REVIVE THE ROAR!

The Vision of Football Supporters Europe

WHAT DO WE WANT THE FOOTBALL OF THE FUTURE TO BE LIKE?

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF FANS IN IT?
Why a fanzine, why an FSE Vision?

Now that you’re holding this issue zero of the brand-new Fanzine of the European Fans’ Network FSE called REVIVE THE ROAR! in your hands, or if you have it in front of you on your computer, you might ask yourself:

Why an FSE fanzine?
Hm, well.... first of all: just because we wanted to do it, I guess.
But also, because we have quite a few projects and ideas coming up for which a fanzine would provide the perfect platform.
So, as you can probably guess already, we have no intention of doing a typical fanzine as Football Supporters Europe (FSE).

There are enough brilliant fans’ publications out there in Europe, produced by many, many supporters at local level. And we will certainly present the “Best of” to you in due course, in order to give credit to these many great authors that there are.

And that’s exactly what we want REVIVE THE ROAR to be: a voice and a platform which can illustrate the “Best of” the great diversity of fans’ activities and projects all across the continent, which can provide us with inspiration and guidance on what has been done or what other supporters think on this continent! Those, who ARE in fact the ones guilty of reviving our roar in what is called modern football.

And if you think your idea / your activity / your project is muuuuuuch better than what is presented here, or if you simply think all the authors of this zine are shit: that’s exactly what we need! Get in touch, send us your articles, contribute your ideas! Our editorial office is most happy to welcome more members!

How regularly are we planning to come out with REVIVE THE ROAR? Not the slightest idea, to be honest.
Whenever we’ve got good ideas for content maybe?!

And why starting with an FSE Vision?
That’s an easy one: because we thought it is about time to provide people with the accumulated wisdom of football supporters from across Europe! If you don’t want to read all our previous reports of the European Fans’ Congresses and other events, this FSE Vision is made just for you. It represents the viewpoints of those hundreds, no, thousands of football supporters who have contributed to the development process and discussions within FSE at our various events over the past 5 years.

It is them, and maybe you as well, who have made the greatest contribution to what FSE has become with members representing millions of supporters from locally active fans’ groups, national fans’ organisations and individual football fans in currently 40 countries in Europe.

This is our shared ideas for the football we’re striving for in Europe. By fans for fans and all others who are interested in how we see things.

And now, dig in!

Glorious Mess
The Vision of Football Supporters Europe

WHAT DO WE WANT THE FOOTBALL OF THE FUTURE TO BE LIKE?

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF FANS IN IT?

OVERALL VISION
As FSE we are united in the belief that the success of football as a global spectator sport rests on the participation and contribution of its supporters, and that it is crucial that these supporters have a collective voice and influence within the game.

Football is considered a part of culture, and often in particular of youth culture. The changing nature of modern football, including its continuing commercialisation, has given rise to some tension between supporters on the one hand and clubs and football authorities on the other. Some communities and social groups feel increasing alienation and exclusion from football, and there remain significant problems with racism and violence.

Conversely, where there is a decent level of self-organisation among football fans, and where there are opportunities for supporters to take part as equal partners in genuine dialogue; where supporters’ concerns and interests are taken seriously; and where supporters are involved in decision-making processes – then there can be a tangible improvement in atmosphere, an increase in community involvement, and a reduction in destructive behaviour.

The success of football crosses national boundaries, as indeed do its problems. The existence of a European organisation of football supporters, enabling transnational exchanges of experience, networking and democratic representation, will have a real impact in addressing the social problems affecting the game, and in promoting positive values of sport and social inclusion.

We therefore strive for
• the full recognition of fans as major stakeholders by football governing bodies & institutions at all levels of the game
• inclusive consultation of football fans and the consideration of fans’ interests and needs in Europe on an equal footing on all key topics
• ownership and governance structures in football where football clubs are owned by their members, ideally by the supporters, for the sake of increasing sustainability of the game
• football without violence and discrimination

KEY VALUES
At the core of all our activities and membership are thereby the following values as outlined in the FSE Statutes:

• ANTI-DISCRIMINATION
FSE members are united in their opposition against any form of discrimination of any individuals on any grounds including: origin, ability, religion and belief, gender,
sexual orientation and age. In order to ensure a positive football culture for the support of our teams, phenomena such as racism, nationalism, sexism, homophobia, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia or other forms of discrimination should have no place either on or off the pitch. Furthermore, apart from own activities, FSE members support the work of partners in the field such as FARE and CAFE.

**THE REJECTION OF VIOLENCE**

FSE members reject violence and stand up for peaceful and creative forms of expression of supporting their teams across Europe. We acknowledge that fans take responsibility for promoting and taking all measures that can support the reduction of violent incidents inside stadia and beyond. That said, we also call for relevant football governing bodies and institutions to acknowledge the role that society and the provision of adequate conditions can play in this, and to take respective measures with a focus on prevention, de-escalation and dialogue, with safety and security strategies, stadium facilities and hosting conditions.

**FOSTERING POSITIVE GRASS-ROOTS FOOTBALL FAN CULTURE**

FSE members believe that true change can only happen when it has the support of the grassroots. There is nothing more powerful than peer pressure. Fans’ participation in all measures taken to tackle existing problems in the game is therefore crucial, in particular when fans are affected by these changes.

**PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Good governance of football is essential for the sustainable success of the game. Good governance in a football context for FSE is characterised by ensuring openness, accessibility and accountability for the benefit of the social, cultural and economic values of the game for society, with all decisions made at all levels of the game. We believe that supporter involvement and ownership has proven to be the best tool to ensure that clubs are run responsibly and are financially sustainable, which is why FSE fully supports the work of the European arm of our members from Supporters Direct in this field.

**KEY FIELDS OF ACTION**

With the above values and the overall vision at the core of all activities, there are a range of key topics which are of particular importance to football fans across Europe. The following list of fields of action & subsequent fans’ positions within FSE do not claim to be comprehensive but rather summarise generic viewpoints in the FSE membership that our members agree with. The list represents the summary of discussions and findings in consultation with our membership, only 5 years after FSE was first established.

And since football and fan culture is constantly changing and evolving, this FSE Vision is to be seen as a living document that is subject to constant evaluation and verification processes with our membership.

FSE members consisting of individual football fans, locally active fans’ group and nationally active fans’ organisations and initiatives in currently more than 40 countries across Europe are united by their agreement to the following key fields of action:
GOOD HOSTING, FEWER PROBLEMS

- When fans are treated in a respectful and welcoming manner, they are much more likely to pay it back with positive behavior.
- The provision of hospitable conditions and services to all football fans at all levels is integral in this respect.
- Fans should be treated as guests and not firstly as a problem.
- The need of fans without tickets should be considered and alternative provisions should be made in the host city of a football match.
- Excellent stadium infrastructure and facilities can make a crucial contribution to positive fans’ behaviour.
- Overall hosting conditions and access to facilities should be the same for both home and away supporters in and outside the stadium.
- The different supporters of one team should be treated in a differentiated manner — rather than judging fans collectively, a targeted isolation of the minority of troublemakers is needed to avoid counter-productive solidarity effects and group dynamics.
- The consideration and understanding of the different existing forms of fan cultural expression and intercultural differences of fan culture by all parties involved in the organisation of a match day is crucial for fostering positive fans’ behaviour.
- The principles outlined here apply both to club football and international tournaments.

SAFETY & SECURITY: POLICING AND STEWARDING

- The relationship between especially organised fans and security forces is usually a negative one and influenced by a long history of negative experiences and enemy stereotyping on both sides including increasingly fierce clashes between both sides.
- From a fans’ perspective, policing and stewarding should be proportionate and sensible, and prepared on the basis of the actual behavior of the individual fans, rather than on the basis of their reputation or the perception of fans collectively as a problem or the enemy.
- Focus and sufficient training should be given on friendly policing and stewarding strategies with a focus on communication and good hosting rather than intervention since this has proven to ensure legitimacy of policing and stewarding of fans.
- The consideration and understanding of the different existing forms of fan cultural expression and intercultural differences of fan culture is essential for ensuring proportionate safety and security concepts.
- Supporters or fan-related initiatives such as fans’ projects should make efforts to provide the respective expertise on fan culture and typical forms of behavior to security forces to trigger adjustments of security strategies based on dialogue and de-escalation rather than means of repression.
Fans are NOT principally opposed to punishment of misbehavior of football fans, provided that the sanction/punishment and respective procedures can be perceived as fair, proportionate, transparent and legitimate by fans and expert organisations, based on the social context and core principles of a juridical system, including the presumption of innocence before proven guilt.

Against this background, sanctions leading to collective punishment, such as matches behind closed doors, away travel bans, lifelong stadium bans, fan ID cards or the closure of entire stands inside the stadium should be avoided or at best abolished, since evidence shows that this usually causes counter-productive solidarity effects of the vast majority of genuine supporters with the minority of actual troublemakers, and increases their scope for destructive behavior.

If clubs are sanctioned for bad hosting of supporters e.g. with overpriced tickets, the sanctions imposed should include an obligation of compensation towards the affected fans since this can significantly foster the compliance with existing regulations in this area.

Fines imposed on clubs for incidents for violent and discriminatory fans’ behaviour should be combined with the obligation to use part of the money for the implementation of recognised measures of long-term socio-prevention focusing on fans’ dialogue, such as fans’ projects (see more further below) and the enforcement of anti-discrimination campaigning together with fans.

Legislation and regulations affecting football fans specifically should be proportionate, transparent and consider the social context as well as the above mentioned recommendations around the avoidance of collective, multiple or excessively repressive punishments.

In the process of developing regulations or legislation affecting football supporters, it is crucial to listen to fans’ viewpoints and the expertise of supporters or related expert organisations such as fans’ projects.

Regulations and legislation on offences committed by fans leading to prosecution or disciplinary sanctions against them must be applied equally to all stakeholders in football for respective offenses committed (e.g. in particular with regards violence or discriminatory behavior), including club officials, players, and guests or tenants of VIP boxes in the hospitality areas of football stadia.
**COMMERCIALISATION & GOVERNANCE**

✓ We as FSE with our membership believe in football in most countries in Europe as an integral part of common property as opposed to a private business entity. Football plays an important social and cultural and also economical role for its fans and surrounding communities.

✓ Against this background, we are clearly opposed to reckless commercial exploitation of football and even more of their clubs for the sake of pure short-term profit-making, short-term vested interests, as well as poor financial management and inadequate standards of governance which all too often result in highly indebted clubs and the loss of important traditions and identification potentials.

✓ Most football supporters are also opposed to the interests of sponsors and commercial investors being prioritised because of increasing restrictions for the fans themselves as the most loyal, passionate and longstanding contributors coming along with it. This reduces their possibilities to support their team (e.g. with regards to the reduced availability of tickets for fans, high prices for merchandise items, predominance of business seats in a stadium, change of traditional club colours or stadium names, etc).

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**SELF-ORGANISATION & SELF-REGULATION AMONGST FANS**

✓ Football fans should be organised and interlinked in democratic structures at local, national, continental and global levels, where possible, to be able to make their voice heard and to provide a visible contact point and responsible partner in a dialogue for football governing bodies and institutions.

✓ Where desired by the fans, football governing bodies and institutions or clubs should take responsibility for their fans and provide moral and financial support to activities of the fans’ organisations.

✓ There are still many countries without representative national networks or structures of self-organisation amongst football supporters in Europe.

✓ Peer pressure is more powerful than anything else when it comes to achieving sustainable changes for the better.

✓ Many organised fans are prepared to take such responsibility for positively influencing the atmosphere inside their stadia but there are also limitations to it.

✓ Hence, there should be conditions for fans in football in and outside the stadium that provide enough room for grass-roots self-regulatory processes, and for fans to take responsibility for a positive atmosphere at their club – this should always be prioritised over top-down safety and security strategies focused on early intervention and be elaborated in consultation with the fans.

✓ The implementation of so-called Supporters Charters on the basis of respective recommendations of the Council of Europe are a desirable model to trigger these processes across Europe.
Scientific evidence shows rightly that the thereby created increasing alienation between fans and clubs can in fact be one of the major root causes of problems and tensions, or even for severe conflicts between fans and clubs.

That said, football fans are equally aware that a business orientation to a certain degree has always been important for sustainable management of football clubs.

Hence, football fans can accept a commercial approach in certain areas of the club management, if the measures taken are balanced with and protective of the needs and identity of the club and its fanbase and the surrounding community.

Supporters ownership and supporters consultation in club management issues and the joint elaboration of respective binding management guidelines can hereby provide a sustainable solution towards a more balanced management of fans needs and commercial interests, and hence contribute to a long-term sustainability and profitability of football.

**TICKETING – TICKETING SYSTEMS & TICKET PRICING**

- Ticket distribution systems should be accessible and transparent for all fans whilst ensuring that the most loyal supporters are put first.
- Ticket distribution should ensure that the majority of tickets go to the supporters of the competing teams and are distributed by the two competing clubs directly in consultation with their fans.
- In support of respective UEFA safety and security regulations, ticket prices should always be the same for both home and away supporters and this should be strictly enforced both at local, national and international level.
- Ticket prices at local, national and international level should at all times ensure that tickets are available in categories that can ensure inclusivity both with regards to age, social class and the price level in the participating countries.

**KICK-OFF TIMES**

- For the sake of an attractive stadium experience and better support for the football teams, we stand up for traditional kick-off times that put the needs of match-going fans first, and can enable the active, most passionate match going fans to support their team.
- Fixtures should be announced early enough in advance, to allow sufficient time for fans so that travel and holidays can be arranged reliably, in time and at convenient costs.
- Fans should be consulted in the process of making kick-off times arrangements.
- As a matter of sustainability of the game, kick-off times should consider issues such as the accessibility of matches for families and youth.
- We call upon football governing bodies, clubs and TV companies, to consider the needs of supporters more important for the sustainable attractiveness of the game than short-term profit-making.
**PLAYERS & FANS**

✓ The players and the team are usually the focus of fans’ support at a match. Alongside high-ranking club officials, players are seen as the most visible representatives for the identity of a football club

✓ The more players and club officials can show their integrity and identification with the club itself and its fanbase and an understanding for the fans, the better for both the sustainable success and the prevention of various problems related to alienation between both sides.

✓ The visual and acoustic support of fans can make a great contribution to the final result of a football match and the performance of players

✓ Match-going football fans want their visual and acoustic contribution to the game to be valued by club officials and in particular by players and managers

✓ Likewise, players that are considered to care about the fans can have very positive influence on fans’ behavior

✓ Hence, players in particular should be encouraged or feel encouraged to celebrate and actively engage with the fans on match days but also beyond

✓ Fans themselves should ensure that players and officials that adhere to these principles of integrity with their club and the fans and the principles of Fair Play on the pitch, are treated respectfully

**TIFO MATERIAL**

✓ For many football supporters, tifo materials are an essential means of expression of their support for their team

✓ Tifo material and stadia displays make a big contribution to the attractiveness of a stadium experience and should be valued respectively

✓ Regulations regarding the use of tifo material should be elaborated together with the fans and be implemented transparently and consistently, both for home and away supporters

✓ Match day arrangements with regards to the use of tifo material must be communicated widely and early enough in advance via all relevant channels of communication both with the home and away team, to avoid problems/conflict upon entry to the ground

✓ Celebrating rivalries is an integral part of football and fan culture. Players, football officials and media regularly contribute to encouraging rivalries with aggressive language, too, to increase the attractiveness of respective matches.

✓ Tifo material and acoustic support against the opponent in this context must be considered as creative and in fact a healthy expression of these rivalries and/or often also as a simple reflection of the above mentioned previous deliberate public incitements by other parties involved, as long as they adhere to principles of anti-discrimination and the rejection of violence
When deciding on permissions for tifo material, it has proven very successful for the prevention of problems to involve fans’ representatives or SLOs of both the home and away team in such decision-making processes.

**MEDIA & FANS**

- As scientific evidence shows, the predominant one-sided negative and sensational media reporting on fan-related issues can contribute largely to worsening existing problems with regards to destructive fans’ behavior.

- At the same time, the vast majority of fans who engage in numerous positive activities that have the potential to lead to sustainable improvements and prevention of problems (e.g. fans’ actions against discrimination), have great problems with finding any platform or interest for their activities from the side of most journalists.

- We call upon media representatives to adopt a differentiated and responsible approach when reporting on fan-related issues and provide a sufficient public platform for positive fans’ activities in the media.

- We call upon fans to continue promoting their activities in the media and increase their commitment in this field towards selected, trustworthy journalists where possible, to show the many positive aspects of fan culture and the impressive contributions fans make to football.

**SAFE STANDING**

- The majority of supporters across Europe wants to have the choice whether they want to sit or stand when watching a football match inside a stadium.

- In many all-seater stadia, tensions or even conflicts arise between those supporters who prefer or have to sit (e.g. elderly and disabled supporters) and those who want to stand on a regular basis.

- Standing areas such as those implemented in modern stadia in professional football in countries like Germany or Norway have proven to be safe.

- Safe Standing areas in professional football stadia, if built and managed like in the countries named above, have proven to increase the attractiveness of a stadium experience and can ensure social inclusiveness with regards to ticket pricing, in particular for young and socially disadvantaged supporters.

- As a matter of social inclusiveness and the prevention of problems, FSE therefore calls for football governing bodies to re-introduce standing areas based on recognised Safe Standing models.
MEASURES OF SOCIO-PREVENTION IN FOOTBALL

✓ We want to see recognised and successful measures of socio-prevention established at all clubs as well as for international tournaments across Europe where there are organised supporters before problems arise but at the latest when there is the first indication of potential issues involving fans.

✓ Recognised measures in this field include in particular Fans’ Projects, Fans’ Embassies, Supporters Charters, Supporters Liaison Officers and/or Supporter Councils

✓ These measures have proven to be a successful addition and/or an alternative even to conventional one-sided safety and security strategies as part of an integrated approach.

✓ FSE supports the respective recommendations of the Council of Europe and the Licencing Requirements of UEFA in this area.

✓ If properly implemented and recognised and supported by all relevant stakeholders in football, they can lead to sustainable improvements, to a perceptible better atmosphere and the reduction of tensions and conflicts and can ultimately save money that would otherwise be spent on expensive security measures.

PYROTECHNICS

✓ In view of the increasing establishment of so-called tifo or ultra groups in professional football across Europe, the organised usage of pyrotechnical material has manifested persistently and increasingly inside most professional football stadia

✓ For these fans’ groups, the usage of pyrotechnical materials represents an important means of expression of their support for their team, rather than an act of vandalism or hooliganism, as considered by many outside parties

✓ In countries where there is a certain “tradition” of fans using pyrotechnics in football, many fans who themselves would NOT use pyrotechnics, consider them a means that increases the attractiveness of the stadium experience

✓ That said, many potentially serious problems have arisen due to the irresponsible usage of flares over the years, ranging from flares being thrown onto the pitch or into neighboring stands to severe injuries both on the sides of players and fans using pyrotechnical material

✓ Reality shows, however, that problems with the usage of pyrotechnics are significantly reduced or almost prevented wherever supporters are allowed to use pyrotechnics legally and responsibly in a certain framework of controlled conditions agreed between the fans’ groups and relevant agencies

✓ As a matter of preventing problems and allowing fans to take responsibility, FSE therefore speaks up in favour of legalising the controlled usage of pyrotechnics for fans in football, where desired by the supporters, on the basis of successful best practice models like in Norway and Austria
COMPETITION STRUCTURES

✓ Competition structures can make a big contribution to the attractiveness of local, national or international football on one hand but can equally have very negative impacts on stadium attendances, TV viewing figures etc.
✓ Depending on the history, traditions and the specific nature of the respective football country (e.g. whether it is a big or small football country, whether other football is the main spectator sport or just one alongside others, etc), competition structures at local, regional or national level can take various different forms
✓ Football supporters are the major target group for football competitions and can provide valuable expertise on what formats they would find attractive
✓ Consultation with fans can play an important role in ensuring a sustainable attractiveness of competition structures

MATCH-FIXING AND CORRUPTION

✓ Scandals around match-fixing and corruption and the lack of consequences or inconsistencies with the prosecution of these cases in football over the past decades have greatly damaged the reputation and integrity of football and competitions, and in particular that of football governing bodies and its representatives, in particular at FIFA
✓ Fans in many countries have lost a great amount of trust in their club officials, players and/or football governing bodies in view of the history of scandals, whilst acknowledging that the direct contribution fans can make to tackle problems related to these issues is rather limited
✓ Hence, we support all measures leading to the independent, fair and consequent prosecution and proportionate punishment of allegations involving match-fixing and corruption based on the principles of a judicial system, including the presumption of innocence before proven guilt
✓ Transparency of football governing organisations and clubs are key for setting a tone of openness, accessibility and accountability and for building confidence among stakeholders. In line with respective recommendations of the international anti-corruption NGO Transparency International, we strongly believe that open policies and processes not only enhance an organisation’s reputation, they also deter corruption
✓ We therefore believe that all members of the executive committees and senior staff of football governing bodies and players must be prepared to place their personal financial affairs in the public domain upon request to avoid any actual or perceived corrupt gain;
✓ Votes taken, e.g. for host nation rights to international tournaments, must be open, recorded and be judged against pre-determined objective criteria;
✓ We call for the establishment of an international sports anti-corruption and match-fixing agency similar in power and scope to the World Anti-Doping Agency, and with powers and resources to independently investigate allegations of corruption and/or ethics breaches by international sporting governing bodies such as FIFA.
**HOW DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE THIS?**

- FSE’s core activities will focus on a range of key topics each year, to be elaborated upon and pursued transparently with a detailed agenda and project plans, and the aim to substantially contribute to capacity building amongst fans and an improvement in the relevant key fields of action mentioned above
- Alongside the annual core activities, other areas will be covered by ongoing side projects and activities (e.g. network of fan lawyers, fans’ embassy activities etc)
- FSE will organise networking events by fans for fans and other stakeholders in football at European and national level, in particular the European Football Fans’ Congress
- FSE will organise European campaigns and projects on key topics relevant to fans at grass-roots fans’ level, with a focus on the respective annual priorities
- FSE will lobby for fans’ interests with football governing bodies and institutions in regular meetings
- FSE will support and encourage the formation of national fans’ organisations & local and regional fans’ networks
- FSE will provide guidance and advice via case work with fans at local/regional level

**WHO WILL DO IT?**

- On-topic divisions and/or working groups are created for all activities or projects agreed with the membership around FSE’s key and side topics, to ensure the utmost levels of participation and diversity as well as measurable outcomes
- On-topic divisions and/or working groups are chaired by FSE Executive Committee members with support from the Coordinating Office in Hamburg
- FSE will cooperate with researchers/scientists and media
- FSE will liaise with relevant football officials and institutions and partners in the NGO sector (such as FARE and CAFE)
- All members and parties involved in the FSE activities are obliged to consent to the FSE core principles

**WHAT DO WE SEEK TO ACHIEVE WITH OUR ACTIVITIES?**

- Empowerment and capacity building of fans on responsible self-organisation, self-regulation and representation of key topics across Europe
- Improvements in accordance with the positions on the key fields of action as mentioned above
- Sharing experience / expertise between football supporters and relevant stakeholders on key topics across the continent
- Raising awareness for the core principles of FSE and enhancement of fans’ support for them
- Full integration of fans’ viewpoints on key topics relevant to fans with respective policies and decision-making processes at European level
- Contribution to the establishment of formalised structures and policies of consultation between fans and relevant stakeholders on key topics at national and local level
- Contribution to the improvement of sustainable attractiveness, social inclusiveness and community involvement of football in Europe
- Improvement of transparency and good governance in football
- Reduction of prejudice and tensions or conflicts between supporters
- Reduction of prejudice and tensions or conflicts between supporters and other agencies (such as police)
- Improvement of the stadium atmosphere in Europe
- Growing and increasingly representative membership of FSE across the continent
- Diversified funding for Football Supporters Europe