Racism in Russian football: a challenge to the World Cup 2018

Elizaveta Zhuk
Racism in Russia

- Nationalities/ethnicities of racial abuse victims (Central Asia, Caucasus, etc.)
- Quite common public manifestation
- Relative impunity
- Interaction of different forms of discrimination
Racism in Russian Football

- 2007: Welliton – Spartak Moscow ("Monkey go home")
- 2008: UEFA Cup (Zenit St-Petersburg – Olympic Marseille)
- 2010: Peter Odemwingie – Lokomotiv Moscow ("Thanks West Brom")
- 2011: Roberto Carlos and banana
Officials’ attitude

Policy of denial → World Cup 2018 → Policy of combat

- Russian Football Union (RFU) Memorandum: complex program against racism (2010)
- RFU Regulations on Ethics (2012)
- RFU Disciplinary Regulations (2013)
- RFU Handbook on football clubs’ licensing (2012)
- RFU Statute (2013)
Zenit anti-racism campaigns (since 2003)

- “Racism is a swinishness” (2011)
- “Show racism the red card” (2009, 2011)
- “Racism deprives the team of support” (2011)
- Anti-racist flyers (2011)
- “Russia without racism” (2011)
- “Through tolerance in sport to tolerance in the society” (2013)
- Campaigns at schools (regularly)
Conclusions

- Racism remains a problem in Russia in general and in Russian football in particular.
- Has local peculiarities, often combined with other forms of discrimination.
- World Cup 2018 ignited the fight against racism in Russian football via anti-racism campaign and adoption of relevant legislation.
- Tendency to adopt more severe sanctions against racism according to UEFA.
Thank you