

Recommendations for coverage of the **World Cup Qatar 2022**





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Introduction

The World Cup¹ is an activity followed by millions of people that arises passions, discussions, joys, sorrows and generates a lot of attention. Coverage of the matches and everything that happens around it are the focus of a lot of media attention during the months in which the event takes place.

Taking into consideration some coverages are live and very extensive and given the need to provide specific information, it is necessary to take some precautions to ensure that in the immediacy and frenzy of work, rights are not violated.

In this regard, the Public Defender's Office of Audiovisual Communication Services in Argentina (known as DPSCA, by its Spanish acronym), in its role of protector and promoter of the rights of the audiences, offers some tools so that communicators and journalists who work as reporters, on mobiles, or commenting on the floor, can carry out their work in a simpler way.

The process of drafting these recommendations included three working groups in which journalists, communicators and experts in the fields of social sciences and sociology of sport made contributions on the central points to be taken into account in the coverage such as that of the World Cup in Qatar.

Four key issues were established: A) Racism and xenophobia, B) Violence in the Game, C) Discrimination, and D) Gender and sexual diversity.

For each item, examples were given to illustrate good practices or the opposite - coverage that could result in the violation of rights. Some of these examples are entirely fictional and others are based on complaints made by the audiences before the News Ombudsman's Office.

These recommendations also include a final Glossary, which offers clarifications regarding some of the words commonly used in journalistic work in this type of event.



¹ This World Cup, as it is well known, is an international competition played by men. It will then be up to another work process to extend these recommendations to local soccer played by men and also by women. At the same time, it will also require modifications for the coverage of the Women's World Cup to be held in July 2023 in New Zealand and Australia.

Recommendations

A. Racism and Xenophobia

1

We recommend that when referring to the Afro community, the word “black” or the construction “dark skin” or other similar phrases should not be used. The term “Afro” or “Afro-descendant” should be used instead.



“He knelt down and raised his arm because there is a tradition in the United States where African descent athletes often make their struggle visible through that gesture”.



“This team has five dark-skinned players”.

2

We recommend not to link the word “black” to negative facts or to illegal and clandestine practices.

“The situation in which the team finds itself is very complicated” or “bought the ticket on the underground circuit”.



“Future looks black for the team” or “bought the ticket on the black market”.



3

We recommend avoiding the use of ethnic references in a way that is discriminatory, pejorative, inaccurate and disrespectful of people and the cultural diversity of their identities.



“This player recognizes himself as a member of the native peoples.”



“The player’s statements were those of an indian, nothing was understood.”
(based on a claim received by the DPSCA about real coverage).



We recommend avoiding ethnic-racial discrimination through comments based on generalizations and stigmatizations.

“There are very different realities in African countries, just as there are very different realities among Afro themselves” or “Cameroon’s left-back has an admirable dedication” or “it is remarkable the integration of Afro-descendants in European teams”.



“Blacks run a lot” or “Latino teams are messy”.



5

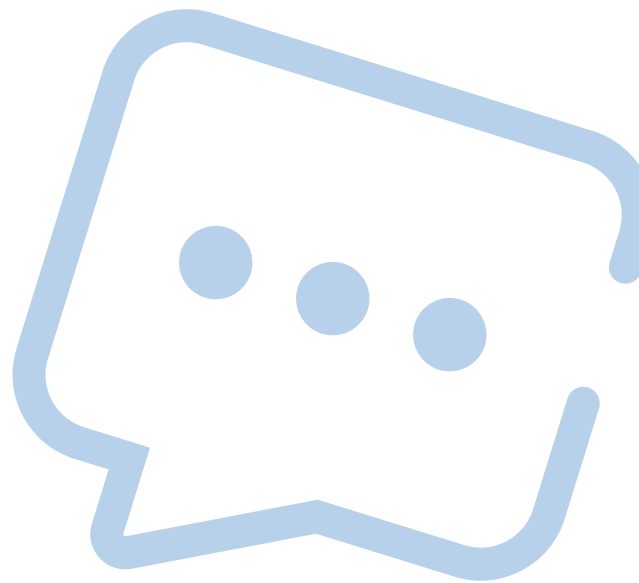
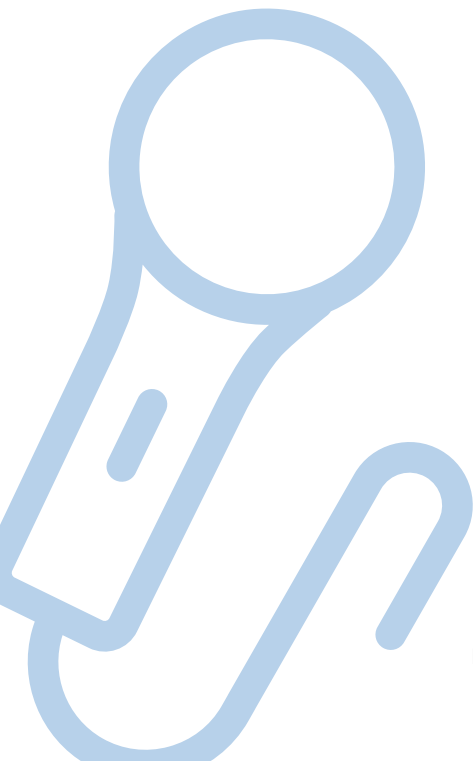
We recommend avoiding generalizations based on prejudices about different religions, beliefs, cults or nationalities that employ simplistic images, spectacularizing and criminalizing images.



“Not all Arabs are Muslims”.



“Islam is a religion that endorses violent attitudes”.



B. Violence in the game



We recommend not endorsing or promoting situations of violence against referees, assistants and technical staff of the teams. Likewise, avoid the dissemination of violent images in the stands, banners with offensive messages or invasions of the field of play.



“You can’t question the arbitration decision in this way”.



“The assistant is getting all kinds of things thrown at him from the stands and he really deserves it”.

7

We recommend not evaluating positively plays that involve malicious actions and/or injuries to the opponent.

"Violence should not be part of the game".



"The opponent is the enemy on the game field".



8

We recommend not promoting or reproducing chants or comments of the supporters.



"These songs show that there is still a lot of work to be done on violence in stadiums".



"Argentina's fans remind their neighbors their team is superior by singing 'Brazil, tell me how it feels having your daddy at home'".



9

We recommend not using bellicose language, avoiding comparisons that refer to confrontation, war or a scenario of unsolvable drama.

"It's a crucial game to stay in the competition."



"Today it's kill or be killed" or "a game of life or death".



C. Discrimination²

10

We recommend promoting respectful approaches to bodily diversities and avoiding mockery and stigmatization based on physical appearance.



“A goal is worth the same, no matter the athlete’s haircut”.



“He’s more focused on the hairdresser’s than on training” or “He can’t jump or run like that”.

2. We suggest to get to know and disseminate the FIFA regulations that penalize racism and discrimination: Art. 3 of its statute and Art. 58 of the Disciplinary Code.

11

We recommend not using adjectives or comments to criticize performance based on age or disability.



"It's fabulous what can be achieved with training and dedication".



"He's getting too old for the sport" or "That referee is blind" or "he/she must really have a wooden leg to hit him/her like that".



12

We recommend that you do not make comments that include mental health categories to describe or characterize behaviors of athletes, referees, assistants and technical staff of the teams and supporters.

"It's crazy to play like this, and to see that player's dribbles".



"That referee is autistic."



13

We recommend not to incur in animalizing metaphors or stigmatizing metaphors.



"He's a tiger at retrieving balls."



"Those fans behave like monkeys" or "they are donkeys".

D. Gender and Sexual Diversity

14

We recommend that when references are made to sexual orientation and/or gender identity, they are done in a way that is inclusive and respectful of rights, always taking into account the self-perceived identity of that person and the way he/she chooses to be named. If these comments are not relevant, it is suggested to avoid them.



“He is an athlete who publicly said that he is a homosexual and from then on he was supported by his teammates, the management and the fans”.



“Some players should prove their manhood to play in this team” or “Is the goalkeeper going to play in that pink jumpsuit?”
(based on a complaint received at the DPSCA).

15

We recommend not using stereotypes based on preconceived attributes of masculinity.

“Being more violent or hitting your opponent harder does not make you more masculine”.



“We are expecting to see a team of men, a team that shows its manhood”.



16

We recommend avoiding gender-based criticisms or stereotypes when referring to the performance of referees or assistants.



“Today this match had bad refereeing.”



“We would check if a woman is up to a World Cup match”.

17

We recommend avoiding gender-based criticisms or stereotypes when referring to the activity of women, transgender or transvestite people.



"I don't agree, in this case we have a different opinion".



"You don't get it because you're a woman."

18

We recommend avoiding the dissemination of sexualizing and/or objectifying comments or images in relation to women attending the stadium.

"There is a lot of women's presence in this game."



"What a beauty the Croatian fans!"





19

In Argentina we recommend including in the coverage, as established by the Law on Audio-visual Communication Services 26.522 in its Article 66, the necessary resources to guarantee accessibility for people with disabilities.

- Sign language interpretation.
- Closed captioning.
- Audio description.





Arabs: are the ethnic and linguistic group that speaks the Arabic language. Not all countries of Islamic religion speak the Arabic language. Turkey and Iran are two countries in the Middle East where, for example, Arabic is not spoken.

Qatar: is a state located in the west of Asia and occupies a small area in the east of the Arabian Peninsula. The majority religion is Islamic of the Sunni branch. Its form of government is monarchical and the Sharia, an Islamic code, is the main source of the law of the land according to its Constitution.

Islam: is a monotheistic religion whose holy scripture is the Koran. It emerged in the 7th century in Arabia and its main prophet is Muhammad. Although it is associated with the Middle East, where 90% of its followers profess it, more than half of its followers are today in the Asia-Pacific region. Indonesia, Pakistan and India are, in fact, the main countries in terms of Islamic population.

Middle East: this concept is widely used globally and includes countries such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, but also the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Iran and Israel, among others. The Middle East and the Near East are virtually synonymous.

Muslim: a person who believes in and practices Islam.

Shari'a: consists of the body of Islamic law. It is a detailed code of conduct, moral criteria and rules relating to worship.

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