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NATIONAL ASSESMENT ITALY

An overall look onto the sports-related initiatives aimed at preventing youth radicalization and extremism in Italy indicate that only few initiatives have been implemented in this direction in the country. This can be traced back to the fact that youth radicalization in Europe is considered almost exclusively through the lenses of a specific phenomenon - that is, jihadist extremism - which has had a great impact on the continent in recent years and has highlighted the urgent need to draft effective intervention plans. Such plans are aimed primarily at promoting the integration of first- and second-generation migrants, according to the assumption that the lack of social, cultural and economic integration represents a risk factor that can lead an individual to undertake a path of violent radicalization.

Due to a colonial history and post-colonial migratory trajectories that differs from other European countries, Italy has felt the need to engage in the prevention of radicalization linked to jihadist extremism with less intensity. There are therefore only a handful of projects concerning this specific issue on the national territory, namely a few local initiatives promoted by the European Commission. This does not mean however that there exist no initiatives aimed at intervening in this sense: though the prevention of youth radicalization is not indicated as an *explicit* priority of the projects promoted in the sports field, the culture of sport as an integration tool has a long tradition in the country as well as a wide variety of experiences. In fact, actions aimed at countering youth violence have increased over the most recent years and these are mostly in relation to racism and intolerance. This is due to two main reasons: first of all, Italy counts on a long tradition of no-profit associations engaged with social issues. Within these organizations, sports are often seen as a means - an effective tool to promote social inclusion and integration - rather than as an end itself.

Secondly, Italian sports organizations, especially football clubs, felt the need to intervene in the field of the prevention of racism and intolerance only in recent years, due to an increasing number



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of violent episodes occurred inside stadiums in the context of professional competitions. Those episodes have led to a sort of “media storm” that has convinced the leading sports federations and clubs about the need to implement programs and initiatives against racism.

Finally, sports federations and clubs are more willing to recognize the social and educational value of sports as more and more young people practice sports in organized centers and clubs today. This differs from what used to be in the past, when sports-practicing was mainly “informal” (for example, sports activities organized by priests and volunteers in parishes). The increasing number of formal sports centers and clubs led to the need to “professionalize” sports coaches and trainers. As a result, today’s coaches and trainers in sports centers tend to focus on performance and athletic excellence rather than social interactions and have only recently started to acknowledge the relevance of the educational and pedagogical role they can play. Indeed, the findings of our mapping activity clearly indicate that **there is a need for adequate training on the educational front** of sports coaches.

Below are the initiatives that are related in different degrees to combating radicalization, violence, and discrimination as resulting from our mapping study. These have been gathered in four groups in relation to their aims:

- i) Actions aimed at promoting integration and social inclusion;
- ii) Actions aimed at contrasting racism, intolerance and violence;
- iii) Actions promoting fair-play in sports; and
- iv) Training activities addressing sports professionals.

The main activities carried out in these areas are:

- Information campaigns aimed at raising awareness on the aforementioned issues in schools, educational and sports agencies;
- Sporting activities and events aimed at promoting the integration between young people of different cultures and social contexts through sports;
- Development of educational strategies aimed at enhancing the values of equality, respect and solidarity in sports.

Although there seems to be no explicit reference to the prevention of youth radicalization, we believe that the abovementioned experiences can fully fall within the scope of this report since they share the objective of contrasting forms of violence and discrimination that can lead to extremism through the enhancement of the educational relationship between sports professionals and young people. The educational principles and strategies on which these initiatives are based are also in line with the Directives of the European Parliament 2015/2063 INI “*Prevention of*



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radicalization and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organizations”, namely at Point IV: “Preventing radicalization through education and social inclusion”.

Prior to the review of the best practices identified it is necessary to address the role played by the different actors in the field. These actors perform very different functions and act with very diverse institutional purposes. Firstly, there are subjects - such as sports federations - whose mission is to promote sports in their competitive and agonistic dimensions and supervise the correct development of sports practice. In these contexts, sport represents a value *per se*. Other subjects - such as associations of sports and social promotion - pursue different purposes instead. They work in a context where sports are regarded as a useful means to counter social disease. For these subjects sports are a means to address various social issues. The words of Beppe Basso, from the Italian Sports Centre (CSI) seem illuminating in this regard: *“Professional staff within sports federations is only oriented towards performance. The educational aspect does not matter as there is a tendency to see training as a tool for enhancing performance rather than creating meaningful relationships. On the contrary, the mission of CSI is education through sport [...]”.*

These different approaches to sports must necessarily be taken into account in order to both frame the individual initiatives (which will be discussed in the next paragraph) and try to develop strategies to address the crucial issues that have emerged.

Our research has shown that the culture of sports as an educational and pedagogical practice is spreading more and more in Italy. This is also due to an agreement signed in between the main national sports organization CONI¹ and the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies. Such agreement seeks to counter forms of discrimination and intolerance through the development of activities aimed at promoting the inclusion and integration of migrants through sports. As previously mentioned, the agreement has to be framed in the wider context of the public debate over the issue of racism in sports - a topic that has had great media attention and was at the center of the political debate in recent years.

The following types of practices will be considered below:

- i. Initiatives promoted within the four aforementioned themes at a national level;
- ii. Two projects specifically aimed at preventing youth radicalization at local level;

¹The Italian National Olympic Committee (*Comitato Olimpico Nazionale Italiano, CONI*), founded in 1914 and a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), is responsible for the development and management of sports activity in Italy. Since 2013, CONI has strengthened its commitment in the social sphere thanks to a more structured approach with dedicated resources and tools and a greater focus on some key issues, identified in collaboration with various stakeholders and subject to a strategic social responsibility plan.



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In consideration of the scarcity of available data in regards to initiatives carried out to prevent and fight youth radicalization and violent extremism in sports in Italy, three interviews were also carried out to complement with more detailed and qualitative data. The semi-structured interviews were therefore carried out with sports managers and these were of great help to identify and evaluate the training needs of sports professionals. The training needs are summarized in the last section of the present report.

Best practices: national programs and initiatives

With respect to the content of the national initiatives, we, furthermore, operated a division on four levels. Firstly, it seemed significant to us to distinguish between projects and initiatives aimed at countering **intolerance and racism** and those aimed at promoting **integration and social inclusion**. The former are aimed at countering aggressive and/or violent practices and behaviors that could lead to a process of radicalization against the Other and are thus primarily destined to the indigenous population. The latter's aim is, on the other hand, to reduce the distance between citizens, promoting the integration of migrants and young people who live in situations of social marginality. These are two strategies of intervention which pursue, *latu sensu*, the same result, but entail a completely different approach. The third category of projects does not directly target sports users (athletes, supporters, family members), but rather those subjects (coaches, sports managers), who have guiding roles for children and youngsters and who can thus contribute to the transmission of messages of tolerance and respect with greater efficacy than other institutions. Those projects try to raise **sport operators' awareness** of their pedagogical role and empower them with the tools to carry it out effectively. Finally, a fourth category concerns the valorization of **fair-play education**, that is the respect for the rules and correct play, through the promotion of the experiences that have stood out on this front.

Initiatives aimed at preventing and countering racism, intolerance and violence

- In 2014, the **FIGC**² promoted the project "**Razzisti? Una brutta razza**" ("**Racists? An ugly race**"). Its aims were countering the social evil of racism in football and raising awareness among young players through moments of meeting and reflection on the topic of discrimination. The project lasted two years and had educational, training and value purposes: it provided the

² The Italian Football Federation (FIGC), established in Turin in 1898, is the organ of organization and control of football in Italy. For several years, Social Responsibility has been a characterizing and distinctive element for the FIGC, transversal to all the policies adopted by the Federation. One of the main objectives of the FIGC is to promote the exclusion from football of all forms of social discrimination, racism, xenophobia and violence.



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involvement of young members aged between 10 and 18 in 20 meetings on the topic of integration, with the participation of well-known personalities of the world of football, entertainment, culture and politics. The program included an awareness-raising program in the Football Schools, an institutional meeting with a press conference to present the event, and a moment of entertainment, with a talk show for the youth target aimed at involving young people directly through the participation of testimonials, actors and singers.

- In the context of the project “**Espelli il Razzismo dal Calcio**” (“*Expel Racism from Football*”), in 2013 the National Football Team met a delegation selected by UNAR (National Office for Racial Anti-Discrimination of the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Prime Minister's Office) composed of first and second-generation migrants, political refugees or asylum seekers, and amateur teams. The initiative was promoted by the **FIGC** and UNAR in collaboration with the FARE network (Football Against Racism in Europe) as part of the 9th Edition of the Action Week against Racism.
- **Junior Tim Cup “Il Calcio negli Oratori”** (“*Football in the parishes*”) is a project born from the will of **CSI**³, TIM and Lega Serie A to create an array of activities to bring children closer to the top tier of sport and to promote the practice of football in the parishes of all Italy. At the same time, a value path was developed on the issues of bullying and cyberbullying, with the aim of tackling episodes of bullying and racism both online and offline. This path was realized involving children and their parents separately in dedicated meetings and seminars. In addition, the project's promoters have assigned contributions for sporting activities to the parishes who have distinguished themselves for the educational value of the projects carried out, allowing the construction of 3 sports pitches near the parishes of disadvantaged areas in Scampia, Genova and Cagliari.
- **Mondiali Antirazzisti** (“*The Antiracist World Cup*”, promoted by **UISP**⁴ and supported by the **FIGC**), was started in 1997 with the aim of organizing a party with the direct involvement of groups normally considered as in contrast with each other: the groups of “ultra”, often labeled as racists, and that of immigrant communities. The formula that wanted to combine non-competitive football and concerts of heterogeneous music bands, in an experience of common life in the camping, proved successful in itself. Over the years, Mondiali Antirazzisti have gradually become more and more like a real multicultural festival and a concrete experience of fighting against all forms of discrimination. In addition, **Uisp**, in collaboration with Unar and

³ The CSI (Italian Sports Center) was born in 1944 on the initiative of the Italian Youth of Catholic Action. The CSI is a non-partisan association whose purpose is the promotion of sports practice “as a moment of education, human development and commitment, in a vision inspired by the Christian concept of man and reality” (Art. 1 of the Statute). The CSI favors sport as a moment of aggregation, a means for human promotion, an instrument of solidarity and social development.

⁴ Uisp (Italian Union of Sports for Everybody) is an association for sports and social promotion which aims to extend the right to sport for all citizens. Since its founding in 1948, Uisp has affirmed the social value of sport, rights, the environment, health, solidarity. Both nationally and locally (where it is strongly rooted and widespread) it collaborates with institutions, municipalities, regions, public and private bodies to improve the well-being of people.



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the Rete FARE, has promoted the creation of a **National Observatory Against Discrimination in Sport** that could create a system involving the largest number of public institutions and bodies, the world of sport and football, that of the Third Sector and sports associations. The aim is to propose effective and cutting-edge strategies to counter racism in Europe. The launch of the project was scheduled for March 21, 2020 but it was postponed due to the spread of Covid-19.

- **“Io Non Discrimino”** (“*I do not Discriminate*”) is a project developed in 2017/2018, which sees the NGO VIS - Italian Voluntary Service for Development as its leader and the **ACLI Sports Union**⁵ among the partners. It aimed to promote the culture of knowledge and acceptance of the Other. The action took place through an awareness campaign aimed at promoting greater awareness of the migratory phenomenon and, consequently, at stimulating discussion and preventing any form of discrimination. The role of the Acli Sports Union in the project was to contribute to the awareness campaign, through the organization of sporting events and conferences promoted in the city of Milan, addressing sport managers and operators and athletes, but also the local network with which it interacts daily, starting from the immigrant associations of Milan.
- **“Progetto 42”** is a national school program realized by the Youth School Sports Commission and by the Marketing and Communication Office of the **Italian Baseball and Softball Federation** in the 2013-2014 school year. The initiative obtained from UNAR the title of *“important initiative in the context of the activity of prevention and contrast of discrimination”*. The project addresses boys and girls of primary and secondary schools of first and second degree and aims to combine the values of sport (and that of baseball in particular) with that of social integration, through events organized by the various institutes and stories and experiences of sports witnesses.

Initiatives aimed at promoting social integration and inclusion

- The **CONI** project named **“Vincere da grandi”** aims to spread legality in areas facing social hardship, high risk of crime and social exclusion, using sport as a vehicle for cohesion and social development. The initiative addresses both children/youngsters aged between 5 and 14 and their mothers belonging to disadvantaged groups or to families in distress and residing in suburban or disadvantaged areas. Through the project, a valid sports-educational path is offered to children through multi-sports activities, participation in national or international sporting events, meetings with testimonials and sports champions.

⁵ The Acli Sports Union is the national sports association promoted by ACLI to encourage, support and organize motor, recreational and sporting activities aimed at subjects of all ages and all conditions, with particular attention to the people most exposed to risks of physical exclusion and social.



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- The **FAMI Project - ASYLUM MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION FUND** was defined in 2016 as part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of the Interior and **CONI**. It aims to spread, practice and implement sports activities in favor of migrant minors that are guests of the national reception system. The project offers them the opportunity to practice sports and training activities to develop socialization and relational well-being, within a broader path of social and cultural inclusion.
- **CSI** created and managed several projects, most of which aimed to promote sports activity among youths as part of an integration process: "**2 YOU, DUE VOLTE RAGAZZI**" is a project, implementation and management of activities in twenty youth activity centres and promotion of youth participation. The project aimed to promote the central role of youth during adolescence, as well as the opportunities for socialisation and for the prevention of distress among youths, including substance abuse and dropping-out of school. "**ANCHE TU! PAR SPORT ...**" is a project aimed to provide high school students with the basic knowledge needed to become a sports organiser and promoter. The project objectives were: a) compile the best practices in terms of the management and promotion of sports associations; b) promote healthy lifestyles and active citizenship; c) strengthen individual and collective sports culture. "**PRONTI, PARTENZA, VIA!**" is a project aimed to regain control of and redevelop sports areas in order to establish a genuine point of interest in certain identified neighbourhoods.
- Since 1983, **UISP** has been promoting the initiative "**Vivicittà**", that is a running race that conveys a message of peace and coexistence. It simultaneously involves dozens of cities throughout the country with the aims of breaking both geographic and social borders. Furthermore, in recent years the race has been extended within several penitentiary and juvenile institutions, in order to promote the social and educational value of sport. **Vivicittà** received the Medal of the President of the Republic.
- **SOCIAL NE (E) T-WORK - young people on the net for active participation and citizenship** is a project promoted by **ACLI Sports Union** which aims to identify and train young NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training), starting with the associative network and activity and supporting, at the same time, the development of actions aimed at promoting spaces and moments of aggregation, as well as the integration of children at risk of social exclusion.

Initiatives aimed at strengthening the skills of sports coaches and managers:

- The Program Agreement between **CONI** and the **Ministry of Labor and Social Policies** has given rise to the **Sport and Integration program**, within which an array of activities have been developed over the years. Among these, the information/educational campaign "**Fratelli di Sport**" ("Brothers in Sports"), born with the aim of spreading a greater awareness of the role



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of sport as a tool for the inclusion of multicultural groups among sport technicians, managers and operators. The campaign involved amateur sports associations/clubs participating in the program. Each club received a kit of materials, also available in digital format, consisting of a Guide for the instructors of the sports clubs (a consultation tool for coaches, which also contains practical examples of activities to be carried out) and the **Manifesto of Sport and Integration**, containing guidelines on the topic designed for the sports world. The most positive experiences carried out on the national territory regarding sport as a vehicle for social integration have been collected, enhanced and disseminated, in order to promote the inclusion of young migrant people who live in our country. CONI has also created the public Call **“Award in memory of Emiliano Mondonico”**: the award is inspired by the figure of Emiliano Mondonico, a football player and coach who has been able, with his work, to be an interpreter and spokesperson for the social dimension of sport. The Call is aimed at enhancing the technicians who are strongly committed to social issues and attentive to the role of sport as a tool for inclusion and integration, in compliance with the principles set out in the Manifesto of the **“Rules for being Brothers of Sport”**. The initiative is intended for sports organizations recognized by CONI, professional leagues, sports clubs or other forms of associations that have implemented initiatives addressing integration or actions through sport and/or who are able to report profiles and applications from virtuous sports technicians.

- CSI is partner in the project **“Sports Identity”**, launched in 2019 and promoted by Erasmus Plus. It aims to update the skills of sports operators working with young people, to better manage “anti-sports” behaviors. The project intends to develop active youth citizenship with sport in order to prevent the risks of violent radicalization of young people. The project activities will last two years, developing teamwork, leadership, intercultural skills, problem solving and critical thinking.

Initiatives aimed at promoting fair-play behavior in sports

- **CONI** has carried out an educational-information campaign in schools, called **“Champions of fair play”**: as part of the value path envisaged by the project, children of the fourth and fifth classes of the participating primary schools had the opportunity to reflect on the fair play and its values, namely: respect for the rules, for others and for oneself, enhancement of diversity and uniqueness, brotherhood, equality, loyalty, integration. Each participating class created an elaborate, telling the students' experiences and reflections on the proposed topics through drawings and texts.
- In 2012, the SGC (Youth School Sector) of the **FIGC** conceived the project **“Green Card - Fair Play”**, in order to enhance all those who have become protagonists of ethical behavior. 50,000



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green cards were distributed to football schools throughout Italy to reward young members who distinguished themselves for particularly Fair Play gestures.

Examples of regional initiatives on the prevention of youth radicalization

In addition to nation-wide initiatives it was decided to include examples from local/regional practices, because we found that the two projects reported are the ones that most closely match the concept of prevention of youth radicalization referred to in the Safe Zone project.

- **PALERMO (Sicily):** The project “**I Sport-Inclusive Sport Project Opposed to Radicalization Tenets**” brought together **CEIPES**, the Malaspina Penitentiary Institute for Minors, the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Centers, as well as the CUS University Sports Center. This collaboration had the main objective of countering the phenomenon of radicalization, especially in the most difficult areas of Palermo society, in order to promote the integration and enhancement of cultural differences through sports. The target group was made of 100 young people of both sexes, aged between 16 and 25, including young prisoners, refugees, young people with a migrant background and local young people. They participated in athletic, football sports modules a 5 and volleyball, through which, thanks to the work of expert coaches and educators, they have been able to develop and experience the values of solidarity and sharing and, above all, the importance of belonging to a team, regardless of the cultural, religious or social background of its members. The project ended in 2018.
- **TERNI (Umbria): ToGetTher (E)** is the project of the social cooperative L'Arco and **Uisp Terni**, funded by the European Commission and launched in February 2020. It addresses the risk of radicalization among young migrants through sport activities oriented to social inclusion and integration. The concrete objective of the project is to involve about thirty children at risk of radicalization and marginalization for economic and social reasons or because they are victims of bullying or intolerance, in local sports activities in Terni and Viterbo for two years.

Critical issues and potential responses to training needs

We decided to carry out three interviews with significant actors from the Italian sports field in order to identify the training needs of coaches and sports managers. Those needs will form the basis for the development of the training methodology within Safe Zone project. The interviews



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allowed to highlight the main constraints that the different realities are experiencing in their work on the field. They demonstrate that the debate on the phenomenon of youth radicalization is at a very embryonic in Italy, whereas on the other hand there is a significant experience concerning the prevention of youth violence in general. The main training needs identified by the interviewees will be described below along with the current difficulties and possible solutions to respond to these needs.

Main critical issues identified by the interviewees

All three interview participants recognized that the training of sports coaches is indeed a priority in the fight against youth violence and radicalization. More specifically, the interviewees revealed that the training needs vary according to the coaches' educational background. Additionally, the interviewees reiterated that sports coaches often have low awareness of the crucial relationship between sports and violence as well as of the fact that they themselves could unknowingly convey ambiguous or negative messages to their young trainees. The emphasis placed on competition, agonism and performance was recognized as risky by the interviewees, who recalled the need to trainers/coaches.

Other critical issues that were brought up by the interviewees are: the absence of networking with other educational agencies; the absence of a shared culture of sport as a pedagogical tool, which could favor the circulation of good practices not yet introduced in the sports field; the difficulty of intercepting young people at risk who do not practice sports.

Below follows a list of the main critical issues that emerged during the interviews:

1. **The lack of trainings for professional coaches with respect to the educational and pedagogical value of sport:** the interviews revealed the tension between sports managers (but also politicians), who would like to promote a culture of Sport as a vehicle to combat social unease, and coaches/sports operators, who instead encourage sports as a competitive and agonistic performance and who pay less attention to the educational and relational dimension. According to Mr. Basso (CSI of Asti), this tension is due to the fact that coaches are trained primarily on the technical and methodological aspects of the different disciplines rather than on the educational and relational ones. In that regard Mr. Basso observes that the relational dimension is fundamental for success in team sports and is thus normally monitored by coaches – even those lacking a specific awareness of their educational role. Mr. Basso main source of concern are individual sports, with specific reference to those combat disciplines (karate, MMA, box, etc.), in which the dimension of violence must be the object of particular attention since it has a role in the practice of the discipline itself.



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2. **The lack of trainings for non-professional volunteer coaches:** the coaches who work in sports' promotion associations (as well as in parishes etc.) often work as volunteers and tend to see their engagement in sport activities in that light. As a consequence, these coaches do not have adequate tools and skills to manage problematic situations such as the explosion of physical and verbal violence among young people during the activities. Not knowing how to deal with such situations, according to dr. Garattini (CSI of Bergamo), they often stick to teaching sports without taking action. He furthermore mentions a provision, enacted by CONI two years ago, which would require anyone who holds the coaching job in a sports club to take part in a very long training (at least 24 hours). Such provision does however apply only to those who receive an even minimal economic reimbursement for their coaching duties and is therefore not applicable to volunteers.
3. **The absence of a shared culture of Sport as a pedagogical tool,** which prevents the implementation of methodologies and tools that have proven useful in other educational contexts and could also be very effective in the sports field. (Mr Garattini cited the Restorative Justice, which hasn't found a broad use in the world of sports, yet).
4. **The lack of adequate networking between the various educational agencies,** which could contribute to the training of sports personnel.
5. **The difficulty of intercepting young people at risk of radicalization,** when they do not practice sports, especially in the most marginal and disadvantaged territories.



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Potential solutions to meet the training needs

The first fundamental strategic action identified by all three interviewees is an increase in the offer of training courses designed for coaches and sports managers. Such trainings should provide them with skills oriented to design and carry out activities aimed at strengthening social ties, fostering a sense of belonging between young people, developing knowledge, integrating fundamental values, enhancing social, civic and intercultural skills, critical sense and media literacy. Specifically, it is necessary to offer young people a high-quality sport activity, one that is capable of teaching how to recognize and manage risks, as well as to make safer choices and to promote a strong sense of belonging, of shared community and responsibility towards others. This requires an inclusive training methodology and motivating activities to go along, but also the establishment of a culture of respect for the rules of the game and group coexistence.

The interviewees also suggested some potential strategies to respond to the specific critical issues described in the previous section, namely:

1. **Trainings for professional coaches**, aimed at the capacity building with regards to the capacity to observe and manage relational dynamics in order to avoid that sport itself is a vehicle of violence. Through the proposal of *ad hoc* trainings on the topic of radicalization, extremism and violence among young people, it would be possible to increase the awareness of sports operators on the matter, allowing them to grasp any “alarm bells” or risky behavior. At the same time, these trainings should also be aimed at offering them adequate and effective tools to respond to these situations and increase their awareness of the educational value of their work.

According to Mr. Basso, an effective strategy could be to encourage coaches to keep track and report what happens in the gym, through the use of a questionnaire. This, according to the interviewee, could help to encourage greater reflexivity and awareness with respect to social dynamics, that often don't receive the proper recognition.

Mr. Mantovani (chief trainer of sports professionals at CONI Sports School) proposed the creation of training modules and educational seminars on the topic of youth radicalization for sports coaches and managers, in order to increase the awareness of the value of sports as a tool to contrast such phenomenon. The modules and seminars should be drafted and organized with the help of experts in these issues.

2. **Trainings for non-professional volunteer coaches**, which are often employed in the most informal youth sports organizations. Mr. Garattini said that it would be necessary to extend the scope of the aforementioned provision enacted by CONI, which requires paid coaches to



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attend a 24 hour-course training, to include also non-professional volunteer coaches (in a reduced form, if necessary).

3. **To adopt tools spread in other educational contexts and in juvenile justice**, as well as those of the business world. According to Mr. Garattini, Restorative Justice - which is generally considered to be very effective in resolving conflicts between offenders and victims - could be equally helpful in the sports field, provided that a shared culture of the pedagogical and educational value of sport is in place and shared by all actors.
4. **To create a network that puts in place other skills than the merely sporty/physical ones**: by inserting sports clubs into a network involving educators, psychologists and professionals from other areas, it would be possible to adequately train the sports coaches; stimulate the pedagogical value of sports; respond to specific needs and problems in a more effective way. Mr. Basso said that it would be necessary to work with sports psychologists and psycho-pedagogues in order to better identify at-risk behaviors and contribute to the training of coaches.
5. **To extend the culture of sports to young people who do not play sports**: it is necessary for sport centers to find effective ways to interact with young people at risk. This could be achieved through actions aimed at promoting sports activities both in schools and in marginalized neighborhoods. Sports offer should also be attractive to young people and include training methodologies that teach how to actively engage young people regardless their sports achievements. In this sense, Mr. Basso spoke about the need to promote “informal” disciplines (such as parkour) within sports centers, due to the great appeal they exert on young people. In order to gain followers in the community such projects should have a relevant social component in Mr. Mantovani's opinion.

Concluding remarks

In conclusion and in light of the research findings emerging from the Italian scenery, the training modules for sports coaches within the Safe Zone project should take the following issues into account:

- i. The need to raise awareness on the potential relationship between sports and violence, in particular when it comes to competition and agonism;



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- ii. The need to restore the centrality of the educational and pedagogical role of sports coaches, in order for them to recognize and manage violent and risky behavior among young people and empower them to take action;
- iii. The need to devise different training methodologies , where necessary and possibly through a multi-disciplinary approach, in order to better the meet the different training needs and the diverse educational background of the sports trainers and coaches (professionals; semi-professionals; non professional volunteers).