html>>
<<https://www.theguardian.com/football/2019/sep/04/inter-fans-tell-romelu-lukaku-monkey-chants-in-italy-are-not-racist>>
<<https://www.aljazeera.com/sports/2023/4/5/romelu-lukaku-racism-inter-milan-juventus-italian-football>>

recent times, according to some interviewees,⁵³ is encountering obstacles in some virtuous initiatives to monitor and combat discrimination in sports. Many cited as an example the work done by the “*Osservatorio Nazionale contro le Discriminazioni nello Sport – Mauro Valeri*” (“*National Observatory Against Discrimination in Sports - Mauro Valeri*”) in bringing to light racism in sports, at all levels, including amateur and recreational. The Observatory produced a pilot report in 2022 recording 211 incidents of discrimination from June 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022; 79 in the last seven months of 2021 and 132 in the first six months of 2022. As stated in the report's conclusions:

“While racist chants or territorial discrimination are found to be the most frequent cases, there is no shortage of individual verbal violence, which degenerated into physical assault in only two cases, and reports of institutional discrimination. Nationality or national origin and somatic characteristics are the motives found to be the most frequent, but a few cases of sexism, homophobia, ableism and body shaming documented in grassroots sports highlight the need to keep attention high on these forms of discrimination as well. Young people between the ages of 18 and 29 appear to be the most affected victims, but the 31 cases of discrimination affecting minors suggest the importance of anti-discrimination awareness actions that should be promoted in schools and grassroots sports spaces. Among the perpetrators of discrimination, fan groups and players are the most recurrent. However, there is no shortage of reports involving sports managers. 78.7% of documented discrimination was recorded in the world of football, but there were also some cases in basketball, athletics, volleyball, field hockey, cricket, dance, tennis and boxing. The majority of victims decided to report the discrimination to those in charge (66%) or make a public complaint via social media (14%), but the share of those who chose not to make any kind of complaint (20%) is significant. Cases in which no sanctions were imposed account for the majority at 62%. The imbalance that emerges between the reports/complaints made and the sanctions adopted points to the need, on the one hand, to monitor more closely compliance with and enforcement of current national and sports law regulations, and on the other hand, to raise the awareness of sports operators (female and male athletes, clubs and grassroots sports associations) to promote initiatives to raise awareness, information and training against all forms of discrimination.”⁵⁴

Some interviews also cited as a positive example the monitoring done by “*Associazione Italiana Calciatori*” (Italian Footballers association) (A.I.C.) in its annual report “*Calciatori sotto tiro*” (“*Footballers under fire*”) in which cases of violence (verbal or physical) against professional, recreational or amateur football players in Italy are reported.

Based on the latest report, 2021-2022 season:

“In 85 % of the cases surveyed, the leagues most at risk were professional leagues. Serie A, with almost 7 out of 10 cases (68%), is the league where footballers have been most targeted by ultras. In amateur leagues, the peak is in the Third Category and Excellence leagues. In these contexts, the most targeted football players were foreigners and black football players, and cases attributable to racism turn out to be the clear majority [...] Black football players are the first target of racism cases [39%]. However, so are football players from the Balkans [11%] or Latin America [8%]. For Italian football players, the insult is often related to being from southern regions. In 64% of cases it is rival fans who are the

⁵³ Interview IT11.

⁵⁴ <<https://www.unar.it/portale/-/presentato-il-primorapporto-dell-osservatorio-nazionale-contro-le-discriminazioni-nello-sport>>

*perpetrators of the acts. Yet in one case out of 3 they are "friendly" fans. If we look at the geographical distribution of cases, Lombardy [26%] is the region and the North, [49%] the geographical area, that are most at risk. Campania follows with Veneto and Lazio [12%]."*⁵⁵

Aside from these and other virtuous examples of monitoring and combating discrimination, several interviewees, however, noted that, especially in the world of football, there is an unwillingness to take concrete action against discrimination. Two interviewees⁵⁶ from the field in particular argue that Italy does not have a regulatory gap but has limitations in enforcing existing anti-discrimination regulations in sports.

One interviewee explains the way the system for countering discrimination in the case of on-field incidents should work in Italian football: there is a regulation that in the presence of a racist incident, the stadium personnel are required to stop the game. The personnel in question are from public security, and among them is an officer from the Ministry of Interior assigned to call the referee in case of discriminatory chants and ask him to stop the game. In that case he/she can ask the referee to make the announcement to the stadium speaker to stop the chants. If they carry on, at the third time, the game can be stopped. But the referee cannot stop the game on his own. This mechanism is based on a clear, hierarchical structure oriented by well-defined rules and regulations. If this does not work, as two interviewed professionals observe, it is a symptom of an unwillingness to abide by the rules. An unwillingness that differs profoundly with other countries where in the presence of incidents of discrimination, concerted action is taken between the League, clubs, players and fans (the positive example most cited in interviews is England). On the subject of anti-discrimination regulations, as a matter of fact, Italy already has well-defined norms such as the Mancino Law (Law 205/1993), which condemns gestures, actions and slogans linked to Nazi-fascist ideology that incite violence and discrimination on "racial," ethnic, religious or national grounds. And it envisages imprisonment of up to one year and six months or a fine of up to six thousand euros for anyone who promotes ideas based on racial or ethnic superiority or hatred, or incites or commits discriminatory acts. In addition to the Mancino Law, one of the most widely used tools for sanctioning fans is the Daspo, which is the "Ban to Access Sports Events" and can be issued by the police headquarters or by a court at the end of a trial. It is not only those responsible for violent gestures, fights, assaults, and throwing of objects who are affected, but also those who chant or "launch" discriminatory chants. The sports plan, on the other hand, is regulated by the judicial bodies of the FIGC under the Sports Justice Code. Under the sports justice code, clubs risk penalties such as fines or the closure of stadium sectors if their fans engage in discriminatory behavior such as chants or banners.

Overall, the Italian sports scene has historically been characterized by the backwardness of its sports culture. A culture that, as we have seen, has been lacking for peculiar historical reasons. Incidents of discrimination continue to occur at all levels and in different sports. In this sense, it seems clear that monitoring and combating discrimination in Italian sports will have to be accompanied by the promotion of a culture of fair-play and solidarity, values that have often been lacking in Italian sports to date.

⁵⁵ < <https://www.assocalciatori.it/news/report-%E2%80%9Ccalciatori-sotto-tiro%E2%80%9D-1>>

⁵⁶ Interviews IT12 and IT15.

2. Monitoring and prevention: structures, policies and cases

2.1 Existing Structures and Policies

Systematically monitoring the various forms of discrimination present in the sports world is a crucial step in analyzing its dynamics and characteristics, and implementing effective strategies for prevention, mitigation and protection of the affected individuals. European Union Member States have been repeatedly urged to establish organized mechanisms for reporting and managing discriminatory practices in sports, along with monitoring and data collection systems in collaboration with sports federations⁵⁷.

Resolution 2276 (2019) "Stop Hate Speech and Hate Crimes in Sport," adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (APCE), called on member states to "promote research and data collection on hate speech and hate crimes in the field of sports", emphasizing that "data ought to be comparable and disaggregated according to geographic location, sport, victim and perpetrator, with a clear distinction in terms of athletes (professionals or amateurs) and spectators and the motives of the discrimination"⁵⁸.

The European Parliament also took action, in 2022, to call for a "zero-tolerance approach towards racism, hate speech, violence and other racist misconducts in sports", urging the Commission, the Member States and sport federations to establish measures to counteract these sort of incidents, impose practical penalties, and provide assistance to victims. Additionally, measures to protect athletes denouncing racism or advocating diversity from possible retaliation must be implemented⁵⁹.

Finally, the EU Action Plan Against Racism (2020-2025⁶⁰) highlights the importance of collecting data based on "racial or ethnic" origin. The objective is to "identify both subjective experiences of discrimination and victimization and structural aspects of racism and discrimination". The Commission specifies that such data should be "comprehensive, reliable, collected regularly and timely, integrated into national and EU surveys, and both representative and comparable."

A study undertaken by the Council of Europe effectively underlines the cruciality and the complexity of monitoring systemic forms of discrimination at a territorial level, emphasizing that effective discrimination monitoring systems ought to ensure "the availability of reparation arrangements for victims of all forms of discrimination"⁶¹.

The aforementioned sources propose a *systemic approach* to monitoring and measuring various types of discrimination and racism, while establishing a clear link with services and

⁵⁷ See ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No.12 on Combating Racism and Racial Discrimination in the Field of Sport, adopted on 19th December 2008, Strasbourg, 19th March 2009, p. 5, available here: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-12-on-combating-racism-and-racia/16808b5ae7> and FRA, *Racism, Ethnic Discrimination and Exclusion of Migrants and Minorities in Sport: The Situation in the European Union*. Summary Report 2010, p. 13, available here: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/1206-FRA-report-Racism-in-sports-summary-EN-2010-10-28.pdf.

⁵⁸ See p. 9 of the resolution at this link: <https://www.senato.it/service/PDF/PDFServer/DF/346331.pdf>.

⁵⁹ See *European Parliament resolution of 8 March 2022 on the role of culture, education, media and sport in the fight against racism (2021/2057(INI))*, available here:

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0057_IT.html

⁶⁰ European Commission, *EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025*, p. 18

⁶¹ Unità delle Città interculturali (the Network of Intercultural cities), Council of Europe, *Individuazione e prevenzione della discriminazione sistemica a livello locale. Studio informativo, (Detection and prevention of systemic discrimination at the local level. Informational study)*, October 2020, p. 27

interventions aimed at supporting, safeguarding, and compensating individuals affected by racist discrimination and violence. It is precisely the lack of such a systemic approach that is evident in Italy, particularly with reference to discrimination and racist violence that occur in the field of sports.

As evidenced by the interviews conducted during this study and by the analysis of the available documentation (namely official administrative and statistical documentation, institutional and civil society organization reports), it is clear that discrimination and racism, in general as well as in the sports world, are characterized by diversity, fragmentation, and a lack of standardization of data and sources within the Italian context.

The monitoring experiences outlined below can be categorized into three main categories: official data collection and monitoring of discriminatory practices in sports, monitoring initiatives supported by civic society, and monitoring the experiences of monitoring the media *representation* of racism in sports (traditional media and social networks), developed by public or private associations or research institutions. The analysis (whenever is possible) aims to evaluate the following factors:

- Time interval
- Used Sources
- Collected data
- Reporting practices
- Areas and sports disciplines involved
- Classification system
- Potential critical issues

To provide context for monitoring racist discrimination in sports, it may be beneficial to introduce a survey conducted by ISTAT in the 2014-2015 school year. The survey sampled 68 thousand Italian and foreign students enrolled in junior and senior secondary education. The survey examined multiple aspects of the integration and growth of foreign youth in Italy, with an emphasis on leisure time and sports.

"In secondary schools, solely 53% of foreign male students participate in extracurricular sports, in contrast to almost 76% of native Italian students. Even in secondary schools, where the proportion of boys engaging in sports is generally lower than among younger boys, the disparity between foreigners and Italians is noticeable (47.4% versus 64.1%)".⁶² The survey also indicates a gender disparity that is more pronounced among foreign young persons. Although football is the preferred sport for Italian and foreign youth alike, there are significant disparities between certain communities.

The monitoring system of the National Office Against "Racial" Discrimination (hereafter UNAR)

UNAR office, situated within the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, is accountable for upholding equal treatment in Italy, particularly concerning the enforcement of European Directive 2000/43/EC. The office provides a telephone *contact center* and an online platform for reporting cases of discrimination. Data on the reports "processed" by the office are published

⁶² Istat, *Identità e percorsi di integrazione delle seconde generazioni in Italia (Identity and integration paths of second generations in Italy)*, 2020, pp. 60-61, available here: <https://www.istat.it/it/files/2020/04/Identit%C3%A0-e-percorsi.pdf>

annually in Reports submitted to the Government and Parliament.⁶³ The last report is for the year 2021. The data sources include direct reports received via the contact center, website, and email, alongside those obtained through press reviews, expert research, and associations. Additionally, Unar created a specific Media and Web Observatory in 2016 to oversee the content of major social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Youtube), articles, blogs, and comments from online forums⁶⁴.

The repository and classification system of the gathered data records cases of discrimination based on relevant grounds (motive)⁶⁵ and subgrounds (specific characteristics)⁶⁶, scope⁶⁷ and context⁶⁸ in which the discrimination has occurred. The published data provide a disaggregation that cross-references information on motive, scope, and context, as well as a disaggregation of cases by region and province; however, they do not provide information on any restorative interventions that were implemented.

The data on discrimination in sports, previously classified within the broader category of leisure time, are surveyed starting from the second half of 2021.

The reports classify the data according to the following "context" categories: "Public," "Player," "Stadium," "Field," "Referee," "Gymnasium," "Competitions," "Mass media", "Scouting athletes," "locker room", "Social network" and "Other." However, the reports do not provide data disaggregated by sports discipline or type of discrimination⁶⁹.

In 2020, Unar established the experimental National Observatory against Discrimination in Sport "Mauro Valeri" by signing a memorandum of understanding with UISP APS (Italian Union Sports for All) and Lunaria APS. The aim was to monitor forms of discrimination running through the world of sports in greater depth⁷⁰.

⁶³The reports can be accessed online via the following link: <https://www.unar.it/portale/web/guest/relazioni-alle-istituzioni>.

⁶⁴ UNAR has established specific partnerships with the operators of the main social networks (Facebook, Google, Twitter), which allow the Office to submit reports to the platforms in a secure manner, thus facilitating the faster and safer removal of reported content.

⁶⁵ In the most recent report, which covers the year 2021, motives have been categorized into the following groups: "Racial Ethnicity," "Religion and Beliefs," "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity," "Disability," "Age," "Multiple," and "Other."

⁶⁶ For the "ethnic and racial" motive: foreigner, skin color, refugees, Rom, Sinti, Camminanti, somatic traits, other; for "Religions and personal belief" motive: antisemitism, personal belief, criticism of Islam, Christianophobia, other religions, other; for the "Sexual orientation and gender identity" motive: gay, LGBTQ+, gender variant. Lesbian, bisexual, other; for "Disability": DSA and rare diseases, architectural barriers, psychiatric disorders, organic diseases, psychological distress; for "Age": elder, youth, other.

⁶⁷ Areas are divided into the following categories: housing, employment, education and training, healthcare, public transport, law and order, public services, public facilities, community, leisure and financial services.

⁶⁸ The category of context identifies various subcategories that refer to the places or groups affected by discrimination. Refer to Unar's *Relazione al Parlamento 2022 (Report to the Parliament 2022)*, p. 66 for the complete taxonomy.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰The text of the protocol can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.unar.it/portale/documents/20125/99431/PROTOCOLLO-osservatorio-sport+31+LUGLIO+2020.pdf/888c08ce-3c07-b20d-14b3-971c04a801f9?t=1631112204329>

The Observatory was established to monitor and analyze discrimination in sports, with a focus on amateur sports; to promote and implement training activities geared towards sports practitioners, joint awareness-raising initiatives, and involve a network of stakeholders in monitoring and analysis activities and the media to promote principles of equality and non-discrimination, with special emphasis on awareness-raising in local media. Through conducting a pilot monitoring study, executed from June 2020 to June 2021, a system for monitoring, archiving, and analyzing instances of discrimination in sports was structured at the territorial level, but coordinated at the national level.

The monitoring process utilized various sources including reports received by UNAR's Contact Center, reports gathered on site by UISP APS operators in ten cities, direct reports from victims or witnesses received by the Cronache di ordinario razzismo observatory, press reports published in mainstream media (newspapers and weekly news magazines), reports and complaints disseminated on social media, penalty notices available on the websites of major sports federations, and referee reports.

The adopted classification system enables the collected information to be disaggregated based on the following variables:

- the type of the discriminatory act or behavior (discrimination, verbal violence, physical violence or damage to property or assets). Verbal violence, which appears to be the most recurrent one, is split into three main categories: racist insults, threats or violent acts; propaganda (writings, banners, flyers, posters with discriminatory content, *hate speech*); public rallies (which encompass racist chants);
- the geographic area (municipality, province and region);
- the sports disciplines that are involved;
- sporting level (professional, elite, high and medium level amateur athletics, as well as competitive grassroots sports and recreational and non-competitive physical activity);
- the discriminatory motives (somatic traits, national or ethnic origins, religious affiliation and beliefs, ability status and gender, and sexual orientation);
- gender and nationality of the victims;
- the age range of the victims, including minors (0-17 years of age), young adults (18-29 years old of age), adults (30-64 years of age) and seniors (65 years of age and older);
- actors responsible for the discriminatory acts (players, individual or group fans, referees, sports officials, private citizens, group of fans with fascist or nazi tendencies);
- the age range of the actors involved in the discriminatory acts, including minors (0-17 years of age), young adults (18-29 years old of age), adults (30-64 years of age) and seniors (65 years of age and older);
- the victims' responses (whether complains to the competent authorities were filed, public complaints were made or no complaints at all were made);
- the type of sanctions imposed (disciplinary, against the company, against the managers, Daspo, no sanction).

The monitoring results were published in a pilot report⁷¹.

Unar entered into a cooperation protocol with the Lega Calcio Serie A on March 14, 2023, which provides for the annual planning of joint initiatives to raise awareness of training for the social responsibility contact persons of Serie A clubs and Stewards who are in charge of

⁷¹ Refer to Osservatorio Nazionale contro le Discriminazioni nello Sport "Mauro Valeri", *Le discriminazioni nel mondo dello sport. Un rapporto pilota, (Discrimination in the sports world. A pilot report)*, October 2022, available here: <https://www.unar.it/portale/documents/20125/0/Rapporto+UNAR+-+OSSERVATORIO+SPORT.pdf/e7756055-9081-4e7c-9d94-946bd27a28e6?t=1666283300263>

stadium reception, sports managers, coaches and under-21 players of the relevant Serie A clubs, for the prevention and countering of all types of discrimination and violence within the world of sports and football in particular; and a commitment by Unar to support through its contact center victims of discrimination in the world of sports.

A collaboration protocol with the FGCI and Coni are also being defined.⁷²

Data provided by the Osservatorio Nazionale sulle Manifestazioni Sportive (National Observatory of Sporting Events)

The National Observatory of Sporting Events was established at the Ministry of the Interior by Decree-Law No. 28 of 24 February 2003 with the aim of "promoting the better implementation of provisions and measures on combating violence at sporting events". The Observatory publishes data on safety in the world of football in an annual report, which provides a wide range of information. Until now, however, information on racist incidents has been very limited: only a total number of incidents of "racial" and anti-Semitic discrimination and the number of violations of the Mancino Law have been provided. However, the most recent report, covering the 2021-2022 football season, announced "a targeted activity to detect the phenomenon of discriminatory acts at sports events, with particular reference to behaviors attributable to racism"⁷³, to be carried out in agreement with the Observatory for Security against Discriminatory Acts (OSCAD) and the Central Directorate of Preventive Police of the Ministry of Public Security. Regarding the data published in the latest report, "In the 2021/2022 season, there were 50 incidents of racial discrimination, 5 of which were of anti-Semitic nature, and 8 violations related to the display of prohibited symbols. A total of 19 fans were reported for such behavior."⁷⁴

The Ministry of the Interior also recently signed a Statement of Intent aimed at strengthening measures to combat anti-Semitism in football. The agreement was signed by the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Sport and Youth, the National Coordinator for Combating Anti-Semitism and the President of the Italian Football Federation⁷⁵.

The activities of the Observatory for Security against Discriminatory Acts (OSCAD)

The Observatory for Security Against Discriminatory Acts (OSCAD) was established in 2010 at the Department of Public Security-Central Directorate of Criminal Police of the Ministry of

⁷² The collection of information was the result of a meeting with the director and an office manager.

⁷³ See Ministry of Interior, National Observatory of Sporting Events, *Rapporto annuale, 2022. I dati della stagione calcistica 2021/2022, (Annual Report, 2022. Data of the football season 2021/2022)* p. 5.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p.19

⁷⁵ According to reports from the National Observatory against Anti-Semitism, "the Statement of Intent defines implementing measures, including the inclusion in the code of ethics of an explicit reference to the international definition of anti-Semitism, the prohibition of 'the use of the number 88 on jerseys, Nazi and anti-Semitic symbols, the interruption of matches in the presence of anti-Semitic chants, acts and expressions, the obligation to strictly respect the nominal allocation of seats in order to facilitate the identification of the perpetrators of anti-Semitic acts, the improvement of the video surveillance system, the promotion of visits to the Shoah Memorial in Milan and other places of remembrance for representatives of organized fans and members of sports clubs, and communication initiatives, in collaboration with specialized media and social networking platforms, on the issue of anti-Semitism."

See: <https://osservatorioantisemitismo.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/TESTO-DICHIARAZIONE-DINTENTI.pdf>

the Interior with the aim of fostering the emergence of so-called "hate crimes," activating forms of monitoring and promoting training initiatives addressed to police officers. It is possible to report discriminatory crimes to Oscad, even anonymously, at a dedicated email address.⁷⁶

Reports received by OSCAD do not replace reports of crimes to the police but are forwarded to the offices of the State Police or Carabinieri (Italian military corps which has civil police duties). The latter provide the Observatory with information on cases handled. In specific cases, the Observatory may act as an intermediary between victims and police forces. In cases where it receives reports of discriminatory acts that do not have criminal relevance, it forwards the reports to Unar.

The monitoring of discriminatory crimes is based not only on reports received but also on analysis of open sources. Oscad has been cooperating with Odihr-OSCE since 2014 by sending annual data on hate crimes. It is administrative and heterogeneous data that, according to the office itself, does not have statistical significance.⁷⁷

The incidents monitored include discriminatory acts committed during sports competitions. Starting in 2022, OSCAD has initiated an inter-institutional collaboration with the National Observatory on Sports Events of the Department of Public Security, which has among its objectives *"also the implementation of strategies for preventing and combating the phenomena of racial discrimination at sporting events through special monitoring, evaluation and analysis."*⁷⁸

The agreement stipulates that *"discriminatory incidents (chants, banners, gestures, verses, verbal insults, physical aggression, threats, etc.) detected during sports events by the police forces are reported to the two Observatories under the responsibility of the territorially competent Police Headquarters, through the completion of a form that allows to highlight the discriminatory matrix of the event (racism, anti-Semitism, territorial discrimination, etc.) and to provide some essential elements to fully analyze the incident, including the summary description of the episode."* A special reporting form has been prepared for this purpose.

Oscad's involvement is also envisaged with reference to the information campaigns indicated in Article 13 of the Declaration of Intent signed on June 27, 2023, by the Minister of the Interior, the Minister for Sport and Youth, the National Coordinator for the fight against anti-Semitism and the Secretary General of the Italian Football Federation.

Since February 2023, the Observatory has also joined the European project "Combating Hate speech in Sport" funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe in cooperation with the Department for Sport of the Presidency of the Council of Mini

The reports of the Associazione Italiana Calciatori (Italian Footballers' Association) (AIC)

AIC, an organization that protects and assists professional footballers in Serie A, B, Lega Pro and, since 2000, also amateur footballers (including Women's football and 5-a-side football), has created an observatory that publishes the annual report *Calciatori sotto tiro (Footballers Under Fire)*, which reports data and information on cases of violence in the world of football. The sources used include newspapers, websites, sports judge's reports, and reports from their own staff present throughout the country. The report documents cases in which players are

⁷⁶ See: <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/ministero/osservatori-commissioni-e-centri-coordinamento/osservatorio-sicurezza-contro-atti-discriminatori-oscad>

⁷⁷ See: https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2022-01/presentazione_attivita_oscad.pdf

⁷⁸ Information contained in a note sent by OSCAD to Lunaria on August 31, 2023 following a specific meeting request related to the subject of this study.

subjected to acts of physical, verbal and/or psychological violence⁷⁹, the place where the acts were carried out (inside or outside the stadium), the individuals who were victims and those who perpetrated the acts, the category of play, the type of threat and intimidation practiced, the motive⁸⁰, the effects it produced, and the reaction of the clubs and players. The published data also disaggregate the cases according to the continental geographical area of origin of the affected players and the region where the incident occurred. The latest report, dedicated to the 2021-2022 football season, documents 121 cases of violence that in 43 percent of cases had racism as a motive.⁸¹

The Osservatorio Antisemitismo della Fondazione CDEC (CDEC Foundation's Anti-Semitism Observatory monitoring)

The Anti-Semitism Observatory monitors anti-Semitism⁸² in Italy on a daily basis and publishes an annual report.⁸³

Physical or verbal assaults, writing and graffiti, online insults, public speeches are documented, and a specific effort is devoted to monitoring online anti-Semitism.

The Observatory learns about incidents of anti-Semitism through the mainstream media, social networks, and reports to the Anti-Semitism Antenna, which are currently made mostly via email, WhatsApp, and through tags on social networks. However, the social network monitoring part is being analyzed separately from the rest of the cases "because that would otherwise lead us to a much higher number of incidents of anti-Semitism."⁸⁴ Incidents of anti-Semitism are aggregated into ten types devised by the Anti-Semitism Observatory for analytical purposes: physical attacks against people, anti-Semitism in the mass media, anti-Semitism on the web, defamation and insults, discrimination, extreme violence against people, graffiti and graphics, threats to people, vandalism, other. Many of the reported cases are published online, among them, those involving the world of sports, especially football, are identifiable by a specific tag.⁸⁵ The form used to receive reports through the website is very simple: it only requires some biographical data from the submitter and a brief description of the incident while allowing documentation to be attached. The importance of simplifying the reporting methods as much as possible was emphasized by one of the researchers interviewed according to whom the more complex the reporting form is, the more people who want to report are discouraged from doing so:

⁷⁹ Acts of violence are divided into the following types: chants, insults, banners, social media, physical assaults, theft, property damage, other.

⁸⁰ Motives fall into three broad categories: "bad" performance, racism, and an unwelcome jersey change.

⁸¹ See: AIC, *Report. Calciatori sotto tiro (Footballers Under Fire). Stagione 2021/2022. VIII edizione, 2023*, p.6 available here:

<https://www.assocalciatori.it/sites/default/files/attachment/news/Calciatori%20sotto%20tiro%202021-2022.pdf>

⁸² The Anti-Semitism Observatory classifies as an incident of anti-Semitism any intentional act directed against Jewish persons, organizations or property, where there is evidence that the action has anti-Semitic motives or content, or that the victim was targeted because he or she was Jewish or believed to be Jewish.

⁸³ See Osservatorio Antisemitismo (ed.), CDEC, *Relazione annuale sull'antisemitismo in Italia (Annual Report on Anti-Semitism in Italy)*, 2022, available here: https://osservatorioantisemitismo.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/RapportoAnnuale2022_Italiano.pdf

⁸⁴ Interview IT5.

⁸⁵ See: <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/tag/antisemitismo-nello-sport/>

"the more difficult the reporting, the longer the procedure, in my opinion that also makes many people not report the things they see because maybe if I have to work so hard to report a post, maybe I do not do it."

In an effort precisely to counteract under-reporting as much as possible, the Observatory will be engaged in a specific project in the upcoming months that will try to standardize the information collection system as much as possible.

The Observatory Cronache di ordinario razzismo (Chronicles of Ordinary Racism)

Since 2007 Lunaria has undertaken a systematic monitoring on the evolution of xenophobia and racism in Italy, which is available on the dedicated website www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org. The goal of monitoring is not to collect data, but to make visible everyday forms of racism by narrating them.

Reports come in either directly (through referrals from victims, witnesses or other associations by email, via the web and, starting in 2020, through a service of legal counseling against racism) or indirectly (through print media, web and social networks).⁸⁶

The archive is updated periodically after careful checking on the sources, writing a brief description of the cases and classifying them on the basis of a classification system that was designed taking into account definitions and main indicators adopted internationally.⁸⁷

Cases are first documented on the basis of some simple basic information: the date and place (region, province, municipality), a brief narrative description of the incident, and an indication of the source of the information. In a second phase, the cases are stored in a database that allows for disaggregation of the information and data collected based on a classification system that permits aggregations of the cases based on the following variables: the type of discriminatory act or behavior (discrimination, verbal violence, physical violence, or damage to property or assets)⁸⁸; the discriminatory motive: national or ethnic origins, somatic traits, religious affiliation, cultural practices; the scope of discrimination; the gender of the victims; the age group of the victims and the actors of discrimination (< 18 years old, young people 18-29 years old, adults 30-65 years old, seniors 65 years old and older). The monitored areas include the world of sports. In this case, the information collected allows data to be disaggregated by sport level, sport discipline, and groups of discrimination actors (players, fans, referees, sports officials).

CVCS experience with the Barometro dell'odio nello sport (Barometer of Hate in Sports)

An original experience compared to those presented above was promoted by Centro Volontari Cooperazione allo Sviluppo (Volunteer Center for Development Cooperation) (CVCS), an NGO based in Gorizia. In the framework of the project *Odiare non è uno sport (Hate*

⁸⁶ Interview IT2.

⁸⁷ The archive is available here: <https://www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org/il-razzismo-quotidiano/>

⁸⁸ Verbal violence, which represents the most recurrent violence, is disaggregated on the basis of a second-level classification broken down into four main categories: insults and threats, online and offline hate speech, propaganda (writing, banners, flyers, posters with discriminatory content), and public demonstrations (chants).

is not a sport)⁸⁹, CVCS developed in 2020, in collaboration with CODER, Center of the Department of Cultures, Politics and Society of the University of Turin, an initial *Barometer of Hate in Sports*⁹⁰ that will see a new edition in October 2023.⁹¹

The *Barometer* was produced based on a three-month monitoring of the Twitter and Facebook pages of the five main Italian sports newspapers: La Gazzetta dello Sport, Tuttosport, Il Corriere dello Sport, Sky Sport and Sport Mediaset. 4,857 Facebook posts, 4,554 Twitter posts, 443,567 Facebook comments and 16,991 Twitter comments were analyzed.

Posts and comments were categorized into four dimensions of hate speech: vulgar language, verbal aggression, physical threat, and discrimination. The report offers some breakdowns of the data by sports discipline and an in-depth look at football, highlighting the teams most present in posts and comments that contain hate speech, as well as the most visible sports personalities on the posts and comments analyzed.

According to the *Barometer* editors, the first monitoring showed that when it comes to online sports, hate speech does not fall below 10.9 percent of comments on Facebook and 18.6 percent on Twitter. Vulgar language (14% on Facebook and 31% on Twitter) and verbal aggression (73% and 60%) are the most frequent forms. However, discrimination (7% and 5%) and physical aggression (5% and 4%) are also not insignificant. Football's overrepresentation compared to other sports is evident; only basketball, Formula 1 and tennis showed enough comment flow to be analyzed.

Facebook and Twitter were the only social media chosen to carry out the first edition because a mere textual analysis was planned; in the second edition of the *Barometer of Hate in Sports*, a specific analysis dedicated to Instagram, Tik Tok and Telegram will also be carried out.

The SPAD Observatory in Bologna

The COSPE-led Observatory of SPAD, the Municipality of Bologna Anti-Discrimination support service, is an interesting example of monitoring and classifying information related to reports directly made to the support service by victims or witnesses of discrimination. It deserves to be mentioned because it represents a model of a territorial observatory, developed in co-design between the municipal administration and 33 local associations, which closely connects the activity of monitoring with that of protecting victims of discrimination.⁹² This connection, as we shall see, constitutes one of the elements considered indispensable by many of those interviewed in order to organize a functioning system for monitoring discrimination in the world of sports. The information on individual cases is initially collected in a survey form filled out by the support service operator, however, the user is left free to provide only the information he or she deems appropriate; then the collected information is entered into a database that is used exclusively by the support service operators. The data are then anonymized, entered into a second database and processed. The published data offer information regarding the modality (Direct, Indirect, Institutional, Systemic, Perceived); type of discrimination (Differentiated treatment, Verbal assault, Physical assault, Vandalism, Hate speech); motive (Religion, Origin/Nationality, Ethnic origin, Gender identity and expression,

⁸⁹ See: <https://www.odiarenoneunosport.it/>

⁹⁰ See: Odiare non è uno sport, Università degli Studi di Torino, CPS, *Barometro dell'odio nello sport*, 2020.

⁹¹ Interview IT8.

⁹² Interview IT3.

Sexual orientation, Disability, Age, Socio-economic status, Other personal conditions), and the discriminating agents (Private entities, Public services or administration, Private citizens, Systemic discrimination, Law enforcement, No perpetrator identified). Finally, some biographical information of users (age, country of origin), area and place of discrimination, and type of interventions undertaken by the service are recorded. In the current classification system, it is intended that discrimination in sports should be classified within the "leisure" category.

Carta di Roma (Charter of Rome) Association's media monitoring

Carta di Roma Association, which was founded in 2011 in collaboration with the Osservatorio di Pavia (Pavia Observatory), has been conducting systematic monitoring of information on migrants and minorities of foreign origin for several years.⁹³ The results are presented in annual reports.

The press analysis consists of two parts: a content analysis carried out on the headlines of articles on the front pages of six Italian newspapers - *Avvenire*, *La Stampa*, *Il Giornale*, *La Repubblica*, *il Corriere della Sera*, *Il Fatto Quotidiano* - and a lexical analysis carried out on a larger sample of headlines in the press, national and local newspapers and periodicals.

The analysis on television news is carried out on the prime time editions of the news programs of three RAI channels (Tg1, Tg2 and Tg3), three Mediaset channels (Tg4, Tg5, Studio Aperto) and TgLa7. The period of analysis is from January 1 to October 31 each year.

Regarding daily newspapers, the data published in the annual reports offer an in-depth analysis that provides information on the number of migration-related news stories that appeared on the front pages, their distribution throughout the year, and the agenda of covered topics classified into thematic areas (migration flows, reception, society and culture, economy and labor, crime and security, terrorism, and since 2020 Covid-19). News stories related to racism are placed in the "Culture and Society" category, but the filing system is constructed in such a way that front-page articles that contain an explicit reference to racism in sports in the headlines can be extrapolated.⁹⁴

The data, provided at the request of the association, show little coverage of racism in sports in the headlines of the six newspapers monitored by Carta di Roma. Most of the headlines are about racist chants in stadiums and racist attacks with insults and threats to athletes in the world of football. From 2018 to 2022, the percentage of headlines/articles on the front pages that explicitly and specifically thematized racism in sports is 2.1 % out of the total content related to the thematic dimension "society and culture." The majority of headlines on the front pages concern incidents of racism in the world of football.

A relatively more significant coverage seems to be offered by television news.

Primetime news programs in the five-year period 2018-2022 thematized the issue of racism in sports in conjunction with news events (racist slurs and chants towards black players during football games; victories of volleyball teams) or at celebrations and anti-racism initiatives supported and promoted by black athletes.

⁹³Carta di Roma is a second-level association established on the initiative of UNHCR, the Italian Federation of Journalists, the Order of Journalists, and a number of Italian associations with the aim of promoting accurate information on migrants, asylum seekers, and Roma, Sinti, and Caminanti minorities by carrying out training activities aimed at journalists, media monitoring and analysis. For further information: www.cartadiroma.org

⁹⁴ Interview IT1.

From 2018 to 2022, the percentage of services that explicitly and specifically thematized racism in sports is 4.4 % out of the total content related to the thematic dimension "society and culture."



Source: Carta di Roma Reports, elaborations edited by Osservatorio di Pavia (Pavia Observatory)

What clearly emerges is an underrepresentation of the phenomenon, which seems to confirm that only the most sensational cases of racism in sports manage to gain visibility in the generalist national media.⁹⁵ In order to carry out a more targeted and systematic quantitative monitoring of the media representation of the phenomenon, it would be necessary to consider sports publications on the one hand, and to carry out targeted monitoring of local media on the other.

The 100 experts in sports

Another interesting experience, aimed at stimulating greater pluralism in the media with reference to gender issues, was promoted by the Rete Gi.U.Li.A. (Gi.U.Li.A. Network) of women journalists, which in 2023 extended its *100 donne contro gli stereotipi* (*100 Women Against Stereotypes*) project to sports by publishing online a list of 100 women sports experts.⁹⁶ It is an interesting initiative that seeks to address the problem of pluralism in the media at its source by trying to facilitate the involvement of women, as experts, in the production of information. Currently the list of sports experts reports only one Afrodescendant expert, but it is possible to report an expert by contacting the observatory. The selection criteria adopted are presented in a document available online.⁹⁷ The initiative is less directly connected to the main subject of this research, but it is at least likely that greater cultural plurality in media editorial offices (sports and otherwise) could contribute on the one hand to a more correct and systematic representation of the forms of racism that run through the world of sports, and on the other it could in itself constitute an element of prevention of the phenomenon.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ See: <https://100esperte.it/search?area=Sport>

⁹⁷ https://100esperte.it/media/uploads/criteri_selezione_2023.pdf

Strengths, critical issues noted and working insights

The analysis carried out seems to confirm the absence of a coordinated system for monitoring racism in sports both with reference to institutional activities and those promoted by civil society.

Poor transparency and uncertainty of the cadence of official data,⁹⁸ concentration of attention on the football discipline,⁹⁹ insufficient collaboration among the different actors involved,¹⁰⁰ and lack of harmonization among the information classification systems adopted¹⁰¹ seem to characterize the initiatives promoted at the governmental level.

With reference to the world of football, what emerges is the problem of the lack of an easily accessible system for referee reports and the fact that racist incidents that occur on sports fields are often not reported, and without the report or the reason for the suspension of the match, it becomes difficult to quantify the spread of racism. Therefore, it would be desirable for sports federations to promote specific interventions to document how many incidents of racism are actually reported by match directors.¹⁰² The United Kingdom could provide a good example in this regard: there is a requirement for sports federations to publish data on diversity and inclusion, moreover, a task force, composed of journalists and cultural workers and pedagogists, has been set up to combat discrimination in football.¹⁰³

Fragmentation and extemporaneousness,¹⁰⁴ difficulty in accessing sources,¹⁰⁵ lack of resources,¹⁰⁶ lack of nationwide coverage, and poor connection between reporting, monitoring and protection activities,¹⁰⁷ on the other hand, seem to be the main critical issues that characterize the initiatives promoted by civil society.

The widespread creation of anti-racism support services and antennas capable of presiding over the territory,¹⁰⁸ the simplification and "unbureaucratization" of reporting methods and a diversification of monitoring methodologies,¹⁰⁹ the focus on establishing trusting relationships with communities exposed to racialization,¹¹⁰ the possibility of ensuring continuity of monitoring and protection activities over time including through the involvement of local entities,¹¹¹ and more timely feedback to the reports received¹¹² could facilitate the development of more accurate monitoring activities and facilitate the understanding of their usefulness, both by racialization-exposed groups and by the whole range of actors involved in sports.

⁹⁸ Interview IT5.

⁹⁹ Interviews IT2 and IT17.

¹⁰⁰ Interview IT17.

¹⁰¹ Interview IT5.

¹⁰² Interview IT11.

¹⁰³ Interview IT13.

¹⁰⁴ Interview IT9.

¹⁰⁵ Interviews IT2 and IT5.

¹⁰⁶ Interviews IT9, IT1 cit. and IT20.

¹⁰⁷ Interviews IT9, IT2, IT5.

¹⁰⁸ Interviews IT9, IT3.

¹⁰⁹ Interviews IT5, IT20 and IT21.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Interviews IT9, IT20.

¹¹² Interview IT5.

The practice of using the data and information collected to promote advocacy interventions capable of impacting those affected by discrimination and/or redirecting public policy, particularly to eliminate certain forms of institutional and structural racism, still seems too limited.¹¹³ This seems to be particularly evident with regard to access to membership and sports competitions for young athletes who do not have Italian citizenship.¹¹⁴

Finally, the direct involvement of those who are at greatest risk of racialization in the conception and designing of anti-discrimination interventions in sports is considered essential to establishing the relationship of trust that determines the success or failure of prevention, monitoring, mitigation and redress initiatives for victims of discrimination.¹¹⁵

Lastly, regarding the media representation of racism in sports, the promotion of targeted monitoring especially focused on local media and related social media pages could help bring out many cases of "ordinary" discrimination that do not gain coverage in the national media. The main obstacle seems in this case to be the very high cost that this type of monitoring requires.¹¹⁶

2.2 Case Studies: Limits and Best Practices

The Italian cultural and sports scene, as we have seen, presents a number of peculiarities that make it an interesting case study from a sociological perspective. A number of projects and proposals have been tested to monitor and combat discrimination at multiple levels (local, regional, national) in sports and everyday life. Initiatives that have been implemented with or without the support of institutions. This makes the Italian case an interesting one because it is characterized more by spontaneous initiatives of autonomous associative realities than by "top-down" institutional planning.

Below is an outline of the successful elements, limitations and potential room for improvement of some of the experiences presented above.

Carta di Roma (Charter of Rome)

An interesting case study is that of the association "Carta di Roma", founded in 2011, which strives to be a reliable point of reference for all those actively involved in the subjects specified in the Charter, primarily journalists, media operators, professional organisations, institutions, associations, and long-standing activists who advocate for the rights of asylum seekers, refugees, minorities, and migrants in the media.

For several years, the association has been systematically monitoring information about migrants and foreign-origin minorities and presenting the outcomes in annual reports. The press analysis consists of two main elements: a content analysis carried out on the headlines of articles published on the front pages of six Italian newspapers - *Avvenire*, *La Stampa*, *Il Giornale*, *La Repubblica*, *il Corriere della Sera*, *Il Fatto Quotidiano* - and a lexical analysis carried out on a wider range of headlines from national and local newspapers and magazines. The intention behind this monitoring is praiseworthy, especially in a country such as Italy, where there has been extensive debate on the role of the media in perpetuating the

¹¹³ Interviews IT2, IT9.

¹¹⁴ Interviews IT2 cit. and IT11.

¹¹⁵ Interviews IT9, IT20, IT21.

¹¹⁶ Interview IT1.

securitarian frame¹¹⁷, often to the detriment of racialized or foreign-born communities and the responsibilities of the Order of Journalists in condemning discriminatory phrases by its members¹¹⁸. The monitoring conducted by Carta di Roma highlights the impact of communication on amplifying subjective perception of certain phenomena. Indeed, the manner in which a situation is defined and the language adopted in the media wield a decisive influence over how individuals perceive and experience that situation. Metaphors and other forms of language are a distinct means by which social reality is simplified¹¹⁹. However, they are often utilised to stigmatise migrants and minorities by blaming them for specific phenomena, ultimately "identifying an enemy" and justifying action taken against them¹²⁰. The Carta di Roma monitoring is appreciable for its approach in examining how traditional media portrays migrants in Italy. The data collection, storage, and classification methods allow for the analysis of information regarding instances of racism in sports regardless of where they are presented in the news headlines. However, from a methodological standpoint, the limitation of Carta di Roma monitoring lies in the small number of newspapers being monitored. This can be easily overcome by expanding the scope to include a greater number of newspapers subject to monitoring. The inclusion of leading sports publications in the monitoring procedure may facilitate an investigation into the behaviour of sports journalism concerning cases, events, and expressions of discrimination within the sports industry. This enhancement may provide a thorough analysis of the linguistic methods and depictions utilised within these contexts.

A.I.C. (Associazione Italiana Calciatori- Italian Footballers' Association)

A.I.C. (Italian Footballers' Association) is an organisation founded in 1968 for the protection of the position of football players, which at that time was not clearly defined and adequately protected. Today, AIC is recognized as a crucial interlocutor by both the Football Federation and the Leagues, and it presents itself as a coalition that has its own representatives among the football players themselves, including those from Serie A, Serie B, Lega Pro, Dilettanti (Amateurs), Women's Football, and Futsal. As of the 2013/2014 season, A.I.C. has set up a monitoring centre to document all cases of violence, intimidation and threats against footballers, both professional and amateur. The annual report "*Calciatori sotto tiro*" (Footballers Under Fire) documents cases of verbal or physical violence against professional, amateur, or recreational football players in Italy. The observatory collects all cases in which players are the target of acts of physical, verbal and/or psychological violence by analysing daily news from local, national, and international newspapers and websites, along with referee reports and reports submitted by AIC partners throughout the country. The observatory documents the location of incidents, the victims, and the perpetrators involved. It records the type of threats and intimidation used, the consequent impact, and the responses of players and clubs¹²¹. The monitoring conducted by AIC shows the commitment of the

¹¹⁷ A prevalent theme since the 1980s with the rise of the globalisation process and the surge in international migration. Among the many studies on the Italian case refer to: Battistelli et al. (2008).

¹¹⁸ On the functions and limitations of the Order of Journalists, refer to <<https://www.ilpost.it/2021/04/10/ordine-dei-giornalisti/>>.

¹¹⁹ M.G, Galantino, (2010).

¹²⁰ Z, Bauman (2011).

¹²¹ Refer to: AIC, Report. *Calciatori sotto tiro*. Stagione 2021/2022. VIII edizione, 2023 (AIC, Report. Footballers under fire. Season 2021/2022. 8th edition, 2023). Available via the following link: <https://www.assocalciatori.it/news/report-%E2%80%9Ccalciatori-sotto-tiro%E2%80%9D-1>

primary footballers' association in Italy to actively participate in monitoring and combating discrimination. This is not a trivial matter because it goes against the typical Italian tendency where football players often struggle to take a stance on social issues¹²². The fight against discrimination should involve the teammates of those who are targeted by racist insults. This will ensure that potential victims are not left alone. The participation of football players is praiseworthy and crucial in advocating for a sports culture that denounces discrimination, especially among team members. In terms of methodology, a greater transparency of the sources used and a more detailed exposition of the data collected would be desirable.

Combating discrimination in sports is a worthy cause that involves athletes. The implementation of more athlete-led initiatives makes it easier to marginalise individuals who engage in discriminatory acts.

The SPAD Observatory

The Anti Discrimination Counseling service, provided by the Municipality of Bologna, offers services specifically tailored to listen, guide, and support individuals who are either witnesses or victims of discrimination based on religious, ethnic, "racial", or origin-related grounds. This initiative, launched in 2021 through collaboration between the Municipal Administration and third-sector organisations (with COSPE¹²³ playing a prominent role), aims to monitor incidents of discrimination in the region. Reports from victims or witnesses of discrimination are collected directly through the Antidiscrimination counseling service. The team, composed of both an internal municipal staff member and an external operator, collects data exclusively on SPAD interactions during consultations.

Regarding data dissemination, there are methods of engagement that incorporate different stakeholders within the SPAD Network. This comprises interviews recorded in the report, sharing report results, and creating video testimonials about the SPAD Bologna project. The chosen methodology merges qualitative and quantitative analyses of discrimination reports compiled and documented between November 27, 2021 (the day SPAD was launched) and October 31, 2022 (the end of the pilot phase). The analysis is complemented by reflections and information from the SPAD team on the work of the project during the same experimental period. Overall, SPAD presents itself as a credit-worthy entity for several reasons: 1) its participatory nature, which is evident from the ongoing dialogue between local entities, the community, and the Municipal Administration; 2) its aim to collect, analyse, and rework data from received reports to guide the actions of the Administration, internally and externally; 3) its "intersectional" approach to discrimination, which allows for the recognition of the complexity of "multiple" and "intersectional" forms of discrimination, characterised by the intersection of discriminatory factors (disability, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.). Such an approach enables the identification and addressing of multiple layers of discrimination; 4) the effective functioning of SPAD is ensured by the network of associations and organisations supporting it throughout the entire territory via continuous dialogue among local entities. These are all interesting aspects which, in some

¹²² The unwillingness of football players, particularly top-tier ones, to take stances on social issues has been frequently noted in various interviews with industry insiders, as evidenced by the interviews IT12 and IT15.

¹²³ See: SPAD. Primo Rapporto dell'Osservatorio dello Sportello Antidiscriminazione del Comune di Bologna, anno 2022, (SPAD. First Report of the Observatory of the Anti-Discrimination Counseling service of the Municipality of Bologna, year 2022), available via the following link: <https://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/AnteprimaPDF.aspx?id=5754>

ways, differentiate this project from others. For instance, the monitoring's objective to guide local government actions is not typically seen in similar initiatives. Additionally, the extension of monitoring to include the entire community rather than solely minority groups, as well as SPAD's ability to establish a network and cultivate relationships among various local entities, sets it apart¹²⁴. The SPAD network is undoubtedly effective and involves various entities. However, a limitation is the absence of participation from sports organisations. This deficiency, due to multiple factors, has resulted to date in a lack of monitoring attention to what is happening in the world of sports.

Antisemitism Observatory of the CDEC Foundation

The "Antisemitism Observatory" is a division of the CDEC Foundation (Contemporary Jewish Documentation Center Foundation), founded in 1975. It conducts daily surveillance of antisemitism in all its complex manifestations, with a particular emphasis on the various aspects, sources, and forms of this phenomenon. The monitoring carried out by CDEC collects and documents incidents of antisemitism, such as physical or verbal assaults, writings and graffiti, online insults, and public speeches. It analyses data related to acts of anti-Jewish hostility, conducts public opinion research, and undertakes focused studies. From a methodological perspective, daily monitoring is conducted by gathering articles, news, and research from both national and international sources such as press, websites, and blogs. The methodology utilised by the Antisemitism Observatory to record and classify antisemitic acts, along with the typologies used to catalogue these incidents, results from a standardised analysis system shared with other international institutions such as the Community Security Trust in London, the Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University, and the Parliamentary Coordination for Combating Antisemitism. The Observatory receives reports of incidents of antisemitism through major media outlets and reports them to the Antisemitism Helpline. Online tracking is utilised to monitor the rise of anti-Semitism on emerging means of communication, such as social media platforms. Based on the collected data, both qualitative and quantitative demographic investigations are conducted. The monitoring encompasses the entire national territory¹²⁵ with the aim of increasing awareness regarding anti-Semitic bias and educating people about the significance of respecting diversity. The Observatory conducts vigilant monitoring. The intention to involve institutions, schools, educators, students, scholars, communicators, and social facilitators is commendable, particularly with the increasing incidence of antisemitism in Italy.¹²⁶ The effectiveness of the initiatives suggested by the CDEC Foundation lies in their eagerness, often achieved, to engage in productive partnerships with institutions to fight against antisemitism. This capacity to influence institutions possesses a valuable quality that encourages desirable actions. Areas for improvement could involve enhancing the description of the methodology used to gather information related to cases of antisemitism presented in the annual reports.

¹²⁴ The need to establish connections between various anti-racist organisations or entities involved in monitoring and fighting discrimination was a recurring theme in several interviews.

¹²⁵ For further information, refer to the following website: <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/chi-siamo/>.

¹²⁶Source: <https://eurispes.eu/news/eurispes-risultati-del-rapporto-italia-2020/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20majority%20of%20Italians,based%20on%20hate%20and%20racism.>>

The analysed case studies have certain limitations, which are easily overcome, but they generate good practices. Not everyone attributes the appropriate significance to the topic of sports, often considering it a minor social issue. A widely held belief, which has long been present in the Italian academic community, asserts that sport is not a relevant topic for scientific research¹²⁷. This belief has therefore made it more complex to carry out monitoring, investigations, or academic research on the topic of sports, resulting in Italian research on these subjects lagging significantly behind that conducted in other countries¹²⁸. However, various forms of discrimination occur frequently and across multiple levels in Italian sports. Therefore, as illustrative examples of the state of racism in Italian sport, we present two cases of racist incidents that gained national prominence for different reasons.

The Tam Tam Basket case

Tam Tam Basket is a non-profit amateur sports association. It was founded in 2016 in Castel Volturno as a basketball team consisting solely of children whose parents are non-EU citizens, mainly of African descent. The team members (all aged 13 to 15) were born and raised in Italy, but due to the current citizenship law, they are not recognized as Italian citizens. The Italian citizenship law is based on the "ius sanguinis" principle (right of blood). If an individual is born in Italy to foreign parents, they automatically acquire their parents' citizenship until they reach the age of 18. After meeting prescribed criteria, they can then petition for Italian citizenship. Until they attain the age of 18, even if they were born, raised, and educated in Italy, they are deemed non-nationals.¹²⁹ Presently, over half a million young people born in Italy to foreign parents (commonly referred to as "second-generation"¹³⁰) reside here. Furthermore, the number rises to almost one million individuals if we include those who arrived at a young age and were raised here. Tam Tam was created with the goal of promoting inclusion through sports but is hampered by a bureaucracy that limits its potential. This scenario has resulted in various issues concerning the registration and involvement of players in federal leagues. In 2017, the team encountered obstacles when attempting to register for the championship hosted by the Italian Basketball Federation (FIP). The FIP regulations only permit two non-Italian players to participate in youth leagues. This discrimination within institutions sparked a campaign in support of Tam Tam, ultimately resulting in the establishment of the "salva Tam Tam" (save Tam Tam) provision by authorities. The revised regulations allow for yearly registration of sports organisations that are linked with sports federations, including for young non-nationals without current resident permits, as long as they have attended school for at least four months. This legislative alteration enabled the team to participate in competitions. However, the favourable outcome of this situation should not obfuscate the gravity of the obstacles that still limit the right to citizenship and sports practice in Italy.

The Cherif Traoré case

In December 2022, despite the fact that the sport in question - rugby - is often seen as 'noble', an incident of racial discrimination received significant media coverage. The incident implicated noteworthy players from the national team. The event occurred at the Christmas dinner of 2022 among team members and was accompanied by the "Secret Santa" tradition of

¹²⁷ Barba, B. (2021).

¹²⁸ Porro, N. (2001).

¹²⁹ Einaudi, L. (2007).

¹³⁰ Azzolini et al. (2015).

gift exchange, with participants unaware of the sender of each gift. Cherif Traoré, a Guinean-born prop who plays for Benetton and the Italian national rugby team, received a rotten banana as a gift. The incident received considerable media coverage after Traoré reported it on his Instagram profile. Ivan Nemer, a prop for Benetton Rugby, was identified as the perpetrator and was suspended for six months by the Rugby Federation. As further punishment, he was also required to undergo a sensitivity training programme on the issue of racism, organised in collaboration with a relevant organisation¹³¹. Subsequently, a programme was organised that led Ivan Nemer and his team-mates to visit an organisation dedicated to supporting migrants. The solidarity within the rugby community (both nationally and internationally) in condemning discriminatory acts demonstrates that this is a viable and replicable process for other sports. If this does not occur, it indicates a lack of willingness on the part of institutions in other sports (i.e. clubs, federations, leagues) to combat or denounce instances of discrimination through uniformly promoting condemnations and sanctions. This reluctance, which seems to be culturally rooted, is also influenced by economic reasons that stand to gain from using hatred as an immediate identity builder, rather than promoting and accepting fair play, which is less profitable and harder to cultivate¹³².

¹³¹ The organisation in question is called “Il razzismo è una brutta storia” (Racism is an ugly affair).

¹³² This thesis has also been corroborated by experts interviewed within the sports sector (spanning across different disciplines). Possible examples include interviews IT18 and IT19.

3 Conclusions

The Italian context

Racism in Italy has deep historical, cultural and religious roots¹³³, but Italy's transformation from a country of emigration to a country of immigration (officially traced back to 1974, when the number of foreign immigrants in Italy exceeded the number of Italian emigrants abroad for the first time)¹³⁴ marked a turning point, establishing a close connection between the proliferation of new forms of xenophobia and racism and the evolution of the migratory phenomenon.

The myth of "*Italians are good people*" is a *removal device* that has long allowed the structural character of racism in the country to be disregarded and ignored, starting with the erasure of the memory of the atrocities committed against Jews under the Fascist regime and throughout the short history of Italian colonialism. On the contrary, particularly from 2008 onward, a process of social, cultural and often even institutional legitimization of xenophobia and racism has favored its *trivialization, normalization* and, at some stages, even its explicit display and vindication.¹³⁵

Factors that have played a part in this are a public debate and a media narrative that tend to deal with racism in a superficial, discontinuous, polarized, instrumental and predominantly mediated way: direct participation and visibility of the people most exposed to the processes of racialization still remain very limited in the Italian public debate.¹³⁶

Trivialization and normalization tendencies also characterize racism in the sports world, hindering its prevention and countering¹³⁷ where racist insults and chants are reduced to "taunting" or, at best, to "cases of rudeness" by sports operators and, sometimes, even by journalists. Discrimination in Italian sports is evident in all sports disciplines and at all levels, although public and media attention tends to focus mainly on incidents of discrimination involving elite female and male football athletes.¹³⁸

The commitment of sports institutions to preventing and combating the phenomenon is still inadequate. What shapes this reluctance to intervene is the substantial backwardness of Italian sports culture, which is based on localist and non-national¹³⁹ identity elements, a culture that still struggles to make the principles of fair-play and solidarity its own, and which remains fundamentally influenced by the evolution of the national sport, football, predominantly conceived and represented as a *microcosm* separate from society, endowed with its own rules and traditions: a world in which anything can be and tends to be considered legitimate.¹⁴⁰

¹³³ See: Burgio A., Gabrielli G., (2012).

¹³⁴ Maciotti M.I., Pugliese E., *Gli immigrati in Italia, (Immigrants in Italy)*, Laterza, 1991.

¹³⁵ Rivera A, 2009, cit.

¹³⁶ Carta di Roma, (2022).

¹³⁷ Interviews IT4, IT7, IT2 and IT1.

¹³⁸ See Andrisani P., "*Il dodicesimo uomo in campo: il caso Balotelli e il razzismo nel pallone*", ("*The 12th man on the field: Balotelli case and racism in football*") in Lunaria (ed), (2020), cit.

¹³⁹ Dietschy, P. and Pivato, S. (2019).

¹⁴⁰ Dal Lago A., (2010), Interviews IT5 and IT7.

But far from constituting spaces separate from society, stadiums, and more generally sports venues, represent "laboratories of social and political experimentation"¹⁴¹ that are of great importance in legitimizing or delegitimizing different forms of discrimination and racism. The attention that football and sports more generally attract from a very large part of public opinion could therefore be a formidable tool for delegitimizing different forms of discrimination and racism inside and outside sports venues, if all the main actors involved (starting with athletes, managers, clubs, and sports journalists) took charge of them, even taking a public stand.

Indeed, the country has a solid national anti-discrimination and racism legislation and a sufficiently defined sports justice system. However, these find limits in the poor enforcement of existing rules and regulations, as also evidenced by some cases of victim blaming¹⁴² in the most recent sports chronicles.

Monitoring racism in sport

The analysis of a phenomenon as complex, multifaceted and widespread as racism cannot to date rest on the systematic and harmonized collection of official statistical and administrative data. As noted by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (Ecri), Italy does not yet have a coordinated, official and transparent national data collection system on discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech (ECRI, 2016).¹⁴³

In Italy, the official data on discrimination and racism made available by Unar (National Office Against "Racial" Discrimination), Oscad (Observatory for Security Against Discriminatory Acts), SDI (the database of the Judicial Police Investigation System), the Ministry of Justice and ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics) in fact differ in their purposes, the survey methodologies adopted, the heterogeneity of the field of observation and the classification systems used.

Lack of transparency and uncertainty in the frequency of official data¹⁴⁴, concentration of institutional attention on the football discipline¹⁴⁵, insufficient collaboration among the different institutional actors involved¹⁴⁶, and lack of harmonization among the information classification systems adopted¹⁴⁷ seem to characterize the initiatives promoted at the institutional and governmental level. Specifically referring to the world of football, what emerges is the lack of an agile access system to referee reports and insufficient enforcement of existing regulations.¹⁴⁸

On the other hand, the multiplicity of experiments in monitoring discrimination and racism promoted by some sports and anti-racist associations, as well as the observatories

¹⁴¹ Interview IT7.

¹⁴² Cole A., (2007).

¹⁴³ The Report is available here: <https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Italy/ITA-CbC-V-2016-019-ITA.pdf>

¹⁴⁴ Interview IT5.

¹⁴⁵ Interviews IT2 and IT17.

¹⁴⁶ Interview IT17.

¹⁴⁷ Interview IT5.

¹⁴⁸ Interviews IT2 and IT5.

implemented at the territorial level, reflect the lack of those lines of guidance and coordination that should find their natural place in institutional, public and sports authorities.¹⁴⁹

Fragmentation and extemporaneousness¹⁵⁰, difficulty in accessing sources¹⁵¹, lack of resources,¹⁵² lack of nationwide coverage, and poor connection between reporting, monitoring, and protection activities¹⁵³ in fact seem to be the main critical issues that characterize the initiatives promoted by civil society. In addition, the practice of using the data and information collected to promote advocacy interventions capable of impacting people affected by discrimination and/or redirecting public policies still seems too limited.

Pathways of action

Systematically monitoring the forms of discrimination that daily cross the world of sport, on the other hand, is indispensable for analyzing its dynamics and characteristics and defining effective strategies for prevention, mitigation and protection of those affected. The member states of the European Union have, moreover, been urged several times to equip themselves with organized mechanisms for the reporting and management of discriminatory behavior in the world of sports and systems for monitoring and data collection by collaborating with sports federations.¹⁵⁴

According to the opinions gathered in the interviews, among the characteristics that should qualify systems for monitoring racism in sport are *systematicity*,¹⁵⁵ *replicability*,¹⁵⁶ *quality of the information and data collected*,¹⁵⁷ *simplicity of reporting procedures and tools*,¹⁵⁸ *networking and effectiveness*,¹⁵⁹ as in the ability to accompany monitoring initiatives with interventions aimed at protecting the rights of people affected by discrimination and preventing the reiteration of discriminatory phenomena. The monitoring practices experienced to date in Italy, both at the institutional and civil society levels, show gaps especially with regard to the last three elements mentioned above.

The interviews conducted revealed first and foremost the need to clearly define the objectives and purpose of national or local sponsored initiatives to monitor discrimination and racism in sport, distinguishing between the purposes of research and those of supporting victims of discrimination.¹⁶⁰ Any monitoring activities and initiatives that are accompanied by the dissemination of quantitative data should also provide detailed information on the sources used, the information collection methodologies adopted, and a complete and comprehensive representation of the data.

¹⁴⁹ Interviews IT1, IT4, IT7 and IT9.

¹⁵⁰ Interview IT9.

¹⁵¹ Interviews IT2 and IT5.

¹⁵² Interviews IT9, IT1 and IT20.

¹⁵³ Interviews IT9, IT2, IT5.

¹⁵⁴ See: ECRI, (2009) and FRA (2010)

¹⁵⁵ Interviews IT5, IT9.

¹⁵⁶ Interviews IT3, IT9.

¹⁵⁷ Interviews IT2 and IT9.

¹⁵⁸ Interview IT5.

¹⁵⁹ Interviews IT2, IT20 and IT21.

¹⁶⁰ Interviews IT1, IT5 and IT9.

It was pointed out by several interviewees that an ideal monitoring system should contemplate the distinction between monitoring activities of the *phenomenon* from monitoring initiatives that concern its *representation*.¹⁶¹ The latter distinction appears significant, where several of the monitoring experiences analyzed (both institutional and informal) report among the sources used those offered by the media (national and local press and social networks). In the current context, the use of media sources to reconstruct the evolution of the phenomenon seems related to the need to fill the deficit resulting from the lack of a structured system of protection and support for victims, especially in the field of grassroots sports. This could facilitate the development of monitoring activities based on the collection of direct reports.

Promoting *targeted monitoring of the media narrative* of racism in sports, especially if focused on sports titles, local media and related social pages, could help bring out with greater scientific evidence the forms of stereotyping that unfortunately still characterize the narrative of sports, especially when it is practiced by Afro-descendant or Roma athletes. The main obstacle to the implementation of such initiatives is the high costs they entail.

The need for a strong coordination between monitoring, data collection and processing initiatives was emphasized by many stakeholders with specific reference to the need to *harmonize both reporting and monitoring and support systems*.

The issue of *facilitating as much as possible the reporting* by victims or possible witnesses of discrimination occurring in sports was identified as crucial. To this end, the importance of diversifying the methodologies and tools for reporting discrimination from those specifically aimed at monitoring and analyzing the phenomenon was highlighted.

In the first case, the importance of allowing the *possibility of reporting* incidents of discrimination and racism *anonymously*, including through the available official channels, was stressed on the one hand¹⁶². On the other, the need to *simplify as much as possible* the amount and type of information requested during the first contact with the reporting person by focusing on a few basic elements: age and gender, nationality or "ethnic" or national origin, the form of discrimination (physical violence, verbal violence, violence against property or discrimination), the place, the sporting discipline and the date of the incident, and a free description of the incident, emerged with equal importance. This is also in order to foster as much as possible the development of a relationship of *empathy* and *trust* between the person collecting the report and the person reporting the discrimination.¹⁶³

The *widespread creation of anti-racism counseling services and antennas* capable of presiding over the territory¹⁶⁴, the simplification and "unbureaucratization" of reporting methods and a diversification of monitoring methodologies¹⁶⁵, the focus on establishing trusting relationships with communities exposed to racialization¹⁶⁶, the possibility of ensuring continuity of monitoring and protection activities over time including through the

¹⁶¹ Interviews IT1, IT5, IT7, IT9.

¹⁶² Interviews IT2 and IT5.

¹⁶³ Interviews IT20 and IT21.

¹⁶⁴ Interviews IT9, IT3.

¹⁶⁵ Interviews IT5, IT20 and IT21.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

involvement of local entities¹⁶⁷, and more timely feedback to the reports received¹⁶⁸ could facilitate the implementation of more accurate monitoring activities and facilitate the understanding of their usefulness, both by racialization-exposed groups and by the whole set of actors operating in the sporting field.

The *direct participation* of those who are at greatest risk of racialization in the conception and design of interventions is essential to establishing the relationship of trust that determines the success or failure of prevention, monitoring, mitigation and redress initiatives for victims of discrimination.¹⁶⁹

With reference to initiatives aimed at *documenting and analyzing* the phenomenon, the elements considered most relevant are the following:

- The promotion of initiatives aimed at fostering collaboration among the different actors involved (institutional, sports, anti-racist, media), including through the organization of consultation panels and the sharing of information related to the different interventions/projects and existing monitoring systems¹⁷⁰;
- The harmonization of information storage and classification systems adopted by different actors¹⁷¹;
- Medium- to long-term planning of activities, aimed at facilitating continuity, systematicity and consistency of data collection and analysis¹⁷²;
- The increase in public and private resources specifically dedicated to financing this type of activity.¹⁷³

If we wanted to identify *a minimum set of variables* that could be considered to structure an ideal classification system of reference at the national level, among the experiences studied the one tested with the *National Observatory against Discrimination in Sport "Mauro Valeri"* seems to provide useful insights. In fact, the system tested makes it possible to store and classify the reports received considering, the following variables: the type of discriminatory act or behavior (discrimination, verbal violence, physical violence, damage to possessions or property)¹⁷⁴; the territorial area of reference (e.g. municipality, province, and region); the sports disciplines involved; the level of sport (professional/elite; amateur and competitive grassroots sport; recreational and noncompetitive activity); the discriminatory motive: (somatic traits, national or "ethnic" origins, religious affiliation and beliefs, ability status and gender, sexual orientation); the gender and nationality of the victims; the age group of the victims and perpetrators of discrimination (minors 0-17 years, youth 18-29 years, adults 30-64 years, seniors 65 years and older); the type of actors of the discrimination (players, individual or group fans, referees, sports officials, private citizens); the type of victims' reactions (report

¹⁶⁷ Interviews IT9, IT20

¹⁶⁸ Interview IT5.

¹⁶⁹ Interviews IT9, IT20, IT21.

¹⁷⁰ Interviews IT5, IT9.

¹⁷¹ Interview IT5.

¹⁷² Interview IT9.

¹⁷³ Interviews IT1, IT9, IT20, IT21.

¹⁷⁴ Verbal violence, which is the most recurrent, could be disaggregated into a few subgroups: racist insults, threats or violence; propaganda; public demonstrations.

to the competent authorities, public complaint, no complaint); the type of sanctions taken (disciplinary, against the club, against the officials, Daspo, no sanction).

However, it would be a mistake to think that the monitoring of racism in sports is only a "technical" or technical-theoretical issue. As we have tried to point out, sport represents an important mirror of the trends that characterize the evolution of society as a whole, and the problem with which Italy is struggling to deal is that of the *deep cultural entrenchment of structural forms of racism*.

Preventing, monitoring, and combating racism more effectively in sports thus means, on the one hand, expanding as much as possible information initiatives on rights and equal opportunities and anti-discrimination awareness-raising and training interventions aimed at young people and schools.¹⁷⁵ But it also means calling for greater daily commitment against racism those who have the real power to change institutional policies and influence public opinion: primarily athletes, clubs and sports federations.

¹⁷⁵ Many entities that are part of the Rete Nazionale contro i discorsi e i fenomeni di odio (National Network Against Hate Speech and Hate Phenomena) promoted by Amnesty International are engaged in this field. For more details see here: <https://www.retecontrolodio.org/>.

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