



FREE

Football Research in
an Enlarged Europe

**Brussels
Committee of
the Regions
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Whose game is it?

**Summary of research findings
on football stakeholders and governance**

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Policy context

Recent policy shift towards involving supporters in football governance

- ③ European Parliament reports
- ③ Commission funding for supporters organisations
- ③ SDE position paper
- ③ DCMS (2011, 2013) recommendations
- ③ UK general election

 **LabourPress**

Visit [Labour.org.uk](http://labour.org.uk)

LABOUR: PUTTING FANS AT THE HEART OF FOOTBALL'S FUTURE

Labour will today (Friday) unveil plans to give football fans a voice in every boardroom and buy a significant slice of the shares when the ownership of their club changes.

Clive Efford MP, Labour's Shadow Sports Minister, will launch the proposals for the biggest legislative shake-up in the governance of English and Welsh football clubs since the advent of the game.

The plan, which has been drawn up in consultation with 95 football supporters' organisations, would require supporters to come together to form a single accredited trust in return for the right to:

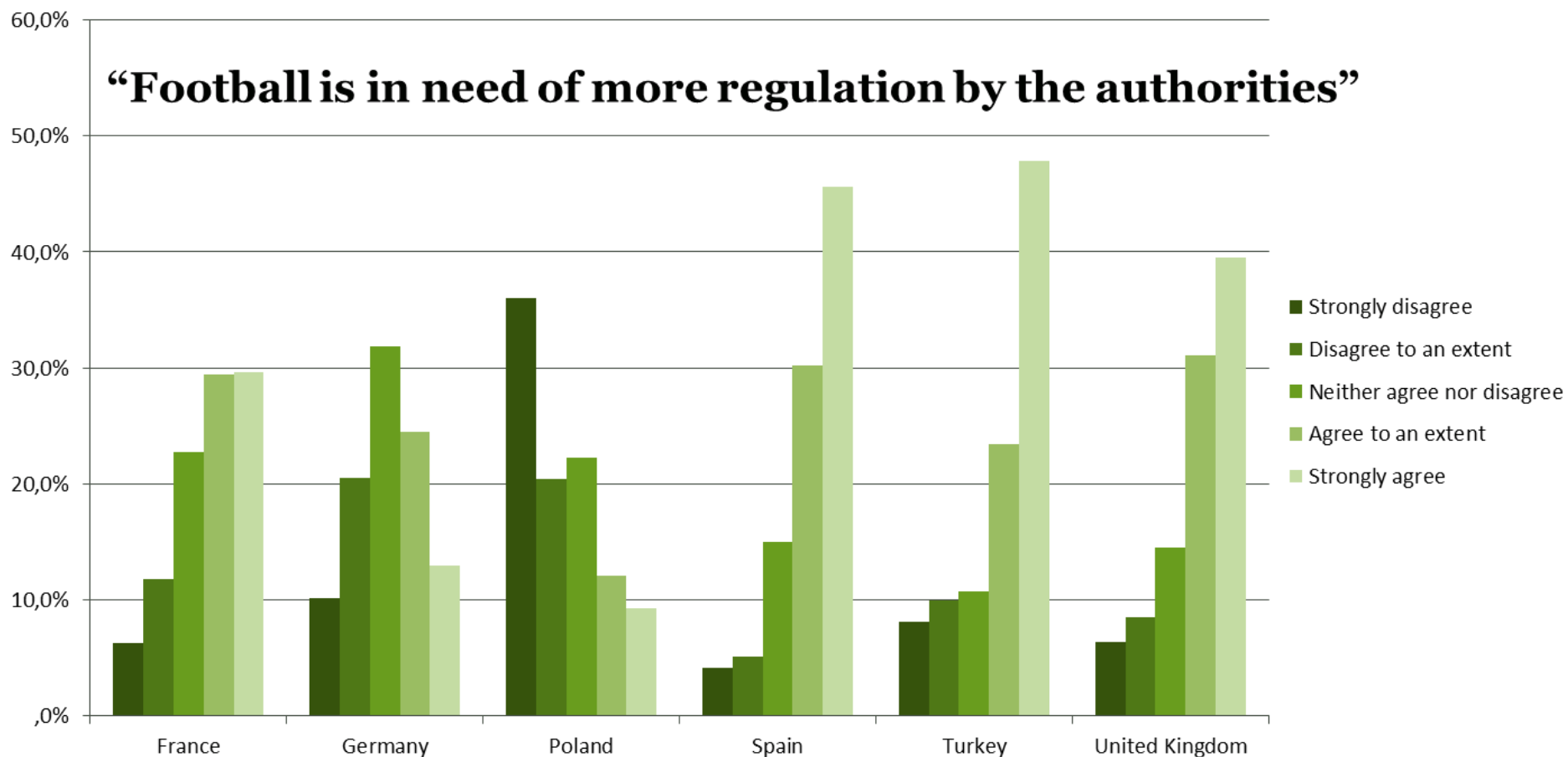
- appoint and remove up to a quarter and not less than two of a football club's board of directors;
- purchase up to 10 per cent of the shares when a club changes ownership, if they so wish.

<http://press.labour.org.uk/post/100193817909/labour-putting-fans-at-the-heart-of-footballs-future>

A combination of research methods:

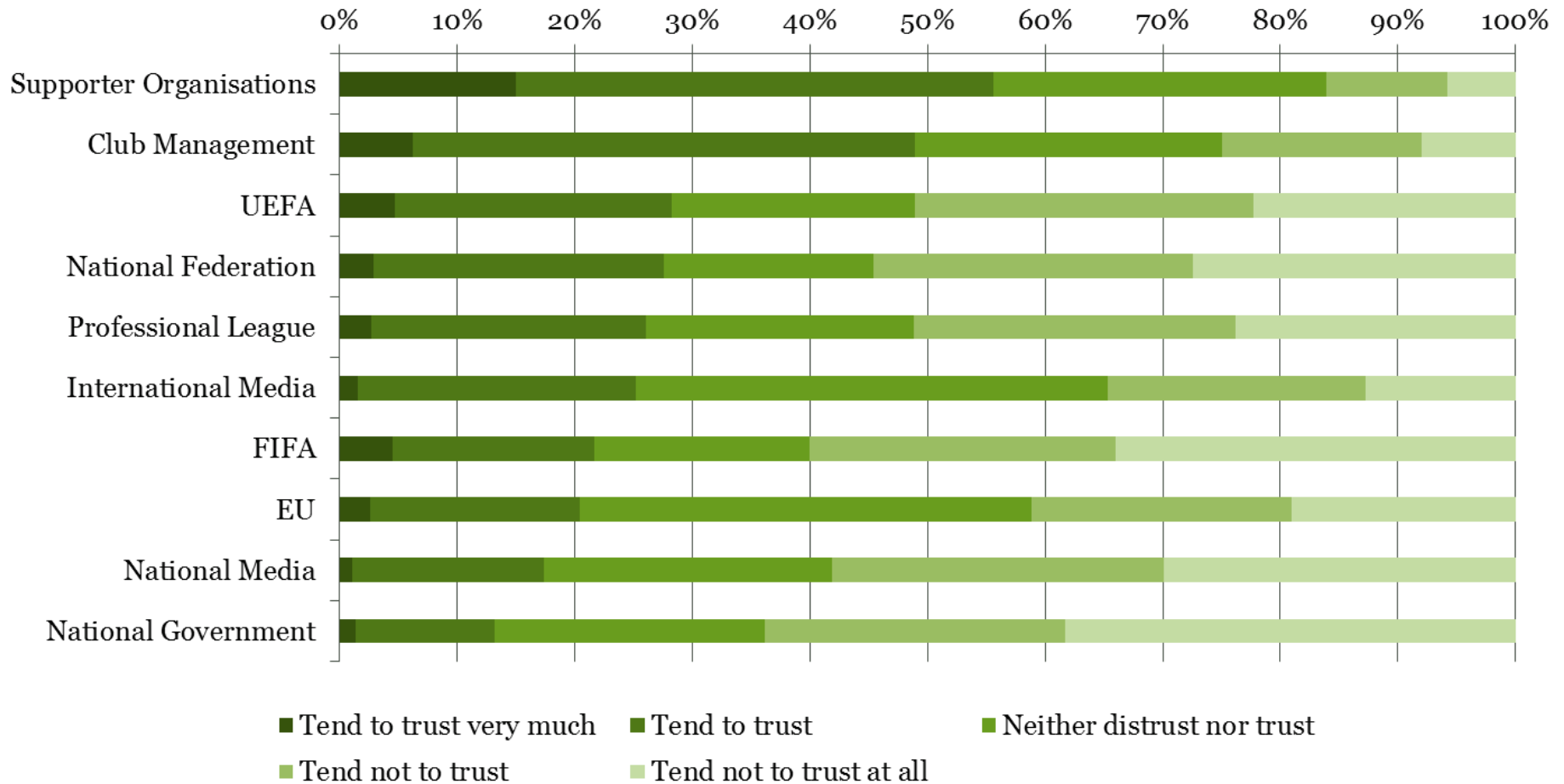
- ① Quantitative CATI (telephone) survey, representative population samples (“general public”) in all 9 target countries (n=7 245)
- ② Quantitative online survey of football fans (“attentive public”) across 6 countries: France, Germany, Poland, Spain, Turkey, UK (n=11 384)
- ③ Qualitative research with ‘engaged’ supporters : Audio-visual auto-ethnography with 65 fans in 5 countries (UK, Poland, Austria, Turkey and Spain).

Demand for regulation



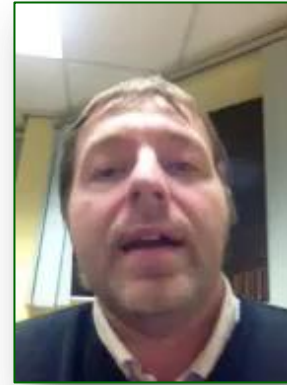
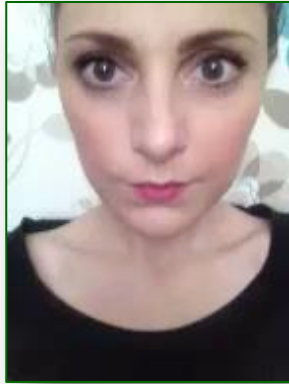
FREE (Football Research in an Enlarged Europe),
European Football Fans Survey (Online), 2014.

Trust and distrust



FREE (Football Research in an Enlarged Europe),
European Football Fans Survey (Online), 2014.

What do fans think about the state of football today?



- 🌀 Fans feel that external stakeholders are gaining in power at the expense of the national FA
- 🌀 Supporters in the stadium do not feel valued and should have a greater involvement
- 🌀 Disabled supporters are particularly dissatisfied with the inequitable experience they receive on match days

Advertisement



The “**Whose Game Is It?**” photo exhibition based on the audio-visual field diaries is now on show at the Berlaymont building (1st floor)!

Policy recommendations (1)

- ④ Further **cost-control mechanisms** should be developed for European football to continue pursuit of sound financial management.
- ④ Widespread cultural change is needed around how clubs understand, relate to and involve their supporters.
- ④ **Formal** supporter engagement and representation should be made a criterion of **good governance** in **club licensing systems and/or national sports acts**.
- ④ EU institutions and UEFA should continue to support **CAFE**, **FARE**, **SDE** and **FSE**, considering how to make best use of the significant work done by these organisations and other democratic supporters groups.

Policy recommendations (2)

- ⦿ Football associations should incorporate democratically **elected representatives of the supporters** in their council, board (independent directors) and/or a fans commission, similar to the IOC's athletes commission.
- ⦿ The EC should fund, through Erasmus+, a **pan-european study** into the different legal forms of club ownership.
- ⦿ The EC, the EP and the Council of the EU should consider spectating (as well as playing) as an avenue for inclusion in and through sport. The upcoming priorities of **Erasmus+ sport** should reflect the importance of spectating and supporter engagement for active citizenship.

Policy recommendations (3)

- ④ Democratic fan organisations should receive **funding** to increase their out-reach activities.
- ④ Governing bodies and UEFA must consider how clubs should be encouraged **to invest in improving their facilities for the disabled football supporter**, and **act** accordingly to enforce this commitment
- ④ Provisions to improve the access and experience of disabled supporters should be **included in national and the UEFA club licensing system.**
- ④ The requirement for **Disability Access Officers** in national and UEFA club licensing systems should be supported and their implementation closely monitored.

Concluding recommendations

- ④ **Football makes many people happy:** It has an invaluable potential to develop social capital and mental well-being.
- ④ **Supporters need and deserve help** to preserve the socio-cultural benefits of this sport.
- ④ **Policy-makers** (in the largest sense) have a responsibility for the future of football.



Whose game is it?

Roundtable

William Gaillard (UEFA)

Borja García (Loughborough University)

Dariusz Łapiński (Polish Football Association)

Zenon Severis (European Commission, Sports Unit)

Heidi Thaler (Koordinationsstelle Fanprojekte)

Jo Welford (Loughborough University)

moderated by

Jürgen Mittag (German Sport University Cologne)