



# **Ethnic minorities and coaching in elite level football in England: 2016 update**

**A report and recommendations from the Sports People's Think Tank in  
association with the Fare network and the University of Loughborough**

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A report and recommendations from the Sports People's Think Tank in association with the Fare network and the University of Loughborough

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# 1. Introduction from the Sports People's Think Tank (SPTT)

Together with Loughborough University and the Fare Network we are pleased to present data, observations and recommendations on the numbers of individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds within the coaching structures of professional football in England at the beginning of the 2016/ 17 football season.

This is the third set of data we have issued and the second report of this kind. It remains disappointing to note that since the first report in 2014 the figures have changed very little; the data continues to show that if you are from a BAME background and aspire to be a manager or coach, you are at a disadvantage.

For us the focus is on how we change this depressing reality. How can we lobby and assist the football authorities to deliver a genuinely level playing field for all those wishing to coach and manage at the elite level.

Some people might still question why this issue is relevant when ethnic minorities, and the black community in particular, are so successful as players – it is surely a matter of time and progression. Our findings simply do not back this up, if effective action is not taken we face the same situation in the decades to come.

In our first report we highlighted the performance management case, the idea that to close off recruitment to minorities in the face of the evident diversity among playing squads at English clubs is damaging. We believe that to encourage diversity in coaching leadership will inform and improve coaching methods, help the development of players, and their on-field performance. Quite simply, greater diversity in coaching means better performance.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Sports People's Think Tank is pleased the football authorities have 'welcomed' our reports, even going as far as to encourage us to continue to "hold them to account".

The Premier League, English Football League and the Football Association have heeded the arguments made by us and others and there has been some significant action taken, such as the introduction of a recruitment code by the EFL ensuring positive action for BAME candidates in their academies and a voluntary scheme across 10 clubs at first team level.

But where there has been unprecedented progress in the EFL, we have seen issues that undermine the league's much praised initiative. It is our understanding that a week before the 2016/ 17 season Championship club Wolves, one of the 10 clubs that volunteered to implement the EFL code at first team level, completely failed to follow the process in appointing Walter Zenga as first team manager. This represented a clear breakdown of the code.

The Wolves episode raises two questions, the first is that if the voluntary code is being ignored for highly visible first team appointments then it is very easy for clubs to ignore the mandatory code at the much less public academy level. The second is to raise the question as to who is monitoring and evaluating progress on the codes adopted by the EFL, who are the clubs accountable to?

On this latter point our view is that an independent body should exist to monitor progress and, if necessary, make a case for action against those who do not follow the recruitment procedures. Without review and enforcement the code will not be given a chance to succeed.

## **WORKING TOGETHER**

While the EFL has taken what are widely heralded as ground-breaking steps to address under representation in coaching and management, the Premier League has stopped short of doing this. They are however using their Elite Coaching and Apprenticeship Scheme (ECAS) to encourage greater diversity including six BAME and female coaches per intake. This is part of the Elite Player Performance Plan – a project that provides the best up-and-coming Academy

coaches in the professional game with the opportunity to learn from other sports and elite learning environments. Meanwhile, we understand The FA are investing more than £1.4 million over the next five seasons to get more aspiring coaches from BAME communities into the licensed coaching system at the elite level. These developments must of course be welcomed, but there appears to be no links between The FA generating and supporting a pipeline of talented coaches and the EFL providing opportunities for them to find work.

There is also significant concern that the team working with the FA Technical Director contains far less diversity than one would expect. A year ago The FA publicly pledged to apply the 'Rooney rule' to all coaching appointments; given the profile of this department and the abundance of BAME coaches qualified to play a role this should be addressed immediately.

Most worryingly our networks of BAME coaches looking for employment report that identifying where there are job opportunities is a huge barrier. In short, there is very little co-ordination across the game to turn the good 'pipeline' work into BAME coaches in elite coaching roles. Why are the authorities not working more closely together?

## **OUR ROLE**

While the SPTT and our partners recognise that the football authorities have upped their game since our first report in 2014, a lack of accountability and co-ordination threaten to undermine these efforts.

We also feel that that monitoring and transparency of progress appears to be limited. We have repeatedly called on the football authorities to make public data on the numbers of BAME coaches and managers at the elite level, as well as the data on BAME coach education. But this has not been forthcoming. The FA, in particular, either through fear of failure or an embarrassment at the lack of progress do not want to share relevant data they hold.

Our hope is that the football authorities take on board our recommendations. Those at the brunt of the continued exclusion of BAME people in coaching and management deserve better, we feel what is being tabled is achievable and once again moves us forward.

The objective for us is to see progress made. The statistics in the report show there is very little of that at this stage. We are ready to work with all of the stakeholders in the game and will continue to represent the views and ideas of our extensive network of sports people. The ball is finally rolling in the right direction, but it needs much more momentum, co-ordination and thought to move it towards the goal of equality. We know that English football sees itself as a leader in many fields, we hope to see that ambition in this area.

*SPTT, November 2016*

## 2. Recommendations for action

In 2014 we made a series of recommendations after consultation with a large number of players and aspiring coaches. In our view the implementation of the recommendations would move football towards equality in this area. We remain convinced of the relevance of the original suggestions and have added an additional sub-recommendation 2(a).

### 1 – Statement of intent

We believe that English football should set itself an overall target of at least 20% of coaches in professional football to be from BAME backgrounds by 2020. The graduated approach to be taken in reaching this target will help correct procedural imbalances in training, recruitment and support.

**Progress since 2014:** *No targets have been set by the football authorities.*

### 2 – Profiling BAME candidates for jobs

English football should give serious consideration to the implementation of a positive action scheme drawing on the one used by the National Football League in the United States for all coaching and managerial appointments in the Premier League and Football League.

**Progress:** *Implemented by the English Football League in full with academies and through ten volunteer clubs with first team coaching teams.*

2 (a) – We call on The FA and Premier League to follow the EFL by implementing the code across the England team set-up and top flight clubs respectively.

### 3 – External reporting

All clubs in the Premier League and Football League and the Football Association (and its affiliates), to report back each season on progress made towards the 20% target to an independent body. The appointed organisation to define the terms of progress to be achieved, to collect and review statistics and issue an annual report on coaching diversity.

**Progress:** *This role remains un-performed but is now more necessary than ever following the pledges by the football authorities.*

### 4 – Qualifications for BAME managerial candidates

The Football Association to set clear targets for the attainment of high level coaching (and coach education) qualifications for ethnic minority coaches to address the under-representation in those taking the courses.

**Progress:** *No targets set but The FA have announced an investment into further developing talent from BAME communities.*

## **5 – Addressing wider under- representation of ethnic minorities**

Less than 1% of all senior governance and senior administration positions at governing bodies and professional clubs in England are held by staff from BAME backgrounds. This situation needs urgent action through a full diversity plan for ethnic minority representation in administrative roles, at Board, Committee and Advisory Group level. The diversity expert body to monitor progress.

**Progress:** *No systematic change or plan announced. Recent announcements from government may effect change on gender representation.*

## **6 – Tackling ‘closed networks’ and offering support mechanisms**

A mentoring and networking plan to be developed by English football to identify and support coaches from ethnic minority backgrounds. The scheme to include industry candidate events to enable decision makers to meet qualified applicants and schemes to other experience to qualified applicants.

**Progress:** *No scheme currently in place or planned.*

# Ethnic minorities and coaching in elite level football in England: 2016 update

Dr Steven Bradbury, University of Loughborough

## 3. The research context

In November 2014, the Sports People's Think Tank (SPTT) in association with the Fare network and Loughborough University produced a report entitled 'Ethnic minorities and coaching in elite level football in England: a call to action'. This original report provided statistical data identifying the low levels of representation of BAME coaches undertaking 'core' coach education qualifications and in employment in senior coaching positions at professional football clubs (see section 3 below). The report also drew on the experiences of elite level BAME coaches in England to identify a series of key explanations for the low levels of BAME coaches in the professional game. These included;

- Limited access to and negative experiences of high level coach education courses
- Over-reliance of professional clubs on networks based methods of coach recruitment
- Conscious and unconscious racial bias and stereotypes in the coaching workplace
- Consequent lack of BAME role models at all levels of the coaching workforce

The 2014 report findings were presented to the All-Party Parliamentary Football Group and key stakeholder bodies at the House of Commons on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014. They were also discussed at an event hosted by the Sports Minister at the DCMS on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015. In October 2015, the SPTT, Fare network and Loughborough University produced the second of five annual reviews of the levels of BAME coach representation in professional football in England. The report findings were presented to the All-Party Parliamentary Football Group and key stakeholder bodies at the House of Commons on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015. Each of the above events also attracted significant national and international media coverage.

This report is the third in a series of five annual reviews of the levels of BAME coach representation being undertaken by the SPTT, Fare network and Loughborough University between 2014 and 2018. These annual reviews are intended to measure the demographic diversity of the coaching workforce of professional football and to monitor any upward or downward trends in the levels of BAME coach representation over time. These annual reviews are also supported by a new three year programme of research (2015 – 2018) which will examine the implementation and effectiveness of measures designed to address the under-representation of BAME coaches in the sport. This wider study is being conducted by Loughborough University and is funded by the Leverhulme Trust.

## 4. Key findings: BAME representation in coach employment

**Table 1** outlines the levels of BAME coaches in employment in six identifiable categories of senior coaching positions at 92 professional clubs on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2016**. Whilst almost all professional clubs employ coaches in all six of these senior coaching positions, a number of (mainly) EFL clubs employ coaches in only some positions of this kind. This is especially the case with respect to First Team Head Coach and Reserves/Senior Development Squad Lead Coach (U21's) positions at less well-resourced EFL clubs and at EFL (and EPL) clubs with lower level (CAT 3) youth academy status.

<b>Table 1: BAME coaches in senior coaching positions: categories</b>	
<b>Senior coaching positions</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> September 2016</b>
First Team Manager	3/92 – (3.3%)
First Team Assistant Manager	3/92 – (3.3%)
First team Head Coach	5/67 – (7.5%)
Reserves/Senior Development Squad Lead Coach (U21's)	4/64 – (6.3%)
Professional Development Squad Lead Coach (U18's)	3/89 – (3.4%)
Academy Director	2/89 – (2.2%)
<b>Overall figures</b>	<b>20/493 (4.1%)</b>

### Analysis: overall

- In total, 20 out of 493 senior coaching positions at professional clubs are held by BAME coaches: 4.1% of all positions of this kind
- In total, 17 out of 92 professional clubs (18.5%) employ BAME coaches in senior coaching positions: Overall, 25% of all BAME coaches in senior coaching positions are employed at just two EFL clubs (Queens Park Rangers and Brighton Hove Albion)
- In total, 11 out of 251 senior coaching positions at first team level (4.4%) and 9 out of 242 senior coaching positions at youth academy level (3.7%) at professional clubs are held by BAME coaches

### Analysis: EPL clubs

- In total, 4 out of 119 senior coaching positions at 20 EPL clubs are held by BAME coaches: 3.4% of all positions of this kind
- In total, 4 out of 20 EPL clubs (20%) employ BAME coaches in senior coaching positions
- In total, 1 out of 59 senior coaching positions at first team level (1.7%) and 3 out of 60 senior coaching positions at youth academy level (5%) at 20 EPL clubs are held by BAME coaches. These include; one first team head coach, two U21's coaches, and one U18's coach

### Analysis: EFL clubs

- In total, 16 out of 374 senior coaching positions at 72 EFL clubs are held by BAME coaches: 4.3% of all positions of this kind
- In total, 13 out of 72 EFL clubs (18%) employ BAME coaches in senior coaching positions

- In total, 10 out of 189 senior coaching positions at first team level (5.3%) and 6 out of 185 senior coaching positions at youth academy level (3.2%) at 72 EFL clubs are held by BAME coaches. These include; three first team managers, three first team assistant managers, four first team head coaches, two U21's coaches, two U18's coaches and two academy director's

### Analysis: continuity and change

- In total, just 1 out of 73 first team managers (1.4%) appointed at professional clubs between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 and 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 is from a BAME background: Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink at Queens Park Rangers
- Levels of BAME representation in senior coaching positions have remained relatively stable over the three annual reviews undertaken as part of this research: from 3.4% in 2014 to 4.2% in 2015 to 4.1% in 2016. Where upward or downward trends have occurred this has tended to be at first team level where the professional coaching labour market is notably more fluid
- Overall, the levels of BAME representation in senior coaching positions at professional clubs (4.1%) remain significantly lower than BAME representation as professional players (around 25%) and within the UK population more broadly (around 14%).

**Table 2** outlines the names of BAME coaches in senior coaching positions and the professional clubs at which they were employed on the **1<sup>st</sup> September 2016**.

<b>Table 2: BAME coaches in senior coaching positions: names and clubs</b>		
<b>Senior coaching positions</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Club</b>
First Team Manager	Chris Hughton	Brighton Hove Albion
	Jimmy F. Hasselbaink	Queens Park Rangers
	Keith Curle	Carlisle United
First Team Assistant Managers	Terry Connor	Ipswich Town
	Chris Powell	Derby County
	Curtis Fleming	Hartlepool United
First team Head Coach	John Salako	Crystal Palace
	Paul Nevin	Brighton Hove Albion
	Chris Allen	Oxford United
	Steven Reid	Reading
	Karl Hawley	Mansfield
Reserves/Senior Development Squad Lead Coach (U21s)	Radhi Jaidi	Southampton
	Ugo Ehiogu	Tottenham Hotspur
	Jason Euell	Charlton Athletic
	Paul Hall	Queens Park Rangers
Professional Development Squad Lead Coach (U18's)	Paul Furlong	Queens Park Rangers
	Kwame Ampadu	Arsenal
	Omer Riza	Leyton Orient
Youth Academy Director	Jon De Souza	Colchester
	Sevy Aslam	Port Vale

## Analysis:

- In total, 10 out of 20 BAME coaches employed in senior coaching positions at professional clubs on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 were also employed in positions of this kind on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 (50%). Amongst these 10 coaches, six coaches were in the same position at the same club, one coach was in a higher status position at the same club, and three coaches were in higher, similar or lower status positions at other similarly ranked or lower ranked clubs
- In total, 14 out of 20 BAME coaches employed in senior coaching positions at professional clubs on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 were also employed in positions of this kind on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 (70%). Amongst these 14 coaches, eleven coaches were in the same position at the same club, one coach was in a similar status position at a higher ranked club, one coach was in higher status position at lower ranked club, and one coach was in a lower status position at a similarly ranked club
- In total, 11 BAME coaches employed in senior coaching positions at professional clubs on 1<sup>st</sup> September in 2014 and/or 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 no longer held positions of this kind on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016. Whilst most of these coaches were now working in higher, similar or lower status football operations or coaching positions at professional clubs in England or abroad, a small number were not presently in employment as coaches in the professional game
- In addition to those BAME coaches presently in senior coaching positions at professional clubs on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016, there is also a small but significant number of other BAME staff working in football development, technical and coaching positions at professional clubs. For example:
- BAME staff employed in senior football operations and technical positions include Michael Emenalo at Chelsea, and Les Ferdinand and Chris Ramsey at Queens Park Rangers.
- BAME staff employed as support coaches at first team or youth academy level include; Eddie Newton (Chelsea), Richard Shaw (Crystal Palace), Earl Barrett (Stoke City), Ledley King (Tottenham Hotspur), Darren Moore (West Bromwich Albion), Michael Johnson (Cardiff City), Gary Bennett (Middlesbrough), Ademole Bankole (Colchester), Brian Deane (Sheffield United), Derek Scale (Bristol Rovers), Antoine Thompson (Cheltenham Town), Ammy Ninje (Notts County), and Jonathan Hunter Barrett (Wolverhampton Wanderers).

## 5. **Headline findings: BAME representation in coach education**

In September 2015, in preparing for the second of five annual reviews of the levels of BAME coach representation in professional football in England, the Loughborough University research team worked closely with key staff at the FA to ascertain figures as to the levels of BAME coaches undertaking 'core' coaching qualifications. These figures were drawn from a large scale cohort of coaches who had provided demographic data to the FA as part of the process of 'signing up' to undertake coach education courses and which accounts for around 35% of all coaches undertaking courses of this kind. We contend that this cohort of 'demographically known' coaches is a strongly representative sample group from which to extrapolate the percentage of BAME coaches at each level of the 'core' coach education pathway. Our secondary analysis of these FA collated data sets indicated the following levels of BAME representation at each stage of the 'core' education pathway

- FA level 1: 8.0% BAME coaches
- FA level 2: 9.9% BAME coaches
- FA UEFA B: 8.8% BAME coaches
- FA UEFA A: 7.0% BAME coaches
- FA UEFA PL: 7.7% BAME coaches

In September 2016, in preparing for the third of five annual reviews of the levels of BAME coach representation in professional football in England, the Loughborough University research team sought to access updated comparative data sets on the levels of BAME coaches undertaking 'core' coach coaching qualifications from the FA. Following conversations with key staff at the FA, the research team were informed that the games national governing body are no longer willing to disclose to us this statistical information, due to some internal concerns as to the robustness and reliability of such data sets (in which we maintain a strong degree of methodological confidence). As a result, the Loughborough University research team are no longer able to access, analyse or present figures as to the levels of BAME representation in coach education in this or any forthcoming reports. The lack of public availability of data of this kind is disappointing and consequently limits our efforts to monitor and report on upward or downward trends over time. We therefore defer to the figures presented above (from October 2015) as the most up to date, methodologically robust, and only publicly accessible account of the levels of BAME coaches undertaking 'core' coaching qualifications.

## 6. Concluding comments

Overall, the findings presented in this report indicate that the levels of BAME coach representation in professional football have remained relatively stable over the two-year period from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 to the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016. Further analysis indicates that this statistical consistency is largely accounted for by a small cluster of highly qualified BAME coaches who now seem firmly embedded within at least some of the more progressive, and, often, highly localised, networks of the professional football coaching industry. However, the overall levels of BAME coach representation at professional clubs remains disappointingly low. This is the case in terms of the low numbers of BAME coaches at clubs and in terms of the low numbers of clubs who employ BAME coaches. Further, whilst this research has focused on the levels of BAME representation in senior coaching positions, it is much less clear in the short to medium term as to the extent to which and from where any future throughput of BAME coaches into the senior realms of professional football coaching infrastructures might emerge. In this respect, the numbers of BAME coaches presently employed as 'professional', 'youth' or 'foundation' lead phase coaches or in more junior coaching positions at professional clubs seems similarly low. Further, whilst the absence of FA collated publicly available data on the levels of BAME representation in coach education makes analysis difficult, it is likely that these figures have also remained stable over the last 12 months and that any upward or downward trends are likely to have had a minimal rather than dramatic statistical effect. In this respect, it is likely that whilst there is a small but significant cluster of highly qualified BAME coaches presently employed or actively seeking employment at professional clubs, there is probably also a larger cluster of BAME coaches who remain a little short of the new and shifting qualifications requirements of professional clubs in relation to coaching at first team and youth academy level.

More promisingly, in recent years, and, especially in the last 12 months, a number of key stakeholder bodies in professional football in England have worked to develop programmes designed to increase the representation of BAME coaches in the game. Some developments such as the newly expanded FA BAME Coach Bursary programme is focused on supporting BAME coaches from outside and within the professional game to expand their qualifications portfolio and achieve high level coaching awards. Other developments such as the new EFL mandatory and voluntary codes of recruitment are chiefly concerned to embed more equitable recruitment practices at professional clubs and to enhance opportunities for employment amongst BAME coaches. The design and implementation of positive action interventions of this kind arguably reflects a steadily growing commitment within the professional game to recognise and dismantle at least some longstanding and deeply embedded institutional barriers to career progression for BAME coaches. However, the extent to which key stakeholder bodies are working collaboratively rather than in isolation to develop a more integrated and holistic approach to the development and recruitment of BAME coaches remains a moot point. For example, what is being done and by whom to ensure that newly highly qualified BAME coaches are being sign-posted to coaching vacancies at professional clubs? Similarly, what is being done and by whom to ensure that professional clubs with coaching vacancies are made aware of – or actively targeting – this developing cohort of talented BAME coaches? We contend that stakeholder bodies should show stronger leadership in taking responsibility for this 'central administrative space' within which much more could be done better facilitate the progression of BAME coaches across trajectory from qualifications to employment in the professional game.

It is also the case that central to measuring the effectiveness of programmes designed to increase the levels of BAME coach representation in professional football will be the implementation of clear and transparent processes of monitoring and evaluation which can capture and record a series of key quantitative outputs and qualitative outcomes. In this respect, we contend that key stakeholder bodies with responsibility for delivering programmes of this kind should begin by collecting baseline data on the levels of BAME representation at all levels of coach employment and in coach education (beyond what is collected externally as part of these annual reviews) and that such data should be made available for public scrutiny and analysis. The collection of baseline data of this kind would provide a useful empirical marker against which to measure expected steady incremental increases in the levels of

BAME coach representation over time. These key statistical findings would underpin and be enhanced by some of the more qualitative based and programme specific research presently being undertaken by the Loughborough research team with BAME coaches, professional clubs and key stakeholder bodies. Importantly, this more holistic and transparent approach to monitoring and evaluation would also help to identify models of best practice which might then be promoted as a means through which to unblock some residual blockages in the pipeline of career progression for BAME coaches and establish greater equality within the coaching tiers of the professional game. It is to this end to which we are all working.

## 7. Acknowledgements

Like all good work this report is a collaboration. We are grateful to **Dr. Steven Bradbury** of the University of Loughbrough for his research and the **Fare network** who commissioned Dr. Bradbury and have worked with SPTT on this piece.

There are many other individuals and organisations that have contributed to this debate either in the recent past or through their long years of tackling inequality, we thank them and hope we can work together for change.

The **Sports People's Think Tank** comprises of current and former athletes offering thought leadership on topical issues from the unique position within the sports industry.

We are striving to help find solutions to a number of varying challenges and issues sport faces with proactive independent thinking.

The **Fare network** is an international campaigning and expert group active in over 40 countries on issues of anti-discrimination and social inclusion in football. Find out more at **[www.farenet.org](http://www.farenet.org)**.

