

Monitoring discriminatory signs and symbols in European football

Introduction

This booklet contains material that most of us do not want to see in football. If we believe in a sport that can be open and free to be enjoyed by everyone, without the fear of abuse and discrimination, we need to be vigilant against the types of symbols that are set out here.

The FARE network works across football, including with European football's governing body UEFA, and human rights organisations towards eradicating racist and homophobic language and the display of discriminatory banners from all stadiums.

As a popular sport that cuts across tribal loyalties and culture it is not uncommon to see organised far-right groups inside stadiums displaying encoded signs and symbols to convey messages of hate.

This hatred is poisonous and should have no place in our culture. The booklet illustrates different signs and symbols, explains their meaning and shows where they are often found in Europe's football stadiums.

Also contained are chapters dealing with symbols used in a particular country and context.

How to use this guide

The list of symbols presented in this guide is not exhaustive. The booklet only lists discriminatory signs and far-right symbols that have previously been displayed at football stadiums or are popular among football fans.

Discrimination and ideas of exclusion manifest themselves in a number of ways. Signs and symbols are only part of it.

If you see one of these signs on display or you witness racism, homophobia or other discriminatory incidents during a game, report it to us - www.farenet.org

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1

Commonly displayed far-right signs and symbols

Swastika

The swastika was the official emblem of National Socialist Party of Germany (NSDAP) and can be displayed on banners and clothing in a number of different ways. The original version of the swastika and altered versions of it incorporated into different banners may be seen inside football stadiums.

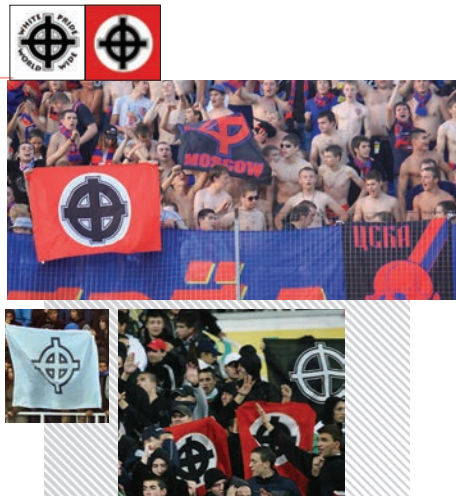
Some variations of the swastika deriving from pagan solar symbols were co-opted by neo-Nazis and are widely displayed inside stadiums (e.g. Kolovrat in Eastern Europe.)



Celtic Cross

The Celtic Cross is a symbol used by neo-Nazis worldwide and denotes "the supremacy of the white race".

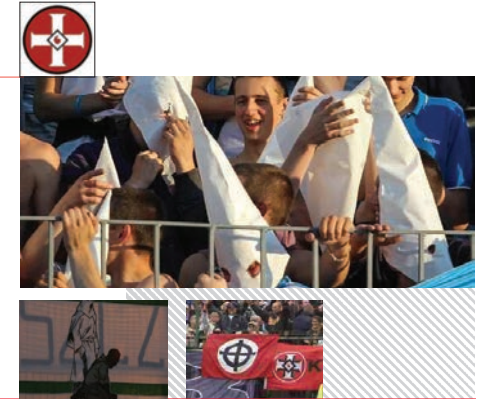
It is one of the most widely used racist symbols. In football stadiums it often appears on banners, signs, scarves or stickers. It is often used as a replacement for the letter "O".



Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

Racists and neo-Nazis may use different symbols of militant organisations in other countries, such as the Ku Klux Klan in the USA.

The KKK logo consists of a white cross within a red circle, and a drop of blood in the centre. Parts of the characteristic white KKK costume with pointed hoods are sometimes worn.



White Power/ White Pride

The slogans "White Power" and "White Pride" are used as a term to denote the 'supremacy of the white race'.

The Right Fist is a symbol of the international racist white power movement.



Cogwheel

The cogwheel is used by some racist and neo-Nazi groups because it was the symbol of the "Reichsarbeitsdienst", a paramilitary institution during German National Socialism. The cogwheel can contain a number of different signs in its middle.

Variations of the cogwheel used in the emblems of some clubs should not be regarded as a far-right sign.



Triskele



The Triskele has an angular design, similar to the Swastika though only with three arms. It is also the symbol of the → Blood & Honour movement and sometimes appears in a circular design.



Blood & Honour

Blood & Honour (B&H) is an international network of neo-Nazi skinheads, founded by → Skrewdriver frontman Ian Stuart Donaldson. Sections of B&H can be found in almost all European countries. Blood & Honour was the slogan engraved on the knives of the Hitler Youth. B&H uses the → Triskele as one of their main symbols.

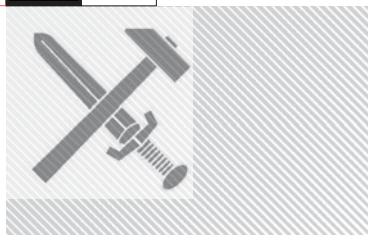


Banners fashioned in a similar design as the B&H logo have been seen in stadiums in Europe.

Hammer & Sword



The crossed Hammer & Sword was a symbol of “national community” of soldiers and workers used by the German Hitler Youth.



Hammerskins



Hammerskins is a paramilitary network of neo-Nazi skinheads operating in many countries. Their symbol consists of two crossed hammers which represents the “white working man.”

Sometimes crossed hammers feature in the emblems of the clubs and do not have far-right connotations.



SS-Totenkopf Skull



The SS-Totenkopf skull was a symbol of special SS groups during World War II (“SS Totenkopfverbände”) and was later used by groups such as Combat 18, an international neo-Nazi terrorist organisation.

The SS skull is one of the most commonly displayed neo-Nazi symbols and is often seen on banners, clothing and stickers.



Reichskriegsflagge

(Warflag of the German Empire)

The war flag of the German Empire, used between 1867-1921, symbolises the desire to return to pre-democratic times.

Football fans often replace the original colours by the colours of their club. The club’s badge sometimes replaces the eagle in the centre of the flag.



Reichskriegsflagge

(Warflag of Germany under National-Socialism)



War flags used by the German army during National Socialism between 1933 and 1945.



Reichsadler (Eagle of the Nazis)



The Reichsadler was an emblem used in Nazi Germany between 1935 and 1945 and was often combined with a swastika or other symbol in the circle to symbolise different divisions and groups. Nowadays, the swastika is often replaced by a Celtic Cross or similar symbol.



Football fans also use the former Reichsadler in combination with their football club badge.



Black Sun



The Black Sun represents a swastika with twelve arms or a wheel made of twelve Sig-runes.

It was used by the SS (the security squadron of the Nazis) as a Nordic-pagan symbol of religion and is often used as an alternative to the swastika.



SA Badge



The badge of the SA (Sturmabteilung), a paramilitary wing of the Nazi party NSDAP represents a combination of the → Sig-rune and the letter A.



References to “Aryan” heritage or “White Only”

Messages grounded on belief of the superiority of the ‘white race’ are displayed widely among far-right groups on their banners.



Often they are combined with a →Confederate flag.



Good Night Left Side



This symbol openly promotes neo-Nazi violence against imagined opponents. The image in the middle varies but it always portrays a scene of violence.



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Runes

Old Nordic/ Germanic symbols co-opted and widely used by the German National Socialists. Many of them are still being used by neo-Nazis and racists.

The main difference between the rune system and most other alphabets is that every letter (or rune) has got an established symbolic meaning.

Sig-Rune/SS-Emblem

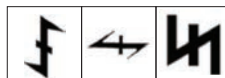


Along with the SS-Totenkopf skull, the two Sig-runes became the emblem of the Nazi German Waffen-SS ("security squadron"). A single Sig-rune was used as an emblem of the Hitler Youth.

Many far-right football fans use Sig-runes on their banners or in graffiti instead of the letter "S".



Wolfsangel/ Wolfs-rod/ Gibor-Rune



The sign was used in Nazi Germany as a symbol of various detachments, including SS Division Das Reich and Werwolf plan.

The rune is extensively used by neo-Nazi football fans throughout Europe.



Tiwaz/ Tyr-Rune



The Tyr-rune was used as a badge of the "Sturmabteilung" (SA) training schools, the "Reichsführerschulen" in Nazi Germany. It was also used amongst Hitler Youth and the SS.

It appears mostly on banners in stadiums.



Odal-Rune



The Odal-rune is a symbol of "Blood and Soil". In Nazi Germany it was used as an emblem of the Hitler Youth. After World War II, it was used by the forbidden German neo-Nazi youth organisation Wiking Youth.

It appears on banners in stadiums.

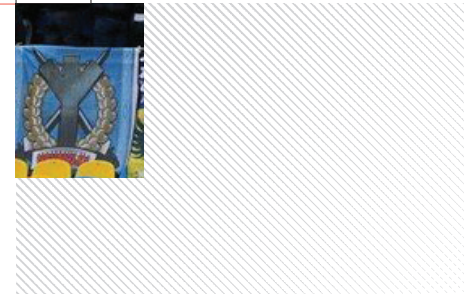


Life-Rune/ Man-Rune



This symbol stands for the "life power of the nation" and symbolises a human being who is stretching his arms to the Gods (signified life, creation, birth, rebirth and renewal). The Life or Man-rune is a universal symbol of nationalist movements and used by various neo-Nazi organisations, such as the American National Alliance.

It sometimes appears on banners in stadiums.



Death-Rune/ Yr-Rune



This is the opposite of the Life or Man-rune. The Death-rune was used on Waffen-SS graves along with the "Life-rune" and later adopted by National Alliance and other neo-Nazi organisations.

It is often used by the far-right groups inside stadiums to commemorate life and death of their icons, as in the example of Rudolf Hess in the photo.



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Letter & number codes

In many countries, certain neo-Nazi organisations are forbidden and symbols of far-right extremists are prohibited from being displayed publicly. To circumvent these bans, extremist groups and individuals use codes to convey their messages and escape legal punishment.

This mechanism can very often be seen within football stadiums where fans wear t-shirts or display banners printed with such codes. The numbers often stand for the corresponding letters in the alphabet.

Below are examples of codes often used by racists and neo-Nazis.

14

14 is the code for the notorious "14 words" by American neo-Nazi David Lane ("We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children"). The "14 words" are one of the main phrases of today's neo-Nazi ideology. It is often combined on banners with → 88, i.e. 14/88.



18 (and Combat 18)

18 stands for the first and eighth letter of the alphabet = AH = Adolf Hitler. It can be found in the name of the international neo-Nazi network Combat 18.

It appears on banners, stickers or clothing.



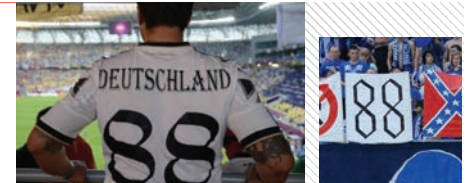
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28 is the code for the Nazi-skinhead network, → Blood and Honour.



88

88 stands for the greeting "Heil Hitler". It is often printed on football fan shirts or used as part of the name of neo-Nazi supporters groups.



Confederate flag

Although the flag is used in a variety of contexts outside the stadiums, it has been appropriated by far-right football fans and often displayed to convey racist message.



Ziga-Zaga

Initially deriving from British Jamaican music scene, the slogan was co-opted by neo-Nazis and is used to substitute "Sieg Heil", a greeting that is prohibited in many countries. Often the chant is accompanied by a Nazi salute.



100%

Refers to the white supremacists' belief in "pure" Aryan or white roots.



"Meine Ehre heißt Treue"

(My honour is loyalty)

Slogan used by the Nazi SS forces during World War II.

It is often translated by neo-Nazis into other languages and used on banners or clothing.



"Gott mit uns"

This slogan was engraved on belt buckles of the German Wehrmacht soldiers during the World War II.



B&H

Is the abbreviation of Blood and Honour.

HH

Abbreviation of "Heil Hitler".

NS

Abbreviation of National Socialism or National Socialist.

WP or WPSH

Abbreviation of "White Power" and "White Power Skinhead".

WPWW

'White Pride World Wide' greeting used by white supremacists.

RaHoWa

The abbreviation is used by neo-Nazis to call for a "Racial Holy War" of the "white race" against ethnic minorities and Jews that would lead to an "Aryan rule" over the world.

ZOG

"Zionist Occupational Government" refers to the conspiracy theory and belief of some neo-Nazis that Jews would occupy and control the state power in their country.

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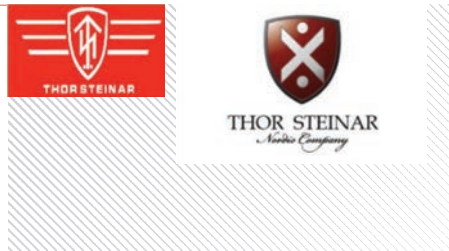
Clothing Brands & Prints

There are numerous neo-Nazi clothing brands and clothes with racist slogans and signs printed on them. The following examples are brands and prints which are predominantly sold through right-wing networks and mail order companies. All brands and labels in this chapter have been seen being worn by supporters in football stadiums.

Thor Steinar

Clothing brand initially with a logo of a combines → wolfsrod and Tyr-rune.

The company had to alter their logo after it was banned in several countries. The brand remains well connected to the far-right scene and is very popular among neo-Nazis.



Consdaple

The clothing brand CONSDAPLE is popular among racists and neo-Nazis as it contains the initials of the National Socialist Party of Germany (NSDAP). The word itself derived from “constable”.

The font resembles the logo of the clothing brand LONSDALE, which explicitly objects to any far-right or racist ideas.



Masterrace Europe

Clothes with the label “Masterrace” are sold all over Europe.



Hatecrime and HC Streetwear

“Hatecrime” is a US-neo-Nazi clothing brand sold in Europe.

In the English language, a hatecrime is defined as “a criminal offence committed against a person, property or society, which is motivated, fully or partly, by race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or ethnicity/ national origin.”

Don’t confuse with “Hatebreed” a non-discriminatory US music band which uses a similar design.



Werwolf (Werewolf)

German neo-Nazi clothing brand (→ Wolfs-Rod).



Walhall

Walhall is a myth of a pagan Viking religion where God Odin sends fallen Nordic/Germanic “Aryan” warriors. Racists and neo-Nazis use this pagan symbol to show their hate for the “ruling” Christian religion. The clothing brand is popular among neo-Nazis.



Skrewdriver

Skrewdriver (written with a “k” instead of a “c”) is a notorious neo-Nazi music band.

There are hundreds of such racist bands across Europe, whose t-shirts are donned widely. Another notorious example is “Landser”.



Svastone

The Ukrainian neo-Nazi sportswear brand employs a variation of the swastika as a logo and produces clothes with far-right insignia for football fans.

It is distributed in the neo-Nazi networks mainly in Eastern Europe.



ZetaZeroAlfa

Official music band of the Italian fascist organisation → CasaPound.

It is connected to some ultra groups in Italy and popular among far-right football fans in several European countries.



White Rex

Russian neo-Nazi sportswear brand reaching wider audience through supporting sporting events to promote far-right ideas.

Authored the design of a t-shirt with “88” print styled as falling bombs.



Beloyar

Clothing brand distributed in the neo-Nazi networks mainly in Eastern Europe using Nazi symbolism in their designs.



Otadzina (Отачбина)

Serbian clothing brand employing neo-Nazi imagery and distributed through the far-right networks.

The brand is popular among some football fans in Serbia and Russia.



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Country Specific Symbols

While many discriminatory signs and symbols are deployed unanimously by racists and neo-Nazis across the world, others are more specific and prevalently used in particular countries. They often relate to the respective countries' nationalistic movements, historic events, far-right political parties or glorify their "leaders" and criminal "masterminds".

All emblems and symbols in this chapter have been noted in football stadiums on flags, banners and sew-on patches, not so often as prints on clothing.

Bulgarian symbols

Bulgarian National Union

(Български национален съюз)

A right-wing extremist organisation allegedly responsible for attacks on ethnic and other minorities in Bulgaria.

Enjoys support of a section of far-right football fans in Bulgaria together with a similar group **Bulgarian Defense League**.



Bulgarian Nationalist Party

(Националистическа партия на България (НПБ))

A far-right party formed by several extremist and neo-Nazi groups.

Allegedly responsible for multiple physical attacks on ethnic minorities in Bulgaria.



Bulgarian National Resistance

(Национална съпротива България)

An informal right-wing extremist movement popular among some of the football fans in Bulgaria.



Croatian symbols

Ustasha/Ustaše

The Ustaše (also known as "Ustashas" or "Ustashi") was a Croatian fascist movement.

It was involved in terrorist activities before World War II and ruled a part of Yugoslavia, protected by the Nazis.

The Ustaše emblem has a white square in the top left corner; in contrast to the Croatian national emblem which bears a red square in this place.



“Za Dom – Spremni” (“For the Homeland - Ready”)

Salute used by the Ustaše as an equivalent of Nazi salute “Heil Hitler”.

May be printed on clothes or chanted by far-right fans inside the stadiums.



English Acronyms

National Front

The National Front is a British far-right party.



British National Party (BNP)

The British National Party is a far-right political party in the United Kingdom.



English Defense League (EDL)

British far-right islamophobic movement extensively recruiting among football fans. The formation of EDL in the UK was followed by similar organisations in other countries.



German Acronyms

NSU

The National Socialist Underground (Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund), was a German neo-Nazi terrorist group uncovered in 2011. The group committed multiple racially motivated murders and terrorist crimes.

The group does not have a logo, though banners in honour of it have been on display in stadiums.

German Symbols

NPD

The National Democratic Party of Germany (Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands) is a German far-right political party.



German Defence League

A far-right islamophobic group popular among some football fans in Germany.



Die Identitären

An islamophobic far-right movement increasingly popular among some of the football fans in Germany.



Greek Symbols

Chrysí Avgí

(Χρυσή Αυγή, Golden Dawn)

Golden Dawn is a Greek far-right political party closely affiliated to neo-Nazi groups and associated with attacks on migrants and visible minorities. In 2013 the leadership of the party was arrested and charged with forming a criminal organisation. After the arrests, a series of solidarity activities in favour of Golden Dawn members were performed by far-right fan groups during matches across Europe.



Italian Symbols

Logo of Tricolour Flame

The Tricolour Flame Social Movement or Tricolour Flame (Movimento Sociale Fiamma Tricolore), MS-FT is an Italian neo-fascist party.



Logo of Forza Nuova

FN is an Italian nationalist and neo-fascist movement connected to some Italian ultras groups.



Symbols of Italian fascism

Fascio, flags of Italian Social Republic and portraits of Benito Mussolini can be found on display across stadiums in Europe.



CasaPound

An Italian fascist organisation, which increasingly attracts young people.

This symbol has also become popular outside of Italy, and has been seen displayed at stadiums in other countries.



Polish Acronyms

NOP

Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski – “National Rebirth of Poland” – a well-known racist extremist organisation.

ONR

Oboz Narodowo-Radykalny – (National Radical Camp), an extreme-nationalist organisation which was forbidden before World War II but is currently active again.

Polish Symbols

Falanga or “Hand and Sword”



“Hand and Sword” was the symbol of → ONR “Falanga”, a fascist organisation which existed before World War II. Nowadays, it is used by National Rebirth of Poland (Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski), an extremist racist organisation.



Mieczyk Chrobrego (Chrobry Sword) or Szczerbiec

A symbol of the extreme-nationalistic Camp of Greater Poland (Oboz Wielkiej Polski – OWP), an organisation banned before World War II.



Toporzel

The symbol of the fascist and neo-pagan organisation Zadruga, which is used by several nationalist neo-pagan organisations.



Romanian Symbols

Iron Guard (*Garda de fier*)



The Iron Guard was a Romanian fascist movement and party active before and at the beginning of the World War II.

Portraits of its founder, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, may be seen displayed inside the stadiums.



Russian Symbols

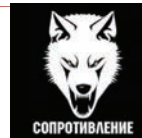
Slavic Union (*Славянский Союз*)

A neo-Nazi paramilitary organisation. It was adjudged as extremist in Russia and consequently banned in 2010.



Soprotivlenie (“Спротивление”)

A far-right youth movement popular among football fans.



Russian National Unity (*Русское Национальное Единство, RNE*)

Paramilitary neo-Nazi organisation active in Russia since the 1990s.



Wotan Jugend

One of the largest neo-Nazi networks and information platforms in Russia.

It distributes propaganda under the slogan "Hammer of National-Socialism".

Increasingly popular among football fans.



Flag of the Russian Empire

This was one of the official flags of the Russian Empire in the 19th century (horizontal black, yellow and white stripes). Although the flag itself does not bear an explicit discriminatory connotation, it is mainly used by nationalists and monarchists in modern Russia as opposed to the official state flag. On its own, it may be regarded as a sign of far-right presence inside the stadium.

It can be an indicator for and is often found in combination with other discriminatory symbols.



Spanish Symbols

Alianza Nacional

The Alianza Nacional (AN) was founded in 2005 and is a national socialist party in Spain.



Blue Division / Division Azul / 250

The Division Azul was a unit of Spanish volunteers which served in the German Nazi army at the Eastern front during World War II.



Falange

A symbol associated with several fascist organisations which originated in the 1930s in Spain and are still active today.



Flag of Francoist Spain (1936-1975)

The official flag of Spain under the Franco dictatorship.

The flag has been seen displayed inside stadiums in Spain.



Ukrainian Symbols

Flag of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists

(Організація українських націоналістів)

The flag of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists active during the World War II is currently being used by some far-right and nationalist political organisations in Ukraine.

On its own it can be regarded as a sign of far-right presence in the stadium. It can be an indicator for and is often found in combination with other discriminatory symbols.



Waffen SS Galizien

(дивізія Ваффен СС "Галичина")

The symbol of the Nazi SS Volunteer Division "Galizien" operating in Ukraine during the World War II.

The symbol featuring a lion on blue background without the three crowns is often used in Ukraine and does not bear discriminatory connotations.



Portraits of Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych

Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych were leaders of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists.



Wolfsangel

This symbol was used by the Nazis during World War II. It was the emblem of SS Panzer Division "Das Reich". In Ukraine often interpreted as the "Idea of a Nation" ("Ідея нації") and used as a symbol of neo-Nazi organisations "Patriot of Ukraine" and "Social-Nationalist Assembly".



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Other discriminatory banners and imagery

References to Auschwitz

Many far-right football supporters use references to the concentration camp Auschwitz and the holocaust as a means of causing offence.

The anti-Semitic banner on the right means "Auschwitz is your home country and the ovens are your homes" referring to the ovens that the Nazis used to burn gassed Jews. Banners like this are often accompanied by hissing noises mimicking the sound of the gas chambers.



References to Adolf Hitler and less common neo-Nazi codes

Far-right groups tend to invent more subtle references to the Nazi ideology to circumvent bans and avoid sanctions.

The top photo depicts Adolf Hitler during World War I.

The text on the banner in the picture to the right reads: "If 36:2 [=18=A.H.=Adolf Hitler] would be alive, your team would not exist".



Anti-Semitic banners

Many far-right groups display anti-Semitic signs and flags. For example, a caricature of a Jewish man, wearing a hat with a Star of David on it, which has a cross through the middle of it (right photo).

Or the slogan “Juden Zeigen” with gallows and a Celtic cross. Or a crossed-out Star of David.



Islamophobic banners

Islamophobic abuse may take various forms – from offensive chants to banners.

In the photo, a neo-Nazi code → 88 styled as bombs falling on a mosque. Or crossed out mosques or other symbols associated with Islam.



Glorification of racist murders or terrorists

Far-right groups might also communicate their message inside the stadiums by expressing support for convicted racist murderers and terrorists.

The example on the right shows a banner in support of Janusz Waluś, a Polish-born racist murderer of one of the leaders of African National Congress in South Africa.



References to Jihad

The banner in the photo to the right reads “Jihad”. Whilst the term “Jihad” is not racist in itself. In the context of football it often has anti-Semitic connotations as being used to refer to the violent fight against Jews.

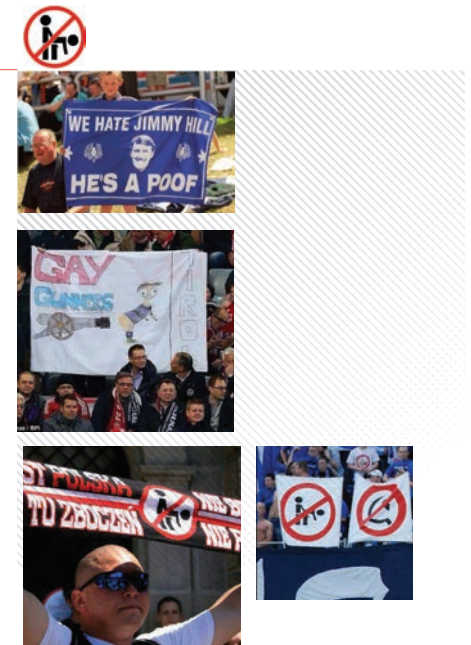


Homophobia

The use of terms such as “poof” and “fag” on banners and flags is homophobic.

The word “gay” is not homophobic but must be interpreted as abusive when used in a pejorative meaning as in the photo on the right.

This sign is often used by far-right groups in Poland and other Eastern European countries to express their homophobic mindset.



Abuse of disabled people

This sign has been seen as stickers or sew-on patches as a form of abuse against people with disabilities.



Sexism

A number of displays use images which are sexist and degrade women, such as the image to the right which portrays women as sexual objects.



As with far-right flags and signs, abusive slogans might appear in combination to cause maximum offence.

The image to the right is both homophobic and offensive to women.



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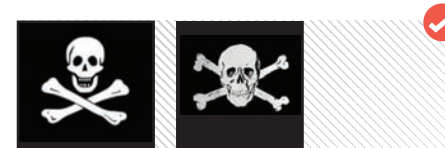
Risk of Confusion

Some signs and symbols bear a close resemblance with certain discriminatory signs and symbols. It is important to distinguish between them to avoid incorrect conclusions.

The following sections contrast the most commonly confused symbols.

Skull and crossbones/ Jolly Roger

A number of symbols featuring a skull and crossbones underneath or behind the skull are used in a variety of contexts and don't bear any discriminatory connotations.



NOT TO MIX WITH DISCRIMINATORY SYMBOL:

SS Totenkopf

The SS Totenkopf symbol features a skull with crossbones behind it. The skull is inclined to its right.



Fist symbols

Several variations of Fist symbols can be found on banners displayed by football fans, the majority of which do not bear discriminatory connotations.



NOT TO CONFUSE WITH:

The racist White Power symbol

The symbol of white supremacist "White Power" movement features a right arm's fist in most cases white on black background.





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This guide has been put together with the help and support of many experts. We would like to thank everyone who has contributed.