



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP-2019-0129, 21 May 2019

Racism in sport

Summary

An Opposition Day debate on Racism in sport is scheduled for Wednesday 22 May 2019. The subject of the debate has been selected by the Leader of the Opposition, Rt Hon Jeremy Corbyn MP.

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Background

On 11 April 2019, Sports Minister, Mims Davies, made a [statement](#) to the House following racist abuse of footballers:

The Government are concerned about the recent rise in racist abuse in football which threatens to overshadow everything we love about our national sport. Last weekend, the English Football League said that it was “saddened, disappointed and angered” after a weekend of fixtures was blighted by four separate incidents of alleged racism against players. At the same time, in the Premier League, Crystal Palace’s Wilfried Zaha re-posted an online tweet calling him “a diving monkey”. This all happened on the very same weekend that the Premier League’s new “No Room for Racism” campaign was visible at grounds up and down the country.

Late last year, the unthinkable occurred—a banana skin was thrown on the pitch in the direction of a player during the north London derby. At the same time, we saw the abuse that Manchester City forward Raheem Sterling suffered at Stamford Bridge. We all witnessed the appalling scenes of racism directed at several of our England players in Montenegro. Homophobic and anti-semitic chanting, both here and abroad, has been prevalent in recent times...

Wilfried Zaha, Raheem Sterling, and Danny Rose deserve our respect for speaking out about the abuse that is happening now, but ultimately they deserve our support. They need clear demonstrations that zero tolerance of this behaviour means just that. Be it player, manager or supporter—whether playing or attending—nobody who goes to games should have to tolerate discrimination of any kind. We welcomed the Football Association’s call for UEFA to take strong and swift action following events in Montenegro. However, if this country is going to show the rest of the world that this behaviour is intolerable, we need to ensure that we are making every effort to combat discriminatory behaviour domestically...

The Minister then summarised some of the steps that had been taken to tackle the problem:

Putting a stop to this is a challenge that affects all fans, all clubs and all football agencies, at all levels. The Government are determined to help in tackling this problem. On 25 February, I brought many of the various administrators, campaign bodies, fan group representatives, players, managers and organisations together for a summit to discuss this issue and collectively decide on what steps they must take to help to eradicate it. At that summit, it was agreed that a number of areas needed to be examined further.

There were six initial areas: first, to review whether football’s current sanctioning regime goes far enough and, if not, what more is needed to act as a deterrent to this type of behaviour; secondly, to ensure that the partnership between football authorities and the police is close enough to improve the

identification and sanctioning of offenders at matches; thirdly, to ask whether we give enough support to stewards and whether we can improve their capacity to deal with discrimination consistently throughout the leagues; fourthly, whether football can improve the information flow of incident reporting on the pitch, and support players; fifthly, how we can double down on efforts to ensure that match officials, stewarding operations and coaching and academy staff are all fully able to engage in their responsibilities to maintain an open and inclusive sporting environment; and finally, initiatives to help to increase the numbers of people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds into football professions beyond playing, with transparency and opportunities in the recruitment process absolutely central to this.

The Government will work with those key groups to deliver clear, tangible actions in the areas I have just described. My intention is to announce these in partnership with football before the end of the summer...

The ongoing cross-Government sport strategy “Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation” seeks to ensure that access to sport is equal for all. It is vital that the atmosphere and environment in which sport and physical activity take place in our communities, whether at grassroots or elite level, are safe, supportive and free of discrimination and intolerance. The experience of players, staff and fans at football games both home and abroad will prove the ultimate test of success in this area...

The websites of the football authorities contain information on what they are doing to combat racism – for example:

- Football Association, [Race Equality](#)
- Premier League, [No Room for Racism](#)
- UEFA, [No to Racism](#)
- FIFA, [Statement by the FIFA President on racism incidents in football](#) (13 April 2019)

[Kick it Out](#) has been working to combat racism in football for over 25 years.

This debate pack gives further material on racism in football and other sports.

2. Press Articles

2.1 Press releases and speeches

FIFA.com

[Statement by the FIFA President on racism incidents in football](#)

13 Apr 2019

Football Association

[Greg Clarke Opens Uefa Equal Game Conference with Strong Message Against Racism](#)

2 April 2019

2.2 News articles

Metro

[First black captain of GB hockey team racially abused at World Championships](#)

29 April 2019

Times

[Danny Rose: 'Black players given no chance'](#)

28 April 2019

Times

[Raheem Sterling: I don't want the next generation to suffer like me](#)

23 April 2019

Times

[Racism in football: The time has come to listen to those who must be heard](#)

23 April 2019

Independent

[Are English football's power brokers actually serious about tackling racism?](#)

19 April 2019

BBC

[Professional footballers to boycott social media for 24 hours in racism protest](#)

18 April 2019

Kick It Out

["I went out to my car after the match and someone had written n***** on my bonnet." - the story of Ipswich Wanderers.](#)

16 April 2019

Times

[Call for Fifa to punish pro-Mussolini Lazio racists who abused AC Milan players](#)

16 April 2019

Times

[Maro Itoje: 'It is shocking footballers are still racially abused'](#)

14 April 2019

Kick It Out

[Kick It Out statement on discrimination reports in grassroots football](#)

10 April 2019

Guardian

[Non-league Padiham FC fined for leaving pitch in protest at racist abuse](#)

10 April 2019

Kick It Out

[Comment: Footballers have little choice but to take matters into their own hands when it comes to racism](#)

5 April 2019

BBC

[Pascal Chimbonda calls for relegation and season-long punishments for racism](#)

5 April 2019

BBC

[Premier League bosses Pep Guardiola, Jurgen Klopp & Maurizio Sarri want more action on racism](#)

29 March 2019

Cricketer

[Keith Barker: I first experienced racist abuse on a sports field when I was nine years old](#)

28 March 2019

Guardian

[Vince Cable urges Premiership Rugby to ditch sponsor in racism row](#)

27 March 2019

Telegraph

[Stadium bans, fines, banners: How Uefa has dealt with racism over the last decade](#)

26 March 2019

Guardian

[Uefa president decries racist abuse 'disaster' during England game](#)

26 March 2019

Independent

[Uefa racist abuse rules explained: What punishment can Montenegro expect?](#)

26 March 2019

Sky Sports News

[UEFA failed football on racism again, says Kick It Out's Troy Townsend](#)

26 March 2019

BBC

[Montenegro v England: Tackling racism in society must come first, warns Barnes](#)

26 March 2019

Guardian

[The ugly spectre of racism in football on the rise across Europe](#)

16 December 2018

Kick It Out

[Discrimination reports continue to rise in English football](#)

28 November 2018

Times

[Racing's plan to make the sport more inclusive](#)

7 June 2018

Guardian

[Fifa's 'hardline approach' at World Cup will be to take the money and run -](#)

6 June 2018

Kick It Out News

[Lord Herman Ouseley statement on FIFA fine for racist chanting issued to Russian Football Union](#)

8 May 2018

3. Parliamentary material

3.1 Early Day Motions

[THE ROONEY RULE IN THE ENGLISH FOOTBALL LEAGUE](#)

That this House welcomes the introduction of the Rooney Rule in January 2018 by the Football Association; notes that the rule ensure that at least one Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidate is interviewed for roles within the English League; further notes that only five coaches across 92 football league clubs are BAME which is not representative of the diversity in English football; calls on the Premier League to introduce the Rooney Rule into its recruitment processes

22 May 2018 | Early day motions | Open | House of Commons | 1304 (session 2017-19)

Primary sponsor: John Mann

[TACKLING RACISM IN FOOTBALL](#)

That this House condemns the racist abuse directed at players in the England football team ... supports UEFA's quick and decisive action in opening disciplinary proceedings against Montenegro; and agrees with footballer Raheem Sterling that any racist chanting should be collectively punished with stadium bans.

26 Mar 2019 | Early day motions | Open | House of Commons | 2230 (session 2017-19)

Primary sponsor: Alex Sobel

3.2 Written and Oral Statements

[Sporting Future Annual Report 2019](#)

7 February 2019 | Written statement | HLWS 1278

3.3 Debates

[English Football](#)

HL Deb 8 May 2019 c1273-1292

[Discrimination in Football](#)

HC Deb 11 April 2019 c498-509

[UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#)

HC Deb 8 April 2019 c99-116

3.4 Parliamentary Questions

[Football: Racial Discrimination](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to tackle racism in amateur football.

03 May 2019 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 247007

Asked by: Offord, Dr Matthew | **Answered by:** Mims Davies |
Department: Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

[Sports: Racial Discrimination](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to prevent race-related crime at sports fixtures.

02 May 2019 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 248712

Asked by: Stevens, Jo | **Answered by:** Mims Davies | **Department:**
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

[Football: Racial Discrimination](#)

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to work with relevant authorities, such as FIFA, and UEFA, to strengthen sanctions against racist behaviour in international football.

08 Apr 2019 | Written questions | Answered | House of Lords | HL14836

Asked by: Lord Taylor of Warwick | **Answered by:** Lord Ashton of
Hyde | **Department:** Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

[Sports: Discrimination](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to encourage (a) anti-racism and (b) anti-homophobia initiatives in sport.

18 Feb 2019 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 220274

Asked by: Stevens, Jo | **Answered by:** Mims Davies | **Department:** Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

[Sports: Racial Discrimination](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to tackle racism in sport.

05 Feb 2019 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 213305

Asked by: Simpson, David | **Answered by:** Mims Davies | **Department:** Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

[Football: Racial Discrimination](#)

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to work with sports authorities to help reduce discriminatory abuse in UK soccer following several recent reports of alleged racial abuse.

19 Dec 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Lords | HL12169

Asked by: Lord Taylor of Warwick | **Answered by:** Lord Ashton of Hyde | **Department:** Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

[Football: Racial Discrimination](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has taken to tackle racism in grassroots football.

09 May 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 140852

Asked by: Onasanya, Fiona | **Answered by:** Tracey Crouch | **Department:** Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

[Football: Racial Discrimination](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department has taken to support grassroots football organisations in tackling racism.

29 Jan 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 124243

Asked by: Onasanya, Fiona | **Answered by:** Tracey Crouch | **Department:** Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

[Football: Ethnic Groups](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps are being taken to ensure that BAME coaches experience adequate opportunities in sports that operate under the UK Sports umbrella.

13 Dec 2017 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 118403

Asked by: Stevens, Jo | **Answered by:** Tracey Crouch | **Department:** Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

3.5 Select Committee publications

Culture, Media and Sport Committee, [Racism in football volume 1](#), HC 89 2012-13, 19 September 2012

Culture, Media and Sport Committee, [Racism in football volume 2 \(additional written evidence\)](#), 13 March, 17 April and 11 September 2012

4. Organisations and further reading

Crown Prosecution Service, [Football related offences and football banning orders: legal guidance](#), 9 April 2019

Luke Campbell and Nicola Hay, [A critical examination of anti-racism initiatives taking place with young adult and adult association football fans in contemporary Scotland \(conference proceedings\)](#), ESREA Network on Migration, Transnationalism and Racisms, 2019

Steven Bradbury, [The under-representation and racialised experiences of BAME coaches in men's professional football in England \(conference presentation\)](#), Loughborough University Institutional Repository, 2018

UEFA, [Social responsibility: no to racism](#) web page

Football Association, [Race equality](#) web page

Premier League, [No room for racism](#) web page

England and Wales Cricket Board, [Inclusion and diversity](#) web page

England Rugby, [RFU inclusion programmes](#) web page

Rugby Football League, [Equality and diversity](#) web page

[Kick It Out](#) web site
"English football's equality and inclusion organisation"

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, [Tackling racism and discrimination in sport: guide of promising practices, initiatives and activities](#), Undated

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