

# Football Research in an Enlarged Europe: Identity dynamics, perception patterns and cultural change in Europe's most prominent form of popular culture

## Reporting

### Project Information

FREE

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## Final Report Summary - FREE (Football Research in an Enlarged Europe: Identity dynamics, perception patterns and cultural change in Europe's most prominent form of popular culture.)

### Executive Summary:

The FREE – Football Research in an Enlarged Europe – project received funding from the European Union's 7th Framework Programme for research, technological development & demonstration under grant agreement number 2090805 between 2012 and 2015. The FREE project involved 9 universities from 8 different countries.

The objective of the project was to produce findings on European patterns of perception and identity

dynamics, using approaches from the social sciences (anthropology, gender studies, political science, sociology) and the humanities (history) through an integrated interdisciplinary research programme. The FREE project focused on 6 different research strands:

(1) the early history of European football competitions, before the foundation of the European Cup (now the UEFA Champions' League); (2) the memory left by those competitions, the lieux de mémoire (realms of memory) they created at European level; (3) the (limited) place of women in European football: first and foremost as supporters; tangentially, as players; (4) identity dynamics in European football, specifically from an anthropological perspective, with a focus on migrant football fans and the East-West divide; (5) the governance of football and the (problematic) place of supporters therein; (6) the possible existence of a European public sphere of football.

The methodology included a mix of quantitative and qualitative research. Two wide-scale quantitative surveys were conducted: one, online, on the attentive public; one, by phone on the general population with a representative sample (countries polled: AT, DE, DK, ES, FR, IT, PL, TR, UK). One campaign of ethnographical fieldwork (participative observation) was conducted by all partners of the consortium on three days during the 2014 World Cup in their respective countries. Each partner institution and each work package also produced original research following the methodology of their academic discipline.

Results are abundant and the FREE project has used numerous channels to communicate the findings (exhibitions, books, policy briefs, journal articles and special issues, presentations, online papers, interviews and articles in popular media...). A special issue of *Sport in History* edited by Paul Dietschy and published in October 2015 shows how early European competitions paralleled the early stages of Europeanisation, yet were not pan-European and mostly organised around deceased empires (Ottoman and Austria-Hungary, namely) or cultural affinities within Europe (e.g. the Latin Cup), nations and the market. *European Football and Collective Memory*, edited by Wolfram Pyta, Nils Havemann looks at the traces left in European memory: alongside a faint memory shared by all Europeans, competing layers of identity have provided national or local memories, illustrating the inter- (rather than supra-) national nature of the Union. Football has also been shown to largely remain a male preserve, a central element in the definition of European masculinities, which justifies concerted efforts to make football more inclusive for women – this has led to the publication of a Policy Brief on the matter. The European public sphere of football has been shown to be in its infancy but that football is bringing Europeans together: Europeans interact about football and Europeans follow football in Europe beyond the realm of the nation-state. This is developed in detail in the Policy Brief on the topic. The research on the governance of football has shown that supporters are ambivalent about the need for more regulation of football, first and foremost because of the limited trust in institutions and bodies of governance (apart from the club, although no agreement can be reached on fans' ownership of clubs). The Policy Brief on this matter shows clear recommendations for action.

More results will be published in the forthcoming months and years. A series of three forthcoming books shows the complexity of identity dynamics and identification patterns, around UEFA Euro 2012 (with an emphasis on public debate around mega-events and flexible loyalties), the 2014 World Cup (especially on the stereotyping of East and West, North and South) and through ethnographies of European football (with a focus on migrant football fans and integration in the days of transnational support). A total of a minimum of 10 books will be published in a dedicated FREE series by Palgrave Macmillan.

Project Context and Objectives:

2. Contents and Objectives

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### Project Rationale: Why football?

The FREE project was carried out between the 1st of April 2012 and the 31st of May 2015. It was designed in response to a call for proposals on 'The Anthropology of European Integration' issued by the European Commission in 2010/2011. Proposals were expected to describe innovative, collaborative European research projects that would focus on 'day-to-day lives, experiences, perceptions, values and identities of citizens' and 'look from different disciplinary perspectives at cultural, social, behavioural formations and transformations of everyday life in the context of European integration'.

The call did not mention sports, let alone football. But the European scholars who were to form the FREE consortium were convinced that there could not be a better subject matter for studying perception patterns and identity dynamics outside the political sphere than football. It was clear to them that football is Europe's most important and most widely spread form of popular culture, one of these social practices that may be called 'ordinary passions' and that establish emotional and horizontal bonds between individuals and groups.

Football is an ambiguous cultural practice: it allows social groups to display their self-perceptions of singularity in an immense and intense 'vanity fair' and at the same time to feel and even joyfully celebrate commonalities with the out-groups against which they define and constitute their identity. It is no doubt one

of the best illustrations of the European Union's oft-quoted motto 'United in Diversity'.

The FREE Project was based on this vision of football, considering this game a potentially very fertile, albeit traditionally under-explored, ground for investigation for the social sciences. It started from the idea that this socio-cultural phenomenon that means so much to so many individuals across the entire continent, that necessarily influences the sentiments that Europeans have towards each other, and that contributes to the construction and definition of 'Others', would be able to provide some fresh and original insight on the fundamental issue of perceived cultural commonality in Europe.

### Overcoming the handicaps of traditional football research

Football is a multidimensional phenomenon, of a rare complexity, which raises many different issues and needs to be studied from various disciplinary angles. In the field of the social sciences and humanities, historians were the first, in the late 1970s and 1980s, to be intrigued by football and to investigate the conditions in which this game was introduced and became, in a very short time, the number one sport in almost every European country. Sociologists and some rare ethno-logists followed suit in the 1980s and 1990s, studying the surprisingly rich and prolific discourse it generates and socio-psychological mechanisms that underlie its impact on individuals and groups.

Yet, football has changed tremendously over the last 25 years, particularly in Europe. It is no exaggeration to speak of several 'paradigm shifts' that occurred since the early 1990s and that have been triggered by both endogenous 'revolutions' – such as the commodification and excessive commercialisation of the game embodied by the English Premier League and the UEFA Champions League – and exogenous 'shocks' like the Bosman ruling by the European Court of Justice in 1995 and the acceleration of globalisation, with its intensification of globalisation fears and identity anxieties.

Grasping the European implications of European football has always been one of the major handicaps of football research. All too often, whether for lack of means or for linguistic reasons, the multiple socio-cultural implications of the 'People's Game' are studied through the national prism or in a comparative perspective that remains limited to the juxtaposition of national case studies. But reaching beyond the state-of-the-art and understanding football in its European dimension and in all its facets requires a both interdisciplinary and transnational approach; it requires complementary work by a research group composed of scholars of different academic disciplines and national origins.

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For this reason, the FREE consortium covered eight different European countries and was composed of scholars from anthropology, sociology, history, political science and gender studies. And in order to make sure to reach the objectives of interdisciplinarity, emphasis was laid on interconnecting a wide range of methods from the social sciences and humanities in an overall research architecture that included both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The extraordinary normality of football

The overarching goal of the project was to increase understanding of football's impact on identity dynamics and perception patterns in an enlarged Europe. FREE sought to explore an apparently non-political, but fully existing sub-cultural European public space of communication: the European football scene in the largest sense.

It did so in focusing on the 'extraordinary normality' of football.

Rather than studying the 'usual suspects' of recent football research, like security-related issues (violence, hooliganism), or recurrent criminal phenomena (match-fixing, doping, corruption, racism and discrimination), FREE decided to focus on the unspectacular mainstream of football fandom, on the banality of the 'ordinary passion' it represents.

This focus was also reflected in the project logo. The view of a stylised football stadium gave evidence of the intention to put those who watch the game in the focus of the research. The object of the studies conducted by FREE, across all work packages and research streams, was not so much the game itself, but the reaction of people, individuals and groups, to football.

In other words, FREE was an attempt to do what Max Weber called 'reality science' in an essay published in 1904:

'We want to understand in its idiosyncrasy the reality of life that surrounds us, the life in which we have been placed – on the one hand, the context and the cultural meaning of its individual phenomena in their contemporary shape, on the other hand the reasons for its historical having-become-thus-and-not-otherwise.'

For several reasons football in the 21st century is a very appropriate tool for 'doing reality science': Football moves and mobilises people, it produces uncensored emotions, it triggers revealing reactions. Football is always, invariably a social event: it makes sense only when it is shared, when it is re-constructed in discourse, when it becomes the thread of collective narratives.

Football is a 360 degree projection screen onto which individuals and groups have almost unlimited potential to project what they desire.

It is true that this apparently futile game seems to occupy a totally disproportionate and over-dimensional place in the simultaneously national and transnational societies that make up 21st-century Europe. But this is the Europe that Europeans are living in, or, to speak with Weber, 'the life in which we have been placed'.

Research streams and research questions

In the light of the above, the FREE Project organised its research in six different streams.

The anthropological and political analysis of the European football phenomenon was to be underpinned by a sound knowledge of its historical origins and of the specific role competitions and icons have played over time in creating patterns of cultural transfer among Europeans.

As a result, two of the project's research streams adopted a historical perspective, two others had a sociological and anthropological approach, and two research streams were anchored in political science and international relations. All of them can be said to have approached the 'Public Sphere of European Football' from different, complementary angles and perspectives.

The first stream aimed at filling a void in the academic literature on the history of European football

The first stream aimed at filling a void in the academic literature on the history of European football competitions. Its objective was to retrace their significant role in the different waves of Europeanisation that football has undergone since the early decades of 20th century, processes that had both a top-down and a bottom-up dimension. The major underpinning research questions of this historical study were how exactly desires of promoting the Europeanisation of football emerged in civil society and were carried by 'pioneers' of European football integration, and the extent to which European football competitions, both for clubs and national teams, have contributed to create today's transnational football environment.

The second research stream was charged with filling the astonishing gap in the academic debate and literature on collective memory, which is traditionally focused on 'official' memory and very rarely takes into account popular culture. It aimed at assessing if and how football and its 'invented traditions' have contributed and are still contributing to the emergence of a continental 'imagined community'. It did so by adopting a cultural-historical approach to the exploration of the 'collective memory of European football' produced through the transformation, by means of media communication, of performative acts into long-term collective patterns of meaning, and by extending the concept of 'lieux de mémoire' to football as a major form of popular culture whose heroes, places and events are widely remembered and transmitted by social (national) groups.

The empirical work of these two first research streams was by definition mainly based on desk and archive research. At the same time, intermediate findings were used for strengthening the foundations of the field work carried out by the anthropological and sociological teams of the consortium and also fed into the quantitative tools used in the last two research streams.

Research stream number three explicitly applied anthropological methods, tools and concepts to football as a symbolic domain that produces social identities at various levels all across Europe. It did so by trying, on the one hand, to take stock of new ethnological football research in a large variety of local and sub-cultural realities, and, on the other hand, by identifying several particularly revealing fields of observation where strategies of action in primary and secondary fandom could be investigated in a clearly defined local context. These included an original approach to the study of mutual and reciprocal perception patterns and representations between Western and Eastern Europeans; the study of conflicting loyalties in migrant football fans; the perception, impact and heritage of a football mega-event on an urban environment and community; as well as the very particular dynamics at work during 'public viewing' events of international competitions.

Another important research question was dealt with by a fourth research stream that focused on performance practices, consumption habits and identification processes that were encompassed under the heading 'The feminisation of European football'. The tasks of this team (located in Scandinavia) included establishing a genuinely European state-of-the-art in the history and development of women's football in Europe, and to investigate, underpinned by current theories of gender construction, the female fan community. The objective was to provide answers to the question if and how female fans adapt and/or resist to what is generally referred to as 'hegemonic masculinity' in the football stadium.

Both the anthropological and gender-related empirical research fed into the design of the tools for the quantitative studies managed by the political scientists.

The first of the political science research stream explicitly widened the concept of the 'European public sphere', which is very often limited to purely political and economic issues, to the sphere of popular culture, in an attempt to verify the relevance of non-political public spaces for the European integration process as a whole. In order to do so, two large quantitative surveys were designed and implemented in eight different European languages: an online survey targeting the attentive public of football fans, and a representative CATI survey targeting the general population.

representative OAH survey targeting the general population.

Finally, the project's sixth research stream took the research on football supporters' networks to a distinctly European level, thus providing an in-depth analysis of changing perceptions of European approaches to football governance and producing policy-relevant new findings on attitudes and opinions on the governance structures of European football. It did so by applying both traditional quantitative survey methods and very innovative anthropological field work, with the aim of measuring the perceived need for more regulation of European football and a stronger involvement of supporters as major stakeholders of contemporary football.

## Project Results:

### 1. The FREE Project's main scientific findings

The summary presentation of the FREE Project's main research findings follows the order of the different research streams presented in the previous section.

#### 1.1. The Europeanisation of football

The history of today's 'Europe of football' – i.e. a sporting space forged by shared competitions and united by the underlying perception of a community of destiny, emerged already at the beginning of the 20th century. At a very early stage, this history of European football appears as partly linked to 'Big' official

history. At the same time, it also is clearly inseparably linked to the commercialisation of regional and national identities and, therefore, to the business of spectator-sport and professionalism.

#### Stages of Europeanisation

In the historical development of the Europe of football several stages may be distinguished:

While the creation of FIFA and its first statutes (1904) made the nation-state the 'natural' unit of international football, another dichotomy clearly determinates the development of European football in the early 20th century: the permanent comparison between continental and British football, whose self-perception as the uncontested master of the game is firmly rooted in the certainty of its own superiority, but which remains attentive to developments on the continent.

It is in comparison with the British standard of play that continental players form the desire to meet, follow each other's progress, establish a continental hierarchy and identify national styles of play. All these elements of Europeanisation is quickly resumed in the inter-war years, following a conflict that is much more than just an 'interlude' in the history of football, as its development and spread is closely linked to World War One.

It is in the 1920s that continental football begins to enter a first stage of 'Europeanisation'. This development finds an often ambivalent expression in the first regular international competitions like the Mitropa Cup, the Central European Cup, the Baltic Cup or the Balkans Cup. All these competitions are simultaneously an occasion of encounter and rapprochement between peoples and outlets for the expression of exacerbated nationalism. These years are, however, also the moment when the general representation of the 'European' footballer emerges, when this representation finds its incarnation in football's first pan-European stars, and when the organisation of a genuinely continental football starts to be imagined and discussed.

Two schools of thought confront each other in the inter-war years: the rather inward-looking promotion of continental football defended by Danubian football and its tireless and influential herald Hugo Meisl, and the Universalist French project of a football World Cup, which eventually imposes itself and relegates the European dimension in the second place.

The World Cups, as the Olympic tournaments, provide ample evidence of the excellence of Latin America, which becomes a new epicentre of football's development. This emergence of a continental rival forces the

which becomes a new epicentre of football's development. This emergence of a continental rival forces the Europeans to define and constitute themselves against this new alterity, and to reinforce their solidarity within FIFA by creating the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) in 1954.

Two frameworks of thought: the nation and the market

Europeanist initiatives are relaunched in 1948-49, stimulated by the manifest decline of English football. Once again regional competitions serve as testing grounds. Just like the creation of the common market is preceded by the constitution of the Benelux zone, the creation of the European Champions Clubs' Cup is partially prefigured by regional contests like the Latin Cup.

While the leaders of UEFA initially remain rather reluctant with regard to the organisation of European competitions, very quickly two conceptions of what 'European football' should be take shape. The first one assimilates the construction of a Europe of football to a Europe based on the traditional entity of the nation-state (which results in competitions like the Champions Clubs' Cup, the European Cup of Nations, or the Cup Winners' Cup); the other one is thought in terms of market, promoted by private investors with the aim of stimulating both the football business and trade relations across Europe (the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup).

In a first stage, the commercial vision is the dominant one. It takes shape in a surprising and innovative 'joint venture' composed of the French sports daily L'Équipe and Real Madrid.

L'Équipe publicly launched a challenge in its columns to create a pan-European competition in December

1954 and, having only lukewarm support from football's governing bodies, simply went ahead creating a consortium of European top-flight clubs, pretending they would organise it on their own. As the last remaining witness of these pioneering days, Jacques Ferran, recalls, they would never have had the means to organise the first European Cup themselves, but they wanted to see the extent to which their pressure could 'persuade' the still young UEFA to take the lead despite the refusal of the secretary general of the English FA, Stanley Rous, who considered the project 'premature'. According to him 'The European Football Union is not built for organising competitions, but defending common interests'. Given the weight of the Champions League, The Euro and other UEFA competitions today, it is difficult to imagine what could be more in the 'common interest' than these (now) immensely lucrative events...

As a matter of fact, UEFA underestimated the interests of private business in the commercial potential of football in post-war Europe. The managers of L'Équipe, born on 28 February 1946 of the ashes of the established sports daily L'Auto, which was 'suspected of collaboration with the enemy' and no longer authorised for publication, saw this potential. It was football that was at the origin of the biggest part of their sales over the year, pushing them to launch, in addition to the daily newspaper, a specialised weekly named France Football, which quickly found a large public and became the self-proclaimed 'Bible of football'. French being still a language widely used among a part of the European élites, L'Équipe and France Football managed to impose themselves across the continent for their expertise and international coverage. And being already the organiser, together with another newspaper, of the Tour de France, they were credible in their call for a European football competition. In December 1954 they took the pretext of the claim from the Daily Mail that the English champions, Wolverhampton Wanderers, were the best club in the world, to propose a pan-European interclub competition. The suggested format – presented by Jacques Ferran on 4 February 1955 – fitted their commercial interests, as the games scheduled in mid-week would boost sales on days with little sports news.

L'Équipe was quickly and enthusiastically supported by Real Madrid, whose president, Santiago Bernabeu not only saw in a European club competition an excellent opportunity to regularly fill the huge stadium he had just extended and generate massive additional revenues, but also to find a means to anchor Spain, isolated under the Franco dictatorship, to the continent, if only in popular culture.

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when L'Équipe and Real Madrid managed to assemble a group of sixteen clubs from across Europe – including, interestingly, several ones from Eastern Europe despite the political stalemate of the Cold War – and threatened to put their plan into practice, FIFA – whose leaders were almost exclusively Europeans – organised an emergency committee on 8 and 9 May 1955 in order to urge UEFA to take over the organisation of the forthcoming competition under the name of 'Coupe des clubs champions européens'. At the beginning of the 1960s the traditions of European Cups have already effectively been 'invented' and the conditions for the fast development are now given (television and transistor radio, air transport, floodlight capacities for mid-week evening matches). From this moment on, the Europe of football is bound to grow and become the first global power of football and its most attractive economic space. Which is not far from what the pioneers of the early 20th century, who laid the foundations of its creation, already had in mind.

Conclusion: Cultural history that deserves to be re-discovered

The role of civil society pioneers in the creation of the Europe of football is a particularly interesting one, which is widely underestimated and deserves to be better known by the larger public. The most dynamic and innovative actors in the European football space in the post-war years were, first and foremost, the above-mentioned French newspapers L'Équipe and France Football, but also club presidents and managers.

Official historiography has been poor in communicating about this historic achievement of creating European competitions, as has been UEFA with regard to its own, essential, role. As a result, general awareness is low about how this 'Europeanisation success story' was realised from below, in a remarkable 'bottom-up' process, rather than from the top (by political institutions). This part of cultural history definitely deserves to be re-discovered.

## 1.2. European football and collective memory

The missing link in the European integration process

The historiography of European integration has traditionally mainly dealt with the forces profondes in politics, economy and the world of ideas that have led to the formation of the European Union in its present shape. Historians specialised in political ideas and political philosophy, as well as sociologists from the social constructivist school of thought have scrutinised the roots and fundamentals of the integration process. Therefore, the discursive origins of the European institutional arrangement belong to the favourite issues of researchers who take a close look at the history of contemporary Europe. With the advent of the European single market and the introduction of a common currency, increased emphasis has been laid on the study of the economic factors of European integration. And since the 1990s, the discipline of European Studies has known a significant 'Europeanisation turn', with a strong focus on the analysis of the processes through which European political dynamics are interiorised in policy-making or preference formation on the national level.

One conclusion that the increasingly diverse research strands on all aspects of top-down and bottom-up dynamics of European integration (and their rich publication output) seem to agree upon is that the 'missing link' in an overall remarkably successful integration process is collective identity. Cultural sociology has shown that successful community building must produce practice-relevant patterns of meaning and there is no doubt that the European project does not seem to have produced such patterns of meaning. Statements on the lack of a 'European demos', the insufficiency of 'European narratives' or the absence of a genuine European 'public sphere' for want of genuinely European political parties or pan-European media have even entered the mainstream of political discourse and become conventional wisdom in speeches and editorials.

What research on European integration has mostly neglected or underestimated, however, are the often



what research on European integration has mostly neglected or underestimated, however, are the often unintended social and cultural practices that have contributed and are contributing to give the European project the dimension of a cultural community project. It is perfectly possible, especially given the present severe crisis of the European Union, that it is precisely such practices, experienced and internalised in everyday life outside the realms of politics and economy, may lend genuine stability to the European project beyond institutional action.

The research carried out by FREE on the collective memory of European football not only adopts a change of perspective but also applies a conceptual refinement. It concentrates on 'Europeanisation' in the sense of those soft forces which provide cultural substance to the integration process. Methodologically, this means that such 'soft' Europeanisation processes are described with a historical and systematic approach which has proven its effectiveness in the humanities and social sciences. This approach is used by qualitative oriented cultural sociologists, by political scientists who are aware of historical developments and, quite naturally, by cultural historians.

### Competing identity layers

European community building has always had to compete with two other cultural codes: the concept of nation and the concept of 'The West' or a Western hemisphere.

The concept of nation is by no means an outdated model of community creation which reached its peak in the 19th century. Even after 1945, it has continuously proved its strong capacity to forge collective identity. In all European states the nation continues to be the primary framework of allegiance and a major instance of socialisation. As a result it both overlaps and partly blocks the construction of a European identity. The relation between the construction of a European identity and the recourse to a universalistic code is not free of tension either. The reason is that universalistic values as they were put down, for example, in the Declaration of Human Rights, are clearly based on assumptions, norms and beliefs that are rooted in Western, or transatlantic, culture or 'civilisation'. They are transatlantic in the sense that they have their foundations both in the cultural heritage of Europe and in norms and traditions that became sustainably effective in the United States of America and were, due to the cultural hegemony of the USA after 1945, successfully exported to all parts of the world, including of course Europe. It is therefore difficult to claim that there are European core values which, from a normative point of view, would be substantially different from Western values.

The European Union as the organisational core of the European project has not succeeded in providing its institutions with a symbolic added value. European institutions seem to be both unwilling and incapable of providing any appealing offers pertaining to the affective dimension of citizenship. They do not touch European citizens emotionally and therefore fail to induce the crucial patterns of identification that are summed up in the Aristotelian notion of *philia* and that are considered essential for the sustainable functioning of the polity. One of the reasons for this lack of visibility and symbolic power of the European institutions is the complicated multilevel system of the European Union where a large number of players compete for decision-making power and public attention. Another one is the strong focus of the European institutions on economic and financial issues since the construction of the European Single Market and the introduction of the common currency. As a result, the institutions of the European Union have been unable to challenge the 'emotional monopoly held by the nation-state' As Ernest Renan famously said in 1882, 'a Zollverein is not a fatherland' (Renan, 1996).

### Football in European memorial culture

Collective myths and narratives need to be rooted in a shared memory. Given the incapacity of the European Union to produce a binding common narrative, it is not astonishing that a genuine European memory culture does not exist

memory culture does not exist.

For a long time it was assumed that an increasingly converging, mutually acceptable interpretation of National Socialism and the Holocaust could become the most important historical-political element on which a European post-war narrative or identity could be founded. This assumption, or hope, was however very much a Western European one. The experience made after the collapse of the communist dictatorships in Central and Eastern Europe shows the extent to which memory cultures in Europe are still framed nationally. For the states of the former Eastern bloc, the historical-political debate on the experience under communist rule clearly had a higher priority than remembering the National Socialist crimes. Furthermore, the question must be asked whether a 'negative memory' drawn from the experiences with dictatorships of different sorts can actually be an appropriate and suitable base for a cultural European identity of Europe. Historical-political discourse that is overloaded with normative moral exhortations at best has limited social impact, and at worst contributes to turning Europe into a continent of a plurality of 'painful pasts'. It is therefore advisable to explore less normative cultural practices with regard to their potential of producing pan-European narratives.

Football is one of these practices that fit well into the recent research agenda of 'Europeanisation of life worlds'. The reason for the growing research interest in football is the fact that it is a cultural phenomenon which gives expression to configurations of meaning in a very practical way. Among all kinds of sport,

football has by far the biggest power for community building because this game is solidly anchored as a classical spectator's sport and as a form of popular culture that has become premium media content. As a result, when we are looking for cultural practices that are a very important part of daily life for a vast majority of Europeans, football imposes itself as a revealing object of study.

In other words: football is trans-European cultural practice that was not artificially conceived by marketing strategists with the aim of promoting the European project on the cultural level. But does football's community building potential actually target Europe as a level of identification? Is it not much more powerful in providing space and opportunity for the consolidation or celebration of national and regional communities? Is football not, in a rationalised world of closely linked states and economies, one of the last remaining 'playgrounds' on which individuals can release and display patriotic emotions in the public space? These questions show that it is far from certain whether football, whenever it serves as projection screen for identity construction, actually also contributes to European identity.

In order to explore this question more thoroughly, it is necessary to identify criteria against which football's contribution to European identity construction can be assessed. One of the most promising conceptual approaches in this respect is the theory of collective memory, which is now well established in the cultural sciences. Since communities are founded on the construction of collective images of history, the fundamental question is whether there is, or not, a shared football memory on a distinctly European level. It was the French historian Pierre Nora who first pointed out that shared memory requires communicative focal points. Particularly in times of mass media and communication overload, such points of reference are necessary memory landmarks that attract attribution of meaning by their symbolic and communicative capacity. Pierre Nora named these memorial reference points *Lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory), and he included in this concept not only geographical place, but also persons, events, monuments or even pieces of art that have the potential to become bearers or supports of collective memory.

Hence, one of the main research questions that underpinned the FREE project's historical research was: are there *lieux de mémoire* which have been established by European football and which have become the object of attributions of meaning with a genuinely European dimension? Spontaneously, one might be tempted to give a negative answer, as the overwhelming majority of potential candidates seem to be firmly owned by national discourses of memory.

owned by national discourses of memory.

Take, for instance, the former Wankdorf-Stadion in Bern, where the German national team won its first World Cup in 1954, which seems to be a purely national site of memory. The same applies to 17 October 1973, when the Polish national team qualified for the 1974 World Cup against the 'mother country of football' in Wembley (Blecking, 2012). Or to the Andalusian city of Sevilla, which hosted the legendary World Cup semi-final between France and Germany in 1982 and whose name has become a meaningful lieu de mémoire in French national memory.

European sites of football memory do not impose themselves. They are not marked in red on the map. And they suffer from the tendency of traditional historiography to favour so-called 'high culture' over popular culture. Even the editors of the commendable book on 'European sites of memory' (Europäische Erinnerungsorte), an ambitious initiative of one thousand pages in three volumes with over 120 entries by authors from over 15 countries, could not – or did not want to – identify any football sites of memory that would have been so unambiguously European as to be included in their collection.

In other words: the identification of genuinely European sites of memory from the international history of football is a demanding endeavour: just as the simple addition or juxtaposition of national memories does not lead to the formation of a European commonality, transnationality is not the same as Europeanness. The Europeanisation of football competitions and football fandom

The tournament format of the European Cups has had two crucial advantages for the Europeanisation of football. Firstly, it gave teams from politically and economically peripheral regions in Europe access to European football's centre stage. A European League would inevitably have resulted, after a few years, in a de facto closed league of the richest clubs, making it impossible for weaker national leagues to make their representatives participate. This, in turn, would have considerably diminished the distinctively European appeal of the European cups, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s for the countries under Soviet influence for whom the European club competitions represented a unique opportunity to participate without restriction in a major pan-European event. Secondly, the knock-out tournament format created media highlights. It makes sure that the significance of the matches is differentiated and that media interest is focused on the last, decisive matches. The finals become privileged highlights and ideal objects of media coverage. It is therefore not surprising that they managed to emerge as transnational media events.

Studies on fan behaviour also indicate that the Europeanisation of football competitions has had an impact on the European awareness of hard-core supporters. First empirical studies have provided evidence for the fact that such fans nowadays consider the European scene the real test for the quality of their team. Rather than the Premier League and the matches against teams such as Fulham or Norwich, their yardstick is the matches on eye level against Real Madrid or Bayern Munich. Moreover, the impact factor of football tourism ought not to be underestimated: Nowadays, it is taken for granted that thousands of fans travel with their team through Europe and become familiar with major European cities.

From their beginnings the European club competitions formed a close alliance with mass media and quickly became premium content for television. Since its inception in 1955 the European Champions Clubs' Cup became an essential element of television programmes in many European countries. This was facilitated by the fact that with Eurovision a European format had been made available, which made it possible to simultaneously transmit television images to all associated broadcasting institutions. The response to the Champions Clubs' Cup was overwhelming, especially to the final, which became a kind of performance show of European football, presenting the new standards set by the best teams. Spectators flocked to see the final and television reported live. For a long time these European Cup finals were the only matches that were transmitted live on a large scale, and due to this positioning as exceptional, almost monopolistic events the finals of the 1950s and 1960s became engraved in the collective memory of the

monopolistic events the finals of the 1950s and 1960s became engraved in the collective memory of the football community across the continent.

In a brilliant case study on the 1960 final in Glasgow Geoff Hare has demonstrated by means of a dense media analysis the extent to which such a European cup final was attributed European meaning by the spectators of the host nation. The simple fact that among the 127 000 spectators more than 90 per cent were Scottish, showing a keen curiosity for continental football as represented by the incumbent champions Real Madrid and their challengers Eintracht Frankfurt, provides evidence for the European dimension of the game. The Glasgow final became the first full-fledged European football media event, and it reveals the existence of a hidden discourse on genuinely European meanings and values: the victory of Real Madrid is not only explained by the outstanding quality of their players. Rather, 'Europe' stands for professionalisation of training, for technical progress that goes beyond the sports realm. The Glasgow final has engraved itself so deeply in the memory of its contemporaries and the following generations that it can claim the status of a *lieu de mémoire*.

Football stadia as lieux de mémoire

This applies even more to an event which at first sight does not seem to be appropriate for European community building: the outburst of violence before the European Champions Clubs' Cup final between Liverpool FC and Juventus Turin at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels on 29 May 1985. Thirty-nine

spectators, mostly Italians, died in a stampede after Liverpool hooligans had invaded the section reserved for Juventus supporters just before kick-off of the European cup final. Another six hundred were severely injured.

Whatever the name given to it – 'disaster', 'massacre', 'tragedy' – the Heysel became a European traumatism. The 'live televised death', as *La Repubblica* labelled it, left a deep mark on the millions of Europeans that had switched on their television set in excited anticipation for what was expected to be a summit of European football culture. As Michel Platini, who scored the decisive goal in the match that finally took place despite what happened around the pitch, declared in 2010, no one who witnessed this tragedy 'will ever be able to erase it from their memory'.

The simultaneous Europe-wide media coverage turned this event first into a collective experience perceived to be massively shared across national borders, then into a genuine 'European *lieu de mémoire*' by making a European public engage in the discussion and evaluation of what had happened.

Over time the interpretation of the event slowly changed, but retained its distinctive European dimension. At first, there was a strong emphasis in public debate on the archaic barbarism and brutal savageness displayed on that day. Among the different emotions triggered by this perception, the most powerful is no doubt a sort of collective shame across the continent, a reaction that comes close to the phenomenon of 'moral panic'. Most importantly, this panic was felt and expressed by a clearly transnational public despite the well-known linguistic and cultural barriers within the European media landscape. Emotions were explicitly expressed in the name of 'European values' or 'European civilization'.

Years later, in the collective commemoration of the event – whose remembrance is never completely extinguished but particularly activated every five years – the symbolic value assigned to it started to shift towards issues of crowd control and security issues. From today's perspective, 'the Heysel' marks a turning point in the organisation of large football events. It may be considered a watershed not only in the perception of football violence in general, but also in international cooperation on European level with regard to stadium design and regulations, crowd policing and spectator safety. One way or another, the Heysel has become a reference point in the history of a common, transnational culture.

In other cases, there is much less evidence for a European symbolic dimension. Take the Wembley Stadium in London. Although it was host to several unforgettable international matches, such as the first

Stadium in London. Although it was host to several unforgettable international matches, such as the first home defeat of the English team against the famous Hungarian squad in 1953, the World Cup final of 1966 with the legendary 'Wembley Goal', or the semi-final of Euro1996 with the dramatic penalty shoot-out, Wembley has never been attributed with any specifically European meaning. The famous 'Wembley Goal', for instance, and the ensuing discussion whether or not the ball had crossed the goal line, did not raise much interest elsewhere than in England and Germany. Wembley has thus remained an essentially national site of memory.

Conclusion: the irresistible emergence of a European football memory?

Clearly, the input of popular culture to the collective memory of large social groups has been consistently neglected. The research carried out in the 'Memory' stream of the FREE project has demonstrated that the contribution of football to what people remember (and choose to remember) as 'important' elements of their collective identity is much more significant than previous research, with its focus on top-down historiography, has made us believe.

On the other hand, the research also provides evidence for the fact that the sedimentation and consolidation of a distinctly European dimension take time. Football was born and developed in strong national settings, its myths and legends have been formulated in national languages. Even today, at a time when the progressive Europeanisation of football has become an uncontested phenomenon, national

patterns of thought seem to prevail.

There are clearly some European sites of football memory. A number of heroes, events, and places have transgressed the boundaries of national discourse, and some apparently national narratives only make sense if put into a European context.

Compared to the long history of our continent, football is a relatively young cultural phenomenon and its Europeanisation process covers only a short time span. This being said, the discourse it produces has an increasingly transnational pattern, also due to the massive availability of football memory on borderless social networks.

Moreover, as the FREE surveys have confirmed in the specific case of football, there is growing curiosity for each other's history. Rather than an eternal focus on the conflictual side of European history, football seems to be an efficient teacher of intercultural skills, such as the capacity to change perspective and develop empathy for different experiences and cultural frameworks of interpretation.

The conclusion of the FREE research on football memory – unsurprisingly for a group of scholars – is a plea for more research in the field of popular culture. Funding bodies would be well advised to issue calls and support projects that deal with the bottom-up memory of popular culture across the continent. It is more meaningful to many ordinary citizens than many 'official' entries to collective memory imposed from above.

### 1.3. The Anthropology of European football

Some notable exceptions put aside, football as a topic of cultural and social anthropology has received only little attention, especially in a distinctly European perspective. This is all the more regrettable given that football reveals attitudes and behaviour patterns that are essential for the study of European integration in everyday culture – rituals and narratives, belonging and self-staging, 'othering' and stereotyping, nationalism and parochialism, to name but a few.

The anthropological research stream in FREE had the ambition to develop a better understanding of football in its implications for class relations and subculture and in its function (or instrumentalisation) as symbolic domain that constructs social identities at different levels. It did so in focusing its research on a series of sub-topics and in reaching out to a large number of individual ethnographic scholars of all career stages that also worked on practices of distinction in sub-cultural contexts.

stages that also worked on practices of distinction in sub-cultural contexts.

The four sub-topics that have been the object of an in-depth study in the framework of FREE are the following ones:

East-West imaginaries and fault lines as expressed in football;

National self-celebration and flexible loyalties;

The meaning of football fandom in migrant populations;

The impact of football mega-events on the local public debate.

The research findings on these four themes are exposed in more detail below.

East-West imaginaries: consolidating or overcoming the stereotypes?

FREE took the European Championship 2012 hosted by Poland and Ukraine, as a pretext for scrutinising the traditional stereotyping of Eastern Europe, as well as the distrust that comes with it and that is consolidated by the media. While there is plenty of evidence for the persistence of prejudice, football also offers an opportunity, through encounter and shared passion, to overcome or oppose the hegemony of stereotypes.

Mega sports events like the European Championship, provide revealing opportunities for anthropological research. This is because states of exception, within the 'ordinary' event cycle of football supporters, reach out beyond their usual audience to include so-called event fans who normally would not care for

football. It may even be argued that it is these 'irregular' supporters who account for the myths that are created with regard to football mega events.

This applies, of course, to configurations that are already heavily charged with myths, like the dichotomous division of Europe into West and East, which is projected on football, too. The image of the cultural 'football East' derives its power from more general and widespread imaginations of the barbarian, uncivilised, and backward East. Not only are the most successful teams found in the Western part of the continent, but this reality, generated by economic factors, is assisted by a plethora of general 'Orientalising' images about Eastern countries. Those areas usually include insufficient sport arena's infrastructure, intrinsic corruption, hooliganism, etc.

Judging from parts of the Western media discourse, it seemed that Euro2012 had opened up the door to a part of the continent, which large parts of the West apparently had not noticed as a travel destination. Suddenly all the stereotypes and prejudices were on the plate again, but this time the East talked back. The BBC documentary 'Stadiums of Hate' was an excellent illustration of typical Western 'Othering' of the East. Presenting 'shocking new evidence of racist violence and anti-Semitism at the heart of Polish and Ukrainian football', it asked, of course, 'whether tournament organiser UEFA should have chosen both nations to host the prestigious event'. Even though the BBC was accused of using highly selective and one-sided material in its documentary, and despite the protests of Western fans, the BBC defended its programme and refused to apologise. This incident highlighted the extent to which, more than 20 years after the transition to democracy, social actions and events are still framed in terms of civilisation vs. backwardness dichotomies and a lagging modernisation narrative. Journalists embarked on 'expeditions' to the Wild East and reported as if they had discovered unexplored land, where no civilised man's foot had ever stepped.

Based on the 'grammars of identity and alterity' developed by Baumann, Euro2012 is a case study in application of an 'Orientalising grammar' in public discourse: Western media and observers define a standard by which to judge others. Western narratives create a highly biased image of Eastern Europe as one homogenous dangerous, violent, barbaric, and uncivilised space. They even have a strong impact on the East's self-representation.

The other side of the coin is that mega events provide an opportunity for many football fans to actually

The other side of the coin is that mega-events provide an opportunity for many football fans to actually travel to places that they previously only knew from the media (or ignored altogether), to meet and exchange with individuals and groups around a shared passion, and thus to emancipate from the frameworks of thought imposed on them by the media discourse. As could easily be observed on site during the event, football can also function as a catalyst for mutual understanding, getting to know each other, and thereby ideally revising stereotypes. One short summer in Polish and Ukrainian stadiums may therefore also give reason for hope, but is clearly not enough to break the larger pattern.

In a more longitudinal perspective on East-West imaginaries, the FREE research suggests that Western knowledge and appreciation of Eastern football was actually higher during the times of the Iron Curtain than in a united Europe. Today's top-flight professional football in Europe is less geographically and culturally inclusive from an East-West perspective than it used to be in previous decades.

This raises the concern about the side-effects of the strong tendency of top-level European football to become increasingly monopolised by Western clubs. If this trend continues, football's potential positive impact on what can be named the 'persisting mental fault lines on the continent' will be lost. The ever stronger cartel of Spanish, English and German top-flight clubs in European competitions – represent a serious threat for the transnational inclusiveness of football, a precious achievement of the last sixty years.

### Euro2012 and flexible loyalties

During big international tournaments ritual celebration of one's own nation is important for many football fans, even for those who in their everyday life would rather reject such a public display of nationalism. Fans dress up in national colours, chanting loudly and joyfully, and singing the national anthem enthusiastically before matches. These are impressive performances of national affiliations and of 'doing nationalism'.

Yet carnival-like events, such as World Cups and EUROs, inform practices and performances that go beyond mere self-celebration and collective reassurance. Dynamics of secondary fandom and shifting loyalties can be observed.

The anthropological research conducted by FREE suggests that loyalties, but also rivalries, can shift under specific circumstances while being absolutely non-negotiable in a different context. Secondary or plural fandom does not take place randomly. Support for a distant football club, other than one's 'own' local or national team, does not change on a daily basis, nor is it an individual decision. It follows certain trajectories that are historically and socio-culturally determined, and as such are not subject to an entirely individual choice. A shifting loyalty/rivalry, like any identification, can be considered a strategy of action, conceived and employed by football fans according to their respective cultural tool-kit. It is, in Bourdieusian terms, a practice of distinction and negotiation of identities in a specific social field.

During Euro2012 loyalty constructs were flexible and multi-layered while being negotiated in a framework of national attributions. Surprisingly, various aspects like competing group identities, political affiliations, player preferences, family background etc. can become more important to identify with than national citizenship. Having more than one team to cheer for is a common practice among many football fans, especially in countries that are less successful in football competitions. The complex universe of European football and European identification should not be regarded in a simplistic manner.

In interviews conducted during Euro2012 (as well as in the FREE quantitative surveys), fans discussed many different reasons why they cheered for a specific country's team, other than the one whose citizenship they hold. Mentioning only a few examples these reasons included: 'I have travelled there a lot', 'my parents were born in that country', 'I do not really care about that team, but I do not want the other team to win', 'I like their underdog image', 'I prefer their way of playing'. During larger championships historical and socio-cultural contexts play an important role in identification processes. This applies

historical and socio-cultural contexts play an important role in identification processes. This applies especially, but not exclusively, to the case when one's 'own' national team is not involved in the tournament (anymore).

Observations suggest that loyalties are more 'flexible' than expected. The category 'flexible loyalties' may be defined as temporarily constructed identifications that customarily result from certain spatial and temporal circumstances. They are exceptional and temporarily limited, based on situations in which people have to, or want to, choose a team to support for a short period of time, sometimes for only one match. Flexible loyalties are, however, not entirely independent from other factors. They require spontaneously and easily accessible identity offerings. This is the reason why space and objects can become powerful actors in these impromptu identification processes, which has implications for organisers and sponsors who seek to achieve commercial goals. Compared to plural loyalties (like in the case of migrants), flexible loyalties are not necessarily less serious or inferior in their symbolic meaning. The lines between both concepts are blurred, but flexible loyalties have a more playful, functional, and temporal dimension, especially during major tournaments.

Locations where football mega-events are watched are central to the construction of flexible loyalties. An event like Euro2012 goes way beyond the stadium and enters homes and work places. People decorate their houses in national colours, but – in a major difference to everyday practices – only for the time of the event. Many public viewing facilities, whose very concepts demand cheering and support, were created only for the event.

Fan venues and public viewing locations are created to give football fans and event lovers an arena to share a social experience, and to provide a platform to the championship's sponsors. The research carried out at the Berlin Fan Park at Euro2012 provides particularly interesting insight. People gathered to watch football, enjoy the cheerful atmosphere, and to support the German national team. Carnivalistic associations in its very basic meaning arose. With the exception that all the costumes shared the same three colours: black, red, and gold. People dressed up as fans and played loyalty. Not only German citizens and football lovers went to the Fan Park, but also tourists and event fans joined in and celebrated in a temporary community. With the help of merchandising products, people were doing nationalism as social practice to participate in the collective event.

In such situations objects become relevant and powerful actors. The marketing experts' imagination in creating fan products in the German national colours is unlimited. There were wigs, mohawks, bunny ears, armbands, hats in all possible shapes, flower garlands, jerseys, shirts, flags etc. Additionally, the German flag was painted on cheeks and many other different body parts. In places like the 'Coca-Cola Fan-Transformer', individuals are physically transformed into fans of the German team, and it is by doing Germany that they get the entrance ticket for becoming a member of the party collective.

The Coca-Cola Fan Transformer illustrates how merchandising products have a unifying character and national categories are pushed to the background. People are unified by merchandise in the same national colours, which become an abstract signal of community. The Coca-Cola Fan-Transformer was not about becoming a football fan, but a Germany fan. The priority goal was not to celebrate Germany, but to trigger positive emotions. The display of shared symbols created equality among all members, allowing everyone to participate.

The observations made during Euro2012 show a deeply ironic use of 'identity'. It was ironic in the sense that national symbols, whose principal purpose is to create 'in-group' cohesion and exclude members of the 'out-groups', were used with the aim of including as many people as possible regardless of their background. It was also ironic in the sense that it was applied by global companies that work on a supranational level and that used these national symbols to make their 'de-nationalised' brand more



supranational level and that used these national symbols to make their de-nationalised brand more attractive. Finally, it was ironic in the sense that a large number of the individuals who participated were perfectly aware of the temporary and flexible character of this carnivalesque performance.

Migrant fans and migrant players: actors of integration

Focusing on first to third generation Turkish migrants in Vienna, one of the FREE PhD dissertations investigated the meaning of fandom for this 'diaspora' population. Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe are among the most popular football clubs in Vienna, and, unsurprisingly, their numerous supporters in Austria are mostly first to third generation migrants from Turkey. But what is the meaning that these supporters attribute to their fandom?

Needless to say the fan base is very diverse. It is necessary to distinguish between fans that grew up in Turkey and had their first football experiences there and those that became fans in Vienna. The first group cultivates nostalgia about a former home that is connected to childhood memories and to strategies of creating home-like spaces that have a positive emotional connotation. For the second group being a fan can be part of a strategy of "doing kinship", using their football fandom to create closeness to family members and their country of origin.

At the same time, the central places where their football fandom is performed on a daily basis are Viennese pubs, streets and living rooms. The advancement of media and technology has made it easy to

integrate fandom in everyday practices and celebrate it in various public spaces in the city. Vienna has become deeply entangled with the performance of fandom, and it is only logical that some fan clubs proudly add 'Vienna' or 'Viennese' to their title while other fans bring posters to stadia in Istanbul saying 'Viennese Galatasaray fans'.

Vienna is certainly not the only city in Europe with similar migration experiences. In many places football has become a symbol of hybrid belongings, a phenomenon that is met with little understanding and acceptance in society. Migrants are often expected to define 'one true home', which is also reflected in the reluctance towards granting dual citizenship – not only in Austria. Having several belongings beyond one national framework has still not become 'normal' in Europe. But is the capacity of expressing and practising multiple belongings not a key prerequisite to identifying with a concept as abstract as 'Europe'? Despite narratives about experiences of discrimination and inequality shared by many diaspora fans, football can help to move across mental borders. In Austria, where 'being Turkish' is often reduced to debates about headscarves and religion, football fandom can provide a strong reply: when a Turkish club is successful in European competitions – often more so than the Austrian ones! – 'being Turkish' can on the contrary be linked to feelings of appreciation, respect or even superiority.

The most important aspects of fandom remain the love of your club, the emotions provided by the game and the common match experience with friends or family. But football fandom also bridges cultural divides and can help to move across mental borders. It offers migrants a chance to gain agency, in other words: to have the possibility to act and influence the world around them, and to counter experiences of contempt and earn respect to counter experiences of contempt and earn respect. It may contribute to raising awareness and acceptance of hybrid belongings.

A similar conclusion can be drawn on prominent players with migrant background. The FREE research reveals that national football teams do have an influence on how integration of ethnic minorities is perceived by the general population, especially in receiving countries with strong immigration (i.e. mainly Western Europe). Citizens agree massively (more than two thirds) that such players 'make an important contribution to the social integration in the countries they play for'.

Policy-makers and civil society organisations would be well-advised to use, without any hesitation, high-level football players with migrant background that play for the national team of their destination country

level football players with migrant background that play for the national team of their destination country consistently as role-models and ambassadors for policies favouring the integration of ethnic minorities.

### Football mega events and public debate

The FREE project seized the opportunity of the 2012 European Championship in Poland in order to conduct an in-depth case study on the organisation and perception, impact and heritage of a football mega event on a local and national level. This work has resulted in a complete PhD dissertation on the specific case of the city of Poznań.

Mega sport events are never only sport events. They are also ideological tools in the hands of different actors. The in-depth case study in Poznań was an excellent illustration of how such an event can be used to legitimise a centralised way of spending public money for a type of infrastructure which is crucial for attracting business investments to the city. Political decisions made locally on hosting Euro2012 derived from, and at the same time sustained, the entrepreneurial perspective on urban management and development, which has been shared by the city authorities and business representatives over the last decades since the economic transition in Poland, not only at the regional level, but in the country as a whole. The event fitted well in this 'hegemonic' pattern of thought. It served as a promotional vehicle: it was meant to enable the city to present itself as a modern and business-friendly European location.

In the definition of Raymond Williams, hegemony is 'a lived system of meanings and values – constitutive and constituting – which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming' (Williams, 1977, p. 110). One of the crucial features of this understanding of hegemony is the role of dominant groups in securing the hegemony, but rather than thinking of it as of a way of indoctrinating those less powerful by those in power, one should bear in mind that hegemony is always partial and, by definition, challenged.

This is what happened in Poznań. Contrary to the authorities' standpoint, which justified the spending as 'necessary in the civilizational process of catching up with the West', and which discredited any criticism as 'irrational' or 'political' rather than use it to consolidate existing power relations and local democracy, Euro2012 actually reinforced the discussion on the general course of Poland's economic and social development, and the shape of its democracy.

This was facilitated and actually intensified by the coincidence with the financial crisis that had begun to spread in 2008 and the subsequent global debate about the hegemony of a neoliberalist interpretation of the market and the damage it has done to the welfare state or to the state in general.

In the general context of the economic and financial crisis Euro 2012 was perceived by parts of the public as part of the same logic of socialising costs and privatising profits in the name of the rising tide which supposedly lifts all boats. The premises and fruits of the dominant public discourse and politics were (and still are) challenged as elitist, short-sighted and, ironically, uneconomic by emerging urban movements and city activists.

In Poznań, just a couple of months after Euro2012, the City Council voted against making a bid for yet another sports mega-event. Cracow's bid for the 2022 Winter Olympics was withdrawn after the citizens voted 'no' in a precedent-setting public referendum. Paradoxically, it was Euro2012, fuelled by neoliberal rhetoric, which paved the way for a deeper discussion about the meaning and the future shape of 'capitalist democracy' in Poland.

Sports mega-events can therefore be seen as a litmus test for power relations in democracy, and a prism through which to analyse grand narratives in transition.

Supranational sport governing bodies should not ignore controversial debates in host cities of mega football events. They are understandably eager to have the best possible conditions for such events, but rather than try to impose them on states and cities, they should see the political debate that today is

rather than try to impose them on states and cities, they should see the political debate that today is inevitably provoked locally, as an opportunity to develop, in their own long-term interest, both attitudes and practices of fairness, sustainability, and social responsibility. They should have the impact and long-term heritage of mega-events assessed by independent research groups with the aim of continuously improving their own practices.

#### 1.4. The feminisation of European football

To many in Europe, football epitomises masculinity. The sport is often depicted as the very activity around which men gather and socialise, both as players and as spectators; and from which women are excluded by men – or from which women self-exclude. Yet, football can make a very convincing claim to being the №1 participant team sport for women in Europe today. However, the situation is less rosy when it comes to football as a spectator sport for women, who typically experience sexism and symbolic violence in the stadium.

The extent to which is football a sport for women today, both as players and as supporters? Given the centrality of football in the definition of masculinities in Europe, this is not a trivial question. Equality between men and women has been a founding principle of the Union ever since the Rome treaty and will no doubt remain a target for years, if not decades to come. Can football help to progress the goals set out by the 2010-5 Strategy for equality between women and men? How? In order to answer these questions,

the FREE project sought to produce evidence through both qualitative and quantitative research methods. It is true that over recent years women's football has attracted growing interest from the wider public, clubs and governing bodies of football, policy-makers and academic research. This being said, attention tends to focus on issues of practice and media coverage of events. The growing numbers of female football players across the continent is proudly presented by the stakeholders. And the television ratings of major events like the last FIFA Women's World Cup in Germany (2011) – which attracted an audience of 249 million for at least 20 minutes and 408 million for at least 3 minutes, with an average audience above 13 million viewers per game – or the UEFA Women's Champions League seem to indicate a clear trend of increasing popularity. Some actors of professional football have already claimed that 'women are the future of football!'

While women's football has attracted growing interest from governing bodies of football, policy-makers and academic research – with a strong focus on issues of practice and media coverage of events – little was known about the reality of football fandom among women. The FREE Project successfully addressed this gap in existing research, by carrying out anthropological field work within the female fan community – especially in Scandinavia – in order to elucidate opinions and attitudes of male and female fans, gender-specific fan cultures, identification patterns and investment of emotions.

The historical background: difficult beginnings and recent development

The history of football has long been a topic of research: it is well known now. There are national and international histories of the sport from a variety of angles (social, institutional, economic...). However, with rare exceptions, the focus has always been on the male sport. 'Football' has always been understood as meaning 'Men's football'. Without further qualification, 'The World Cup' always means the men's competition – so are the Euro and other continental competitions, so are the national Leagues and Cups. De facto, there is a male hegemony on football. If and when mentioned, the rise of the women's game is often described as a recent phenomenon.

Less well known, yet undoubtedly established by historians, is the modicum of success football enjoyed as a sport for women in an earlier period. From the militant beginnings in the mid-1890s to the early 1920s, there was a first golden age for women's football. During World War I, many men left their job to fight in a conflict which ended up being very long. Women filled the roles left vacant by the men, did the work men

conflict which ended up being very long. Women filled the roles left vacant by the men, did the work men used to do and this arguably constituted a first major step in their emancipation. In parallel, it is during this period that they took up football comparatively en masse: it became a real participant sport for women, notably in France and in the UK. Women's football as a spectators' sport arguably reached its peak in 1920 – in England, Dick Kerr's Ladies played against St Helen Ladies in front of a crowd nearing 53 000 spectators in Liverpool. The Tarpeian rock is close to the Capitol: this success alarmed football authorities. It led the (English) Football Association (inventors of the modern game in 1863) to ban women from playing on its grounds in 1921. Women were forbidden to play football in the UK – and effectively, though not always explicitly so, in other European countries too. Following the loss of influence of 'the' FA on football, the women's game enjoyed a renaissance outside the established institutions in the 1960s. The European governing body, UEFA, ended up recommending that national Football Associations integrated and developed women's football. The English FA relented in 1971 and lifted its ban. As of 1972, formal or informal bans were no longer in place in any country.

As a participants sport, women's football has grown ever since. The number of women playing football in Europe has increased five times in the 30 years between 1985 and 2014. There are seven countries with more than 60 000 players each (6 in the European Union: Denmark, England, France, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands; plus Norway). In 2014, there are 1 208 558 female players across UEFA – including 1 038 419 in the Union.

Women's football has also become better organised at the top level, and begins to compare favourably with the men's sport in this respect. There is a full programme and calendar of international competitions at both national and club level.

Remaining obstacles for the development of women's football

Football may be Europe's number one women's team sports in terms of participants, it is also the one that includes the fewest women as a share of the total players. 7% of registered players in UEFA are female, which does not compare favourably with volleyball: 52% or handball: 42%. Within the EU, even the national associations with the highest proportion of women boast rates above 20% but lower than 30%. The World Cup and the Champions League may be mega events but they are contested by amateurs. The game is not really professional (a professional is defined by UEFA as 'a player who has a written contract with a club and is paid more for her footballing activity than the expenses she incurs'). There is no more than a handful of top clubs that are fully professional: Paris Saint-Germain or 1. FFC Frankfurt for example. One of the most important problems within women's football is the lack of money. Budgets remain tiny. Of the clubs polled by the European Club Association (ECA) Women's Football Committee in 2014, only three had a budget over 1 000 000 €, and the total budget for women's football in all 28 Member States is 61 220 322 €. This is the cost of a couple of top-players in the men's professional game...

This is largely due to the paucity of sponsors for women's football. In addition, because of the small number of spectators, there is no significant income through gate receipts.

As a matter of fact, women's football is caught in a vicious circle. Public interest remains low, with the exception of the mega-events. Although the World Cup, the Olympics or UEFA's Women's Champions League may attract great numbers of spectators (for example, 80 203 watched the women's Olympic football final in 2012), on average, audiences in other competitions remain low. Some national teams have a sizeable audience (the German one attracts an average of 15 000 spectators, and the French one nearly 10 000), but in 2014, the average audience of all 28 national teams within the European Union (plus Turkey) sits uncomfortably around the 2 000 spectators mark.

Overall, women's club football fails to attract a large public – some would say it even fails to attract any public. The average audience for women's top league football in the EU is around 350 spectators. Only

public. The average audience for women's top league football in the EU is around 500 spectators. Only Germany (2 500) and Spain (1 000) reach a four-figure mark. This is particularly problematic since the league is the yearlong competition that generates income for most actors (clubs, leagues, national associations, players) in the common business models of team sports.

The lack of public in the stadiums is cited by television broadcasters as evidence for the assumption that 'our audience doesn't want to see that'. But without media coverage, women's football is unable to either develop 'stars' or attract sponsors. This, in turn, is not conducive to an increase in the number of spectators... The vicious circle goes on.

The lack of interest for women's football is confirmed in FREE's research. The FREE CATI survey (targeted at the general population) shows that while 49.6% of respondents are interested in football in general and 51.3% are interested in men's football specifically, only 22.8% are interested in women's football and a staggering 46.6% are not interested in it at all. The FREE Online survey shows that the attitude of the attentive public of football fans is somewhat less hostile to women's football: 4.8% is very interested, 15.8% is interested and 26.2% is somewhat interested. Still, even among this public, 53.1% are 'not so much interested' or 'not interested at all' in women's football.

However, there is clear evidence showing that when international top level women's football is on television, it does generate interest. In every country where the number of broadcasting hours for the

Women's World Cup increased between 2007 and 2011, this was also followed by an increase in average audiences.

#### Women are unwelcome in the governance of football

The governance structures of football are simply unwelcoming to women (even unwittingly) and prevent many women from aiming at and/or attaining positions of power. Progress has been made: for instance, there are women committees in a majority of EU member states. Issues remain, though. Firstly, the average proportion of female employees in national associations is below a third (31.88%). Secondly, very few women reach managerial level: there are typically between 1 and 10 in every member state. Thirdly, figures for women at board level are even lower. The glass ceiling for women is overall very low, even though local initiatives have been taken: for example, the second highest executive at the French football association (Fédération Française de Football) is a woman (Brigitte Henriques) and she was elected by a large constituency within the football association. This is certainly a strong signal.

Sending a similar, though considerably weaker signal, UEFA has also nominated one woman as a member of its executive committee: Karen Espelund. Although figures are hard to gather, there are even fewer women in positions of authority at the level of clubs – both professional and amateur. Sandra Schwedler, newly elected (2015) President of the board of FC St Pauli seems to be the only woman in this position within a professional club throughout the Union.

The glass ceiling issue in women's football is not limited to governance: it also extends to every position of authority, for instance to positions as coaches. On average in the European Union, only 16% of the coaches of women's teams are women. The phenomenon is even clearer when UEFA licences are looked at: only 1% is held by women. It goes without saying that men's teams are coached by men only, with the exception of Corinne Diacre who coaches a second division football team in France (Clermont).

Although progress with regard to women's integration in the world of football has been made, there is still a huge gender gap with regard to participation and power. It appears very clearly that self-regulation is not working and that externally imposed regulation is needed to move towards equality between women and men in football.

#### Female fandom

Historians have shown that the development of football is in a (very large) part linked with the development

Historians have shown that the development of football is in a (very large) part linked with the development of men's homo-social practices within the British working class at the end of the 19th Century. Men would gather to play and to watch football, while women would be left at home. Although the picture has changed slightly, football, especially the club stadium can still be seen as a male preserve. This is vindicated by the results of the FREE survey: only 10% of the respondents of the FREE Online survey were women. Also, the interest in 'football in general' clearly showed a difference based on the gender of the respondents: 64.9% of men were 'interested' or 'very interested' in football; 63.4% of women were 'not interested' or 'not interested at all' in football – figures that are quite contrasting!

Consequently, as shown in the FREE CATI survey, women follow the different football competitions less than men do: 36.3% of women don't follow men's football at any level; compared with 14.3% of men; less than 50% of women are following all of the levels of competition identified. Women also engage much less in the activities supporters normally do. Most importantly, very few women go to the stadium to see football games. For example, even the women who declare they support a men's club attend home matches less than men do.

Moreover, qualitative research shows that women who are interested to the point of engaging into active fandom may not necessarily feel welcome among supporters. The football stadium, in particular the supporters' stands, is the definitive male preserve. As ethnographic research and interview studies have

shown, a great number of male supporters reject female supporters: 'I don't think women should be in the stadium' is still often heard. Many male fans are prejudiced against women, and female fans are often subject to verbal abuse in fan chants. However, in a tiny minority of European stadiums 'family seating' is provided where women are meant to be more welcome.

There are two different kinds of response to misogyny and 'male domination' in the fan stands.

Firstly, some female supporters internalise sexism. They join existing groups, which are nearly all-male, they embrace the existing supporter culture, including its misogynistic aspects: they comply with its habits and its rules; they act as 'companions'. These fans typically embrace sexism as 'part of the culture', and trivialise it: 'fan chants are fun, they are not serious, we don't mean it' are typical responses. This illustrates an important aspect of discriminatory discourse: it can be said in jest, with a degree of irony from the group who says it; however this irony is often lost on people outside the group, who can only see the offensive aspect. This is best explained in a quote from a female supporter 'When they sing "get your tits out for the lads", they don't sing about me. I also sing along, by the way.'

Secondly, a minority of female supporters oppose sexism and join forces in women only fan groups. Those groups have been established in various European countries, for example the 'Pink Lions' or 'Female Vikings' in Denmark. The members of these groups may decide to claim a specifically feminine 'football identity': they choose logos or colours which they perceive as 'feminine' in order to share their messages. One said 'We wanted to show that we are women, but also like football. We wanted to make the logo as feminine as possible, so that there's no doubt what this is about.' Equally, they often challenge and reject sexism.

Football's difficulty to integrate female fans has a consequence on how the fandom of women's teams develops. Women's football has only few supporters. Most interestingly, women are even less interested in women's football than men!

Even a smaller proportion of women declares attending women's football games, or buying a season ticket than men. In the FREE CATI survey, the only fan activities pertaining to women's football that women proportionally do more than men are activities that involve distance: paying to watch games on TV or the Internet (29.9% vs 23.2%); travelling to follow the team (24.3% vs 21.0%) – although their interest in women's football is undoubted: more women buy club related items than men (39.2% vs 36.9%) and a

women's football is undoubted. More women buy club related items than men (59.2 % vs 50.9 %) and a comparable proportion is member of a fan group (19% vs 18.7%). Women may be more committed to women's football, yet are put off attending the games or buying season tickets!

Conclusion: The feminisation of football is still some way off

Even in a Scandinavian country like Denmark, which is reputed to have a high sensitivity for gender issues in general and a high level of development of women's football (21% of all Danish players are female), women often remain marginalised within the footballing communities, and football stadia appear as social spaces where traditional masculinity is performed by typically male fan groups with 'hyper-masculine' behaviour.

Almost all national federations have a strategy to develop women's football, but efforts to reduce the gender gap in football should go beyond that. Based on its research the FREE Project has formulated recommendations in its FREE Policy Brief No. 3, including measures and actions

to foster women's and girls' grassroots football;

to encourage media coverage of women's football;

to promote women in positions of authority in football bodies;

to reduce sexism in the football stadium.

All Policy Briefs can be downloaded from the project website [www.free-project.eu](http://www.free-project.eu).

### 1.5. The European public sphere of football

The idea of a public sphere was initially conceptualised in and for the monolingual, relatively homogenous setting of the nation-state. When it was transposed – including by Habermas himself – to the transnational, European level, it was eagerly picked up by both promoters and opponents of European integration. The former usually referred to it as being the object of a 'quest' or a 'search', while the latter had an easy time pointing out the absence of truly transnational European media, the lack of salience of Europe in people's lives, and the 'cultural diversity overload' that characterises Europe.

The question whether there is a 'Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere', to quote the original title of Habermas, or whether the current development is actually part of a civilizational process of very longue durée in the sense of Fernand Braudel or Norbert Elias, is secondary. What is incontestable is that the new configuration of communicative space make transnational public spheres perfectly imaginable, though rather unlikely in the form of one single 'European Public Sphere' following the model of the national public spheres in the 19th and 20th century. What is much more likely to emerge and develop is a plurality of co-existing public spheres, highly segmented, but transnational indeed. One of which is the European public sphere of football.

The popularity of football in a wider European geography has an important outcome; it creates an interaction among Europeans at unprecedented levels. Europeans do not only interact with each other on football related issues, but go beyond it. Through football there is a constantly growing cross-border curiosity and exchange as well as increasingly multiple loyalties.

The two surveys conducted by the FREE project provide significant evidence that a European public sphere around football exists. The analysis of the data suggests that football is not the focus of interest of some marginal social group, but a subject that draws the attention and interest of a very wide European public. Football penetrates European society, and the discourse that society produces about football creates social bonds. Including even the minority of non-football fans, who explain in detail why they don't like it (or no longer like it).

Football is bringing Europeans together

Conventional wisdom has it that football's fundamental competitive configuration is essentially divisive and produces rivalry rather than unity. In reality, however, by providing opportunities of interaction and

and produces rivalry rather than unity. In reality, however, by providing opportunities of interaction and creating new and flexible imagined communities on various levels, football is creating a public sphere by encouraging and enabling Europeans to talk, discuss, exchange about football, taking part in a larger discourse surrounding football and thus creating a transnational communication space.

It is an issue that brings Europeans together, it creates a sense of common ground; a starting point for other issues. The European citizens surveyed – interested or not in football – consider football an important factor that unites Europeans, rather than separates them. This shows that the conventional wisdom of the allegedly divisive effect of football mentioned above is nothing but a cliché. Six out of ten Europeans think that football is what unites Europeans most after arts and culture. This is slightly more than democracy, and significantly more than geography, let alone the European institutions or religion. The belief in the unifying force of football is understandably even stronger among surveyed football fans. According to the attentive public survey, football is ‘the’ thing that unifies Europeans most: three out of four respondents think that ‘football’ unites Europeans making it the most popular answer.

#### Europeans interact about football

Both at national and more importantly at European levels, people do exchange views, opinions about football. Football is an important conversational topic that goes beyond boundaries. Football is an ice breaker and topic of exchange across borders, between Europeans of different origin, age, gender and

social class. It is a key issue for establishing common ground from which to proceed in dialogue. Football increasingly provides connection between people from different countries, even for individuals who do not necessarily have access to other experiences of transnational encounter (such as European mobility programmes or international tourism). A total of 63.6% of respondents to the online survey have ‘discussed football with somebody from another European country over the previous 12 months’.

Sport is also a very important conversation topic at national level: respondents declare they talk more about sport (38.7%) than about the economy (36.4%) and politics (27.7%) with friends. Sport is also clearly the most frequent topic of conversation that respondents ‘always’ talk about when they meet with friends (11.3%). Naturally these figures are much higher among the football fans: most respondents (91%) talk ‘often and always’ about sports; almost 15 percentage points more than the second most talked topic: ‘every day personal issues’ (78%). On the other hand, 85.2% respondents talk about football when ‘they are with friends’. Spain (90.6%), Poland (89.4%) and Turkey (88.4%) obtain the highest percentages, while France and Germany register the lowest ones (80.3% and 80.1% respectively). Finally, almost a quarter of respondents talks ‘often and always’ about football with somebody from the opposite sex.

Country results vary from Germany (36.8%) to France (16.4%).

#### Europeans follow football in Europe

The interest in football goes beyond borders. The research findings show that Europeans have a keen interest in football in other European countries and the European competitions. The interest also often transforms into sympathies and even loyalties. There is strong evidence that Europeans carry multiple identities in football through transnational support. With the increasing availability of information through information and communication technologies, Europeans are able to follow closely football in other countries and follow closely ‘their’ different teams.

According to the general population survey of the FREE project, 53.4% of respondents follow the results and news from other European leagues on internet and social media. 70% watch ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’ matches and summaries from other European leagues than the one from the country they live in.

Transnational followership is a common place for football fans as well. In the online football fans survey, almost nine out of ten respondents indicate that they follow results and news from other European leagues on internet and social media and 84% of surveyed fans watch matches and summaries from other



on internet and social media and 64% of surveyed fans watch matches and summaries from other European leagues than the one from the country they live in.

Some Europeans not only watch football from other European countries, but they establish emotional bonds across borders and make these bonds part of their social identity. Among the general population, 16.8% of respondents support a men's football club from a European country different than the one they live in (with country results varying from 7.8% in Germany to 27.4% in Turkey). Transnational support even extends to the national team level, which is normally considered as the pinnacle of commitment and allegiance to one's country. Almost 4 out of 10 respondents stated that they would support another national team in case their own team was not participating in an international tournament. In the realm of football fans, transnational support is at very significant levels. According to the football fans survey, almost six out of ten respondents (59.6%) support a men's football club from another European country different than the one they live in. Results by country vary from 90.4% in Poland to 44.5% in Germany. The first reason for supporting a 'men's club from another European country' is because 'the club has a great history' (55.4%) and because 'they have a great style of play' (53.6%). Among those who support a men's football club from another European country, 90.2% 'watch matches on TV or the internet for free'. The interest in football is also reflected on international tournaments. Especially the European level organizations are extremely popular. Among the football fans, 'The World Cup' is the main level followed (95.5%), secondly, 'the 'Champions League' (94.5%) and thirdly, 'the European Championship' (92.6%). The Champions League seems to have established itself as a true European tradition. According to the findings of the general population survey, almost three quarters of respondents watched a Champions League match at least once. Spain (87.8%), The UK (75.8%) and Denmark (72.2%) have the highest percentages. Almost four out of ten respondents (38.0%) know which club won the Championship League in 2103. Country results vary from 72.2% in Denmark to 35.1% in Germany.

Conclusion: More than just a popular spectator sport

As we expected to find, football is important in many citizen's everyday lives. It pervades social and cultural life on a daily basis, and even those who are not particularly interested in it can hardly escape the discourse and sociability it produces. Moreover, this is true across boundaries of age, gender, social class and geography. There is no doubt that football is not just a pastime or an attractive product of the entertainment industry, and that it provides structures of meaning to many individuals in a complex society. It helps people make sense of individual and collective belongings, and cope with the tension between forces that hold society together and developments that tend to fragment it. The findings of the FREE research demonstrate that people in Europe not only watch football, but talk, discuss, exchange about it, taking part in a larger discourse surrounding football and thus creating a public sphere.

The findings produced by the FREE surveys converge towards a series of principal results:

There is a European Public Sphere of football. It is a sphere in which, to refer to the public sphere's major theorist Jürgen Habermas again, there is an exchange of reasons and opinions, and public and private complement each other. Europeans engage in football as a spectator sport, but they also follow it on a European level, form and exchange opinions on current issues and football history, on clubs, tournaments and competitions, players and even spaces such as stadia.

Football does not divide but bring together people across borders. It produces interest in what happens elsewhere, provides opportunity for empathy and recognition of commonality. It is, in accordance with the classical definition of what makes a public sphere, inclusive and of unrestricted access, it transcends social groups and subcultures, it is made of discourses that produce collective self-awareness.

Football is meaningful to European citizens, but endangered. Football is generally perceived by citizens to be heading in the wrong direction. Given football's many social and cultural side effects revealed by the

be heading in the wrong direction. Given football's many social and cultural side-effects revealed by the FREE surveys – for instance, with regard to socialisation, physical activity and well-being – policy-makers would be well advised to preserve the features that have made the game as socially meaningful as it is.

#### 1.6. Governance structures & stakeholder empowerment

As football touches a large part of the European population, it is not surprising that in recent years EU policy-makers have become interested in the governance structures of this game. The European Institutions – Commission, Council and Parliament – have all agreed that governance must be one of the priorities of the nascent EU sports policy.

There is a general consensus that the transformation of European football's governance is underpinned by a constant tension between the most commercialised and professionalised part of football (whose target is to maximise economic profits) and a more socio-cultural view stressing the social values of football.

For football fans, the evolution of the game creates a complicated scenario. On the one hand there are increasing calls by the European Union institutions to engage supporters in the governance of the game. On the other, the commercialisation of football might be endangering some of the values of football most cherished by supporters. What impact has this shift in European football had on the very diverse body of supporters in Europe?

The supporters' movement is an important part of Europe's civil society, and it has the potential to develop active citizenship and the social dimension of sport through fan involvement. Supporters are extremely diverse in Europe, mirroring the heterogeneity of fan cultures across the continent. Organisations such as Football Supporters Europe (FSE) or Supporters Direct Europe (SDE) have been praised by EU institutions and football stakeholders alike for their work in favour of the supporters. They have earned with their work the status of partners in the development of EU sport policy. Moreover, a large number of democratic and inclusive supporter groups already work to improve the governance of the game at continental, national and local level in Europe.

Thus, there is a clear policy discourse that advocates greater engagement of supporters. Yet, there is no clear evidence of whether there is a major demand from supporters to participate in the game's governance. The FREE project has worked to fill that gap with the objective to improve our understanding of the fans' opinions of football governance and supporter activism in order to inform policy-making in this area.

Does football need more regulation?

It was first necessary to establish the level of demand for better football governance from the supporters. The results of the FREE Project Survey on Football in the European Public Opinion (2014) are clear in this respect. In the nine European countries polled there is a 62% of the population which agrees (or strongly agrees), that 'football is in need of more regulation by the authorities'. This percentage is extremely high in the UK (60.3%) and Turkey (84%), and relatively lower in Denmark (18.8%) and Germany (41.8%).

The qualitative data gives insights into some of the reasons for this variance and demonstrates the diversity and heterogeneity of football fan cultures and perceptions in Europe.

In Poland, fans spoke about their concerns such as the excessive money flowing into the game and their fears of corruption, but felt that the fan experience was actually over-regulated. They were critical of heavy police control inside and outside stadia and tight controls over freedom of speech, which can explain their answers to the survey. The Polish fans that participated in the qualitative research thought of 'further regulation' as meaning more policing and control of the supporter match-day experience. They protested against what they consider to be unfair criminalisation of football supporters.

The Turkish participants highlighted recent scandals in relation to corruption and match-fixing, which can explain the high scores of the survey in favour of further football reform.

explain the high scores of the survey in favour of further football reform.

For fans in the UK, criticism was directed at the increasing power of external stakeholders such as media companies and the perceived lack of fair distribution of incoming finances. Thus, the qualitative research helps to explain the reasons behind the responses to the surveys whilst, at the same time, also suggests different priorities in relation to football governance and regulation that are clearly linked to the local context.

There was, however, one common concern to fans across our sample: The amount of money at the top level of the sport. This was an aspect that they felt needed further regulation to control.

#### Trust in institutions and bodies of governance

It is important not to underestimate the role of trust and public perception on the integrity and good governance of football. Both the FREE Project Survey on Football in the European Public Opinion (2014) and the FREE European Football Fans Survey (online) (2014) investigated trust in football institutions and organisational bodies who have some responsibility for football governance.

The comparison of results between the two surveys, one aimed at the general population and the other at those who follow football closely, points to some discrepancies between the two groups polled.

Firstly, overall trust of most of the institutions was higher amongst the general population than football fans. This suggests that the closer individuals are to the daily business of the game, the more critical of

them they become. In other words, the more involved people declare to be in football, the more suspicious they are of the governing bodies.

Secondly, the ranking of the organisations changes slightly for the two groups. The general population expressed greater trust in professional leagues and national football federations, whereas football fans trust supporters organisations and UEFA (the European football governing body), much more. What is coherent is the higher level of trust placed in football bodies than non-football bodies (EU, media and national governments) for the organisation of the sport. Both surveys also demonstrate a high level of trust in supporters' organisations to improve the governance of football.

Of particular interest is the result of the FREE Online survey targeted at the attentive public with a clear interest in the game. Here, supporters' organisations are the most trusted stakeholder, with over 50% of the respondents trusting or trusting very much the likes of Supporters Direct Europe or Football Supporters Europe. In other words, those fans that actively follow football from a close range have a high level of trust on the work of supporters' organisations to improve the governance of the game.

Qualitative data confirms the supporters' mistrust of their national football association. Fans in Turkey and Poland were particularly critical of FIFA, UEFA and their national FA due to concerns over corruption and mismanagement. It is particularly interesting to note the low level of trust placed in the government to effectively regulate football. It is not that supporters did not want national governments to legislate on football, but rather that they thought the public authorities will not be strong enough to challenge the power of football bodies. In the UK, participants were aware that the government is considering further legislation of football, and had mixed thoughts as to whether this will ever see the light. Some felt it was the only way to regain any control over the game, whereas others were of the opinion that political institutions should not get involved in sport. They all agreed that supporters are already making a difference and that further fan engagement is welcome and necessary for the benefit of British football.

Regarding national federations, it must be noted that on the whole, the participants in our research believed in the current model of a national federation governing football in their respective countries. There was little interest in alternative forms of governance. It is the lack of power of those national federations what the participants in the research mostly complained about. Supporters want representative national governing bodies, but they want them to reform, enhance their transparency, fight corruption and regain

governing bodies, but they want them to reform, enhance their transparency, fight corruption and regain some of their lost power, particularly in comparison to external stakeholders.

### Club ownership

The different club ownership models evident across Europe are heavily scrutinised and debated by the media. The FREE surveys reveal that trust in current owners/presidents of clubs is very low, which will indeed vindicate the already existing campaigns of supporters across Europe to empower fans to regain a say in their football clubs, as exemplified by the recent projects coordinated by SDE and FSE with funding from EU preparatory actions in the area of sport.

Again, there is a clear diversity in the results reflecting the different contexts and the diversity of fan cultures and interests, but overall the lack of trust in club owners goes well beyond 50% if we take the six countries in the on-line survey together. Critique is highest in Spain, with 90% of the respondents agreeing that “we cannot always trust what club owners/presidents say”. This is significant, as Spanish supporter organisations have been actively working on challenging the current ownership model of football clubs in the country, which prevents fan participation in the professional game. Our data finds wide support for those campaigns. The Turkish (83%) and UK (80%) based fans reported similarly high levels of agreement.

Qualitative data helps to illustrate the complexity of issues regarding ownership. The single-owner model

is the most common ownership format in the English Premier League (a very similar model is used by most clubs in Spain as well, with the exception of Athletic Bilbao, CA Osasuna, FC Barcelona and Real Madrid). British participants in the research spoke at length about this, as it is an issue high in the public agenda due to the increasing number of supporter owned clubs and the work of Supporters Direct and Supporters Direct Scotland to improve democracy in English, Scottish and Welsh football.

Our participants expressed mixed feelings about the ownership structures of football clubs. Some criticised new foreign owners for not understanding the importance of clubs to local communities, and failing to value their fans. Yet overall, fans were more concerned with how the club was run. They accept that to achieve on-field success in modern football requires significant financial investment, so are not unanimously critical of majority owners. They acknowledge that football today is a business, and clubs must compete in this arena. What they want are owners that offer transparency, value their fans, engage with their communities and respect the history of their clubs, and acknowledged that this should be possible regardless of who the owner is.

UK and Spanish fans heralded the German ‘50+1’ rule preventing majority private ownership as an ideal. The positive view of the German model clearly means that our participants are in favour of supporter ownership, and see it as one way to secure democracy and links with the community in their football clubs.

### Supporter involvement in football governance

One major question for the FREE project was: if fans agree that football is in need of further regulation, would the involvement of supporters be a step to addressing this? Survey data demonstrated that supporters feel that they should have a say (66% of the total 6 countries polled in the on-line survey).

The qualitative data gave further insight into the relationship fans have with club governance structures. Supporters expressed frustration at their lack of power across all of the countries, feeling that they are not allowed to make a difference. High profile clubs such as Cardiff City in the UK or FC Red Bull Salzburg in Austria were cited as examples of the lack of influence fans have, despite their active and effective organisation. On the other hand, supporters cited the case of English Premier League Swansea City (20% owned by the supporters) in the UK as an example that, if allowed by the governing structures, democratic supporter organisations and supporter ownership can make a positive impact on the game. Thus, supporters are critically aware of their value to clubs. They recognise the work that has been done by

supporters are critically aware of their value to clubs. They recognise the work that has been done by fellow supporters and would like to see more of that. In this respect, fans are not simply consumers with blind faith to their club, but are critical stakeholders with an understanding of the equity they hold. However, they feel they are facing too many barriers to transform this collective equity into meaningful action to make a difference at the club level. This tends to be blamed on the lack of willingness by the federations, clubs and leagues to give a real voice to the fans, despite the work of local and European supporter groups.

There is a lot of frustration amongst fans, which see the current structures of the game shutting them out. On the other hand, participants in our research feel that the existing democratic structures can only increase supporter activism and cited campaigns in relation to safe standing, fight against racism and homophobia or even for affordable ticket prices as the type of existing work that demonstrates the value of the supporters for football governance.

#### Supporter ownership of football clubs

The consideration of whether supporter representation and supporter ownership in football could be increased – therefore enhancing the governance of the game – is of particular relevance to the current European context. In the UK, legislation has been proposed to this effect. The German ‘50+1’ rule in combination with low ticket prices, full stadia and more relaxed fan regulation is regularly referred to as an

example of how this might be successful. In Spain, supporters have demanded that supporter ownership structures are included in the amendment of the national sports act. Our qualitative research found fans of various countries looking elsewhere in the continent for viable alternatives to the governance models in their own countries. This confirms our conclusions about the potential for football to increase transnational inclusiveness across Europe. This also confirms the positive effect of the work of supporter groups in Europe over the last decade with regard to mobilising fans across the continent through representative and democratic organisations.

Moreover, the way that fans engage with and understand the various national contexts of football introduces some interestingly conflicting perceptions that relate the elite leagues to their dominant model of club ownership. Here again, the diversity of football structures and cultures are an important element of the analysis. UK based fans drew upon the member-association ownership model at Real Madrid, whereas Spanish fans were critical of the dominance of their ‘top two’ and saw the English Premier League as offering more balanced competition. Austrian fans were more critical of the Bundesliga and German clubs, whereas English fans praised the so-called German model. Opinions respond to different contexts, constructed realities and perceptions. But there is one commonality: Supporters need and want to be given the opportunity to invest in their clubs, be that financially or emotionally.

Supporters are already organising themselves across Europe to find ways to be involved with their clubs, and our data suggest that they would like to see more of that. The participants in our research believe that given the unwillingness of football stakeholders, the only way forward may be government legislation. However, they are worried that government regulation may lead to a mere effort of ‘ticking the box’ from the clubs, rather than a real genuine engagement with the supporter community.

#### Disabled football supporters

The work of FREE with disabled supporters was circumscribed only to the United Kingdom. However, in the collaboration with the Centre for the Access to Football in Europe (CAFE) the evidence produced appeared to of relevance to European football in general.

The reports from the disabled supporters that participated in our research suggest that significant improvements need to be made for these fans to enjoy an equal match-day experience to non-disabled fans. Our findings in this area are worrisome and in line with recent high profile media reports investigating

fans. Our findings in this area are worrisome and in line with recent high profile media reports investigating the lack of provision for disabled fans at English Premier League clubs, and the resultant call for significant improvements.

Problems faced by disabled supporters are numerous and diverse. Many are related to the physical design of football stadia: difficulties with access, a lack of accessible facilities such as toilets and catering, and a lack of adequate seating. Only two of the twenty English Premier League clubs meet the required number of wheelchair-accessible seats as recommended in guidelines produced in conjunction with football organisations. As such, football is failing to meet its own standards of accessibility.

Yet supporters themselves were less concerned with the number of seats provided, than with the quality of these seats. Disabled fans listed numerous examples of being unable to see large amounts of the pitch from their specially allocated seats due to the poor location or design of accessible seating areas. In other words, disabled fans cannot watch the game from the areas that are supposed to be designed especially for them. These are subject to photographers, stewards and other fans blocking the view. Despite UEFA guidelines available to demonstrate how disabled seating areas should allow for unobstructed views, many grounds do not comply with these.

Particularly concerning is the common practice (particularly at Premier League clubs with old stadia) of seating disabled away supporters with the home fans, denying them an equal experience and putting them at greater risk of abuse due to their proximity to opposition fans. Moreover, this practice may be seen as not observing the legal requirement to segregate fans.

Another problem is the predominant interpretation of a disabled person as a wheelchair user. Actually, these represent a minority of disabled people, yet football clubs often have little understanding of the needs of disabled fans that are not wheelchair users. In particular, fans with a learning disability were often very poorly understood and catered for.

On the positive side, excellent examples of good practice were given where clubs had specific disability stewards that were aware of the varying needs of the disabled fan. Unfortunately these are uncommon, but they present a pool of good practice to build upon. European campaigning group CAFE and their UK-based partner Level Playing Field (LPF) work tirelessly with limited resources to monitor accessibility and the quality of experience at football clubs, and give guidelines for clubs in better understanding disability. Another positive finding in this area is the role of Disabled Supporter Associations (DSAs). These are club-specific supporter groups for disabled fans with their own membership, committee and often a direct communication link to the football club. Participants in the research found DSAs an excellent way of attracting and integrating disabled supporters into the club, providing a platform to understand their needs. Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs) were regarded as essential links between disabled supporters and football clubs. Developing a network of dedicated DLOs at clubs, who work with DSAs, would facilitate open communication between fans and clubs and would allow clubs to see where they need to improve in order to provide an equal experience for all. Our data shows that disabled supporters do not want special treatment: they just want equal treatment, to be able to attend and experience football in the same way as anybody else. That this is difficult to achieve is shameful and should be addressed as a priority.

Conclusion:

The FREE research has consistently confirmed that European citizens value football more for its social aspect than for its competitive features. In other words, supporters love football because they can share it with others. In that respect, football acts as a powerful generator of social capital and even of physical and mental well-being.

A 'better football' is possible. In order to achieve it, the FREE Project has issued a list of recommendations to various stakeholders of European football with the aim of improving governance of the 'beautiful game':

to various stakeholders of European football with the aim of improving governance of the 'beautiful game'.

To the governing bodies

Actively promote and facilitate supporter engagement at local level to build capacity

Promote and facilitate the development of a regular fans' congress.

Incorporate representatives of the supporters to consultative and decision-making bodies.

UEFA professional football strategy council could open its membership to representative supporters' organisations.

To the clubs

Strive towards genuine and proactive channels of communication with the supporters that go beyond tokenistic gestures.

Develop the role of a supporters liaison officer and of a disabled supporters liaison officer.

Promote the development of representative supporters organisations that could act as partners in dialogue.

Support and encourage the creation of a supporters' advisory committee and consider the need for supporter representation in the board.

To the supporters organisations

Flexibilise your structures in order to increase membership.

Work together with researchers to have a better understanding of the barriers and motives of those supporters who are hesitant to join.

Promote diversity and inclusivity by working together with fan groups representing minority groups, such as disabled fans, LGTB fans, etc.

To the EU institutions

Maintain the actual level of support to the development of supporter networks across Europe.

Work together with the Member States to find funding schemes that could ensure the independence of representative supporter organisations.

Acknowledge the significant contribution that spectating and supporting make to building social capital and to producing mental and physical well-being.

Consider supporter groups as another avenue to facilitate social inclusion in & through sport, as this tends normally to be restricted to those who play/participate in the sport.

These recommendations are exposed in more detail in the FREE Policy Brief No. 2 that can be downloaded from the project website [www.free-project.eu](http://www.free-project.eu).

Potential Impact:

4. Potential impact: dissemination and exploitation

From the beginning the FREE Project had the firm ambition to avoid being 'ivory tower research': it aimed at producing results that are of use not only to the academic world, but to different stakeholders and the larger public. Against this backdrop three key target audiences were identified and addressed through different channels:

the academic community engaged in European Studies, but also in anthropology, history, sociology, political science, intercultural communication and gender studies;

European policy-makers in the largest senses, including representatives from European institutions, but also from national and supranational governance bodies of football;

civil society organisations who see themselves as stakeholders of European football – such as supporters' organisations, but also NGOs and think-tanks – and the wider public of citizens with an interest in a better understanding of European football as a whole.

interest in a better understanding of European football as a whole.

#### 4.1. Dissemination to the academic public

The attentive academic public, within and beyond the academic disciplines covered by the FREE consortium, was of course the first 'natural' target audience of a research project. For a project with an interdisciplinary character and a rather original thematic focus it was important to raise awareness of the project across disciplinary silos and linguistic borders; to give testimony to the increased recognition of football as worthwhile object of academic study; to encourage different academic communities to apply for European research funding with original and out-of-the-box projects of European relevance.

To this the consortium communicated about the project in academic circles in various ways: contributing columns, short pieces or ad-hoc articles in bulletins or newsletters of academic associations; presenting papers with reference to the FREE project in conferences and workshops, also in member-states or third countries that are not covered by the FREE consortium; publishing academic papers; organising outreach events to the academic community interested in research on football and spreading information on these events, such as calls for papers etc., via mailing lists of such associations.

#### Events

In the three years of its duration, the FREE Project organised six thematic academic events in seven different European cities. The purpose of these events was threefold:

they successfully opened up the FREE project to other, geographically dispersed and fragmented academic resources that brought additional input into the work of the consortium and provided for interesting feedback;

they provided an opportunity to the FREE consortium to make its work known to the larger academic community at all stages of the project;

they enabled the consortium to bring together members of the different external bodies of the project, such as the Scientific Advisory Board, the Policy-Maker Panel and the Civil Society Network.

In addition to these six thematic events, the project also organized a kick-off conference at the very beginning of the project and a concluding conference at the very end, which had the vocation to disseminate research findings to a different target audience, i.e. policy-makers in the largest sense (see below under 4.2). The conferences welcomed paper givers from within the consortium of the project, but also from other academics, civil society partners and policy-makers. All papers made available by the authors were uploaded on the FREE website (<http://www.free-project.eu>). All conferences have given (or will give) birth to at least one book (or a special issue of an academic review). The six conferences were: Origins and birth of European football. 28-9 September 2012, Université de Franche-Comté (Besançon, FR)

European Football and Collective Memory. 22-3 February 2013, Universität Stuttgart (Stuttgart, DE)

Women's Football: Played, Watched, Talked About. 21-2 June 2013, Københavns Universitet (Copenhagen, DK)

Kick it! The Anthropology of European Football. 25-6 October 2013, Universität Wien (Vienna, AT)

From Habermas to Fanblogs: Exploring the Public Sphere of European Football. 24-8 April 2014, Middle East Technical University (Ankara, TR)

Whose Game is It? Supporters and Football Governance. 24-5 October 2014, Loughborough University (Loughborough, UK)

#### Conference papers

Beyond the conferences organised by the FREE Project itself, the consortium presented over 20 papers in



Beyond the conferences organised by the FREE Project itself, the consortium presented over 50 papers in the name of FREE and related to thematic areas covered by FREE in international conferences between 2012 and 2015. Other papers at international conferences are already scheduled at later dates, and with the ongoing exploitation of research data, a sustained activity of academic dissemination is to be expected over the forthcoming years.

Here is a selection of conference papers related to the themes of the FREE project and presented by members of the consortium, over the three years of the project:

#### Work Package 3

DIETSCHY, Paul . '1938 France: a Pre-War World Cup?'. The Relevance and Impact of FIFA World Cups 1930-2010. Zürich (CH): FIFA, Durham University & Freie Universität Berlin; 24-25 April 2013.

DIETSCHY, Paul. 'Keynote'. The Political Games: The Olympic Agenda. Saint-Petersburg (RU): Department of Comparative Political Studies of the North-West Institute of Management of St Petersburg (Russia); 22 March 2013.

DIETSCHY, Paul. 'Still Masters of the Game? England and the Continent on the Eve of World War II'. Football 150 Conference. Manchester (UK): National Football Museum, De Montfort University, University of Central Lancashire, the FA; 2-4 September 2013.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Entrepreneurs of European Football Integration'. Football 150 Conference.

Manchester (UK): National Football Museum, De Montfort University, University of Central Lancashire, the FA; 2-4 September 2013.

#### Work Package 4

HAVEMANN, Nils. 'New Findings on the Cultural History of the Bundesliga'. Football 150 Conference. Manchester (UK): National Football Museum, De Montfort University, University of Central Lancashire, the FA; 2-4 September 2013.

RANC, David. 'George Best: a symbol or a hero?'. Ilas Jornadas de Comunicação e Desporto of the Universidade de Coimbra. Coimbra (PT): Universidade de Coimbra; 25 February 2013.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'A Watershed World Cup'. The Relevance and Impact of FIFA World Cups 1930-2010. Zürich (CH): FIFA, Durham University & Freie Universität Berlin; 24-25 April 2013.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'European Collective Memory in Popular Culture: Hypotheses and Findings from the FREE Project'. UACES 44th Annual Conference. Cork (IE): Cork University; 1-3 September 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Entre indifférence et inspiration'. Colloque international "La place de la culture populaire et de ses médiateurs dans les relations franco-allemandes après 1945" . Saarbrücken (DE): University of Saarbrücken; 10-11 June 2014.

#### Work Package 5

BUCHOWSKI, Michał . 'The Intersection of Global Capital Flows and Local Needs: Protest Against Euro 2012 in Poland'. Conference of the American Anthropological Association. Washington DC (USA): American Anthropological Association; 3-7 December 2014.

BUCHOWSKI, Michał, KOWALSKA, Małgorzata Zofia. 'Football Research in an Enlarged Europe: Introduction to the FREE project'. Football: Politics of the Global Game. Warsaw (PL): University of Warsaw; 29-30 November 2012.

GRZEŚKOWIAK, Kamila. 'Odczarowany Zachód czy dziki Wschód? Wizerunek medialny Polski i Ukrainy w przeddzień Mistrzostw Europy w piłce nożnej mężczyzn EURO 2012'. Między Wschodem i Zachodem. Dawne i współczesne granice Europy [www.etnologia.amu.edu.pl/images/konf-miedzy-wschodem-a-zachodem.pdf](http://www.etnologia.amu.edu.pl/images/konf-miedzy-wschodem-a-zachodem.pdf). Poznań (PL): Koło Studenckie Etnologów & Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology UAM; 7 December 2012.

KOWALSKA, Gosia. 'Neoliberalism as we know it: The crisis, the elites and the sports mega event in

KOWALSKA, Gosia. 'Neoliberalism as we know it. The crisis, the elites and the sports mega-event in Poznan, Poland'. International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences & Japanese Society of Cultural Anthropology 2014 inter-congress: the future with/of anthropologies. Tokyo (JP): National Museum of Ethnology; 15-18 May 2104.

KOWALSKA, Małgorzata Zofia. 'Euro 2012 and local politics in the city of Poznań, Poland'. II International Conference Mega-Events and the City, Rio de Janeiro <http://megaeventos.etter.ippur.ufrj.br/pt-br/programacao>. Rio de Janeiro (BR): Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro & Universidade Federal Fluminense; 27-30 April 2014.

KOWALSKA, Malgorzata Zofia. 'Sports Mega-Events As Triggers of Social Change: Euro 2012 and the Case of Poznań, Poland'. Conference of the American Anthropological Association. Washington DC (USA): American Anthropological Association; 3-7 December 2014.

SCHWELL, Alexandra & SZOGS, Nina. 'Playing (with) Loyalties: the UEFA EURO 2012 Critically Revisited'. IUAES world congress. Manchester (UK): IUAES (Host: University of Manchester with the support of Manchester City Council); 5-10 August 2013.

SCHWELL, Alexandra. 'Offside: Eastern Europe as the Blind Spot of European Football'. UACES 44th Annual Conference. Cork (IE): Cork University; 1-3 September 2014.

SCHWELL, Alexandra. 'Offside – or Not Quite. EURO 2012 as a Focal Point of Identity and Alterity'. Conference of the American Anthropological Association. Washington DC (USA): American Anthropological Association; 3-7 December 2014.

SZOGS, Nina. 'Galatasaray und Fenerbahçe: Wiener performative Praxen einer transnationalen Loyalität/Rivalität'. Erschaffen, Erleben, Erinnern, Fankulturen als Akteure populärer Unterhaltung und Vergnügung. Regensburg (DE): Universität Regensburg; 10-12 October 2014.

SZOGS, Nina. 'Globalization of Football Fans? The Perception and Performance of Turkish Football Clubs and its Fans in Austria'. FLACSO-ISA Joint International Conference. Buenos Aires (AR): Universidad de Buenos Aires; 23-25 July 2014.

SZOGS, Nina. 'Süper Lig supporters in Vienna: local strategies and transnational ties of football fans abroad'. International Society for Ethnology and Folklore. Tartu (EE): University of Tartu; 30 June-4 July 2013.

SZOGS, Nina. 'Süper Lig-Fans in Wien: Jubeln, Identität und Medien'. 8. dgv-DoktorandInnen-Tagung. Graz (AT): Universität Graz; 10-12 May 2013.

SZOGS, Nina. 'Vienna, Istanbul, Europe, Translocal Strategies of Soccer Fans Abroad'. Conference of the American Anthropological Association. Washington DC (USA): American Anthropological Association; 3-7 December 2014.

#### Work Package 6

MINTERT, Svenja . 'Women as Football Fans: Gendered patterns of perception, motivations and practices of supporters in a Danish context'. Football 150 Conference. Manchester (UK): National Football Museum, De Montfort University, University of Central Lancashire, the FA; 2-4 September 2013.

MINTERT, Svenja. 'Feminisation of Football: The Role of Women in the European fan community'. European Association for the Sociology of Sport (EASS) Conference: Changing Landscapes in Sport: dynamics, hybridities and resistance. Utrecht (NL): Utrecht University; 2014.

MINTERT, Svenja. 'The gendered patterns of perceptions, motivations and practices of female football supporters'. DVS Sport & Gender Conference: Transnational Body and Movement Cultures from a Gender Perspective. Copenhagen (DK): University of Copenhagen; 13-15 November 2014.

MINTERT, Svenja. 'Women as Football Fans: Gendered patterns of perceptions, motivations and practices among supporters in a Danish context'. Football 150 Conference. Manchester (UK): National

practices among supporters in a Danish context'. Football 150 Conference. Manchester (UK): National Football Museum, De Montfort University, University of Central Lancashire, the FA; 2-4 September 2013.

PFISTER, Gertrud. 'Changin Perceptions of Women's role in football? Women as football fans in the Nordic countires'. Nordcop-seminar "The Nordic civil society model of sport in transition: The case of women's football". Reykjavik (IS): University of Iceland; 14-5 April 2014.

RANC, David. 'Feminisation in times of crises: The case of French football'. Sport&EU Conference. Istanbul (TR): Kadir Has University; 26-28 June 2013.

#### Work Package 7

ALPAN, Başak. 'Between Public and Private: What Does European Football Tell us about the Public Sphere?'. UACES 44th Annual Conference. Cork (IE): Cork University; 1-3 September 2014.

ALPAN, Başak & Özgehan ŞENYUVA. 'Does qualifying really qualify? Comparing the representations of the EURO 2008 and EURO 2012 in the Turkish media'. Sport&EU Conference. Istanbul (TR): Kadir Has University; 26-28 June 2013.

LARA GONZALO, Paula. 'Football as a public space: An evolutionary analysis of team identification in Spain (1984-2014)'. 13th International Congress of the Spanish Association for the Social Research Applied to Sport (AEISAD). Valencia (ES): Universitat de València; 25-27 September.

RANC, David. 'Bosman Comes of Age: A Comparative Study on European Football 18 Years after the Bosman Ruling'. Football 150 Conference. Manchester (UK): National Football Museum, De Montfort University, University of Central Lancashire, the FA; 2-4 September 2013.

ŞENYUVA, Özgehan. 'Does qualifying really qualify? Comparing the representations of the EURO 2008 and EURO 2012 in the Turkish media'. Sport&EU Conference. Istanbul (TR): Kadir Has University; 26-28 June 2013.

ŞENYUVA, Özgehan. 'Football: the True European Culture?'. ISA 2013 Annual Convention. San Francisco (USA): International Studies Association; 3-6 April 2013.

ŞENYUVA, Özgehan. 'IR and Football: Softest Soft Power?'. FLACSO-ISA Joint International Conference. Buenos Aires (AR): Universidad de Buenos Aires; 23-25 July 2014.

ŞENYUVA, Özgehan. 'The Legal Dimension of Megasport Events: Is Turkey Ready?'. Sport&EU Conference. Istanbul (TR): Kadir Has University; 26-28 June 2013.

#### Work Package 8

FLORES NAVARRO, Helena. 'Some critical aspects about Spanish football's management from supporters' point of view'. 13th International Congress of the Spanish Association for the Social Research Applied to Sport (AEISAD). Valencia (ES): Universitat de València; 25-27 September 2013.

GARCÍA, Borja. 'Keeping private governance private: Is FIFA blackmailing' national governments?'. Sport&EU Conference. Istanbul (TR): Kadir Has University; 26-28 June 2013.

GARCÍA, Borja. 'The Power of FIFA over National Governments: A New Actor in World Politics?'. FLACSO-ISA Joint International Conference. Buenos Aires (AR): Universidad de Buenos Aires; 23-25 July 2014.

GARCÍA, Borja. 'Consumers or Stakeholders? A Comparative Analysis of Supporters Vision of their Own Role in Football Governance in Six European Countries'. UACES 44th Annual Conference. Cork (IE): Cork University; 1-3 September 2014.

GARCÍA, Borja & Jo WELFORD. 'Whose Football Is It? A Supporters' View of the Current State of the Game in England'. Football 150 Conference. Manchester (UK): National Football Museum, De Montfort University, University of Central Lancashire, the FA; 2-4 September 2013.

RANC, David. 'Football after the Bosman Ruling (1995): Globalisation, Glocalisation, Gloculturation'. UACES 44th Annual Conference. Cork (IE): Cork University; 1-3 September 2014.

ORACES 44th Annual Conference. Cork (IE). Cork University, 1-3 September 2014.

RANC, David. 'Football supporters' cultures in Europe'. EUPOP 2012 (Inaugural Conference of the European Popular Culture Association). London: London University of the Arts; 11-13 July 2012.

RANC, David. 'Researching football supporters' identification in Europe'. Political Studies Association – Sports and Politics group, 6th annual conference. Southampton (UK): Southampton Solent University; 24 February 2012.

WELFORD, Jo & Borja GARCÍA. 'Facilitating inclusivity and broadening understandings of access at football clubs: The role of Disabled Supporter Associations'. 20th SMAANZ Conference (Sport Management Association of Australia & New Zealand). Melbourne (AU): Deakin University; 26-28 November 2014.

#### Academic papers

Although the publication timeframes of academic reviews means most academic papers from FREE are still forthcoming, a number of published papers reflect some of the work done in the FREE project (in alphabetical order):

DIETSCHY, Paul. '¿Globalizando el fútbol? La FIFA, Europa y el mundo del fútbol no europeo, 1912-1974'. *ISTOR: Revista de Historia Internacional*. Vol 15: Nº57; June 2014.

DIETSCHY, Paul. 'Du champion au poilu sportif: Représentations et expériences du sport de guerre'.

*Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*. n/a: Nº251; March 2013.

DIETSCHY, Paul. 'Making football global? FIFA, Europe, and the non-European football world, 1912-74'. *Journal of Global History*. Vol 8: Nº2; July 2013.

GARCÍA, Borja, Brett SMITH & Jo WELFORD. 'A "healthy" future? Supporters' perceptions of the current state of English football'. *Soccer & Society*. Vol 16: Nº2-3; 2014.

LLOPIS-GOIG, Ramon. 'Racism, xenophobia and intolerance in Spanish football: evolution and responses from the government and the civil society'. *Soccer & Society*. Vol 14: Nº2; 2014.

MINTERT, Svenja & Gertrud PFISTER. 'The Female Vikings, a Women's Fan Group in Denmark: Formation and Development in the Context of Football and Fan Histories'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*. Vol 4: Nº13; 2014.

MINTERT, Svenja & Gertrud PFISTER. 'The FREE project and the feminization of football: the role of women in the European fan community'. *Soccer & Society*. Vol 16: Nº2-3; 2015.

MINTERT, Svenja. 'Women's Football in the public media: Good practice from England, Germany and Scandinavia'. In Julian JAPPERT (ed). *Femmes, Sport et Mediatization en Europe*. Neuilly sur Seine (FR): Sport et Citoyenneté; 2013.

PFISTER, Gertrud, Verena LENNEIS & Svenja MINTERT. 'Female fans of men's football – a case study in Denmark'. *Soccer & Society*. Vol 14: Nº6; November 2013.

PFISTER, Gertrud. 'Sportswomen in the German popular press: a study carried out in the context of the 2011 Women's Football World Cup'. *Soccer & Society*. Vol 18: Nº1; 2014.

PFISTER, Gertrud. 'Women, football and European integration: Aims and questions, methodological and theoretical approaches.'. *Annales Kinesiologiae*. Vol 4: Nº1; 2013.

SCHWELL, Alexandra. 'Football Research in an Enlarged Europe – Ein Projekt stellt sich vor'. *Jahresbericht 2012 (Mitteilungen des Instituts für Europäische Ethnologie der Universität Wien, Heft 20)*. Wien (AT): University of Vienna; 2012.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Grilles de perception et dynamiques identitaires dans l'espace européen du football'. *Politique européenne*. n/a: Nº36; Spring 2012.

#### Columns, short pieces, academic blogs

In addition to internal communication pieces in local university bulletins, the FREE Project targeted two

In addition to internal communication pieces in local university bulletins, the FREE Project targeted two very specific regular publications for an academic audience strongly interested in European Studies, but not necessarily convinced of the European policy-relevance of football research:

Between 2012 and 2015, seven columns named 'The FREE kick' were published in the name of FREE in the Sport & EU Review (<http://www.sportandeu.com>) – an eighth instalment is scheduled for 2015;

A special FREE blog named 'European throw-ins' was introduced to the UACES multiblog 'Ideas on Europe' (<http://free.ideason europe.eu/>). Over twenty blogposts published in the name of FREE were tweeted to over 7 000 followers and featured in a regular newsletter sent to 2 500 subscribers from the larger European Studies Community.

The published FREE kick columns are:

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'The FREE kick №1'. Sport&EU Review. Vol 3: №2; October 2011.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'The FREE kick №2'. Sport&EU Review. Vol 4: №1; May 2012.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Kicked off, on track, at work'. Sport&EU Review. Vol 4: №2; October 2012.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'In the books, in the blind sport, in the wiki-memory'. Sport&EU Review. Vol 5: №1; May 2013.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Half-time talk, online talk, transnational talk, party talk'. Sport&EU Review. Vol 5: №2; November 2013.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Is there a European Public Sphere of Football?'. Sport&EU Review. Vol 6: №1; May 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Dissemination and its discontents'. Sport&EU Review. Vol 6: №2; November 2014.

The European throw-ins include:

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Too good not to be true'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 22 December 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Four days that changed Europe'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 14 December 2014 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Fake neutrality'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 29 September 2014 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Fair competition and legitimacy'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 25 September 2014 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'The good old Panzer stereotype'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 7 September 2014 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Coronation Day'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 21 May 2014 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Business as usual'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 1 April 2014 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Populist own goals'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 25 February 2014 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Model Bavaria'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 22 December 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'France's Got Talent. So has Ukraine'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 25 November 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Next stop: Jean Monnet'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 9 November 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Taxes, polls and strikes - welcome to France!'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideason europe.eu/>; 7 November 2013 .

<http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>, 7 November 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Style'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>; 14 October 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Surprise, surprise'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>; 23 September 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. '8:45 - the European hour'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>; 17 September 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'How English can a German become?'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>; 10 September 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Season's greetings'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>; 28 August 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Mayday!'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>; 6 July 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Language skills required'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>; 26 June 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'How Kosovo Won the Champions League'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>; 17 June 2013 .

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'An energy drink rather than the opium of the people'. European throw-ins. UK: <http://free.ideasoneurope.eu/>; 10 June 2013.

### Book series

The FREE Project has managed to contract a full-fledged book series with the reputed international academic publishing house Palgrave Macmillan. The book series is entitled 'The Football Research in an Enlarged Europe series', stressing the direct link to the FREE project and attesting the quality of the proposal and the timeliness of a publication series exclusively based on football research (something that has not previously existed in the area of the social sciences).

Publication has started in early 2015, a minimum of ten books based on the FREE Project is scheduled over the next years. The envisaged rhythm of publication will be two or three books per year, each with a volume of between 65 000 and 80 000 words. An editorial board of renowned European scholars was set up in 2014, and the series may be extended beyond the output of the FREE project.

The first three titles, which includes original research from the FREE project (not listed elsewhere in this document) and, in the edited volumes, contributions from academics outside the project are:

Pyta, Wolfram & Nils Havemann (ed). European Football and Collective Memory. Basingstoke (UK) : Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

Llopis-Goig, Ramón. Spanish Football and Social Change: Sociological Investigations. Basingstoke (UK): Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

Alpan, Basak, Alexandra Schwell, Albrecht Sonntag (ed). The European Football Championship: Mega-Event and Vanity Fair. Basingstoke (UK): Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

### Other books

In addition, the following book will publish results from the FREE project in Polish this year:

BUCHOWSKI, Michał, KOWALSKA, Małgorzata Zofia. Nie tylko piłka w grze (ed). Poznań (PL): Poznańskie Studia Etnologiczne, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN; 2015 (in print).

And Paul Dietschy's classical history of football was revised in 2014, taking into account results of the FREE project:

DIETSCHY, Paul. Histoire du Football. Paris (FR): Perrin; 2014.

### Book chapters

Book chapters already published based on the results of the FREE project include:

DIETSCHY, Paul. 'Kriegshelden – Sporthelden? Das Dilemma der französischen Sportpresse im 1

- DIETSCHY, Paul. 'Kriegshelden – Sporthelden : Das Dilemma der französischen Sportpresse im 1. Weltkrieg'. In Arnd Krüger et Swantje Scharenberg (ed), *Zeiten für Helden – Zeiten für Berühmtheiten im Sport*. Berlin (DE): Lit Verlag; 2014.
- DIETSCHY, Paul. 'The 1938 World Cup: Sporting Neutrality and Geopolitics, or All-Conquering Fascism?'. In Stefan Rinke and Kay Schiller (ed), *The FIFA World Cup 1930-2010. Politics, Commerce, Spectacle and Identities*. Göttingen (DE): Wallstein; 2014.
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- BUCHOWSKI, Michał, KOWALSKA, Małgorzata Zofia. 'Opis etnograficzny wydarzenia a interpretacja antropologiczna: protest przeciwko Euro 2012 w Poznaniu'. In Michał Buchowski & Małgorzata Zofia KOWALSKA (ed), *Nie tylko piłka w grze*. Poznań (PL): Poznańskie Studia Etnologiczne, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN; 2015 (in print).
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#### 4.2. Dissemination to policy-makers

Alongside the dissemination to academics, FREE also took very seriously its task to disseminate to non-academics, including the general population, civil society and policy makers. Although distinctions are sometimes hard to make between civil society organisations and policy makers, actions to disseminate to

sometimes hard to make between civil society organisations and policy makers, actions to disseminate to these publics are split in two. Policy makers were specifically targeted via publications: the newsletter (electronically distributed through a mailing list), publications within the Sport & Citizenship review, a number of events, and three policy briefs.

#### Publications

The mailing list for the FREE newsletter (see 4.4 below) included a very significant number of recipients from the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council and other Brussels-based institutions.

The partnership with the Sport and Citizenship think-tank was deepened over time and may be considered extremely successful. Between 2011 and 2014, nine quarterly columns were published by Albrecht Sonntag in the name of FREE in the Sport and Citizenship Review:

‘A new legitimacy’, Sport & Citizenship Review, №17, December 2011.

‘Football’s multiple dimensions’, Sport & Citizenship Review, №18, March 2012.

‘Vanity fair?’, Sport & Citizenship Review, №19, June 2012.

‘One Euro does not necessarily lead to another’, Sport & Citizenship Review, №20, September 2012.

‘Paradigm shifts’, Sport & Citizenship Review, №21, December 2012.

‘Memory and dialogue’, Sport & Citizenship Review, №22, March 2013.

‘Mayday!’, Sport & Citizenship Review, №23, June 2013.

‘20:45 – the European hour’, Sport & Citizenship Review, №24, September 2013.

‘Fair competition and legitimacy’, Sport & Citizenship Review, №25, December 2013.

#### Events

Four events took place in Brussels (BE):

The concluding event of the FREE project We’re in the Final! took place on 17 March 2015, at the Committee of the Regions (Brussels, BE), which attracted over 100 participants (and never less than 60 at any time in the room)

On 27 September 2013, a so-called ‘Sport Bites’ lunch seminar with the Burson-Marsteller consultancy in Brussels (involving Borja García, David Ranc, Özgehan Şenyuva and Albrecht Sonntag)

In February 2015, a ‘Sport Corner’ video interview of MEP Marc Tarabella and Albrecht Sonntag was conducted by Laurent Thieule (from Sport & Citizenship as well as the Committee of the Regions), it will remain accessible online on various websites, including here: <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2hb4vj>

The photo exhibition Whose Game Is It? designed by Borja García and Jo Welford and whose original target audience was the general population was also shown in the Berlaymont from 18 March 2015 onward (see below under point 6)

#### Policy Briefs

The consortium ended up publishing three Policy Briefs on the most obviously policy-relevant results of the project. All are available online from the FREE website (<http://www.free-project.eu>)

Policy Brief №1, ‘Public Sphere of European Football’

Policy Brief №2, ‘Stakeholders and Governance’

Policy Brief №3, ‘Women’s Football and Female Fandom’

#### 4.3. Dissemination to civil society and the larger public

##### Special issue of Sport & Citizenship Review

In January 2015, the collaboration between FREE and Sport & Citizenship culminated in the publication of an issue of the bilingual (French and English) Sport and Citizenship Review that was almost entirely dedicated to the FREE Project (issue 29).

The issue was widely distributed in electronic version, and distributed as print copy at the concluding



The issue was widely distributed in electronic version, and distributed as print copy at the concluding conference in the Committee of the Regions as well as in the Berlaymont building, where the photo exhibition 'Whose Game Is It?' was held in March 2015 (see also below under point 6). It was produced in several hundred extra copies and will continue to be an excellent dissemination tool on the general project findings for the civil society and the larger public. Feedback on the form and the content of this publication were overwhelmingly positive.

The issue included the following contributions from nearly all members of the consortium and covered all the research themes (some were also blogged on [www.lesechos.fr](http://www.lesechos.fr); [www.rtbef.be/sport](http://www.rtbef.be/sport); [www.euractiv.fr](http://www.euractiv.fr); [www.huffingtonpost.fr](http://www.huffingtonpost.fr); [www.mediapart.fr](http://www.mediapart.fr):

Albrecht Sonntag's editorial, 'Feel FREE to enter'

A summary of context and figures for the FREE project

'How football became European' by Paul Dietschy

'The slow, but irresistible, emergence of a European football memory' by Wolfram Pyta and Nils Havemann

'A European traumatism' by Albrecht Sonntag

'Anthropological Football Research and East-West imaginaries' by Alexandra Schwell and Michal Buchowski

'Fandom and migration' by Nina Szogs

'The mega-event paradox' by Malgorzata Kowalska

'Can we speak of the feminisation of football?' by Gertrud Pfister

'The feminisation of football is still some way off' by Svenja Mintert

'How much do supporters care about football governance?' by Borja García and Jo Welford

'The recommendations of the FREE project for a better football' by Borja García and Jo Welford

'Football and the European public sphere' by Özgehan Senyuva and Ramon Llopis Goig

'The football stadium as political space' by David Ranc and Basak Alpan

Media appearances

The task of appearing in the mass media was also accomplished taken very seriously and accomplished very successfully, through different outlets, ranging from quality specialised magazines (like Der tödliche Pass, in Germany) to world leading newspapers (like France's Le Monde), in order to reach as diverse a public as possible. Interventions in the media included:

Albrecht Sonntag's columns in Der tödliche Pass

A number of press interviews given by Albrecht Sonntag, Paul Dietschy, Özgehan Senyuva, Nils Havemann, Michal Buchowski, Ramon Llopis-Goig, and other members of the consortium to written news outlets, including pure players (<http://www.touteurope.eu> <http://numer10.blox.pl>) and the traditional press (Berliner Zeitung, Frankfurter Rundschau, Le Monde, Natemat, Magazyn Kolejorz, Stuttgarter Nachrichten, Augsburger Allgemeine, Rhein-Zeitung, Wiener Zeitung, le Nouvel Observateur, L'Équipe, Folha de São Paulo, Le Temps)

A number of radio and TV appearances (France Culture, Le Mouv', Eur@dionantes, Deutschlandfunk, iTélé, Sky TV, GloboTV, LigTV radio, Tok FM, Radio öt, Bayern2, Fm4) by David Ranc, Nils Havemann, Albrecht Sonntag, Borja García, Michal Buchowski, Paul Dietschy, notably.

A blog on [lemonde.fr](http://lemonde.fr) by Albrecht Sonntag which included the following posts:

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Brésil 2014 : Neymar, héros (un peu) malgré lui'. [lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 24 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Mondial 2014 : Allemagne - Etats-Unis, le prochain « match de la honte » ?'. [lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 23 June 2014.

lemonde.fr. Paris (FR). <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>, 23 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Faut-il avoir mauvaise conscience d'adorer le Mondial au Brésil ?'. [lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 21 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Du sang, de la sueur, des larmes... et de la fête !'. [lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 20 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Mondial 2014 : le jeu de l'échec'. [lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 19 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. 'Mondial 2014 : l'Allemagne face à ses démons'. [lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 18 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. Mondial 2014 : faut-il supprimer les hymnes nationaux ?. [\\_lemonde.fr\\_](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 17 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. Mondial : Bataille dans la touffeur. [\\_lemonde.fr\\_](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 15 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. Le football, école d'humilité . [\\_lemonde.fr\\_](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 14 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. Footballeurs, indignez-vous !. [\\_lemonde.fr\\_](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 13 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. Un Mondial du peuple, par le peuple, et pour le peuple ?. [\\_lemonde.fr\\_](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). Paris (FR): <http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/>; 12 June 2014.

SONNTAG, Albrecht. Football Research - are you serious?. [\\_Open Citizenship\\_](http://www.lemonde.fr/coupe-du-monde/). UK: Issue 3.1; Summer 2012.

Members of the FREE project also took parts in public debates organised in Vienna, Malta and Turkey, in order to reach all audiences.

#### 4.4. Project website and web-based dissemination tools

The project website [www.free-project.eu](http://www.free-project.eu)

The project website was to remain the central and most important communication tool throughout the duration of the project. It was deemed essential to keep the website regularly updated, especially in three of its sections:

on the HOME PAGE, the left column was to showcase the most recent pieces of news;

the EVENTS pages were also to be updated on a regular basis, with the call for papers followed by the event programme and, later, the links to the conference papers;

the BLOG, which was expected to publish a post at an average rhythm of one per week, was also meant to contribute to renew the contents of the website on a regular basis.

According to the figures provided by Google analytics, the number of pageviews was 82 131 as of 30 March 2015.

Both logo and website, together with a very convenient name, have contributed to giving the FREE Project a very high 'brand recognition'. The website also remains very well referenced: on the Google search engine, it appears systematically on the first page of results when entering search terms like "FREE project" (with or without hyphen), "football research", or even the French "projet FREE" or the German spelling "FREE Projekt".

The home page and events pages have been updated regularly and will continue to do so even after the project's official end. The website has maintained a regular visitor flow, which is rather positive for an academic site that is not directly linked to an academic association.

The Blog has maintained a satisfying rhythm of publication, showcasing its 100th post in autumn 2014.

According to the figures provided by Google analytics, it has reached a total of over 50 000 hits

According to the figures provided by Google analytics, it has reached a total of over 50 000 hits.

The blog has also had a Turkish version on the 'Hayatimfutbol' website, where selected posts are referred to as 'free kicks'. Unfortunately, the initially planned establishment of a European network of quality blogs was not achieved as this initiative proved too time-consuming to complete.

#### The FREE Newsletter

The newsletter was written and produced by the coordinating team in Angers with input from all consortium members. It was expected to count at least six pages per issue and to be dispatched on a regular basis, ideally three times a year.

The consortium did not set a precise target for the number of addresses included in the mailing list. The 2nd issue of the newsletter being sent to 1 000 recipients, it was expected that this number would grow steadily, perhaps reaching 3 000 at the end of the project.

The newsletter has turned out to be an excellent communication and dissemination tool. Not only was it published at regular intervals – with seven issues sent out before the end of the project and at least an eighth one planned for spring 2015 – but each issue finally counted eight pages.

The mailing list has been expanded continuously. Unsubscribing, though made very easy, was extremely rare. Issue 7 was sent to 4 862 recipients.

It is very likely that the newsletter will continue to be published after the end of the project, especially with regard to publication announcements etc.

#### Social networking tools

In addition to the main website, the FREE set up some other online tools:

a Twitter account, on which the conferences were to be tweeted 'live' by members of the consortium;

a Facebook page, with the objective to relay the same information as twitter to a different and complementary audience;

accounts on Flickr & Youtube which were to serve in priority to host the images and videos that have or will appear on the website.

In the course of the project, it is mainly the Twitter account that was found most efficient and most appropriate for use of dissemination. It has fulfilled its function very satisfactorily at each of the conferences. It clearly had a higher added value than the Flickr and Youtube accounts.

As of 31 March 2015, the number of followers is 589. By the end of the project, the FREE conferences generated dozens if not hundreds of tweets from our accounts and from the accounts of people who follow the project. The twitter account has also been a useful tool to gather participants for the online study.

Facebook being a very ambivalent medium, the Facebook account was to be handled with care: a number of 100 regular followers appeared as a reasonable target. As of 31 March 2015 there are 267 followers, on average 120 of whom are engaged in each post.

#### The photo exhibition 'Whose Game Is It?'

The exhibition, which was a deliverable in its own right (D8.3) is based on the audio-visual field diary of the anthropological research carried out among European football supporters within WP8. It was inaugurated in an academic setting at the Loughborough conference in October 2014, but reached a wider public in January and February 2015, when the National Football Museum in Manchester decided to put it on show in its entrance hall, right opposite its 'Hall of Fame'. The NFM was extremely satisfied with the visitors' response to the exhibition and estimates that it has been studied by over 60 000 visitors. As mentioned

#### List of Websites:

<http://www.free-project.eu>

twitter: @free\_project\_eu

twitter: @free\_project\_eu

facebook: FREE-Football Research in an Enlarged Europe

[albrecht.sonntag@essca.fr](mailto:albrecht.sonntag@essca.fr)

## Related documents



[final1-free-290805-final-scientific-report.pdf](#)

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