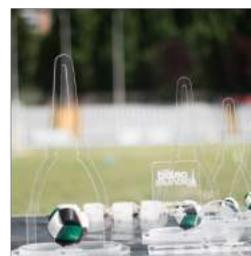




## BALON MUNDIAL: IMMIGRATION, FOOTBALL, COMMUNITY BUILDING

Viviana Premazzi  
Claudia Genovese  
Tommaso Pozzato



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# Executive summary

Every year, Turin and all the migrant communities living in the city look forward to the football tournament organized during the summer by the association Balon Mundial<sup>1</sup>. Balon Mundial works for the promotion of individual and cultural identities by using sport as a tool of community building and participation, serving at the same time as a platform for the development of educational and job opportunities. Besides, in recent years Balon Mundial has become a more and more active actor in the creation of support networks for refugees and in fostering the creation of new communities through sport, starting from the teams themselves, which often work as a first tool for implementing welfare and for welcoming migrants. One of the main goals of the organization is to promote the culture of sport as a mean of social and cultural advancement enhancing communication and interpersonal relationships, as well as the promotion of communication and mutual knowledge among the various migrant communities in Turin and the creation of a forum for cross-cultural debate to exchange views and give information on topics related to social inclusion, anti-racism and fighting intolerance. In addition to the summer tournament, Balon Mundial organizes a number of activities all year round, networking with other local actors such as institutions, associations, projects and social enterprises.

Between June and July 2016 Turin hosted the tenth edition of Balon Mundial, Europe's biggest "Migrant communities world cup": which took place with the official partnerships or involvement of UEFA Foundation for Children and Save the Dream. It comprised the 11-a-side men's tournament and the 5-a-side women's tournament. In 2016 there was a total of 49 teams involved, 32 of which are national teams (12 African countries, 5 Asian, 7 South American and 5 European), 9 are project-teams formed by refugees and asylum-seekers, 11 women's teams, 3 of which are project-teams. It counted more than 1,000 players, more than 100 games played and an audience of more than 6,000 people between supporters, team members' families and friends, football enthusiasts and people sensitive to the themes promoted by the tournament. Edition in 2007 saw the participation of 20 teams, and the number has since been increasing to this year's figures. Balon Mundial has never required a participation fee in order to guarantee everyone's right to take part in this event.

The tournament has two main goals: on the one hand it aims at creating a unique space in the city of Turin where the migrant communities can meet and share their cultural backgrounds on the other hand, it seeks to promote the creation of new relationship networks through a universally renowned sport such as football, thus destroying the barriers that often arise between communities of migrants coming from places and cultures very distant and different from one another.

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<sup>1</sup> According to ISTAT, on the 1st January 2016, foreigners living in Turin were 221.961, among them there are migrant first and second generations, refugees and asylum seekers.



Balon Mundial is passion, involvement, respect for the opponent, and it is also the exceptional strength given by the knowledge of having a “place in the world”, even if only for a few hours, of playing for one’s own ideals and of representing one’s own country, even if far away from home. During the summer tournament, from early June to early July, teams and supporters from all around the world, dwelling in Turin or Piedmont (but not necessarily) gather to support their team and to feel a little closer to their native country through the food, songs and dances that are the framework (and sometimes the main elements) of the various days of the tournament, and also to meet and get to know the other communities living in Turin. That is when Balon Mundial becomes an accelerator of integration, mutual knowledge and cross-community networking.

As a part of the partnership between Save the Dream and Balon Mundial, this study was conducted to analyse the social impact of the initiative, the effects of sport and its values in general, or, more specifically, the motivations and the outcomes (not only in sports terms) of participation in the tournament, both on an individual and on a team/community level. In particular, one player and one manager or coach from every men’s and women’s team has been interviewed. Everyone has been asked to trace the process of creation and development of the team, and with regard to national teams everyone has been asked to quantify how much the team contributes to community building. The interviewees were also invited to reflect on the effects of being part of a team, in terms of social network building, emotion management and differences, prejudice and diffidence overcome. Then they were asked to evaluate the importance of national teams in promoting and reconsidering national pride,

especially among Italian-born young people. From Balon Mundial's point of view, the questions were aimed at evaluating the opportunities given by the tournament in promoting contacts between communities and the role of Balon Mundial in promoting and supporting the creation of such relationships.

One of the main focuses was on the topic of leadership within Balon Mundial communities, since one of the main outcomes of Balon Mundial efforts is to train and follow up community leaders, who eventually will become promoters of a kind of bottom-up welfare and of Balon Mundial core values. The interviewees were asked to identify the leader(s) of their team and the traits that characterize a leader.

Lastly, every interviewee was asked to share one of her/his dreams, whether it was or was not linked to sport and the tournament.

The importance of games and sports, particularly team sports, emerges clearly from the research: the team offers an identity, a role, a sense of belonging and important relationships. Finding a team to play in, whether or not made up of fellow countrymen, helps in particular newly-arrived young immigrants in the creation of relationships that prove able to sustain, help and accompany both from a material and psychological points of view. National teams are a powerful means of community aggregation, where also second generations who were born and raised in Italy may find or re-discover their roots. Besides, a team created with a shared goal enables overcoming prejudice and exclusive or discriminatory behaviours, and the skills acquired on the field may be transferred into daily life. Playing a sport, playing in a team and against an opponent also teaches respect for rules, commitment and responsibility towards team-mates and the coach. The team thus becomes a gym where one can practise social skills and where one can implement his or her rights and duties.

The tournament organized every year by Balon Mundial, the festival of sports and migrant communities, helps the different communities living in the city to get to know each other and to promote contact between them and the "locals". Also in this case, mixing may promote the overcoming of prejudice and stereotypes, the creation of support networks between different communities and the protagonism of associations.



## Introduction

“Differences unite and enrich Turin; together with the help of football we are now proving this to everyone”.

Tommaso Pozzato, president of ASD Balon Mundial Onlus

As stated by the EU Council’s report *Studies on Education and Sport. Sport and Multiculturalism* (PMP, ILSP, 2004), sport is both a source and a driver for inclusion and social cohesion and it’s recognized as an excellent tool for integrating minorities and groups subject to social marginalization. Sport may become an element of socialization, helping to group together people of different age, as well as different territories, communities and city districts. It can lead to the creation of social communities with shared interests and boost citizens’ active involvement.

Similar attention towards sport as an essential part of the lives of millions of Europeans has been paid by the new Erasmus+ programme (2014-2020), which is a summary of 7 earlier EU programmes which recognize the value of sport in promoting cooperation, dialogue and participation<sup>2</sup>. On a national level, in recent years the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR) has been paying more attention to sport, by allowing it three times more funds than previously, raising it from 2 millions in 2015 to 6.7 millions in 2016, outlining its value in promoting knowledge and interaction between migrants and Italians<sup>3</sup>. This is precisely the idea underlying the organization of the Balon Mundial tournament, an event that seeks to promote through sport mutual knowledge and integration between the various communities dwelling in Piedmont.

Balon Mundial works with global partners like Save the Dream and Uefa Foundation for Children for the promotion of individuals and cultural identities by using sport as a tool for community building and participation, serving at the same time as a platform for the development of educational and job opportunities. Besides, in recent years Balon Mundial has become a more and more active actor in the creation of support networks for refugees and in fostering the creation of new communities through sport, starting from the teams themselves, which often work as a first tool for implementing welfare and for welcoming migrants. One of the main goals of the organization is to promote the culture of sport as a mean of social and cultural advancement enhancing communication and interpersonal relationship, as well as the promotion of communication and mutual knowledge among the various migrant communities in Turin and the creation of a forum for cross-cultural debate to exchange views and give information on topics related to social inclusion, anti-racism and fighting intolerance. In addition to the summer tournament, Balon Mundial organizes a number of activities all year round,

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<sup>2</sup> Sport in EU, [https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/sport\\_it](https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/sport_it)

<sup>3</sup> D. Zoletto, *Il gioco duro dell'integrazione. L'intercultura sui campi da gioco*, Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2010.

networking with other local actors such as institutions, associations, projects and social enterprises.

Traditionally, football is seen as an Italian sport. Nevertheless, many teams are nowadays recruiting young players from foreign countries. The EURO16 Italian national team sported players of Nigerian, Egyptian and Brazilian origin, who have been naturalized Italian citizens thanks to their Italian ancestry. In this light, the Italian national team is nothing but a snap-shot of 2016 Italian society itself: a fully multicultural society, facing the daily emergency of the arrival of new asylum-seekers and, at the same time, experiencing the daily reality of peaceful coexistence, gathering and cooperation between people with different backgrounds.

An initiative like Balon Mundial helps, in the first place, to “go beyond the notion of the Italian character of football”<sup>4</sup> and shows clearly how sport can be a bridge among cultures, as well as among generations. When the aim is to score a goal, differences of age, social class, culture and religion are erased; everyone is just part of a group, a team, sharing the same passion and the same objective: to have fun and, possibly, to win. In this light, Balon Mundial is that “informal educational environment”<sup>5</sup> that supports and develops personal and cross-cultural empowerment paths.

Between June and July 2016 Turin hosted the tenth edition of Balon Mundial, Europe’s biggest “Migrant communities world cup”: it comprises the 11-a-side men's tournament and the 5-a-side women's tournament. In 2016 there was a total of 49 teams involved, 32 of which are national teams (12 African countries, 5 Asian, 7 South American and 5 European), 9 are project-teams formed by refugees and asylum-seekers and 11 women's teams, 3 of which are project-teams. It counted more than 1,000 players, more than 100 games played and an audience of more than 6,000 people between supporters, team members’ families and friends, football enthusiasts and people sensitive to the themes promoted by the tournament. The first edition, 2007, saw the participation of 20 teams, and the number has since been increasing to this year’s figures. Balon Mundial has never required a participation fee in order to guarantee everyone’s right to take part in this event.

The tournament has two main goals: on the one hand it aims at creating a unique space in the city of Turin where the migrant communities can meet and share their cultural backgrounds, on the other hand, it seeks to promote the creation of new relationship networks through a universally renowned sport such as football, thus destroying the barriers that often arise between communities of migrants coming from places and cultures very distant and different from one another.

Balon Mundial pays great attention to fair play. That is why, alongside the trophy for the teams that rank first in the tournament, additional prizes are given for on-field ethics and fairness, qualities promoted by Balon Mundial. Besides, in 2011 the “Balon Mundial Sport Ethical Charter”

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<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, p. 15

was introduced, inspired by the "Piedmont Sports Ethical Charter"<sup>6</sup>, the 11 UEFA values and the UEFA anti-racism programme<sup>7</sup>. The charter contains 10 statements involving anti-racism, fair play promotion, sporting rights and the fight against violence in sport. The charter is signed by all the managers before the beginning of the tournament. By signing the charter the managers commit themselves to enforcing and promoting its values within their teams.

Among the players there are first, second and third generations, workers and entrepreneurs, shopkeepers and freelance professionals, students and, in recent years, a number of refugees and asylum-seekers. Once turned adult or after gaining the necessary experience, many former players eventually become managers or coaches of their teams, thus gaining a leading role and assuming new responsibilities.



Revolving around the football fields, "Food Mundial" is a project aimed at promoting gastronomies from the world. Food is a natural "third half" protagonist for the event and represents an important moment for further gathering and debate among the participants. Lastly, several cultural events such as book presentations, debates, concerts and dance shows by and about the different communities involved take place, when possible, during the last days of the tournament.

The first phases of the championship are played on the fields of Colletta sport facility, located inside Colletta public park, made available for the tournament by Turin City's 7th district. The facility includes two regular football fields (an artificial turf pitch and a grass pitch) provided with locker rooms and public toilets. The finals take place in a real stadium: Primo Nebiolo Stadium, located in the 3rd district and third in size behind Juventus Stadium and Grande Torino Olympic Stadium. Primo Nebiolo Stadium has a grandstand with a seating capacity of 950 and a set of bleachers with 6,500 seats, and is provided with a grass pitch (for football, rugby and American football) and a running track.

In the first edition, 2007, and from 2011 to present, the tournament organization has been supported by UISP (Unione Italiana Sport Per Tutti)<sup>8</sup>. UISP promotes sport for everyone, with no limits or barriers, aimed at giving everyone the possibility to "be part", "play" and "be there", using the language of sport as a mean bringing differences together. Through the format "sportpertutti" (sport for everyone), the association experiments with different sport activities within a cross-cultural framework.

One of the main purposes of "sportpertutti" in the specific field of football and of Balon Mundial is to promote free registration for foreigners, which is often a problematic issue within F.I.G.C. federal championships. The relationship between Balon Mundial and UISP is mutual: on the one hand UISP club championship players reunite in national teams for Balon Mundial and, conversely, some Balon Mundial players may be hired by UISP clubs. This virtuous exchange has produced over the years an increase in terms of participants in both the events and promoted wider participation in sports activities, producing positive outcomes in terms of both psychophysical and relational health.

Since the tournament has become an important event for migrant communities in general, and for bigger ones in particular, every year many official representatives choose the event for an official visit. For example, last year the Peruvian Consul Guillermo Bernos and the Columbian Vice-Consul Carlos Fernando Molina Cespedes joined in the first day of the tournament, in order to support their men's and women's team debuts in the championship, while the former Turin mayor Piero Fassino kicked-off the men's Ecuador-Peru and the women's Ecuador-Colombia matches. The finals were attended by Piedmont regional counsellor for equal opportunities Monica Cerutti, UISP Torino president Patrizia Alfano and Slow Food Italian migrant communities representative Amajou Abderrahmane, who is also ASD Balon Mundial

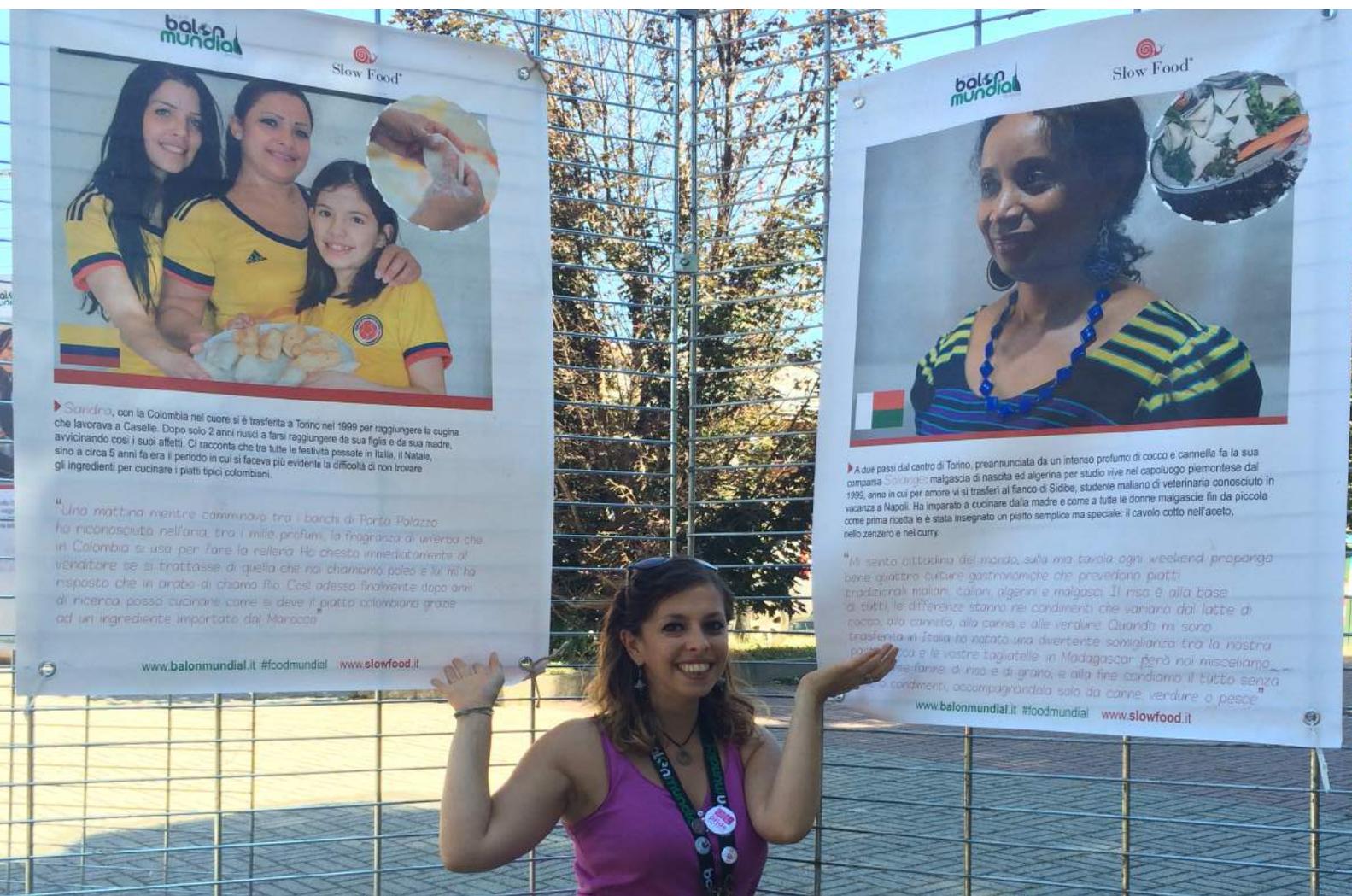
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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.uisp.it/nazionale/>

Onlus partner in the project Sapori Migranti. During the finals, the newly elected mayor Chiara Appendino congratulated the organization of the tournament with a tweet.

We win, we lose, we get angry, we celebrate together. This is sport, and this is Balon Mundial in the persons of its enthusiastic and tireless volunteers, who work to seek support from sponsors and institutions, and also by making the best out of available resources and strategically networking, helping the various entities dedicated to the cause of integration in the joint development of projects, during and after the tournament. A fruitful cooperation was established for the 2016 edition with the Giovani per Torino (GXT) volunteers, who work for a volunteer youth-community project aimed at people 16-30-year-olds within the city of Turin. The project started in 1995 and provides the opportunity to engage in short-term volunteering projects during events that take place in Turin.

Since 2015 Balon Mundial has also been taking part in the Football vs Homophobia campaign, supported by the FARE Network (Football Against Racism in Europe) and, since 2016, has engaged in a partnership with Slow Food which resulted in a communication campaign aimed at the promotion of Food Mundial, an event that in 2016 included Albania, Brazil, Colombia, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, and Peru. Moreover, on Sunday 19 June Balon Mundial was the third stop-over of Altri Europei 2016, a travelling event created by The Small Now Onlus in partnership with AltroPallone Asd Onlus, which travelled around Europe for 6,000 km touching, in 20 days, Italy, Hungary, Turkey and France, with the aim of taking advantage of the media exposure granted by EURO2016 in order to draw attention towards social inclusion and integration through sport. The tour ended on the 28 and the 30 of June at the Calais refugee camp.



Moreover, during the first three days of the tournament, Balon Mundial hosted Associazione Giosef for the launch of the “Across the Lines” campaign, a project funded by the Erasmus+ program aimed at attracting interest to the visas requested for international mobility within European projects.

Besides, in 2016 Balon Mundial gained, for the first time, the direct support of three international organizations supporting and promoting football and sport as tools of social change: Street Football World and Uefa Foundation helped in the implementation of the Balon Mundial project in particular with refugees and younger people, while Save the Dream with regard to the analysis of the social impact of the event and the production of an inspirational video to capture and promote the core values of the tournament and the dreams of its participants. These partnerships show the value of the event and also the commitment of the organization itself to create ever-stronger partnerships.

The work of Balon Mundial has been recognized over the years at a national level. In fact, in 2010 Balon Mundial was also awarded, by the Piedmont Regional Scientific Committee “Etica e Sport”, the Rinaldo Bontempi – Maurizio Laudi Award. Then, in January 2015, the association received the #SPACE – spazio alla pace/sport per la pace Award, labelled by the association volunteers as the #PallonedOro of social integration, which is awarded yearly by Altropallone Asd Onlus to those who worked for collaboration among sport organizations.



## Box 1. Bolstering refugees' and asylum-seeker's soft skills through football: Cuori d'Aquila (Eagle Hearts)

Cuori d'Aquila is a project started in 2011 to create a football team of refugees and asylum-seekers. The project underwent several changes through the years, both concerning its ideals and its goals. Such changes were the outcome of reflections on transformations in the social and economic context in which the project operates. The Cuori d'Aquila project is for Balon Mundial an incubator for the experimentation of good practices with the beneficiaries of the project itself.

In particular, it is possible to identify three phases of the project:

Phase 1: Fair play-oriented sport and football education;

Phase 2: Football and job opportunities;

Phase 3: Football, leadership and empowerment.

The three phases shared the same method, characterized by:

1. Free access for every player to training, without any prior "technical" assessment, basing the selection on respect for the ethical charter of Balon Mundial;
2. Redefinition of the goals according to the needs of the players themselves;
3. Strongly educational fair play-oriented approach aimed at the development of soft-skills applicable both on the field and in the labour market.

The key factor of the Cuori d'Aquila project is the use of workouts and sport as tools to identify and develop players' soft skills in order to help them achieve personal goals off the field, in particular in jobseeking and in creating, managing and training a community team (always respecting fair-play rules), as well as engaging in volunteering projects.

Since 2012 eight Cuori d'Aquila players have been engaged in traineeships at L'Oréal Saipò Industriale, while others have received support in jobseeking, three have started managing a community football team which has taken part in Balon Mundial and four have worked for the creation of their own national teams.

Besides, the free access activity allows the creation of a "football" social network which becomes a moral and material support for the players, who often, due to their refugee and asylum-seeker status, are excluded from conventional welfare systems and support networks.

## Aims and methodology of the research

The involvement of Save the Dream in the tournament and this research falls within the framework of its vision towards a world in which every child and young person can practice sport, safely, and learn from its values in terms of integrity, respect and inclusion. Save the Dream is a global nonprofit Movement of organisations, people and athletes who believe in the power of sport to build more fair and inclusive societies and are therefore committed to promote and protect its core values for the good of youth and future generations.

The research was conducted using a qualitative methodology. The interview outline (Appendix 1) aims at analysing various aspects such as the positive effects of sport and its values in general, or, more specifically, the motivations and the outcomes (not only in sports terms) of participation in the tournament both on an individual and on a team/community level. In particular, one player and one manager or coach from each men's and women's team was interviewed. Everyone was asked to trace the process of creation and development of the team, and with regard to national teams everyone was asked to quantify how much the team contributes to community building.

The interviewees were also invited to reflect on the effects of being part of a team, in terms of social network building, emotion management and differences, prejudice and diffidence overcome. Then they were asked to evaluate the importance of national teams in promoting and reconsidering national pride, especially among Italian-born young people.

Concerning Balon Mundial, the questions were aimed at evaluating the opportunities offered by the tournament in promoting contacts between communities and the role of Balon Mundial in promoting and supporting the creation of such relationships. One of the main focuses was on the topic of leadership within Balon Mundial communities, since one of the main outcomes of Balon Mundial efforts is to train and follow up community leaders, who eventually will become promoters of a kind of bottom-up welfare and of Balon Mundial core values. The interviewees were asked to identify the leader(s) of their team and the traits that characterize a leader. Lastly, every interviewee was asked to share one of his/her dreams, whether or not linked to sport and the tournament.

As a matter of time and resources, the majority of the interviews were conducted in Italian, while others, to a lesser extent, were conducted in Spanish and English, languages known by the interviewers. Even though the interviewees were able to understand the questions and the answers proved to be, in most cases, coherent and understandable, the lack of a possibility to communicate in their mother tongue proved to be a limitation in the research. Probably, if many interviewees had had the opportunity to communicate in their own native language, their answers would have been more complex, more articulate and deeper. This is certainly an important aspect to take into account for future research.



A total of 64 interviews was conducted<sup>9</sup>. Some key informants were interviewed along with a player and a manager or coach for every team: Tommaso Pozzato, ASD Balon Mundial president; Luca Dalvit, UISP; Federica Rosa, in charge of women's football; William Bacci, in charge of UISP referees; Monica Cerutti, counsellor for youth policies, international cooperation, equal opportunities, civil rights and immigration for the Piedmont region; Diletta Berardinelli, former 7th district counsellor and Forum Politiche di Integrazione e Nuovi Cittadini coordinator; and two of the tournament volunteers. The interviews were conducted during June and July 2016, while the analysis was carried out in August 2016.

The following pages aim at presenting the first outcomes of the research: all the topics here analysed may be the object of future study and further in-depth analysis. The first part of the report is a descriptive analysis of the characteristics of Balon Mundial participants (gender, age, national origin) and of the genesis and history of the 46 teams which took part in the 2016 edition of the tournament. In the second part, analysis of the interviews was divided into two parts: a broader one on sport in general and, in particular, on team sports and their effects and values, with a focus on its meaning within migrant communities gathering around a national team; and a more specific one, focused on the Balon Mundial tournament and its impact on individuals and communities. The third part is, as stated earlier, research on leadership within Balon Mundial communities. Lastly, the conclusions suggest some critical points and present possible future research paths.

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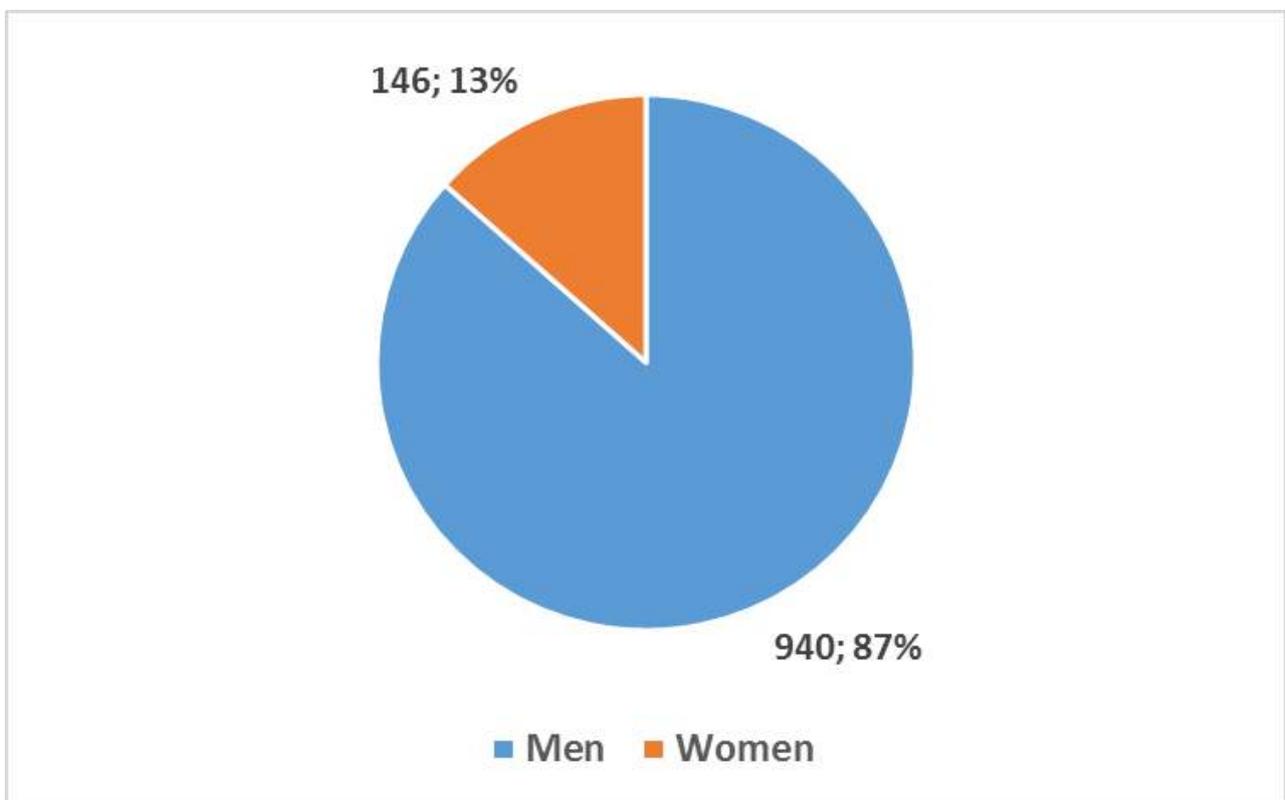
<sup>9</sup> Interviews were submitted by Viviana Premazzi, Claudia Genovese and Romina Maria Carpucci.



# Charts and statistics

There were 1,087 participants in the 2016 Balon Mundial, of whom 13% were women. Women still represent a minority and the number of women's teams, even if constantly rising over the years, is much lower than the number of men's teams. It must also be noted that the great majority of coaches and managers are men. In any case, the ratio between male and female participation to the tournament mirrors the general trend of women's football in Piedmont. It can, conversely, be seen as an example of excellence, especially for its peculiar characteristic of comprising women's national teams.

**Fig. 1. Participants in Balon Mundial 2016, by sex**



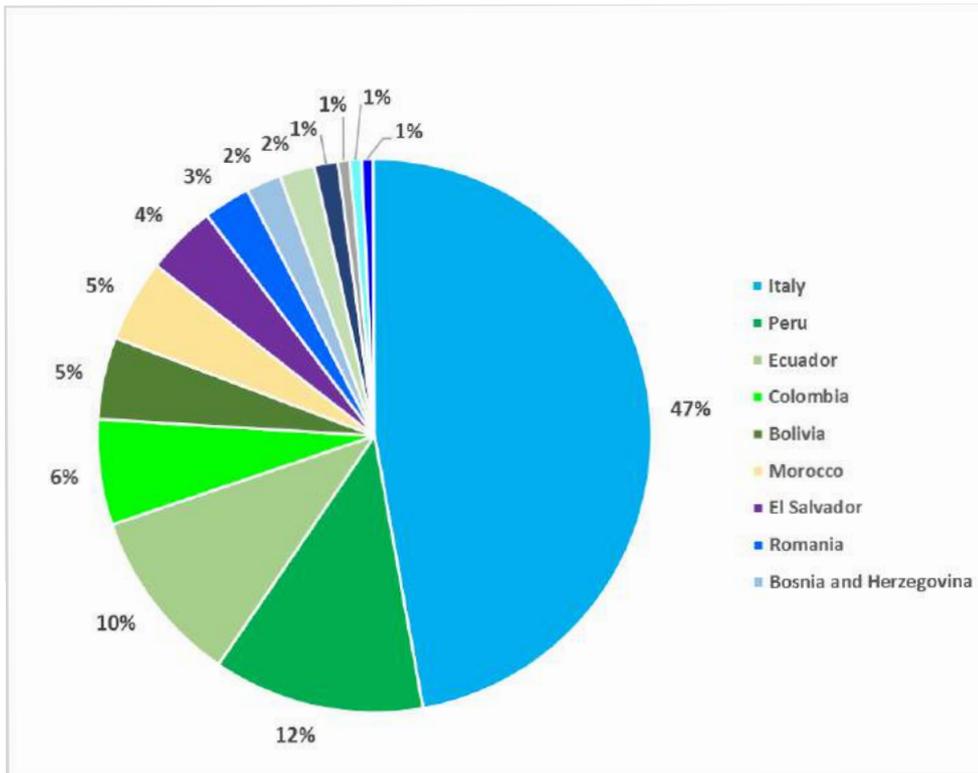
The majority of male participants is of Italian or African origin. The most represented nationalities are Senegal, Gambia and Ghana, with a significant number of Moroccans and Peruvians. This figure mirrors the situation of the city of Turin, where Moroccans, Peruvians and Senegalese are the biggest immigrant communities, ranking respectively second, third and eleventh (as of 31 December 2015). Gambians, Malians and Pakistanis are mainly asylum-seekers who have arrived in Turin during the last two years.

**Table 1. Foreign citizens. Resident population in Turin by sex and citizenship on 31 December 2015**

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Romania	24,448	30,084	54,532
<b>Morocco</b>	<b>9,942</b>	<b>8,915</b>	<b>18,857</b>
<b>Peru</b>	<b>3,520</b>	<b>4,927</b>	<b>8,447</b>
China	3,710	3,705	7,415
Albania	2,922	2,926	5,848
Egypt	2,980	1,758	4,738
Nigeria	2,107	2,608	4,715
Moldova	1,648	2,848	4,496
Philippines	1,713	2,093	3,806
Braszi	616	1,126	1,742
<b>Senegal</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>1,642</b>
Ecuador	604	862	1,466
Bangladesh	1,035	366	1,401
Tunisia	792	523	1,315
Ukraine	233	739	972

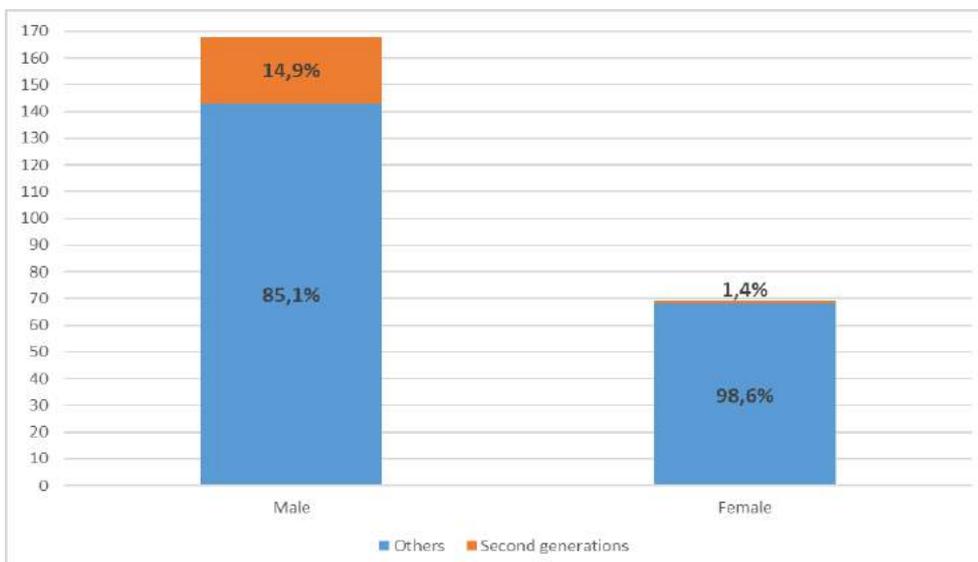


**Fig. 4 Women, participants in the tournament by citizenship**



The minimum age for taking part in the tournament is 16 for men and 14 for women. It is interesting to notice that it is possible for fathers and sons to play together in the same team. The average age of the participants is 28. Among the young people the presence of second generations, that is Italian-born children of immigrant parents, is starting to be relevant. For them to be part of national teams is a way to maintain the relationship with their parents' country of origin, to meet fellow countrymen and, sometimes, to rediscover a language and a culture they had lost.

**Fig. 5 Second generations, percentage male and female**



## Chapter II

# Men's teams

In the first Balon Mundial edition of 2007 there were 20 teams, all of them men's 11-a-side teams. In 2016 there were 34 men's teams, plus 4 teams which didn't qualify for the tournament, adding up to a total of 38 teams. As hinted before, in recent years the tournament has seen an increase in the number of teams linked to integration projects for refugees and asylum-seekers. Since every team is a world of its own and has a story to tell, we found it right to take this chance to tell briefly these stories. The first teams to be described are the national teams, listed alphabetically, then the project-teams, also in alphabetical order as well.

## 2.1. National teams

**AFGHANISTAN:** 5 tournament attendances. This team is composed of Afghani refugees and asylum-seekers (among them the largest ethnic group being Hazara) and by some Italian colleagues and fellow students.

**ALBANIA:** 9 attendances. Since two years ago, the team has been partnered with the "Italb" association, an organization of second generations willing to promote Albanian culture. The team took part in the 2016 Food Mundial project with a stall offering traditional Albanian dishes.

**ARGENTINA:** 5 attendances. After the first editions of Balon Mundial, the team started to attend regularly the UISP football tournament. In 2015 some former Argentinian national team players took part in Balon Mundial as coaches of Guinea national team.

**BOLIVIA:** attended since the first edition. The team has no link with any association and over the years it has become more and more difficult for the team to play in the tournament, since many immigrants have returned to Bolivia because of the economic crisis in Italy.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** 6 attendances. As reported by the team's spokespeople, before Balon Mundial there was not a proper Bosnian community. The first time when more than one family gathered before the national flag and sang the national anthem was on the occasion of the first edition of Balon Mundial.

**BRAZIL:** attended since the first edition. The economic crisis in Italy and the economic boom in Brazil drove many to go back to Brazil, thus making it more difficult each year to build up a national team. The team has taken part in the Food Mundial project since its beginning.

**BURKINA FASO:** 6 attendances. Almost all of the players come from Fossano, a town in the province of Cuneo. Many players also have a Senegalese passport, because of previous migration. The team is not partnered with any association.

**CAMEROON:** attended since the first edition. It is a mixed team composed of economic migrants, students, asylum-seekers and second generations. There is a Cameroonian association in Turin, but it is not directly linked to the team.

**CHINA:** attended since the first edition. The Chinese team is organized by the UNICORNO STYLE association, which also manages 5-a-side and 7-a-side football tournaments for Turin's Chinese community, working together with the Cina Più Vicina association. The players are mainly students, young workers and entrepreneurs. Due to the considerable proportion of university students who, year after year, graduate and leave over the years the team has faced a lack of continuity.

**COLOMBIA:** attended since the first edition. It takes part in the tournament with both a men's team and a women's team. The men's team is partly composed of migrants living in town and partly of Turin Polytechnic students. The economic crisis and the cyclical conclusion of their studies has caused a considerable turnover within the team, with the adoption of foreign players.

**CONGO:** attended since the first edition. In recent years the team has been linked to the CONGO HELP association, with which it also took part in an amateur league. Until 2015 the CONGO HELP association used to organize a party for Congo Independence Day, inviting all the Balon Mundial teams to join in.

**ECUADOR:** attended since the first edition. The players are both first and second generations. Besides the men's team there is also a women's team. Through the years the team has also played in other amateur leagues.



**EGYPT:** 8 attendances. In the last two years the team has been managed by a young Egyptian who studies at the Polytechnic. Among the players there are both students and workers, both first and second generations.

**EL SALVADOR:** 7 attendances. The Salvadorian community is one of the smallest in Balon Mundial. Since they are so few, the community taking part in Balon Mundial is mainly linked by family relationships. They haven't created an actual association, but they take care of the community's needs, such as residence permits and the organization of small-scale events. Since last year they have been organizing meetings on alcoholism, which is a serious issue for the members of the community. They are closely related to the much bigger Salvadorian community based in Milan.

**GAMBIA:** first attendance. All of the players are refugees or asylum-seekers who have arrived in Turin in the last 2-4 years. For them football has been a strong tool for community building and they are now thinking of creating an association to help Turin-based Gambians and to promote Gambian culture in Italy.

**GHANA:** attended since the first edition. The Ghanaian team is linked to the Turin Ghanaian Association and it is composed of first and second generations and of refugees who have arrived in recent years. The team manager/coach is a young refugee, a former player in the Survivor team, supported by an Italian manager who is a football expert.

**GUINEA:** second attendance. In 2015 the managers were a Peruvian and an Argentinian, while in 2016 the managers have been Guinean.

**IRAN:** 3 attendances. The Iranian team is almost fully composed of Polytechnic students and former students. In Turin there two large Iranian associations in conflict with each other, but in 2016, thanks to the team management, the associations joined forces to support the team's participation.

**ITALY:** attended since the first edition. Italy's attendance at the tournament has gone through two different phases: during the first editions the Italian national team was made up of a group of friends of Officine Koiné association members (Officine Koiné was an association working for integration in the Pinerolo area). Since 2011/2012 the team has been composed of players from the UISP regional football championship.

**MALI:** 5 attendances. All of the team members are asylum-seekers. The team took part in the first editions of Balon Mundial, but then, due to a lack of players, the team had to withdraw from the tournament. Before 2015 the Malian community was a very small one, partly because many economic migrants had left crisis-stricken Italy for France, where they had relatives and where job-seeking was made easier by the shared language, French. The current team was created in 2015 by a young refugee, former captain of Cuori d'Aquila (the project-team led by Balon Mundial, which is linked to a project for refugees' and asylum-seekers' integration and job placement. Having played in Balon Mundial for two years, the young refugee, knowing that many Malian refugees were living in Turin, decided to try and create a Malian national team. In

a year, he got in contact with 30 people and, before the 2015 tournament started, Balon Mundial volunteers managed to put him in contact with a Malian association, which was going to close down, because it was composed of economic migrants from the 1980s and had already lost many of its members. The older members of the association, seeing the enthusiasm and the youth of their fellow countrymen, decided to help them in the creation of the team and to support them in the exit phase of their reception projects. Today the association counts more than 200 members.

**MOROCCO:** attended since the first edition. The Moroccan team has always been organized by AMECE (Association Maison d'Enfant pour le Culture et l'Education), which mediates between the various Moroccan associations concerning player selection and relations with consulates.

**PAKISTAN:** second attendance. The Pakistani team is made up of refugees, students and a few workers. It is supported by ERI (European Research Institute), an organization managing projects for refugees and asylum-seekers in Piedmont.

**PALESTINE:** 5 attendances. The players who created the team are mainly Polytechnic students, Palestinian, or Italian players, or players coming from other Middle-East countries.

**PERU:** attended since the first edition. The Peruvian community is one of Turin's largest and most organized. There are many cultural and sports associations; in particular, there are at least 10 associations or football teams playing in regular tournaments. The organization of a "Peruvian national team" for Balon Mundial witnessed over the years internal conflicts between the various managers and coaches, to the point of involving even the Consul. Through Balon Mundial volunteers' mediation, the organization created a board composed of the representatives of the various associations in order to democratically elect a person in charge of the national team. After two years, in 2015, the board became a sports association devoted to recruitment for the Peruvian men's national team, aimed at promoting Peruvian culture in addition to football.

**POLAND:** 4 attendances. The team was created and is managed by the person in charge of Polski Kot, a cultural centre promoting events related to Poland and Eastern Europe. The Polish team contains also Italian players, who are often the husbands or boyfriends of Polish women in the community.

**ROMANIA:** attended since the first edition. The Romanian team changed its make-up several times. This team is not representative of the community, since the community, being very numerous, is also very fragmented. The team is thus identified as Santa Rosalia's team, which is the name of the team playing in the UISP championship. Santa Rosalia "earned" its participation in Balon Mundial four years ago by challenging two other teams to friendly matches, after having agreed that the winner would become the team representing Romania at Balon Mundial.

**SENEGAL:** attended since the first edition. The team is managed by the person in charge of sports at A.S.T (Associazione dei Senegalesi di Torino), a landmark for the Senegalese

community. This person is most interested in raising young people and this leads him to constantly look for new talents among community members. Since this team has been taking part in the tournament for 10 years, there are now some players who are becoming managers and who have assimilated Balon Mundial's spirit.

**SUDAN:** 9 attendances. There are only a few Sudanese with stable residence in Turin and, as a consequence, it is more difficult for them to organize their community. For many Turin is only a passing point. The manager is a former Survivor player who now has a stable job and who is enhancing the team's organization.

**TUNISIA:** 9 attendances. The Tunisian team is not linked to any association. In 2011, after the Arab Spring, the long-time manager was overshadowed by others more in line with Ennahda, the leading party of the new government of Tunisia. The next year, both for reasons of expertise and the team's wish, the former manager was re-instated, leaving to a young player the task of recruiting new players, helped in the team's management by himself and other managers.



## 2.2 Project-teams

**AFRICA UNITED:** 4 attendances. Africa United is the team representing “Ex Moi’s occupied houses”, the buildings created for the Olympic village and occupied in March 2012 by refugees after the so-called North Africa Emergency. The team’s players change almost every year, but there is a nucleus of 3-4 players who have remained through the years. This turn-over is due partly to the creation of new national teams by Africa United former players or by their desire to play for their national team after having met their fellow countrymen during previous editions of Balon Mundial (as for example in the case of Mali, Gambia and Guinea), and partly to the fact that many former players have decided to leave Turin to seek new opportunities. The team is coordinated and helped by Ex Moi’s volunteers.

**AMIS DE NICOLAS:** it was attending for the first time. All the players are refugees living in Valle d’Aosta region. This is the only team of its kind in the region. The coach is a former professional player.

**CUORI D’AQUILA:** 5 attendances. Cuori d’Aquila (Eagle Hearts) is a refugees’ and asylum-seekers’ team directly managed by Balon Mundial. Cuori d’Aquila players are selected according to their respect for the ethical rules of the team, and not according to their technical skills. A further aim of the team is to help players’ leadership emerge and to make them part of the management of the team. A former player was the Cuori d’Aquila coach for Balon Mundial 2016, deciding to assume responsibility for the creation and management of the team in line with the ethical principles of the association.

**IUS SOLI:** 5 attendances. Ius Soli is Balon Mundial volunteers’ team. It is originated in United Colors of Arci, who played in Balon Mundial 2009 as a team representing multi-ethnicity. In 2013, after they decided not to play as Italy, volunteers resolved to take the field under the name of Ius Soli, in order to support the campaign for a reform in the system of citizenship for young foreigners who were born in foreign countries. Some United Colors of Arci players are founder members of A.S.D. BALON MUNDIAL ONLUS.

**MORO TEAM:** it was attending for the first time. This team is a project which earned participation in Balon Mundial by qualifying. Moro Team is the football team created by Coro Moro, an association based in Valli di Lanzo which promotes refugees’ social inclusion through culture and sports. Coro Moro is famous for being a refugees’ and asylum-seekers’ choir which sings traditional Piedmontese songs. Moro Team plays also in the 5-a-side Valli di Lanzo UISP championship.

**SURVIVOR:** 7 attendances. It is an all-refugees and asylum-seekers project-team. The project is committed to the selection of players because of their success in sports with the aim of helping them in job seeking. During the year the team plays in the UISP championship. After the Nice terrorist attack, the Survivors decided to play the “Marseillaise” as their anthem for the 2016 semi-final.

# Women's teams

The women's championship first edition dates back to 2011, when it counted 8 teams. In the tenth edition there were 11 women's teams, both national and project-teams.

### 3.1. National teams

**BOLIVIA:** attended since the first edition. The Bolivian community is small but proud and committed since the beginning representing their country also in women's football. The majority of the players are the wives of the men's team players.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** attended since around three years ago. Due to the small number of Bosnians in Turin, the team has always had a "foreign" component (Italians, Romanians...). The team was created mainly under the influence of the manager and his family, who wanted to see the Bosnian community represented.

**COLOMBIA:** attended since the first edition. Proud of their national colours, this team is largely formed of wives, partners and sisters of the men's team players.

**ECUADOR:** attended since the first edition. The peculiarity of the Ecuadorian team lies in the fact that it is essentially composed of one big family, almost all of the players being related to one another: mothers, daughters and cousins, all coming from Ecuador. In 2016, a player was asked to go for a trial at Torino FC and in the past she received offers from semi-professional clubs. The team is not directly or officially linked to any Ecuadorian association, but is organized thanks to the initiative of its male and female managers, who work together.

**EL SALVADOR:** 5 attendances. At the beginning the team was an all-Salvadorian one, but due to defections and to the desire to create a more competitive team, over the years there have been new "foreign" players, who also participate in the various activities of the community. There is no community association, only an informal group.

**PERU:** attended since the first edition. After the first edition the managers created an association devoted to Peruvian women's 5-a-side football. Through the years, at least two more associations were created, whose managements were in conflict about the official selection during Balon Mundial. Thanks to Balon Mundial's mediation, they managed to "reunite" when it was time to form and manage the team.

### 3.2. Project-teams

**GIVE ME A 5 AVIS TO:** first attendance. The team is a project which uses football to promote AVIS, a blood donors' association, but it is also committed to raising funds through football tournaments in order to support other Turin-based ONLUS organizations. During the year they play in the CUS (Centro Universitario Sportivo) championship.

**ITALIA:** started attending 5 years ago. Former winner of several Balon Mundial editions, the Italian team during the year plays in the UISP 5-a-side football championship as Atletico Baraccas.

**KHORAKANE:** attended since the first edition. The team was created in 2010 after some girls attended a mixed 5-a-side football tournament and the anti-racist world cup. The team is characterized by a strong fair-play and friendship spirit, which well represents Balon Mundial's philosophy. Since the first edition and until the participation of the Italian women's team, they played as the Italian national team. During the year they take part in tournaments and championships. Through the years they have become volunteers for the event. They can be defined as the men's IUS SOLI – Equipo Corsaro alter-ego.

**MAROCCO UNITED:** Marocco United as such (under that name and legal form) attended for the first time in 2016, whereas, the Moroccan women's team has attended since the first edition. The majority of the players are the same, but, in winter 2015, they decided to set up a sports association named "Marocco United" in order to be independent from Amece (the association managing men's football and, previously, also women's) and to promote women's football, football for Islamic women and integration in general (the team aims at being multi-ethnic and is not much interested in nationality)

**POLITECNICO TEAM:** attended since 3 years ago. The team is a selection of Polytechnic students. The team is multi-ethnic and some of the players come from countries which are not represented in other teams.





## Chapter I

# The value of a team sport

### 1.1. "The team is my family"

Some of the teams taking part in the Balon Mundial tournament play during the year in the UISP championship or in other amateur championships, while others take shape or are created every year on the occasion of the tournament. An analysis of the interviews reveals that the feeling of being part of a team and of playing a team sport is regarded as having a strong importance for socialization, represented by the creation of a "working team" which has a goal to achieve and uses fixed methods and tools: no one can play football on his own. Sport, and football, is thus a strong means of socialization and social integration or re-integration. The team becomes for many of them the family they left behind (or lost) in their country of origin.

We created the team because we wanted to get to know more people and to make friends through football, because when I arrived in Italy I didn't know anybody and now this is my family: the team, they are everything for me, they are my friends, my family, without them I wouldn't have made it here. (Politecnico Team player)

We live in ExMOI and there are many different nationalities and the ones that come and help us got to know about Balon Mundial and told us about Balon Mundial. Balon Mundial did something which is very powerful, because at our place there are many nationalities and we didn't know each other, but now we are a group also within MOI. Thanks to the team we made friends and so now I visit them and they visit me. Thanks to Balon Mundial something changed. (Africa United player)

The team helped me in the creation of the group, because we Argentinians in Turin are not that many. Being far from your country and finding so many friends makes you feel a little closer, that is what it is worth, not feeling far from your home. (Argentina's manager)

With the team you are together, you are not isolated, you are not alone and so to be united is to be strong. It helps you to grow up, to go to work every morning. (Brazil's coach)

Among Balon Mundial's goals, a particular place is reserved for action as a tool of community building: it can make it easier for communities to aggregate around the teams in a way that generates the creation of mutual help networks, which can work also (and especially) off the field. In fact, through the team it is possible to meet new people and to create social networks, in particular in the case of national teams, between fellow countrymen, who can help each other from an emotional and motivational point of view in not feeling alone and in enduring the migration experience and the distance from home; and also from a more practical point of view, as in the search for accommodation, in job seeking, in managing bureaucracy and so on.



Being part of a team is being part of a social network, which they might not have, especially seeing that we are talking about migrants and asylum-seekers as well, who are young people arriving on their own and then scattered around Italy. When they become part of an integration project they might not have relationships, friends or any sort of link. Italy is a relationship-based country, job seeking is based on relationships and social networks, help comes from social networks and if you are on your own you risk being abandoned and being unable to find opportunities. Football allows the creation of a social network of peers, where they can share their hardships and their positive paths as well. Interaction with an association managed by Italians and/or by more integrated migrants allows them to have interlocutors of whom they can ask their questions and who can help orienting their choices and becoming independent, through autonomous access to work, accommodation and so on (Tommaso Pozzato, Balon Mundial chairperson)

There was a guy who had some problem with university bureaucracy (taxes, documents...) and one of the graduates helped him, he took him to EDISU (Ente Regionale per il Diritto allo Studio Universitario) to explain clearly how he could divide his debt into instalments so there was tangible support, active mutual help between people who didn't know each other until a month ago. (Pakistan coach)

It is a way of getting to know other Ghanaians: our players are refugees and don't have a job. Some of us do have a job but if we gather we get to know the new ones who are arriving and we can help them, especially those who arrived when under-age. We try to learn their story and we talk with someone that maybe could help them in finding a job. (Ghana manager)

There is the idea of forming something more than the football team, the idea of creating an association. Even now they are bringing forward some typical association formats, such as bringing drinks to the field and asking for a 10€ membership fee, but the goal is to create a cultural association which may have a double worth: firstly to become a fixed point for Gambians, who at the moment don't have anything like that, and secondly to illustrate Gambia and the Gambian situation to Italians, since I doubt many Italians don't even know Gambia exists... (Gambia coach)



Besides, being part of a team teaches how to be responsible for one's team-mates and coach, how to be disciplined and how to respect one's duties. Thus, sport becomes a place where one can learn social rules and behaviours which will eventually prove essential, especially in professional life.

Playing taught me to accept responsibilities because it is one of the values that everyone should have, responsibility and values: tomorrow I have to play, so today I won't go out and drink. (Bolivia coach)

It is a matter of priorities, if today's match is the priority and if you respect your team-mates you have to get there in the morning; if you have to play at 11 you can't come home at 6, because you have to give priority to the team and to show respect for the team and to your team-mates. (Brazil player)

## 1.2. Every game has its rules

For the coaches who were interviewed qualities such as discipline, commitment and respect for the rules are very important, particularly when taking part in this tournament where fair play is one of the strongest elements, and when it comes to selecting the players such qualities are praised and appreciated even more than technical skills.

We select players on a commitment basis, a practical example is work-out and this is the first thing I told them, if you don't come to work-outs and there is another person who always comes I will select the latter even if he is a worse player than you. (Africa United coach)

The door is open for everyone, but when we have to play in a tournament we select the best players. Anyway discipline comes first, you can be a good player but if you don't show discipline I will leave you out because if we allow the best players to come whenever they want it's a mess; in football you have to commit and to train and if you don't train you can't be at your best. (Amis de Nicolas coach)

Participation in a tournament like Balon Mundial, where fair-play is more valued than the result of the match, leads to particular care for respect of one's opponents and, in the interviewees' words, it teaches how to learn to lose and how to be fair, respectful and honest.

Football is competition and, you know, our Albanian players are hot-tempered, but still they have an exceptional attitude towards Balon Mundial! I am proud of them because it has been enough to just tell them that we were here to have fun and that was exactly what happened, so what does it mean? It means accepting defeat, it means accepting others and to combatting racism. (Albania player)

In Asti FC we played to win and we were given a goal: to win. Here there is a goal, but if you lose with dignity at the end of the match we shake hands with everyone, even with those who have defeated us. (Congo player)

Balon Mundial taught me how to be tolerant. It helps you not to lose your temper, it teaches endurance, self-respect and respect for others. And I learnt how to be positive. (Cuori d'Aquila manager)

Without rules it is impossible to play, and in order to play it is essential to follow certain rules, "Those who do not follow such rules take themselves out". It is the pleasure of the game that makes people appreciate the common rules, those which guarantee everyone the right to play. Playing in a team teaches also how to cope with one's own emotions, to see one's own value and limits, with humility. Indeed, it is when an individual gets involved and plays with his own body that he can experiment, gets to know himself, develops and shows his self, his essence<sup>10</sup>. When playing, everyone brings his own personal experience, his being, his personality. Sport enhances reflection and self-reflection abilities both in individuals and groups<sup>11</sup>. Games and team sports implement shared-learning processes, and can also help people with problems, who are at risk of exclusion or deviant behaviour, to set out on a better path thanks to the help of team-mates, the rules and the responsibility of playing in a team.

If in his life one is a little bit lost, but in the team he has to follow advice and rules, he changes a little and the other players start helping him change his lifestyle. Football is a very helpful tool. (Cameroon coach)

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<sup>10</sup> R. Ferrero Camoletto, *Oltre il limite. Il corpo tra sport estremi e fitness*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005, p. 191.

<sup>11</sup> R. Spaaij, *Beyond the playing field: Experiences of sport, social capital, and integration among Somalis in Australia*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2012, 35:9, 1519-1538

We decided to create first the association and then the team, aimed at not leaving the kids in the streets, because the more a kid is busy, the less he gets into trouble. (Amis de Nicolas manager)

### 1.3. National teams, examples of double-presence?

Sports has always been an important element of national cohesion<sup>12</sup> and this is perceptible also among foreigners and the national teams taking part in the tournament. Indeed, national teams are also a way of keeping in contact with one's country of origin. Playing in such a team representing one's country's colours is a source of boundless pride, especially for those who are far away and haven't been able to go back to their countries for years (even for summer holidays). Besides, national pride helps to strengthen relationships in the communities.

When you tell them they have to wear the Albanian jersey and to represent their country they cheer up, their commitment becomes much stronger. Especially the youngest ones get to feel part of Albania, they are proud when they are told they have to represent Albania. And when you represent your country in a tournament where there are 38/40 teams, mostly national teams, you feel proud and pride unites, because where there is pride it is easier to get along. (Albania coach)

We play because we love our country, we bring the Bolivian colours everywhere. During the year I play in another team, but during this kind of event I will always be with Bolivia, like many other friends of ours, and no one can take this away from us because this is the only source of pride we have. In a normal championship I can play in any team, but on these occasions Bolivia is Bolivia. (Bolivia coach)

We decided to connect with this tournament and every year we try our best to form a men's and a women's team in order not to be missing and to show that Bosnia is there and there is someone representing Bosnia and willing to show Bosnia's presence in sports and in these activities. It is different from when I play with my little team, I'm not saying that this is like being at the World Cup, but when I come here to Balon Mundial I feel like I am at Maracanã and I am playing for Bosnia as if I were Džeko<sup>13</sup> taking the field and I have to raise Bosnia higher and higher, I represent Bosnia, my homeland. (Bosnia player)

Respondents stressed the importance of symbols and rituals representing their country. For this reason, a number of little aspects become thus essential, such as the flag on jerseys, the jerseys' colours, the national anthem before the match, the supporters' flags and the presence

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<sup>12</sup> A. Bairner, *Assessing the sociology of sport: On national identity and nationalism*, International Review for the Sociology of Sport 2015, Vol. 50(4-5) 375-379

<sup>13</sup> Edin Džeko is a Bosnian footballer, Roma and Bosnia National Team striker, he is captain and leading scorer of all time with 46 goals scored. His nickname is Bosnia's Diamond.

of institutions representing the country of origin, as for example the presence on the 2016 tournament's opening day of the Peruvian and Colombian consuls.

When they play the national anthem I feel really moved. It's a way of keeping pride alive. (Brazil's coach)

Football is Cameroon's first sport, the most played one, so when we play here we feel the responsibility to stand up for a community, a nation, and the guys are very happy to play for this name, especially when there is the national anthem the guys feel it inside and they feel the responsibility. (Cameroon's coach)

We Colombians are strongly attached to our country, to Colombia. Kids grow up with the idea that it's our country and that they always have to wear the national jersey, whether they are playing or just supporting. (women's Colombia coach)

Every player plays out of passion, they represent their homeland, their country. When we heard that we were going to be given a kit with the Pakistani flag we were all excited. (Pakistan player)

Through the years Balon Mundial has been the occasion for people playing in project-teams to meet their fellow countrymen, maybe other teams' players, and sometimes it leads, as in the aims of the organization, to the will to create for the next year their own national team to represent their country, or maybe to join in their already-existing national team. The national team also meant community welfare for some and a fundamental support in the exit phase of the reception projects. This was the case of Mali, a team lead by a Cuori d'Aquila former player, and of some Gambians, Africa United former players, who in 2016 played with their national team and with Ghana, which counts among its players some former Survivor players.

We got to know Balon Mundial thanks to the Moro team players, who also played in other teams, some of them were playing in Cuori d'Aquila and others in Survivor. They still don't know Turin communities, but maybe Balon Mundial could be the right chance, and then what we would like to see is that next year they could play with their national teams. (Moro team coach)

Our history is strongly tied to Balon Mundial and it's thanks to Tommaso if we managed to group together Malian young people. Together with the captain, a former Cuori d'Aquila player, Tommaso tried to gather the Malians living in Turin, especially the refugees, who are young and love playing football, to create the team. (Mali coach)

I started playing in Cuori d'Aquila, but then I noticed that here there were many Malians so I talked to Tommy and I told him I wanted to try to set up a team, to show we are here, and so he helped me in gathering the people and I got to know a lot of people to create the team. (Mali player)



Despite what has been said so far, in some, fewer cases, loyalty to one's team, the team where one found a place and a role, goes beyond the feeling of national belonging.

I am from Cameroon and Cameroon players would like me to join them, but I can't. I will always be a Survivor. (Survivor player)

Furthermore, for some second-generation players, to play in the national team of their parents' country of origin was a way to re-connect, to feel again part of their community and to learn or re-discover a language and a culture which had been long forgotten due to the fact that they hung out mostly with Italians.

Playing in the team helps us to spread our culture. Especially those who grew up here, who maybe don't remember much of Albania or have little memory, when they are with us we can say that they feel a little like home with us who came here when we were a little older, because in the end we share the same principles and we have the same behaviours and traditions. Tradition above all, we do the same things and in the end they feel good when they are with other Albanians and here they have lots of fun. (Albania player)

For example I didn't remember, I didn't speak Spanish, I didn't remember it, so creating the football team and gathering with people all coming from the same country and speaking Spanish I started again, I was again part of the community because before that I didn't know my fellow countrymen, I hung out exclusively with



Italians and so on, so it helped us to gather, to get to know all the components of the Turin community because there are few of us and we all know each other. (El Salvador player)

Since some years ago I have also been a manager and so I go and look for Tunisian players, some of them play in professional teams and some of them were born here in Italy, they have Italian friends so they moved away from the Tunisian community. And so thanks to the team they started again to talk, they speak our language again and this is a good thing, to bring back the third generation, obviously without detaching them from Italy because we are all integrated here, but still it's a fantastic thing. (Tunisia player)

Besides playing in a team or playing sports, sport can be watched, it can be talked about, it can be told. As stated by Zoletto<sup>14</sup>, this non-played part has always played an important part in the wider function of sports. Since its origins, modern sport intertwined with the development of media. The internet and mass-media allow migrants a double-presence<sup>15</sup>: in fact, especially through the social media, Facebook above all, one can easily create and maintain

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<sup>14</sup> D. Zoletto, *cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>15</sup> P. Cingolani e R. Ricucci, *Transmediterranei. Generazioni a confronto tra Italia e NordAfrica*, Torino: Accademia University Press, 2014.

transnational networks and relationships, “communities of feelings”, as Appadurai<sup>16</sup> named them way before the birth of Facebook, talking about the relationship existing between the media and sports (cricket, in that case). Media in general, and social media in particular, allow people to share pictures, feelings and thoughts with relatives and friends living in the country of origin or in other countries. On one hand, the player has an audience which is much bigger than the one watching the match; on the other hand this transnational audience gives the player a sort of recognition and makes him feel even more part of the community, an aspect which is particularly important within the migratory experience, thus moving from what Sayad<sup>17</sup> called a double-absence to a double-presence.

For us when we post on social networks we feel supported by many people living down there and they tell us to hold our country’s name high and we try to do our best. (women’s Bolivia coach)

Yes, sure we are proud of being Senegalese, it’s a huge thing, it’s a way to maintain the bond because we always send pictures to Senegal through the internet and social networks and they see them and comment on them. (Senegal coach)

There is always someone new coming to see us. And especially on social media there is broad participation and many people commenting. The team is helping us to create new relationships. Together we support Albania when it plays in the European Cup, then we go out to have a drink together and that’s it... (Albania player)

## 1.4. Finding one’s place in the world

The team gives the individual a role, a place: here you are someone. Playing in a team helps being recognized in a role, in finding a “place in the world”, in regaining meaning, even if only for a few hours and only in a specified place. Playing in a team and finding one’s place is greatly beneficial, most of all for those migrants and asylum-seekers who can’t work because they are waiting for a permit or for recognition of their status, and for those who are not part of any project or activity whose days pass by idly, in a waiting mood which fuels frustration, disillusion, and, in the worst scenario, resentment and anger. For such people to be part of a team, to undertake responsibilities and to commit helps in regaining a meaning and a link to reality.

For example the guys who are in the team used to stay home with nothing to do but now they can help other guys to leave the streets and be part of the team and be a group, and find a meaning. (Cuori d’Aquila manager)

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<sup>16</sup> A. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

<sup>17</sup> A. Sayad, *La doppia assenza. Dalle illusioni dell’emigrato alle sofferenze dell’immigrato*, Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2002.



Because many come here and on the field they feel like they are someone. Because there are some who are discriminated against or who don't have documents, or a job or accommodation, and they come here and there are maybe hundreds of people supporting them and thus you don't feel like you are no one, but instead you feel like you are someone and this is a huge thing because if someone feels like he's dead you can show him that no, you are still alive. (Bosnia player)

Sport is also an essential safety valve, it helps in letting go of frustration and anger. It works as a liberating, recreational and regenerating counterbalance to work and relational tiredness.

Surely for them on a scale going from 1 to 10 the team is useful more than 10 because maybe not everyone has a job and work-outs give relief, in fact that's also what I always tell them: "If this week we can't work out try to get together anyway, be a group and become friends, gain each other's trust". (Africa United coach)

I talked to the others and I told them "Here nobody knows us but we have to learn to get people to know us, on the field, letting the football do the talking". Thanks to football, even if life here isn't easy, at least here we get relief and we can make friends and so on and something may spring from it. (Survivor player)

We have a colleague who doesn't love football, to use an euphemism, actually he hates it, and yesterday he came here once and he is changing his mind because he has seen the positive effect it has on the guys, from a thousand points of view: greater socialisation and creation of a group of friends, athletic involvement and the deriving tension and stress-relieving effect, time management, commitment, work-outs, schedules. It's really helping them in every way. (Pakistan coach)

Playing in a team helps to find what Sayad calls “new roles against the stigma”<sup>18</sup>, in other words when there is an effort in enhancing and empowering migrants, they are given words as immigrants, thus promoting their identification that eventually bonds them to the stigma-effect: I want you in the team, I call upon you to be this and you become this. Instead, among Balon Mundial’s teams, there are not only Italians who teach and foreigners to be taught to, in effect coaches and managers are both Italians and foreigners (or of foreign origin). Migrants are involved as coaches, players and managers, and not as migrants, thus witnessing their role of teacher/coach/player instead of that of immigrant as such.

In their case I can’t explain, but regarding the effect that we witnessed even more with our own eyes, it’s really really good for them; as we said before they are learning to be on time, to respect schedules, they are more serene, they feel better, they really feel better, this is good for them, concerning players. Then as I said before there are more than 50, so they don’t all play, but for this association-to-be there is someone who helps to keep the lockers clean, someone who gives assistance on the sideline and who is a sort of manager, mediating conflicts when they emerge and thus it gives these guys roles that normally, being simple asylum-seekers, they wouldn’t have, it gives them responsibilities and gives them roles that, being workers or just students, with no job or other experience, they wouldn’t have had and instead they find out that around a team there are players and non-players, too. (Gambia coach)

## 1.5. Different from whom?

Playing together in the same team helps to overcome differences. Indeed, sport is a powerful engine for the inclusion of everyone, no matter one’s ethnic origin, nationality, religious belief and so on. It can forward the possibility of uniting everyone who wants to play, promoting the creation of friendships, relationships and networks. While playing together, people may feel closer one to another in the game rather than feeling divided because of their different memberships<sup>19</sup>. The team is a group aiming at winning and having fun and where differences of age, social class, culture and creed, which exist off the field, seem not to be important. Conversely, once such differences become unimportant on the field they automatically become so also off the field. All that matters are roles within the team and technical and leadership skills. The most striking example among the teams taking part in Balon Mundial is that of Pakistan, which witnessed the former ambassador’s son playing together in the same team with illiterate asylum-seekers coming from rural areas. For a strongly hierarchical and rigid society like the Pakistani, where the presence of people coming from social strata so distant from each other may have been a major issue, nobody noticed the problem and roles were defined and imposed only on the basis of roles on the field and of everyone’s skills.

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<sup>18</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>19</sup> P. Maniotti, *Il mondo in gioco. Percorsi ludici e repertorio di giochi per l’educazione interculturale*, Torino: Edizioni Gruppo Abele, 1997.



The team is composed of asylum-seekers and students and even if maybe the average Italian can't see differences and can't tell apart the different ethnicities, the difference exists, because they speak different languages and there are also differences of social class because there is the former ambassador's son together with a couple of asylum-seekers who are completely illiterate, a man who not only has a primary degree but also a Master and peasants coming from the mountains where unfortunately the Taliban forced them to run away, so let's say that maybe an Italian can't see it but there is a mixture, not only between teams but within the teams themselves (...) they overcome the differences playing football because as they play they're not different any more. For example, there is a guy here with us who is an asylum-seeker and he comes from a very wealthy family – because often one links the idea of asylum-seeker with poverty and hunger – and this guy became the reserve goalkeeper and another one played as a full back. Indeed they were no longer the ambassador's son and the wealthy refugee, but just a midfielder and a defender, the only differences being the role played because as you start playing you have to take it seriously and you focus on playing well, it doesn't matter anything to anyone who you are and where you come from. (Pakistan coach)

Everyone brings her culture, but everyone is part of the Politecnico Team, we have Nigerians, Venezuelans, Canadians, people from every continent, everyone brings her own culture and this is amazing. No barrier of any sort; we have Muslims, Catholics, no race or colour, it helps in strengthening diversity, in creating a group and in becoming stronger, because diversity adds value. (Politecnico Team coach)

For the Brazilian community this is not an issue, neither on nor off the field, because you are out of your country and your social status is reset because you are an immigrant like everyone else, a foreigner like everyone else. We don't feel it and we

don't give it any importance if you are the ambassador's son and you play; and if you play well and help us to win, that's fine. (Brazil player)

This is very important to us, because in the team we are evenly divided between Muslims and Christians and we get along and we do everything as a team. So as in our country Muslims and Christians are united, in the same way we are united in our team, on and off the field. (Ghana manager)

Well... on the field I don't even know exactly if one is a student or a preppy or a humble worker... That's also because it doesn't matter, I mean we are together to play and who cares if you are what you are, so if you come from Iran or Bolivia there's little difference. (El Salvador player)

There are Muslims, Christians, illiterates and graduates in their countries of origin. The differences do exist, but if you have something in common, problems and snobberies are reset, because we're all on a football field, we're all here singing together, whereas before some people lived in isolation, felt different, but now it's not that way anymore. (Moro Team coach)

## 1.6. The languages of football

National teams can host some "foreign" players (Italian or other nationalities), while project-teams are mixed by nature. The fields are thus multilingual places, in the sense that there you can speak and listen to many languages, both foreign and Italian (minority languages, dialects...). Besides, the majority of the players, both Italians and foreigners, are multilingual speakers<sup>20</sup>. In these cases language can become a limit to communication both between players and with the coach. In many cases Italian is used as a lingua franca, and football and the team thus become a tool that may facilitate the learning of the host country's language. As Fabio Caon, director of the Laboratory for cross-cultural and educational communication LABCOM at Ca' Foscari in Venice, states in his work "Cross-culture in football. Italian L2 and integration through football"<sup>21</sup>, written with Vinicio Ongini (Italian Ministry of Education), learning in general, and thus learning a language, is widely influenced by motivation: interest, pleasure and need represent, in fact, the internal factors which are useful in order to learn effectively.

They are learning Italian because two work-outs with other guys coming from different countries teaches them more than a week at school, partly because the coach is Italian so when he gives orders they must understand and if you care, and they care, they are forced to learn it. (Gambia coach)

By the way the Gambian guy, who helps to train them, speaks English, and they speak English too, so even here, there was no language problem. In some cases, when there's some technical term which they didn't understand they used Italian. (Pakistan coach)

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<sup>20</sup> D. Zoletto, cit., p. 75.

<sup>21</sup> F. Caon e V. Ongini, *L'intercultura nel pallone. Italiano L2 e integrazione attraverso il calcio*, Roma: Sinnos, 2008.

I coached Burkina even if I'm from Senegal, but in the team there were also some Moroccans playing and Senegalese and with Burkinabe I spoke French but with Moroccans I spoke Italian and at the end of the first half I explained everything in Italian so that everyone could understand. If I had to speak to a player from Burkina or Senegal I sometimes spoke Italian because they know the language. (Balon Mundial volunteer)

In other cases, the "foreign" players get to learn the technical terms in the language of that national team, such as Spanish for Peruvians and Arabic or French for Tunisians. Moreover, as stated before, for some second-generations playing in the national teams of their parents' country of origin helped in reviewing and improving their proficiency in the language.

Even he, who is Italian and plays with us and has been playing with us for many years and now knows the words in Spanish. (Bolivia coach)

Since we have the right to select 5 "outsiders" for our team we have 4 Italians, so partly as a matter of respect to them we speak Italian for 90% of the time, then maybe with the managers we can use some Arabic words as we use some Italian words among ourselves or maybe we make some jokes with the Italians using some Arabic words and in this way they learn a few words, just joking. (Tunisia player)



# Balon Mundial

## Overcoming differences

### 2.1. Balon Mundial, a festival looked forward to all year long

As stated by Zoletto<sup>22</sup>, to play is of vital importance not only for inclusion, but also, in general, for co-existence and citizenship. We have fewer and fewer sharing and inclusion moments in our neighbourhoods, cities, villages and territories. We have a huge need for playing places, which are strategical in particular for those who have few opportunities. This is why Balon Mundial is particularly important because it follows the processes and tries to ensure that everybody will have a place to play. For many participants Balon Mundial is a festival looked forward to all year long, a time for meeting and sharing which marks the beginning of summer, without which “summer wouldn’t begin”, a chance to gather with fellow countrymen and with people coming from different communities, a chance for integration thanks to and through sport, football.

I first came to Balon Mundial because in 2009 I started playing in a team which worked for integration and this team was invited to take part in Balon Mundial as a project-team and what happened is that we played and it was an unbelievable experience because we found ourselves in this totally multi-ethnic environment with a lot of colours and a lot of teams; obviously we played just 3 matches, we lost them all but I was deeply struck by the enthusiasm on the field, and, being a football enthusiast, by the idea of playing a world cup with all the typical shades of the world cup: there were national anthems, we played against national teams, it was truly a football enthusiast’s dream. What really made me fall completely in love with Balon Mundial was the final that I watched – obviously we didn’t make it to the final - I wasn’t a volunteer, I wasn’t anything, I just went there to watch the Brazil-Senegal final match, it was a beautiful final, but between the first and the second half the Senegalese supporters started playing drums and the Brazilian guys started dancing, and at that point nobody watched the match and everyone just partied. I come from the professional football world and that’s something that doesn’t exist on the stands, it doesn’t happen, so I said right, this is really interesting. (Tommaso Pozzato, Balon Mundial president)

I wait for this moment all year long. I talk about Balon Mundial all year long and for me it’s always a joy, really I can’t wait for this moment to come to meet everyone and to be in this group, this is the best thing. I wait for this tournament from when it ends till next June. (El Salvador player)

Balon Mundial makes us want to party, it’s a very human, festive environment. Summer just doesn’t begin if there isn’t Balon Mundial. (women’s Italy coach)

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<sup>22</sup> Interview with Davide Zoletto by Umberto Folena, in “Avvenire” 25th May 2016 <http://www.didatticaermeneutica.it/il-gioco-duro-dellintegrazione/>

Balon is the championship we care about the most, there are some girls who moved to other cities that sometimes say they'd like to come back to play in Balon. It's the time of the year we like the most but not only because we play, we like coming as volunteers, helping in any way we can and when we can because it's something we really feel and we really like. (Khorakane players)

## 2.2. Meeting and respecting the "other", on and off the field

Unfortunately, racist behaviour can emerge also within playing places and it can lead to confrontations. Games and sports may help to blur cultural borders and to build shared spaces where it is possible to feel shared belonging, overcoming origins and prejudice<sup>23</sup>. For this reason, Balon Mundial is an important occasion, because it allows people of different nationalities, origins, cultures, languages and religions to meet. It helps in getting to know the others and in getting the others to know you, it helps one not to feel lonely and different. In the words of the interviewees, Balon Mundial helps in "opening your mind".

Besides, the relationships created on football fields during Balon Mundial continue during the year, even outside of the championship, becoming sometimes job and support opportunities.

Balon Mundial is a co-existence experiment, Italy gives us this chance, to stay together no matter our race, the colour of our skin and our religion, sport can unite. No matter who you are you can stay together. Thanks to Balon Mundial we reunited with our families but we also got to know other people. The goal is not to win, but to be together and to understand the



worth of what Balon Mundial is doing. It was useful to me to understand many people, many hardships, many problems. It made me open my mind: there's not only us but there are others around us and they're people like ourselves. In Bosnia there aren't any coloured people but here we met, we talked, we ate together and shared many things so you see them and you start understanding that they're people like us. (Bosnia coach)

We played in Balon Mundial because it's an example of how communities can co-exist in a city without losing their identity, making the community and the city of Turin richer, and all the inhabitants, whether Italians or coming from all around the world, it's a way of living better in the city. Through sports Balon Mundial is an excellent example and so we're here with the team and starting from this year with the food as well. Balon Mundial taught me to see all the communities that live in the city, normally you don't see them, you don't notice them, but when you're here there are so many different people, cultures and behaviours and so you say we're here even if when we're around and about in the city we don't get noticed we are really here, and besides it puts my community in touch with the others, to avoid becoming like those who are integrated and now are racists, but they should remember that 20 years ago it was us, don't forget where you come from and what you have suffered. (Albania coach)

Furthermore, as stated before, Balon Mundial is not a normal amateur football championship, but a project aimed at promoting fair play, respect for opponents and sportsmanship on the field. This is a fundamental point for every team, even though it is not always fully respected by players, especially in men's football, which is more professional and competitive. On the other hand, it seems that this aspect is widely appreciated in women's football.

We care more about discipline than about the score because we are not interested in sacrificing a principle for a win. We prefer to lose than to misbehave. (Avis player)

I am a very competitive person but I have learnt that it's good to play independently of the result and to share with the others, get to know one's limits and points of strength, I've learnt that it's good to be correct and honest, which is something that here is strongly promoted, and I think it's a core value in any sport and now I'm living it also in my life and I learnt it here in Balon Mundial. (Khorakane player)

Balon Mundial is amazing because it's a friendly competition, the friendship championship, and when the match starts competition enters the field, but with fair play. It's more important to have fun and to stay together. Our goal is not to come to win Balon Mundial but to come and be part of it, be part of it because it's a party. (Politecnico Team coach)

In this tournament the first thing to teach to the kids is the tournament's values, mutual respect, respect for one's opponent, and getting to know the context where one is moving, even if it's quite physiological: when you are taking part in such a tournament certain behaviours are banned so one has to bear certain qualities in mind, dignity, a respect for one's opponent having its basis on a human and social level because the opponent comes from a situation of immigration like yours, or even more complicated, so they must be in tune on the field. In this tournament more than in others relationships are perhaps more important than victory. (Poland coach)

## 2.3. Standing out to become leading actors

The Balon Mundial association and its tournament also play a part in facilitating meeting and relations with institutions, which are vital for the immigrant communities in order to present their requests and to have their needs and worth recognized.

I remember when we won Balon Mundial in 2014 and the next year we were invited to Turin City Hall for a press conference. Even the Mayor was there, so it gives you the possibility to meet with the institutions. (Congo coach)

Being an amateur football championship, Balon Mundial can also give the players more chances to be seen by talent scouts and there are some athletes who, thanks to the tournament, have eventually been selected for professional clubs of various categories, both for men's and for women's football.

Balon Mundial gave our players the chance to be seen; some now play in the D-series and thanks to Balon Mundial I play in Asti FC. (Congo player)

There are a couple of Gambian players who, as yesterday one of their team managers told us, have contacts with some clubs for next year and probably they will get paid to play because technically speaking they are really good; of course that is not the initial goal but that possibility also exists. (Gambia coach)

On July 25 a player is going to a retreat camp with Casale Calcio, which means that if it goes well he could become economically self-sufficient from football. (Survivor coach)



## 2.4. Save the Dream

As a part of the partnership with Save the Dream, we asked the players of the tournament to share one of their dreams with us, one that may or not be linked to the tournament, a dream that they carried inside. It was good to hear that many of the dreams were not “individual” ones but rather dreams regarding their fellow countrymen, their country and all the people like them that gather one month a year for a tournament which gives them the possibility to travel around the world without moving from Turin and to dream of a different world. This was maybe one of the best results of the work done by Balon Mundial.

I am Brazilian and I think that diversity is something that enriches, but still after living here for 20 years it's unlikely that I'll ever be integrated. I'd like everyone's diversity to be accepted and I'd like perfect integration to come about, because there is not yet complete integration, I understand that we're still far from that. (Brazil player)

Until now even in our community there have been many young people who are not fully integrated or just don't care about Italian culture and who want to remain closed in their culture of origin, but instead step by step we need to try to understand Italian culture, that's what I'd like. (Congo coach)

My dream? Becoming a very important person and going back to my country to help people. (Congo player)

My dream is to see all the communities succeed, I wish one day I'll see all the guys that play with me fulfilled and successful. (Egypt player)

Our dream is to see these people solving their problems, documents, job, and finding a stable life in Italy, above all integration which is very hard for them, it's their dream. (Mali coach)



My dream is to go back to my country to do something for the children because I really care a lot, because Africa is not so poor as they say but anyway I'd like to help children. (Senegal player)

My dream is to make it to the final, but we won't make it, so my other dream, which is unlikely to come true at the moment, I'd like to feel integrated, that wherever I want to go I won't feel different, where any community can easily be inserted with no obstacles or hardship and I'd like to feel part of it. (Sudan coach)

My dream is that especially in sport people learn how to be together without hatred and violence... we already have enough off the field... that here all this violence and hatred may be forgotten... that's the work we have to do, all together, we have to work in a way that one can get angry on the field but there it ends, and that there won't be issues of confrontations or violence. This is my dream. (Referee)

I have many dreams one of them is for example to get citizenship and then I'll be a candidate for Mayor in Bra, that is one of my dreams, because I understood that many things are changing and there is no society in Europe or in the world which can go ahead without the immigrants who live there, and since there is the possibility I have always liked politics so to make a contribution to the context where I live, and since I have seen many Moroccans working in the City Hall and until now I haven't seen a single coloured person. I want to do it, because Bra has given me everything: a job, a house, and I want to give something back, I want to make my contribution even if I am working and paying taxes as it should be but I want to give more than that, this is a dream I have. (Balon Mundial volunteer from Senegal)



# Conclusions



To conclude this report, we would like to briefly summarize some key points which emerged during the research process, some critical points, and to suggest some possible future research paths.

Every year, Turin and its communities look forward to the festival of Balon Mundial, “a festival without which summer couldn’t start, without which summer wouldn’t be summer”, as many stated during this research. Balon Mundial is passion, involvement, respect for one’s opponent, and it is also the exceptional strength given by the knowledge of having a “place in the world”, even if only for a few hours, of playing for one’s own ideals and of representing one’s own country, even if far away from home. During the summer tournament, from early June to early July, teams and supporters from all around the world dwelling in Turin or Piedmont (and outside) gather to support their team and to feel a little closer to their native country through the food, the songs and the dances that are the framework (and sometimes the protagonists) of the various days of the tournament, and also to meet and get to know the other communities living in Turin. That is when Balon Mundial becomes an accelerator of integration, mutual knowledge and cross-community networking.

The importance of games and sports, particularly team sports, emerges clearly from the research: the team offers an identity, a role, a sense of belonging and important relationships. Finding a team to play in, whether or not made up of fellow countrymen, helps in particular those newly-arrived young immigrants in the creation of relationships that prove able to sustain, help and accompany them both from a material point of view and from a psychological one. National teams are a powerful means of community aggregation, where also second generations who were born and raised in Italy may find or re-discover their roots. Besides, a team created with a shared goal allows overcoming prejudice and exclusive or discriminatory behaviour, and the skills acquired on the field may be transferred to daily life. Playing a sport, playing in a team and against an opponent also teaches respect for rules and commitment and responsibility towards team-mates and the coach. The team thus becomes a gym where one can practise social skills and implement his or her rights and duties. The tournament organized every year by Balon Mundial, the festival of sports and migrant communities, helps the different communities living in the city to get to know each other and to promote contact between them and the “locals”. Also in this case, meeting may promote the overcoming of prejudice and stereotypes, the creation of support networks between different communities and the active role of associations.

During the interviews some critical aspects emerged:

- The lack of spaces and promoting sports and the possibility for every group to have access to such places. We are thinking, in particular, of training fields which are often difficult to find, where it is hard to gain access or, when accessible, are kept in awful conditions. In particular, on a national level, there already exists a privatization process which affects the management of sports facilities, making it harder for the less organized or less wealthy communities to gain access to the facilities and thus to amateur sports.

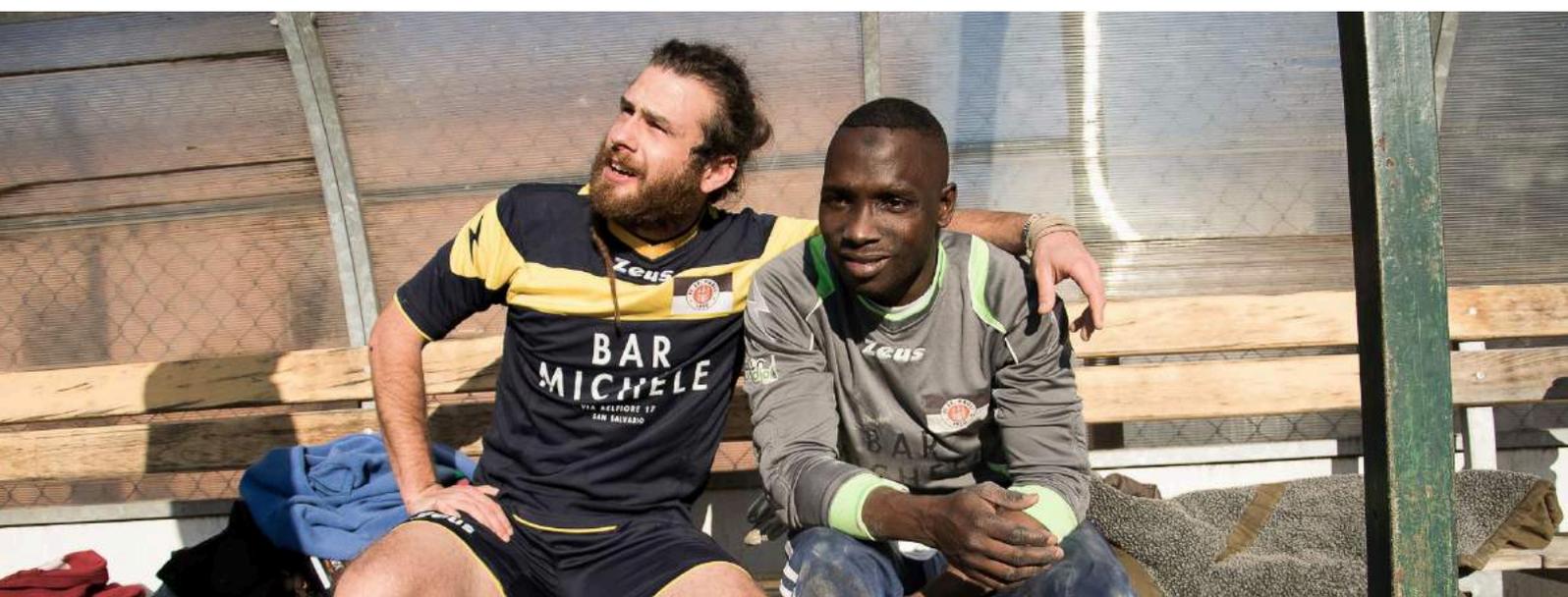
- The weak participation of Italians. Especially during the first days of the tournament, when the matches take place at Colletta sport facilities, there are only a few Italian supporters or onlookers. An Italian woman player said during an interview that it almost seemed to her to be playing abroad because there are no Italian supporters, even though Italy is represented in the tournament by both a men’s and a women’s team. When playing at Primo Nebiolo facility, due to its more favourable position within a public park located in a more central district, the situation improves slightly. Among the Italians watching the matches there are only the team’s players, the coaches and managers, volunteers and some people who are already particularly sensitive towards topics such as cross-culture and the fight against discrimination. Through a sport so deeply loved by Italians as football it should be possible to offer a real

chance to get the average Turin citizen to know the different migrant communities and the other people who live in Turin but come from somewhere else. Advertising the event in sports magazines targeting an Italian audience may enhance its visibility and stimulate the participation of Italians who are perhaps more interested in football than in cross-culture. Similarly, if the tournament had taken place from the beginning in more central areas, it might have stimulated the interest of passers-by and helped to make it better known. In any case, institutional support may prove crucial;

- The risk of ghettoization and stigma-effect reproduction. The involvement of more Italians, not only among the organizing group, could help in fighting the ghettoization risk, in other words, the idea of Balon Mundial as a nice tournament, a wonderful experience, but still "for foreigners". Besides, creating national teams and project-teams composed mainly of refugees and asylum-seekers may, on one hand, help in developing bonds and support networks, but, on the other hand, it may also promote the stigma-effect and imprison the foreigner, the refugee, the asylum-seeker in the role of being only a foreigner, a refugee, an asylum-seeker, confined within his/her national group and risking consolidating her/his identity in a negative and proactive way with respect to the host-country society. This is especially true for those groups which experience greatest difficulty in achieving integration and social and work inclusion. A valuable contribution in the fight against such trends could be the promotion of meetings between communities and of social and work inclusion paths, while supporting the switch from migrants as the target of actions to migrants as proactive protagonists, organizers and volunteers within the tournament.

This research was conducted over a very short span of time (3 months), thus making it impossible to deeply analyse many of the aspects which emerged during the research. In particular, we identified two topics worth deeper attention and further analysis:

- ▶ Women's football: as stated by the interviewees, the existence of a playing space for women aided in enhancing women's independence and in developing involvement paths. Women stopped being just players' wives, mothers and girlfriends and became part of the tournament as protagonists and participants in their own right. However, there remain many prejudices towards women's football and women's place in football. Targeted research may be helpful in observing the dynamics of the creation and development of women's teams, the role of sports (and, in this case, of football in particular) in fighting against gender discrimination and in favour of paths of committed involvement and female leadership within communities.
- ▶ The positive effects of sports on the precarious and uncertain situation of asylum-seekers currently living in Italy and, in Turin specifically, and the paths leading through football to integration into the labour market.



# In-depth analysis: leadership within Balon Mundial communities<sup>24</sup>

by Claudia Genovese

Leaders act mainly through the stories they communicate  
H. Gardner, *Leading minds. An anatomy of leadership*

## INTRODUCTION

The role of leaders has long been, and still is, the object of research in a number of fields: from psychology to history, from sociology to economics, to the countless number of manuals, more or less scientific, aiming at explaining how to become true leaders both in professional and personal life. If it is true that humans soon gave away part of their own individuality for the sake of society, on the other hand they have always showed the need to put themselves in the hands of individuals who were able to lead the community, regardless of its size: a nation, a company, a classroom, being its outcomes providential or catastrophic. Studies on the figure of the leader are quite recent, if put in comparison with the human species history, nevertheless our species, devoted since its beginning to self-narrative, showed an almost immediate interest in the topic: mythology, religion, history, literature are rich in recounts on the lives of outstanding individuals, able to lead huge masses but also to generate great changes.

The history of sports is no exception, as full as it is of uncommon personalities: we all know the names of giants as Diego Armando Maradona, Pelè, Usain Bolt, Micheal Jordan; the domain of sport is one of those where humans put into play the mechanisms which norm society and thus create the conditions requested in order to identify individuals who are able to “lead”, this is true not only for team sports, but also for individual sports, where individuals reach records that put them on top of the groups involved in such discipline. When sport is not only fun, but also competition, someone will undoubtedly be given the task of leading, as the roles of captain, manager and coach show; when the group has to compete with other groups aiming at victory or at good results it becomes necessary for it to have someone who is able to show the way and to be a proactive part of the process, this individual has to be different from everyone else, with features which make him a “*primus inter pares*”, brought to leadership by the group itself.

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<sup>24</sup> The following considerations are part of a wider research project started in 2015 and named “Democracy processes within sports and leadership building within Balon Mundial migrant communities”, a project promoted by CRT Foundation and Giovanni Goria Foundation. The research, investigates the connection existing between sports and (democracy) processes within some of the communities taking part in Balon Mundial tournament, with a particular focus on the figure of the leader, trying to define its outline and to answer the question at the basis of every thought on the topic: “Are leaders born or made?”.



## THE SURVEY

Football, one of the world's most loved and played sports, is undoubtedly an interesting domain of research around the figure of the leader. Balon Mundial's tournament offers an ideal sample. Many of the teams taking part in the event were created and/or gather only on the occasion of the tournament itself, so their existence often depends on the will and the resolution of individuals who decide to spend their time gathering players, training them, enrolling for the tournament, following them throughout the event; whether they be or not identified as leaders by their community, anyway they undertook the task of leading a group through a definite process<sup>25</sup>. Here we will use the word leader to point at an individual who, as we will later investigate, possesses some peculiar characteristics which put him on top of a group, and leadership as the complex set of mechanisms regulating the relationship between the leader and his group. The extreme diversity of the communities taking part in Balon Mundial makes it hard to formulate more specific and detailed definitions, conversely, the fluidity of the situations in which every community operates forces to give less structured definitions than those given, for example, while studying

organizations. A last remark regards the gender composition of the interviewees. Even though the number of women's teams falls far below the number of men's teams, nevertheless it was possible to investigate a significant sample. Nevertheless, it has to be noticed that within Balon Mundial women's teams, female captains do exist (as necessarily), but there are no female coaches or managers, resulting in the emerging of mainly a male point of view. There is virtually no difference between the answers of the two groups, and one is left to wonder if this is due to the fact that the perception of the figure of the leader and of leadership is the same for men and women or if the women's perception is influenced by the fact of having only and exclusively male leaders as reference models.

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<sup>25</sup> Regarding this point, it is important to give some general clarification: those who lead a group are not necessarily accepted by all of the group's elements; those who have once been identified as leaders won't necessarily always be leaders, since, as the conditions in the environment or the group members change, their figure may be contested by others, leading them to lose the status they once acquired or were entitled to by the group. If it is true that leaders are born (this is the standing point of the author), nevertheless it is true that there are some situations where it is more likely for leadership-developing conditions to be created, thus as the fore-mentioned situations change it is possible to lose such favourable conditions.

## NATURAL LEADERSHIP AND INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The interviewees were selected according to the roles they play within their team: manager, coach, captain, player. This allowed the direct investigation of the figure of the leader, while leadership was investigated indirectly, not by the observation of leader-group interactions, but by framing it through questions such as "Why did they pick you as their: manager, coach, captain, and so on?", "Was it difficult to gain the team's recognition?". What emerged are two types of leadership which seem to characterize Balon Mundial communities: one that could be defined as "natural", where the leader is almost instinctively followed by the group through a free-will process involving its components, and an "institutional" one, where the leader is regarded as such because of his role within a certain domain related to the team (president of an association, secretary, clubhouse owner and so on).

"They picked me because they want to." [Africa United]

"It is the assembly who elected me, I was voted for." [Mali]

"They picked me? No. I mean I, being this clubhouse president, Balon Mundial's guys came to me, because of my link with the Polish community. So then I became the reference point also for this tournament, which I accepted with pleasure." [Poland]

"I am "Congo Help" president, so being the association's president that is why I directly became the team's president." [Congo]

Between "natural" and "institutional" leadership we find another type, determined by the football skills and seniority related to the number of presences during the 10-years history of the tournament. Many among the interviewees declared to have been selected because one or both the fore-mentioned characteristics:

"I have been taking part in the tournament since 2008, in 2008 I was already attending it and I was young, very young, then many players relocated, they moved, so an 80% of the team changed, and the manager stayed, who has been the same for years with the same coach, and so I, who never left Balon Mundial, I tried with my little experience." [Tunisia]

"At first she was the best player. Thus we couldn't disregard her neither on a technical level nor as the group leader. She's a natural, perhaps also for a matter of technical skills, because the team-mates are more inclined to follow you if you are a good player, they lean on you on the field, so it becomes natural to lean on her in the locker room and off the field too." [Italy]

"I have been playing football since I was maybe six, so I gained a great deal of experience with football school, with various teams, group experiences and I also experienced being coach of a 5-a-side football team." [Africa United]

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD LEADER

The survey on the figure of the leader, besides the two already mentioned questions, was based on the description of the characteristics that, according to the interviews, a good leader should have had. Many elements were recursive: being able to communicate with anyone, being respectful in order to be

respected, being patient and calm, having the ability to overcome hardship, being responsible people and able to be an example.

Some interviews refer especially to relational skills while others consider mainly individual traits. The first have to be understood as the combination of skills giving a leader the ability to move freely within the complex network of relationships where he operates, and the second as the qualities distinguishing the personality. With regard to the group building process, it may be conscious or not. In the first case it will be the individual himself/herself to volunteer as a leader, while in the second case the group will likely recognize a leader in one of its members. It is possible that the success rate might be higher for the cases of "unconscious building" operated by someone who stands out for his commitment, dedication, experience or particular football technical skills:

"I was chosen by the team and my coach too, he told me he'd like me to stay in the team as a captain because, it's not only that I am stronger than them, because it's also a long time since, since before I played in the team there are some new players that just came and don't know how Balon Mundial works and I always try to talk to people, this way, that way, and some of them don't speak Italian as I do and I help to communicate, also the coach, I help him a little like this ... and this is why they chose me" [Africa United]

## LEADER AND COMMUNICATION

Communication is one of the most widely used terms in the interviewees' words, and it is not by chance that the macro-area identified as "communication" comprises relational skills and individual traits. Its importance emerged throughout the interviews both explicitly:

"To speak quite good Italian." [Mali]

"He has to be a person who knows how to communicate with others." [Congo]

and implicitly:

"In this tournament here the first thing to teach the guys are the tournament values, respect, mutual respect, respect towards the opponents." [Poland]

The ability of effectively communicating on different levels, such as the linguistic and the symbolic level, seems to be the most distinctive characteristic of the leader in his relationship with the group, making communication a cross-sectional element in the analysis of leadership. In the category of communication fall both the communication within the group and the communication with the outer circle, defined as the total of the individuals who are outside of the national community of origin, referring to the migratory context within which the leader operates. When in contact with elements outside of the community, the leader is provided with a series of useful information and links, for example with local actors (political and non-political institutions, organizations, associations, and so on), which often make him the person to address when in need or in hardship, being it of a bureaucracy nature or linked to basic needs. Also in this case the basis is a strong ability in communication, which emerges when engaging with a culture different from the culture of origin and when building relationships and networks which are useful for the community itself, thus becoming a sort of link

between the hosting society and the community of origin, while being also a point of reference for fellow countrymen:

"I think it's because I know a lot of people. [...] Also because I helped many people, and I always tried to help those who had problems, as collecting food, some basic things to help those who face hardship, because hardship is always there, me, I've always been doing so, and they acknowledge it. [...] Most of all when there is someone in need almost everyone come to me, you know? Because I know so many people, maybe for me getting around is easier than for someone else." [Brazil]

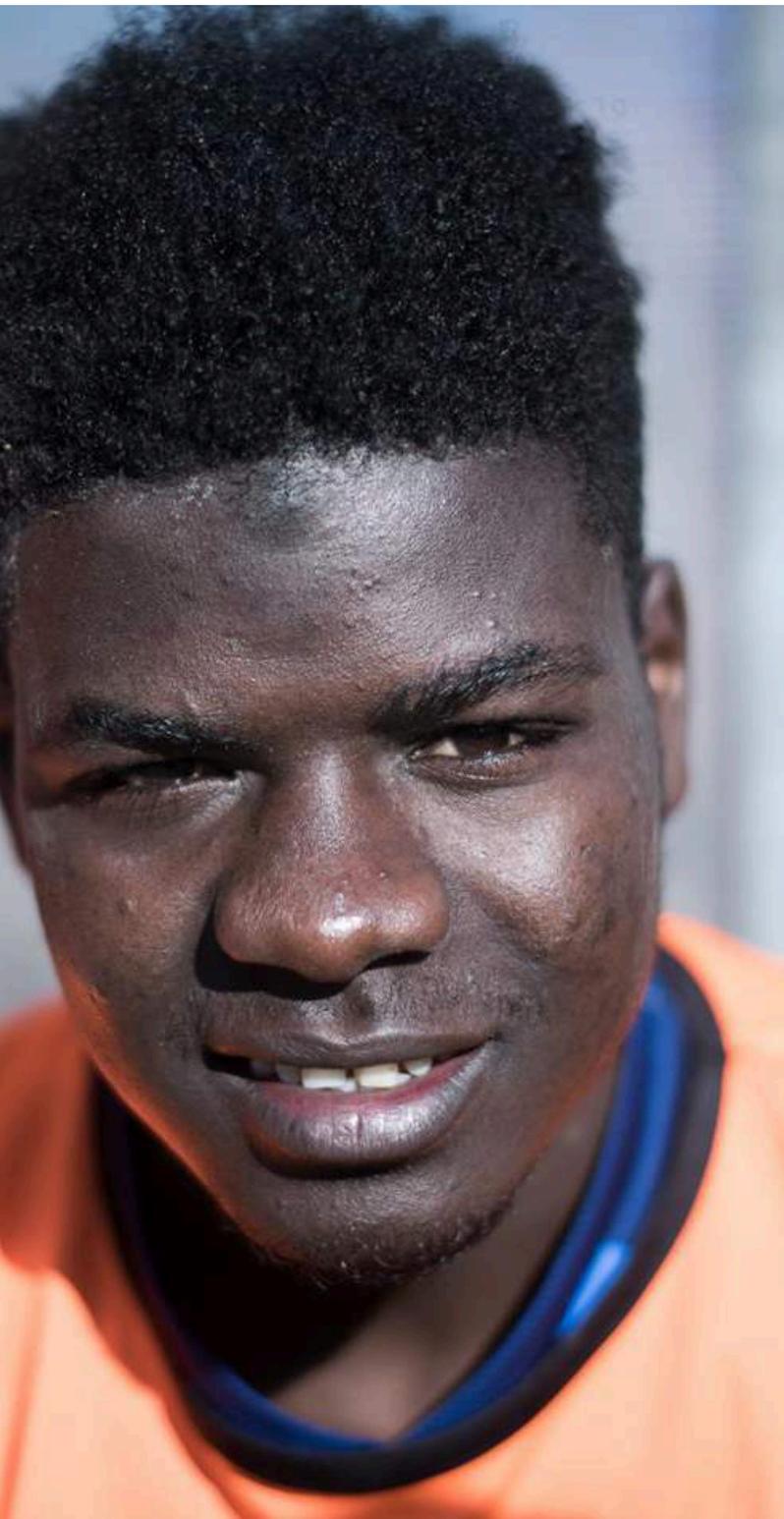
Through the answers given by the interviewees it was possible to individuate some of the focuses which are essential to the leader for the communication within the group, with the aim of keeping the team together while obtaining good results. The success in keeping the team together seems to start when

there is a common language and/or meaning allowing communication between the players, putting together the differences and guarantees the unity of the team.

Concerning language and meaning, the latter is here defined as the sum of non-verbal messages which the leader is able to convey to the individual and the group (for example, we noticed before how a good leader should be a role-model). Being this a migratory context, we can assume that the knowledge of one or more languages, Italian first, becomes an important element: it is necessary to speak Italian in order to interact with the association organizing the tournament and to meet the administrative requirements; besides, mainly in the case of project-teams, where there are players of different national origin, the knowledge of one or more languages (Italian, Arabic, English, French, and others) which can be used as vehicular languages, is an asset, since it allows to communicate with everyone.

"So they told me that you because you can speak a little the language, you could communicate with the manager, other people, maybe also when we have a lack of players let's say I can engage with others, I can bring some player." [Sudan]

"Trying to get different people together, because maybe one comes from here one comes from there, you know mentality is different, like north, south, and so on, you know?" [Bosnia]



Communication proves to be essential for the correct management of the individual within the team, especially in the case of teams which are “heterogeneous” on a national or generational basis. Some of the teams, even if built on a national basis, have among them second and third generations who were grown up in Italy, having thus a culture which is different from that of the country of origin of their parents:

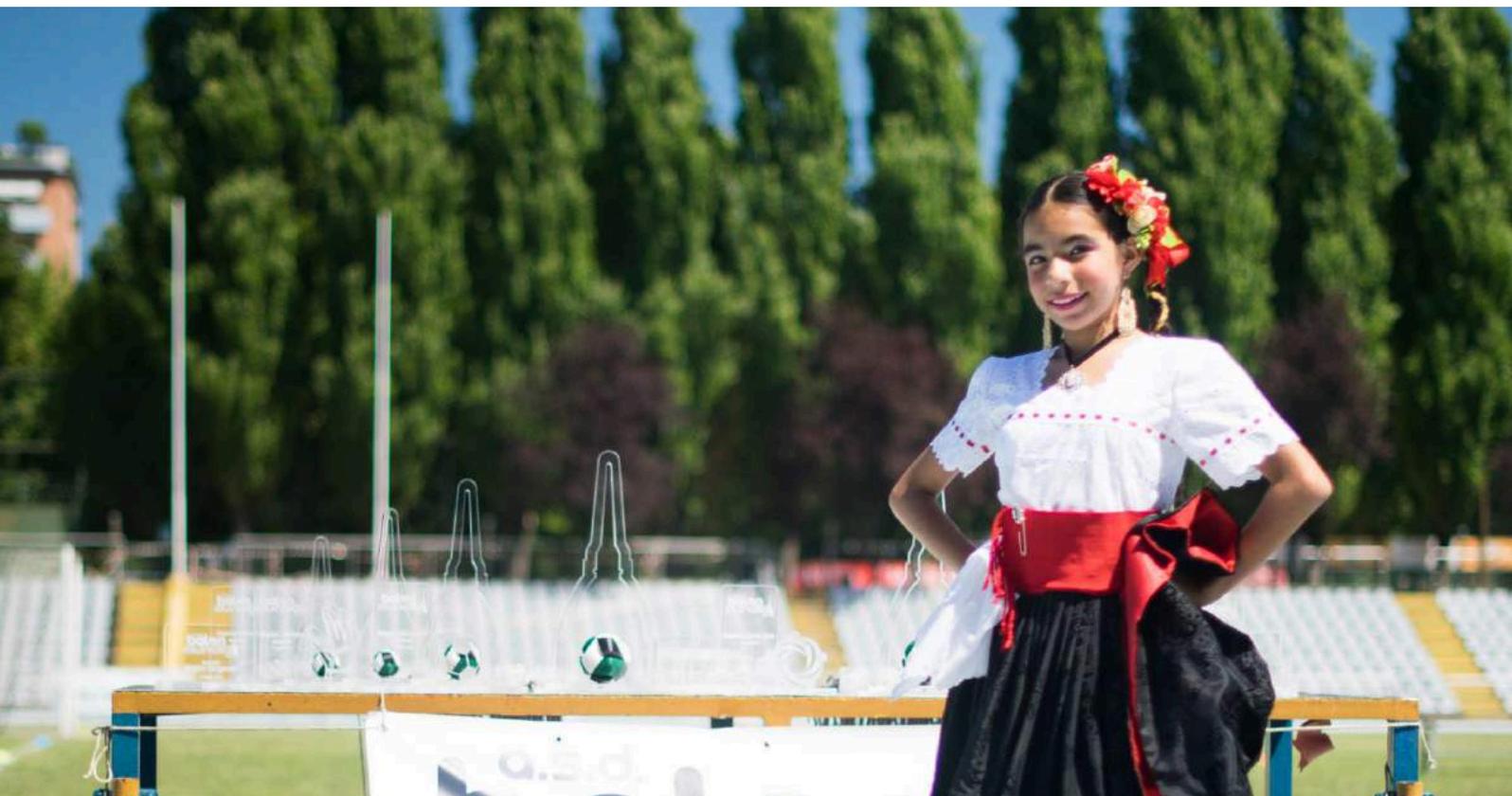
“Today the youngest player of my team is 17, or 16, almost 17. But he always gets mad, when on the field he sees things differently, he wants to do as he wants. So I, my role there is to try to make him part of the group, because he was born here, raised here, and so he has a different mind, a different way of seeing things. Instead, those who arrived, who have been here for 2, 3, 4 years, see things differently, so my role is to try to make, to get these ideas together, to make a, to make the team grow. It’s a bit difficult with the youngest ones but in the end I always manage to set things up.” [Cameroon]

To be able to get everyone involved by making them part of it means also to accept others’ diversity, for example, none of the interviewees said that social class, education, economic or religious difference is a problem in the locker-room. In some cases it was necessary to repeat or to explain the question, and this demonstrates how the interviewees never even thought about this issue:

“I can’t give you an answer to this question because we just don’t feel it, for us it doesn’t exist, it’s a family, I mean, it’s a family”. [Egypt]

“We don’t care about such things.” [Romania]

“When we get to the locker-rooms all the players are equal, there isn’t one who is seen as better than the others or as having more possibilities, so every player feel to be on the same level.” [Congo]



## LEADER AND GROUP-LEADERSHIP

Considering that the constant presence is at the basis of the relationship, which requires the leader to have a vast amount of time at his disposal, otherwise he will have to take it from other domains of life (as family, in many cases), the answers indicate three typologies of relationships, three placement levels, corresponding to three "attitudes" or styles of leading the group. The first focused on the support to the team, in this case the leader is at the service of the group, is on a level which could be defined as "basic", its function is to "serve" the team, offering his support in all areas, from bureaucracy to motivation:

"I've been doing everything for two years, anyway in the end it's like a, more than training them it's a matter of selecting them." [Poland]

"I'm there just to bring the guys together, to make the team possible. [...] One has to devote all of his time, to check everything even in the littlest details, but without burdening others with problems if something goes wrong." [Albania]

The second style is a delegate-oriented style; in this case it is not a matter of off-loading an unwanted responsibility on the group, instead it is a proof of full trust in the group's members: here the leader puts himself on the same level as the players. To delegate means also to include and to motivate, leaving to the team a certain level of autonomy.

"I am a much delegating captain, I delegate responsibilities also within the team, I think it's a good thing because I empower them and so everyone does his share. I don't feel like a captain who takes decisions, quite the opposite. [...] I think we are a team who communicates a lot, I mean, we take every decision in a shared way." [Khorakanè]

"One has to know how to get the guys involved, not just giving orders, but letting them so that they can understand what is to be done and they stand out to do it before being asked. I mean at last for me this is very important, because if one feels part of the group he's way more inclined to help and do anything." [Albania]

Finally, we find the style closer to the classical concept of leadership: the leader, as one who leads. "To lead the team" is a definition emerged various times during the interviews, associated mostly with being an example: the leader has to be a role-model which will be adopted by the team following the one who represents it.

"To be on time, and one has to set goals for every player, this is also a matter of priorities, because on Sundays, on Saturday evenings, we who are used to always go out at night. In order to play a match today, if you give priority and if you show a little respect for your team-mates you arrive in the morning without having come back at 6 a.m. if you have to play at 11. Giving priorities is important, because if your priority is the match, your team-mates. That is the leader." [Brazil]

"To be recognised, the human side comes first, the good ethics that has to be conveyed, to be an example for players too. The management has to show a good behaviour on and out of the field, and in general." [Peru]

To conclude it is important to highlight that the ability of adopting different styles of leading undoubtedly gives the leader the flexibility requested in order to maintain the position.

“After training we are friends. But when we talk about football, when I am on the field with them, I am another person, more strict.” [Amis de Nicolas]

## LEADER AND STORIES

In his “An anatomy of leadership”, Howard Gardner offers a reading which proves most suitable for the present case-study. While analysing the relationship between leader and group, the scholar asserts that: “The impact of leader significantly depends on the story that he communicates or embodies, and on how such story is perceived by the public”<sup>26</sup>. Thus, according to Gardner, the leader communicates a story, which is internalized by the group and becomes the object of a constant creation and exchange between both of the parts, in an active, fluid and dynamic relationship<sup>27</sup>. Gardner’s approach seems the most suitable in the explanation of the complexity and the richness of interactions in the context of Balon Mundial; if it is true that the world of football, and the tournament is no exception, talks primarily about goals to be reached, however limiting the analysis to a series of goals set by the leader and pursued by the group recalls more the world of companies and corporations, while talking about stories that the leaders are able to communicate allows to better understand the fluidity and the countless amount of elements which intervene during the interaction between leader and team.

So what is the element at the base of the stories communicated by the leaders who take part in the tournament? Balon Mundial is built on the same format as FIFA World cup, and thus is played by national teams: to wear one’s country jersey and to be part of an event called “the migrant communities World Cup”, when one has been living thousands of km far from home for a long or also a short time, inevitably causes national pride to re-emerge:

“Especially here at Balon Mundial it’s not the same match as when I go to play with my normal team, with my little team where I play. I’m not saying that this is like being at the World Cup, but when I come here at Balon Mundial I feel like I were at Maracanã and I am playing for Bosnia as if I were Dzèko taking the field and I have to fly Bosnia higher and higher, I represent Bosnia for what it had to endure, trying to make Bosnia great again as it was before the outbreak of the war.” [Bosnia]

At the question: “Do players feel national pride? Do they feel like they represent their country?”, everyone answered yes, moreover some declared to be not interested in playing in other national teams:

“Personally I wouldn’t be able to play for another national team [...], I’d only play for Brazil, not for another (team), I’d rather not play [...]. I don’t see the point of playing in another (team). If the Ivory Coast would be stronger I wouldn’t go to play there because I think it’s stronger, it makes no sense to me.” [Brazil]

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<sup>26</sup> H. Gardner, *Personalità egemoni. Anatomia dell’attitudine al comando*, Feltrinelli, 1995, p. 15.

<sup>27</sup> H. Gardner, cit., p. 42.



"I noticed that also those young people who were born here, when they play here, I really feel the play with pride." [Congo]

In a context such as the migratory one, where all of the social, family and affective bonds are crushed and where the individual often faces crisis, it is clearly easier to reconstruct one's identity starting from a national basis, than to do so by trying to generate relationships in the context of arrival. Being part of "us" as opposed to "them" has always been the easiest way to reconstruct a lost or scattered identity. For the athletes taking part in Balon Mundial (many of them have been living in Italy for years and without problems), it can be asserted that the leaders and the groups surrounding them build their own stories starting from national identity, an identity that is shown wearing the "colors" of their national team, speaking the mother tongue, preparing and eating national food, listening to music before or after the match, playing against other national teams. It is on this basis that leaders build their story: the pride of representing one's own country and the "rediscover of origins".

"We play to bring honour to our country, to represent it, and to stay together, because we are not many we Argentinians in Italy." [Argentina]

"We play because we feel love for our motherland. We bring the colours of our Bolivia everywhere." [Bolivia]

"They like it, when we play, we don't even have a jersey of let's say a team, we have our flag, but now we bought a jersey that has our flag. We are very proud of using it, of representing Sudan." [Sudan]

It can be thus stated that the core from which communication between leader and group origins and develops is the one of belonging on a national basis. To gather and to compete against other groups built on the same basis means to strengthen one's own, whose borders are clearly drawn by a language, a culture, habits and traditions.

"We often play football, also with our Italian friends, I mean, not that I'm not Italian, you know! But when you play in a team where everyone is Egyptian, we share the same interests, same origins, same situations that we live, obviously there's a different feeling in the lock-room." [Egypt]

But what happens in the case of non-national teams? Even though the tournament is based on the participation of national teams representing the migrant communities of the area, many of them also have foreign players coming from communities other than that of the team, this is especially true for small communities, for which it is hard to create a team completely composed of fellow countrymen. The same situation is seen in the case of "project-teams", where the totality of the players are refugees or asylum-seekers coming from different countries: in this case it will be harder to have a story based on a shared national identity, even though there is the possibility of being, for example, all coming from the African continent. In this case the leader will necessarily have to focus on other elements, which will make his figure even more important and his task even harder, by using his ability of positively interacting with the group, including everyone and taking particular care of the relationship between individuals and between team and individuals, using a set of personal skills going from being patient to understanding and motivating the team:

"We're mixed, many different countries, many different languages, so we come to an agreement to make the team. [...] Because the first thing, the leader, it's the one who has to be positive with the others, if I'm not so the others won't respect me, so a leader must first of all be nice with the players and to be respected has to respect." [Cuori d'Aquila]

"To be the face for people of different nationalities, different education, one has to have a great deal of patience. Because we have some cases in which if you're not patient, and you have to manage them as a family father. Because sometimes there are arguments. [...] You have to know how to get in and bring a little discipline." [Amis de Nicolas]

"Because I like being always in a team and going always along with the others, I know that unfortunately going along is difficult, because there are languages that we don't understand well. [...] We feel the difference between countries but we don't have it in the hearth, it doesn't come out." [Africa United]

Perhaps it is not a coincidence if the turn-over is extremely high within project-teams, making them change every year; this is due on one hand to the extremely precarious condition of refugees and asylum-seekers, on the other hand to the desire to play with fellow countrymen.

## LEADER CHARACTERISTICS

So far we have analysed the characteristics of leaders which emerged from the interviews and were called relational. We will now briefly discuss the individual characteristics, in the belief that without some peculiar personality traits it would be impossible to "develop leadership". Among the recurring adjectives used to describe the personality of a good leader we identify: patience, calm, humility and empathy, while the term "charisma", widely used in literature while talking about leaders, emerged only on a few occasions, mainly among the Italian interviewees, thus showing how much this concept belongs to western culture.

"Those who know how to get people involved in the end get to possess a different charisma in comparison with those who isolate themselves." [Moro Team]

"He possesses an appeal, a charisma which is natural, he's born with it, there's nothing to do, usually it goes like this." [Politecnico Team]

Having to deal with an enormous amount of relationships and situations, some personality traits as calm and patience will prove essential, as it will be important to understand whether to be strict or not:

"The coach has to empathise with the team, I recognise it's definitely not an easy role, and he is a very very very present coach, very attentive. And he has to possess a lot of patience, because you have ten, twelve women in front of you, and you're the only men. You have to be patient, but also to get respect, because also in women's football women tend to be a little edgy towards choices. You have to understand when it's time to scream, he has to understand when it's time to treat us right instead, and that's not easy." [Italy]

"To be patient, because he's one, but we're 24, just think about managing 24 people, everyone with a different problem, schedules, jobs. He has to be patient." [Argentina]

"The head of a team has to be tolerant, and bear all the things they say about you." [Cuori d'Aquila]

It is meaningful how all of the adjectives used by the interviewees indicate positive personality traits, almost drawing a reassuring picture of the leader, nevertheless history teaches that it is not always needed to be "good" in order to find someone willing to follow, quite the contrary, as many historical leaders are known for their terrible personality or their brutality, and there are a number of cases where leadership is based on terror, violence and coercion. This is not the case of Balon Mundial, even though tensions within some of the communities are determined precisely by leaders willing to assert themselves with "strong energy".

## CONCLUSIONS

It has been showed how leadership develops on two areas: one defined as that of relational skills and the other as that of individual traits. Those are domains which are common for every individual, however in the case of leaders a good combination of the two will probably make him able to take the lead. But there are also cases of "end of leadership" emerged also from the interviews:

"It doesn't take much for the important figure of the leader to fall apart." [El Salvador]

It is possible in fact that other individuals may read complexity in a different way and challenge the prevailing story, starting to communicate a different one: at this point they may find or not other individuals willing to listen to it and to identify with it, starting a cooperation aimed at the creation of a new story and a new group, ready to gather around it.

Through the 10 years of the tournament there have obviously been a great number of leaders who alternated, everyone with his own story: regardless of who will play the role in the next years, Balon Mundial will always offer the chance to test people's abilities in cooperating at their best for the creation of a shared story.

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Every year, Turin and all the migrant communities living in the city look forward to the football tournament organized during the summer by the association Balon Mundial. This year, thanks to the partnerships established with Save the Dream, Balon Mundial conducted a study to analyse the social impact of the initiative, the effects of sport and its values in general, or, more specifically, the motivations and the outcomes (not only in sports terms) of participation in the tournament, both on an individual and on a team/community level. In particular, one player and one manager or coach from every men's and women's team has been interviewed.



**Viviana Premazzi** Research Coordinator. Research fellow Università di Torino, migration and integration expert. She worked as consultant for the World Bank, the International Organization on Migration (IOM) and other international organizations.



**Claudia Genovese** Researcher. Since 2011 she collaborates with several non-governmental organizations in the fields of integration and interculturalism. Currently in charge of monitoring and evaluation of Balon Mundial Football Communities.



**Tommaso Pozzato** Chairman A.S.D. Balon Mundial Onlus since 2013. Currently he develops migrants sport network and a sport method to empower migrants and refugees communities leadership through football. He is project leader of Balon Mundial Football Communities and Balon Mundial, the biggest world cup for migrant communities.



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