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## THE FARE NETWORK IN SLOVAKIA

### REPORT

Activities organized by Ludia proti rasizmu and others during the 2011 FARE Action Week  
(12-25 October 2011)



### Activities of Ludia proti rasizmu

#### **1. One round of Corgonliga against racism**

The most important activity for Ludia proti rasizmu within this year's FARE Action Week has been the 13 round of the Slovak First League (Corgonliga) that was devoted to fight against racism and intolerance. Karim Guede, a player of African roots now playing in Slovak national team, and another national team player Filip Sebo were the official faces of this year's campaign. It was for the first time since 2008 that Slovak league clubs took part in the FARE Action Weeks.

The Corgon liga campaign was prepared in cooperation with the Union League Clubs (ULK) and UFA Sports to promote common ethnic, racial and religious tolerance. The whole Action Week and major activities within it were presented during a press conference thanks to which the main ideas and aims of it reached wider public. On 22 and 23 October 2011, the players at six stadiums entered the pitch carrying a banner: "Football Against Racism" containing the FARE logo to make it clear that this initiative took place during Action Weeks. Before the kick-off, captains of the teams read addresses condemning all expressions against fair play and invited the fans to show racism and violence the red card and to respect each other. Symbolic red cards were shown by all players straight afterwards. It was great to see that captains reading addresses were applauded loudly by fans at all stadiums.

For the Union of League Clubs ULK safety and fair play are its priorities. "Due to the continuing manifestations of intolerance at stadiums in Slovakia, we welcome this campaign and we are glad that we can join the idea of football for all. We believe that our activities will help to increase tolerance and respect in general public, as well as between supporters of various football clubs once they realize that on the pitch everyone is equal. I believe the words read in addresses will become true," said Dusan Tittel, the President of the Union of League Clubs.

The cooperation with the Union of League Clubs should continue also in the near future as Ludia proti rasizmu plans visits at schools in which football players of various origins would participate.



## 2. Tournament Against Racism and Intolerance

It has been already the fourth year of the annual football Tournament Against Racism that was held on 16 October 2011 in Bratislava, Slovakia. Once again it was organized by Ludia proti rasizmu in cooperation with the Bratislava League in Small Football. Altogether 12 teams took part in it in which players of various background played including Romas, Africans, Jewish community, asylum seekers, former football players etc. Two teams from abroad participated as well – a selection of players from Czech Republic and a mixed team

(Afghans, Romas, Slovaks, Hungarians) from Hungary. Besides football matches a discussion with interesting guests took place during the tournament and its topic was: “Football as a tool of inclusion of minorities” in which the President of the Union of League Clubs (former national team player) Dusan Tittel, an amateur football player African-born Kilian Mabhena, Balint Josa from the Foundation of Subjective Values (Hungary) and Michal Zalesak from Ludia proti rasizmu discussed. The whole day full of fun and newly created friendships peaked with the award-giving ceremony followed by a small banquet and zumba.

This year’s tournament was held under auspices of the Bratislava region’s chairman Mr. Pavol Freso. However, we have had other interesting guests e.g. the Minister of Defence Lubomir Galko or the Vice-president of Slovak police forces Lubomir Abel. We are happy that we had the opportunity to invite refugees and asylum seekers who played as the “Football for Equality”.

The tournament had been heavily promoted in media via electronic banners, broadcasting, press conference and press releases. The state TV channel (STV) prepared a nice 5 minutes long summary from it.

The following photos were taken by Tomas Benedikovic.





### 3. Central European multiethnic dinner

On 15 October 2011, one day before the Tournament Against Racism, a rare event has taken place in Bratislava, Slovakia. A dinner followed by an informal discussion were organized by Ludia proti rasizmu, Foundation of Subjective Values and Mahatma Gandhi Foundation (both from Hungary) and the Institute for Intercultural Dialogue (IPMD) with the presence of representatives of the Slovak minority living in Hungary, representatives of Hungarian minority living in Slovakia as well as representatives of the Roma community in both countries.

In addition to this event, both groups created teams and participated in the Tournament Against Racism.





#### 4. Dramatic piece performance against homophobia

A comedy called Na dva prsty was performed on 17 October 2011 (within the FARE Action Week) by the actors forming the No mantinels theatre. The comedy's aim was to draw the attention to the topic of homophobia in football that is still a social taboo in Slovakia.

Andrej Kuruc (the director at the No Mantinels): “We joined the FARE Action Weeks because there can't be enough occasions when to point at the problem of homophobia in our society. Homophobic, gender and racist hatred exists in sport and football, too. Hence, it is important to show it is based on stupidity and has no rational grounds.”

The actors performed really well and the audience applauded loudly.



## Other activities in Slovakia

Thanks to the small FARE grants some funding has been provided to schools and NGOs in various parts of Slovakia. They organized the following activities:

### **1. Tournament against nationalism – Velky Saris**

The tournament organized by OZ Stara skola Kanas and Velky Saris municipality. brought together children of Slovak, Hungarian and Romani origin who played together football matches on 16 October 2011. The kids also drew posters condemning nationalism and racism. As you can see on photos they prepared also a banner with the FARE logo so they contributed themselves to make the gist of the tournament as much visible as possible. To show good relationship between each other the teams have exchanged the jerseys (with FARE logos and in national colours of the respective states). They had also a dinner together during which they talked a lot. The kids had fun and a lot of new friendships were created.



## 2. Football brought together Romas and non-Romas - Rimavska Sobota

On 18 October 2011, the Futbal nas spaja (Football unites) NGO organized a friendly football match in Rimavska Sobota. The match was played between the teams of Tempus Rimavska Sobota and selected Roma players from the Gemer region. Besides the match, also a cultural program and a discussion (topic – Football as a tool of coexistence of Romas and the majority) took place.



## 3. Minifootball children tournament – Selice

The football tournament in Selice is traditionally organized by the local Leander Osztenyi elementary school with the help of social worker Laszlo Vadkerti. This year's tournament was held on 24 October and kids of Slovak, Romani and Hungarian origin from Selice took part in it.



#### 4. Football matches organized by the local football club – Podamcok

The local football club TJ Podzamcok organized football matches of young footballers from the village and neighbouring villages. The sport event against racism was attended by 40 footballers and 150 spectators. The local football club aims at further events to promote the development of sport and meetings of young people of different cultural groups.



#### 5. Sport and educational activities – Moravany nad Vahom

The local elementary school in Moravany nad Vahom where significant Romani minority lives has organized a walk in the nature for the pupils during which they stopped at various locations and had useful discussions on the topics of racism and intolerance. It was followed by a football tournament in which pupils from 4 elementary schools took part.



## 6. International week for tolerance was commemorated - Koskovce

Second year of the annual football cup was held in Vysny Hrusov in Eastern Slovakia to commemorate the international week for tolerance as well as to join the FARE Action Weeks all around the Europe. Teams of 4 elementary schools from the nearby villages with significant Romani minority participated in it. The aim of the cup was to support the idea of removing prejudices, racism and intolerance from sportgrounds. At sportgrounds talent and capabilities should count and not colour of skin, nationality or religion.



## 7. Children from marginalized families played football matches at all local schools – Snina

During the 2011 FARE Action Week a series of football matches was organized by FENIX - an NGO helping children from marginalized families in Snina, Eastern Slovakia. Children formed mixed teams with Romani as well as non-Romani players.



## 8. Football tournament and goulash cooking – Hontianske Tesare

It has been already the second year that the local municipality in Hontianske Tesare organized an event with the motto: *“Everywhere where life is, it is possible to live in harmony”* to promote the importance of fighting against the racism in their community. Once again, a competition in cooking of goulash was held as well as friendly football matches and cultural program.



### **9. Multiethnic tournament organized by local football club – Tvrdosovce**

The Tvrdosovce football club organized a tournament in which local Romas, Hungarians and Slovaks took part. The aim was to show that there can be a harmonic coexistence between different groups of inhabitants.



### **10. Multiple activities within the 2011 FARE Action Week – Zavadka nad Hronom**

Joint elementary school and kindergarten in Zavadka nad Hronom has organized a wide range of activities between 1 and 19 October 2011. Within their classes, pupils prepared anti-discrimination material and held various thematic workshops. Besides, a football tournament and an artistic exhibition were held.



## **11. Friendly football matches and interesting discussion – Vranov nad Toplou**

A friendly football match between two Roma clubs has been organized by KVO Roma Vychod on 18 October 2011 within the 2011 FARE Action Weeks. On 23 January 2011, the same organization which traditionally joins FARE Action Weeks prepared a discussion on the topic of racism in Vranov district football league in which a few local football players participated.