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# ACTIVITIES FOR 7-14 YEAR OLDS TO RAISE AWARENESS OF REFUGEES AND MIGRATION

## A RESOURCE FROM AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



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## Football Welcomes Refugees

Refugee footballers have been making their mark on the world's most popular game for decades. Granit Xhaka, Victor Moses and Nadia Nadim are among those who have played in the UK. They follow in the footsteps of Spanish Civil War child refugees who sailed from Bilbao to Southampton in 1937, six of whom went on to be the first refugees to play professionally in the 1940s and 1950s.

Football clubs are at the heart of our communities, where people come together on and off the pitch. For many footballers with a refugee background, the game helps them adjust to a new country and culture, and gives them a sense of belonging and purpose. It was definitely important for those Spanish refugees.

Amnesty International's **Football Welcomes** campaign highlights the contribution refugees have made to football and to communities in the UK. It's about creating a more welcoming environment for those people fleeing conflict and persecution and asking communities around the country to play their part to help do this.



Tottenham Hotspur  
Ladies team  
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wusphotography.com

#### THIS RESOURCE

This resource has been designed to support teachers to encourage discussion about refugee rights and to celebrate the contribution that people of refugee backgrounds have made to the UK, especially to football.

Football is such a passion for young people; we hope this will be an effective way to get them interested in refugee rights.

##### Age range

This resource is for KS2 and KS3 (7-14 year olds); P3-P7 and S1-S3 in Scotland. It can also be adapted for younger and older students.

##### When to use

You can link this resource to Refugee Week, which takes place annually in June, but it can also be used throughout the year, during other footballing events and with Amnesty's **Football Welcomes**.

##### The activities

These activities have a strong geographical focus and are relevant to other parts of the curriculum throughout the UK, in particular PSHE, SMSC, Citizenship, RE and English. The video links can be used to introduce refugee rights in an assembly or tutor time.

##### Find out more

[www.amnesty.org.uk/footballwelcomes](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/footballwelcomes)

#### INCLUDED IN THIS RESOURCE

- Three *Refugees in Football* case studies with video or website links to use with the class
- General discussion questions
- Activities for KS2 and KS3, P3-P7 and S1-S3 students

#### HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT

This resource explores the following articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

**Article 3** Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person

**Article 14** Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution

**Article 24** Everyone has the right to rest and leisure

See and download a simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at

[www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr)

##### Facts

- A refugee is a person who has left their own country because they are afraid of being persecuted and have been given permission to remain in a new country for their own protection.
- People are forced to leave their homes and seek protection because they are in danger from war, violence or persecution.
- The UK is home to approximately 1 per cent of the 26.4 million refugees forcibly displaced across the world.

Source: The Refugee Council, Refugee and asylum facts/The truth about asylum, [www.refugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk)

# REFUGEES IN FOOTBALL

## Case study 1

MARIO VRANČIĆ

Born 1989

Plays for Stoke City and Bosnia



© Alamy

**Midfielder Mario Vrančić was a young boy when his family fled the war in Bosnia and found refuge in Germany.**

Mario Vrančić's hometown of Brod in Bosnia was one of the first towns to be hit by conflict when the war broke out in 1992. Mario was just five when his parents decided to leave to find safety. They took just a few clothes and their ID, travelling first to Croatia then to Germany. They weren't sure if they would be allowed to stay but the family received the right of residence in 1994.

Mario began his footballing career in Germany playing for FSV Mainz 05 and SC Paderborn before moving to Darmstadt. He represented Germany at youth level and in 2015 he made his debut for the Bosnian national team. He signed for Norwich City FC in 2017, and joined Stoke City in 2021.

He says: 'It was clear the war in Bosnia was coming and we had to leave to find safety. My entire family went to different countries. The hardest thing was leaving my grandparents behind and trying to start a new life in a new country... People here [Norwich] have been really friendly and helped me adapt to this city.'

■ **Watch** the video with Mario Vrančić (3 minutes):  
YouTube, search 'Football Welcomes Mario Vrančić'

## Geography

**Bosnia** (official name: Bosnia and Herzegovina)

**Area** 51,129 sq km (19,741 sq miles)

**Population** 3.2 million

**Capital** Sarajevo

**Main languages** Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian

**Natural resources** Coal, iron ore, clay, timber, steel, lead, salt, sand, timber

Sources:  
bbc.co.uk  
nationmaster.com



# REFUGEES IN FOOTBALL

## Case study 2

ELIZABETA EJUPI

Born 1994

Plays for Durham and Albania



In action for  
Aston Villa FC  
© AVFC

**The Durham forward was forced to leave her life in Kosovo at the age of four, and moved to the UK.**

Elizabeta Ejupi was born in Kosovo when it was part of Yugoslavia. When she was four, her family moved to the UK to escape war. Hundreds of people were killed during this conflict so she feels lucky to have been able to rebuild her life in safety.

Elizabeta began playing football as a child on the estate where she grew up, and the sport helped her find friends and 'become someone'. She was encouraged to visit Charlton Athletic for a trial, which turned into a development path from the under-13s all the way to the first team for the London club. She then played for Nottingham Forest and Notts County, before signing for Aston Villa in 2015. She now plays for Durham FC. The midfielder is also part of the Albanian national football team.

She says: 'Football has really helped me since I moved to the country. I was always playing outside. It helped me make friends, integrate into the community and build confidence, because it was hard learning a new language, learning a new culture, whereas football's just the same wherever you go. No one really cared where you were from. They just wanted you to pass them the ball.'

■ **Watch** the video with Elizabeta Ejupi (3 minutes): Google, search 'Forced to flee Elizabeta Ejupi Aston Villa Ladies'

## Geography

### Kosovo

**Area** 10,887 sq km (4,212 sq miles)

**Population** 2 million

**Capital** Pristina

**Main languages** Albanian, Serbian

**Natural resources** Nickel, lead, zinc, magnesium, chrome, bauxite

Sources:  
bbc.co.uk  
nationmaster.com





# REFUGEES IN FOOTBALL

## Case study 3

GLASGOW AFGHAN UNITED

Founded 2004

Plays in the Scottish Unity Football League



© GA United

**Glasgow Afghan United was set up by a former Afghan refugee to bring refugees in Scotland together.**

Glasgow Afghan United football team was established in 2004 to support the Afghan community in Scotland and help players participate fully in all aspects of society. The team plays in the Scottish Unity Football League which aims to create a football environment free from all forms of prejudice and discrimination and to bring players together from different backgrounds.

Club president Abdul Bostani (second from right in picture) was forced to leave his family behind in a war-torn country to find a place of safety. When he fled Afghanistan in 2001, he did not speak any English and had never heard of Glasgow or Scotland. It was a long, difficult journey.

Abdul says: 'I didn't understand Scotland was a country. People said it was very cold all the time but I found the people to be warm. They supported me to achieve things in my life and helped me make the most of the new opportunities here. I grabbed the opportunity I was given, I educated myself and I made a life here.'

However, when Abdul arrived in Glasgow, aged 17, without his mother, brother and sister, he felt lonely and isolated. He understood that other refugees had the same feelings so he set up Glasgow Afghan United for them to support each other through sport and friendship. He says: 'Football can be about much more than winning – it can bring people together.'

**Find out more at**

[www.glasgowafghanunited.co.uk/about](http://www.glasgowafghanunited.co.uk/about)

## Geography

### Afghanistan

**Area** 652,864 sq km (251,827 sq miles)

**Population** 39 million

**Capital** Kabul

**Main languages** Dari, Pashto

**Natural resources** Natural gas, petroleum, coal, copper, chromite, talc, sulfur, lead, zinc, salt, semi-precious stones

Sources:  
bbc.co.uk  
nationmaster.com



## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION WITH YOUR CLASS

- Why did these footballers have to leave their homelands?
- How would you feel if you had to suddenly leave your home and country?
- What three things would you take with you?
- What would you miss about home?
- How has football helped these players?
- What would help you feel welcome in a new country?
- How would you make friends?
- How could you make someone feel welcome when they first arrive in the UK?
- What have you learnt from these stories? Did anything surprise you?



After reading the *Refugees in Football* case studies, choose one or more of the following activities.

### KS2 ACTIVITIES

Imagine you are one of the footballers and their family. Create a short drama to show what it might have been like to leave your home and arrive in a new country.

Research your local football team. Where were the players born? Which player has travelled the furthest from the country of their birth?

The three *Refugees in Football* case studies come from Kosovo, Bosnia and Afghanistan. Choose one country.

- Find it on a map, globe or atlas. How far is it from the UK? Which countries would you travel through to get here? Draw the journey on your own map.
- What foods come from that country? Draw or cut out two large circles. On one, draw a traditional meal from your chosen country. On the other, draw your own favourite meal. How are they similar or different?
- Draw the country's flag next to the flag of the UK. How are they similar or different?
- Find out how to say 'hello' and 'welcome' in one of the languages of the country. Create a display of these words in lots of different languages.



Avenue Junior School in Norwich welcome refugees

### KS3 ACTIVITIES

Research the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). You can download a summary version of this at [www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr). Which human rights are relevant to people seeking refuge in another country? Design a poster to present your findings.

The three *Refugees in Football* case studies come from Kosovo, Bosnia and Afghanistan. Choose one country.

- Research three key areas (eg people, politics, economy, topography). How is the country similar or different to the UK?
- Pick a language you don't know from a country featured above. With a partner, research that language. Ask each other questions about your lives and families and try to find the answers. How did it feel to have a conversation in a new language?

Choose one of the countries above. Research the conflict that led to the footballer leaving their home. What happened? What is the situation there today?

Choose one of the footballers or team. Find out more about their background and how they came to play football in the UK. Write a newspaper report or blog telling their story.

Research your local football team or the club you support. Find out the nationalities of each of the players. Present your findings on a world map. Include the flags of all the countries represented on your team.

Research other public figures from refugee backgrounds who have made a home in the UK. What kind of work do they do? How have they contributed to this country? Create a social media profile for them, including key facts about their life and achievements.