EVALUATION REPORT
RESPECT FAN CULTURE – FANS’ EMBASSIES AT UEFA EURO 2016

Fans’ Embassies Division

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Fans’ Embassy Division
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## CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Who are we? A brief history of FSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Fans’ Embassies – an introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Partners of FSE Fans’ Embassies at UEFA EURO 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The specificities of the Host Country - France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>UEFA EURO 2016 – Preparation Phase: Getting Ready For Kick-Off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>PROJECT OVERVIEW: RESPECT FAN CULTURE - Fans’ Embassies at UEFA EURO 2016 at a glance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Project Evaluation: organisation, methods, processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>UEFA EURO 2016 v UEFA EURO 2012 - MATCH EVALUATION ANALYSIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Digging deeper into fan hosting at UEFA EURO 2016: pre-match meetings analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Digging deeper into fan hosting at UEFA EURO 2016: Liaison between Fans’ Embassies and Host Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Digging deeper into fan hosting at UEFA EURO 2016: Liaison of Fans’ Embassies with UEFA Delegates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Digging deeper into fan hosting at UEFA EURO 2016: Liaison between Fans’ Embassies and Local Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>FOCUS: FAN HOSTING AT UEFA EURO 2016 – STEWARD AND POLICE OPERATIONS IN RELATION TO SUPPORTERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>What went well: a few examples of best practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>...a few examples of things that didn’t go so well at UEFA EURO 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Changes and adaptations after the Group Stage of UEFA EURO 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Perspectives and evolution of the concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>What will France learn from UEFA EURO 2016?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>What has been achieved so far? What legacy for France?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Who are we?
A brief history of FSE

The Football Supporters Europe network (FSE) is an independent, representative and democratically organised grassroots network of football fans in Europe with members in 48 countries across the continent. FSE can trace its history back to the international collaboration of fans’ organisations under the old name of Football Supporters International to provide Fans’ Embassy advice, information and support services to fans of national teams at international tournaments.

The story of FSE as it now exists, as the biggest democratic, membership-based association of football supporters across the continent, began in July 2008, when the first European Football Fans’ Congress was hosted in London. The meeting, held at Arsenal’s Emirates Stadium and hosted by the Football Supporters’ Federation (FSF) from England and Wales, brought together more than 250 supporter representatives from 27 European countries who, for the first time ever, discussed a wide range of issues which concerned fans across Europe. They immediately reached a broad consensus on many subjects and shared problems. As a consequence, attendees expressed the need for the establishment of a continental network that could represent the interest of football supporters across the board and develop transnational activities amongst fans in the future. The following year, in Hamburg, the second European Football Fans’ Congress (EFFC) was held. Alongside workshops on issues such as discrimination, policing, ticket pricing, pyrotechnics and commercialisation, the first Annual General Meeting was held, at which the statutes were adopted and the first Committee of fan representatives from 10 different countries across the continent was elected.
Membership of FSE is open to fans as individuals, as well as to fans’ groups organised at local, national or transnational level. A key condition for membership, however, is consent to FSE’s set of core principles: the opposition to any form of discrimination, the rejection of violence, the support of grassroots supporter culture and of values such as good governance and FairPlay in football.

The FSE Committee, as the executive board of the organisation, is in charge of developing the activities and agenda of FSE on this basis, together with the Coordinating Office and the wider membership. The FSE Committee is composed of members who are elected for a two year term at the Bi-Annual General Meetings, plus representatives from the Hamburg-based Coordinating Office and from the FSE “on-topic divisions” - the semi-autonomous departments charged with responsibility for the development of specific areas of work undertaken by FSE in addition to the usual working groups. Currently, these departments are the Anti-Discrimination Division, and the Fans’ Embassy Division, which co-ordinates the work of Fans’ Embassy teams particularly, but not exclusively, for fans of national teams.

Since its formation, FSE has launched many Europe-wide campaigning activities and projects and the network has grown rapidly. In 2009, FSE was recognised by UEFA as their main dialogue partner on fans’ issues. Over the years, FSE has also established itself with a number of other bodies, like the Council of Europe and the EU, as a key expert on supporters’ issues, taking part in different committees, police training programmes and expert groups.
Fans’ Embassies – an introduction

The Fans’ Embassy concept can be traced back to services provided for supporters of the England and Germany teams at the 1990 World Cup in Italy, and has evolved through subsequent tournaments. The main aims behind Fans’ Embassies are the implementation of preventative and social measures and the offering of structural support for travelling supporters at international tournaments.

These have proven to be valuable and significant additions to the conventional security measures during all major football events in the past 20 years. Previously, restrictive policing interventions and repressive regulatory policies were considered the only way to control fans in most European countries and during major tournaments. Since the end of the 1980s, this point of view has begun to change, thanks to new scientific findings in crowd psychology and constructive and on-going commitment from fan experts and some organised supporter representatives to promote alternative solutions based on their expertise and knowledge of dynamics in a fan crowd. This development has led to an increasingly widespread recognition of spectator (mis)behaviour as merely one part of a complex interaction of different factors at institutional level: “...such violence is part of a wider social phenomenon, which adversely affects genuine law-abiding supporters and local residents that an integrated approach is needed to counter it” (Council of Europe – Recommendation on the prevention of violence in sport No. 1/2003).

Fans’ Embassies have been recognised as a best practice tool in the course of this change in perspective. The idea for Fans’ Embassies came out of two national initiatives, developed totally independently from one another in England and Germany in the early 1990s.

The English model: by fans, for fans. The Fans’ Embassy service in England began as a lobbying and self-empowerment initiative taken by the Football Supporters’ Association (now known as the Football Supporters’ Federation - FSF), a membership-based campaigning body made up of ordinary football supporters and independent of both football and governmental authorities. The English Fans’ Embassy service has existed since 1992 and enjoys a good reputation amongst England’s travelling supporters for its consistency and reliability, not least because it is a service run by supporters for supporters. This creates a feeling amongst fans that the service is trustworthy as it is “on their side”. The FSF runs Fans’ Embassies at every England game to ensure consistency through its visibility amongst England fans. Moreover, the FSF publishes a “Free Lions” fan guide for each game which is distributed for free and has also become a very valuable collectors’ item.

The German model: professional fan workers. As with the English model, the service operated by the German fan workers is delivered by individuals known to and trusted by the supporters’ groups. However, the German Fans’ Embassy is provided by trained social workers engaged at various club-based fan projects, who are primarily involved in work with
local supporters’ groups. Since the 1990 World Cup, professional fan workers have also been travelling with the German national team’s fans and fan clubs. The German Fans’ Embassies are run by KOS, the coordinating office of more than 50 club-based German fan projects.

It is significant and interesting to note that despite the very different starting points of the people involved from the two countries, the Fans’ Embassy services each initiative provided have resulted in remarkably similar working practices. This commonality of experiences and conclusions about methodology shared by the two longest-standing and most successful practitioners in the field allows us to speak with some authority about a tried and tested best practice model. It has also been recognised by the Council of Europe, the EU Law Enforcement Working Party and UEFA as a successful tool if fully incorporated into a holistic safety and security concept which puts hospitality, service and prevention at international sporting events at the heart of operations.
CONCordia is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation that has been promoting peace and intercultural exchanges through international voluntary service projects since 1950. Working with a large number of partners around the world, Concordia works on: organising voluntary projects in France so that volunteers from every corner of the globe can come and lend a hand to local communities; giving French volunteers the opportunity to volunteer with partners’ projects by enrolling them on and preparing them for the projects; and preparing and leading training sessions and seminars on many themes (cultural diversity, environmental issues, human rights, etc.) based on informal and non-formal education methods.

Concordia was our operational partner during the project. Concordia hired young French volunteers for 6 months in a common good mission. The main purpose of the mission was to raise awareness of Europe and related questions amongst young people and prepare the deployment of the Fans’ Embassies. 16 volunteers across France have been working on education through sport, particularly football. These volunteers helped FSE during the Euros by welcoming our members, providing help in every Host-City and assisting the Fans’ Embassies at every game. The project has been certified by “Tous Prêts”, a project implemented by the French Government to promote social initiatives linked to UEFA EURO 2016. Thanks to “Tous prêts”, the volunteers could invite young people, mainly from underprivileged areas, to attend matches in the tournament.

The project also received the support of the German-French Office for Youth (OFAJ/DFJW).

UEFA is committed to ensuring that the needs and viewpoints of supporters are taken into account in European football governance. Football Supporters Europe (FSE), an independent, representative and democratically organised European association of football supporters, was launched with UEFA’s backing in 2009. UEFA recognises FSE as the official interlocutor on fans’ issues and as one of its key stakeholders. UEFA has engaged in a continuous dialogue with FSE on various matters as well as in support of the following particular initiatives and projects relating to fans’ involvement: Annual meetings between FSE and
relevant representatives from UEFA; a seminar on fan hosting called Football, Host Cities and Respect; the European Football Fans’ Congress of FSE in 2008 (London), 2009 (Hamburg), 2010 (Barcelona), 2011 (Brondby and Copenhagen), 2012 (Istanbul), 2013 (Amsterdam), 2014 (Bosco Albergati) and 2015 (Belfast); fans’ embassy projects at major tournaments and anti-racism activities such as the UEFA EURO 2012 project: Respect Fan Culture.

The DANIEL NIVEL FOUNDATION was established in 2000, after police officer Daniel Nivel was critically injured by German hooligans during the World Cup in France in June 1998. The DANIEL NIVEL FOUNDATION was created for the purpose of carrying out research on violence in football, to take preventative measures to curb such violence and to lend assistance to its victims. The founders are FIFA, UEFA, the French Football Association (FFF), the German Football Association (DFB) and the DFB Sports Aid Society. The Daniel Nivel Foundation particularly supported the coordination, training and evaluation meetings of the international Fans’ Embassy teams of FSE, as well as the provision of information services for supporters travelling in France.

The ASSOCIATION NATIONALE DES SUPPORTERS is the representative network of French supporters’ groups. A member of FSE, the ANS and its member groups have provided informational and logistical support to the project.

The ANS has also been working with FSE on the establishment of a constructive legacy for UEFA EURO 2016 for all French football fans.

The FRENCH FEDERATION OF HOUSES OF EUROPE took an active part in the project by providing an office space for Concordia volunteers in most Host-Cities and hosting our September 2016 evaluation meeting at the Paris House of Europe.
The specificities of the Host Country - France

This was the first time since 1998 that France had hosted an international football tournament and the event was held in a very specific context.

The major terrorist threat
France has been hit by terrorist attacks several times since 2014. In November 2015, a coordinated attack targeted the Bataclan nightclub and the Stade de France where the France v Germany friendly was taking place. Since then, a State of Emergency has been in place, highlighting the great fears of another attack in the country and the precautions being taken to prevent one, particularly in the context of an upcoming international football tournament when hundreds of thousands of people were expected to travel to France. In the course of this process, it was debated both in public and at the highest level whether EURO 2016 should be cancelled, whether there should be Fan Zones at all and what appropriate security measures should be undertaken. This of course had an impact on our work and the organisation of the tournament as a whole.

The absence of dialogue between French supporters and public authorities
This question remains a major issue in France. For many years now, the relationship, or absence of one, has complicated the dialogue between fans and authorities. French authorities have issued multiple administrative stadium bans and away travel bans over the past few seasons, making people wonder if France would be able to welcome supporters from all over Europe when it seems unable to handle hundreds of its own club supporters on a league match day or even just to be in dialogue with them.

Toxic legacy from FIFA World Cup 1998
Daniel Nivel is a French police officer who was savagely attacked by German hooligans in Lens around a match at WC 1998. He was severely injured and was in a coma for six weeks at the hospital and will suffer as a result of this incident for the rest of his life. He therefore became a tragic symbol of the consequences of football hooliganism at previous international tournaments.

In addition to this, Marseille was the setting for hooligan violence around the England v Tunisia game. English and Tunisian fans, the latter with the support of locals, fought for hours in the city, before, during and after the game. The police were subsequently criticised for their poor response.
These events left a very negative image of football fans which had an impact on the initial preparations for football supporters travelling to France for UEFA EURO 2016. This wasn’t helped by the fact that Marseille ended up being the Host City for one of the greatest risk matches of the entire tournament: England v Russia.

Good Cop, Bad Cop: the negative reputation of French police abroad

French police suffer from a very negative reputation abroad. In the opinion of many foreign fans that had travelled to France for European or international matches before, French police are seen as reacting violently not just often but also very quickly and by not being communicative or open to dialogue whatsoever. As a result, many foreign national team supporters raised concerns about the way they expected to be treated by French authorities during the tournament.

All these factors represented specific challenges to be taken into consideration when looking at the implementation of the UEFA EURO 2016 Fans’ Embassy Programme documented in this report.
On 3-4 March 2016, more than 150 participants met at a conference in Paris organised by Football Supporters Europe (FSE) and the French Fédération Française de Football (F.F.F.) with support from UEFA, to plan supporters’ services to be offered through Fans’ Embassies and related measures during UEFA EURO 2016, setting the course for fan hosting at the tournament. Participants included representatives from the FSE Fans’ Embassies Division, UEFA, UEFA EURO 2016 SAS, French Host Cities, national Football Associations, fan experts and other major stakeholders who met in the Hotel Pullman Paris Tour Eiffel (03 March) and at the F.F.F. headquarters (04 March). They came from 26 European countries, so all nations participating in UEFA EURO 2016 were represented.

French Secretary of State for Sports, Thierry Braillard, addressed the conference. It was the first fan-related conference of this kind ever organised in France and it provided a unique platform for football supporters internationally. National team supporters from various countries participating in EURO 2016 explained their role in the wider fan hosting concept to different agencies in France, underlining their intention to contribute to a festive atmosphere and to safety and security at the tournament.

Longstanding practitioners from the FSE Fans’ Embassies Division, delegates from National Associations and the EU Think Tank of Football Safety and Security Experts contextualised the conference theme by sharing their experiences of fan hosting at international tournaments since the 1990s with Host Cities and organisers in France. UEFA EURO 2016 SAS and the French Host Cities then presented their plans and consulted fan representatives on a wide range of operational matters related to their local and national preparations for the competition.

As a consequence of this conference, and as part of the UEFA Social Responsibility Programme for the tournament, FSE managed, in association with all major stakeholders in the competition, to initiate a very fruitful dialogue that ultimately benefited every fan travelling to France in summer 2016.

The value of the event was underlined by the presence of French Secretary of State for Sports, Thierry Braillard, and his very vocal support for the involvement of supporters and Fans’ Embassies as a tool in the organisation of UEFA EURO 2016. He invited encouraged football stakeholders and supporters’ organisations in France to switch from defiance to
trust: “Fans are one of the key pillars in the hosting of major sports events. Involving fans in the organisation of major sports events is most certainly the best way to prevent tensions.”

Nicolas Desforges, the Interministerial Delegate for Major Sports Events (DIGES) also reinforced this position in his opening address: “Fans will be at the heart of the EURO. This competition will be a celebration, thanks to the fans. We will support the RESPECT Fan Culture Fans’ Embassies, comforted by the fact that fans’ organisations have proven to be responsible stakeholders, fully aware of the challenges of such an event.”

Lukas Ackermann, Head of Event Services EURO 2016 SAS, added that he welcomed a “wonderful opportunity to see all stakeholders cooperating and to receive feedback from football fans’ representatives”.

The FFF said that “exchange is the only way to a mutual understanding and we are convinced that this first conference is a milestone for the legacy of fan culture in France”.

Michael Gabriel, FSE Fans’ Embassies Director, agreed: “It is a very positive sign to see all stakeholders of UEFA EURO 2016, from supporters’ representatives to French authorities, from football institutions, diplomatic services to Host Cities joining us today and building up an active cooperation.”

It was the first time that the positive and progressive role fans can play in preventative efforts and in promoting a positive atmosphere for a safe and secure sporting event for all was so clearly and unanimously underlined by all football governing bodies and institutions in France.

FROM NATIONAL TO LOCAL LEVEL:
PREPARATORY VISITS – MARCH/MAY 2016

The idea behind the preparatory visits was to give key stakeholders at a local level the chance to get to know the international visitors from the participating countries before the event and learn about their typical forms of fan culture and customs. From the point of view of the delegates from the international FSE Fans’ Embassy initiatives, the preparatory visits helped tremendously to gather first-hand information on the general conditions visiting fans could expect in the Host Cities where their team was due to play.

At the same time, the representatives from the Fans’ Embassy teams could meet the key personnel in charge of operations at a local level and provide support to the Host Cities through the early identification and prevention of potential problem areas in the organisation. This cooperation helped to ensure that services provided in the Host Cities could be tailored to the needs and numbers of visiting supporters and hence represented a key element of the FSE’s RESPECT FAN CULTURE Fans’ Embassies project.
at UEFA EURO 2016. They helped greatly in building working relationships and dialogue between the supporters and different players in the field ahead of the tournament.

The preparatory visits included meetings of experts from the Fans’ Embassy initiatives from one participating country with representatives of the French Host Cities, representatives of local organising committees of EURO 2016, local authorities (prefecture and police) as well as UEFA delegates and stadium managers, wherever possible. It was the occasion for every party to detail their needs, to exchange information, and identify challenges and common ground in case of contrasting expectations and ideas. Fans’ Embassy representatives on the other hand could explore the cities from a fans’ perspective, gather reliable information about transportation, the stadium, and cultural and other activities which they could use to inform national team fans back home to help them prepare for their trip to France.

LESSONS LEARNED

The process of project implementation for RESPECT FAN CULTURE activities showed that such preparatory visits must be a mandatory part of any future fan hosting project at an international tournament. Project partners, stakeholders at a local level and the international FSE Fans’ Embassy teams all highlighted their added value and expressed the need for a standard integration of these visits into the schedule of all stakeholders involved in safety and security operations and fan hosting measures at Host City level, which should take place not long after the draw, once it is clear which teams are due play in which Host City.

FINAL SPRINT BEFORE KICK-OFF: THE FINAL FANS’ EMBASSIES TRAINING – PARIS, MAY 2016

At the end of May 2016, FSE organised a final training event for all Fans’ Embassy teams and volunteers from Concordia operating at UEFA EURO 2016 as part of the project RESPECT FAN CULTURE. The training, which took place at the “Maison des Volontaires” in Paris, was to share and harmonise the last practical details of the tournament organisation and work methodology with a group of more than 40 team leaders of the Fans’ Embassies from the participating countries and the local volunteers, the latter of whom had only started their work for the project in March 2016. It provided an opportunity for key personnel in the project to get to know each other before the tournament kicked off.

The volunteers from Concordia had to play a key role during UEFA EURO 2016 as they, alongside the Host City representatives, were the main contact points for the travelling mobile Fans’ Embassy teams from the participating countries. Hence, the meeting was an important opportunity to harmonise the joint operations and procedures between French volunteers and the Fans’ Embassy teams and to nurture good relations between each other.
In the very special context related to the State of Emergency, it was also essential to train participants on security protocols. Beyond that, other training elements of the two-day event included internal communication and reporting policies, as well as media relations, basic conflict mediation methodology and anti-discrimination training, to provide tools to all Fans’ Embassy and volunteer members of staff to help with their daily operations during the event, based on the Fans’ Embassy work methodology.

At the end of the training, every Fans’ Embassy received:

- a hotline number provided by the FSE project partner Orange to ensure that the FSE Fans’ Embassy network members could stay in touch during the tournament and offer a specific communication channel for supporters of their respective national teams;

- a briefing pack with all the essential information for match days, details to key contacts in every Host City and beyond (volunteers, host city representatives, other Fans’ Embassies, national project coordination staff), the stadia and public transport;

- information about special team accommodation provided via FSE to Fans’ Embassy teams in every Host City and how to get there;

- general information on emergency security procedures and contact numbers.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

The final Fans’ Embassy training proved essential for the success of the project operations and helped to ensure consistent work methodology, team building for key personnel involved in the project at international level and transparency regarding operational procedures. In particular, it gave the French volunteers and supporters’ representatives from Fans’ Embassy teams operating for the first time the chance to receive substantiated training and an opportunity for exchange with experienced practitioners on the work methodology.
PROJECT OVERVIEW: RESPECT FAN CULTURE - Fans’ Embassies at UEFA EURO 2016 at a glance

The Fans’ Embassies driven by Football Supporters Europe (FSE) are looking back on their most successful tournament in history: fan volunteers from 19 participating countries were in operation to help guide travelling fans through all stages of EURO 2016. In September 2016, the Fans’ Embassies met in Paris for an evaluation of their work and to make plans for their upcoming challenge: the World Cup 2018 in Russia. More than 80 participants from the EURO 2016 Fans’ Embassies, UEFA, security bodies, authorities, the French government and their partners Concordia and the Daniel Nivel Foundation attended the three-day evaluation meeting at the House of Europe in the French capital.

The organisers particularly welcomed the participation of delegates from the Russian Football Association and the Local Organising Committee of WC 2018 who learned from the experiences in France regarding what is needed to facilitate a peaceful and welcoming tournament in 2018. Their attendance shows the increasing value that is placed on Fans’ Embassies as a methodology of fan hosting to help ensure the successful course of a major football event. In France, Fans’ Embassies and related services for travelling supporters under the project RESPECT FAN CULTURE provided help and information on match days for supporters following their teams and reported a high demand from fans throughout the tournament. In total there were more than 180 volunteers and staff members running Fans’ Embassies information points around every match at the tournament.

- 2 years’ preparation period
- 19 Fans’ Embassy Teams from participating national teams operating with support from national governments or football bodies
- 16 German-French volunteers from Concordia (Civil Service NGO)
- 185 volunteers
- Up to 1 million people reached through social media and publications during the tournament
- 4105 calls on FSE Hotlines
- 10 Host Cities
- 7 Partner Organisations
After having implemented the project RESPECT FAN CULTURE, which involved Fans’ Embassies in 10 Host Cities during the 51 games of UEFA EURO 2016, Football Supporters Europe organised a meeting to evaluate the project in Paris from 14 to 16 September. This conference gathered all stakeholders involved in the project in order to analyse the project’s operations and the overall tournament organisation in relation to all matters of fan hosting, as well as to identify room for improvement and further develop cooperation for future tournaments. It was also the occasion to establish the legacy of the project’s operations for the future of fan hosting and fan dialogue at club level in France.

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The organisers particularly welcomed the participation of delegates from the Russian Football Association and the Local Organising Committee of WC 2018 who used the opportunity to learn from the experiences in France in order to help them
facilitate a peaceful and welcoming tournament in 2018. Their attendance shows the increasing value that is placed on Fans’ Embassies as a methodology of fan hosting to help ensure the successful course of a major football event. In France, Fans’ Embassies and related services for travelling supporters under the project RESPECT FAN CULTURE provided help and information on match days for supporters following their teams and reported a high demand from fans throughout the tournament.

In order to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the work conducted, FSE asked all volunteers and staff involved in the project from all 19 countries and the French volunteers to complete evaluation reports. Each Host City volunteer and each Fans’ Embassy team had to file a match evaluation report after each game. Two months after the final whistle, another questionnaire had to be completed which aimed at an overall assessment of fan hosting operations in the context of the project. The FSE Project Coordinating staff subsequently analysed the results of all responses and used them as a basis for discussions at the project evaluation meeting.

The evaluation meeting itself was split into three parts: an internal evaluation amongst the Fans’ Embassy teams allowed the representatives of the Fans’ Embassies operating in France to share their experiences with each other and to identify potential problem areas and room for improvement, with a focus on internal operations between the teams and volunteers. Afterwards, the evaluation was extended to include an exchange behind closed doors with external stakeholders and political authorities with an organising capacity in France, to express constructive criticism in an atmosphere of trust and identify the key lessons learned for the organisation of future tournaments in different areas. In the third part of the project evaluation meeting, key results of the analysis were shared with a wider audience.

All in all, project partners and participants had the shared impression of very contrasting fan experiences from one city to another, and also from one country to another. Supporters’ feedback and need for assistance via the Fans’ Embassies was dependant on how much effort the different national Football Associations, local organisers and police had put into fan dialogue and to what extent national team fans’ groups had been credibly involved in the tournament preparations and Fans’ Embassy provisions.

All meeting participants and partners agreed with the conclusion that there is evident added value and thus a need for organisers and Football Associations participating in an international tournament to build stronger links with their respective Fans’ Embassies and national team supporters’ groups in the future, whilst recognising their independence.

FSE Fans’ Embassies operating in France also underlined the need for their early involvement in preparations for upcoming major football events in view of various new and major challenges to be expected for supporters around the World Cup 2018 in Russia and especially around EURO 2020 when the tournament will be played across 13 European countries for the first time.
The FSE Fans’ Embassy Division asked its members to compare fan hosting measures at UEFA EURO 2016 to UEFA EURO 2012. Fans’ Embassy teams who had operated at both tournaments were asked to assess a variety of indicators and to judge if hosting conditions were better, less good or stable compared to 2012.

6 indicators showed improvements at EURO 2016:

- Cooperation with UEFA
- Cooperation with other FEs
- Tournament experience from a fans’ point of view
- Quality of work of other Fans’ Embassies
- Conditions at stadia for fans in general
- Quality of work of local volunteers at HC level

Only 1 indicator showed lower rates in 2016 compared to 2012:

- The relationship between police authorities and stewards was rated lower during UEFA EURO 2016.
- According to ratings much less dialogue and fewer meetings between fans and police took place.

On the following pages, different charts will be presented, analysing the results of the match reports and evaluation questionnaires provided by Fans’ Embassy teams and volunteers operating during UEFA EURO 2016.

The first chart gives an overview over the proportion of meetings held between the Fans’ Embassies, the Host Cities and other different stakeholders (Host City, UEFA, local police). The subsequent charts seek to detail the findings and visualise the extent to which Fans’ Embassies managed to liaise with different stakeholders in every Host City throughout the tournament.
Digging deeper into fan hosting at UEFA EURO 2016: pre-match meetings analysis

CONTENT
% of all Fans’ Embassies that managed to liaise with different key stakeholders during the competition.
KEY OUTCOMES

77% of all FEs met UEFA Representatives.

65% of the FEs met the Host Cities and the other Fans’ Embassy teams.

Collaboration with UEFA and the Host Cities was good but there was a desire for improvement.

43% of the FEs met the French police authorities.

Less than 30% met with the representatives from the international police delegations from the National Football Information Points (NFIP).

FEs met French Police only occasionally and met their national police officers even less. This must be improved to facilitate effective prevention through dialogue with fans.

10% met consulate representatives.

INTERPRETATION

As responses underlined, Host cities and representatives of UEFA were regularly met by the Fans’ Embassies. Cooperation with UEFA Delegates took place in 77% of all matches. Since 19 out of all 24 participating countries at UEFA EURO 2016 provided Fans’ Embassy services, not every match provided an opportunity for two Fans’ Embassy teams working together which is indicated by the 65% cooperation rate in responses. Liaison between local police and Fans’ Embassies took place in less than half of cases and encounters with international police delegations only happened in 29% of all cases. It seems there was only a little interest in police liaising with football supporters via the Fans’ Embassies.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

The collaboration with UEFA seems to have been the most successful and indicates mutually beneficial and fruitful cooperation levels between UEFA, Host Cities and amongst Fans’ Embassies. In responses from both participants and partners it emerged that there was even a desire for improvement. Consequently, meetings between the different FEs and UEFA/HC should be arranged more systematically. Contrary to that, Fans’ Embassies couldn’t or didn’t manage to hold regular meetings with representatives of the police which was considered as a potential risk by all participants, especially in a scenario when incidents occur. Future Fans’ Embassy projects should therefore seek to invest more resources in the early establishment of structured dialogue with police.
Digging deeper into fan hosting at UEFA EURO 2016: Liaison between Fans’ Embassies and Host Cities

**CONTENT**

Chart illustrating the percentage of matches around which Fans’ Embassies met representatives of the different Host Cities.
KEY OUTCOME
In Bordeaux, Lens, Lyon, Paris, and Toulouse, there were meetings between the parties at all or almost all matches in the Host City (75% and higher, even 100% for two cities).

In Marseille, Lille and Nice, there were meetings only in half or 2/3rd of all occasions (between 55 and 65%).

In Saint-Etienne and even more in Saint-Denis, there were meetings around less than half of all matches (40% and 10%).

INTERPRETATION
In half of Host Cities, the cooperation between Fans’ Embassies and Host Cities was intense and thus satisfying. In the other half of the 10 Host Cities, cooperation rates between Host Cities and Fans’ Embassies during EURO2016 was rated as low or even insufficient. In Toulouse and in Lens for example, the Host Cities were proactively seeking contact with the Fans’ Embassies throughout the tournament. The intense cooperation was also reflected in the ratings of the fan experience in those cities.

In other cases, such as in Bordeaux, Marseille and Paris, Host Cities and Fans’ Embassies met particularly often on the initiative of the Fans’ Embassies with the aim of troubleshooting as more meetings had to be held to facilitate working together for the prevention of potential risks and problems. Matches with rather average or low ratings in these cities could indicate that no risk was identified, and that parties saw no special need for meetings or no desire to meet, unless absolutely needed.

Finally, the two lowest ratings have to be interpreted in their specific organisational context: in Saint-Denis, the cooperation rate with the Host City was very low simply because fan gatherings for fixtures in Saint-Denis were still focusing on the Host City of Paris. Most supporters gathered in the centre of Paris and only went to Saint-Denis shortly before kick-off.

The rather low rate of meetings during the tournament in Saint-Etienne and Lille seemingly contrast with the very good fan experience ratings in these Host Cities. However, this can be explained by the fact that both Saint-Etienne and Lille were the cities with the most intense levels of cooperation with the FSE Fans’ Embassy initiatives on fan hosting ahead of the tournament. Consequently everything was so well planned and integrated into daily tournament operations that there was not as much need for further meetings during the event.
KEY CONCLUSIONS
The very high frequency of meetings observed between Fans’ Embassies and Host Cities during or ahead of the tournament underlines a cooperation that was mostly considered of mutually added value.

Having said that, a high frequency of meetings during the tournament did not necessarily imply efficiency of discussions or depend upon the relationship between both parties. Meanwhile, it is interesting to note that Host Cities that show high held many frequencies of meetings with the Fans’ Embassies during UEFA EURO 2016 were are not necessarily the best rated on quality of services provided to supporters during the tournament.

Contrary to that, in those Host Cities which held intense meetings with the Fans’ Embassies before the tournament AND fully incorporated Fans’ Embassies and related measures of fan hosting in their safety and security operations during the event, the overall fan experience seemed better than in those cities where this hadn’t been the case.

These findings further underline the need for intense and systematic establishment of relations between all Host Cities and Fans’ Embassies before the tournament. During the tournament, systematic meeting arrangements proved to be valuable whereas ad-hoc meetings often didn’t bring the desired results of improving cooperation.
Digging deeper into fan hosting at UEFA EURO 2016: Liaison of Fans’ Embassies with UEFA Delegates

CONTENT
Percentage of matches around which Fans’ Embassies liaised with UEFA Delegates during the tournament in each Host City.

KEY FACTS
In Lens, Lille, Lyon, Marseille, Paris, Saint-Denis and Toulouse, regular meetings or exchanges took place between Fans’ Embassies and UEFA Delegates (80% and higher).

In Saint-Etienne and Nice, ratings were lower (65% and 50%).

In Bordeaux, only 38% of the Fans’ Embassies had interactions with the UEFA Delegates.

In seven out of ten Host Cities, the frequency of meetings was very high. In only three Host Cities, liaison between the Fans’ Embassies and UEFA Delegates was rated as insufficient.
**INTERPRETATION**

The high ratings in almost all Host Cities confirm that a systematic exchange between UEFA and Fans’ Embassies was in place and both parties managed to meet at almost every game. Only in the Host City of Bordeaux was cooperation with UEFA below the usually high average rating which might have been down to a specific working environment in this Host City rather than a general lack of interest in the exchange by either party. This interpretation is supported by the fact that this was the only Host City where the Fans’ Embassy was forced to be located within the Fan Zone, which conflicted with the Fans’ Embassy work methodology and hence made daily operations more difficult.

**KEY CONCLUSIONS**

The intense collaboration with UEFA in the tournament preparations continued during the tournament. UEFA Security Officers and Fans’ Embassies managed to meet at almost every game. UEFA therefore represents the stakeholder that the FSE Fans’ Embassy teams had the most systematic exchanges with. Findings from the Fans’ Embassy match evaluation scheme at UEFA EURO 2016 confirm that an early and mutually agreed procedure of cooperation supports a smooth interaction during the tournament.
Digging deeper into fan hosting at UEFA EURO 2016: Liaison between Fans’ Embassies and Local Police

**CONTENT**
Percentage of match days in each Host City around which Fans’ Embassies met with local police.

**KEY FACTS**
Paris, Marseille and Lens are the Host Cities where most interaction took place between local police and the Fans’ Embassies (average 60%).

In Nice and Lille, only 50% of all Fans’ Embassies liaised with local police.

In Lyon, Saint-Etienne and Toulouse, exchanges with Fans’ Embassies took place on less than 50% of match days.

In Bordeaux and Saint-Denis, the Fans’ Embassies met local police only exceptionally (20%).
INTERPRETATION
The police are the stakeholder that interacted the least with the Fans’ Embassies. The best ratings show percentages of interaction in just above half of all matches. Furthermore, the highest exchange rates are concentrated on those cities where either fixtures classified with the highest risk took place (e.g. England v Russia) or where national teams with big followings played matches (Paris). These were also the cities where Fans’ Embassies and their national associations sought increased contact with the police to make specific arrangements to mitigate risks, such as fan marches.

KEY CONCLUSIONS
The fact that Fans’ Embassies and police engaged on less than half of the 51 match days at UEFA EURO 2016 demonstrates a predominantly problem-oriented rather than a systematic approach of constructive dialogue between Fans’ Embassies and police at UEFA EURO 2016. This is further supported by the fact that the frequency of meetings between Fans’ Embassies and the local police increased for the matches after incidents had occurred (e.g. in Marseille).

This was foreseeable in the light of very little interest shown by French police in establishing systematic cooperation with the Fans’ Embassies ahead of the tournament. Hence, the lack of interaction in this field was merely a continuation of the generally predominant absence of dialogue between fans and police in French football overall.

It is positive that French police eventually took note of the potential added value of exchanges with the supporter representatives from the Fans’ Embassies, even though it was only after incidents had occurred. In order to allow Fans’ Embassies to fully exploit their preventative and mediating effects for the facilitation of a positive atmosphere and international understanding among supporters though, it is crucial that police are convinced to liaise with Fans’ Embassy representatives systematically, as a natural part of all tournament operations, independent from scenarios which are problem-focused.

This is why Fans’ Embassy representatives should be systematically included in MD-1 match operations and security meetings at all future tournaments as a standard measure. Jointly with all other stakeholders responsible for match arrangements, the input provided by the Fans’ Embassies can help to minimise risks effectively and ensure a direct information flow with trustworthy and responsible fans’ representatives working on the ground.
FOCUS: FAN HOSTING AT UEFA EURO 2016 – STEWARD AND POLICE OPERATIONS IN RELATION TO SUPPORTERS

CONTENT
Fans’ Embassy project participants’ ratings evaluating stewarding and policing operations based on different aspects monitored over 51 match days at UEFA EURO 2016 in 10 Host Cities. Value 1 = unsatisfying, value 5 = very satisfying.

KEY FACTS
When both police and stewards were assessed for the same indicators, the ratings attributed to police were a bit lower each time than those for the stewards. Particularly the ability of stewards to make fans feel welcomed / treated with respect as well as their respect for security procedures was rated above average. However, participants of the Fans’ Embassy project assessed the English language skills of both police and stewards operating at UEFA EURO 2016 as unsatisfying.
KEY CONCLUSIONS

The different indicators assessed show merely average ratings for police and stewarding operations during the tournament, demonstrating the need for improvement in those areas. Having said that, stewards were generally better assessed than police on the indicators assessed for both groups. Not only does this show the need for increased training of police on principles of hospitality ahead of major football events, it could also be indicative of a generally more positive perception of stewards amongst fans. This supports the general policy promoted as part of safety and security operations in sport to deploy stewards rather than police for match operations where possible.

In addition to that, ratings indicate that there is a need to ensure that stewards and police deployed at a major football event receive more training in the languages of participating national teams, and at the very least in English. Organisers should make greater efforts to ensure that a sufficient number of security staff with those skills is deployed in order to prevent potential problems should there be a need to communicate with supporters.
What went well: a few examples of best practice...

LILLE / TOULOUSE / SAINT-ETIENNE

Toulouse, Lille and Saint-Etienne are the three best rated among the UEFA EURO 2016 Host Cities by the participants operating in the FSE REPSECT FAN CULTURE project. These results were drawn from average daily ratings in match monitoring reports for each game throughout UEFA EURO 2016 and from an overall survey of tournament operations conducted among the Fans’ Embassy project participants two months after the end of the tournament.

The high ratings for all three Host Cities are underpinned by three common characteristics:

PREPARATION

Toulouse, Lille and Saint-Etienne all put great efforts into ensuring a comprehensive integration of hospitality at the heart of their local tournament preparations. Fans’ Embassies were fully incorporated as an integral part of the preparatory work in these Host Cities, including the nomination of one person at Host City level as a key contact point for FSE and related fan hosting operations. This person was aware of the practical questions and requirements linked to the work methodology and was committed to dialogue with supporters. They were all united by a perspective on supporters as citizens rather than as tourists. To strengthen this perspective at operational level, they organised meetings with local stakeholders and the Fans’ Embassies operating in their city on their own initiative during the tournament in an attempt to facilitate a smooth interaction between all parties.

In each case, this led to the best possible working conditions for the Fans’ Embassies and interestingly largely corresponded with the overall fan experience in those cities as well.

COMMUNICATION

The efficient coordination of communication between so many international and local parties in the project was integral to success. Thus, after having identified a reliable contact in each Host City and after having built the first links, meetings, exchanges and dialogue could be facilitated rather easily via the FSE project coordinating staff at a national level.

The continuous information flow established between FSE and the Host Cities allowed all parties to be very quickly aware of potential developments, new scenarios and the need for modification of operations. The better and more reliable the contacts for the Fans’ Embassies that could be established at Host City level before the start of UEFA EURO 2016, the more fruitful and productive the dialogue was and thus the actual work during the tournament could be organised much more effectively.
IMPLEMENTATION
The results of the evaluation of the systematic match monitoring reporting and post-tournament evaluation amongst the Fans’ Embassies reflected the working experience of the FSE Project Coordinating staff before the beginning of UEFA EURO 2016: it was expected that the Fans’ Embassy operations would work very well in all those cities where the recommendations from the long-standing FSE Fans’ Embassy experts in the field had been fully taken into account and were put into practice as part of a working relationship, characterised by mutual trust. Where some other cities merely sought to put the Fans’ Embassies “somewhere” to avoid any additional work, such as into the Fan Zone, these Host Cities bought into the concept, they requested advice for the location, size, format, equipment and information material needed for a successful Fans’ Embassy operation.

Wherever needed, FSE and these best rated Host Cities managed to put operational conditions in place that could fit the minimum requirements of best practice in consultation with each other and based on specific local conditions, or they went beyond that.

CASE STUDY OF BEST PRACTICE: ENGLAND V WALES (LENS)
The game that pitted England and Wales against each other in Lens represents one of the best practice examples of a holistic concept of safety, security and service based on a hospitality approach at UEFA EURO 2016.

CONTEXT
The game between England and Wales took place in Lens on 16 June 2016. As Lens is quite a small city, it was expected that many supporters from England and Wales would stay in Lille around the game, which is located not far from Lens in the North of France. However, one day before the fixture, Russia and Slovakia played each other in Lille. Hence, many Russian supporters were present in Lille before and around the actual match day. The major incidents around the England v Russia game in Marseille had happened only five days before and tensions were high when English, Welsh and Russian supporters met in Lille. Moreover, the intense rivalry between the fans of the two British football countries led to additional fears of further clashes to be expected around their match in the adjacent City of Lens.

WHAT WAS DONE TO PREVENT PROBLEMS?
The shocking images of clashes in Marseille left many genuine English supporters with a very negative impression of French policing operations, indiscriminately targeting all fans, irrespective of their individual involvement in violent behaviour. Post-match day media reports gave rise to fears, not just among police and organisers in the Host City of Lens, that history could repeat itself around the fixture against the rivals from Wales.
As a consequence, stakeholders in Lens came together immediately after the match day in Marseille to discuss how similar incidents could be prevented. Contrary to institutional preparations in Marseille, the representatives from the different Fans’ Embassies operating in the Host City were invited as key partners to the security meetings. The supporters could contribute their specific knowledge on crowd dynamics and supporters’ reactions following events in Marseille and gave input as to how security operations could respond to the situation so as to be perceived as reacting proportionately. As a consequence of these security meetings, it was decided to keep a constant communication channel open between decision-makers in the local police and the supporter representatives from the Fans’ Embassies, to allow each other to anticipate potential tensions among fans much earlier and with the appropriate focus on measures of de-escalation.

Nevertheless, intervention strategies were established to allow security forces to react quickly in case violent incidents should occur. However, policing instructions were focused on dialogue and at graduate intervention in case of incidents rather than on immediate escalation by the indiscriminate use of force as in Marseille. As a consequence, the atmosphere remained festive before, during and after the game – also thanks to the close collaboration between supporters, host cities and authorities at this high risk fixture.

Moreover, the improvements in the safety and security arrangements in Lens, compared with operations in Marseille, were achieved in only five days. This was also down to the FSE’s preparatory work that ultimately made it much easier to gather the key players at international and local level to discuss solutions as they had already met with each other in the context of preparations for tournament arrangements in the cities.
BEST PRACTICE: FAN ACTIVITIES

FAN WALKS
As part of the pre-tournament phase in the RESPECT FAN CULTURE project, FSE sought to ensure that fan activities could be facilitated during UEFA EURO 2016 which would create a festive atmosphere and promote international understanding amongst supporters and thereby contribute to the reduction in tensions. However, in the context of a traditionally predominantly restrictive safety and security approach in French football, it wasn’t clear at all whether such typical and festive encounters between different sets of fans would face support from the side of French authorities and organisers.

Fan Walks are one of these typical forms of fan activity which are extremely popular amongst many supporters internationally, both at club and at national team level. However, in France, Fan Walks have regularly been met with opposition from the security agencies and were even completely prohibited for supporters in Ligue 1.
This is why the FSE Project Coordinating staff invested a lot of time in raising awareness among the host cities about the preventative and therefore added value of Fan Walks. It was important for FSE and its Fans’ Embassy teams operating in the UEFA project RESPECT FAN CULTURE to ensure that such walks could indeed happen where desired by the fans. The subject was therefore discussed with French authorities over many months before the beginning of the tournament with the aim of identifying common ground where possible and manageable compromises, where required. After many debates and discussions, French authorities opened the door to Fan Walks under the following conditions: fans and authorities agreed on a route for the march in advance, one person from amongst the supporters had to be named as person responsible for the walk, and there had to be a permanent line of communication between authorities and supporters during the walk. These arrangements permitted fans at UEFA EURO 2016 to organise Fan Walks in Lyon, Lille, Marseille, Paris, Bordeaux, and Toulouse with tens of thousands of participants.

It is important to mention that despite all initial skepticism on the side of local authorities, not a single incident was recorded during any of these Fan Walks. On the contrary, the Fan Walks were among the most memorable experiences for many national team fans at UEFA EURO 2016.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Some national team supporters also used their time in France to support local communities in the country with dedicated activities.

In every city where their team had to play, Welsh supporters, under the lead of the supporter federation FSF Cymru that ran the Fans’ Embassy Wales, identified a non-profit association that they could support through in kind donations (materials, clothes, toys etc.). Meeting local social actors and helping them was a way for them to make their stay more worthwhile and of added value. It was also a way for them to build links with the local population and promote solidarity through sport.

Supporters from the Northern Ireland Fans’ Embassy operated by the Amalgamation of Official Northern Ireland Supporter Clubs (AONISC) organised a trip to Somme, a French region very well known for a battle that occurred there during WWI in 1916. Since many soldiers from Northern Ireland were involved in this war, this battle plays a big role in the national history of the country. Thus, via the Fans’ Embassy project, Northern Irish fans were connected with the inhabitants of a city in the region called Albert. The supporters ultimately played a friendly match against a local team and were then welcomed by officials from the city for a tour of cultural and historical monuments.
....a few examples of things that didn’t go so well at UEFA EURO 2016

TICKETING

The match monitoring evaluation revealed that black market ticket sales were observed at 96% of the 51 games, including the opening game and the final. At most matches, high numbers of tickets were perceived to be sold on the black market, although tickets were generally sold at face value or below. Quite a few Fans’ Embassies reported that they had seen a number of corporate tickets amongst those on sale on the black market. Reports in the evaluation process also suggested that professional ticket touts could operate freely right in front of the eyes of police and little or no interventions to address the issue had been observed.

One possible root cause for the perceived high numbers of tickets on the black market could be the fact that more than the half of the tickets were sold one year before the beginning of the tournament, before knowing which teams would be involved. At that time, many people bought tickets knowing perfectly well that they would/could still sell them a year later to foreign fans that came to support their teams.

This raises further concerns about the allocations for national team fans who reported many problems with obtaining tickets for games of their own national team via regular channels. In particular, smaller football associations or those fans who had participated for the first time in the tournament seemed to have struggled the most with the procedures put in place via the centralised ticket sales platform. The Fans’ Embassies received a lot of complaints from supporters before and during the tournament related to ticketing, for example, related to very expensive tickets being non-refundable but official changes to names on the ticket not being possible either; there were troubles with voucher exchange procedures or payment etc. These largely technical and procedural hurdles seem to have led to a perception that the official system was not user-friendly from the point of view of many fans and thus is likely to have been a key contributing factor to an even bigger black market.

Whilst it is unlikely that black market ticket sales can ever be completely eradicated, FSE Fans’ Embassy representatives believe that supporters could give valuable input into the development of effective ticketing procedures that can help to minimise the opportunities for ticket touts. FSE therefore welcomes the UEFA decision to create a Spectator Services project dedicated to EURO 2020 preparations which will also deal with ticketing arrangements, and will be happy to contribute its expertise to the work of this department in due course.
POLICING / STEWARDING

As the match monitoring ratings suggest, the experienced practitioners from amongst the Fans' Embassies agreed unanimously that there was still great room for improvement with policing and stewarding operations in a football context in France.

Especially where incidents occurred, police officers usually reacted very late and then immediately very aggressively and with the indiscriminate use of force against both victims and attackers, often characterised by the use of tear gas. Targeted intervention against individuals and dialogue were not seen as options in such cases nor were recommendations or mediation attempts from the Fans’ Embassies or foreign police delegations taken into account. However, when there was a low risk fixture police were very much in the background and generally friendly. This contrast suggests that police officers in France weren’t sufficiently trained in line with the graduate and preventative approach set out in the European standards in the Council of Europe Convention on Safety, Security and Service at Sports Events (which was signed and ratified by the French government just before UEFA EURO 2016) and the EU Handbook on Police Cooperation at Football Matches with an International Dimension.

The positive example of safety and security operations in cooperation with the supporters’ representatives from the Fans’ Embassies in Lens around the England v Wales match demonstrates how much preventative potential there is when these policing principles are followed.
Similarly, several representatives of Fans’ Embassies - who also provided support as interlocutors upon entry to the stadia on match days - reported cases where supporters had flags or other fan memorabilia taken off them and confiscated by stewards without any further explanation. Another pattern in reports about stewarding described great differences in searching regimes from one stadium to another: whilst fans felt almost strip-searched in one place and had to have every lighter in their bag confiscated (which gave rise to tensions and many discussions upon entry), they weren’t searched at all upon entry to other stadia (which gave rise to concerns about their safety in the light of the terror threat). Fans expressed a need for greater balance and consistency with body search procedures.

That many police officers and stewards approached by fans generally couldn’t speak or understand English sufficiently to communicate with supporters, was considered one of the biggest issues in daily operations by the Fans’ Embassies and their peers, many of whom complained about having encountered problems in this regard. Their lack of foreign language skills also didn’t help to de-escalate tensions where they arose. Apart from the fact that there is certainly a need for increased foreign language training for stewards and police in France, it also underlined the need for the Fans’ Embassy teams themselves to ensure the inclusion of team members who speak the language of the Host Countries.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation arrangements also posed some problems during the competition as many stadia were located very far from city centres. The worst rated examples in this regard were Bordeaux, Lyon and Nice.

The Fans’ Embassies and UEFA had previously sought to convince the Host Cities to have a combined ticket scheme, which would allow free transportation for all fans in possession of match tickets. However, and under the lead of the City of Paris, the Host Cities rejected respective proposals. This is why, during the first games, supporters were all required to buy tickets to enter the public transport buses or tram lines taking them to the ground and in many places, ticket checks were enforced. However, very long queues, congestion and problems with the operation of ticket machines raised a lot safety and security issues, especially shortly before kick-off. It then became apparent in most Host Cities that it was irresponsible to continue to enforce the rule that every supporter should buy a public transport ticket to get to the ground. The only reasonable solution was to allow free transport for the fans to and from the stadia.

In Bordeaux, only two tram lines connected the stadium with the city centre. After the game, tens of thousands of supporters arrived more or less at the same time in front of these trains. This led to massive queues, congestion and in some cases to encounters between risk groups amongst supporters from both teams who had
previously sought to provoke each other. Similar observations could be made in Lyon and Nice after the final whistle. Insufficient crowd management like this is likely to provoke tensions and fears in the wider crowd, further boosted by the consciousness of a terrorist threat. Such extremely low crowd flow, simply caused by a lack of transportation services provided for departure from the stadium, can hence very easily become an unnecessary root cause for a high risk of incidents and conflict.

In Nice, shuttle busses to the stadium brought fans to a parking lot more than two kilometres away from the stadium. Thousands of fans had to walk all the way to the ground from there. This caused particular issues for supporters with disabilities or for fans who had brought their children as there were no alternative means of (public) transport provided for these groups. Hence, the stadium in Nice wasn’t meeting basic standards of accessibility. The summer heat on the French south coast didn’t help either: some supporters fainted and lost consciousness on the rather long walk to the ground and medical assistance had to be called to take care of them.

As a consequence of these experiences, the question of transportation arrangements and combined tickets including free public transport tickets for match ticket owners was once again tackled and addressed during the FSE Fans’ Embassy evaluation meeting. There was a clear consensus that such a combined ticketing model would have helped greatly to facilitate transportation of fans in the Host Cities. Also, with stadia being located outside of the city centres, greater attention should be paid by Fans’ Embassies and local organisers to ensuring the provision of sufficient local transportation services to prevent related security risks.
Changes and adaptations after the Group Stage of UEFA EURO 2016

After the end of the Group Stage of UEFA EURO 2016, FSE came together with the relevant stakeholders at national level to try and secure changes and adaptations to the hosting arrangements in relation to the Fans’ Embassy operations and beyond to prevent further problems.

MEETING AT THE FRENCH MINISTRY OF INTÉRIEUR AFTER THE GROUP STAGE

Just after the group stage, FSE was invited for the first time to the French Ministry of Interior to discuss safety and security issues and what went well or not during the first matches in the tournament.

FSE used this opportunity to address relations with the different prefectures, the lack of consistency in safety and security procedures and the shortcomings of some authorities.
DIRECT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FSE AND AUTHORITIES

In Paris, the added value provided by Fans’ Embassy operations was not recognised by key personnel in the Host City which had major consequences and led to a situation where ultimately no stationary Fans’ Embassy Information Point could be operated. This made it impossible for the Fans’ Embassy representatives to organise Fan Walks, to operate together from one location or to facilitate similar opportunities for encounters between supporters.

It was only once the FSE Project Coordinating staff and individual Fans’ Embassy teams, in close cooperation with their National Football Associations, managed to deal directly with the prefectural level in the City that they were allowed to occupy public space for the operation of Fans’ Embassy services. In the course of this increasingly productive dialogue, more and more fan walks could then be facilitated and coordinated with the prefecture.

Events around England v Russia in Marseille were a good example of how things shouldn’t be done. It also reinforced the Fans’ Embassy work methodology and the principle of modern safety and security concepts: dialogue between fans’ representatives and policing authorities proved absolutely vital in lowering tensions at high risk fixtures.

This was underlined by the management of the high risk match in Lens (England v Wales), where no major incidents occurred. There was mutual interest amongst Fans’ Embassies and police to work together in a positive spirit throughout the day and the information flow was more efficient overall.

IMPROVED COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FANS’ EMBASSIES AND FRENCH VOLUNTEERS

After the group stage, the French civic service volunteers from Concordia also became more settled in their work and had familiarised themselves with the needs of every Embassy and with the way the Host Cities worked. Once they had gotten to know all Fans’ Embassy teams and Host City representatives, the work went much more smoothly and operations could be gradually improved in the process. It confirms once more that preparatory visits, training and conferences should take place early in the course of the tournament preparations, as it allows longer to become familiarised with key network partners and contacts, with the basics and with the practical routine of the work during the competition.
Perspectives and evolution of the concept

During the evaluation meeting of the project in Paris, FSE shared the outcomes of match reports and questionnaires with all stakeholders. During EURO 2016, the cooperation between FSE and UEFA was very good. The collaboration went so well that UEFA reaffirmed its desire to continue to work with FSE and both organisations have decided to work on the basis that there will be a similar project for further competitions. Many other themes were also discussed, such as the need to integrate the Host Cities into the preparatory meetings as soon as possible in order to ensure that the project is led efficiently. It will also ensure that the Host Cities understand the concept and implement what is needed to make it successful. An early preparation will also allow enough space and time to create a file that summarises all technical specifications. The necessity to create one unique model that should be applied in every Host City was also underlined to ensure similar procedures and apply the same rules. It will also facilitate the work with local authorities and organisers.

Security was a big issue during the tournament. Lessons should now be learned from EURO 2016 to improve the next events. The conclusion of the discussions and debates during the evaluation meetings was that the systematic integration of Fans’ Embassies’ representatives to the security meetings before each game is essential. They can share their expertise and the information that they get from their respective networks. Letting them join security meetings is a unique opportunity to share knowledge, information and recommendations.

Some difficulties at entrances in the stadia have also been reported, such as items allowed or forbidden, different procedures in different cities or events, or even at different entrances of the same stadia were also reported. FSE could contribute to the drawing up of an exhaustive list of allowed and forbidden items. Meanwhile, Fans’ Embassies must be identified as mediators within the stadia and recognised as such in order to improve communication between stewards and supporters and help to lower tensions. As mediators, they could also more easily report any bad behaviour committed by supporters and/or stewards.

FSE pointed out many deficiencies in the current ticketing system and is willing to contribute to the work of the future UEFA department “Spectator Services” in order to fight against the black market and make the ticketing system more efficient. The question of implementing e-ticketing has also been raised and FSE could consult its members and then feedback the results to UEFA.

All these improvements are needed to ensure greater success at EURO 2020.

FSE is currently in discussions with FIFA about the implementation of Fans’ Embassies at FIFA World Cup 2018 in Russia.
What will France learn from UEFA EURO 2016?

During UEFA EURO 2016, France welcomed thousands of supporters from all over Europe. The project UEFA Respect Fan Culture – Fans’ Embassies at UEFA EURO 2016 enabled us to gather supporters from 19 participating countries. In every Host City, Football Supporters Europe met key stakeholders and representatives from local authorities. At a national level, FSE also met representatives of the French ministries of Intérieur and Sports as well as DIGES (the governmental body for major sports events). Some of the difficulties encountered during the competition also allowed FSE to develop closer collaboration with some other stakeholders, such as Préfectures.

UEFA EURO 2016 proved that France was able to welcome supporters from various countries and to deal properly with them. France also managed to adapt after having committed some mistakes during the group stage. For the first time in many years, France has been able to have a dialogue with supporters and their representatives to discuss some security issues.

It has also been noted that when supporters were included in security meetings or simply consulted, no major incident occurred. Conversely, when they tried to speak with authorities but were not heard or welcomed at all, tensions or problems occurred. As a result, France learned to work with and talk to representatives of Fans’ Embassies.
Fans’ Embassies after UEFA EURO 2016: what has been achieved?

What is the legacy for French and international football?

FSE’s evaluation meeting was also an opportunity to gather key stakeholders such as DNLH, Ministry of Sports, LFP, FFF, ANS and to engage them in the first stages of dialogue. On the last day of the evaluation meeting, many subjects were tackled, such as SLOs, for example. Many panel discussions were held to introduce the concept and let key actors present their actions or commitments. Discussions and debates were also organised between representatives of supporters and of institutions. It was really important to initiate a dialogue that could open the door to further cooperation.

The work of the Daniel Nivel Foundation was also presented. The German FA, who already run the workshops recommended by the foundation, gave its feedback on such projects. Their aim is to gather supporters, ultras, hooligans, police officers all together and let the FA play the role of mediator. Thanks to these workshops, these groups all have the chance to interact and the FA also underlined the importance of informal sessions to build cohesion and make links.

Representatives of French supporters and authorities agreed in principle to take part in such workshops in the future and showed willingness to make things improve.

Furthermore, in May a new law, called the law to improve dialogue with fans and fight against hooliganism, was adopted in France. Initially, the law was supposed to be called the law against hooliganism only. After lobbying led by FSE representatives and thanks to the active involvement of French deputies, the initial project was amended in order to incorporate room for dialogue with supporters. A special committee, the Instance Nationale du Supportérisme will be created, with one seat for FSE and one for ANS. This should theoretically lead to further dialogue and improvements. Last but not least, France also ratified a new European convention on Sports in June.