

## DEVELOPMENT OF FOOTBALL FANDOM AFTER 1989: EVIDENCE FROM CZECHIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The goal of this article is to analyze football fandom and violence in Czechia following the dissolution of the socialist state, focusing on the example of Slavia Prague, one of the most significant clubs in the country. We focused on the issue of football spectatorship in the 1990s, over the following twenty years until now. Primary data were collected by a questionnaire survey mainly in Prague, secondary data were used as well. We found that expressions of damaging the stadium and other disturbances are considered the most serious expression of violent behavior. On the other hand, booing is the least serious problem for our respondents.*

**Keywords:** football behavior, spectatorship, Velvet Revolution, violence, visitors

## SVILUPPO DELLA TIFOSERIA CALCISTICA DOPO IL 1989: L'ESEMPIO DELLA CECCHIA

### SINTESI

*L'obiettivo di questo articolo è analizzare la violenza delle tifoserie calcistiche nella Repubblica Ceca, in conseguenza della dissoluzione dello stato socialista, mettendo in rilievo l'esempio dello Slavia Praga, una delle squadre più rilevanti del paese. Ci siamo focalizzati sui problemi relativi al pubblico calcistico negli anni '90, nei seguenti venti anni fino ai giorni nostri. I dati principali sono stati raccolti tramite un'indagine statistica condotta principalmente a Praga; vengono poi usati anche i dati secondari. Abbiamo scoperto che i danneggiamenti degli stadi e altri disordini sono considerati la più seria espressione di comportamento violento. D'altro canto, abbiamo altresì rilevato che il "booing" risulta il problema meno serio.*

**Parole chiave:** comportamento calcistico, spettatori, Rivoluzione di velluto, violenza, visitatori

## INTRODUCTION

The sports environment has always been influenced by the political as well as economic and cultural development of society (Strachová, 2013). We can state that sport is a vital part of the “Visegrád countries” (so-called V4 as a cultural and political alliance of four Central European countries – Poland, Hungary, Czechia, and Slovakia), the Balkan and Baltic states’ culture. The development of sport in the Visegrád countries is observed in mutual interaction with ideologically homogenous and totalitarian systems (Waic, 2014). Post-war Polish history – its location on the orbit of USSR influence – had a significant impact on sport in this country. The collapse of communism and the rapprochement with Western Europe after 1989 caused the situation of sport in Poland to increasingly resemble the position of sport in Western Europe (Kobiela, 2011; Szymanowski, 2015). The history of the development of modern sport since its inception in Poland and Hungary has similar features (Jakubcová, 2013). Since the fall of the Communist government in 1989, Hungary has undergone significant changes (Foote et al., 2010). Elite-driven negotiations and non-violence can characterize the revolutionary changes of 1989 in this country. The Hungarian transition to democracy was characterized by non-violence and round table talks between the communist powerholders and the organizations of the emerging opposition (Bozóki & Simon, 2010). Especially after the onset of communism, the V4 countries went, and not only in sport, through similar developments. This area was “united” and its management has pursued state organization, which claimed to control all branches of sport. It had to replace state funding with alternative sources, at least partially, build its structures, set up relationships between subjects of sports scenes, etc. (Jakubcová, 2013). The situation in the Baltic states was very similar to that in the Czech Republic.

After the fall of the communist régime, new challenges awaited sport (e.g., Ice Hockey World Championships organized in Czechoslovakia in 1992, Czechia 2004, 2015, Latvia 2006, Slovakia 2011, 2019, and Belarus 2014; FIFA World Cup in Poland & Ukraine, 2012, FIBA Eurobasket in Serbia & Montenegro 2005, Lithuania 2011, Croatia & Latvia 2015). In the long perspective of the establishment and development of a democratic culture in the Baltic States, the signs of increased individualism and participation are very positive. After sixty years of forced integration with the Soviet Union, Estonia reasserted its independence in 1991. The independence phenomenon was not new to Estonia. However, the challenges facing civil society today are more significant than those of the inter-war period (Mačiukaitė-Žvinienė, 2008). We note that while the communist breakdown coincided chronologically in all the Balkan states, the communist regimes did

not collapse uniformly. They were instead affected by their prior national communist experience, including the degree of communist ideological orthodoxy, the extent of the party control over society, the intensity of dissident politics, or the control of the Soviet Union over internal matters (Anastasakis, 2013). This applies to both the popularity of individual sports, as well as organizational, economic, and ideological issues. The freeing of sport from the ideological burden of communist times is the most characteristic feature.

The fall of socialism in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in 1989 (known as the Velvet Revolution) was a fundamental social change that transformed the whole society. Societal changes began immediately after November 1989 and were projected onto the sports environment (Svobodová et al., 2013). Sport was considerably politicized before the Velvet Revolution, and most sports organizations and unions were in the hands of the state (Kössl et al., 2008). Long-term involuntary subordination to socialist central management tended to negate the organization of society and the principles on which society functioned in all spheres of life (Svobodová et al., 2013).

Release from the Communist grasp prompted an intensive search for new ways of development. Most institutions began to swiftly and spontaneously democratize. The sports environment was one of the first to look for ways to rearrange itself (Svobodová et al., 2013).

After the Velvet Revolution, the Executive Committee and the Central Committee of the Czech Sports Association met and resolved several crucial issues. It was decided that the Czech Sports Association would become a voluntary and politically independent organization. On November 26, 1989, the Citizens’ Forum for Athletes was established, and within a short time the Council of Mutual Understanding for Body Culture was formed and incorporated into the Civic Forum (Grexa & Strachová, 2011). The sports environment had to adapt to new social and political conditions (democratization, plurality, etc.), a market environment, entrepreneurship and the open professionalization of top-level sport. Furthermore, the Committee of the Czech Sports Association decided to rehabilitate former officials and athletes who had been persecuted for their political views after 1968 (Strachová, 2013). In January 1990, Věra Čáslavská (seven gold medals and four silver medals from the Olympic Games) became an advisor to the Minister for Sport and Social Affairs. In April 1990, the name Czech and Slovak Federal Republic started to be used. The country began to work slowly with the member countries of the Council of Europe, which it joined in 1991. This integration allowed the country to accede to the European Charter on Sport, which it joined in 1992 (Grexa & Strachová, 2011).

After 1990, top-level sport was commercialized. Sports organizations and unions also had to cope with the drying up of funds from the state budget and were

forced to find alternative financial sources. Following the model of Western European countries, federations and organizations began to search for these resources in the private sector (the phenomenon of sponsorship). Another aspect was the outflow and transfers of the best Czech players (football, hockey) worth millions of Czech koruna (CZK) to foreign competing leagues.

Changes were also made in the area of state administration. Formally, the development of Czechoslovak physical education and sport was the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. In practice, however, the situation was more complicated, especially in relations with foreign countries. But even in this challenging period, some successes were achieved in the international sports forum.

For Czech representatives, formerly generously supported by the socialist system, a descending trend of sporting results was observed in the first years after 1989 compared to those from Western Europe and the rest of the world. The increasing self-sufficiency of the athlete, the new quality of relationships (sponsors' entry into the sport, the search for financial resources, etc.) sometimes led to neglect of training needs, unwillingness to subordinate the interests of the whole, etc. It also failed to build on the former well-developed and efficient system of preparation of talented athletes, students and pupils in selected classes with extended teaching of physical education (Svobodová et al., 2013).

The 1989–1992 phase ended with the peaceful division of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republics into two independent states, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic, which came into force on January 1, 1993 (Strachová, 2013). The emergence of the Czech Republic brought about further changes in developments in all areas of life, (including sport), but it is necessary to say that these changes were not as fundamental as those happening before 1993. It was the era of right-wing politics and the period when the state began to devote more attention to sport. The efforts of the state to pay more attention to sport subsided very quickly. The changes were mainly related to sports organizations, Sazka (Lottery), the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, sports financing, etc. (Kössl et al., 2008).

One positive fact is the re-creation of a pluralistic sports environment and that the sports environment has high autonomy and a strong position, which is based on the traditions of voluntary sport in the Czech Republic. The creation of a clearly defined property structure in the sports environment during the transformation years can be seen as a success. Despite the failure to completely prevent the speculative expulsion of property and other excesses, the ownership of sports grounds, gymnasiums, and sports facilities remained mostly reserved for subjects operating in the sports

environment. It is not to be expected that the financial flow to the sports environment by the state will increase significantly in the future. Instead, it will be the opposite. Already in the 1990s, the sports environment had begun to face this trend with the concept of multi-source financing, which has been increasingly emphasized. Without the principle of funding from different sources, some sports clubs would no longer exist today (Strachová, 2013).

Regarding top-level and recreational sport, the new millennium and the large number of fitness centers and emphasis on a healthy lifestyle is favorably inclined. In addition to soccer and hockey, the two most watched sports; there is a lot of enthusiasm for floorball. It came to the Czech Republic in 1993, and its base is continuously growing. At present, sports such as cycling, volleyball, jogging, as well as golf, which was not considered a sport in the pre-November 1989 era, are also prevalent.

The most significant regular international sports events in Czechia include the Motorcycle Grand Prix in Brno, the Ostrava Golden Spike, the Prague International Marathon, the Great Pardubice horserace, WTA Prague Open, the Jizerská 50, the Barum Czech Rally Zlín, and the Golden Helmet in Pardubice. In the past, the Czech Hockey Games and the Peace Race were also significant events. The World Cup and Championship in water slalom and biathlon are regularly held in Czechia.

The Czech Football League (formerly the Czechoslovak Football League), the Czech Football Cup, the Czech Football Super Cup, the Czech Ice Hockey League (formerly the Czechoslovak Ice Hockey League) and the Czech Basketball League (formerly the Czechoslovak Basketball League) are the most popular regular competitions.

Sport — as a media spectacle — is sometimes seen as a possible means of compensating for human aggression. Events attractive to audiences are always easier to sell. We can state *“if it bleeds, it leads”*. A sporting spectacle can create the situation where people give up their free time, weekends or vacation to witness rampage, violence, and hysteria. Sometimes it seems that a passive consumer-oriented modern society is bored with the wide range of information and entertainment. In this sense, we can find boredom as a source of desire for the extraordinary, dramatic and risky nature of the sporting experience (Sekot, 2007).

The motive for elaborating this article was the author's interest and the fact that there is not enough current information on this issue. In Czechia, no publication has been devoted to a more significant number of people (spectators, fans, supporters, and hooligans) in a “football end” and visitors' conduct in one club. It needs to be said that when football spectatorship in Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic was studied in the past, there was no distinction made between differ-

ent categories of visitors, and the results applied to the stadium crowd as a whole. Apart from the aforementioned surveys (Slepička, 1990; Slepička et al., 2010), there are also other studies available, though most of them lack validity. They usually included only a handful of respondents and there is no unifying methodology. These surveys were mostly conducted as part of students' seminar papers or Bachelor's theses. We see a pioneering innovation in conducting research (Scholz, 2018) in which visitors were divided into various categories. The overall final results were comparable to those of the two aforementioned surveys. The values were similar, though when we looked at the individual categories, there were significant differences between the various groups.

The paper aims to describe the general development of sport, especially football after 1989 in Czechia, and then to analyze the relationship between visitors' verbal and other expressions and their violent behavior at football stadiums in Czechia.

#### SPORTS SPECTATORSHIP IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA/CZECHIA

The issue of football spectatorship has become the subject of intense media, political, and academic interest in recent years. Although we can state that the danger of socially pathological phenomena is considerably lower in Czechia than in some other countries, it cannot be underestimated. In our paper, we focused mainly on negative phenomena that occur during football matches in Czechia. We chose football because it is the most watched sport in the world. In 2018, a record audience of more than 3.5 billion viewers – more than half of the global population aged four and over – watched the World Cup in Russia (fifa.com). In Czechia, football has a considerable base; more than 330,000 members are registered with the Football Association of the Czech Republic (facr.fotbal.cz). There is a large number of people attending the stadiums, with an average of 5,000 visitors per match (season 2018/2019), while the most attractive teams see even higher numbers (Slavia Prague 13,500 visitors, Sparta Prague 11,000 visitors, Baník Ostrava 10,500 visitors, and Viktoria Pilsen 8,900 visitors).

We must state that the problem of disorder in sport was already occurring in the former Czechoslovakia. Disruptions associated with sports events, especially with football, were common in our country at the beginning of the 20th century. But it was a completely different kind of violence than what is seen today. Football fans participated in shouting vulgar expressions at the referee, the opposing players, the organizing service, and other football visitors. At the turn of the 20th century, we can also register the first interplay between visitors to football matches. A different situation occurred in the international field.

Spectators who could not attend a match abroad because they were not allowed to travel (especially to the West) were relatively moderate, and signs of "popular hostility" towards the USSR were vented mainly in ice hockey.

An important milestone for football hooligans was the appointment of Gustav Husák as President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in 1975 and the rise in repressive measures during the so-called normalization period. Despite the considerable in-depth security measures and increased efforts by the state apparatus to suppress violence at football stadiums, the police failed to prevent the growing trend of spectator riots, and the number of violent incidents at the end of the 1980s increased. We can state that it was mainly street fights after derbies, mostly involving Sparta Prague fans (Supporters, 2012). This team dominated this period in Czechoslovakia, which caused euphoria among its fans. On the other hand, with the rise in fan numbers, there was a proliferation of violent behavior. The youth, especially those recruited from the ranks of the working class who were not satisfied with their social status, began to vent their frustration during football matches. Incidents occurred inside stadiums and included attacks on players of the opposing team.

In the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, football hooliganism occurred spontaneously in the 1980s, but since the 1990s, Czechia has become one of many countries that has seen activation of hooligan groups. From the original informal groups emerged the first hooligan gangs and supporter groups in the 2nd half of the 1990s, issuing fanzines (fan + magazines). Even in Czechia, the violence associated with football and negative phenomena (including racism) has become a social problem over time (Smolík, 2008).

A significant moment for the development of hooliganism in totalitarian Czechoslovakia was an incident in June 1985. Coincidentally, it happened only a few weeks after the tragedy at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels, Belgium. Sparta Prague fans traveled to Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. In their drunkenness, they demolished several train carriages, harassed and beat other travelers, and even tried to push a lone conductress off the train. After this event, thirty fans were arrested, and the first action against football violence at Czech stadiums got underway. All stadiums of the top league created separate sectors for fans of the visiting team. The organizers of the football matches were given the power to control fans when they entered the auditorium — other measures were related to the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Only beer a lower alcohol content was allowed to be sold at stadiums (Duke, 1990).

After 1989, changes were made in the organizational structures in Czechoslovakian and Czech football. These, together with political developments, led to the behavior of football supporters being transformed.



Some trends of their radicalization and the rise of aggression towards referees, supporters (players) of their opponents emerged (Strachová, 2013).

The inrush of freedom and self-confidence facilitated the emergence of new hooligan groups that are starting to create clear rules and are well organized. Temporary interruption of the continuity of the work of security forces or their difficult orientation in new circumstances have negatively reflected in the ability to suppress some negative manifestations associated with football hooligans. Another problem is also the attendance at football stadiums of members of the skinhead subculture, which is experiencing a significant upturn after the loosening of conditions in society in general. This group is notorious for committing violent crimes not only during Czech football matches. As a result, racist or neo-Nazi elements are emerging in football. These are manifested in the chanting of catchwords, abuses, heiling, etc.

In spite of these problems, in the early nineties the organizing of people in so-called “ends” (stands for the most faithful and noisiest fans) increased, more fans are seen at away matches, and the style of supporting has become visually and acoustically more impressive. On the other hand, there is a large percentage of shouting consisting of racist and xenophobic catchwords. There is also a growing number of fan clashes outside football stadiums (Scholz, 2016).

From the 2nd half of the 1990s up till now, the general Czech public has been confronted by several cases of football hooliganism that have been highly publicized in the media. One of the most serious incidents happened in August 1999, when a 32-year-old woman was traveling by train to the town of Ostrava together with fans of Sigma Olomouc football club. Baník Ostrava hooligans attacked the moving train by throwing stones. The woman suffered very severe head and brain injuries with lasting consequences (Smolík, 2008). On the other hand, there is a lot of prejudice and confusion about hooligans that is often strengthened by the media. In particular, tabloid journals focus on incidents, complemented by sensational headlines (Scholz & Vespalec, 2017). Smolík (2012) notes that if the media do not change their approach when describing tense games and continue to present this issue in a non-objective way, they can in their own way be participating in these violent clashes and other riots.

Further, the second half of the nineties saw a new stage emerge in the development of the Czech hooligan scene. In several clubs in the highest football competition, well-organized hooligan groups have formed (defining themselves as a part of the hooligan scene) and regularly participate in football matches and fights. These gangs are far removed from direct “fan club” ties to that club.

We must state that what is allowed at football stadiums is unacceptable in a smaller auditorium environment, e.g., during a tennis match. Particular types of sport develop their very own level of tolerance of the behavior of spectators. Sports practice confirms that outbursts of uncontrolled spectator rage are not common occurrences in athletics, golf, sport diving, and similar sports. In these types of sport, there is no direct physical contact between athletes that would lead to the use of aggression or violence. The level of performance is measured, and the achieved results are then compared. This almost always eliminates the possibility of the results being affected by problematic decision-making, for instance, by referees. Spectators thus have no opportunity to see mutual skirmishes with interventions that transcend the boundaries of the rules and stimulate spectators to similar reactions in the auditorium. In contrast, football offers a show full of physical clashes between opponents with distinctive features of aggression primarily attacking the audience’s emotions (Slepička, 1990). The research carried out in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic/Czechia in the 1990s and at the beginning of the new millennium did not distinguish the audience in various sports, let alone individual visitors to football matches. The term spectator was incorrectly used to cover all visitors. Alternatively, they were classified merely as fans, spectators, and problematic spectators. We must say that such a division is insufficient. It is crucial to distinguish, e.g., hooligans from other people who are interested only in football and watching football matches. At the beginning of the new millennium, the academic community began to distinguish individual visitors. In this context, it is possible to use the most common division and identify four major groups: inactive spectators, football fans, supporters, and hooligans (Sekot & Smolík, 2009). Each group is characteristic and has its own specifics. For a better understanding of the negative phenomena, it is desirable to know which persons are seen at football stadiums and how they behave.

*Inactive (objective) spectators.* In this group there are four subgroups: (1) irregular visitors to football matches, frequently this concerns a particular type of fashion and snobbery, (2) fans of other clubs, not teams that are currently playing a football match (3) observers, coaches or other football players from other clubs, and (4), women (especially older), who attend the match accompanying their partners, or children accompanying their parents. Mareš et al. (2004) state that spectators are passive observers of the game, they are not affected by the rivalry between the two teams, and thus, the game looks entirely neutral. They are not interested only in football matches, but visit other sports fixtures and other sports. Often they do not identify with a particular club and do not wear their symbols such as scarves, caps, etc (image 1).





*Image 1: Inactive spectators (author's archive).*



*Image 2: Traditional football fans (author's archive).*



*Traditional football fans (“normal”).* These individuals attend football games and regularly have a relationship with their club, often due to the stadium being located relatively close to their residence. A fan has certain expectations for the development of the match, identifies with the team and therefore takes its success, or lack of it, personally (Greenwood et al., 2006; Slepíčka, 1990). Fans usually invest most of their free time, energy, and money in their favorite football club (Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Yusoff, 2016). In sport, especially football, visitors can become loyal fans of the club they visit. Often, they become fanatic fans who rarely miss home matches (Thorne & Bruner, 2006). A high level of identification with the club is linked to the aspects as mentioned above, also with higher attendance (Fisher & Wakefield, 1998). As Brandes et al. state (2013), in England, every fan purchases a season ticket, as tickets to individual matches are not available (image 2).

c) *Supporters (ultras).* These persons create a highly homogeneous group of fans who strive for the most spectacular development of the match while avoiding direct conflict, violence, and vandalism. They direct choreography in the game, often using fireworks, banners, and singing or cheering (Sekot, 2013). They greatly enjoy every game and are interested in club life. During the match, we can find them in the stands behind the goals (ends), which are designed mostly for standing. Almost every supporter is dressed in the club jersey, t-shirt, or at least a scarf of their favorite team (Scholz, 2016). Edensor (2014) says that the atmosphere is an essential component and should be experienced on the day of the match. Some supporters say they are not so disappointed by a loss, but the atmosphere must be unique (image 3).

d) *Hooligans (rowdies).* They come to football stadiums and their surroundings with the primary objective to cause conflict or fight with other similar groups from the opposing team. These groups (gangs) have their own names, which are defined against unorganized groups and other groups. Some of these parts are very well organized and unite not only club rivalry and hatred of enemy groups, but also political, racial, religious, national, regional, or social motives (image 4). Hooligans, unlike fans, often do not identify with a football club, only with their group (Mareš et al., 2004). Hooligan girl clashes, mostly in Russia, are also no exception (Scholz, 2018).

## METHODOLOGY

This case study deals with the issue of sports spectatorship in selected top league football clubs in Czechoslovakia/Czechia. We will focus on the issue of football spectatorship in the 1990s (Slepíčka, 1990), over the following twenty years (Slepíčka et al., 2010), to today (Scholz, 2018). In the 1990s, there

were 1,500 respondents, in the next period there were 1,400 respondents, and last year the number was 720 respondents. We realize that the number of respondents is twice as small but previous studies (Slepíčka, 1990; Slepíčka et al., 2010) were conducted by several researchers in several clubs, whilst the last research (Scholz, 2018) was conducted by one researcher in one club only. It mainly concerns the social composition of the sports audience, and we will also try to show possible changes that have occurred in the structure of the audience over the past 30 years, as the socio-economic environment has changed significantly.

Then the more detailed focus will be on individual speeches, opinions and experiences of individual respondents in the 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 seasons. Primary data were collected by a questionnaire survey mainly at the Eden stadium in Prague, Czechia. Given the nature of the surveyed phenomenon, a quantitative approach seems to be the most appropriate. Therefore, the questionnaire was used as a base (Slepíčka, 1990), which was updated and also focused on the demographic structure of sports visitors, behavior at the stadium, etc. The questionnaire had to be expanded with questions related to pyrotechnics, racism, vulgar expressions, booing, and pitch incursions. A total of 720 persons aged  $25.46 \pm 10.19$  years participated in this research. These were 592 men ( $25.62 \pm 10.20$  years), 120 women ( $25.01 \pm 10.20$  years), and 8 persons who did not wish to specify their gender. The research sample consisted of fans (462), supporters (158), sports spectators (68), and hooligans (32). This disproportion in the selection structure corresponds approximately to the percentage structure of visitors, and for some less numerous groups it is practically impossible to get higher numbers (especially if we want to follow the selection principles). All the respondents were attending in a stand of home team supporters. It is understandable that most of the respondents were fans and supporters, as these two groups watch and support players directly from the stand behind the goal. That is where the supporters can be found in most cases. The same applies to hooligans, who usually occupy the first couple of rows behind the goal. In addition to the above-mentioned groups, the stand behind the goal was also visited by 68 sports spectators. We know it is a significantly lower number than for fans or supporters, but we have to note that sports spectators usually do not get tickets for this part of the stadium. These persons like to watch a football match from the central or opposite stand, which offers the best view and where they can enjoy the game. Among the reasons that made sports spectators watch a match from the end is the considerably cheaper tickets than for the main stand, trying out something new (the experience of chanting, singing



Image 3: Supporters (author's archive).



Image 4: Hooligans (author's archive).



chorals, performing card stunts, etc.) and boasting to friends via social networks. Nowadays, when Slavia is playing a lot of appealing football, the end has more “fans of success” who attend the football matches because it is “in” and the club is doing well. In 2010–2015, when Slavia was not playing well, and especially in the 2013/2014 season, playing to merely exist, only devoted fans supported Slavia.

The selection of respondents was based on carefully pre-defined factors; e.g., seats 1, 3, 5, 7 in the first row; seats 2, 4, 6, 8 in the second row, etc., in all the rows. It was a random selection. The respondents were informed about the research and the anonymity of the questionnaire. Once they had answered the questionnaires, each of them received a small Slavia club badge. They also had the opportunity to contact the interviewer via the email stated on the questionnaire and inform themselves about the research results. The respondents were willing to participate in the research and were even entertained by filling out the questionnaires before the match started. The questionnaire consisted of twenty-nine questions; some of them were scalable, where respondents rated on a Likert scale (1-5) individual verbal and other expressions and also their violent behavior speeches. The least serious activity was rated 1; the most significant activity received the highest grade, i.e., 5. This paper uses methods of scientific work; i.e., the analysis method (also Correspondence analysis – CA), a method of generalization, mathematical, and statistical methods. Using the graphic tools of this CA, it is possible to describe an association of nominal or ordinal variables and obtain a graphic representation of a relationship in multidimensional space – for readers it is easier to understand. The analysis provides further evidence that dependencies exist between variables.

CA is a multivariate statistical technique. It is conceptually similar to principal component analysis but applies to categorical rather than continuous data. In a manner similar to principal component analysis, it provides a means of displaying or summarizing a set of data in a two-dimensional graphical form (Zámková & Prokop, 2014). All data should be non-negative and on the same scale for CA to be applicable, and the method treats rows and columns equivalently. It is traditionally applied to contingency tables - CA decomposes the chi-squared statistic associated with this table into orthogonal factors. The distance between single points is defined as the chi-squared distance. The distance between the  $i$ -th and  $i'$ -th row is given by the formula

$$D(i, i') = \sqrt{\sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(r_{ij} - r_{i'j})^2}{c_j}}$$

where  $r_{ij}$  are the elements of row profiles matrix  $R$  and weights  $c_j$  correspond to the elements of column loadings vector  $c^T$ , which is equal to the mean column profile (centroid) of the column profiles in multidimensional space. The distance between columns  $j$  and  $j'$  is defined similarly, weights correspond to the elements of the row loadings vector  $r$  and sum over all rows. In correspondence analysis, we observe the relation between single categories of two categorical variables. The result of this analysis is a correspondence map introducing the axes of the reduced coordinates system, where single categories of both variables are displayed in graphic form. The aim of this analysis is to reduce the multidimensional space of the row and column profiles and to maximally save original data information. Each row and column of the correspondence table can be displayed in  $c$ -dimensional ( $r$ -dimensional respectively) space with coordinates equal to the values of the corresponding profiles. The row and column coordinates on each axis are scaled to have inertias equal to the principal inertia along that axis: these are the principal row and column coordinates (Hebák, 2007).

## RESULTS

In Czechia, football matches are mainly attended by men, but we note that the number of women is gradually increasing – 9.00% were women in the 1990s (Slepička, 1990), 19.00% were women ten years later (Slepička et al., 2010), and 20.00% are women today (Scholz, 2018). The higher representation of women in younger age categories corresponds with their concept of spectatorship as a leisure activity and accompanying their partners to football matches.

The composition of the football audience in the 1990s was mainly made up of young people – 60.00% of respondents were under 30 years of age and the 15-18 years of age category had the most significant representation (20.00%). Twenty years later, the group of visitors under 30 years of age made up 61.00% of visitors. At present, the majority of visitors to football matches are aged  $25.62 \pm 10.20$  years. The age of individual visitors is therefore still decreasing at football matches, especially in the ends. It is undisputed that young visitors are more likely to be emotional, more radical, and more spontaneous in their reactions than older visitors. It concerns a polarization of a group of spectators with possible impacts on their behavior. We note that football is focusing its promotion in addition to youth groups also on families with children.

As far as individual groups of football visitors are concerned, we can say that the age structure was approximately the same, in the group of supporters and hooligans, the average age was three years lower.

spectators	fans	supporters	hooligans
26.41 ± 10.23 y.o.	26.29 ± 10.19 y.o.	23.01 ± 10.11 y.o.	23.06 ± 10.22 y.o.

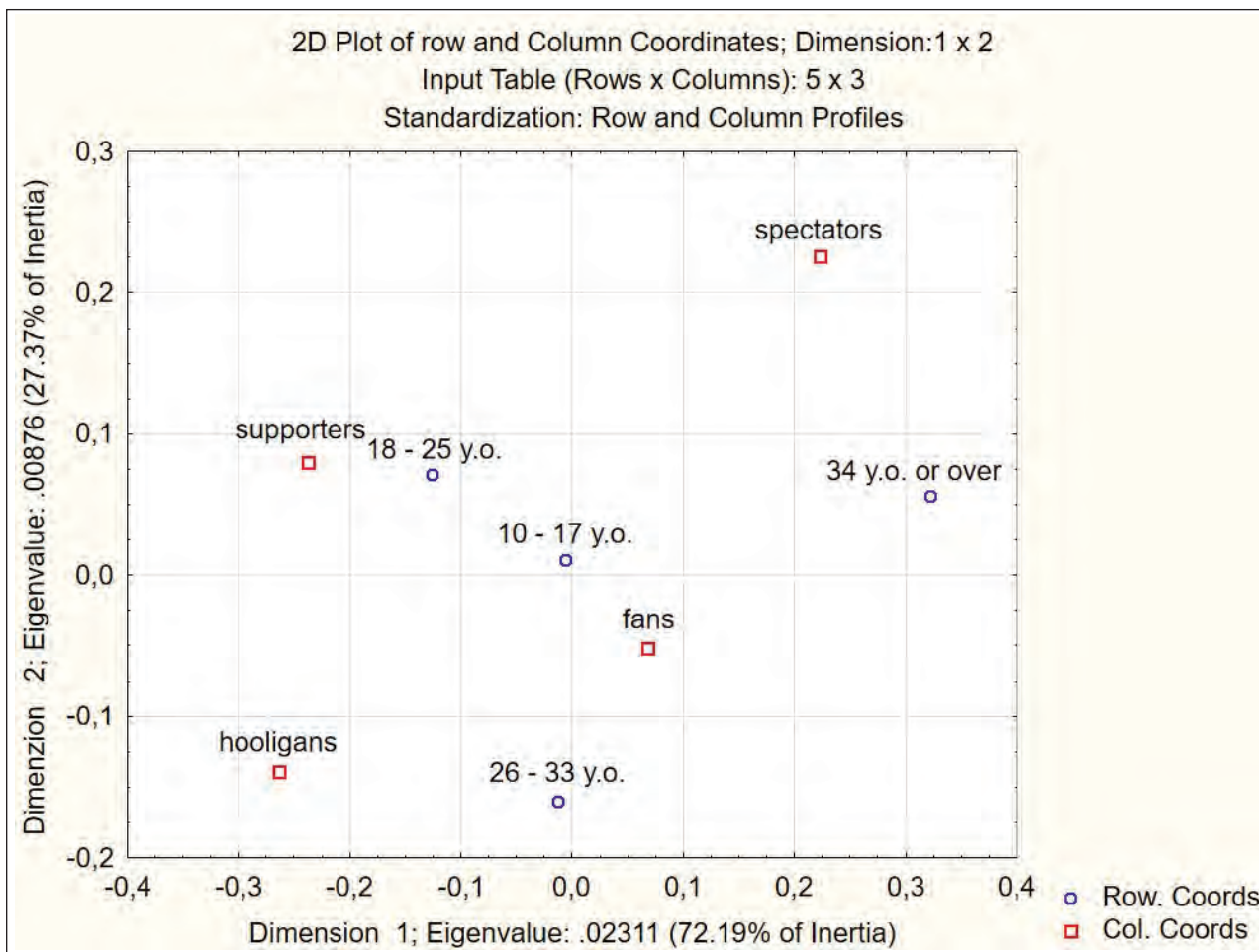


Figure 1: Age composition of visitors.

It is evident from CA that the spectators in the Slavia end were most often aged 34 years or over, the fans were 10-17 years old, supporters were most often 18-25 years old, and the hooligans 26-33 years old (figure 1).

From the visitors' family status point of view, singles are represented the most. In the 1990s they made up 50.00%, in the following twenty years already 62.00%, and now it is 75.00%.

An equally important fact, which is often mentioned in connection with the atmosphere at football stadiums, is the composition of the education attained by the visitors. In the 1990s, 43.40% of visitors had completed primary education and this declined to 26.50% of visitors in the next twenty years, and there was a

decline in the third period (24.84%), too. Compared to the data from Slepíčka (1990), when secondary and tertiary education was not subdivided, there was a significant percentage increase in respondents, especially in the middle education levels, which also corresponds to the general society-wide trend of the average education of the population increasing. Contrariwise, the claimed trend of a significant increase in education in the population did not manifest itself in the group of university-educated visitors (Slepíčka et al., 2010). If we focus on the four selected groups (spectators, fans, supporters and hooligans), we can see more accurate findings. It gives readers a better understanding of the individual groups, not just as total values in the third column (Scholz, 2018). It is desirable to mention that



**Table 1: Time changes in the educational structure of the surveyed respondents (%).**

Completed education	Slepička (1990)	Slepička et al. (2010)	Scholz (2018)	Scholz (2018)			
				Spectators	Fans	Supporters	Hooligans
	All respondents in one group						
Primary school	43.40	26.50	24.84	17.65	16.45	21.52	43.75
Secondary school (general certificate)	36.80	18.20	18.42	11.76	21.65	21.52	18.75
Vocational school (certificate of apprenticeship)		37.10	34.71	50.00	34.63	35.44	18.75
Higher Vocational School	17.20	3.30	0.75	0.00	1.73	1.27	0.00
University		12.70	16.67	20.59	13.42	13.92	18.75
Not specified	2.60	2.20	4.61	0.00	12.12	6.33	0.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

a few answers were not specified. On the other hand, 12.12% of the fans did not wish to give an answer, thus indicating their educational attainment. However, almost all the fans who chose this answer were between 10-14 years old. This means that they had not yet completed primary school. Therefore, these educational characteristics need to be interpreted concerning the fact that at the time of the research, some respondents were students of primary or secondary schools (table 1). In these cases, it was not completed education level (Scholz, 2018).

As regards the assessment of life and socio-economic conditions, among the respondents surveyed life satisfaction was clearly high (57.60% of respondents were satisfied and 35.70% of respondents rather satisfied), even though the groups of rich and poor (according to their assessment) were relatively balanced (rather richer 48.00% and rather poorer 37.60% of respondents). An interesting fact, however, is that even respondents who explicitly said they felt poor were satisfied or rather satisfied in their lives (in total 72.10% of respondents). A comparison with the previous study cannot be made as these data were not monitored (Slepička et al., 2010).

Almost ten years later, Scholz (2018) notes that due totally to the assessment of life, the results were similar, with a decreasing trend in satisfaction among hooligans. Half of the spectators was rather satisfied, and the other were satisfied. Over half of the fans (57.58%) were satisfied with their lives, while more than one-third of fans (35.93%) were rather satisfied. In addition to satisfaction with life, the respondents also subjectively assessed their financial situation. We can conclude that again, we saw approximately the same

results for the investigated groups except for hooligans. Almost two-thirds of spectators (61.76%) were satisfied with their financial situation. Supporters were even satisfied in 70.89% of cases. We must point out that the results are greatly influenced by the fact that more than 1/3rd of all the surveyed respondents lived with their parents. This means they often did not have to be interested in finances because they often received money from their parents. For hooligans, adequate amounts of satisfaction were found (56.25%), but 18.75% of hooligans were not satisfied with their financial situation due to their poorly paid workers' professions or unemployment.

The most common reason for visiting a match was to support the team by cheering. This is an essential motive for sports attendance. It was 18.00% in the 1990s, and 33.00% in the next twenty years. This increase was due to respondents being able to mark up to 3 responses. Currently, 59.16% of visitors attend a football match to support their club by cheering. There was also a strong effort to create an atmosphere in the auditorium. It was only 7.00% in the 1990s, 31.00% in the following twenty years, and currently over one-half of respondents (57.32%).

Based on the observations and questionnaire surveys, it can be stated that in the 1990s and at the beginning of the new millennium, the atmosphere at the beginning of the match between individual visitors was positive and the speech was respectable and non-vulgar. In the case of both ends, there are signs of mutual rivalry, which were still mostly fair and both ends expressed full support for their team by chanting various slogans and shouts. At present, if it is a nerve-

racking match or a match for 1st place, whistling is heard from both ends, other stands also join in, and verbal racist insults can sometimes be heard.

Vulgarisms and the use of pyrotechnics are nowadays common phenomena. In the 1990s, if there was contact between different hooligan groups, some mutual attacks (mainly verbal) happened.

There were only a few incidents involving injuries, damage, or arrests. Currently, hooligan groups do not get in direct contact with each other outside the stadium or nearby thanks to organizational measures and the police. During this time of information-communication technologies (smartphones, social networks ...), it is more difficult (in comparison to 30 years ago) to arrange a fight between different hooligan groups and avoid being tracked by the police. The original hooligan clashes, as known from England (two groups spontaneously meet and fight), are now being replaced by clashes between two groups in meadows, parks, forests, or abandoned railway stations. Contemporary hooligans are well-trained individuals who mostly engage in martial arts, which they then use in their appointed fights. These fights then have predefined, though unwritten, rules. The numbers of fighters on each side, age limits, etc., are determined (Slepička, 1990; Slepička et al., 2010).

In the following lines, you will find out how it looks with negative phenomena in recent years at football stadiums. There is no comparison with previous periods, as individual visitors to football matches were not divided into groups (spectators, fans, supporters and hooligans), and some speeches and attitudes were not examined at all.

*Pitch incursion.* We find that the achieved figures are adequate; spectators showed the lowest experience (5.88%) and hooligans the highest (75.00%).

*Throwing objects onto the pitch.* Hooligans proved to be the most experienced with the issue (62.50%) and spectators the least (2.94%). Most often this happened in the case of misconduct of the referee, or during the opponent players' goal celebrations near the home end. The pitch was often filled with empty or full beer cups, plastic soft drinks bottles, small coins, strobe lights, smoke grenades, and lighters. We can also state that in some cases the referee's performance may have sparked the beginning of violent clashes.

*Bringing objects to the stand with the intention of using them as a weapon.* We have to note that only a minimum of visitors would bring any objects to the stand. Only for hooligans were the figures slightly higher (12.20%). More than 1/3rd of the hooligans (37.50%) sometimes carried an object to the stand that could be used as a weapon. If we focus on objects, those were mainly knuckledusters, pyrotechnics, folding umbrellas, or empty plastic bottles. After filling them with water and closing the lid, they could cause an injury if somebody is hit.

*Pyrotechnics.* Pyrotechnics were mostly used by hooligans (68.75%) and supporters (49.37%). They also said that pyrotechnics belonged to football and made the atmosphere, even though they knew that firing off pyrotechnics was forbidden. The personal checks at the turnstiles before entering the stadium were not so thorough. Many pyrotechnics were smuggled into the stadium by women, or in clothing, through the VIP entrance where checks did not take place. Surprisingly, it was found that fans were less willing to fire the pyrotechnics than spectators.

*Vulgarisms.* Vulgar expressions were especially characteristic for supporters and hooligans, although the most vulgar expressions were chanted by fans (sometimes, 68.40%). These were addressed mainly at the chairman of the Czech Football Association (FAČR) and his deputy chairman, ex-chairmen of the FAČR referees committee, referees, and players of the rival team.

*Stadium damaging.* As expected, we noticed that all surveyed spectators (100%) never participated in the "activity" of damaging a stadium. To a lesser extent, it concerned fans (2.60%) and supporters (15.19%), who occasionally participated in stadium damaging. Nearly half of the hooligans (43.75%) never participated in it, and the rest of the hooligans were more or less directly involved in demolition of seats, lavatories, urinals, etc. Such conduct happened almost exclusively during so-called away days when the property of other clubs would be damaged. According to our respondents such behavior was caused mostly due to the unprofessional work of the organizing service or the police, in fewer cases a serious fault by the referee would give a pretext for destroying property.

*Racist display.* The level of involvement in racism showed the lowest figures among the spectators, and the highest figures among the hooligans. A quarter of the hooligans (25.00%) used racism frequently, including several supporters (10.13%). We state that the situation is definitely better than in the early 1990s, when dark-skinned players began to appear in the top Czech league. In the last few years, however, even at Czech football stadiums, dark-skinned players have become more popular and have become top-level players of "their clubs" as well as fan favorites. For this reason, these racist crises are sporadic.

*Booing the referee.* During a football match, nearly half of the spectators (47.06%) never booed the referees. Other groups recorded insignificant figures. Most boos were made at the referee and then the assistant referees when they mistakenly assessed offsides. The referee heard boos especially when a player was fouled and play was not stopped. These situations often happen when the stadium is sold out, a roaring atmosphere ensues and the referee makes a mistake under the pressure of supporting fans.

*Booing the rival players and club.* Compared to the previous booing, we noted a rapid increase in frequent





*Image 5: Firing off pyrotechnics at the Eden stadium (Tribuna Sever, n. d.).*

boos (supporters 63.29%, hooligans 37.50%, fans 34.63%, and spectators 14.71%). The most common causes included players “diving” and delaying play in standard situations. We can state that almost 1/2 of the spectators (41.18%) did not show their emotions and never booed their opponents.

*Drinking alcohol.* We can state that we saw the expected results for each group. Nearly half of the hooligans (43.75%) did not consume any alcohol before or during the match because of the possibility of a fight and being able to better concentrate on it. Also, some surveyed hooligans did contact sports (boxing 33.33%, MMA 11.11%) and were disciplined as far as diet and alcohol. At present, alcoholic beverages are not sold at stadiums except in exceptional cases. Most supporters consume alcohol before the match, or they smuggle alcohol directly into the stadium. Outside the stadium, they drink more alcohol than they would drink if alcohol was sold inside the stadium. A significant number was also seen among spectators (41.18%) and fans (37.23%) who never consumed alcohol before or during the match. Supporters who drank alcohol before entering the stadium stood near the stadium, where several refreshment stands were available. We can state that in most cases there was agreement on the most serious speech between individual groups of visitors (more detailed information in table 2), but this is a declining trend (spectators – fans – supporters – hooligans).

It needs to be said that in the past there were hardly any measures related to visitor safety at stadiums (Mareš et al., 2004; Slepíčka, 1990; Slepíčka et al., 2010;

Smolík, 2008). At present, also thanks to information and communication technologies, the level of public safety at stadiums is very high.

Upon entry to the stadiums of the first league clubs, visitors undergo a security check aimed primarily at preventing people from smuggling potentially dangerous objects and pyrotechnics inside the stadium. The audience at the stadium is then monitored by a sophisticated surveillance camera system as well as the security personnel (Scholz, 2018). However, the clubs do not have a very good idea about the movement of people banned from football matches. Such a ban can be imposed on a fan by the court or the club itself as a result of the fan breaking the law or the club’s rules. The offenders are watched by the Probation Service as well as the club itself. However, such security measures are very problematic for clubs. The Ministry of the Interior is working on a bill which should make it easier for sports clubs to check if anyone banned from football matches attempts to enter a stadium. This bill includes the use of surveillance cameras and their facial recognition capability. This way, any troublemakers would be identified at the stadium entrance. The bill also proposes creating a register of problematic, rowdy fans (so-called addressed ticketing). Security checks with respect to the entry of persons banned from football matches should be assisted by cameras equipped with facial recognition. The Ministry of the Interior wants to allow clubs to use them, provided stringent conditions are met. These cannot be used for any other purpose except for monitoring any attempts

**Table 2: The participation of individual visitor groups in specific violations (%).**

<b>Pitch incursion</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
yes	5.88	16.45	44.30	75.00
no	94.12	83.55	55.70	25.00
<b>Throwing objects onto the pitch</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
yes	2.94	12.99	36.71	62.50
no	97.06	87.01	63.29	37.50
<b>Bringing objects to the stand with the intention of using them as a weapon</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
always	0.00	0.87	3.80	12.50
sometimes	0.00	6.06	20.25	37.50
never	100.00	93.07	75.95	50.00
<b>Firing off pyrotechnics</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
always	2.94	0.87	1.27	18.75
sometimes	8.82	9.09	49.37	68.75
never	88.24	90.04	49.37	12.50
<b>Vulgar chants in the stand</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
always	8.82	20.35	44.30	43.75
sometimes	47.06	68.40	54.43	50.00
never	44.12	11.26	1.27	6.25
<b>Damaging the stadium</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
often	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.75
sometimes	0.00	2.60	15.19	37.50
never	100.00	97.40	84.81	43.75
<b>Racist display</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
often	0.00	2.60	10.13	25.00
sometimes	5.88	17.32	31.65	31.25
never	94.12	80.09	58.23	43.75
<b>Booing the referee</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
often	14.71	21.65	44.30	37.50
sometimes	38.24	55.41	50.63	56.25
never	47.06	22.94	5.07	6.25
<b>Booing the rival players and club</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
often	14.71	34.63	63.29	37.50
sometimes	44.12	43.72	27.85	37.50
never	41.18	21.65	8.86	25.00
<b>Drinking alcohol</b>	<b>spectators</b>	<b>fans</b>	<b>supporters</b>	<b>hooligans</b>
always	14.71	19.48	32.91	25.00
sometimes	44.12	43.29	40.51	31.25
never	41.18	37.23	26.58	43.75



to access the stadium by people banned from football matches, and with their knowledge. Facial recognition technology has been implemented, for example, at stadiums in Great Britain and Denmark. In Belgium, the data can be accessed only by authorized personnel and the video footage taken at the entrance to the stadium is not stored.

### CONCLUSION

The article brings a unique insight into the issue of sports spectatorship (mainly football) during the last thirty years in Czechoslovakia/Czechia. This article demonstrated the development of football spectatorship since 1989. The comparison was based on a total of three surveys (Slepička, 1990; Slepička et al., 2010; Scholz, 2018) with sufficient numbers of respondents (over 500 people).

The most significant benefit of this article compared to previous research (Slepička, 1990; Slepička et al., 2010) is that visitors were divided into four groups (spectators, fans, supporters, and hooligans). Furthermore, the comparison mentioned surveys bring findings that the composition of the education attained by the visitors and the assessment of life and socio-economic conditions were similar. However, when we looked at the individual categories, there were significant differences between the various groups.

After the Velvet Revolution, finally, individual sectors have been created for home and away fans. Fur-

thermore, the incidents took place mainly directly in the stadiums or their immediate vicinity. Dozens of incidents were reflected in the statistics, and fines were high for sports clubs. Police presence at sporting events, especially football, was widespread. It was a media and politically important ad hoc topic. At present, there are agreed clashes between hooligans, and large-scale riots in stadiums are not very common. These are about 5-6 more severe incidents per year. Clubs are not penalized too often. Police presence at sporting events is minimal. There are several far more essential themes of social discourse compared to football spectatorship.

The article deals with the socio-demographic characteristics of visitors and their motivation to attend football matches, too. It also describes the experiences of individual groups of visitors during matches and their reactions to different selected situations. The article also provides an insight into the views of individual groups of visitors, such as on firing pyrotechnics, throwing objects onto the playing field, manifestations of racism, vulgarism, booing, etc. Getting information and interviews from supporters or hooligans is also exciting, but sometimes dangerous, especially when it comes to away matches. On the other hand, there has been a reduction in negative phenomena (letting off pyrotechnics, damaging the stadium), which has led to a greater sense of security at stadiums, with more families with children and women coming to matches and the overall climate becoming as cultivated as in developed countries.

## RAZVOJ NOGOMETNEGA NAVIJAŠTVA PO LETU 1989: PRIMER ČEŠKE

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## POVZETEK

Članek obravnava razvoj športnega okolja na Češkem v zadnjih treh desetletjih z vidika napredka tega družbenega pojava v njegovem zgodovinskem okviru. Osredotoča se na najbolj kritične procese, ki so športno okolje preoblikovali od začetka devetdesetih let do danes. Na razvoj športnega okolja je močno vplival politični, pa tudi gospodarski in kulturni razvoj celotne družbe. Po letu 1989 so v češki družbi spremembe vplivale na način ukvarjanja z nogometom, na dogajanje okoli nogometa in so s tem pomembno vplivale na odnos in vedenje nogometnih ljubiteljev, navijačev in huliganov. Splošna sprostitvev odnosov v javnosti je pripeljala do degradacije koncepta svobode. Dojemali so ga kot drugačno vedenje, pri katerem ni potrebno spoštovati družbenih standardov iz prejšnjega obdobja. Odnos novoustanovljenih gospodarskih subjektov, ki je temeljil na zlorabi slabo določenih in medsebojno povezanih pravnih norm, do neupoštevanja osnovnih moralnih standardov, je privedel do splošnega občutka, da je dovoljeno skoraj vse. Študija primera kaže, da vse anketirane skupine največjo težavo vidijo v uničevanju imovine na stadionih, po drugi strani pa menijo, da izvižgavanje ni tako resna kršitev. Nogometni klubi in organizatorji na obiskovalce gledajo predvsem kot na ekonomski dejavnik. Kljub temu pa je pomembno poudariti, da so tudi odgovorni za njihovo upravljanje. Poleg tega tudi ugotavljamo, da mediji igrajo zelo pomembno vlogo pri tem, kako javnost gleda na nogometno huliganstvo.

**Ključne besede:** nogometno vedenje, gledalci, žametna revolucija, nasilje, obiskovalci



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