

# Media Advisory

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10.02.2010

## "Friendly match" between ultra supporters and police officers staged by the Council of Europe

**Dates:** 17-18 February 2010

**Place:** Vienna (Austria) – Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior (Minoritenplatz 9)

**Organised by** the Council of Europe and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, with the support of UEFA

**Description:** Supporters' representatives from across Europe, including supporters' associations and ultra groups invited by [Football Supporters Europe](#) (FSE), and those responsible for policing and security in stadiums as well as representatives of governments will come together, for the first time at international level, to initiate dialogue aimed at improving mutual understanding and preventing problems, such as violent incidents, at football matches.

Gaining a better understanding of the ultra phenomenon, improving communication and addressing problems between supporters, sporting bodies and police, preventing incidents in and outside stadiums and capitalising on the involvement of supporters in the football world are the objectives pursued by the conference. University lecturers, researchers and social workers will help shed light on these different questions.

Who are the ultras? How is the "ultra mentality" to be defined? How does their behaviour differ from that of the other supporters? Where does the negative image of ultras come from? Does it have an impact on how police deal with ultras? Are measures taken adequate or problematic? A [Council of Europe study](#) (\*), carried out on a Europe-wide scale and giving a behind-the-scenes insight into the ultra movement, **has just been published** and gives us some pointers.

The conference is organised within the framework of monitoring of the implementation of the [European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches](#) (1985). The Convention was drawn up in the wake of the Heysel stadium tragedy and is a reference today for the preparation of football tournaments including at world level.

The discussions will contribute to the Council of Europe's preparation of a **Recommendation on the Ultras** aimed at improving dialogue and cooperation between all those involved.

A **press conference** will be given on **Wednesday 17 February at 10.30 am** by **Maria Fekter**, Federal Minister of the Interior, and **Ralf-René Weingärtner**, Director of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe.

[More information](#)

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(\*) This study, prepared for the Council of Europe by Professor Gunter A. Pilz, covers 35 European countries and analyses the findings of a survey carried out in 2008 among ultra supporters in 25 countries.

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.