

Executive Summary and Key Findings: 'Queering Football - Tackling Homophobia and Promoting Anti-Discrimination around Major Sports Events'

The 'Queering Football - Tackling Homophobia and Promoting Anti-Discrimination around Major Sports Events' project (hereafter 'Queering Football') ran between January 2016 and December 2017. Its aim was to use football, in particular the Men's UEFA EURO 2016 in France and the Women's UEFA EURO 2017 in the Netherlands, as a pan-European communication platforms to tackle discrimination and hatred. Queering Football represented a range of partners including fairplay-VIDC, the European Gay and Lesbian Sports Federation, Football Supporters Europe, Federation Sportive Gaie et Lesbienne, Unione Italiana Sport per Tutti and Spolint Institute in the shared project. Accordingly, Queering Football reaffirmed questions of inclusion, equality and minority rights, ensuring they remain the agenda and promoting awareness of these issues across the sport and societies in which it operates.

In addressing this aim, Queering Football held the following five objectives ('Obj' below):

Obj1. To campaign against homophobia around major sports events;

Obj2. To build networks and capacity among LGBTIQs and football supporters;

Obj3. To develop anti-homophobia educational and training tools;

Obj4. To promote anti-discrimination standards at major sport events, and,

Obj5. To strengthen and grow the Queering Football network

In meeting this aim and objectives, Queering Football played an active role in the production of nine key activities and outputs ('Act' below):

Act1. Two sets of 'Euro Pride House' fan embassies, held in a range of locations during the Men's UEFA EURO 2016 in France and the Women's UEFA EURO 2017 in the Netherlands;

Act2. Local, national and international meetings with LGBTIQ activists in a range of sites;

Act3. Football Pride Week (2016) events, particularly including the International 'Fußball Fans Gegen Homophobie' conference;

Act4. The 'Against the Rules' exhibition;

Act5. A 'Toolkit for Training Journalists', launched to sensitise journalists to issues faced by individuals in LGBTIQ communities in football;

Act6. A 'Toolkit for Sport Educators' launched to sensitise sport educators to issues faced by individuals in LGBTIQ communities in football;

Act9. Training activities with a range of individuals to sensitise them to issues faced by LGBTIQs

Act8. The ‘Handbook of Human Rights & Mega-Sport Events’, which was launched at the European Parliament, and,

Act9. The European Networking Conference – Queering Football: Addressing Homophobia at Mega-Sport Events

These objectives and outputs were addressed under four specific modules through which this report is structured ('Mod' below):

Mod1. Diversity Campaigns around Euro2016 and Euro2017;

Mod2. Networking and Fan Activities Against Homophobia;

Mod3. Diversity Training Activities

Mod4. Setting Antidiscriminatory Standards

Key Findings

Queering Football's project aim was to use football as a pan-European communication platform to tackle discrimination and hatred. This aim was broadly met by the range of activities that ranged from providing training events with a range of individuals, to the promotion of exhibitions, the hosting of conferences, the dissemination of ideas to policy makers at the European Parliament and the successful running of Euro Pride House events that were spread over two tournaments. The production of the ‘Handbook of Human Rights & Mega-Sport Events’ and two training toolkits provide tangible legacies of the project.

This work raises awareness of the issues and discrimination felt by LGBTIQ communities in football but, alone, cannot be expected to ‘solve’ these issues that must be recognised as hegemonic. In other words, such prejudices are embedded within the fabric of life away from and within sport. Addressing the issues needs further concerted support in the form of future projects, training and conferences. Within football, there needs to be support from FIFA, UEFA and national FAs in this quest. In many instances, this support needs to be material rather than symbolic, and must not singularly require the communities of LGBTIQ activists to work harder in the pursuit. A long-term threat to the strong work of such activists in this quest is the possibility of exhaustion, given many are volunteers.

Events that have taken place during the project have often been accompanied by social spaces. These have proved to be important to the network as it is in such spaces that affective bonds have been formed and tactics shared. It is also through these conversations that volunteers and activists have realised the value of the work that they have given to challenging discrimination against human rights.

In 2017, UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin made an encouraging step of voicing pledge to ‘not tolerate racism, or sexism, or homophobia, or discrimination against disabled people’ at his address at the 41st Ordinary UEFA Congress. Should these words be carried forward by the confederation’s future actions, a strong value Queering Football will be realised as it has brought together those challenging prejudices felt by LGBTIQ across Europe who will collaborate with football’s authorities in this mission. Along with the production of the ‘Handbook of Human Rights & Mega-Sport Events’ and two training toolkits, these bonds could be a lasting legacy of the project.

Future Recommendations

To build upon Queering Football’s successes five recommendations are made to future, similarly guided projects.

1. *Include a partner with dedicated public relations and/or media skills:* to maximise the purchase and visibility of messages to the widest set of publics.
2. *Utilise social media in the fullest sense:* potentially spreading messages across the world instantly and possibly using facilities such as ‘Thunderclap’ to enhance excitement levels about the work that is being undertaken.
3. *Gain endorsements from well-known individuals, where appropriate:* such as well-known athletes, politicians, football clubs and celebrities to give the message further public traction.
4. *Continued strategies to link up issues in football at all levels, from grassroots to the ‘elite’:* to continue be able to realize ambitious aims such as those embedded into Queering Football.
5. *Value volunteers but do not over rely upon them – projects must be fully resourced:* work on Queering Football is indebted to the perseverance of highly skilled and motivated volunteers. These people often report being tired and both physically and emotionally drained by their experiences. The call in this recommendation is not for improved practice by future projects but for better resourcing from the state and/or football’s various authorities.

Teamwork and Communication

The lead partner and principal applicant in Queering Football was fairplay-VIDC. Colleagues from that organization liaised with key personnel from other partner groups - the European Gay and Lesbian Sports Federation, Football Supporters Europe, Federation Sportive Gaie et Lesbienne, Unione Italiana Sport per Tutti and Spolint Institute – and the external evaluator to discuss key issues in the project.

The representatives from all of these groups used ‘Trello’ as an online platform and repository to store project documents, outputs and associated paperwork. All members could upload documents to this site, and the facility generated automatic email alerts to inform all individuals that new documents were available for inspection. Such documents were gathered together under specific sections of the platform in a way that project partners and the evaluator found to be useful. Messages about documents or meetings were communicated through Trello and informed those involved with the project through an automated email alert. Trello provided a highly effective tool for the group although a minor area for the platform’s development would have been a facility to reply to group messages directly through email connections rather than following a link back to the host website.

Physical meetings took place at the sites of key events. The opportunity to have full project teams available at such moments was invaluable to the development of collective ideas and plans. Given the necessarily far reaching ‘home’ locations of those involved in the project, the opportunities to undertake physical meetings were not more frequent than occasional. A pragmatic solution was the hosting of frequent Skype mediated interviews in which ideas were successfully discussed in a broad sense. Akin to the physical meetings, key points from these discussions were recorded by fairplay-VIDC and circulated electronically. Such meetings took place, on average, every 2 months with individual communications arranged by project partners.

Mod1. Diversity Campaigns around Euro2016 and Euro2017

'Mod1. Diversity Campaigns around Euro2016 and Euro2017' addressed 'Obj1. To campaign against homophobia around major sports events' and is evidenced as doing so through 'Act1.' by running two sets of 'Euro Pride House' fan embassies, held in a range of locations during the Men's UEFA EURO 2016 in France and the Women's UEFA EURO 2017 in the Netherlands. In addition to this, the social spaces afforded by Pride Houses allowed network capacity to be built amongst LGBTIQs and the growing of the Queering Football (informal) network, which are 'Obj2.' and 'Obj5' of the project.

Euro Pride House is an initiative that initially operated in Warsaw (Poland) at the men's Euro 2012. At Euro 2016, Euro Pride House took place as a series of events in Nice, Lyon and Marseille. Events were spaces where all fans, specifically including the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans community could enjoy Euro2016 in an environment of tolerance and respect for fundamental human rights. Thus, the aims Euro Pride House were: 1) to raise awareness of the involvement of LGBTIQ people in football as supporters and participants, and 2) to create a dialogue amongst football's many stakeholders on homophobia and transphobia. These will now be considered with respect to Queering Football Euro Pride House activities at the two major sports events.

Euro Pride House Events, Euro2016 and Euro2017

The 'official' Euro 2016 Pride House launch took place at the UEFA Fan Zone at the Eiffel Tower, Paris, on June 11, 2016, from noon. This tournament, the Men's Euro2016, ran from June 10-July 10, 2016 across France. A total of 14 Euro 2016 Pride House events ran over the month in which the tournament ran, approximately equating to one event every second day, providing a space for sports fans of all sexual orientations and LGBTIQ communities to mix freely. Euro 2017 Pride House was launched in Bodytalk, a bar/nightclub on the banks of the Oudegracht canal in central Utrecht on 16 July, the first day of the Women's Euro 2017 which ran until August 6, 2017. Pride House took the basement area of the bar throughout the tournament, holding events when matches were played in the city. Pride House was situated separately from the UEFA Fan Zone but was within a five minute walk from it, ensuring close proximity. Press releases were released and initially circulated through the Queering Football newsletter. These were released at strategically targeted time periods – for instance on June 3, one week before the Euro2016 began in which the concept and an outline programme was offered and June 16, when a review of the launch events was offered.

Methodology

Evaluation methodology for the Euro2016 and Euro2017 Pride House consisted of two activities:

1. Participant observation and 'field' interviews: These took place with volunteers and fans at *Pride House and Respect Fan Culture - Fans' Embassy* at the Euro2016 on the launch weekend of the tournament, in Paris and on July 16, 2017 at the launch of Euro2017.
2. Questionnaires: Distributed at *Euro2016 Pride House* in Paris that measured participants' feedback and experiences in numerical terms.

Findings

Euro2016 Pride House's launch location was central within the Eiffel Tower fans' embassy. Entertainment, food and drinks were offered throughout the day, and the ensuing football matches were displayed on multiple screens inside Pride House. Information leaflets which distributed the messages and aims about LGBTIQ rights and, specifically, the organizations involved in Queering Football were freely available, along with banners from the organization. Key individuals from the European Gay and Lesbian Sports Federation were on hand to talk with people who entered into Pride House. This format was broadly replicated at other Euro2016 Pride House events across France. From these similar events, one such was held in Marseille - a city that one person who took part in the questionnaire administered at the Paris launch event said would especially benefit from Pride House activities - which was a panel discussion on Sport and Discrimination which took place in searing temperatures in the fan zone in that city on 25 June 2016, reflecting the diversity of events taking place under the project's banner.

At the launch event, about 50 fans entered into the Pride House at the Eiffel Tower on 11 June. 42 supporters filled out the questionnaire, giving a response rate of around 84 per cent. None of these supporters had attended the Euro Pride House event in Warsaw (Poland) at Euro2012, reflecting a different composition of supporters. This was reflected in the sample which suggested that 39 out of the 42 fans who filled in the evaluation survey described their nationality as 'French'. The remaining three - describing themselves to be 'British', 'Brazilian' and 'Colombian' - lived in France. The sample declared themselves to be from a wide range of ethnic groups - the composition was not all or mostly self-identifying as 'white' - and from a similarly wide range of occupations, although there was a majority who were from either professional/creative social classes or had similarly high levels of social and cultural capital, as students.

32 out of the sample of 42 fans in the sample described their sexual orientation as 'gay' or 'lesbian'. 2 people defined themselves as bisexual and 2 people described themselves as heterosexual. A further 6 declined to answer the question. Nobody described themselves as trans-sexual or intersex. None declared themselves to have a disability, although around half of the sample (20 people) declined to respond to this question.

From the 50 fans, all apart from one individual in the gathering attended in small groups, ranging from 2-6 people. These individuals tended to stay in their pre-existing small groups, talking with those that they already knew engaging in further 'bonding capital' rather than 'bridging' and extending their networks. All reported to enjoy the event and in interviews many reported to having learned more about the project and the organizations that were running the project.

There were around 90,000 supporters of ranging nationalities, genders, occupations, ages and sexualities in the wider fan embassy on June 11, 2016. In field interviews undertaken outside of Pride House in the wider fan embassy, very few supporters encountered knew about the activities provided and information distributed in Pride House: some reported to be uninterested (or, in their words 'not bothered') that such activities were taking place but others expressed a much keener interest. UEFA rules dictated that to gain access to Pride House in the embassy, supporters had to pre-register and take along photographic identification. Indeed, a sizable crowd of young people gathered at the open door way into Pride House to watch a football juggler inside it. Despite a willingness from local organizers, they could not be granted entry to the space and the discussions/information within it. Many of those inside Pride House reported to hear about the events through friendship networks that were traceable to local organisers of the event. UEFA's interpretation about the 'politicism' of sexuality meant that information leaflets could not be distributed to those outside of Pride House, despite a willingness from those who organized it to do so.

On July 16, at the launch of Euro2017 and its Pride House, around 40 people attended. This was close to the full capacity of the cellar area of Bodytalk, and indeed some of those in attendance chose to sit outside the area, on the tables to the side of the canal. The audience included a wide range of nationalities with many from the LGBTIQ community in and around the city. Before the event began, John Ryan from EGLSF and Lou Manders from the John Blankenstein Foundation gave speeches about the need for equality, fairness and respect in sport raising awareness around campaigning activities. The audience was fully briefed on the ongoing work taking place in Queering Football, alongside work on a number

of other projects sharing similar aims. Selected segments of the 'Against the Rules' exhibition ('Act4.') were on display inside and outside the bar area and the 'Handbook of Human rights & Mega-Sport Events' ('Act8.') were available for collection. Approximately 30 people took home a copy of the latter publication at the event, and many others posed for photographs in front of segments of the former. Both these sets of actions raised awareness of campaigning activities against homophobia at major sports events, a theme central to 'Obj1.'

Alcohol was made available at the event. Although in its early stages of the evening, people remained in the small groups they arrived in, as the evening progressed groups joined together – forging 'bridging capital' in the community. During informal interviews with those that attended after the event, it was reported that these processes continued throughout subsequent events at Pride House 2017. These processes help to foster network capacity amongst LGBTIQs and offer the potential to grow the Queering Football network, which are 'Obj2.' And 'Obj3.' of the project.

Reflections from the Activities

A SWOT analysis of the i) Strengths, ii) Weaknesses, iii) Opportunities and iv) Threats and Barriers provides the opportunity to reflect on Euro2016 and Euro2017 Pride House.

i) Strengths

The launch of both Pride Houses provided opportunities for supporters to mingle. This value was replicated in subsequent days' Pride House events at the two tournaments. Pride Houses were physical spaces in which information was distributed and was not, as is often the case amongst football fans, homogenous according to age, ethnicity and gender. It was also a space in which members of the LGBTIQ community could overcome any negative feelings that they may feel toward football. Many of those in survey's sample reported that being able to launch events such as Pride House and having such a space recognized by UEFA would be major achievements of the project - such aims were clearly met, strengthening the beliefs that prejudices against LGBTIQ people in football could be overcome. This affective aspect of Pride House is clearly significant as those who were in attendance were likely to be those who might lobby for continued changing attitudes and practices in sport and achievements such as these renew such hopes.

No violence took place in the spaces, and at Euro 2016 Pride House engagements took place between the organizers and UEFA; indeed, forging links to stakeholders such the European confederation for football was one of the intended aims of this activity. Given the event took place without any disturbances this was a clear success: there appeared that there would be no reason why UEFA would not engage with the local organizers again. Inside the space, the atmosphere was warm and jovial with the dispersal of educational elements of the exercise made to be 'fun'. Awareness of LGBTIQ communities as fans and participants in football was made clear to those in attendance.

ii) Weaknesses

Attendance at both Pride Houses was quite modest and disproportionately small to those within the fans' embassy. At Euro2017, Bodytalk was very busy with little room for more fans given that the size of the bar was small. At Euro2016's launch event, the size of the space was large and it was a source of frustration for the organizers that more people could have accessed the event.

Inside Euro2016 Pride House launch, people usually socialised with the people they already knew. As such, it was difficult to see how 'bridging' capital could be built to extend social networks. This is not a criticism of only this event, given that such connections are usually built in spaces over time and the Pride House launch ran for just one day. Those who gained access to the space were likely to already be educated about the issues LGBTIQ people face given that the majority who took part in the survey were from such communities. In the survey, no-one described themselves as either trans or intersex: connecting with those individuals who see themselves as part of these communities was important to the aims of activity. This is not to say that trans or intersex people need to be present at education events about their sexual orientations but this could be considered a weakness of the activity.

Euro2017 Pride House's launch event was more similar to the events it regularly ran throughout the tournament. At these events, people from the LGBTIQ communities met together and new connections were made. These connections tended to be friends of friends rather than completely new acquaintances, perhaps reducing the capacity of bridging capital.

As with Euro2016 Pride House, Euro2017 Pride House lead organizer, John Ryan carried out his actions through a belief in the commendable aims of the project but during the days was occupied by his full time job. A weakness of the endeavour is that they are run by volunteers who are highly committed but have other activities to occupy their time.

iii) Opportunities

The contact established with UEFA in holding the Euro2016 Pride House launch is significant in meeting the aim of creating a dialogue amongst football's many stakeholders on homophobia and transphobia given that large organizations involved in the governance of sport are usually the most difficult stakeholder to access. The opening of a communication channel with UEFA is significant creating such dialogue and also opportunities for future Pride Houses. Although attendance inside the launch of Euro2016 Pride House was modest, it was clear that there was an appetite amongst many young people inside the fan embassy at the excitement of the events taking place inside the space. This excitement is indicative of the opportunities to roll out the networks and generate 'bridging' social capital with those who could be educated and/or become part of a movement. Opportunities were presented in terms of the balance of entertainment and educational dimensions of the event, particularly given that most people inside the launch space described it as 'fun'. Opportunities could be presented in terms of extending the networks of participants and establishing communication channels to create sustained social change.

iv) Threats and Barriers

Threats and barriers to realising the potential of the event are twofold: first, the launch of both events was promoted through a range of personal networks of the local organizers, who worked very hard for the successes of the event. Friends and friends of friends of friends where therefore more likely to hear about the event. This form of 'word of mouth' promotion was a reflection on both a small advertising budget and a fear that by expanding the web of publicity there could be little control over who attended. A wider promotional campaign could have spread the information and support networks further but would have greater potential for exposure to prejudiced groups who may have wanted to cause trouble. This is a live difficulty in promoting such events, especially when connections were being forged with stakeholders such as UEFA. Second, UEFA arguing that LGBTIQ awareness is political and therefore banning information material outside of Euro2016 Pride House presents a threat to the group spreading its message. Similarly, although UEFA requiring a pre-event registration and photographic identification gave the launch added security, it also restricted access to the space - and prevented a barrier in spreading the information and discussions to engage a wider body of football fans.

Mod1. Summary

‘Mod1. Diversity Campaigns around Euro2016 and Euro2017’ was central to Queering football’s aim to use football and mega sport events in particular as a pan-European communication platforms to tackle discrimination and hatred by using two sets of ‘Euro Pride House’, held in a range of locations during the Men’s UEFA EURO 2016 in France and the Women’s UEFA EURO 2017 in the Netherlands. In addition to this, the social spaces afforded by Pride Houses allowed network capacity to be built amongst LGBTIQs and the growing of the Queering Football (informal) network, which are ‘Obj2.’ and ‘Obj5’ of the project. These threads will be picked up in the next section.

Pride Houses gave supporters opportunities to meet others, as they became physical spaces in which information was distributed. That such spaces existed gave many activists the belief that they could successfully challenge the prejudices faced by LGBTIQ communities. However, attendances at Pride Houses were modest, particularly in comparison to fan embassies at large. In some cases, such as the launch of the Euro2016 Pride House, this was beyond the control of Queering Football and local organizers. A major purpose of Pride Houses is to offer LGBTIQ fans a safe social space to watch matches together. It is without question that this aim was met at both Euro2016 and Euro2017. An aim of Queering Football is to tackle discrimination and hatred faced by LGBTIQ fans. Pride Houses audiences were almost uniformly made up of LGBTIQ communities, many of whom were already known by the local organizers. The affective boost given to the community in attendance, and the merging of local networks in the spaces, gave many the renewed belief that discrimination and hatred could be challenged in the medium term but it is questionable whether this aim could be feasibly met in the short term through such occasions.

Highly committed and strongly engaged volunteers ran both sets of Euro Pride Houses. These volunteers also held professional full time jobs away from these activities. Euro Pride Houses are clearly worthwhile endeavours in terms of affording LGBTIQ communities social spaces but the toll placed upon volunteer organizers is very sizable. In short, a ‘best practice’ scenario would be for FIFA and/or UEFA to show their commitment to supporting communities of LGBTIQ fans by investing resources in the operations of Euro Pride Houses, without placing requests and demands that might be deemed unreasonable on local organizers.

Mod2. Networking and Fan Activities Against Homophobia

'Mod2. Networking and Fan Activities Against Homophobia' addressed 'Obj.2' in building networks and capacity among LGBTIQs and football supporters and 'Obj.5' in strengthening and growing the Queering Football network. Activities and outputs principally associated with 'Mod1.' addressed these objectives. However, 'Mod2.' objectives were principally addressed by 'Act2.' as local, national and international meetings with LGBTIQ activists in a range of sites, 'Act3.' as Football Pride Week (2016) events, particularly including the International 'Fußball Fans Gegen Homophobie' conference and 'Act9.' through the European Networking Conference – Queering Football: Addressing Homophobia at Mega-Sport Events.

The capacity to boost and strengthen the network is a key part of any social movement and it was good practice for activities addressing 'Mod2.' to be central to Queering Football. A strong and diverse network facilitates the spread of messages connected to campaigning and antidiscriminatory messages to be spread across individuals, organizations and associations that might otherwise be disparate. It was important to Queering Football it is either connected or actively supported pre-existing connections in the quest to challenge all forms of discrimination in sport, particularly those that were sexuality-themed.

To these ends, the mid-project activities during Football Pride Week, held in Berlin (5-9 October 2016) and the end of project European Networking Conference – Queering Football: Addressing Homophobia at Mega-Sport Events, held in Ljubljana (17-18 November 2017) are central to evaluation of this module and individually form its analysis.

Football Pride Week, Berlin, 5-9 October 2016

Football Pride Week 2016 took place on 5-9 October with events concentrated in Berlin, Germany. The activity of the keenest note was the International 'Fußball Fans Gegen Homophobie' (Football Fans Against Homophobia, hereafter FFGH) conference, held on Friday 7 October with conference activities continuing on Saturday 8 October. This conference symbolized the hub of activity for the FFGH, which was founded in 2011 (and gained registered charity status in 2013) in Berlin as a clear positioning of football fans against homophobia. Amongst the organizations that were involved in the co-ordination of the conference were Queering Football project partners Football Supporters Europe (FSE) and Queer Football Fan Clubs (QFF), along with the Leben und Schwulenverband Berlin-Brandenburg (Lesbian and Gay Association Berlin-Brandenburg, LSVD) who run the SOCCER SOUND project (founded in 2010) with the task of raise awareness about "diversity" and combat prejudice and homophobia in sport and football, in particular. Around 150 delegates attended, spanning at least 29 countries which included Russia, Germany, France, Norway, Poland, Italy and the UK. Attendees were asked to tweet conference information and outcomes using the hashtag '#footballprideweek'. The programme conference included talks by journalist Nicole Selmer, QFF's Sven Kistner, FSE's Daniela Wurbs and Martin Endemann and UEFA's Patrick Gasser. Break out workshops took place with discussions ranging from strategies to address fans' concerns about safety at the Russia World Cup which will take place in 2018 (discussion led by Amnesty International's Naomi Western) to supporting the formation and development of LGBTIQ fans' networks that spanned specific clubs, countries and the whole of Europe. Friday 7 October included a reception to celebrate five years of FFGH at Rathaus Schöneberg which was hosted by drag artist Gloria Viagra.

Methodology

Evaluation methodology for Football Pride Week consisted of five activities:

1. Participant observation and 'field' interviews: These took place with delegates (fans and activists) at FFGH events during Football Pride Week particularly over 7-9 October 2016
2. Questionnaires: Distributed on Saturday 8 October at the FFGH conference that measured participants' feedback and experiences in numerical terms.
3. A social network analysis (SNA) of Twitter communications that used the hashtag #footballprideweek between 5 and 10 October (allowing for a day after the event ended) to map out connections, communications, geographies and 'clusters'.

4. Twitter communication, specifically including direct messages which afford greater character space, with some who used the hashtag #footballprideweek to reflect upon their usage.
5. Field interviews with fans and activists that were present at politically similar future events (specifically including the Football Pride 'Call It Out' conference held in Manchester on 24 June 2017) to discuss what the interpretative meanings of the FFGH and the ways in which it altered their individual practices.

Findings

Around 150 fans/activists attended the FFGH conference in Berlin. Conversations with a wide range of delegates across the event showed that attendees came from six different interest locations, membership of which sometimes overlapped. First, there were those who were connected to the event through formal or informal membership of LGBTQ football fans' networks, such as QFF and, to a lesser extent, the Gay Football Supporters Network (GFSN). Many supporters/activists in this group self-identified as part of an LGBTQ community. Second, there were those supporters/activists who principally identified as members of FSE. There was some crossover with the first group of attendees but this group were of all sexualities and are identified as engaged in anti-discrimination politics in football. These two groups made up the majority of the conference attendees. The third group were not defined by strong personal interests in football (although some of the group did) but were LGBTQ rights activists. Fourth, there were a small number of 'local' (German and often living in Berlin) individuals who were interested because they were football supporters. These were not connected to any of the organizing associations and were far fewer in number than especially the first two groups. Fifth, another small group emerged of 'local'(German and often living in Berlin) individuals who attended the FFGH conference because they were engaged in leftist politics. Finally, sixth, a small group emerged of 'local'(German and often living in Berlin) individuals who attended the FFGH conference because they identified with LGBTQI politics but did not identify with any formal associations.

An evaluation questionnaire was administered on Saturday 8 October. The response number was small with only 28 people completing it. The data indicated that delegates were from a broad range of backgrounds: describing their sexuality in a range of different ways, being from a range of different nationalities, from a broad scale of different social classes (although there was a concentration of those from skilled occupations or were studying as students) and describing themselves in ways that would suggest the ethnic make-up of the conference was not homogenous. However, all shared the view that discrimination in football and society existed - of the 28 respondents, 21 quantifying that

discrimination in football was 'large' and 23 offering the same answer when asked about discrimination in society.

In the evaluation questionnaire, respondents were asked to grade whether the meeting would make a difference to the ways in which they complete the role. The most common answer to the question was that it would make a difference (coded as '4' on a likert scale out of 5). This question was probed at during that conference, and subsequent events such as the Pride in Football conference that was held in Manchester on 24 June 2017 which drew in many of the people who attended the FFGH conference. The results about the positive impact of conference revealed important value in six key ways. Surprisingly, these coalesced on the contacts made rather than new strategies in tactics for campaigning, or new forms of knowledge they gained.

First, attendees reported that their core beliefs about combating homophobia and other forms of discrimination did not change as a result of the conference. However, the workshops and social spaces afforded by the conference allowed them to talk with other fan/activists. These people had reported that their beliefs that homophobia and other forms of discrimination could be overcome sometimes wane in their everyday practices but the discussions and social bonds replenished their beliefs that they could make advances to challenging these anti-social forms of behaviour. Second, although engagements at the conference would suggest that most friendships that were evident there pre-dated the event, many fans/activists believed that the conference was important in converting new individuals into anti-homophobia and discrimination campaigns. This argument is backed up by new connections being formed as new recruits into the organizations, although it must also be taken into account that those who were recruited were attending the conference as individuals but had a pre-existing interest in combating homophobia/discrimination, leftist politics or were football fans - and that these new friends were often vaguely known to individuals as 'friends of friends' before the event rather than completely new contacts. Third, communion at the conference gave rise to the feelings of 'excitement', 'stimulation', 'enthusiasm', and feeling 'right' amongst fans/activists. These positive emotional experiences reward and renew beliefs in the movements. Fourth, the setting of FFGH in Berlin, set against the work the organization has undertaken meant that it became a meeting ground for key movement activists and intellectuals, and thus sites of debate and discussion. Fans/activists claimed that the setting lured in like-minded activists, concentrating them in situations where they can and did exchange ideas. Fifth, the conference offered the opportunity for people from different national movements, with different approaches, policies and tactics to exchange views, learning from each other even when they could not agree on the best overall approaches. Sixth, anti-homophobia and other forms of discrimination movements have a presence on social media platforms such

as Twitter and Facebook. On those platforms, people 'meet' without having met physically. At the FFGH conference, many reported that the people they had 'met' and forged immediate friendships with were those they already 'knew' on social media. Thus, that the conference took part in lived urban space - in Berlin - gave an opportunity to make such friendships seem 'real' - this was important to attendees and became the basis for further communication online and offline meet ups in the battle against homophobia and other forms of discrimination.

The emphasis on sociality as emerging from those who physically attended Football Pride Week activities in Berlin, and especially the FFGH conference, is an important outcome. Without these feelings of support and affect, the aims of Queering Football would not be met. Although homophobia in football or the wider society was not combated during the conference, supporting the beliefs and feelings of those involved in this task was an important outcome that should not be overlooked. However, contemporary engagements with events and conferences do not end in physical attendance but also take into account communications through social media. Accordingly, the evaluation methodology took this into account by using the programme *NodeXL* to scrape tweets from the week along with the direction of these tweets (from whom and to whom) and, where GPS on mobile phones making the tweets was turned on, physical location. A scrape was made on the official hashtag #footballprideweek at the end of 10 October 2016, the day after the week finished. Using the appropriate algorithm (Clauset-Newman-Moore) the full network using these tweets is visualised in Figure 1 (below). In Figure 1, a line represents a 'tie' between individuals, which are represented by each of the coloured large dots. A tie (line) denotes that the individual tweeted another using the searched hashtag between 5 and 10 October 2016.

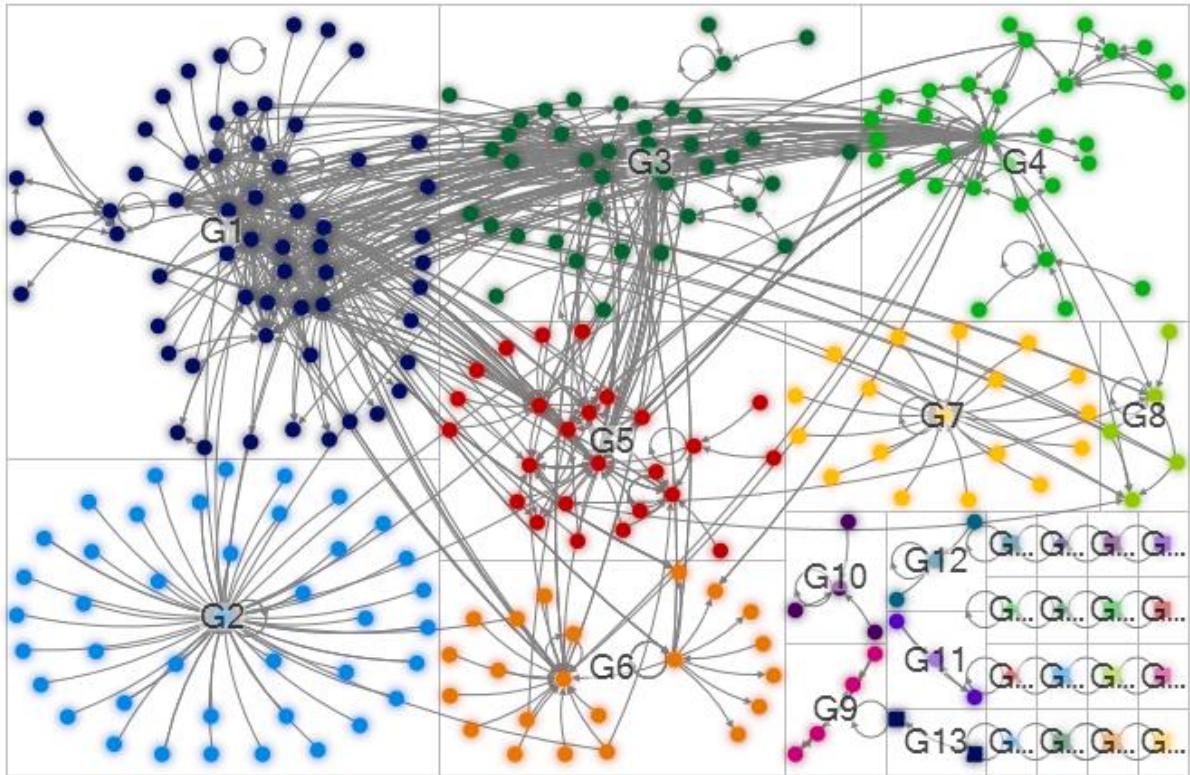


Figure 1: Sociogram illustrating connections between individuals #footballprideweek on Twitter, 5-10

October 2016.

275 different Twitter accounts (comprised of individuals and organizations) 'tweeted' using the hashtag. This was almost double the number of physical attendees at the FFGH conference. The partitioning algorithm (Clauset-Newman-Moore) divided up the full community of 275 into groups according to connection on Twitter. It divided these into 29 groups, each represented by a 'G' in Figure 1. Of the 29 groups, 16 included only one individual each. These were largely made up of isolated individuals that attended the conference but were not associated with any of the organizations that co-ordinated the event, or isolated fans retweeting messages of support. Of note, due to the number of Twitter accounts involved were groups 1-5 (G1-G5 in Figure 1). G1 was the largest group in the network. It was made up of 59 individuals, and was defined by a Twitter connection to both FSE and QFF. Individuals in this group tweeted both organizations and/or retweeted their messages. There are some overlapping affiliations to FSE and QFF and those individuals who are well-connected in both organizations were central to this group. Many in this group were either friends or at least familiar with each other, even if the strength of this bond was 'friends of friends' and 'knowing each other's faces' rather than close contact and almost all in this group attended the FFGH conference. Some of those who took part in field interviews were in/related to this group. G3 included 39 Twitter accounts with that number made up of people strongly related to well connected to LGBTI organizations in football, or individuals who are likewise. Accounts in G3 were connected to those in G1 but were less likely to be connected to FSE than QFF. Most of those in G3 were in attendance at

the conference. G4 was made up of 30 Twitter accounts of those who were connected to G3 and some in G1 but were not generally in attendance at the conference. G5 was made up of 25 Twitter accounts of those who were related to FSE, but not having communicated with QFF. G2 were arguably the most interesting group and so have been left out of sequence. They were large in so far that they were made up of 50 Twitter accounts. If an aim of activities in Queering Football is to spread anti-homophobia and other discrimination messages beyond established networks, G2 are important as mobile GPS data would suggest that none appeared to be in Berlin while the conference was taking place. An unplanned delegate at the conference was the German-born football player, Roman Neustädter who plays international football for Russia and club football for Fenerbahçe in Istanbul (Turkey). Mobile GPS co-ordinates suggested that G2 was a group made up of football fans in Russia and Turkey who were retweeting and commenting on news that Neustädter was at the conference. Although 50 is a very small proportion of those in Russia and Turkey, it presents a significant in-road into the possibility of carrying messages of the conference beyond an audience who, by attending, were perhaps unlikely to need educating in anti-homophobia and other discriminatory information.

The European Networking Conference – Queering Football: Addressing Homophobia at Mega-Sport Events, Ljubljana (17-18 November 2017)

The European Networking Conference signalled the end of the Queering Football project and was held in The University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Sport on 17 and 18 November 2017. Around 70 delegates from 17 different countries attended the event. Attendees ranged from interested individuals who were football fans and/or from LGBTIQ communities to those representing a range of pressure groups, NGOs and government offices. Indeed, the conference met the overriding aim of the Queering Football project by bringing together European wide civil society actors, LGBTIQ fan groups and activists, fan organizations (e.g FSE), anti-discrimination-in-sports organizations (e.g. FARE), and representatives of the Slovenian state, football players and athletics unions. Sara Holmgren who worked in UEFA's division for Diversity and Education attended on 18 November and made a full contribution to the programme that day. Her participation potentially reflected the confederation's new president's, Aleksander Čeferin's, values in so far as the Ljubljana made an encouraging step of voicing pledge to 'not tolerate racism, or sexism, or homophobia, or discrimination against disabled people' at his address at the 41st Ordinary UEFA Congress in Helsinki earlier that year. Attendee, David Brown, in his review of the event however noted that 'a glaring absence was the Slovenian Football Association, who despite numerous invitations, never replied'.¹ The evening of 17 November included a programme of food and social activity in

¹ This review can be found at: <https://contentiousimages.wordpress.com/2017/11/22/queeringfootball/>

which delegates could mingle and visit Klub Tiffany at Metelkova, described in the programme as an ‘autonomous Culture Center’.

Methodology

Evaluation methodology for The European Networking Conference consisted of two activities:

1. Participant observation and 'field' interviews: These took place with delegates (fans and activists) at The European Networking Conference on 17 and 18 November.
2. Questionnaires: Distributed on Saturday 18 November at The European Networking Conference that measured participants' feedback and experiences in numerical terms.

In addition to this, a third form of data collection took place at the conference which was to ask five delegates who attended the Football Pride Week in Berlin, thirteen months earlier to reflect on how debates and connection there had shaped their thoughts and practices in the time that had elapsed, thus becoming reflective interviews.

Findings

24 people filled out the evaluation questionnaire. This was a full response from the number of delegates at the close of the event. Akin to the FFGH conference, the data suggests that those who were in attendance were not a socially homogenous group. Although a vast majority of those in attendance described themselves as of ‘white’ ethnicity (21 out 24) and football fans (17 out 24). The group were otherwise diverse. Out of the 24 respondents, 11 described themselves as ‘homosexual’, ‘gay’ or ‘lesbian’, 3 as ‘bi’ or ‘bisexual’, 1 as ‘fluid’ and 8 as ‘heterosexual’ or ‘straight’. One person declined to answer and none described themselves as intersex or transsexual; which were two of the groups of people that project sought to listen to and help challenge the inequalities they face. There was a similar diversity in the nationalities of those who filled out the survey – although British, German and Irish delegates outnumbered others, with only three Slovenians present at the end of the conference. Generally people who took part in the survey found out about the event either through pre-existing contacts, the NGOs/agencies they represent or through social media channels, in particular the Queering Football Facebook space. The most commonly described ‘best feature’ of the conference was the opportunity to network, followed by the opportunity to listen and learn from others and then the social experiences afforded by the conference. These are in line with the Queering Football project objectives, ‘Obj2.’ and ‘Obj5.’

9 from the 24 people who filled out the survey were in attendance at the Football Pride Week in Berlin a year earlier. Reflective interviews with five of these people revealed that practices addressing discrimination had not changed because of that conference but that the experience of communality had allowed people who were loosely connected in the Queering Football network to become more closely connected with the possibility of offering social support to each other's projects in the future. As FSE member and key Proud Lilywhites (Tottenham Hotspur's LGBTIQ fans' group) member, Darryl Telles said: 'it's always nice to put a name to a face and have a good chat with someone you met at an earlier conference'. The affective impact ongoing social support as sustaining the network should not be underplayed in its importance.

Reflections from Football Pride Week and The European Networking Conference

A SWOT analysis of the i) Strengths, ii) Weaknesses, iii) Opportunities and iv) Threats and Barriers provides the opportunity to reflect on Football Pride Week/FFGH conference and The European Networking Conference.

i) Strengths

The strengths of the conferences were strongly located in the social support and feelings of coming together experienced by delegates who sometimes reported to feeling isolated in their quests to challenge and fight against homophobia and other forms of prejudices. By meeting and talking with other campaigners from both within but often outside of their national context reinvigorated fans/activists positive emotions to carry challenges forward. The conferences gathered together a critical mass of individuals to renew beliefs that discrimination can be successfully challenged and offered opportunities to share best practice.

In doing this, not only were the formal conferences spaces of talks and workshops important but also were the break out social spaces where 'friends of friends' could become 'friends' and people encountered on social media could be encountered in lived urban space. This strengthened bonds and will facilitate the speeding up of information transfers.

ii) Weaknesses

Both conferences operationally worked very well but, like many, tended to attract people who are already fighting against discrimination in its various forms. The limits on the dispersal of information away from these networks into the wider populations of football fans and those who are not football fans stands as a challenge. Those who attended were also likely to attend other FSE, QFF and/or fairplay-VIDC events and thus there is the weakness that those in attendance already knew each other. Bonding capital of getting to know each other better was rich but the bridging capital of getting to know more people was potentially much weaker.

In his review of the event, David Brown identified a ‘lack’ in The European Networking Conference by suggesting:

As refreshing as it was to have the content come from mostly activistic perspectives, an academic contribution might have gone a long way to address some this wider context mentioned above. This point was driven home in a discussion I had with our Contentious Images [name of the blog] collaborator Julia Tulke about the conference and this post. In our email correspondence she wrote: “I’m somewhat curious, though, as to the name choice of “queering football,” for that suggests a more wide-reaching gesture than just looking at LGBTQ* fandom and organizations. In my understanding of the term queering (which mostly stems from gender studies) as a practice it would mean excavating histories of queerness in football itself, interrogating the role of homosociality etc. Did any pushback against that come up during the conference?”²

The answer to both conferences was ‘no’. This could be identified as a limit to the conferences but the context in which both were run – as activist rather than academic – events must be acknowledged.

iii) Opportunities

In Berlin, the presence of, and reaction to professional football player Roman Neustädter attending the FFGH conference was strong. Indeed, his presence gives rise to the opportunity to break anti-discrimination messages out of the network of campaigners at the conference and to the public at large. The conference in Ljubljana did not achieve this aim, where no football players were present and access to wifi was not offered.

² This review can be found at: <https://contentiousimages.wordpress.com/2017/11/22/queeringfootball/>

Twitter presented a medium to generate these messages but an opportunity is presented to use the presence of high profile individuals to generate mainstream media attention.

Football Pride's 'Call It Out' conference was held in Manchester on 24 June 2017. Its speaker included former professional football player, Paul Elliott. His presence generated interest for the event by media platform Sky Sports, who showed interviews they conducted on him and key campaigners on their Sky Sports News channel at regular intervals throughout that weekend. The timing of the 'Call It Out' event might have helped - taking place in the football 'close season' and so not competing for sports news space with live matches. Thus opportunities are presented in the form of stretching the message to new audiences in these two ways.

iv) Threats and Barriers

Turkey and, especially, Russia are two countries where anti-homosexuality themed discrimination messages would be well targeted. However, if mainstream media interest in Roman Neustädter's presence had been gathered, it is possible that he may have become the target of abuse in the countries in which he plays international and club football. The balance of how far and through what means the anti-discrimination message can be spread are therefore live questions. There are no initiatives of LGBTIQ fans in Slovenia's top football division, where The European Networking Conference was held. Indeed, if there were such fan movements they may face hostilities. The Slovenian Football Association were not present at the conference, therefore threatening success of any initiatives by seemingly not offering any support. During The European Networking Conference, Alexander Agapov, of the Russian LGBT Sport Federation, asked a pertinent question about what might be left for LGBTIQ communities and activists after the 2018 World Cup in country, other than potential hostilities from the population at large. Nobody offered positive answers to his question, so these concerns must remain an active threat to the Queering Football movement.

The conferences undoubtedly provided the social support for many anti-discrimination campaigners across Europe. However, these events cost money to host. One of interviewee reported that UEFA and FIFA, either of whom could resource such events, 'don't really give a shit' about fighting homophobia. This was signified in Berlin by Patrick Gasser from UEFA's defence of the confederation's policy on not allowing rainbow flags inside football stadia in the name of remaining politically neutral, although comments by Aleksander Čeferin since then gives hope to changing position. A barrier to such events is therefore a lack of resource which means that they can only run intermittently therefore not building connections and emotional resolve of the campaigners involved.

The theme of resource continues as a threat to the movement in other ways, too. At The European Networking Conference, UEFA's Sara Holmgren was effusive in her support for the Queering Football movement. However, a frustration from an attendee who did not wish to be named was: 'There's a concern that UEFA's answer is to say to us, 'give more', 'do more', 'we're behind you' but the problem is that most people here already give everything they can in terms of who they are fighting the fight against homophobia. We just can't give anything more, we've already given the lot'. In such cases a threat to the Queering Football network, that was not answered at either conference was how it can be resourced beyond the work of its committed volunteers.

Mod2. Summary

Mod2. Helped to address the project aim by providing the network meetings. At these meetings fans and activists came together to discuss stories, experiences and 'tactics' in fighting discrimination and hatred faced by LGBTIQ communities. In doing so, connections were made and skill sets brought together which will serve future campaigns in challenging prejudice very well.

The meetings also contained some in 'policy making' positions for the local and national state – involving such people in the Queering Football network is important to the process of shaping future social change. It must be noted that at such events, the engagement of such individuals beyond their own talks was not consistent - some were highly involved and others were less so. Hope has been given to the Queering Football network that UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin's claims that the confederation is prepared to challenge homophobia and other forms of prejudice will bear out, and should that happen the fan activists who attended both conferences discussed in this module have forged connections and are aware of skill sets to do so. However, a concern amongst some fan activists at the conference was that such a position might not meaningfully come to fruition at UEFA. Indeed some expressed acute concerns that the responsibility for this challenge will continue to fall on fan volunteers, many of whom have a continued strong enthusiasm but are personally jaded by years of challenging discrimination.

The Football Pride Week/FFGH conference made strong use of social media platforms such as Twitter with a dedicated hashtag. This meant it was easy for short communications about the event to spread beyond the community in attendance. Although the individuals picking up the messages were likely to share many of the similar antidiscriminatory views as

those in attendance, this at least raised awareness of the debate. In the contemporary era, making full use of social media platforms is essential for activist conferences. The presence of Roman Neustädter at the Berlin congress boosted public interest in the meeting. Such connections should be organic and not forced, but the inclusion of those with genuine public status in the network is a positive step for gaining wider recognition and should be noted as excellent practice. Neustädter's presence facilitated the spread of messages to 'hard to reach' territories such as Russia and Turkey.

Raising public awareness through traditional media channels would also be beneficial. Football Pride's 'Call It Out' 2017 conference in Manchester achieved this with a distinction, where key activists were featured on the 24 hours a day, 7 days a week 'Sky Sports News' channel for a number of days. Strategically including journalists who would broadly share the social and political views of those at the conferences would help in this respect, although it must also be noted that the primary aim of the meetings – as NGO conferences – were to introduce and bring together individuals, which the module strongly succeeded in doing.

Mod3. Diversity Training Activities

Mod3. Diversity Training Activities addressed Obj3., which explored the development of anti-homophobia educational and training tools through, particularly, *Act9*.which covered training activities with a range of individuals to sensitise them to issues face by LGBTIQs along with the production of *Act5.* as a ‘Toolkit for Training Journalists’ and *Act6.* as a ‘Toolkit for Sport Educators’ (*Act5.* and *Act6.* are discussed in Mod4.).

Methodology

Evaluation methodology for this module was a focus group held with the people who administered the training. On site observations could not be undertaken in this module given that some of the people involved were children in a semi private setting (schools and youth clubs) and therefore unable to legally give their consent to be interviewed or observed.

Findings

Training activities were undertaken on multiple sites across Europe specifically in Marseille, Turin, Vienna, Forcalquier (France) and Ljubljana and was administered by qualified experts who were sensitive to the discrimination that LGBTIQ individuals can face. Those who were involved as learners in the activities included school children of varying ages, and other young people; and those working as sport educators, in sport clubs, fans’ embassy volunteers and as journalists. Training sessions were interactive mirroring pedagogical beliefs that active learning has deeper and more profound impacts on the way learners think. No assumptions were made about the sexualities of those individuals who were in the learning community.

In all cases, the trainers reported that those in the learning community recorded that the activities had made them ‘think’ about their actions. Given that an aim of the activity was to raise awareness, this represents real progress. However, all of those who were involved in the training reported that they experienced that homophobia was hegemonic, embedded in the structures and taken for granted assumptions in the external environments in which the learners were based. Occasionally this meant that homophobia was denied, given that it is, as reported by one trainer, ‘just the way they think it is’. In some cases ‘jokes’ were made about LGBTIQ individuals which may not have intended to cause distress, but could conceivably have done so – in many cases, reported the trainer based in Ljubljana, this involved emasculating men.

Some of the trainers considered a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to addressing such inequalities but decided that this might censor but not change the views of the individual. Indeed, some thought that this might cause resentment and worsen attitudes. Trainers thought that these deep attitudes could be countered if more prolonged and frequent training activities took place. This would require increased resource, especially given that the trainers were – in most cases – voluntarily administering such sessions. Around 25 people typically made up the learning community of workshops. Trainers based in Turin particularly thought that smaller group sessions might afford deeper learning experiences.

Reflections from training sessions

A SWOT analysis of the i) Strengths, ii) Weaknesses, iii) Opportunities and iv) Threats and Barriers provides the opportunity to reflect on the training activities across the sites.

i) Strengths

There was clearly some reflection from some of the learning community at all sites. Given the hegemonic nature of the discrimination, an awareness of ‘everyday’ actions was gleaned. Many of the individuals were not intentionally discriminatory and having the consequences of actions demonstrated through interactive sessions raised awareness around the issue, which was a central purpose of the activity.

ii) Weaknesses

Homophobia and other sexuality-based discriminations are endemic and hegemonic in many societies. The number of training sessions which were administered were largely determined by the budget of the project and the time that could be afforded by a team that were mostly working on a voluntary basis. It is entirely possible that awareness was not sufficiently raised to change a large number of attitudes through the training sessions.

iii) Opportunities

That some of those involved, especially young people, were able to pause for some reflection on the power of the words they say potentially presents a genuine opportunity for social change. Given that social scientific research has demonstrated that sport is a site

where hegemonic homophobia is (re)produced, the capacity for sport to create social change – according with the main aim of Queering Football – is a further opportunity.

iv) *Threats and Barriers*

A recurring theme across the project is that its endeavours largely rely upon the hard work and dedication of committed volunteers. This is the case here, as in other modules. Most obviously, the gains that have been made in challenging discrimination are threatened by the minimal resourcing of such projects and the dependency that volunteers will continue to offer their labour in the future.

Mod3. Summary

Homophobia and other sexuality-themed prejudices are hegemonic. Training that sensitises individuals to such issues is very important in contemporary societies. The training that was administered to various groups in society by well-qualified individuals was clearly high quality. However, resource levels meant that courses are occasional rather than enduring and this potentially threatens their abilities to create social change.

Mod4. Setting Antidiscrimination Standards

'Mod4. Setting Antidiscriminatory Standards' addressed 'Obj4. To promote anti-discrimination standards at major sport events' and is evidenced in a number of places including Euro Pride Houses discussed in Mod1. (Act1.) and conferences in Mod2 (see 'Act2.' and 'Act3.', both discussed in Mod2.). However, four important outputs that are evaluated in this section centrally fall under this banner. These are: *Act4.* The 'Against the Rules' exhibition; *Act5.* A 'Toolkit for Training Journalists'; *Act6.* A 'Toolkit for Sport Educators' and *Act8.* The 'Handbook of Human Rights & Mega-Sport Events', which was launched at the European Parliament. These outputs are some of the Queering Football legacies that will continue to be used in the temporal periods that follow the project with the intention of setting and reinforcing standards in antidiscriminatory behaviour connected to football. These will now be discussed individually.

Against the Rules – Lesbians and Gays in Sport exhibition

Against the Rules – Lesbians and Gays in Sport, is an exhibition started by the EGLSF in cooperation with the acceptance campaign office of the ministry for youth, family and health of the North Rhine-Westphalia regional government and organised jointly by SC Janus, Cologne's Centrum Schwule Geschichte (Gay History Centre). It was updated and translated into English by EGSLF in 2010, and then later into French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Slovenian, Slovak and Spanish in the framework of the predecessor project of Queering Football called 'Football for Equality'. The exhibition, opened on May 4, 2010 in Berlin, does not claim to be exhaustive, but aims to help remove the taboos from the subject of homosexuality and sport, and draw attention to the various forms of discrimination against sexual minorities in sport as well as resistance, self organisation and role models.

The exhibition consists of 37 banners in total, giving introduction and information on elite athletes, discrimination, lesbian & gay clubs & federations, Gay Games, OutGames, EuroGames. Through its photographs, other pictures and texts it is portraying LGBTIQ athletes including Amelie Mauresmo, Babe Didrickson, Billie Jean King, Bob Paris, David Kopay, Gottfried von Cramm, Greg Louganis, Heinz Bonn, Ian Roberts, Imke Duplitzer, John Blankenstein, Judith Arndt, Justin Fashanu, Marcus Urban, Marie Carsten, Mark Tewksbury, Martina Navratilova, Otto Peltzer, Parinya Kiatbusaba, and Tom Waddell.

Queering Football has facilitated the touring of the exhibition at its events including Euro Pride Houses and conferences and, for instance, between February 11 and February 21, 2016 it was hosted by the City of Ljubljana in its City Hall. This invitation was significant given that the City of Ljubljana set out the exhibition as part of its strategy to protect vulnerable populations and under this banner included those in lesbian, gay, transsexual

and bisexual communities along with others who could be targeted because of their sexual identity. As such, the City of Ljubljana invited the exhibition during the period the Queering Football project was running in an attempt to strive towards changing the wider social attitudes to create an all-inclusive society. In other words, in common with Queering Football's project aim, it saw football and other sports as a pan-European platform to tackle discrimination and hatred. The exhibition's display in Ljubljana was opened by Mayor Zoran Janković and this was launched with a roundtable discussion event which included Louise Englefield (Football Versus Homophobia, FARE), Milan Hosta (Institute Spolint), Simona Topolinjak (City of Ljubljana), Andrej Pišl (Out in Slovenia Sports Society, the DIH Society) and Tina Jeklic (Slovenian Football Association).

As part of the Queering Football project also two new biographical banners have been added to the exhibition: Finnish professional goal keeper for FC Bayern München, Tinja-Riikka Korpela, and Turkish professional referee, Halil İbrahim Dinçdağ. In Austria two further local LGBTIQ athletes have been added: female ski jumper Daniela Iraschko-Stolz and female icehockey player Virginia Ernst. The banners have been translated to the exhibition languages.

Toolkit for Training Journalists

Part of setting and raising the standards of antidiscrimination materials is ensuring that journalists are sensitive to the issues faced by many in LGBTIQ communities inside and outside of sport. To these ends, a 31 powerpoint slide toolkit was prepared for those in the media industries which is set out according to sensitising to socio-cultural and political issues, raising awareness of standards in journalism according to international codes of law and setting out interactive learning activities for those engaging with it.

Toolkit for Training Sport Educators

In a similar vein, a 15 powerpoint slide toolkit is set out for sports educators to encourage that young people are socialised in non-discriminatory ways. This toolkit is freely available on the Internet and can be used to by sports educators across the world.

Handbook on Human Rights & Sport Events presented at the European Parliament

VIDC/Fairplay led a team including all partners in Queering Football to produce a 21 page Handbook on Human Rights & Sport Events which was available from July 2017. Vice-President of the European Parliament, Ulrike Lunacek, prefaced the handbook, which

included five articles discussing a range of human rights issues on a number of stakeholders in sport. The final article discussed the significance of these issues for both Queering Football and ‘Our Game’, a related project which is also led by VIDC/Fairplay. The handbook closed with two pages of descriptions and links to related documents and resources as further reference for readers. The document has been circulated widely at, for instance Euro2017 Pride House events and The European Networking Conference.

This document was important given the ongoing human rights abuses connected to major sports events. Set on this backdrop Queering Football activists joined members of the European Parliament, and sport bodies in Brussels on July 12 2017 to launch the handbook and discuss human rights issues ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2018 in Russia.

At this event, MEP Hannu Takkulu from the Sport Intergroup, highlighted that mega-sports events should ‘promote peace and understanding of people irrespective of their origin, culture, religion or sexual orientation’. However, he recognized that the reality may be different in that countries which host these events in so far as ‘human rights violations increase, people are forcibly evicted from their houses and construction workers building stadiums are exploited, also minorities such as LGBTIQs are discriminated.’ Takkulu concluded by arguing that the EU has to do everything to protect the rights of athletes, workers, journalists and minorities. Also at the event, Elvina Yuvakaeva from the Russian LGBT Sport Federation decried the current ideology of the Russian government pointing out its tendency to ‘use scare tactics, for example exploiting the LGBT rights topics to demonstrate the moral decay of the Western world.’ Yuvakaeva argued that World Cup 2018 presented an opportunity to change this situation: ‘We can and must claim from FIFA and the Russian Football Union their full support in implementing inclusive policies in football for LGBT people. Such programmes would be a significant step forward in fighting homophobia.’ Vice- President of the European Parliament and co-chair of the LGBTIQ Intergroup, Ulrike Lunacek, said sport events ought to unite people and ‘one should go there joyful and not with fear. Imagine you’re a gay, lesbian or bisexual sports person and you go to a country where you shouldn’t be out, this doesn’t help your sport activities.’ She called on International Olympic Committee, the European Olympic Committee and FIFA to ‘move ahead and make sure that Human Rights standards and social standards are part of the allocation process, because that’s where it all starts, otherwise we wouldn’t have the next football World Cups in Russia and Qatar.’

FIFA was represented at the launch by its Head of Public Affairs, Fani Misailidi. She acknowledged that her organisation had to go through a learning curve in the process of putting in place a more systematic human rights approach in the context of its competitions: ‘A few years ago we wouldn’t be discussing in those terms. The sports bodies needed also

some time to review their responsibility in promoting the respect of human rights in their sports competitions.’ She noted that FIFA was now drawing upon the expertise of Harvard Professor John Ruggie and was developing a more robust Human Rights Policy. Misailidi recognized the challenges FIFA had faced but noted it was now ‘integrating human rights in the bidding and the hosting documents.’ In the months that followed the launch, Misailidi left the organization and Queering Football partners have expressed a strong wish that FIFA at least retains the commitment to challenging human rights abuses associated to the hosting of mega-sport events.

Conclusions and Future Recommendations

Queering Football’s project aim was to use football as a pan-European communication platform to tackle discrimination and hatred. It has been European in scope with key events taking place in France, The Netherlands, Germany, Slovenia, Belgium, Italy and Austria, amongst other countries. Conferences that formed part of the project activities attracted delegates from up to 29 countries, including some that stretched beyond Europe while Euro Pride House activities included LGBTIQs originally hailing from an array of territories. Its broad message was clear – to challenge the various forms of discrimination and hatred associated, in particular, to sexuality and, in the broader sense human rights at large.

This was an ambitious aim which was broadly met. At Euro Pride House events, those that took part reported a sense of conviviality and a pleasure that they felt ‘safe’ watching matches with friends, old and new. At training events, it was felt that some of those involved had their awareness of the impacts of their actions raised. At conferences, campaigners reported the sense of sociality to ‘top up’ and refresh their beliefs that their endeavours were strongly worth undertaking. At such conferences, stories and ‘tactics’ of best practice were exchanged. The panels were illuminating, if sometimes also sad, and there was some capacity that networks could be stretched to include policy makers in local and national governments and the European confederation, UEFA.

During the course of the project, incoming President, Aleksander Čeferin, claimed that his UEFA would ‘not tolerate [...] homophobia’. A potential frustration for Queering Football is that the extent of its success will be decided more by whether UEFA turn these words into a range of meaningful actions, including resource, and place addressing such forms of discrimination higher up its list of priorities. During the project some activists reported that they felt that the prejudices against LGBTIQ communities was ‘largely forgotten’ while others reported that the ‘silence and non-debate’ around the issue ‘wears’ down fan activists, there is some reluctance amongst activists to believe Čeferin. However, on the

other hand, given that he was the first UEFA President to talk in this way, there is good reason to hope that it may do so. A real positive of Queering Football is that it has activated and switched together a network of highly skilled and committed activists who would be ready to play an active role in taking on this challenge. However, to do so it needs resource: currently most of the activists involved give themselves to the project on a voluntary basis while often also holding down full time professional jobs. This presents a sizable emotional and physical toll on such individuals. If UEFA's way of tackling sexuality themed discrimination and hatred is to ask volunteers to 'give more', progress will not be as fast paced as if it offers material resource.

One practical way in which an activist suggested that UEFA and FIFA could easily help the movement fighting discrimination against LGBTIQ is to alter its process of redistribution of money they collect through fining clubs and national associations for supporters' homophobic actions. Currently, fines go to a range of charities and NGOs but these organizations are not always immediately named when the sum is announced. The activist suggested that transparently announcing that this money had been redistributed to NGOs and charities that deal in addressing such behaviours would materially support campaigns and symbolically spell out UEFA's message of non-tolerance.

Inside Queering Football, there are additionally five recommendations that could be taken from the project to assist future campaigns. These are:

6. Include a partner with dedicated public relations and/or media skills

The purchase of the Pride in Football 'Call It Out' conference was strong because it strategically used the media very well, with key personnel offering interviews that were frequently broadcast on the 'Sky Sports News' channel in the UK over the next days. This conference shared some common ground with Queering Football but was not explicitly part of the project, despite some of those who were interviewed being active participants at the conferences in Berlin and Ljubljana. High quality press releases were written for key events but the extent to which they were picked up by traditional media forms was uncertain. A media savvy partner would be able to frame messages to journalists s/he may already have relationships with to be able to gain further exposure. This is important if the messages are to break out of the established network of activists which might be necessary to grow social change.

7. Utilise social media in the fullest sense

Relatedly, in contemporary messages are increasingly spread through social media channels. A dedicated hashtag at the Berlin conference allowed key insights to be dispersed to interested audiences across the world, beyond those who were in physical attendance. A mastery of social media can work as an inexpensive marketing tool to create excitement

around an event or a movement and, if appropriate, could be used for Pride House events and network conferences. On 19 December 2017, the ‘Come Out to Play’ campaign to support LGBTIQ football players released its ‘#comeout2play’ hashtag via a ‘Thunderclap’ facility. This meant that all of those who signed up to it had a tweet which read ‘When a gay footballer comes out I’ll support them’ simultaneously released at 12pm. This action bombarded Twitter with the same message. Well-known athletes, politicians, football clubs and celebrities signed up to the campaign, giving it traction. The ability to send out similar messages of support at strategic moments is worth exploring in future projects. Pdf copies of key project resources such as The Handbook of Human Rights and Mega-Sports Events could also more widely distributed through these mediums if projects utilised social media architectures in the fullest sense, at strategic moments which might include the commencement of World Cup 2018.

8. Gain endorsements from well-known individuals, where appropriate

A key reason why messages from the conference in Berlin spread around Europe was the presence of an international football player who aligned himself with the antidiscriminatory politics of the event. Where appropriate endorsements, support, and potentially integration into the network of similar people of high sub-cultural status should be encouraged.

9. Continued strategies to link up issues in football at all levels, from grassroots to the ‘elite’

Queering Football made strong attempts to link to connect football projects at all levels. This has to continue in future projects given the increasing disconnect of the ‘cash rich’ elite from the less salubrious grassroots. In short, future projects have to continue to view football as one game and have ambitious targets as Queering Football has provided.

10. Value volunteers but do not over rely upon them – projects must be fully resourced

The final recommendation is beyond the confines of Queering Football or any future projects but is a call for greater resources. In discussions around Modules 1, 2 and 3 it has been noted that the strong work in Queering Football is indebted to the perseverance of highly skilled and motivated volunteers. These people work hard for such projects although they often also hold down full time jobs and other commitments. They have clearly been valued in Queering Football and have received intrinsic rewards but they also often report being tired and both physically and emotionally drained by their experiences. The call in this recommendation is not for improved practice by future projects but for better resourcing from the state and/or football’s various authorities.