



COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION



Council Conclusions

Adopting the Work Programme on Minimising Safety, Security and Public Order Risks in Connection with Football Matches with an International Dimension

*2838th JUSTICE and HOME AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 6 and 7 December 2007*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"Having regard to the following:

1. In recognition of the European Union's objective, *inter alia*, of providing citizens with a high level of safety within an area of freedom, security and justice by developing common action among the Member States in the field of police, a work programme of measures designed to minimise safety and security risks in connection with football matches with an international dimension has been drawn up. Whilst the work programme is primarily focused on football, the outcome may have an impact on the arrangements for other sporting events.
2. The measures contained in the work programme fall primarily within national competence and are without prejudice to existing laws, policing and other arrangements in Member States, in particular the division of responsibility among different authorities and services in the Member States concerned.
3. The work of the football experts group provides the appropriate basis for taking forward the annexed work programme and, where necessary or desirable, for preparing firm proposals for approval by the PCWP and the Justice & Home Affairs (JHA) Council of Ministers. It is crucial therefore that each Presidency continues to organise at least one meeting of the football experts group and that representatives of the group continue to meet on an ad hoc basis to consider the impact of current and proposed measures and emerging trends and themes. There can be no complacency as football security and safety is a continually evolving phenomenon.
4. It is clear that the football experts group cannot take forward the work programme in isolation. Effective and harmonious international and national partnerships will be crucial. Key partnerships include the following:

- The football experts group should work in partnership with the European Commission, who should ensure that all Member States are encouraged and resourced to participate in taking forward the work programme and to implement the training measures contained in the programme.
- The football experts group should look for synergy effects with the network of European Sports Ministers;
- The football experts group should work in partnership with the Council of Europe Standing Committee on the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches (T-RV);
- The football experts group should work in partnership with UEFA (and other international football authorities) in view of the overlap in responsibility for safety and security between governments, police and football authorities.

5. Some events have already been promoted by the Portuguese Presidency and by other Member States to facilitate and enhance close involvement with key partners such as the Commission, the Standing Committee of the Council of Europe, and UEFA.

6. The implementation and development of this multidisciplinary approach should be further facilitated by the outcome of events such as the High Level Conference “Towards an EU strategy against violence in sports”¹, which had the objective of strengthening the framework of cooperation of a wide range of stakeholders.

7. Other initiatives and further work should be promoted with a view to facilitating the implementation of the measures proposed in the work programme. An overview on progress made on the work programme should be drawn up.

¹ Conference organised on 28-29 November 2007 by the European Commission jointly with the Portuguese Presidency, the European Parliament, in association with UEFA.

8. Aside from the key issue of the need for effective international, national and local multi-agency partnerships, themes covered in the football experts work programme centre on:

- Ensuring that all Member States are funded to participate in the group's working arrangements;
- Ensuring that integrated in-stadia safety and security arrangements are developed for all football grounds hosting football matches with an international dimension;
- Developing pan-European training arrangements for in-stadia safety personnel;
- Developing arrangements for expert evaluation of tournament and high risk match preparations;
- Exploring the potential for further harmonisation of relevant legal arrangements;
- Developing arrangements for sharing security and related information between governments, police and UEFA;
- Developing European arrangements for training police personnel undertaking key roles in football policing operations;
- Examining the scope for, and the need to develop, additional advice to policing agencies on preventing and tackling racism in football stadia; and
- Exploring the scope for further initiatives on preventive measures and for working with supporters.

Approves the annexed work programme on minimising safety, security and public order risks in connection with football matches with an international dimension.

WORK PROGRAMME ON MINIMISING SAFETY, SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER RISKS IN CONNECTION WITH FOOTBALL MATCHES WITH AN INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION.

KEY FINDINGS

1. Football related violence and disorder is a European-wide phenomenon and there is a need for a sophisticated European strategy comprising an extensive array of deliverable measures designed to reduce the associated risks.
2. There are no simple or supranational structural solutions to what is a complex phenomenon. Football safety and security matters and associated public order risks are complex: it is an area in which the dynamic is continually evolving and which is subject to wide national and local variations in severity and character across Europe.
3. The European strategy and associated preventive measures need to be flexible and non-prescriptive in order to be adaptable to national (indeed local) circumstances.
4. The complexity is compounded by wide variations in the relevant constitutional, legal, policing and safety and security arrangements in each Member State.
5. It is crucial that the European strategy and preventive measures respect national sovereignty if arguments about competence and constitutional issues are to be avoided. While respecting national sovereignty, the aim should be to harmonise European cooperation, in accordance with the Handbook.
6. In view of the current initiative of European Sports Ministers in developing a response to the Independent European Sport Review of José Luís Arnaut, the work programme should be reflected in the Sports Ministers response to this initiative.

P R E S S

7. The specific items to be taken forward are set out below. They should be pursued in a manner that is consistent with and builds upon current European governmental and police co-operation in this field. As stressed throughout, the aim is to identify and take forward the measures necessary to prevent and counter violence and disorder at football matches with an international dimension and otherwise enhance the underlying safety and security arrangements at such events. It is equally important that the work is processed in a flexible manner that will enable all of the key agencies in this field to continually look forward and respond proactively to any emerging trends and other developments.

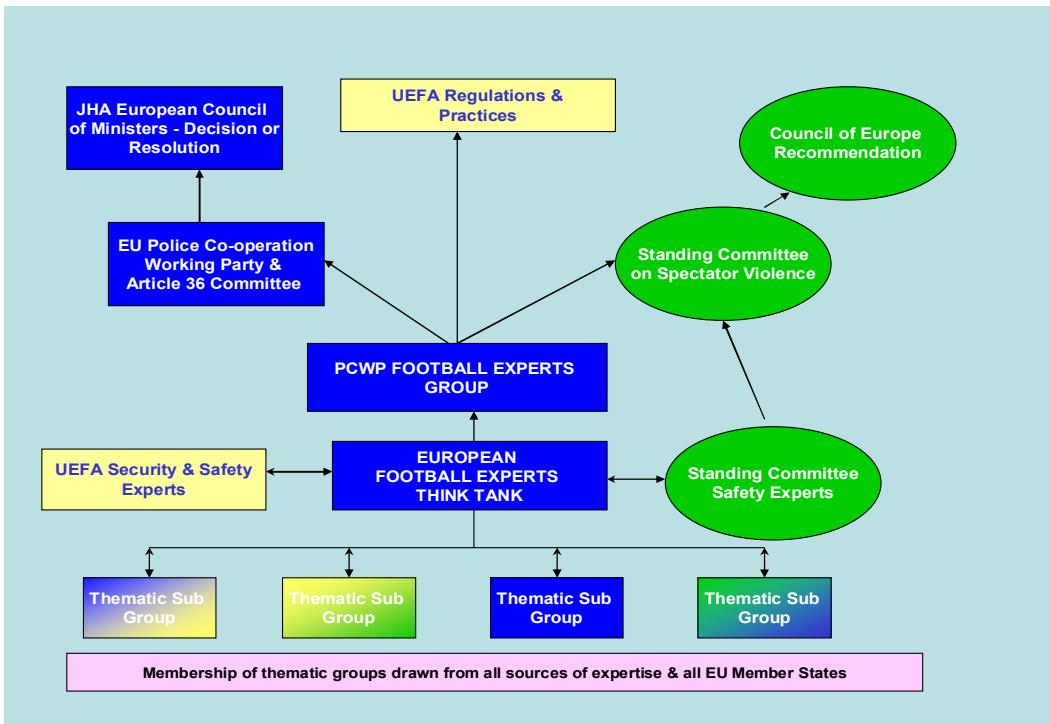
PROPOSED MEASURES AND WORK PROGRAMME

(i) Football Experts Group

8. In recognition of the continually evolving character of football safety and security matters, the EU network of football experts should continue to meet at least once under each Presidency, plus some ad hoc meetings, with a view to swiftly making recommendations to the PCWP and JHA Council of Ministers where necessary or desirable.

9. Moreover, representatives of the group should meet regularly to consider emerging themes and review the impact and effectiveness of preventive and counter measures.

10. It is crucial that all Member States (notably new Member States) are able to participate in this process and, where necessary, have the ability to draw upon European Commission or other funding to undertake the necessary work.



11. The above flow chart shows how the various experts from the EU, the Council of Europe Standing Committee and UEFA and beyond can manage the need to thoroughly examine all safety and security matters of mutual interest along with the mechanism for approving agreed decisions and recommendations where necessary. The flow chart is drawn from an EU football experts' group perspective. Parallel arrangements will naturally exist for partner agencies.

(ii) Partnership Working

12. To maximise impact and effectiveness, the EU approach and delivery of whatever transpires from the work programme should be based on multi-agency international, national and local partnerships.

(iii) Council of Europe Standing Committee

13. In recognition of the overlap between safety and security, the work programme will need to be taken forward in partnership with the Council of Europe Standing Committee on the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches (T-RV).

(iv) EU Commission

14. In view of the EU Commission's important role in ensuring that all Member States are able and resourced to pro-actively participate in the football expert group's thematic and general deliberations and implement the outcome, the Commission should participate in football expert group meetings and consider on a regular basis how they can assist implement the group's findings.

15. To ensure consistency and continuity in respect of EU Commission support or projects in this area, it is important that the Commission liaise with the EU Football Experts Group regarding all football security related matters.

(v) UEFA and other International Football Authorities

16. If the current high degree of international co-operation that exists at governmental and policing levels is to be extended to accommodate UEFA's influence on national football associations and organisers of matches and tournaments, it is crucial that representatives of the EU football experts group and Council of Europe Standing Committee work closely with UEFA in respect of all in-stadia safety and security matters.

17. As previously mandated by the PCWP, representatives of the EU football experts group have met with UEFA and jointly identified a range of important areas where co-operation (and partnership) is both desirable and necessary. These areas of co-operation are incorporated in this work programme. Particular attention is focused on UEFA's potentially crucial role as the organiser of international club and country matches and tournaments.

18. It is also important for the EU Football Expert group to develop partnerships with other European and international football authorities including the European Professional Football Leagues Association and FIFA.

(vi) National and Local Multi-Agency Partnerships

19. In isolation, national governmental and policing agencies cannot deal with the all of the underlying issues associated with safety and security concerns and in-stadia public order risks. Full account must be taken of the important role played by national football authorities, national football leagues and professional clubs, who should recognize and act upon their respective safety and security responsibilities.

20. The developing partnership with UEFA (and other international football agencies) will be crucial if national football authorities are to participate in dynamic and harmonious multi agency national arrangements for minimising safety and security risks.

21. The current Champions League meeting hosted annually by the Dutch NFIP provides a basis for bringing together the key agencies involved in safety and security at football clubs participating in that competition. This event should be expanded to cater for all clubs participating in European club competitions and developed in partnership with UEFA

22. In view of the potentially important role which local authorities and or other local agencies can play in ensuring that spectators can attend matches in a safe and secure environment, it is desirable for national partnerships to be adapted and developed at a regional or local level.

(vii) Integrated In-Stadia Safety and Security Arrangements

23. While avoiding prescriptive obligations on the various agencies involved in providing spectators with a safe and secure event, the need for holistic/integrated in-stadia safety and security arrangements cannot be exaggerated. At present, the effectiveness of these partnerships at a national level can be variable and the role of the various agencies blurred.

24. Moreover, while football violence and disorder may constitute criminality (and, as a consequence, the primary responsibility of statutory authorities), governmental or policing agencies do not necessarily have control or influence over a range of key contributory factors which impact on risk levels (e.g. the dynamics of in-stadia crowd management and wider safety and security arrangements).

25. For example, in many Member States policing agencies may be responsible for dynamic safety and security measures, whereas the match organiser (clubs/associations) is responsible for inter-related physical measures.

26. It is crucial, therefore, that all Member States are encouraged and helped to develop integrated in-stadia safety and security arrangements based on key core (but non-prescriptive) concepts and standards, comprising both physical and dynamic measures. Compliance should help ensure that national football authorities and clubs meet their obligations in this area.

27. It is particularly important (from a European perspective) that all football matches with an international dimension are played in stadia possessing integrated arrangements based on these core safety and security concepts and standards. UEFA has a key role to play here in ensuring that all matches played under their auspices take place in stadia that fully meet agreed safety and security standards.

28. Measures should be taken by the competent international football authorities to ensure that the responsible national football authorities take exactly the same steps as UEFA and FIFA in case of safety or security failings or unacceptable supporter behaviour at football matches played under the responsibility of a club or the competent national football authority

(viii) Core Safety and Security Standards and Best Practice Guidance

29. It is important, therefore, that all agencies involved have access to documentation designed to assist in the development of integrated in-stadia arrangements. The document, which needs to set out core in-stadia safety and security standards and best practice, should be produced by safety and security experts from the EU football experts group, the Council of Europe Standing Committee and UEFA. This document should reflect and/or be reflected in UEFA's safety and security regulations and be based on a revised version of the Standing Committee '*check list*' of important safety and security measures.

30. UEFA should monitor and urge compliance with the document and should consider the need for implementation of the content to be a pre-requisite for hosting matches with an international dimension played under their auspices.

(ix) Training of In-Stadia Safety and Security Personnel

31. In view of the important role which stadia safety officers and stewards can and do play in providing spectators with a safe and secure environment, UEFA should build upon its recent Stadia and Security Education Programme (SSEP) training programme to ensure that national football association safety officers are trained to a high standard and that national associations disseminate the same training to club safety officers.

32. UEFA should also ensure that a uniform training programme on high-standard stewarding is available to and made use of by all national football associations.

(x) Role of Visiting Stewards

33. The football experts group and UEFA should contribute to the Council of Europe Standing Committee's current review of the role and remit of visiting stewards at European matches with an international dimension.

(xi) Expert Multi-Agency Evaluation of Tournament and High Risk Match Preparations

34. The football experts group recognise that UEFA needs to consider a range of factors when determining the venue for high profile European matches, and that it is desirable for all countries to gain experience in hosting high profile matches with an international dimension. However, at such events, it is critical that all supporters and other spectators are provided with a safe and secure experience.

35. It is important, therefore, that all Member States and other European countries hosting World and European football tournaments and other high profile European Finals and matches have access to a pool of safety and security experts equipped to provide advice and early and ongoing evaluation of the preparations.

36. The delegation of experts needs to incorporate experience or knowledge in EU and Council of Europe regulations and guidelines, strategic planning or policing operations and tactics or in-stadia safety and security arrangements.

37. The football experts group, the Council of Europe Standing Committee and UEFA should explore the appropriate means for identifying and using teams of safety and security experts to assist cities or countries hosting major football matches and tournaments. UEFA should urge host national football associations and, where appropriate, individual clubs to comply with the experts' recommendations. UEFA should also give consideration to making compliance a pre-requisite for hosting football matches with an international dimension.

(xii) Guidance for Countries Jointly Hosting Football Tournaments

38. The Euro 2008 tournament jointly hosted by Austria and Switzerland provides an ideal opportunity to prepare specific guidance on the safety and security strategies and concepts required in circumstances where more than one country is hosting a tournament. The football experts group welcomes the decision of the Austrian and Swiss Governments to produce such a document.

(xiii) Bilateral Training and Awareness Initiatives.

39. Whilst there are already a number of informal bilateral training and awareness initiatives around Europe, it is desirable for the football experts group to introduce arrangements for auditing the above initiatives to help ensure that such bilateral contacts help achieve common standards.

(xiv) Legal Arrangements

40. A crucial array of important safety and security factors (e.g. policing strategies and tactics, the detail of domestic legislation and in-stadia safety and security laws and operating arrangements) fall within the competence of each Member State.

41. The football experts group recognises that in view of the wide and varied character of relevant constitutional, policing, legal and other arrangements across Europe, harmonisation of legal and policing arrangements in connection with improving safety and security at football matches and preventing and countering football violence is only desirable if it significantly reduces the risks in all Member States.

42. However, it is the view of the football experts group that these variations in legal, policing and other national arrangements can increase the risk of public disorder (and associated safety risks). As a result national regulations should take into account that:

- The absence of exit bans enables risk supporters from a Member State to travel to matches hosted abroad;
- Wide variation in the extent to which the Council Decision on Football Information Points and the content of the Handbook on Police Co-operation is implemented can have serious consequences on the quality of information exchange, and the effectiveness of risk assessment and the policing operations; and
- Risk supporters can and do exploit variations in policing, judicial and in-stadia safety and security arrangements.

43. The football experts group, therefore, will continue to examine in detail any legislative-related areas where further harmonisation would be of added value. In such cases, detailed proposals will be submitted to the PCWP.

44. One such area of added value centres on *exit bans* in circumstances where risk supporters travel to and cause problems in another Member State. The national authorities in the country that is effectively exporting its domestic football problems should take steps to prevent known risk supporters from travelling to matches in other countries. Various legal approaches can be used to achieve this outcome.

45. It is crucial that Member States have access to information and advice on available legal and other options concerning safety and security in connection with football matches. The new CIV-based web site for NFIPs (www.nfip.eu) will provide one vehicle for disseminating such information and advice.

(xv) Sharing of Governmental, Police and UEFA Security and Safety Information

46. All parties stand to benefit from expanding the current European-wide arrangements by which governments and police gather and share important safety and security information to incorporate information held by UEFA and other football authorities. This is work in progress: discussions with UEFA are ongoing. An important consideration will be the need for a protocol designed to ensure that shared information is not publicised without the express authority of the organisation that has provided the information.

POLICE TRAINING

(xvi) National Football Information Points (NFIPs)

47. The role of NFIPs is crucial in terms of the safe and secure management of football matches with an international dimension in the key areas of police information exchange and the sharing of national perspective on the dynamics of football disorder. However, it is important that NFIP personnel are equipped to deliver their functions effectively to an agreed standard.

48. It is imperative, therefore, for all NFIP personnel (particularly new staff) to have access to an ongoing training programme. It is further desirable for this training to be part of a wider integrated training programme for police officers undertaking key football policing functions.

49. Ideally, the NFIP training should form part of the wider policing football training package set out below

(xv) Training of Operational Police Commanders and Spotters

50. Whilst governmental and police co-operation at a national level may be generally effective, a continuing issue of concern centres on whether or not operational police commanders at a local level are well versed in the content of the EU handbook and otherwise have received comprehensive training in policing football matches (either in town centres or at stadia).
51. Common training of Operational Police Commanders should reduce safety and security risks and assist in the harmonisation of policing of football supporters.
52. It is crucial for operational police commanders, who often have to make time-critical decisions impacting upon the safety of supporters, to have access to comprehensive training programmes which are up to a common standard. It is desirable for this training to be multinational in character to facilitate the sharing of policing perspectives and experience.
53. In order to ensure maximum effectiveness it is also important that other key police personnel (spotters, football intelligence officers, liaison officers, NFIP personnel etc.) receive training to a common standard.
54. As all of the above roles are inter-related it is important that the training programme comprises generic and role specific training, combining theoretical and practical components including enhanced awareness of important matters such as dynamic risk assessment, graduated policing tactics and other policing tactics recommended in the EU (football) handbook on police co-operation, and for follow-up training to be developed.
55. The above training programmes should be harmonised with the ongoing police peer-evaluation process previously agreed by the PCWP.
56. In order to be successful the training programme needs to be professionally prepared and delivered, in consultation with CEPOL.

(xvi) Funding of European Police Training Initiatives

57. To ensure that the training programme is ongoing and available to key personnel in all Member States, the EU Commission is urged to ensure that funding is made available on an annual basis to deliver the training. It is stressed that without such a European-wide training programme, common safety and security standards cannot be achieved.

(xvii) Public Viewing

58. In view of the increasing importance of public viewing events in national and international football matches and tournaments, the football experts group welcomes the German initiative regarding good practice guidance in this area.

(xviii) Tackling Racism among Spectators.

59. Racism continues to pose challenges at football matches in some Member States. The football experts group will work with the Council of Europe Standing Committee and other agencies in examining current guidance on preventing and tackling racism in football stadia in order to establish whether it is necessary or desirable to provide the police and other agencies with additional advice.

(xix) Preventive Measures and Working with Supporters

60. To ensure that football matches and tournaments are welcoming and enjoyable events for all concerned and to minimise safety and security risks, supporters need to be active participants at all stages of planning for and hosting the event. There needs to be an appropriate balance between police measures, repression and preventive measures. Self-policing by supporters will always be the best form of prevention and the need for, and desirability of, updating guidance on developing close links with supporter groups should be an important element of the work programme. The football experts group will work with the Council of Europe Standing Committee and other partners and continue to invest in this area."
