

Football Supporters Europe (FSE)

Constitution

Preamble

The work of FSE is based upon the understanding that the success of football as a global (spectator) sport is decisively shaped by the involvement of and the contribution made by supporters.

Football is to be considered a part of culture, and often especially youth culture. Social change and the changing nature of modern football, including its continuing commercialisation, has given rise to much tension between supporters on the one hand and clubs and football authorities on the other. Some social groups and communities within football are experiencing increasing alienation and exclusion from the game and racism and violence remain significant problems.

Further, it is to be observed that wherever football fans are organised and/or recognised and taken seriously, along with their interests and concerns, as equal partners in dialogue and involved in decision-making processes, a perceptible reduction in the number of problems, a much improved atmosphere and an increase in community participation can result, thus making the club and the match-going experience a generally more attractive one.

The activities of FSE are based upon the following core principles:

- Opposition to all forms of discrimination on the basis of background, ability, religion or faith, gender, sexual orientation or age.
- Rejection of violence, both verbal and physical.
- Empowerment of the fan base.
- Fostering of a positive fan and football culture, including values such as fair play and good governance.

The success of the game transcends national boundaries, as indeed do its problems. The existence of a European football supporters' organisation that permits a transnational exchange of experience, networking opportunities and democratic representation will make a significant contribution to addressing the social problems associated with the game, also in relation to conveying the positive values of sport and social inclusion.

With this in mind, FSE adopts the following Association constitution:

1 Name, headquarters, financial year

1. The name of the Association is Football Supporters Europe e.V., or FSE for short.
2. It is headquartered at Hamburg and entered in the registry of clubs, societies and associations [*Vereinsregister*] under the number VR 20279.
3. The financial year is the calendar year.

2 Tax relief

1. Football Supporters Europe exclusively and directly pursues non-profit-making purposes within the meaning of the chapter covering tax-privileged purposes in the German Tax Code (AO). The object of the Association is to foster international understanding, tolerance, equal opportunities for women and men, and democratic principles. The Association engages in nonprofit activities; it does not primarily pursue its own commercial purposes.
2. Funds of the Association may be used only for the purposes laid down in the constitution. Members of the Association may not receive gratuities, in their capacity as members, from the funds of the Association. They shall have no claims whatsoever on the assets of the Association on relinquishing membership. No one may benefit from any expenditure that is outwith the purposes of the Association or from disproportionately high remunerations.

3 Goals and responsibilities of the Association

The objects of the constitution shall be achieved, in particular, by:

1. Promoting democratic principles and international understanding by organising a democratic and representative network of football fans and supporter initiatives/organisations from different European countries that is capable of establishing a mutual cultural exchange, in particular in the field of sport, identifying and representing their interests, in particular at European level, in dialogue with institutions that deal with football supporters.
(for instance, by organising meetings of the network members at which different cultural customs (including supporter culture) and initiatives are presented; by informing and campaigning on cultural customs (including supporter culture) and interests in different countries; by organising mediation and information events between representatives of institutions involved with football supporters and network members from different European countries).
2. Encouraging responsible self-organisation, especially among young football supporters as a part of democratic education processes, and conveying values such as tolerance, anti-discrimination and the rejection of violence.
3. Organising regular international workshops, talks, seminars and networking events for football supporters and representatives of football bodies on the subject of the organisation of sport, (fan) culture, customs and successful initiatives in the field of sport/football in different countries across Europe (such as issues relating to the organisational structure of clubs and associations, supporter groups and methods of co-determination at clubs in different countries).
4. Providing social preventive information and support offerings for football supporters and others attending international matches and tournaments, in particular "fan embassies" as a recognised method of preventing violent and discriminatory spectator behaviour.
5. Assisting and advising supporter groups, supporter organisations and supporter-related initiatives and providing development and networking support to intercultural exchange programmes for the conveying of information on the culture and customs of other countries, in particular among (young) football fans, and to related projects, in particular in Europe, e.g. fan projects and inclusive football projects.
6. Educational, public relations and campaign work using football as a platform for conveying values such as tolerance (promotion of opposition to exclusion, racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, homophobia, etc), fair play and gender equality.
7. Producing publications and newsletters on activities of the Association and activities and campaigns by football supporters in other countries.
8. Developing a library of information on legislation, directives, regulations and core articles on supporter-related issues and the organisation of sport (e.g. on issues relating to the organisational structure of clubs and associations, methods of co-determination at clubs and cultural forms of expression of [supporter] groups in different countries).

The Association is entitled to employ full- or part-time staff to carry out its responsibilities.

4 Membership

1. Membership shall be open to all natural and legal persons and informally organised groups with a nominated FSE delegate who are primarily active in the football supporter sector in Europe, who promote the goals of the Association and who commit to and actively support the core principles of the Association. Europe is defined as the sum total of the national football associations that are members of European football's governing body, UEFA. Countries are deemed to be all nations with a national football association.

2. Admission of members is by written application (including via e-mail or online) to the representative body appointed by the FSE committee in accordance with the constitution, which is the FSE Coordinating Team/Management.
3. Membership shall end upon the death of the member, by voluntary cancellation, by the member or informally organised group ceasing to exist as a legal person, by expulsion from the Association or by dissolution of FSE.
4. Voluntary cancellation of membership can be effected at any time with effect from the end of the financial year by submission of written notice to the FSE Committee or the management appointed by the FSE Committee.
5. Members can be expelled or prevented from joining by decision of the Board if they act in defiance of the goals and core principles of the Association or fail to meet their obligations towards the Association. An expelled member has the right of appeal to an ordinary general meeting. The decision of the meeting is final. The member shall be invited to the meeting and has the right to be heard. Appeals shall be decided by a two-thirds majority of the members present.

5 Rights and obligations of members

1. Football Supporters Europe e.V. may levy a membership subscription. The type and amount of the subscription shall be set by the general meeting on the recommendation of the FSE Committee as part of a schedule of subscription fees.
2. Members have the right to participate in the meetings and events of the Association and to use the services (e.g. advice, information) and publications provided, unless stated otherwise, free of charge.
3. Members shall:
 - a. Act according to the core principles of FSE, promote them and encourage other members to do the same.
 - b. Fulfil and promote the objectives and tasks of the Association.
 - c. Pay any due membership subscription on time and meet any other agreed obligations.

6 Bodies of the Association

The bodies of the Association are:

1. The general meeting
2. The FSE Committee/Board
3. The FSE Coordinating Team/Management
4. The on-topic divisions

7 General meeting

1. The ordinary general meeting must be convened at least once a year by the FSE Committee/Board or the representative appointed under this Constitution by the FSE Committee, the FSE Coordinating Team.
2. The FSE Committee and the FSE Coordinating Team shall present the annual and financial reports at the ordinary general meeting. Thereafter the general meeting shall decide whether to ratify the actions of the Board.
3. General meetings shall be convened in writing by the FSE Committee or by the FSE Coordinating Team on its behalf at least eight weeks before the meeting.
4. Extraordinary general meetings shall be convened in writing by the FSE Committee or by the FSE Coordinating Team on its behalf if required in the interest of the Association or if demanded of the FSE Committee or the FSE Coordinating Team on its behalf by $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total number of votes of all Association members.
5. Upon the expiration of the term of office of the FSE Committee the general meeting shall elect a new FSE Committee.
6. The general meeting is the highest body of the Association and has the power to direct the activities of the FSE Committee.

8 Voting rights

1. All duly admitted members in attendance over the age of 14 have the right to vote at the general meeting. Voting rights are primarily weighted according to the main geographical area of operation of the respective members.
 - a. The voting rights of natural persons are limited to one vote per member.
 - b. Legal persons, informally organised supporter groups and supporter-related organisations and initiatives that are primarily active at local level shall be represented at the general meeting by a nominated delegate or, should the nominated delegate be unable to attend, by a previously appointed proxy. The voting rights of members primarily active at local level are limited to three votes per member.
 - c. Legal persons, supporter associations (informally organised or organised as legal persons) and supporter-related organisations and initiatives that are primarily active at national/pan-European level shall be represented at the general meeting by a nominated delegate or, should the nominated delegate be unable to attend, by a previously appointed proxy. The voting rights of members primarily active at national/pan-European level are limited to ten votes per member.

The FSE Coordinating Team shall determine the voting classification based upon the information provided in the membership application.

2. Delegates of local and national/pan-European members or their previously appointed proxies may represent a maximum of one national/pan-European and a maximum of one local member as delegates with voting rights at a FSE general meeting.

9 FSE Committee

1. The FSE Committee/Board consists of:
 - A number of special representatives to be determined in accordance with section 9 (2) and elected by the general meeting.
 - The FSE Coordinating Team/Management
 - The heads of each on-topic division.
2. The size of the FSE Committee should always guarantee a two-thirds majority of electable committee members. The number of FSE Committee/Board members to be elected by the general meeting shall be determined based upon the number of on-topic division heads/management members at the time of the election. The number of Committee members so determined who are not elected by the general meeting is increased by a third.
3. The number of elected members on the FSE Committee from one country shall not exceed one third of the total number of elected FSE Committee members.
4. The FSE Coordinating Team and the heads of the on-topic divisions may be employed on a full-time basis.
5. The elected members of the FSE Committee are elected for a period of one year by simple majority vote at the general meeting. They remain in office until such time as a new FSE Committee is elected.
6. Committee members may stand for re-election.
7. All Committee members must be members of the Association or special representatives and must be 18 or over.
8. The FSE Committee and the special representatives shall have the following responsibilities, in particular:
 - a. Preparing an annual budget, an action plan, if required, an annual report and a financial report.
 - b. Convening general meetings.
 - c. Preparing and implementing the motions passed by the general meeting.
 - d. In between general meetings the FSE Committee and the special representatives shall represent the interests of the Association and take any decisions that cannot be postponed until the next general meeting.

9. Each Committee member shall have one vote. Unless otherwise stated herein, decisions of the FSE Committee shall be taken by simple majority of the required votes cast. Where decisions affect an on-topic division or the Management, the various special representatives shall not have the right to vote on issues pertaining to:
 - The removal from office of the person concerned.
 - The dissolution of an on-topic division.
 - The existence, nature and scope of the full-time employment.

10 FSE Coordinating Team/Management

1. The FSE Committee/Board shall appoint and have the right to dismiss members of the Management (FSE Coordinating Team), based at the FSE Coordinating Office, as special representatives within the meaning of section 30 of the German Civil Code (BGB).
2. In case of doubt, the power of agency of the FSE Coordinating Team/Management pursuant to section 30 BGB extends to all legal transactions.
3. The FSE Coordinating Team shall have a permanent seat on the FSE Committee.
4. As a higher-level body, the FSE Committee has the power is to direct the FSE Coordinating Team and monitor the work it performs.
5. The FSE Coordinating Team shall inform the FSE Committee of the latest position of the Association at least once every three months.

11 On-topic divisions

1. On-topic divisions serve to improve organisational efficiency and develop specific areas of activity, within the scope of FSE's goals and responsibilities, which require a certain level of expertise.
2. The establishment or dissolution of an on-topic division requires a two-thirds majority decision of the FSE Committee.
3. The structure of an on-topic division can take on any number of different forms depending on the requirement. Internally, it can be structured on a membership basis, in the form of a loose network, on an informal committee basis or as an advisory service.
4. Each on-topic division shall appoint a head who shall represent the division on the FSE Committee with a permanent seat. The division heads shall be considered special FSE Committee representatives. In case of doubt, their power of agency extends to all legal transactions occurring in the ordinary course of business of their division.
5. The annual and financial reports on the budgets allocated to each on-topic division must be submitted to the FSE Committee at the end of each financial year. Interim reports shall also be presented in time for the general meeting to allow them to be included in the overall financial report.
6. The FSE Committee has the power to direct the activities of the on-topic divisions.

12 Recording of decisions

The decisions passed at the meetings of the FSE Committee and at general meetings shall be recorded in writing and signed by the appointed minute-taker.

13 Amendments to the constitution and dissolution

1. The general meeting shall decide on all matters pertaining to the constitution. Amendments to the constitution require a two-thirds majority decision of all Association members present.
2. Resolutions proposing amendments to the constitution must be sent to the FSE Coordinating Team in writing at least 30 days before the general meeting. The resolutions shall be published seven days before the general meeting.
3. The Association may be dissolved only by a resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of all members present at a general meeting convened for this purpose with at least one month's notice.
4. Upon dissolution or winding up of the Association or cessation of its tax-privileged purposes, its assets shall be conveyed to a legal person under public law or another tax-privileged entity to be used for the advancement of international understanding and sport.
5. The public body or other tax-privileged entity upon dissolution or winding up of the Association or cessation of the tax-privileged purposes pursuant to section 14 (4) shall be selected by the FSE Committee by two-thirds majority decision of all Committee members at the time of dissolution or winding up of the Association or cessation of the tax-privileged purposes.

14 Coming into force of the constitution and transitional arrangements

1. This constitution shall come into force on the day it is entered in the registry of clubs, societies and associations.
2. The Association bodies can pass decisions on the basis of the constitution before it is registered, such decisions also becoming effective upon registration.
3. The Association bodies in office upon adoption of this constitution shall continue their work until such time as the general meeting appoints different legal successor bodies.