

Guide to Discriminatory Practises in European Football

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Introduction

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

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

It should be noted that not all forms of political discourse that advocate for, or lead to, discrimination are perpetrated by political groups. Often, discrimination is abetted by everyday language, gestures, and 'traditions' which have become normalised. Discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation can be seen around the world. This type of discrimination can be embedded in the legislation of nation states, making stadiums less safe for women. For women, abuse in the stands can be coupled with institutional barriers to playing or watching football.

The impact of discrimination goes beyond the use of insulting words, and the patterns by which people are discriminated against in football reflect the most common forms of abuse suffered by vulnerable groups in society. The issues dealt with in this guide are part of a societal problem that affects football and uses football to perpetuate itself. As a uniquely popular social activity, football has a duty, and an opportunity, to protect its players, spectators and supporters, and anyone else involved in football, from discrimination.

Football is watched by millions of TV viewers and the behaviour displayed in a stadium is likely to be seen and copied by many. The game should set a positive example of inclusivity.

It is important to recognize that this guide is not exhaustive regarding racist or far-right groups in Europe, as organizations can dissolve and new ones can emerge. Likewise, patterns, behaviours, and gestures evolve over time, and symbols and signs may be redesigned, recreated, or repurposed. The presence of any of the signs, symbols, or gestures described in this guide should be seen as an indicator of the presence of far-right groups that are likely to engage in discriminatory actions.

About Fare

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

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

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

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

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

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

www.farenet.org

Definitions

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

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

Antigypsyism (or Romaphobia/anti-Roma racism) is ‘a special form of racism directed towards Roma and those stigmatised in the public imagination as ‘Gypsies’, which has at its core the assumption that Roma are inferior and deviant, thus justifying their oppression and marginalisation. Other preconceptions of antigypsyism are that they are nomadic, of oriental origin, rootless and backward. As such, antigypsyism represents a historical system of oppression of Roma whose consequences are clearly apparent in the current difficult situation of Roma, in the dominant narratives on Roma and in the continuous stigmatisation of Romani identity in public statements’ (*Council of Europe – definition included in the Report Antigypsyism: Causes, prevalence, consequences, possible responses.*)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Commonly used discriminatory practices

There are many discriminatory expressions and practices that are used inside stadiums across Europe that are recurring. Discriminatory practices displayed in European football include verbal and symbolic abuse of black and ethnic minority players and fans, the display of far-right and neo-Nazi symbols, homophobic and sexist abuse. In addition, antisemitic and Islamophobic as well as anti-refugee displays have also been witnessed across Europe.

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

Monkey noises/gestures

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



Offering a banana to a black or ethnic minority player

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



Blackface

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

As harmless as it may seem, it spreads and reinforces racist stereotypes and generalisations about black people. Regardless of the motivation, it is universally perceived as racist.

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



‘Slant-eyed’ gesture

‘Slant-eyed’ gesture is widely recognised in various parts of the world and universally perceived as a racist insult targeting the human dignity of people of East Asian, Central Asian and Southeast Asian descent, regardless of whether the intent of the person performing it is to offend or not.

The gesture of pulling one’s eyes to the side is performed to mock and ridicule the eye shape visually, and should be regarded as equivalent to verbal expression ‘slant-eyed’.

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



‘Gorilla/monkey’

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

‘N-word’

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

‘Faggot (fag)’

A derogatory term used against gay or gender non-conforming males throughout English speaking countries. Similar discriminatory terms are commonly used inside stadiums in other languages. Examples include but are not limited to the use of the word ‘pédé’ in French, ‘peder’ in Serbian and Bosnian, or of the term ‘buzi’ in Hungarian.

‘Poofter’

A derogatory term used towards gay or gender non-conforming males most commonly used in English-speaking countries.

‘Dyke’

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

Homophobic banners

The use of terms such as ‘poof’ and ‘fag’ on banners and flags is homophobic.

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



Anti-Roma chanting – ‘Gypsy’ (‘Tsigane’/‘Cigáni’/‘Țigan’/‘Cigane’/‘Zigeuner’)

The use of the term ‘gypsy’ often has a negative connotation and is linked to attributing to a player or fan negative characteristics as part of the racist stereotyping of Roma people. Discriminatory practice commonly displayed include fans chant ‘Gypsies’ (‘Țigani/Cigani’) towards players on the pitch or directed at the referee, attributing to them negative characteristics as part of the xenophobic stereotype about Roma people. Examples include when a referee is

booking a player with a yellow/red card and/or when players commit or suffer a foul. The term varies across Europe, with fans in Central and Eastern Europe countries using similarly sounding terms like ‘Tsigane’, ‘Cigáni’, ‘Țigan’, ‘Cigane’, while in Western countries we could find/hear variations such as ‘Zigeuner’ (Germany/The Netherlands), ‘Gyppo’ (UK), ‘Gitano’ (Spain).

Antisemitic chanting

– ‘Jews/Jude’

Calling opponent team supporters “‘Jews’” is commonly used by far-right groups in Europe as a means of causing offence. It reflects an antisemitic worldview which inflicts xenophobic stereotypes about Jewish people onto fans of the opposing team. It is important to take the context of

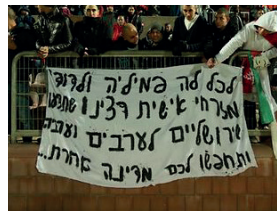
the expression into consideration when determining whether it is discriminatory, i.e. in the football context directed at the opposition it should be regarded as discriminatory. Versions of the chant can include ‘Who is not jumping is a Jew.’

Antisemitic banners

Far-right groups display antisemitic signs and flags. For example, a caricature of a Jewish man, wearing a hat with a Star of David on it, which has a cross through the middle of it.

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

Antisemitic abuse may take various forms like banners or chanting ‘Kill the Jews’. Some forms of anti-Israel messages can also be antisemitic i.e. combining the Star of David with a swastika.



Hissing noises

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

References to Jihad

The banner in the photo to the right reads 'Jihad'. In the context of football it often has antisemitic connotations when being used to refer to the violent fight against Jews.



Nazi salute/Hitler salute

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



Quenelle gesture

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



References to Nazi concentration camps

Far-right football supporters use references to the concentration camps such as Auschwitz and the Holocaust as a means of causing offence.

Antisemitic banners such as one with the text *Auschwitz la nostra patria, i forni le nostre case* (in English: 'Auschwitz is your home country and the ovens are your homes) have been on display, referring to the ovens that the Nazis used to burn gassed Jews. Banners like this are often accompanied by hissing noises mimicking the sound of the gas chambers.

Such banners have also appeared with references to refugees.



References to Adolf Hitler and less common neo-Nazi codes

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

The first picture depicts Adolf Hitler during World War I.

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



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

The taking the-knee gesture in sport was first used by the NFL player Colin Kaepernick in the United States of America (USA) in 2016 and has been widely used by footballers worldwide since 2020. Banners with a crossed-out image of a person taking the knee started to appear in 2020 displayed by far-right groups in football targeting players for performing the gesture. Such banners have also been combined with 'White Lives Matter' banners (page 31). Banners that address players and urge them not to take the knee have also been used by far-right groups.

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



Defend (White) Europe

'Defend Europe' or 'Defend White Europe' is an Islamophobic, anti-refugee, racist slogan used by far-right groups to signify their intolerance towards migrants and refugees. Inside stadiums it is likely that we would see banners with the message 'Defend Europe' or 'Defend white Europe' or variations, such as 'Europa blanca' banner displayed by Real Madrid fans.



Islamophobic displays

Islamophobic abuse may take various forms, from offensive chants to banners. For example a banner with a styled neo-Nazi code '88' with bombs falling on a mosque.

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

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

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



Other forms of xenophobia and prejudice

Derogative and xenophobic displays such as 'Rapefugees' make racist generalisations and promote xenophobic stereotypes.



Glorification of racist murders or terrorists

Far-right groups may also communicate their message inside the stadiums by expressing support for convicted racist murderers and terrorists. The example on the right shows a banner in support of Janusz Waluś, a Polish-born racist murderer of one of the leaders of the African National Congress in South Africa.



Abuse of disabled people

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



Sexism

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

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

The second image to the right is both homophobic and sexist.



Commonly displayed far-right signs and symbols

Across UEFA members' countries, a number of far-right groups have established a presence amongst football fans and attempt to use football matches for propaganda and to project their discriminatory views.

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

The hate groups use symbols and codes specifically to avoid detection and claim a double meaning of their displays.

Swastika

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

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



Celtic Cross

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

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

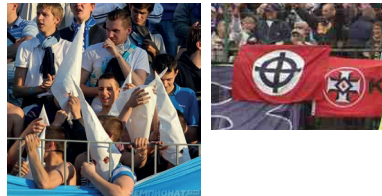
It is often used as a replacement for the letter ‘O’.



Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

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

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



White Power/White Pride

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

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



Cogwheel

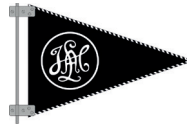
The cogwheel is used by some racist and neo-Nazi groups because it was the symbol of the 'Deutsche Arbeitsfront', a paramilitary institution during German National Socialism. The cogwheel can contain a number of different signs in its middle.

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



SS Adolf Hitler Division (LSSAH)

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



Flipped SS shield

The shield used by LSSAH or SS-Totenkopf Skull is sometimes displayed flipped, with club, fan group or other far-right symbols instead of the Skull or the key.



SS Division ‘Dirlewanger’

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

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



‘Bergmann’ Nazi SS Battalion

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



Triskele

The Triskele or Triskelion has an angular design, similar to the Swastika though only with three arms. It is also one of the symbols of the ‘Blood & Honour’ movement and sometimes appears in a circular design.

Note: versions of a Triskelion are present in non-discriminatory contexts on the flags of Sicily and the Isle of Man.



Blood & Honour (B&H)

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



Misanthropic Division

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



Hammer & Sword

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



Hammerskins

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

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



SS-Totenkopf Skull

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

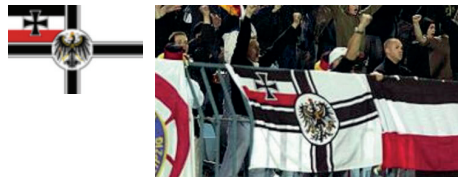
The SS skull is one of the most commonly displayed neo-Nazi symbols and is often seen on banners, clothing and stickers.



Reichskriegsflagge (War flag of the German Empire)

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

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



Reichskriegsflagge (War flag of Germany under National-Socialism)

War flags used by the German army during National Socialism between 1933 and 1945. Football fans often replace the original colours with the colours of their club. The club's badge sometimes replaces the eagle in the centre of the flag.



Reichsadler (Eagle of the Nazis)

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

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



Black Sun

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

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



SA Badge

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



References to 'Aryan' heritage or 'white only'

Messages grounded on belief of the superiority of the 'white race' are displayed widely among far-right groups on their banners.

Often they are combined with a Confederate flag.



Confederate flag

In 1860-61, eleven southern states seceded from the United States to protect the institution of slavery, forming the Confederate States of America and precipitating the Civil War. During the war, the Confederacy and its military forces used a variety of flags, but the flag that became most associated with the Confederacy was the so-called 'battle flag'.

The flag has been appropriated by far-right football fans.



Good Night Left Side

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



Runes

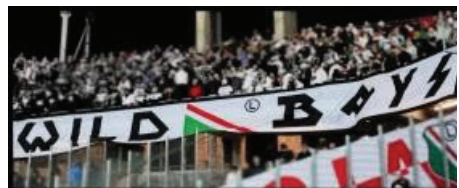
Runes are old Nordic/Germanic symbols co-opted and widely used by the German National Socialists. Many of them are used by neo-Nazis and racists. Runic writing can be used in non-racist contexts outside the stadium, but Runes have been widely co-opted by the neo-Nazis worldwide.

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

Sig-Rune/SS-Emblem

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

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



Wolfsangel/Gibor-rune

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

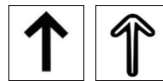
The rune is extensively used by neo-Nazi football fans throughout Europe.



Tiwaz/Tyr-rune

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

It appears mostly on banners in stadiums. Sometimes it is also used to replace the letter 'T' on banners.



Odal-rune

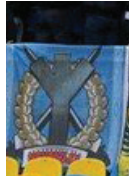
The Odal-rune is a symbol of 'Blood and Soil'. In Nazi Germany it was used as an emblem of the 'Hitler Youth'. After World War II, it was used by neo-Nazi youth organisation 'Wiking Youth' which is banned in Germany.

It appears on banners in stadiums.



Life-rune/Man-rune

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



Death-rune/Yr-rune

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

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



Letter and number codes

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

This mechanism can very often be seen within football stadiums where fans wear T-shirts or display banners printed with such codes. The numbers often stand for the corresponding letters in the alphabet. Using codes is designed to avoid detection and claim double meaning of apparent hate messages.

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

14

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



18 (and Combat 18)

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

It appears on banners, stickers or clothing.



28

28 is the code for the Nazi skinhead network, 'Blood and Honour'.



88

88 stands for the greeting 'Heil Hitler'. It is often printed on football fan shirts or used as part of the name of neo-Nazi supporter groups. Sometimes fans use math equations to get around a direct display of the 88 number, such as the case of the banner with the square root of 7744, which is 88.



Ziga-Zaga

Used as a football chant in the UK, it did not have a discriminatory connotation, but was co-opted by neo-Nazis particularly in Eastern Europe due to acoustic similarity to the German word 'Sieg' and is used to substitute "Sieg Heil" salute. In parts of Eastern Europe, the chant is often accompanied by a Nazi salute.



100%

Refers to the White supremacists' belief in 'pure' Aryan or 'White' roots.



'Meine Ehre heißt Treue' (My honour is loyalty)

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

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



'Gott mit uns'

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



'White Lives Matter'/WLM

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



NS

Abbreviation of National Socialism or National Socialist.

WP or WPSH

Abbreviation of 'White Power' and 'White Power Skinhead'.

WPWW

'White Pride World Wide' greeting used by white supremacists

ZOG

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

RaHoWa

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

Country-specific symbols

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

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

Bulgarian symbols

Bulgarian National Resistance

(Национална съпротива
България)

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



Kubrat Youth

Kubrat Youth are a far-right group who self-identify as 'National Socialists' and 'against minorities' and uses far-right symbols.



Croatian symbols

Ustasha/Ustaše

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

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

The ‘U’ is stylised to resemble the ‘U’ of the Ustasha logo, as can be seen in the Frankfurt logo.



‘Za Dom – Spremni’ (‘For the Homeland – Ready’)

A salute used by the Ustaše as an equivalent of the Nazi salute ‘Heil Hitler’.

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



Srbe na vrbe!

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

English abbreviations

National Front

The National Front is a British far-right party whose central belief is that only white people should be citizens of the United Kingdom. It started in the late 1960s.



British National Party (BNP)

The British National Party is a far-right political party in the United Kingdom. It developed from elements of the National Front in the 1980s.



Britain First

Britain first is a far-right political party and movement in the United Kingdom. It developed from the BNP. The party plays a leading role in harassing asylum seekers and refugees in this country



English Defence League (EDL)

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



Patriotic Alternative

Patriotic Alternative (PA) is a British far-right, fascist, neo-Nazi and white nationalist hate group which states that it has active branches nationwide. Its stance has been variously described as Islamophobic, fascist and racist. The group has been active in protesting around football matches, particularly against the Black Lives Matter protests.



German abbreviations

NSU

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

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

German symbols

NPD

The National Democratic Party of Germany ('Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands') is a German far-right political party. As of 2023, the party has renamed itself Die Heimat (in English: 'The Homeland').



German Defence League

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



Die Identitären/Identitarian Movement

An Islamophobic, pan-European far-right movement increasingly popular amongst some football fans in Germany, Austria, France and other countries in Europe.



PEGIDA

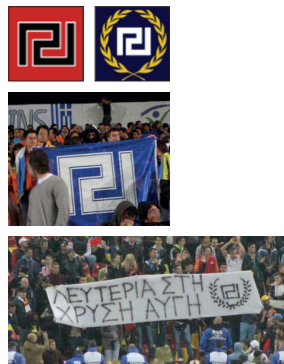
An Islamophobic political movement supported by football hooligans in Germany.



Greek symbols

Chrysí Avgí (Χρυσή Αυγή, Golden Dawn)

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



Hungarian symbols

'Greater Hungary' map

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

It is used by some far-right groups inside stadiums. Displayed together with other hate symbols it should be viewed as a reflection of ultra-nationalism.



Arrow Cross Movement

Hungarian fascist movement and party, which governed Hungary in 1944-45 under the Nazis.



Israeli symbols

Kach/Kahane Chai

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

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



Lehava

An Israeli far-right organisation promoting religious segregation.



Italian symbols

Tricolour Flame

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



Forza Nuova (FN)

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



Symbols of Italian fascism

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



CasaPound

An Italian fascist organisation which increasingly attracts young people.

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



Polish abbreviations

NOP

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

ONR

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

Polish symbols

Falanga or 'Hand and Sword'

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



Mieczyk Chrobrego (Chrobry Sword) or ‘Szczerbiec’

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



Toporzel

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



Front Oczyszczenia Narodowego

Front Oczyszczenia Narodowego (in English: National Purification Front) is a far-right nationalist Polish movement connected to some football fans groups. The group’s declared aim is to fight against the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people and refugees or migrants. They have used the Celtic-Cross, the Hand and Sword as well as other far-right symbols in their marches.

Romanian symbols

Iron Guard (Garda de fier)

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

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



Noua Dreapta

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



Russian symbols

Slavic Union

(‘Славянский Союз’)

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



Soprotivlenie (‘Сопrotивление’)

A far-right youth movement popular amongst football fans.



Russian National Unity

(‘Русское Национальное Единство’, РНЕ)

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



Wotan Jugend

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

It distributes propaganda under the slogan 'Hammer of National Socialism'.



The Z symbol

Since mid-March 2022, the “Z” began to be used by the Russian government as a pro-war propaganda motif and has been appropriated by pro-Putin civilians as a symbol of support for Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. It is an ultra-nationalist war symbol also used by far-right football fans to show their support for Russia.



Serbian symbols

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

This slogan is commonly used by Serbian far-right groups glorifying the genocidal killing of Bosnian Muslims by the Bosnian Serb army in 1995 in Srebrenica.

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



Chetniks/ Četnici/ Четници

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

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



Ratko Mladić portrait

Ratko Mladić is a convicted war criminal responsible for genocide of Bosnian Muslims. His portrait is displayed on flags as well as shirts by Serbian fans.



Ratko Mladić cap

Military general's cap for which Mladić was distinctive, is used as a recognizable symbol for glorifying him.



Spanish symbols

Alianza Nacional

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



Blue Division/Division Azul/250

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



Falange

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



Flag of Francoist Spain (1939-1975)

The official flag of Spain under the Franco dictatorship.

The flag has been seen displayed inside stadiums in Spain.



'Viva la unión de España' flag

The constitutional Spanish flag with the message 'Long live Spain's union', a message which has become an alternative slogan for the far-right and is commonly associated with far-right fan groups of various Spanish teams.



Ukrainian symbols

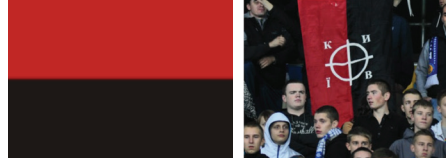
Flag of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists

(Організація українських націоналістів)

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

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

It is specifically offensive during games against Polish teams.



Waffen SS Galizien

(дивізія Ваффен СС 'Галичина')

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

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



Portraits of Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych

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



Wolfsangel

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



Clothing brands and prints

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

Thor Steinar

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

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



Erik & Sons

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



Consdaple

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

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



Masterrace Europe

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



Hatecrime and HC Streetwear

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

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

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



Werwolf (Werewolf)

A German neo-Nazi clothing brand.



Walhall

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



Skrewdriver

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

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



ZetaZeroAlfa

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

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



Beloyar (Белояр)

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



Svastone

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

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



White Rex

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

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



Otazbina (Отачбина)

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

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



Wiking

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



Risk of confusion

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

The below sections contrast the most commonly confused symbols.

Skull and crossbones/ Jolly Roger



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



NOT TO CONFUSE WITH
DISCRIMINATORY SYMBOL:



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

Fist symbols



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



NOT TO CONFUSE WITH
DISCRIMINATORY SYMBOL:



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

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

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