

**Report
European Seminar
Involving Young Migrants
in Winter Sports**

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Report Multipliers' Seminar

Involving Young Migrants in Winter Sports

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Haus der Begegnung, Innsbruck

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- I) Opening Session
 - Welcome
 - Opening Addresses
 - Key Note Speech
- II) Plenary Session: Young Migrants and Winter Sports: Challenges and Opportunities
- III) Working Groups
 - Working Group A: Status Quo of initiatives to involve migrants in winter sports
 - Working Group B: Encouraging migrants and minorities to patronise winter sports; an effective and participatory strategy
 - Reports and Summary of Working Groups
- IV) Closing Plenary Session: Minorities and migrants in winter sport: A collective strategy towards the future

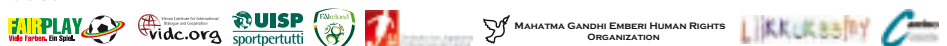
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Preface

This document presents the results, activities and proceedings of the multipliers seminar “Involving Young Migrants in Winter Sports” held in Innsbruck, Austria on 12 January 2012. The seminar brought together experts, actors, policy makers, sports women and men and administrators from 14 different countries.

This meeting was part of the European project “Sport Inclusion Network (SPIN) – Involving migrants in mainstream sport institutions” which is designed to promote and share good practices across Europe on the inclusion and involvement of migrants and other third-country nationals (including refugees) through and in mainstream sport. The project aims to raise awareness about the potential positive role of sport in terms of social inclusion of migrants and intercultural dialogue.

Attended by 46 participants, this multipliers’ seminar is the first of its kind in Europe to address the issue of minority involvement in winter sport and the question of the exclusion of traditional immigrant communities, with a focus on the Alpine region and Scandinavia. It touched on questions of stereotypes and how winter sports can attract and recruit young talents from migrant communities. It is very common to hear and see the involvement of minorities and people with migration backgrounds in summer sport especially football – albeit accompanying exclusion and discriminatory problems. The story is different when it comes to winter sport. This is the case at hobby, amateur and professional levels.

The seminar took place a day before the opening of the maiden Winter Youth Olympic Games (WYOG) 2012 in Innsbruck. The intention was to use this window of opportunity to discuss the issue of the under-representation and absence of immigrants in some of the traditional winter sports and the uniting, intercultural power of sports.

Among others, the main objectives of the seminar was raising awareness on the problems of exclusion and ethnic discrimination in European sport and foster equal rights in sport. It is also supposed to promote dialogue between various sport institutions and federations, migrant sport organisations and public authorities in order to make full use of the potential integrative and intercultural power of winter sports for young migrants

and ethnic minorities. And finally, to make mainstream sport institutions (clubs, associations, federations) more accessible and open to the needs and aspirations of young members of migrant communities.

In addition to lectures, presentations and two plenary sessions, two working groups met to discuss diverse issues with their results presented at the closing plenary session.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all participants, resource persons, our sponsors and all those who have in diverse ways contributed to the success of the seminar and the day to set the agenda for the future.

Bella Bello Bitugu,
FairPlay-VIDC



Introduction:

This multipliers' seminar was the first of its kind in Europe to address the issue of minority involvement in winter sport. This was an initiative by an independent group of organisations a day before the opening of the maiden Winter Youth Olympic Games (WYOG) 2012 in Innsbruck. The seminar was attended by youth coaches and workers, sport administrators, and other multipliers and stakeholders in sports.

Organiser

The one-day seminar was organised by the anti-discrimination initiative "FairPlay. Different Colours. One Game" of the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC). VIDC is a non-profit, international NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC of the United Nations. Over the years, FairPlay-VIDC has also worked with major sport governing bodies including UEFA, FIFA, IOC and also with the UN.

SPIN Project

The multipliers' seminar was organised as part of the ongoing project "Sport Inclusion Network (SPIN) – Involving migrants in mainstream sport institutions", co-funded by the European Commission – DG Education and Culture, Sport Unit.

The SPIN project is designed to promote and share good practices across Europe on the inclusion and involvement of migrants and other third-country nationals (including refugees) through and in mainstream sport. The project aims to raise awareness about the potential positive role of sport in terms of social inclusion of migrants and intercultural dialogue.

The EC project is carried out under the leadership of VIDC-FairPlay (Austria), together with the following European partner organisations: Camino (Germany), UISP Emilia Romagna (Italy), Liikkukaa (Finland), FAI – Football Association of Ireland (Ireland), Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organisation (Hungary) and the Portuguese Players Union SJPF (Portugal).

The seminar has been co-funded by the Austrian Ministry of Sports.

Focus on Winter Sports

The first WYOG gathered more than 1000 young athletes from 14 to 18 years, and hundreds of youth coaches and sport administrators were welcomed to Innsbruck. Sport disciplines that were competed in included ice hockey, skiing (Alpine and Nordic), ski jumping, snowboarding, biathlon, bobsleigh, curling, luge, figure skating etc. The seminar used this window of opportunity to discuss the issue of the under-representation and absence of immigrants in traditional winter sports and the uniting, intercultural power of sports.

The seminar was one of the first meetings focusing on winter sports and the question of exclusion of traditional immigrant communities, with a focus on the Alpine region and Scandinavia. It touched on questions of stereotypes and how winter sports can attract and recruit young talents from migrant communities.

Objectives of the Multiplier Seminar

The main objectives of the seminar were to raise awareness and sensitise the sporting world and the general public about the problems of exclusion and ethnic discrimination in European sport and to foster equal rights in sports – everybody should have the right to practice sport (irrespective of nationality, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender or economic status). Also to promote dialogue between various sport institutions and federations, migrant sport organisations and public authorities in order to make full use of the potential integrative and intercultural power of winter sports for young migrants and ethnic minorities and finally to make mainstream sport institutions (clubs, associations, federations) more accessible and open for the needs of young members of migrant communities.

As Peter Schröcksnadel, President of the Austrian Ski Federation, said prior to the seminar:

"There are two crux issues for the future of national sports – the attractiveness of school ski courses and the encouragement of migrant children, who do not have any relationship to skiing; the basic theme is therefore to get migrants to the snow"



1) Opening Session

Welcome

After a brief introduction by **Bella Bello Bitugu**, Project Coordinator at FairPlay-VIDC, and clarification on organisational issues, the Conference was kicked off by **Notburga Troger**, Head of the Integration Department of the City of Innsbruck, to welcome all the participants of the conference on behalf of the Mayor and Vice-Mayor of Innsbruck, **Christine Oppitz-Plörer** and **Christoph Kaufmann** respectively:

"Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, firstly I would like to apologise for holding my speech in German, however, whenever I represent the City of Innsbruck officially, it is of utmost importance to me that it will be presented correctly and without any room for misinterpretation. Therefore, I would like to thank Martina in advance for assisting me in this matter by translating. I would like to welcome you all on behalf of Ms Christine Oppitz-Plörer, who, as Bella already mentioned, unfortunately could not be with us here today, due to many appointments, which naturally come up at a time when the opening of the first Winter Youth Olympic Games is underway. I would also like to excuse Mr Christoph Kaufmann's absence, he was urgently called upon to a meeting at the regional government of Tyrol. However, I would like to point out that our Mayor has declared integration as a matter of top priority and Mr Kaufmann, apart from being Vice-Mayor of Innsbruck, is also in charge of Sport and Youth related matters in Innsbruck, which include themes that are being dealt with here today. This is why I am especially glad to be welcoming you today to this conference and on behalf of the Mayor and Vice-Mayor of Innsbruck I wish you a successful meeting and many fruitful discussions. Thank you very much!"

Opening Addresses

Des Tomlinson, National Coordinator of the Intercultural Football Programme at the FA of Ireland, acted as Moderator for the opening addresses and introduced the below mentioned panellists and speakers to the audience.

First up was **Bart Ooijen**, Sport Unit of the European Commission, DG Education and Culture, who was keen on giving an overview of the objectives and projects of the Sport Unit of the European Commission for 2012 and stated that "I am here to learn from your experience about migrants in sports and especially in Winter sports, which is a very interesting theme and unfortunately full of stereo-types. We know from research that the participation of people in sport is partly influenced by the attitudes of the parents.

I think 2012 will be a very special year also in the field of sports. There are many key events taking place this year, where it is not only about competition and medals but also about discussions and about ethical values, about doping and about social inclusion in sport. Of course we have the Youth Olympic Games in Innsbruck now, but we also have the EURO 2012 in Poland and Ukraine, we have the London Olympic Games, we cannot forget the Paralympic Games, which is also about social inclusion, and of course on a local level and national level, there are so many events. I would like to mention the **Mondiali Antirazzisti** in Italy and the **Streetfootballworld** Youth Camps in Ukraine this year, these are events at which we can meet and discuss and put the theme of social inclusion on the agenda.

We are going to continue to monitor the different activities we are supporting in terms of social inclusion and anti-doping. As I was explaining at the SPIN conference on Sport and Integration in September, we also support good governance projects and again you could say "yes but is this linked to our theme?" and I think yes, because it is not only about perfect functioning or match fixing in sport, it's also about diverse groups being represented on the different governing boards.

I want to show you what sort of things we are going to support: ELYS (Educational LABs for European Young Supporters) the "Prevention of sexual violence in sports", which is sometimes deeply hidden in the field of sports, and then of course we would like to congratulate VIDC, because we selected them again for a project in the field of Prevention through Empowerment (Pro Supporters), and finally Preventing and Fighting Homophobic Violence and Intolerance in Sport (Pride in Sport).

In 2014 there will be a new European Commission Programme called "Partnerships in Sports" where we will be looking for Private/Public cooperation programmes. We are looking for a way where private enterprises are involved in projects.



There will be different themes involved, like "Active Ageing", which is about the fight about match fixing and it's about the cooperation on a local level in the field of sport. There will be around 3,5 to 4 million Euros available to support projects.

Furthermore, we are going to support a number of events like the FTAFISA games in Lithuania, the Youth Olympic Winter Sports festival in Romania, Paralympic Youth Festival in the Czech Republic and the European sports forum in Cyprus.

But our main topic for 2012 will be discussions on the new programme for sports from 2014 onwards. There will be around 234 million Euros available for 7 years (2014 to 2020) for all sorts of projects.

The subjects of those programmes will also include social inclusion and health. Some member states had some doubts concerning those topics, since they thought they were local issues. However, we have support from the sports movement, who say we can learn a lot from each other in those areas.

The discussion will also touch on questions such as "Should we support social inclusion games?" "Should we support events?" or "Should we really support transnational projects like yours?"

What about migrant sports organisations in Europe do they exist and should we support them?

This is all I have for now and to conclude, I wish you a very good conference, and as I said, there are a lot of stereotypes about migrants and winter sports, but I think there are also a lot of opportunities. And I am hoping that projects like yours will bring valuable input and recommendations to the European Commission."

Des Tomlinson then introduced the next speaker, Christian Thibault, founder of the NGO Likkuka in Finland:

"I have been working in this field now for about 15 years. That's also as long as the history of migrants in Finnish Sports actually is, since migration to Finland is a rather new phenomenon. Maybe this makes Finland also a rather interesting field of study.

Bart gave us a very good perspective for the future, but also I believe he gave us a challenge and a mission, which is our active participation in the process and ongoing media work.

The situation in Finland regarding inclusion of migrants in Winter Sports doesn't look very good at the moment, but Finland did a very good



job about 10 years ago, but now we are in a very similar position to the Netherlands and Sweden – doubtful and thinking. So it's good to have this international discussion about the situation now.

My country has 7 months of winter a year so it's a very good opportunity to give this some thought now and it could be a good case study.

There is not much data available right now, but much prejudice."

Christian at this point shares a very nice anecdote with the audience, concerning a local football medal he and his team won. A team composed of members from different migrant football teams participating in the Finnish Winter Outdoor football league. This anecdote also led Christian to state that;

"Migrants often don't know about the winter sports available. This is where the parents also come in, but in many migrant communities, family is a big issue. Therefore you need to work with the whole community, the whole family.

The survey we carried out shows a lot of frustrating things at the moment. Migrants are not holding any seats within any committee in Finnish sports, migrants are not employed in any Finnish sports. Migrant activists have observed that the physical condition of young migrants has decreased in the last 10 years, their drug use has increased. Participation costs between 500 € and 3.000 € annually depending on the type of sport, but we have also found that the migrant self initiated groups can and do provide sports possibilities at a cost of around 160 Euros annually. These groups are the most relevant in providing opportunities. Migrants between 12 and 35 years old are the most challenging group, racism is harshly observed, for example, 50% or more than 50% of referees have reported or have quoted in surveys that they have observed racism during their work, but in the same year that the survey was made, only 5 cases were reported and only one led to a punishment.

The projects between the Finnish Football Federation and the Finnish Sports Federation on migrant in recent years, have all stopped. However, the situation is not all bad; parliament has allocated more money than ever before for integration through sport, the budget of the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for sport in Finland, is bigger than before. Also the criteria on integration has been added to any funding that goes to sports club programmes.



But at the same time, opportunities are not being taken advantage of. The sport department in the biggest city of Finland, where most of the migrants live, Helsinki, is not participating in municipal inclusion projects. The past has shown that only one migrant self-initiated club has been supported. This shows it is a question of perspective and communication. And that is our mission here, because the right decisions are made, but somehow they are not implemented and the relevant information is not travelling between the clubs and the decision makers. I think this is the challenge in our work.

There is figure skating and snowboarding, which are relevant for migrant participation in our country. There is a larger migrant group of migrants from the former Soviet Union in Finland and they are used to winter sports, they have even allocated coaches and trainers and are even bringing in new sports into the country. The communication is not very good at the moment, but it's starting. Ice-Hockey does not involve migrants at all or very few, also not in the fan work and some racism has been reported in Ice-Hockey, but the Finnish Ice-Hockey World Champion team has come out against racism. The price of equipment is somewhat higher in Winter Sports than in other sports and is restricting lower income families.

The empowerment of migrants' own initiatives, the integration of migrants in the planning and the implementing of actions and the fight against racism are the important messages that we have to represent in this discussion and if we can do that then we can provide the answer, how everybody and all countries can benefit from this action, because we are building the future society."

Next up as speaker was Notburga Troger, who apart from being the Head of the Integration Department of the City of Innsbruck, has also worked as a teacher before and has been involved in creating networks between different kinds of stakeholders when it comes to social integration.

"In Innsbruck something really important has recently happened, our Mayor has declared integration as a matter of the highest priority, which enables quick implementation of actions concerning projects related to matters of integration. This is also shown by the very fruitful cooperation myself and Bella have had. Projects are implemented and "signed off" very quickly. Integration isn't just about migration of foreigners itself, but it



also means to integrate the whole of the democratic process in all the areas of life, be it social politics, education, administration, sports or culture, we put all of these together. We also combine the young and old, the healthy and the not so fit.

The same applies to our Vice-Mayor, Mr Kaufmann, who is responsible for the areas – children and youth, education and sports, areas very close to the hearts of Innsbruck's founding fathers and mothers. Mr. Ludescher would confirm that together with Mr. Kaufmann, we have been working together on many different projects covering culture and sports, in order to be able to achieve our most important objective, social peace, for all of our residents, who – no matter where they come from – are all citizens of Innsbruck.

Innsbruck is the first city to have the Olympic flame burning for the third time and is also the first city to host the Winter Youth Olympic Games. Events like these make things happen, for instance 450 new apartments have been constructed to host the participants and those apartments will afterwards be used for social housing.

During the World Cup 2010 in South Africa, Bella and I achieved many good things together here in Innsbruck, by organising the public viewing and different integration programmes with it. We have thereby shown what an amazing force lies within sport to integrate and involve people of all cultures, to have people meet with respect and in recognition of each other.

What is still missing is to have the same spark of enthusiasm being transported to winter sports that we see in summer sports. It is essential to use the natural environment available by exercising outdoors. Our migrants hardly know the mountain paths of Innsbruck, because winter sports are often alien to them. Two new projects have already been introduced that are designed to foster the enthusiasm of younger and elder migrants alike for winter sports. It is hereby important to take good care of their needs and fears.

The aim of a second such project is to win over migrants for official functions on a club as well as on a regional level. Furthermore, mentoring programmes are also essential.

Both of the speakers before were absolutely right. It is essential to integrate sport in education, also at a school level. Children easily learn



and get used to doing things. But sports also teach children to get together and to get used to each other.

In order for winter sport to be made accessible to migrants and less advantaged citizens, we offer reduced tickets called "Freizeittickets" and "Regionalkarten". This makes it possible for a family of four to go skiing at the Patscherkofel, the Seegrube and other surrounding mountains for as little as 25 €. So, it really is affordable.

All of us together will be able to achieve a lot and surge forward with small steps at a time but continuously working on these themes.

Des Tomlinson then introduced the next speaker, **Bella Bello Bitugu**, who said:

"First of all I would like to thank you all for making it to this maiden seminar despite your very tight schedules considering the numerous activities, meetings, championships, not least the Winter Youth Olympic games. A thank you also goes to the resource persons and representatives of NGOs for accepting our invitation and request.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are here today as part of the Sport Inclusion Network (SPIN) project made up of 7 organisations from 7 EU countries which in diverse ways focus their activities on inclusion, integration and addressing all forms of discrimination in sport and society in general. The organisations include FairPlay-VIDC of Austria which is the lead, Camino of Germany, UISP of Italy, FA of Ireland, MGHRO of Hungary, Likkukkaa of Finland and Portuguese Players' Union.

The 14 months SPIN project from March 2011 – April 2012 has been designed to promote and share good practices across Europe on the inclusion and involvement of migrants and other third-country nationals (including refugees) through and in mainstream sport. The project aims to raise awareness about the potential positive role of sport in terms of social inclusion of migrants and intercultural dialogue.

The project has been made possible thanks to funding from the EU, Austrian Ministry of sports and other outfits in the six partner countries.



Among others, the interventions of the SPIN project include:

- A Good Practice Guide based on 3 case studies in each of the 7 partner countries plus UK which will result in printed booklet to be disseminated to key sport stakeholders.
- Train the Trainers Workshops which has trained two trainers of each partner organisation as multipliers.
- Inclusion Workshops for Sport Clubs & Associations where each partner organised two Inclusion Workshops in their countries with one targeting a non-football sport association or club.
- Football Refugee Day where all 7 project partners organised a public event with refugee football teams to mark the UN World Refugee Day 2011.
- European Networking Conference: Challenging social exclusion in and through sport which took place in Vienna in September last year bringing together sport and anti-discrimination experts and migrant activists with sport stakeholders and policy makers to exchange best practices and devise an Action Plan.
- There is also a website – www.sportinclusion.net which you all have access to and that is constantly updated with information and links to European wide like minded outfits.
- The last major event is this European Multiplier Seminar on the eve of the WYOG 2012: Involving young immigrants in winter sports. We initially reckoned and planned for 30 Participants including experts but we have been overwhelmed and as you could see, we have almost 50 participants.

The main objective of this seminar is to create awareness on the absence of participation of migrants and minorities in winter sport and devise strategies to attract and motivate these groups to take up winter sport and to discuss the barriers and structures that hinder these groups to participate in winter sports at all levels as participants, officials, trainers etc. In putting together the resource persons, the absence of any strategy in this area became clear to me as some organisations decided to attend only as participants and NOT as resource persons because they have absolutely no experience in this but would like to do something.

It is in this regard that we have brought together experts and practitioners from diverse sport. We as outfits have gathered enormous experi-



ence and expertise over the years in breaking down barriers that hinder the participation of these groups in football and other forms of sports. It is this capability that has encouraged us to venture into winter sports and we believe with the diverse experts and activists from the different sports that we have here, we are hopeful that we shall in no time start setting the agenda so that one day we will have the Drogbas, the Asamoahs, the Alabass, the Boatengs, the Balotellis, the Gullits, the Williams, the Freemans, the Gebreselassies etc making headlines in winter sport.

We started these inclusive and antidiscrimination initiatives at Fair-Play-VIDC and the wide FARE activities in Europe about 12 years ago and now these outfits have become major advocates up to the highest level to the extent that they have become part of the UEFA CSR programme with many Football Associations, NGOs and outfits like the EU, opening up possibilities for funding towards these initiatives.

I implore all of you here to be proud of being part of this maiden, bold and courageous move, and with my experience in football, I dare say that in a few years we shall be making headlines not for ourselves but contributing to society by integrating minorities and groups at the edge of society to take up winter sport and enjoy all the social and human rights that go with it.

I may add however and this is also meant to be a message to the big guns especially governing bodies, who together with multinational companies that sponsor them hijack the sport away from what it should be – peoples' leisure and rights. We, the small guns and NGOs and individuals, are doing our best and have started the initiative, we call on these bodies to also join us because it is only through their support and involvement that we can be assured of all forms of support, success and sustainability. UEFA, the European Commission, other bodies and individuals are speaking to them and showing them the way and I believe the message is clear and we implore them to see the writing clearly on the wall.

Ladies and gentlemen may I indulge you in expressing my extreme disappointment with the IOC and the organisers of the first Winter Youth Olympic Games starting here tomorrow. We started consultation with them well over a year ago and after much ifs, buts and whens, we realised in the end that they were mainly interested in making sure that our mention of them goes only in line with their branding and marketing strategies with no single contribution from them whatsoever.

Another anecdote is when we first started our anti discriminatory initiatives in football in Austria. We were told during the first meeting with the Austrian FA that they do not have any discriminatory or racism problems in football and if there were any, it is better not to make them public. Only years later the Football Association approached us to design anti-discriminatory initiatives towards the EURO 2008 bid because that had become the prerequisite by UEFA for all EURO championships.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am aware that winter sport has its unique structural, institutional, societal, lifestyle and individual problems. These factors should not discourage us and that is why we are gathered here today with capable experts. I believe strongly that the agenda is set and I am sure we will do it. I therefore wish you all the best for this seminar and I am looking forward to the constructive debates, discussions and strategies that will come out of it. I am positive and certain that we CAN.

Thank you and all the best."

Key Note Speech

The key note speech was held by Georg Spitaler, lecturer at the University of Vienna and author of a Fundamental Rights Agency study on minorities in sport. The speech is entitled: "Excluding images of national identity? The under-representation of ethnic minorities and immigrants in national winter sports".

"The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in cooperation with the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC) and Kick it Out have carried out a study to put together a comparative overview of the situation regarding "Racism, ethnic discrimination and exclusion of migrants in sport".

This study has been carried out by the Racism and Xenophobia Network (RAXEN) conducting studies and surveys in 27 countries analysing 3 sports in every country:

- Football
- Athletics &
- one popular national sport in each country



With regards to the national sports, i.e. Alpine Skiing was looked into in Austria and Slovenia, Basketball has been taken for Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia and many others. With regards to a second national winter sport, Ice Hockey has been looked into for the Czech Republic, Latvia, Slovakia and Sweden. For other countries different national sports have been selected.

Austria has then been presented a little more into detail. Most ethnic minorities in Austria are either Turkish-Austrians or Austrians from the former Yugoslavian countries. Those minorities are very much under-represented when it comes to Austrian winter sports (and especially in Alpine Skiing), which is not the case, for instance, in football."

Looking through the media, Georg "only found two examples of ethnic minority background athletes in winter sports", one of which might participate in the WYOG. This under-representation especially in "national winter sports" can, however, also be seen in other countries as well.

"Going back to the other 2 sports that have been looked into for all countries involved, an under-representation of ethnic minorities has been found to be much less prevalent in football and athletics, however it can be observed in second national sports, which are often seen as "giving a pure image of a nation".

Until recently awareness among national bodies seems to have been very limited. There's hardly any or no anti-racism work being done in those sports. There seems to be a slight change coming up now, which might also be a result of the need for "recruitment of new members, especially on an amateur level".

In Austria, a decline of obligatory school ski courses has been linked to an alleged limited interest of migrants.

Some possible explanations for the above mentioned under-representation have been looked into:

■ Composition of regional population

This doesn't really hold up as a theory, though, especially in the case of Austria. Considering Austria, for instance, Tyrol, Vorarlberg and Salzburg are the main regions where Alpine Skiing is being practiced. However, all three of those regions are within the Top 4 (Vienna being first) in terms of the percentage of citizens with migration background based on the total

number of citizens and all three are just slightly under or above the national average.

■ Socio-economic explanations

This theory works much better as a possible explanation. Skiing, to name but one, is quite expensive as a sport compared to others. Various studies also show that the higher the social, cultural and especially financial capital of a person, the higher the participation in sports is. Looking at one of the top Austrian ski colleges, the Stams academy and other schools alike (which prepare students to become top level athletes), one might think that those and, therefore the whole school system, might also have an influence on the under-representation of migrants in winter sports. Furthermore, Austria very much creates "cultural classes", most kids equal their parents' education levels.

■ Quota restrictions (especially on an amateur level)

Especially team sports, i.e. football, Ice Hockey and others, many national organisations have limited restrictions on quotas of foreigners, i.e. in Ice Hockey in the cross-national Ice Hockey league in Austria.

■ Cultural Explanations

Clubs or member associations are still the prevalent model of organising amateur sports to in most EU member states. This is also true for winter sports. So the question is, whether the under-representation of ethnic minorities in these sports is due to a lack of tradition or knowledge on the part of migrants (= integration paradigm) or if those clubs and member associations are partly unapproachable for ethnic minorities due to the "unwritten rules, the cultural code and/or the lack of knowledge of how to communicate with the ethnic minority groups (= cultural modes of exclusion)."

As Agnes Elling put it:

"The fundamental question is whether (young) people are free to choose to participate in any sport they want to or whether they are hindered in their choice by implicit 'exclusionary mechanisms' and 'anticipative self-exclusion'."



At the end of the Key Note Speech, the floor was opened for a couple of questions to round up the Welcome Session.

First a question from Adu Adjei was directed to Bart Ooijen, enquiring how minority organisations in Switzerland, whilst Switzerland not being a full EU member, might be able to participate in and profit from the new European Commission's programme starting in 2014. Bart answered this by stating that "from 2014 onwards, all candidate and special agreement countries (such as Switzerland and Norway for instance) will be able to apply for and profit from those programmes."

A few questions from the floor were directed at Georg Spitaler, asking if they "had included direct interviews with migrant families with regards to the mentioned "voluntary exclusion"? And if he thinks whether hypothetically, Austrian society would accept the Indian Skier as a "national hero" if he had a good chance of winning a medal and if there was a different level of acceptance in different EU countries?

Georg Spitaler answered that the study was based on 27 national case studies conducted by national focal points and rights agencies. They gathered mostly secondary data, but some interviews were conducted with members of sports organisations, NGOs, minority organisations and the like. But in general more interviews should have been conducted. So, it was very difficult to answer that question, although it was found that there is family influence. So there is a point to this, but Georg Spitaler thinks that it would be wrong to over-estimate those factors and consider other points not as important. Moreover, Georg Spitaler stated that there was a difference between amateur and professional sports – Integration or participation of non-nationals or migrants. For instance, it would make a difference if there was for example an Austrian ski champion with a migration background. This could have a signalling effect on a symbolic level like the French football team of 1998 had. But the fact that there was this socially and culturally diverse team didn't solve all the social issues that were present in France.





II) Plenary Session

The Plenary Session, entitled "Young Migrants and Winter Sports: Challenges and opportunities", was moderated by **Nicole Selmer**, a football writer and member of the network F_in "Women in football", Germany, and kicked off with **Friedl Ludescher**, President of the Austrian Luge Association, vice president of Federal Sport Organisation (BSO), chairman of the Austrian committee on top-level sports, board member of the Austrian Olympic Committee, founder of a Sports Club in the Innsbruck district called Olympic village, a district with a high percentage of migrants and minorities founded in 1975, chairman of the Association of all culture-, sports- and social clubs of that district, including Turkish and Bosnian clubs.

For Mr. Ludescher, sport in general can play a big part towards a positive development of young people as well as offering high integration potential teaching social skills. According to many studies, only a quarter to a third of all people practice sports regularly, which creates a need and the potential of involving and recruiting new members to sports and sports clubs. Introducing sports to young children and adolescents at an early stage works much better, which is true irrespective of whether they are from the native population or have a migration background.

The issue with winter sports lies within the fact that people need to be fit before they can practice those sports, also because a high degree of technical abilities and physical fitness is often a prerequisite. Furthermore, winter sports tend to be more dangerous than indoor- or summer sports.

So the question on "how to bring young migrants to winter sports" is not an easy one to answer, also because many of the winter sports are unknown to them, which makes motivating and teaching through peers and relatives all the more difficult. Organised teaching and training via schools and clubs as well as sports federations is a much more promising route to take, but cooperation is of utmost importance if this is to work.

In Tyrol, there are several ways of getting information on the sports and facilities available, such as through the regional Ministry of Sports, the councils and at the sports federations and clubs themselves. The Austrian Integration Fund, furthermore, offers prizes and grants for integration ac-

tivities through sports and in 2012 the topic of Integration in and through sports will be a central issue in Austrian NGO-sports.

Next up was **Nikolaus Meze**, head of the Integration Centre of Tyrol, who presented a joint mentoring project introduced in October 2011 by the Austrian Integration Fund and the "Sport Union". The aim of this mentoring programme is to integrate migrants through very personal and individual mentoring into sports. A native mentor is paired with a migrant mentee, in a kind of a "train the trainer" programme. The mentee shall then be well integrated into the clubs and federations and through the mentee other groups of ethnic minorities can get involved as well. Currently, this project includes 8 mentor/mentee pairs with a mid-term aim of getting up to 15. Mr Meze also mentioned that in his experience there is too much emphasis on the word "integration", because integration really happens without it being constantly talked about. Moreover, people have too many different interpretations of the word integration itself.

Nicole Selmer was curious to find out how the pairs were linked up and how the Austrian Integration Fund decided on the pairings. Mr. Meze replied that they worked closely together with Newspapers on the one hand but certain clubs and federations on the other, to make sure that they could find mentees and then match them up correctly with suitable mentors.

The next presentation was given by **Amani Abuzahra**, integration officer of the Austrian Islamic Communities. Amani made a strong point by outlining that people should be asking migrants directly as to why they think it is so difficult for them to participate, be it in winter sports or society in general. Amani prepared a video clip of a young Muslim woman snowboarding whilst wearing a headscarf, in order to outline that this is not an issue and that it doesn't look "odd". Looking at the history of Integration in Austria, one can see that in the 1960s Turks and other non-Austrians were mainly called to Austria as workers. Their initial aim was to work, save money and then eventually move back. However many of them stayed on and never moved back. But still, winter sports, was never really of any interest to them, nor did they have a tradition of winter sports. Therefore, also their kids didn't get told or taught by them about winter sports. In addition to that, it can be easily observed that the Austrian Tourism Industry and the ski resorts themselves don't really address migrants in their advertising, by not including them in the "target groups". This is also true for manufac-



turers of winter sports equipment. Therefore, migrants often find it very difficult to get in touch and identify with winter sports.

Nicole Selmer summed it up and made an appeal to the audience not "to speculate about what migrants want to do or what to think" but to "just ask them".

At this point some more questions were directed at the panelists. Adu Adjei asked Amani Abuzahra how, in her view, someone "can explain that there's no conflict between Islam and/or the Quran and winter sports? And who can explain it?" Amani answered by stating that there were "many misunderstandings about what the Quran does and does not say about many topics" and that one of them concerns doing sports in general. Since the prophet actually said it was recommended to do sports, lectures should be given to teenagers, who in turn could go home and explain it to their parents.

Bella Bitugu addressed a question to Friedl Ludescher asking whether there were any rules concerning clothing in sledging, to which Mr. Ludescher replied that there were some restrictions due to health and safety, but that clubs are generally eager to get new members to join and, therefore, also to include migrants.

Des Tomlinson then asked Amani Abuzahra whether she thought that more work was still needed inside or outside the Muslim community when it comes to integration in winter sports? Amani thinks that both need much work.

Wolfgang Öbelsberger, who works in the Tyrolean Department of Education, the regional school board to be precise then came to the floor to say a few words. Mr Öbelsberger started off agreeing with Mr Meze by stating that integration shouldn't be overly talked about but just gotten on with. He explained to the audience that the obligatory ski weeks in Austria depend on a minimum number of participants of 70%. This often causes an issue especially with schools in Vienna, whereas in Tyrol it hardly ever presents any problem at all, because in school weeks pupils can also sleep home, which, of course, is only workable if the ski week is being held within a reasonable distance of the students' homes. Mr Öbelsberger also mentioned that in his experience almost all kids that try to ski for the first time, actually like it. So if you make it possible for them to try it, they will like it and get involved.



Axel Bammer of the Austrian Ice Hockey League presented the situation as it is within professional Ice Hockey in Austria. The European EBEL league (Erste Bank Eishockey Liga) includes 11 teams from 5 different countries (Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia and the Czech Republic). In that league most professional foreign players come from the USA and Canada and are not really migrants as discussed before, because there never really is any "long term aim" to stay in the country. However, those athletes can, of course, be or become role models for the migrant population. The already much talked about "quotas" that exist in Austrian professional Ice Hockey are a result of the conflict of interest that exists between the league and clubs, who are eager to put together the best possible team and players, and the Austrian Ice Hockey federation, which is keen to be able to improve the standard of the national team and therefore wants "home grown" players to regularly play competitively within the league. In terms of integration of young migrants in Austrian Ice Hockey, it can be said that currently there are 261 registered young players from 36 different countries playing in local teams all across Austria. One of the most common obstacles when it comes to integration of migrants in Ice Hockey is the elevated cost involved in the purchase of equipment, however, free skating schools are starting to pop up.

Last to speak in the Opening Plenary Session was Nelko Nelkovski from Macedonia who leads the NGO project "Winter Happiness for all". Nelko started off by talking about what the BalkanFARE project has so far been involved with in the 11 target countries covered by it (Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Romania and Hungary). Within the newly integrated project of "Winter Happiness for all" some of the BalkanFARE's most prominent objectives are:

- To develop access and a methodology for the inclusion of marginalised groups in winter sports, based on experience of such programmes in football
- To provide permanent financial support from domestic and international resources
- To prepare a National Action Plan for greater inclusion of marginalised groups in winter sports
- The public affirmation of the subject and media campaigns



- Regions connecting multiple countries and organizing winter-holiday for marginalized groups
- To provide a special financial support fund for talents from marginalised groups
- To provide educational and athletic programmes involving disadvantaged groups in winter sports
- To create a relevant coordination body for all projects
- To create a coordinating body composing representatives of sports organisations that unite and represent different types of winter sports
- To create a coordinating body of representatives from primary and secondary schools as well as universities

These goals should be achieved through collaboration with state authorities and partnerships with sports federations and companies within the private sector in all countries covered by the BalkanFARE project. BalkanFARE have set out a 5-year-plan for the implementation of these activities, which will constantly be monitored.



III) Working Groups

There were two working groups. The first one was; **Working Group Session A – Status quo of initiatives to involve migrants in winter sport**

In this working group, Layla Mousa from UISP (Italy), acted as the facilitator, whilst Corinna Graubaum from Camino (Germany) reported on the outcome of the working group session. Panelists included Adu Adjei (Swiss Minorities SCI), Thomas Jäger (Project SIQ – Sports – Integration – Qualification, Caritas Styria) Vaitsri Tirkkonen (InterTechno Training, Global Communication Director, Finland) and Zeljko Todorovic (General Secretary of BalkanFare and coordinator of the project “Winter Happiness for all”).

Three main topics were identified:

- Economic factors
- Motivation
- Partnerships

The main topics highlighted and conclusions drawn from the workshop were:

- Role Models – to use role models more to encourage migrants to participate in winter sports
- Parenting – to encourage parents to do sports especially winter sports in order to involve their kids in sports
- Identity – to include all kinds of identities (people with different religious beliefs, different cultural identities, ...)
- News – the information that gets into the public sphere should be balanced better (negative and positive news)
- Individual responsibility and institutional responsibility – both sides bare huge responsibilities that need to be addressed.
- Address and change the attitude and perceptions of others
- Co-operation and work with migrant groups help to grow the power of migrant groups and communities and, therefore, includes them more in the decision making process
- Open funding and flexible rules for funding. A closer look into the “real needs” of the people needs to be done and funding changed and addressed accordingly.

The second was **Working Group B: Encouraging migrants and minorities to patronise winter sport; an effective and participatory strategy.**

In this working group, Junaid Olalekan from MGHRO (Hungary) served as the facilitator, whilst Carlo Balestri, head of the international department at UISP, acted as the reporter.

Asma Aiad from the Young Muslim Women of Austria, Christian Lettner of the Sport Union Austria, Elisabeth Narnhofer from the Austrian Integration Fund and Nicola Werdenigg (former professional Austrian Alpine Skier and editor of the “Kunstpiste” ski magazine) all gave presentations on different topics, which opened up a lively discussion within the working group.

Christian Lettner and Elisabeth Narnhofer gave a more in-depth overview of the mentoring programme on which Nikolaus Meze elaborated earlier on.

A few questions were directed at Christian and Elisabeth concerning whether they saw barriers from inside of mainstream organisations, to which they replied that yes they did see some barriers, but they found them to be mainly due to lack of communication.

Des also wanted to know whether in this project a “bottom up approach” was at all made, so whether or not they had at any stage consulted with people from the migrant community to ask them what they wanted, prior to launching the project? Bella actually came in at this point to say that he was approached by the Austrian Integration Fund, because they were hoping that he could be of help in getting in touch with the African community to ask them what they wanted. So that’s been part of the bottom up approach.

Christian Thibault wanted to know whether any migrant sports clubs have been involved so far in this programme, to which the answer is yes, an Afghan only sports club based in Graz for instance.

Asma Aid first presented the organisation of the “Young Muslim Women of Austria” to the working group, a German only speaking organisation that only deals with issues that Muslim women face in society and in their personal lives. Within their work, the Young Muslim Women of Austria pretty quickly realised that many Muslim parents weren’t comfortable with the thought of their daughters participating in mixed gender sports activities, which is why they have decided to offer a possibility for Muslim girls to interact and practice activities in a girls only environment.



This topic threw up a few questions within the working group such as "What are your experiences with being a Muslim feminist group. What's the Austrian society's reaction?" to which Asma alluded to that she came across two different reactions- both positive and negative, but in her experience other feminist groups see them mainly as a "victim group that is being oppressed into doing certain things", rather than being seen as an "equal group with the same interests".

Another question focused on whether Asma could imagine working together with a main-stream sports club, especially if they noticed that a girl at the Young Muslim Women winter camp for example expressed interest in a certain winter sport? Asma responded by stating that this is already very much happening, there are already co-operations in place with a Sports club in Vienna, where facilities can be used and they are given access to coaches as well.

Also a comment was made that there was a conflicting understanding of the stance the group seems to be taking, to which Asma replied that she doesn't think she is a minority, however, society sometimes puts that stance on her.

Nicola Werdenigg started off by stating that she found it shameful that nobody from the Austrian Ski Federation was present, especially since they stated that they didn't know anything about the issue, there could have been some possibility for them learning something about it. Nicola then went on to elaborate on the importance of winter sports, especially relating to tourism for the Austrian (but also Swiss and Italian) economy. So even on that front, it is important to bring migrants and ethnic minorities to the snow. The Austrian Ski Federation hasn't exactly been very forward thinking at any stage of its history, with for instance her being the first woman in an important function within the federation as of 1981 only. The issue, when it comes to professional skiing in Austria is that after a certain age (approx. 14), it is very difficult indeed for a non-Austrian passport holder to get into competitive skiing, because skiing is not "club based" (as are other sports) and, therefore, the main support comes from the skiing federation, which as a non-national isn't possible. Moreover, professional skiing is a very tough game to get into. Out of the 2000 racers aged 6 only 1 will make it into high performance skiing.

In Austria, there are now certain associations coming up aiming to make skiing more accessible to a wider group of interested people. In Vi-

enna, for instance, there's a ski rental run and owned by the ministry of sports, which offers ski equipment at a low price for kids so that they can participate in the school run ski weeks.

Nicole Selmer was keen to find out whether there is an alternative federation to the Austrian Ski Federation in Austria to which the answer is yes, but not when it comes to performance oriented sports.

Bella Bitugu wanted to know what people like her and other athletes were doing considering the history of the Austrian Ski Federation OSV and based on that what former athletes like Nicola Werdenigg have realised about it? Nicola answered that they had just founded a new union for ski athletes, of which she is the vice chairlady.

In order to understand the possibility of winter sports, compared to summer sports such as football, one needs to go and practice in something like huge "open spaces" therefore, the question was raised, who actually owns the ski lifts? In Austria it varies- it could be banks, companies, tourism boards, regions, even the president of the Austrian Ski Federation, Mr Schröcksnadel, himself owns a few resorts. In any case, it's mostly a commercial, private enterprise, not a communal. social one.



IV) Closing Plenary Session: Minorities and migrants in winter sport: A collective strategy towards the future

The closing plenary session kicked off with a report from Corinna Graubaum and Carlo Balestri briefly reporting and summarising the discussions and findings of the working groups.

Afterwards, Bella moderated the closing plenary session presentations made by Danny Silva, Former Olympic cross country skier (Portugal) and now Project Manager, ELMA-project –winter sports accessibility issues in Vuokatti Snowpolis, Northern Finland, Dirk Shaars, NISB Holland, Christoph Witoszynskyj, Institut für Kinderrechte, and Vincent Lange, Insider Beat, Sports and Media Consultant / Coach. All were asked to sum up and draw the conclusions from the discussions held during the day.

Danny first ascertained that Northern Finland, the region where he is heavily involved in inclusion of migrants in and through sports programmes, is not traditionally a place of migration. The migration taking place there is mainly from two groups – Russian and people from the continent of Africa. As far as the Russian migrants are concerned, including them into winter sports is not usually an issue, since they are very much used to the cold and the sports involved. Those from the continent of Africa on the other hand, have no tradition whatsoever when it comes to winter sport and many of them are being confronted with snow for the first time, a reality that they will, however, have to deal with and get accustomed to. So really, it is the hosts responsibility to give the migrants the opportunities to participate in winter sports and the migrants should have the willingness to participate. The North-East of Finland in terms of the economy, heavily relies on winter sports and the downward spiral noted even by the FIS on the trendiness of skiing as a sport, has led to many activities being introduced. Whilst education is usually thought of as “schooling”, Danny and his team have brought in a slightly different approach, by integrating their activities into semi-private sectors. By having clubs introduce winter sports to migrants rather than state institutions, one can profit from the social phenomenon that clubs are supposed to be. The other advantage

by including the clubs in such schemes is that clubs immediately offer the next step to the new members, so it's a natural transition from starting off with a new sport to joining a club and getting more and more accustomed with the sport. There should be the following three rules that projects, which aim to include migrants and minorities into sports, should have;

- you must involve the private sector
- you must use people from that region to be role models
- the question of education and the process of education cannot be put on the public sector only

Dirk Shaars presented the projects that have been done or are being done in the Netherlands which are:

- “communities on the move” ... which deals mainly with the development of local physical activity programmes for specific target groups (i.e. migrants)
- “participation of all youth through sport” ... which represents a policy programme to reinforce sport associations and clubs to incorporate the social value of sport
- “join in” ... an international (EU-funded) project to create a digital, social network to share knowledge among organisations dealing with such matters within the European Union.

The results/conclusions that NISB have so far been able to draw are:

- the development and maintenance of multiple partnerships
- a community approach has been necessary and achieved
- active participation of members of the target group in all phases and aspects of the programme/organisation is an absolute must
- enjoyment and fun has to be at the centre of it all
- involvement of the social environment/wider social network (parenting)
- appropriateness of the environment (sport venues)
- structural embedding and maintenance of the programme
- use sport as a tool to develop personal and interpersonal skills.
- 30% growth in sport club memberships, 500 clubs have been achieved ... of which more than half are migrant youth
- www.sportin.nu ... a website to share knowledge with other international partners is already online.



The challenges for the near future will be:

- on a national level
 - to continue the implementation of good principles with decreasing financial support from national government
- on an international level
 - further development of good principles with the international community
 - making existing information easily accessible

Christoph Witoszynskyj of the Institute for Children's Rights and Parent Education, outlined that in Austria there is a huge economic dependence on alpine skiing/winter sports in general and that winter sports are also of great cultural importance. Winter sports are in fact embedded in many popular traditions such as folkloristic music and a culture of alcohol consumption. Furthermore, winter sports are a symbol of national identity, which is supported by the media, politicians and several related industries. The cost for skiing has considerably and constantly increased over the last years and whilst local children used to be able to ski for free in the past, those days are now long gone.

It is surely true that sports are "inheritable", so if one wants to include migrants into winter sports, often a need arises for somebody else than their parents introducing them to it and teaching them the sport. Migrants are often within lower income classes, often have more children, still face disadvantages in education, housing and the labour market and are, therefore, disadvantaged in terms of consumption, leisure and holidays.

To these effect, the following conclusions were drawn

- tear down structural barriers (i.e. school systems ... there are 10 secondary schools focusing on skiing in Austria and in all of them a significant under-representation of children with migrant background can be noticed)
- what has been done over the last years? Since 2010 the Ministry of Sports has been preparing funding for integration projects. 8 selected projects are currently in the pilot phase, however, no explicit skiing project is amongst those, even though some modules are within one or two projects that include winter sports activities



- sledging and other sports are being introduced to funded projects. Funding for families with low incomes to enable children to participate in ski weeks have been introduced, but they are not sustainable as long as skiing is remains so expensive

Last to report on his conclusions was Vincent Lange, who outlined three basic reasons as to why so few migrants are involved in winter sports:

- 1) money
- 2) access -> it is rather difficult and expensive to get to winter sports locations
- 3) skill -> technical requirements tend to be high in winter sports activities

So the question has to be asked as to how we bridge those gaps?

First of all, though, we need to ask what are the numbers involved: In Germany there are approximately 7,2 million people with migrant backgrounds, which represents about 8,8% of the total population. The number one amongst those are people from Turkey and Southern Europe and since the 1990s, almost every third migrant comes from within the EU member states.

Currently, in Germany around 500 clubs provide courses within an "integration through sports" programme and about 38,000 participants are included. The best example of integration through sports is surely represented by the German national football team, which includes many players with migrant backgrounds from Poland, Turkey and many more nations.

But how can the football team's integration success be brought into winter sports?

There is a scheme called "Pro Athletes: "Ambassadors in boots and sneakers". Within these schemes workshops are created, clinics and exchange sports programmes in communities are set up and the technical requirements are addressed through the teaching and mentoring by former professional athletes. Funding for such camps is of vital importance, especially since migrants hardly ever have the income for what to them is considered "leisure". One good example of starting to include migrants in winter sports in Germany is the newly founded "Snow Volleyball Tour",



which may also serve as a door opener to other winter sports, with volleyball offering the advantages of being easily accessible, easy to learn and easier to identify with for many migrants.

The following conclusion by Vincent Lange rounded up a very successful and enriching seminar:

- 1) We will have to invent new things and get away from old traditions. Let us not waste time by trying to change the attitude of governing bodies such as the Ski Federation OSV, which for now seems to be a lost cause. Let us invent and develop new approaches and start from there
- 2) All the recommendations and contributions at this seminar represent very unique and rich ideas. Nobody else seems to be working on this, so let us proceed. To do this we need to apply for EU and other funding
- 3) Migrants and ethnic minorities of African decent live in every part of Europe. Therefore, we should be very specific in drawing up possibilities of how to include them also in winter sports



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January 12th 2012, Innsbruck

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