

DESCRIPTION FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

It has been commonly acknowledged that football is 'men's game' because men enjoy their spare time while watching other men competing on the football pitch. There is little doubt that football have been always dominantly populated by male supporters, although in recent years a growing number of women has entered the stands. This trend is observed in different countries, e.g. in English Premier League (UK) which is broadcasted to over 200 countries, female fans could make much as 20% of total attendance. Therefore, one cannot speak about separate individuals that accidentally found themselves on the football stadium, but about a growing social phenomenon that requires systematic empirical approach, analysis and explanatory in-depth studies. A samples of such studies have been already conducted in the UK, Scandinavia and also in Italy (though patchy and in a very small scale). However in Poland the issue of female supporters, their role and impact on the community of fans still calls for a systematic investigation based on empirical study.

The ambition of the research team is to conduct a pioneering project that would address the social phenomenon of the Polish female fans, seeking to identify their motives to entry to such a highly masculine world. This study will outline the female fans seeing it from a wide perspective, paying special attention to how they define themselves through a prism of their fandom. Furthermore, it aims to analyze how male supporters perceive a growing number of female supporters on the stands, what roles female fans are allowed to perform on the stands ? We also want to investigate if male supporters feel that their masculine hegemony traditionally embedded in football fandom has been challenged due to presence of female supporters. Last but not least, we tempt to establish how the presence of women is perceived by football authorities (namely, Ekstraklasa and PZPN).

This systematic and in-depth study of the female supporters can prompt to wider reflections on recent changes in football fandom. In particular, it may identify (external) processes that have been shaping this social phenomenon and also help to foreseen its possible developments in the future.