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**The Involvement of Migrant-Descent Footballers in European
Football as the Reflection of Diversity of European Society**

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The Involvement of Migrant-Descent Footballers in European Football as the Reflection of Diversity of European Society

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ABSTRACT

The involvement of migrant-descent footballers has become an important phenomenon for the demographic changes in the world, partially Europe. This phenomenon has reflected multiculturalism and heterogeneity in European society. The inclusion of foreign footballers into national teams has become common which leads to denationalisation of European national football teams, but the dynamics and complexities have remained under-researched. In this research, we will use the paradigm of constructivism to see Europe as a world society constructed by shared identities and values. This research will analyze how diversification and multiculturalism represented by football in nine countries heavily impacted by immigrants could shape heterogeneity in European society. The results depict that the existence of migrant descent footballers reflect the multiculturalism and heterogeneity of European society.

Keywords: European football; migrant-descent footballers; European multiculturalism; UEFA; constructivism

ABSTRAK

Keterlibatan pemain sepak bola berlatarbelakang imigran telah menjadi suatu fenomena penting bagi perubahan tatanan demografi di seluruh dunia, khususnya Eropa. Fenomena ini menghasilkan multikulturalisme di Eropa serta merefleksikan kawasan Eropa sebagai kawasan yang heterogen. Inklusi pemain asing ke dalam tim nasional sudah menjadi hal yang lumrah yang mana mengarahkan kepada denasionalisasi tim nasional sepak bola negara-negara Eropa, namun dinamika dan kompleksitas akan kehadiran mereka masih sangat jarang untuk diteliti. Pada penelitian ini, kami menggunakan paradigma konstruktivisme untuk melihat kawasan Eropa sebagai masyarakat dunia yang dikonstruksi oleh kesamaan identitas dan nilai. Penelitian ini akan menganalisis bagaimana diversifikasi dan multikulturalisme yang direpresentasikan oleh sepakbola melalui sembilan negara yang terdampak besar imigran dapat mengonstruksi heterogenitas pada tatanan masyarakat Eropa. Hasil penelitian menggambarkan bahwa kehadiran para pemain sepak bola yang berlatarbelakang imigran dapat merefleksikan masyarakat Eropa yang heterogen dan multikultur.

Kata Kunci: Sepak bola Eropa; Pesepakbola imigran; multikulturalisme Eropa; UEFA; konstruktivisme.

Introduction

Football is the most popular sport in the world which attracted billions of fans worldwide and has given a massive impact and became a global phenomenon. Football has been an integral part of European society. Until now, Europe has the best football development, hence Europe produces the most competitive competitions in the world and constituted the best national teams in the world. European football is not only popular among Europeans but also globally popular. Football league

matches in Europe are broadcasted worldwide hence European football teams have numerous fanatic fans around the world. Even the Euros, which is held every four years, still attracted billions of viewers because Europe is the epitome of football whereas plenty of football stars play to represent their respective countries.

Through football, we will understand better on how the socio-political circumstances in Europe, for instance the '*denationalization*' of European football which was followed by the involvement of football players from migrant backgrounds namely migrant-background players in national teams of European countries reflect the history of European migration and colonization, also as a barometer of European diversity. Then, racism that occurred in European football also reflected the disintegration and acceptance of migrants by European society. The dynamics of geopolitics have shaped football. Through the globalization and migration channels, European football players have found themselves globally overseas, dramatically changing the way societies value the contributions of immigrants. These migrants migrated because of their families or being naturalized by football associations.¹ As a sport played by teams, togetherness and unity are the key to footballing success, and this term has also indicated that football is a sport that is open to everyone with various backgrounds regardless of their differences. Although togetherness and unity do not automatically translate into 'openness', it actually refers to acceptance and approval. In the context of European football, we used the example of Mario Balotelli who did not get decent approvals by the Italian society which affected his performance in the Italian National Team.

The Euro 2020 is an opportunity to celebrate diversity rather than deplore it. For a month, the 24 teams involved in Euro 2020 offered a good overview of the demographic diversity in Europe. Along with France, Portugal, Belgium, and the Netherlands, England is one of the five countries that present a very diverse squad, marked by the long-standing presence of players of migrant backgrounds. As luck would have it, these European countries are all former great colonial powers. France and Portugal first selected the Black players in the 1930s, and the Netherlands in the 1960s. In England, the appearance of Viv Anderson in 1978 in the national team started a great series of black English players.² Geographical proximity has also guided the migratory movements among the European countries. In this context, the movements of footballers between the neighboring countries in Europe also influence the denationalization of European football teams even though the migrant players from inter-European migration, such as the Turkish players in the Germany national football team, nationality-switch of players among the United Kingdom and Balkan players in the Switzerland national football team. During Euro 2020, between a third and half of the teams of the former colonial powers are made up of players of color. The ethnic composition of the national team and its performance in major competitions have remained a debate for pro- and anti-migrant political views. France's World Cup triumph was claimed as a victory for a multiracial French republic.

A previous research about the diversification of national football teams written by Campenhout and Sterkenburg, used the idea of migration corridor to understand the underlying structure of migrant footballers around the world, particularly in the World Cup. They concluded that the inclusion of migrant footballers within national football teams in the World Cup can be considered

¹ Yassin, A. & Carlson, D. (2015). *Players and Migrations*. Retrieved from <https://sites.duke.edu/wcwp/research-projects/players-and-migration/>

² Goldblatt, D. (2020). *It's not just football, it's barometer of diversity*. The Guardian Special Report. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/football/2021/jun/06/its-not-just-football-its-a-barometer-of-diversity-bring-on-the-euros/>

as an echo, and the reversal of preceding migration flows between countries, indicated that historically, migration corridors sustain and are rediscovered.³ This research will explore the dynamic nature of modern society and nationality by examining nine European countries which were heavily affected by migration and have a high involvement of players from migrant backgrounds during Euro 2020. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to study the processes of diversification of European football through migration corridors using Alexander Wendt's constructivism that reflect the European multiculturalism that shapes the heterogeneity of European society.

Theoretical Framework

Alexander Wendt's constructivism denies such classical theories of international relations. Constructivists counter that states' actions are not driven by tangible things and anarchy but happened otherwise. States' behavior is shaped by intersubjectively shared ideas by constituting the identities and interests of international actors.⁴ Shared ideas such as norms and values so were states that constructed the anarchy of the international system. States' behavior is dynamic hence states don't have fixed interests. Meaning that states' behavior is constantly changing according to the needs of their national interest. For example, one state can be a realist (to compete) and be a liberalist (to cooperate) at the same time.

This research will be analyzed by deductive methodology and qualitative method. The deductive methodology is an approach which involves the concepts and theories in the beginning, develops hypotheses from the theories, and later collects and analyzes data to test those hypotheses as the relevance of the research phenomenon, or the theory-testing methodology. (Wendt, Levy and Little, 2014). The qualitative method includes three stages: 1) data-collecting; 2) data-analyzing; and 3) data-interpreting. (Cresswell, 2014). To fulfill this research's purpose, various concepts will be used to analyze and elaborate the topic, which include the concept of multiculturalism and national identity, as well as John Williams' world society.

a. Multiculturalism and National Identity

In political science, a state's capacity to accommodate cultural plurality within its borders is defined as multiculturalism; the coexistence of diverse cultures, which includes various aspects as racial and cultural groups that manifested in various behaviors, communication style, cultural assumptions, and values.⁵ As Blaine J. Fowers stated, "multiculturalism is a social-intellectual movement that promotes the value of diversity as a core principle and insists that all cultural groups be treated with respect and as equals."⁶ In a simpler way, multiculturalism is depicted where people would live side-by-side happily. Multiculturalism means the recognition and accommodation of diverse cultures.

³ Campenhout, v. G. & Sterkenburg, v. J. The diversification of national football teams: Using the idea of migration corridors to explore the underlying structures of nationality changes amongst foreign-born players at the football World Cup. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. Vol. 56. No. 1, 36-61 (2019). DOI: 10.1177/1012690219892849

⁴ Copeland, D. C. The constructivist challenge to structural realism. In G. Stefano & L. Anna. *Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his critics*. (p.1). New York. Routledge. (2006).

⁵ International Federation of Library Associations. (2005, March 18). *Defining "Multiculturalism"*. Retrieved from <https://www.ifla.org/publications/defining-multiculturalism>

⁶ Fowers, B. J. & Richardson, F. C. Why Is Multiculturalism Good. *American Psychologist*. Vol. 51. No. 6, 609-621 (1996). DOI: 10.1037/0003-066X.51.6.609

National identity is a part of multiculturalism. The term nation refers to a homogeneous ethnocultural unit that shapes the behavior and identity of its members.⁷ Heterogeneity refers to a condition that helps to shape a society by diverse nationalities. Meanwhile, the term identity refers to the inner constitution of principles and characteristics that make a nation the kind of nation it is. Identity has its own organizing principles such as characteristic ways of thoughts, beliefs, ideals, values, tendencies, impulses, and dispositions.⁸ Rupert Emerson once described national identity as an embodiment of people who feel that they are a nation.⁹ Furthermore, using Emerson's definition of national identity, Henri Tajfel and John Turner manufactured the social identity theory. According to Tajfel and Turner, national identity includes both self-categorization and self-affectation. Self-categorization refers to the identification of an individual as a member of a nation, where the self-affectation part refers to an individual's emotional attachment and a sense of belonging toward one's nation.¹⁰ To put it simply, national identity is an awareness of oneself belonging to a certain group of a nation that conjures positive emotions of oneself about the group and leads to a tendency to act on behalf of that group.

b. International Society and World Society

Martin Wight formulated the three traditions of English school theories such as realism (international system), rationalism (international society), and revolutionism (world society).¹¹ The concept of world society is derived from English school theories which are based on the idea of the society of states that exist between the anarchic international system as realists and liberal assume. World society is often taken as an extension of international society. As Bull defined, international society as a group of states which have constituted common rules and institutions for their relations and recognise their common interest.¹² Hence, world society is at the individual level where international society is at the state level. Revolutionists share an interest for the shared values and norms of states' society.¹³ John Williams defined world society as "a political system in which states are not the dominant actors; where most political activity are focused upon individuals, rather than states; and where normative progress can be understood in universal terms."¹⁴ As Buzan described the concept as the idea of shared norms and values at the individual level.¹⁵ In simple terms, all human beings belong to a community based on collective values and norms.

⁷ Parekh, B. The Concept of National Identity. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Vol. 21. No. 2, 255:268 (1995). DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.1995.9976489

⁸ Cates, Truett, Jr. & Knoulton, J. (1993). In Parekh B. *The Concept of National Identity*. (1995). p. 256

⁹ Emerson, R. *From Empire to Nation: The Rise to Self-Assertion of Asian and African People*. Boston. Beacon Press. (1960).

¹⁰ Tajfel, H. & Turner, J. C. (2004). The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior. In J. T. Jost & J. Sidanius (Eds.) *Political Psychology: Key readings*. (pp. 276-293). Psychology Press. DOI: 10/4324/9780203505984-16

¹¹ Keene, Edward. Three Traditions of International Theory. In N. Cornelia & D. M. Green (Eds.), *Guide to the English School in International Studies*. (p. 171). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. (2014).

¹² Hedley Bull in Hurrell, A. & Alderson, K. International Society and the Academic Study of International Relations. In Hadiwinata, S. B. *Studi dan Teori Hubungan Internasional: Arus Utama, Alternatif, dan Reflektivitas*. (p. 131). Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia. (2017).

¹³ Wight, M. (1991). In Iftode, C. *The Concept of 'World Society' in International Relations*. (p. 1). E-International Relations. ISSN: 2053-8626

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 2

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Analysis

a. Depiction of European Multiculturalism

Traditionally, Europe consists of the richness of national and cultural identity. A true depiction of the *nation-state* system that was established after the Westphalia Peace Treaty back then in 1648 who brought us to a divine concept in international relations called sovereignty. From the Dark Ages until the present day, people in Europe have lived under the banner of national identity. Each European civilization has its own unique identity. The Britons and Celts who shared the present-day British Isles; or the Franks and Goths who both lived across Germany, Belgium, and France today; and the Norse who lived in present-day Norway, Denmark, and Sweden; and so on. Each traditional tribe have transformed into present-day nations, English people for England, German people for Germany, French people for France, Italian for Italy, etc. This phenomenon has manufactured the national identity and cultural embodiment for the people in their respective countries through the formulation of shared values and norms. In this state, they have the feelings of belonging to their own people and their own country, and as well as they connect and interact with other people from different countries and diverse cultures, they will soon integrate to a bigger part and identify themselves as European.

Europe is the region that recognises and accommodates its cultural and ethnic plurality which later led to multiculturalism. They welcome various ethnic and diverse cultures across the world which in modern terms are called immigrants. Mostly, immigrants in Europe came from Asia and Africa. Those people have many differences from European people in general. The differentiations consist of races, colors, habits, and political and religious views. European integration emerged after the European states brought their common interests, norms, and values into the European Economic Community in 1957, which later transformed into the European Community in 1986 and the present-day European Union in 1992. All European Union member states have signed the Geneva Convention, which is also known as the refugee convention. So, it is mandatory for them to welcome every migratory surge from mixed migration flows of refugees and migrants.

The Schengen area has made this possible. Factually, this directly helped the spread of multiculturalism across the continent. On March 26, 1995, the Schengen agreement was implemented. Hence it was implemented, Schengen states shared a common visa policy. The area allows individuals to travel with ease without border control and restrictions amongst twenty-six European states.¹⁶ Though the signatories of the Geneva Convention have to carry out the UNHCR's mandate, they would still consider their national interest which is the safety of their own citizens. With the stream of incoming refugees and immigrants in Europe, the Schengen states have tightened their border controls. What does this mean for the migrants? Several Schengen states have routinely upgraded their border controls, such as reintroducing border checks to reinforce their country's safety. The refugees who have traveled to Europe will be granted a temporary permit and then asylum status.¹⁷ It is illegal for the refugees to travel across Schengen countries before they have been granted asylum status.

Multiculturalism in Europe is seen as both an advantage and a threat. As an advantage, multiculturalism enriches the diversity of European cultures but also a threat to European national

¹⁶ Dockery, W. (2017, October 31). *What is the Schengen area and how does it impact refugees*. Retrieved from <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/5791/what-is-the-schengen-area-and-how-does-it-impact-refugees>

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

identity. Despite the openness of European countries to welcome immigrants, multiculturalism in Europe also happened as the consequences of European colonialism back in the 15th to the midst 20th century. The European colonialism resulted the spread of westernization and mixed-blood descendants by interracial marriages in former colonies, which later led to the existence of the people of colours in Europe. The chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel once stated that multiculturalism is a failure. Furthermore, as she added: “Multiculturalism leads to parallel societies and therefore remains a life-line.”¹⁸ In the German context, since anti-immigrant sentiment is increasing, at the same time many Germans also expect immigrants to integrate with the society and contribute more to their communities.

Football is the result of British colonialism. European football teams are becoming more diverse as they reflect the diversity of their nations.¹⁹ In the football context, multiculturalism can be seen as an advantage to their respective national football teams. This also answers why there are so many ‘coloured footballers’ in European national teams. Many footballers who identify themselves as European citizens have various racial backgrounds. You may also wonder what the French National Team who won the 2018 World Cup is filled mostly by non-native French players to be called French or not. Would they have been this good without those immigrant players? On the other hand, would those immigrant players be as good as if they were not playing in Europe? As explained above, whether a player is native or not, the society has constructed oneself to be part of a certain group of nations which later manufactures the emotions of belonging and leads to a tendency to act on behalf of that group. For example, Kylian Mbappe is a descendant of a Cameroonian father and an Algerian mother but he was born and raised in France. He developed the feelings of belonging to be French hence he plays for the French National Football Team. On the other hand, Riyad Mahrez is a French-born from Algerian descent, he could have done the same thing as Mbappe but he chose to play for Algeria National Football Team instead. This will be elaborated further in the next section of the paper.

b. The Involvement of Immigrant Footballers in the European National Football Team

Football is heavily linked with migration and denationalization. Camperhout and Sterkenburg explained the diversification of national football teams as historically-established migration patterns, which means that footballers do not ‘swap’ nationality randomly but historically constituted. Furthermore, Camperhout and Sterkenburg formulated the idea of migration corridors: 1) *Colonial migration corridors*: migratory movements between colonizer and colonies; 2) *Geographical proximity migration corridors*: migratory movements caused by neighboring countries’ geographical proximity; and 3) *Guestworker migration corridors*: migratory movements caused by the labor shortage-surplus relation in different countries.²⁰ We will analyze this section by classifying the heavily impacted countries into two categories, the colonial migration corridor; and the geographical proximity-guestworker corridor.

¹⁸ The Washington Post. (2015, December 14). *Multiculturalism is a sham, says Angela Merkel*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/12/14/angela-merkel-multiculturalism-is-a-sham/>

¹⁹ TRT World. *European Football and Colonialism*. July 9, 2021. YouTube video, 6:05. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HupN9jPuJqE&t=4s>

²⁰ Camperhout, v. G. & Sterkenburg, v. J. The diversification of national football teams: Using the idea of migration corridors to explore the underlying structures of nationality changes amongst foreign-born players at the football World Cup. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. Vol. 56. No. 1, 36-61 (2019). DOI: 10.1177/1012690219892849

According to research from Sportsanddev.org a sport analytics media that based in UK it explains there is a unique factor of migrant descent player which is the process of assimilation and building the sense of belonging hence migrant descent player have double identities, first the identity that inherited from country of origin of their parents and second the identity that established after grown up in European society and assimilated to European values furthermore one of the key factor of the success of migrant descent player penetrated to European football is the footballing scout in early ages hence they have better understanding of the methods of European football and assimilated with European teammates, this process build up the sense of belonging of European identities by migrant descent player, one of the example is Raheem Sterling who was born in Jamaica then migrate in early age to England he have the the opportunity to represent Jamaica but opted to play with England national team²¹

a. Colonial Migration Corridor

Immigrants in France constitute 9.1% of the population, according to its 2014 census, nearly 6 million immigrants resided in the country. France is one of the first countries that developed an advanced sports-scouting system. This made France able to boost its performance on a global scale. This system has trained many immigrants. The current France national football team is a promising example of multiculturalism, with stellar players mushrooming out of immigrant suburbs or 'banlieues'.²²

²¹ Kevin Coleman, The FA (September 23, 2020). Nurturing a sense of belonging in European football. Retrieved from <https://www.sportanddev.org/en/article/news/nurturing-sense-belonging-english-football>

²² Rakhi, B. (July 17, 2018). *A Win for Immigrants: This is What France's World Cup Winning Team Looked Like*. Retrieved from <https://www.news18.com/news/buzz/a-win-for-immigrants-this-is-what-frances-world-cup-winning-team-looked-like-1813827.html>

Table 1. French migrant descent footballers during Euro 2020

Country	Players / Ethnicity																				
France	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Antoine Griezmann <i>German-Portuguese</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Mike Maignan <i>Haitian</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Corentin Tolisso <i>Togolese</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Mousa Sissoko <i>Malian</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Hugo Lloris <i>Catalan</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">N'golo Kanté <i>Malian</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Jules Koundé <i>Beninese</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Olivier Giroud <i>Italian</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Karim Benzema <i>Algerian</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Ousmane Dembélé <i>Mauritanian-Senegalese</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Kingsley Coman <i>Guadeloupean</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Paul Pogba <i>Guinean</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Kurt Zouma <i>Central African</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Presnel Kimpémbé <i>Congolese</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Kylian Mbappé <i>Algerian-Cameroonian</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Raphaël Varane <i>Martiniquais</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Lucas Hernandez <i>Spanish</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Steve Mandanda <i>Congolese</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Marcus Thuram <i>Guadeloupean</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Wissam Ben Yedder <i>Tunisian</i></td> </tr> </table>	Antoine Griezmann <i>German-Portuguese</i>	Mike Maignan <i>Haitian</i>	Corentin Tolisso <i>Togolese</i>	Mousa Sissoko <i>Malian</i>	Hugo Lloris <i>Catalan</i>	N'golo Kanté <i>Malian</i>	Jules Koundé <i>Beninese</i>	Olivier Giroud <i>Italian</i>	Karim Benzema <i>Algerian</i>	Ousmane Dembélé <i>Mauritanian-Senegalese</i>	Kingsley Coman <i>Guadeloupean</i>	Paul Pogba <i>Guinean</i>	Kurt Zouma <i>Central African</i>	Presnel Kimpémbé <i>Congolese</i>	Kylian Mbappé <i>Algerian-Cameroonian</i>	Raphaël Varane <i>Martiniquais</i>	Lucas Hernandez <i>Spanish</i>	Steve Mandanda <i>Congolese</i>	Marcus Thuram <i>Guadeloupean</i>	Wissam Ben Yedder <i>Tunisian</i>
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Source: Primary data. Compiled from UEFA.com and Transfermarkt.

This French national football team embraced diversity and combating xenophobia in their squad. The multi-ethnic faces of the victorious squad of twenty years ago earned the nickname ‘*Black Blanc Beur*’, a metaphorical phrase referring to the country’s flag and to European, sub-Saharan, and Maghreb origins of the players indicates this national football team has a vast involvement of migrant-descent players from French former colonies.²³ As explained before, there is always the power to bring different perspectives together that football will become the face of European society. The involvement of migrant-background players indicates the presence of respective migrant communities within the countries, and France leads the way in diversity amongst European countries. Even the French squad is composed of various and diverse ethnic backgrounds, which described the ethnic backgrounds that made up today’s France. From the migration perspective, the majority of these migrant players were born in French former colonies. Namely, Morocco, Algeria, and Senegal, or immigrants who have migrated from overseas France to France, such as New Caledonia, Martinique,

²³ Ulimann, J. (July 13, 2020). *Black Blanc Beur: How French Secularism Suppresses Important Conversations about Race*. Retrieved from <https://www.media-diversity.org/black-blanc-beur-how-french-secularism-suppresses-important-conversations-about-race/>

and Guadeloupe. These overseas France territories are administratively part of France. Hence, people born in these territories will automatically acquire French citizenship.²⁴ Particularly, the French national football team used their colonial connection to empower and enrich the diversity within their squad.

England's national team has its own colonial history which shaped its today's diverse society. England has a very diverse squad, where players of color have a long-established presence on the national team, and, uncoincidentally, related to colonial-migration corridor concept as England within the United Kingdom was a major colonial power.

Table 2. English migrant descent footballers during Euro 2020

Country	Players / Ethnicity	
England	Harry Maguire <i>Irish</i>	Raheem Sterling <i>Jamaican</i>
	Kyle Walker <i>Jamaican</i>	Marcus Rashford <i>Kittitian</i>
	Declan Rice <i>Irish</i>	Harry Kane <i>Irish</i>
	Bukayo Saka <i>Nigerian</i>	Kalvin Phillips <i>Jamaican</i>
	Jack Grealish <i>Irish</i>	Tyrone Mings <i>Caribbean</i>
	Jude Bellingham <i>African</i>	Reece James <i>African</i>

Source: Primary data. Compiled from UEFA.com and Transfermarkt.

Viv Anderson's national team debut in 1978 was the beginning of a great wave of black-English players. During Euro 2020, the England squad is more diverse than expected. Between a third and half of the squad is composed of players of color. Without those migrant background players, the England squad as we know now would not exist. The immigrants have heavily contributed to the England national team.²⁵ To highlight the power of diversity, the recent crucial achievement in Euro 2020 was notable that without migrant background players, only three teams would have remained. The 2021 England squad of 26 players is more racially diverse than the country as a whole. Only 3% of England's population is Black. To explain the involvement of migrant background players in England national teams, the migration corridor of colonization is suitable with these circumstances as England included many players from their former colonies mainly Africa and Caribbean countries.

²⁴ Dubois, L. *Soccer Empire: The World Cup and the Future of France*. University of California Press. (2010).

²⁵ Liew, J. (June 13, 2021). *The England squad is built on immigration, yet our xenophobic government dares to cheer it on*. Retrieved from <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/sport/2021/07/england-squad-built-immigration-yet-our-xenophobic-government-dares-cheer-it>

Raheem Sterling for instance, who became England’s hero during the Euros was born in Jamaica and has Jamaican roots. Notably Marcus Rashford and Jadon Sancho who have Caribbean roots. There are more England players such as Kalvin Phillips and Kyle Walker who have a distant connection with Jamaican ancestors. Apart from the players from the former colonies, England also included players from its neighboring country like Ireland. They capped Jack Grealish and Declan Rice who used to play for Ireland youth team which then switched nationality to England. This phenomenon of player transfer among the British Isles is not anything new because not just geographically close but also, they share a lot of common identities which ease the migration for players from one country to another.²⁶

The diversity of the Portuguese national football team can be analyzed through the colonial migration corridor as Portugal was a major colonial power and started its relation with other countries through colonization, mainly Brazil, several African countries, and some part of south-eastern Indonesia, the Timor. Due to the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, Portugal was allowed to colonize Brazil. The Portuguese have a strong relation with the Brazilians as they share a similar identity, Brazil is the most successful footballing country and they produced many decent football talents. Furthermore, Brazilian players are known as world-class footballers, being selected to the Brazilian national team is one of the hardest things to achieve for the Brazilian-born footballers. Therefore, alternatively, they did swap their nationality to compete at the highest level possible in international football. This caused several Brazilian players to represent other countries.²⁷

Table 3. Portuguese migrant descent footballers during Euro 2020

Country	Players / Ethnicity								
Portugal	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%;">Pepe <i>Brazilian</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%;">Nuno Mendes <i>Angolan</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Raphael Guerreiro <i>French</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Danilo Pereira <i>Guinea Bissauan</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Nelson Semedo <i>Cape Verdean</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Renato Sanches <i>Santomean</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">William Carvalho <i>Angolan</i></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Pepe <i>Brazilian</i>	Nuno Mendes <i>Angolan</i>	Raphael Guerreiro <i>French</i>	Danilo Pereira <i>Guinea Bissauan</i>	Nelson Semedo <i>Cape Verdean</i>	Renato Sanches <i>Santomean</i>	William Carvalho <i>Angolan</i>	
Pepe <i>Brazilian</i>	Nuno Mendes <i>Angolan</i>								
Raphael Guerreiro <i>French</i>	Danilo Pereira <i>Guinea Bissauan</i>								
Nelson Semedo <i>Cape Verdean</i>	Renato Sanches <i>Santomean</i>								
William Carvalho <i>Angolan</i>									

Source: Primary data. Compiled from UEFA.com and Transfermarkt.

Apart from Brazilian migrants, Portugal is also nationally diverse with its significant African communities which migrated from its former colonies such as Mozambique, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and Sao Tome Principe, and several other African states. Brazilian descent has a

²⁶ Bazaraa, D. (July 8, 2021). *Graphic shows reality of what England’s squad would look like without immigration*. Retrieved from <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/graphic-shows-reality-what-englands-24486530>

²⁷ de Vasconcellos Ribeiro, C.H. & Dimeo, P. The experience of migration for Brazilian football players. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*. Vol. 12. No. 6, 725-736 (2009). DOI: 10.1080/17430430902944159

similar appearance with the Portuguese native. On the contrary, players from African descent are coloured and different from the rest, they are often subjected to racism. Nuno Mendes, Nelson Semedo, William Carvalho, Danilo Pereira, and Renato Sanches are Portuguese players with African descent who represented Portugal in Euro 2020. Also mentioning that Portugal victory in Euro 2016 has a significant contribution from an African-descent player namely Edercito Antonio Lopes, also known as Eder who scored a winning goal against France in the Euro 2016 final. Migrant background players play a determining role in Portuguese national football development, also they became part of Portuguese society, and became the instrument of diversity index in Portugal.

Belgium also included many coloured players in their national football team because diversity has been an integral part of Belgium. As comprised of two main ethnicities, Flemish and Walloon, which speak French and Dutch. For instance, Eden Hazard who speaks French from the Walloon region and Kevin de Bruyne from the Flemish region who speaks Dutch. Belgium is one of the national teams that embraces diversity within their national team, not only because of the presence of migrant background players, but also the diversity within its society that made up Belgium which are Flemish and Walloon.

Belgium's diversity has broken the stalemate of 'Walloon versus Flemish' identity in the national conversations, offering something of the hyper-cosmopolitan mix of Brussels.²⁸ To analyze the involvement of migrant background players in the Belgium national football team, we applied the migration corridor of colonization. Mostly, migrant background players in the Belgium national football teams have Congolese ethnicity as they were tied through colonization. Players like Romelu Lukaku, Vincent Kompany, Youri Tielemans, Dedryck Boyata, and Michy Batshuayi have at least one Congolese parent. Apart from that, Belgium has also Moroccan descent players such as Nacer Chadli and Marouane Fellaini. There are also players who migrate from European neighboring countries like Adnan Januzaj who has Kosovan descent, and Yannick Carrasco whose parents are Portuguese and Spanish.²⁹

²⁸ Palmer, E. (July, 2 2018). *World Cup 2018: How Belgian footballers speak to each other*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44624066>

²⁹ CGTN. (July 2, 2018). *Which are the most diverse World Cup 2018 teams*. Retrieved from https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d3d774d7859444e78457a6333566d54/share_p.html

Table 4. Belgian migrant descent footballers during Euro 2020

Country	Players / Ethnicity	
Belgium	<p>Thibaut Courtois <i>Walloon-Flemish</i></p>	<p>Thorgan Hazard <i>French</i></p>
	<p>Thomas Kominski <i>Polish</i></p>	<p>Yannick Carrasco <i>Portuguese-Spanish</i></p>
	<p>Jason Denayer <i>Congolese</i></p>	<p>Nacer Chadli <i>Moroccan</i></p>
	<p>Dedryck Boyata <i>Congolese</i></p>	<p>Jérémy Doku <i>Ghanaian</i></p>
	<p>Axel Witsel <i>Martiniquais</i></p>	<p>Romelu Lukaku <i>Congolese</i></p>
	<p>Youri Tielemans <i>Congolese-Flemish</i></p>	<p>Michy Batshuayi <i>Congolese</i></p>
	<p>Eden Hazard <i>French</i></p>	<p>Christian Benteke <i>Ghanaian</i></p>

Source: Primary data. Compiled from UEFA.com and Transfermarkt.

The Netherlands national football team is heavily impacted by players from their former colony mainly Surinamese descent. As the former colony, Suriname remains important to the Netherlands, which is home to around 350,000 of Surinamese origin. Both countries have a shared history, speak Dutch, and are closely linked. The relations between both countries continue in the footballing world, as many football players with Surinamese descent are representing the Netherlands national team. Suriname is the place where the next generation of *'OnsOranje'* stars were born.

Table 5. Dutch migrant descent footballers during Euro 2020

Country	Players / Ethnicity	
Netherlands	<p>Nathan Aké <i>Ivorian</i></p>	<p>Georginio Wijnaldum <i>Surinamese</i></p>
	<p>Jurrien Timber <i>Aruban-Curaçao</i></p>	<p>Cody Gakpo <i>Togolese-Ghanaian</i></p>
	<p>Owen Wijndal <i>Surinamese</i></p>	<p>Quincy Promes <i>Surinamese</i></p>
	<p>Patrick van Aanholt <i>Curaçao</i></p>	<p>Memphis Depay <i>Ghanaian</i></p>
	<p>Denzel Dumfries <i>Aruban</i></p>	<p>Donyell Mallen <i>Surinamese</i></p>
	<p>Ryan Gravenberch <i>Surinamese</i></p>	

Source: Primary data. Compiled from UEFA.com and Transfermarkt.

Sander Ijtsma, a Dutch football writer, explained that “Holland’s national team has undoubtedly benefited from using Suriname-born players, who had the potential to make quite the impact.”³⁰ To make the selection of Dutch national football team, the federation could easily include Surinamese-born players into its squad. As specific regulations to acquire Dutch nationality are in place for Suriname-born individuals.³¹ The influence of Suriname-descent to the Dutch football has started since the late 1980s, for instance, such players as Patrick Kluivert, Ruud Gullit and Frank Rijkaard. In Euro 2020, there are still plenty of players with Surinamese descent who represent the Netherlands. Players namely Gini Wijnaldum, van Aarnholt, and Virgil van Dijk are the second generation of Surinamese migrants. Apart from Surinamese descent, the Dutch national football team also included players from other countries like Memphis Depay from Ghana.³²

b. Geographical Proximity and Guestworker Migration Corridor

Germany has a very special place in the immigrants’ hearts. Germany has many major policies that accommodate and welcome immigrants to their society and gain citizenship with ease.³³

³⁰ Ijtsma, Sander. In van Amersfoort, H. & van Niekerk, M. Immigration as a colonial inheritance: Post-colonial immigrants in the Netherlands, 1945-2002. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Vol. 32 No. 3, 323-346 (2006). DOI: 10.1080/13691830600555210

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Carmichael, C. (October 16, 2018). *How Surinamese migrants revolutionized Dutch Football*. Retrieved from <https://thesefootballtimes.co/2018/10/16/how-surinamese-migrants-revolutionised-dutch-football/>

³³ Merkel, U. German football culture in the new millennium: ethnic diversity, flair, and youth on and off the pitch. *Soccer and Society*. Vol. 15, No. 2, 241-255 (2014). DOI: 10.1080/14660970.2013.849189

This belongs to the model of geographical proximity and guestworker migration corridors. Germany national football team is ethnically diverse which reflected the diversity of German society.

Table 6. German migrant descent footballers during Euro 2020

Country	Players / Ethnicity								
Germany	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%; border: none;">Antonio Rüdiger <i>Sierra Leonean</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%; border: none;">Jamal Musiala <i>English-Nigerian</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; border: none;">Rubin Gosens <i>Dutch</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; border: none;">Serge Gnabry <i>Ivorian</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; border: none;">Emre Can <i>Turkish</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; border: none;">Leroy Sané <i>Senegalese-French</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; border: none;">İlkay Gündoğan <i>Turkish</i></td> <td style="border: none;"></td> </tr> </table>	Antonio Rüdiger <i>Sierra Leonean</i>	Jamal Musiala <i>English-Nigerian</i>	Rubin Gosens <i>Dutch</i>	Serge Gnabry <i>Ivorian</i>	Emre Can <i>Turkish</i>	Leroy Sané <i>Senegalese-French</i>	İlkay Gündoğan <i>Turkish</i>	
Antonio Rüdiger <i>Sierra Leonean</i>	Jamal Musiala <i>English-Nigerian</i>								
Rubin Gosens <i>Dutch</i>	Serge Gnabry <i>Ivorian</i>								
Emre Can <i>Turkish</i>	Leroy Sané <i>Senegalese-French</i>								
İlkay Gündoğan <i>Turkish</i>									

Source: Primary data. Compiled from UEFA.com and Transfermarkt.

Among the 23 players that represented Germany during Euro 2020, many of them have migrant backgrounds. The players have roots in several foreign countries comprising Turkish, African, and neighbouring countries. Antonio Rüdiger has Sierra Leonean parents, Rubin Gosens who has Dutch ancestry, Serge Gnabry with German-Ivorian descent, Emre Can and İlkay Gündoğan who have Turkish background, and identity complex for Jamal Musiala who has both mixed English and Nigerian descent and Leroy Sané who was born to Senegalese-French family. They are representing Germany at the international level.³⁴

According to Destatis (German Federal Office for Statistics), 19.3 million people living in Germany have immigrant backgrounds and 13,2 million of them had moved to Germany willingly, by themselves. Out of the 19.3 million, 14% of them have Turkish roots. The migration started after World War II, most western European countries started to reconstruct and restructure their country by recruiting migrant workers as their temporary laborers. Thus, Turkey and Germany have established the guest worker migration corridor. German policy on migration allows it to accept migrants and asylum seekers from Asia and Africa.³⁵

With the involvement of migrant background players, the Switzerland national football team seems to confirm its reputation as a ‘country of immigration’ with so many migrant background players. These players originated from eleven different countries as diverse as from the African states as Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, and Zaire; the South American countries, Argentina and Colombia; and its neighboring countries like France, Germany, Kosovo, and Macedonia.³⁶

³⁴ DW. (June 13, 2010). *Germany’s soccer squad boasts ethnic diversity*. Retrieved from <https://www.dw.com/en/germanys-soccer-squad-boasts-ethnic-diversity/a-5678110>

³⁵ De Haas, H., Castles, S. & Miller, M. J. *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. 5th Ed. Basingstoke. Palgrave Macmillan Higher Education. (2014).

³⁶ Hess, P. Small-country soccer and the integration debate: The case of Switzerland. *Soccer and Society*. Vol. 15, No. 3, 334-352 (2014). DOI: 10.1080/14660970.2014.896502

Table 7. Swiss migrant descent footballers during Euro 2020

Country	Players / Ethnicity
Switzerland	<p style="text-align: center;">Yvon Mvogo <i>Congolese</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Manuel Akanji <i>Nigerian</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Eray Cömert <i>Turkish</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Loris Benito <i>Spanish</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Ricardo Rodríguez <i>Chilean</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Kevin Mbabu <i>Congolese</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Jordan Lotomba <i>Congolese</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Denis Zakaria <i>Congolese</i></p>

Source: Primary data. Compiled from UEFA.com and Transfermarkt.

The inclusion of migrant background footballers from geographical proximity has benefited the Switzerland national team the most. The inclusion of footballers born in former Yugoslavian countries like Kosovo and Macedonia. Xherdan Shaqiri, a Kosovan descent that migrated to Switzerland at a young age after the war broke out in the 1990s, represents the Swiss national football team. There are footballers who are born in Switzerland and have immigrant descent, namely Ricardo Rodriguez, Granit Xhaka, and Haris Seferović are some of the examples who currently represent Switzerland in international football.³⁷

Spain and Italy are in contrast to other western European countries. They were notably successful in European football with Spain winning three Euros and one World Cup, and Italy winning four World Cups, and two Euros. Although being the European football giants, both countries have less involvement of migrant background players, unlike France. Hence, both countries are less diverse because of the lack of presence of coloured footballers and often perceived as the homogenic national football team.

Even though Spain has capped black players, the balance of the Basques, Catalans and Spaniards have consumed the national energy under the banner of Spanish. Neither of these applies to Italy, who are notably white but have naturalized Brazilians. Neither Spain nor Italy have acquired a significant migrant community from their global empires. Indeed, both are the countries of emigration

³⁷ Xherdan, S. (June 22, 2018). *Now I Got My Own Army Guy*. Retrieved from <https://www.theplayertribune.com/articles/xherdan-shaqiri-switzerland-now-i-got-my-own-army-guy>

until today. Brazilians with Italian or Spanish roots would likely integrate with ease. Even though Spain was a former colonial power with colonies along South America and 3 million of South Americans resided in Spain, not many of them have been included to the selection of the Spain national football team. During Euro 2020, only three players who do not originate from Spain, Thiago Alcântara for instance, was born in Italy and has Brazilian roots but decided to represent Spain in international football. Then, Adama Traoré who was born in Spain from Malian parents, and the most discussed player in Spain, Aymeric Laporte who switched nationality before the start of Euro 2020, he represented France youth team but decided to play for Spain in his senior career because he stated that he has Basque roots and spent a long time in Spain.³⁸

Table 8. Spanish and Italian migrant descent footballers during Euro 2020

Country	Players / Ethnicity				
Spain	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%; border: none;">Robert Sanchez <i>English-Spanish</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%; border: none;">Thiago Alcântara <i>Brazilian-Italian</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; border: none;">Aymeric Laporte <i>French</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; border: none;">Adama Traoré <i>Malian</i></td> </tr> </table>	Robert Sanchez <i>English-Spanish</i>	Thiago Alcântara <i>Brazilian-Italian</i>	Aymeric Laporte <i>French</i>	Adama Traoré <i>Malian</i>
Robert Sanchez <i>English-Spanish</i>	Thiago Alcântara <i>Brazilian-Italian</i>				
Aymeric Laporte <i>French</i>	Adama Traoré <i>Malian</i>				
Italy	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%; border: none;">Rafael Tolói <i>Brazilian</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%; border: none;">Jorginho <i>Brazilian</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; border: none;">Emerson Palmieri <i>Brazilian</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; border: none;"></td> </tr> </table>	Rafael Tolói <i>Brazilian</i>	Jorginho <i>Brazilian</i>	Emerson Palmieri <i>Brazilian</i>	
Rafael Tolói <i>Brazilian</i>	Jorginho <i>Brazilian</i>				
Emerson Palmieri <i>Brazilian</i>					

Source: Primary data. Compiled from UEFA.com and Transfermarkt.

As for Italy, they did not really have much connection with colonialism even though they did colonize the Northern part of Africa during 1890-1941. Hence, Italy has become the main destination of migrants from Africa through the Mediterranean Sea. One of the most notable immigrant players in ‘*Gli Azzurri*’ is Mario Balotelli who is of Ghanaian descent. He is often subjected to hate and racist abuse. He is retired from the national team. Italy has ties with South American countries like Argentina and Brazil as many so-called ‘*Orduni Italiano*’ (Italian diaspora) migrated and settled in those countries. In the past, many Argentinian players moved to Italy and some of them decided to represent Italy. Migrant background players, such as Jorginho, Emerson Palmieri, and Rafael Tolói have contributed to Italy’s victory in Euro 2020. The three were born in Brazil and moved to Italy at young ages and later acquired Italian citizenship.

c. European Multiculturalism as the form of World Society

Multiculturalism is the willingness of the society to accommodate and recognise the coexistence of diverse cultures, which includes racial and cultural aspects that are embodied into shared norms and values. The diversification of European society which is conducted through the

³⁸ Lara, M. Á. (September 6, 2020). *The most diverse Spain team ever*. Retrieved from <https://www.marca.com/en/football/spanish-football/2020/09/06/5f54be68e2704ea7738b4605.html>

migration corridors created the coexistence of diverse cultures in Europe itself. The migrant-descent footballers in Europe have their sense of belongings as part of the nation itself. For example, Adama Traore was born in Spain from a Malian-descent parent, he identifies himself as a Spanish instead of Malian. Another example is Antonio Rüdiger, he is a Sierra-Leonean-descent yet he was born in Germany, he also identifies himself as a German. They have already embodied their shared norms and values into the society, hence the society accepted them as part of their nationality. This phenomenon creates a multicultural society which accommodates the coexistence of differences. Hence, the term of world society can be used to describe this phenomenon.

Though Europe has been already integrated through the European Union as the form of international society, the integration of immigrant footballers in Europe has faced major key challenges such as racism and negative sentiments, cultural and linguistic barriers. Football can be seen as the mirror of Europe hence European football reflects the condition of European society. Racism is one of the major challenges to the multiculturalism and heterogeneity of European society. This condition will postpone multiculturalism, which will integrate people from different backgrounds and diverse cultures into the society. For example, racism that happened throughout footballing communities also represents what racism in society looks like.

Mark Dodge in his report once stated that for racism to be eliminated, it requires action from all sections of football, from the fans, players, clubs, national associations, international federations, mass media, and politicians.³⁹ Furthermore, he added, UEFA and some national football federations have taken a clear stance with sanctions, support for anti-racism campaigns, and spreading positive messages at football games.⁴⁰ Though many anti-racism campaigns are sounded worldwide, there are still a lot of people who cannot accept it. They are afraid of multiculturalism as multiculturalism could be both an advantage and a threat at the same time. For some who could not afford diversity, they would want Europe just to remain for Europeans, therefore they are spreading hate to the ‘coloured’ communities, particularly in football.

Recently, in the Euro 2020 final, the hate is once again spread following England’s defeat against Italy. Italy won 3-2 on penalty shootouts. This game is England’s first international final appearance in more than fifty years. As their ‘coming home’ hope turned into dust after Italy claimed the trophy ‘Rome’, the hate and racist abuse emerged on social media after three coloured players missed their three penalties that led to England losing. The abuse has been aimed at Jadon Sancho, Marcus Rashford, and Bukayo Saka. This irritating behavior even caught British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prince William who serves as the president of England’s Football Association. As NPR stated, they both condemn this act of racism. Prince William wrote on Twitter that he was sickened by the racist abuse.⁴¹

On the contrary, Boris wrote that “this England team deserves to be lauded as heroes, not racially abused on social media.”⁴² Gareth Southgate even addressed this abhorrent behavior as

³⁹ Dodge, M. *Anti-Racism in European Football*. Brighton: University of Brighton, 2014. Accessed July 24, 2021.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 2

⁴¹ NPR. (July 12, 2021). *Three Black Soccer Players Are Facing Racist Abuse After England’s Euro 2020 Defeat*. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/2021/07/12/1015239599/prince-william-and-boris-johnson-denounce-the-racist-abuse-of-englands-soccer-te>

⁴² Johnson, Boris. Twitter post. July 12, 2021, 1.02 PM. <https://twitter.com/BorisJohnson/status/1414465103374729220>

unforgivable.⁴³ Not only in England, but these racist behaviors have also spread throughout the continent. I remembered when Mesut Özil, a German football star of Turkish origin who has experienced discrimination and racism, after the World Cup 2018, while announcing his retirement from the German national football team, he also said that “I am a German when we win, but an immigrant when we lose.”. Another story comes from a Belgian football star of Congolese descent, Romelu Lukaku. He also experienced racism both in the fields and on the internet. He even got ‘monkey-chanted’ by ignorant communities in Italy. He quoted “When things were going well, they were calling me Romelu Lukaku, the Belgian Striker. When things were not going well, they were calling me Romelu Lukaku, the Belgian striker of Congolese descent.”. Did you catch the difference? Absolutely.

There are just a few examples of many players that experienced hate and racist abuse in Europe. This indicates the major challenges of immigrant integration to European society, especially in the footballing community. At the end of this section, I want to quote this strong message by spoken TRT World that depicted the sad connection between football and multiculturalism. “After a win, diversity and multiculturalism tend to be celebrated and you hear slogans like ‘we are stronger together’, but after a loss, players of color are often scapegoated for their differences.”⁴⁴

Racism is one of the most important major key challenges to the internalization of multiculturalism into European society. When this behavior is eradicated, the process can be conducted with ease.

Conclusion

Though football is the most popular sport in the world that attracts billions of fans, and racial and cultural diversity have always been a part of this, this topic has still yet under-researched. We may say that why did not they play for their national origin but on the contrary, we must also say that they would be this good as if they did not absorb and integrate to the sophisticated European footballing facilities. Europe is one of the immigrants and refugees’ favorite destinations. This region can give these asylum seekers hope and a brand-new start. It is a region full of richness and cultural diversity. For the footballers, Europa is seen as the paradise of footballing communities, and transformed into their very dreams. As we have stated in the previous section, football is the mirror of Europe, what is happening in football, depicts what happened in society. The involvement of migrant footballers in European football as exemplified by examining nine countries can be seen as the reflection of European multiculturalism and heterogeneity. The inclusion of migrant footballers into the national teams led to denationalization of their national origin. This can be seen as a depiction of how Europeans accept the existence of immigrants by letting them integrate and acculturate with the society.

The immigrant background footballers cannot exist without migratory movements that made all of this possible. We examined these players' migratory movements as Camperhout and Sterkenburg explained that there are three migratory corridors: 1) colonial migration corridors; 2) geographical proximity corridors; and 3) guestworker migration corridors. We concluded that the

⁴³ CNN International. (July 12, 2021). *Racist abuse directed at England players after Euro 2020 final defeat is described as ‘unforgivable’ by manager Gareth Southgate*. Retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/07/12/football/england-racist-abuse-bukayo-saka-jadon-sancho-marcus-rashford-euro-2020-final-spt-intl/index.html>

⁴⁴ TRT World. *European Football and Colonialism*. July 9, 2021. YouTube video, 6:05. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HupN9jPuJqE&t=4s>

existence of migrant background or migrant descent players are heavily affected by the colonial migration corridors, as five of the nine countries we have examined had and have connections with those players historically because simply they were former major colonial powers. Namely, England with the United Kingdom, France, Portuguese, Belgium, and Netherlands. Though the Italian and the Spanish did colonize some countries in the past, neither of them included *colony-from-players* as much as the other former colonial countries, hence we put Italy and Spain into the different corridor, the geographical proximity-guestworker corridors, as well as Germany and Switzerland.

Immigrant integration to the very core of the society resulting in a heterogenous community which leads to multiculturalism. As multiculturalism is the willingness to accommodate and recognise the coexistence of diverse culture, which includes such racial and cultural aspects that are embodied into shared norms and values of states' society, we could use the term of world society to describe this phenomenon. World society emerges under the condition that one region is becoming more diverse as the people in it integrate by accepting diversity, and constitute common norms and values that are conducted to the common rules and institutions. Last but not least, this has answered the objective of our research. We want to study the processes of diversification of European football through the involvement of migrant background footballers and the integration of them to society. The results depict that football is the reflection of European multiculturalism that shaped the heterogeneity of European society.

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