



## **WHY SENTRY Sport?**

Sport brings together millions of people, regardless of their sex, colour, gender, age, nationality or religion, and thus has the potential to play an important role in creating an inclusive society<sup>1</sup>.

Sport, in general, is considered by many to be a tool for inclusion, particularly through the organisation of sport events and training. Some may consider these activities in themselves to be enough, but, in reality, grassroots sport associations need to have a particular set of skills, competences and capabilities in order to amplify the inclusivity of sport.

The approach proposed by SENTRY Sport highlights the role that sports venues, sports ecosystems (clubs, federations, municipal services, etc.) and, specifically, sports educators can play in our societies to monitor and mitigate discriminatory acts.

This idea stems from the experiences of many sports clubs. Sports educators often report that they play a role that goes beyond mere coaches, rendering them figures of trust that players can rely on. Victims of discrimination or abuse tend to be more open in talking about these issues with their sport trainers compared to social workers, family members or teachers. As such, sport can contribute towards wellbeing and happiness, and yet, more importantly, on the sports field, you are not judged as a person, but as an athlete.

In this sense, we want sport centres and sport educators to become SENTRIES in their communities by monitoring discriminatory acts not only in the sport world, but also in their neighbourhood, and act as mediators and conflict-resolvers.

**The role of SENTRIES is:**

**To listen to concerns, help victims, and create area-specific awareness-raising campaigns.**

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<sup>1</sup> FRA Report (2010), Racism, ethnic discrimination and exclusion of migrants and minorities in sport: [https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/1207-Report-racism-sport\\_EN.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/1207-Report-racism-sport_EN.pdf)

## WHAT is SENTRY Sport?

Grassroots sport sectors can provide significant contributions to tackle acts of discrimination in our society. Sports venues and sports operators are pertinent stakeholders in promoting more inclusive societies, offering victims or potential victims of discrimination support and advice, whilst getting to the real root and gravity of the discriminatory phenomenon. Through their actions, they can contribute to a dialogue between communities and designated institutions, and ultimately, prevent discrimination.

The main goal of SENTRY Sport is to develop a methodology which puts sports educators in the centre, and provides them with the necessary knowledge and tools for monitoring, preventing and responding to discriminatory acts in their neighbourhood.

In particular, SENTRY Sport aims to provide training programmes to help educators in providing:

- a better support for victims of psychological, physical and or verbal abuse;
- a better understanding and recognition of the various forms of discrimination, racism and intolerance;
- the creation and establishment of a broad social network of different stakeholders involved;
- awareness-raising and dissemination campaigns throughout sport actions to improve public awareness of the multidimensional and cross-cutting nature of issues of discrimination.

## HOW can you contribute to SENTRY Sport?

While grassroots sport organisations play a big role in the field of social inclusion and cohesion, they cannot solve all the problems and difficulties that victims of discriminatory acts face today. This is why we believe there is a need for a **SENTRY Sport Network**.

If you believe that sports centres can become key areas, where sports operators are able to collect the testimonies of victims and encourage them to liaise with the right bodies, who can then offer professional advice and assistance, then please join us.

This is therefore an invitation for you and your organisation to become a stakeholder in the SENTRY Sport network. If you are a sports operator, volunteer, professional in the sport sector, an NGO fighting discrimination, a cultural organisation, victim support centre, health care workers or a local authority, you are invited to become a SENTRY and listen to concerns, help victims, and create area-specific awareness-raising campaigns!

## Why the name SENTRY Sport?

SENTRY Sport is the name of the project, supported by E+, led by UISP from Italy. More here: <https://www.sentrysport.org/>

Word 'Sentry' in this project is not used in a military sense, but rather refers to the etymology of the Italian *Sentinella* "hearing over" (*sentinella* comes from the verb "*sentire*", to hear).

The idea behind the project's name is to have somebody who is "vigilant", who can respect the implementation of fundamental rights, who has the capacity to collect information about acts of discrimination and report about it, but also has the necessary tools to assess the best way to act on it.

The project's partners were also inspired by the symbol of the "vedette boat, which, in the past, was used in order to find a secure and safe harbour. Today, NGOs employ boats or aircraft in the Mediterranean to find those in need. SENTRY Sport wants to empower grassroots sports stakeholders to become a beacon of hope for vulnerable people, just as vedette boats have.

## WHY act now

- Incidents of racism and discrimination remain underreported, making it difficult for local and national authorities, as well as for European bodies, to understand and address the issue.
- Understanding the local context of each territory involved in SENTRY Sport is also essential in order to prevent acts of discrimination. Currently, only extremely violent cases are reported on in the media and cause a public uproar, while other incidents tend to be downplayed and do not receive the necessary attention.
- SENTRY Sport aims to improve the under-reporting of racism and discrimination, and help liaise with relevant law enforcement agencies and public and private bodies dedicated to data collection on discrimination, racism and intolerance.



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