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HOOLIGANISM AT EUROPEAN FOOTBALL STADIUMS AND BRITISH LEGISLATIVE ANSWER

Abstract

This paper deals with problem of hooliganism, which attracts the attention of not only sports public, but also the largest state authorities. Although the first example of misbehavior at football matches dates back to the late XIX century, the problem escalated during the 1980s. This paper explains the origins of hooliganism primarily in Great Britain, but this specific problem is further enriched with the examples from Italy, Poland and Western Balkan countries. England as the cradle of violence at football grounds has achieved remarkable results in this particular area representing a good example to others who follow her leads with greater or lesser success. For this reason, this paper provides insight into the most important documents adopted in United Kingdom in order to eliminate hooligan outbursts from the stadiums, such as Public Order Act, Football Spectators Act, Football Offenses Act and Football Disorder Act. The paper also deals with issue of racism, which is a result of integration of extreme right-wing groups and football fans. One part of the paper is dedicated to the problem of hooliganism in the Republic of Serbia.

Keywords: hooliganism, legislation, United Kingdom, Republic of Serbia, football.

1. Introduction

Sport is most often defined as a free human activity aimed at development of psycho-physical abilities, with an emphasis on improving human health or achieving the necessary mental relaxation. According to a survey conducted by the European Commission (EC) in the territory of the European Union (EU) during 2009, it was found that 40% of citizens were engaged in sports at least once a week, 34% of respondents said they rarely or never got engaged in physical activities, while a particularly interesting fact is that 22% of people over

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the age of seventy were still active in sports. In the mentioned area, the inhabitants of the Nordic countries were positioned in the first place. The Dutch stand side by side with the Swedes, Danes and Finns, while the results of the research showed that the citizens of the Mediterranean Member States of the European Union were the least involved in sports.¹ The main feature of modern sports is certainly competition. If it lost its competitive meaning, the sport would deny its fundamental characteristic. The value of sports competition is measured by the achieved results.² Whether we are talking about top-class or amateur sports, it is indisputable that it plays a very important role in the everyday life of modern man. The most popular sports attract the attention of a large number of visitors and represent *par excellence* events.³

Of course, nowadays there is a strong expressed financial moment reflected in unrealistically high transfers of professional athletes, high sponsorship agreements, as well as enormous sums of money obtained from the sale of television rights to the most popular sports competitions. Having in mind all the circumstances that accompany the modern sport, it can be said with certainty that the latter represents a very profitable industry. Sports events such as the Olympic Games or the World and European Championships attract the attention of tens of millions of people around the world, while many of them want to personally attend such sports holidays in order to experience a real pleasure. Undoubtedly, the football competitions are the most popular in Europe, either at the national or continental level, which supports the fact that football game also gathers the largest number of people. It is an undeniable fact that the vast majority of spectators come to sports events in order to enjoy the charms of the game provided by their sports idols. However, since being available to the masses, sport also represents a great responsibility, because it is well known that in life, and therefore in sport, there are individuals or groups who do not share the same values and do not have the same goals as the majority of the population that behaves according to the legally prescribed frameworks. The causes of destructive behavior at sports events are diverse, and that is why not only legal science, but also sociology, psychology and other scientific disciplines deal with the phenomenon of violence in sports. Hooliganism that takes place in football stadiums is like education, one of the topics for which most people consider themselves to be experts. Everyone knows how the existing problems should be solved, and the only thing that misses is a little attention from the competent

¹ European Commission, Special Eurobarometer, Conducted by TNS Opinion & Social at the request of Directorate General Education and Culture, Survey co-ordinated by Directorate General Communication, TNS Opinion & Social, Brussels, Belgium, October, 2009, 8. https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs_334_en.pdf (23. 03. 2021).

²D. Koković /R. Kuljić, *Društvo i sport*, Old Commerce, Novi Sad, 2009, 28.

³M. Totić, „Pravna podrška razvoju turizma na području Evropske unije (EU)”, *Tematski zbornik*, Kopaonik, Republika Srbija, 2017, 398.

institutions, football authorities, misdemeanor judges and parents.⁴ Certainly, if being observed from the aspect of law, the main goal would be to adopt strict rules that will regulate this area in the most efficient way, which means preventing violent individuals and groups from attending sports events. In that way, serious countries, but also regional and international organizations, create conditions for sport to show its primary role as much as possible, which is reflected in providing entertainment to passionate fans of not only football, but also basketball, handball, volleyball and any other game.

2. Historical review of hooliganism at European stadiums

Violence on sports events is a harmful phenomenon that unfortunately for decades has occupied the attention of not only the people closely associated with sports, but also lawyers, politicians, journalists, sociologists and other experts who view this problem as behavior undertaken by the audience during a sporting event in order to achieve destructive or offensive goal, which may be the product of personal, social, economic or competitive factors.⁵ Therefore, regardless of the scientific discipline, the offered definition contains approximately the same elements and is very easily feasible, which certainly cannot be said for solving the problem of sports violence. From the point of view of legal science, there is no precise definition of football hooliganism. In the absence of a legal definition, the clear demarcation of membership is used to cover the various activities that are more or less related to football.⁶ Nowadays, destructive and violent behavior at sporting events is referred to as hooliganism, while its protagonists are called hooligans. The word hooligan comes from the Hooley's gang and was first used in the early XX century. This gang consisted of young robbers of Irish descent, who operated in the east London. Although the competent institutions of Great Britain have recognized football hooliganism as a serious problem only since the 1960s, violent behavior on football fields has much longer history. Namely, "violence" was registered as the cause of problems at professional level matches by the competent authorities in the last decade of the XIX century,⁷ when violent groups were attacking supporters and players of visiting teams, and even referees, after the games. The stadium became a battlefield for "war games", where one side defended "home territory" from the supporters of the rival club, or tried to

⁴E. Dunning / P. Murphy / J. Williams, *The roots of football hooliganism: An historical and Sociological study*, Routledge library editions, Routledge, 2014, 7.

⁵Y. Simons / J. Taylor, „A psychosocial model of fan violence in sports”, *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, Edizioni Luigi Pozzi Srl, Roma, 1992, 213.

⁶E. Dunning, „Towards a sociological understanding of football hooliganism as a world phenomenon”, *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, Springer, Berlin, 2000, 142.

⁷Football and football hooliganism, Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research, Fact Sheet 1, University of Leicester, 2001, 2.<http://futbol.investigacion.uma.es/descargas/fs1.pdf> (22. 03. 2021).

"conquer" the opponent's territory.⁸ At that time, traveling to other cities to support football clubs was an exception, so conflicts between destructive groups were not possible.

However, hooliganism⁹ as an undesirable phenomenon on football fields gained momentum in the 1980s, when individuals prone to breaking the law have brought language and street manners to stadiums, thus appropriating football that became a working-class sport.¹⁰ The hooligans of that time came up with an ideal way to avoid harassment and arrests by the police, as they started wearing expensive clothes, which consequently led to the creation of a very popular subculture among fans (casual culture). The main goal of wearing expensive clothes was to give an impression that they were those who obey the law and could not be involved in any way in the riots in the football stands. Unpleasant events on the football fields, that took place almost every weekend, have made England the cradle of hooliganism. Although the 1980s are considered to be the time when hooliganism in English stadiums fully escalated, the analyzes have shown that the roots of the problem were in events that took place one decade earlier, when were formed hooligan groups known as the firms. Namely, still in that time most professional English clubs, regardless of the rank of competition, in addition to the fans who supported their club in correct way, unfortunately also got organized groups for whom enjoying the charms of football was not on top of priorities. At the very beginning, these groups gathered up to a hundred hooligans, who expressed their affiliation with the clubs through clashes with organized hooligan groups that supported other teams. The number of members grew over time, so there were cases when some clubs had several different firms, while a large number of them exist even today. At that time, the most famous firms were primarily London groups that supported football clubs West Ham (Inter City Firm), Chelsea (Headhunters), Arsenal (Gooners), Tottenham (Yid Army), Millwall (Bushwackers), but also the then (and now) most successful English clubs Liverpool (Urchins) and Manchester United (Red Army). Fans of English football teams from London, Manchester, Liverpool and other cities used every opportunity for a showdown, not only in England, but also abroad, during away matches, which made the problem even more drastic. Thus, the violence at football matches gained an international character, because hooligans from Italy,

⁸Y. Pallade /C. Villinger / D. Berger, Antisemitism and Racism in European Soccer, *American Jewish Committee (AJC)*, Berlin Office/Ramer Center for German-Jewish Relations, 2007, 3.

⁹ Football hooligans are almost exclusively male. Most are in their 20s and come from working-class backgrounds. According to a sample of more than 500 persons arrested for various football-related "disorders" in the mid-1970s, the average hooligan was 19 years old. More than 80 percent of hooligans were manual laborers or unemployed. (See more: E. Trivizas, „Offences and Offenders in Football Crowd Disorders”, *British Journal of Criminology*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1980, 280).

¹⁰F. Pero, „L’Inghilterra degli anni ’60: tra subculture e delinquenza giovanile”, Facoltà di Scienze dell’Educazione, Università Pontificia Salesiana, Roma, 2013, 9.

Scotland¹¹ and other countries did not want to miss the pleasure of confrontation with, at that time, by far the most notorious "fans".

Especially interesting example is Italy¹², which like England has a rich history of sports violence that is pretty much politically colored, but also caused by division into the rich north and the poor south of the country. The first recorded conflicts on football fields in Italy date back to 1925, while the hooliganism so far has taken more than twenty-five lives in Italian stadiums. The very well-known case is the one of Giuseppe Plaitano, who lost his life in Salerno on April 28, 1963, after being hit by a stray bullet fired by a police officer in charge of maintaining order at the stadium. A police officer fired the bullet in an attempt to prevent the fans from forcibly entering the field. Vincenzo Paparelli also lost his life in the stands. Namely, on October 28, 1979, together with his wife he was at the Olympic Stadium in Rome, at the tribune where the fans of SS Lazio were accommodated. At around 13:30h, a nautical rocket flew from the opposite tribune, about 200 meters away, where were the fans of the AS Roma, and hit the unfortunate man in the left eye. Paparelli, who was a car mechanic, left behind two underage daughters aged fourteen and eight.¹³ Interestingly, hooligans from the two mentioned countries (England and Italy) were responsible

¹¹ Hooliganism in Scotland is mainly associated with two most popular football clubs Celtic and Glasgow Rangers. The situation is pretty much complex because supporting these clubs is conditioned by religious and national affiliation (Celtic is supported by Irish Catholics, while Rangers is supported by Scots, the Protestants), and burdened with political issues (affection or animosity towards the British crown). Bearing in mind that these are the clubs with most trophies in Scotland, and in the same time also city rivals from Glasgow which mutual rivalry dates back to the second half of XIX century, it is not surprising that unpleasant scenes at their matches have a long history. One of the oldest examples dates back in 1909, when six thousand Celtic and Rangers fans, dissatisfied with the draw outcome of the city derby and referee's refusal to extend the game until one of the teams win, started entering in the field. On that occasion, 54 police officers were injured, big material damage was caused at the stadium and complete ambulance service equipment was destroyed. (See more: G. Carnibella *et al.*, *Football violence in Europe, A report to the Amsterdam Group*, Social Issues Research Center (SIRC), 1996, 22).

¹² Although hooligan groups that support Italian football clubs are identical in their destructive behavior with other groups from all around the Europe, their main characteristic is the expression of political views. Such example is most obvious in Rome, where AS Roma fans are traditionally committed to communist ideology, and SS Lazio, whose most loyal supporters openly express pro-fascist views supporting the policies of the Italian Nazi dictator from World War II, Benito Mussolini. Also, one of the specifics of Italy is the great imbalance that exists between the developed north and poor south, which undoubtedly has implications in other spheres of society, where football is not an exemption. Best example are the supporters of football club S.S.C. Napoli from Italian south city Naples, who are well known for their extremely hostile attitudes towards the capital, but also for the clubs situated in the north. Three most famous and most successful Italian clubs are positioned in the north of Italy, the football club Juventus FC from Turin, and Milan's city rivals FC Inter and AC Milan. They also have right-wing individuals among their supporters, but Turin's Druggi that were formed in the late 1980s, stand out as the most violent.

¹³M. Ziosi, „Violenze allo stadio: il caso di Filippo Raciti”, *Rivista di Criminologia, Vittimologia e Sicurezza*, Bologna, 2008, 111.

for the big tragedy that happened at the Brussels football stadium Heysel in 1985. This tragic event took place before the start of the final match of the European Champions Cup between Italian club Juventus and English club Liverpool, and the result of unpleasant scenes was thirty-nine lost lives, six injured fans and fourteen convictions of English hooligans accused for negligent homicides.¹⁴

3. Violence at sports events in XX century

Hooliganism is a negative phenomenon, resulting from the activities of fan groups, which had a great impact on the world, not only on sports, but also on socio-political relations. The development of a country is reflected in the suppression of destructive behavior of hooligans and prevention of consequences which it brings.¹⁵ Hooliganism at football matches in the XX century in various European and non-European countries occasionally creates serious political and public anxiety. Despite the efforts and resources invested in the last few decades, violence on football fields is still perceived by politicians, the media and other relevant factors as a disturbing social problem.¹⁶ Nowadays, a serious and almost unsolvable problem of hooliganism in Europe is faced by countries that have weak institutions and unregulated, corrupt judicial systems. These are mainly the countries that once were based on the foundations of communism, in which there is a high unemployment rate of young people. Therefore, it can be said with certainty that once socialist countries, such as Poland¹⁷, the Russian Federation

¹⁴ Problems were caused when the group of English fans broke down the fence that separated them and Juventus fans. Frightened and in fear for their lives, Italian fans started to flee in the opposite direction, but such enormous number of people could not move quickly in a limited space such as a stadium. The tragedy was inevitable, since the fans literally trampled on each other. In addition to priceless human lives, English football clubs suffered severe consequences, and were expelled from European football competitions for the next five years.

¹⁵M. Nikolić, „Uticaj novih medija na razvoj navijačkih grupa i podsticanje huliganizma", *Fizičko vaspitanje i sport kroz vekove*, Fakultet sporta i fizičkog vaspitanja, Niš, 2016, 60.

¹⁶R. F. J. Spaaij, „Understanding football hooliganism: a comparison of six Western European football clubs'', University of Amsterdam, 2006, 1.

¹⁷ Poland, although being European Union Member State, has been fighting against hooliganism for many years. This country that once belonged to the "Eastern Bloc", has big issues with corruption, while the impact of criminal activities is present in the field of sports. Namely, hooligan groups of almost all well-known football clubs like Cracovia, Lech Poznań, Lechia Gdańsk, Legia Warsaw or Wisła Kraków are very often engaged as security at famous and popular night clubs and restaurants. Such position allows them to distribute drugs in these places, where a large number of people gather. The connection between Polish right-wing groups and hooligans is especially worrying, because in that way stadiums become the recruiting centers for new members. Of course, these right-wings group ideology advocates identical political views as similar groups in other European countries. Interestingly, the events that took place in Poland during the World War II tells us that it should be unthinkable that these groups cultivate pro-fascist and Nazi ideas, since this country in the mentioned period had more than six million victims, among which half were ethnic Poles. During 2008, there was a moral collapse of Polish football caused by match-fixing affair. Only a few clubs from Poland's strongest football league

and the countries of the Western Balkans, led by Republic of Serbia and Croatia, are now connected by another circumstance embodied in hooligan excesses that take place at sporting events. It is a particularly alarming fact that incidents often occur during sports matches, although there are more cases of violent individuals and groups clashing outside the stadium, therefore, before and after the matches. On the other hand, the countries of Western Europe, such as England, Spain and Germany, managed to remove hooligans from the stadium thanks to the legal framework that refers not only to sports, but to the entire social system. However, the fact is that no European country can boast that it has completely solved the problem of hooliganism in sports, but there are certainly positive examples. The achieved results represent a variable category if being observed in a way that they are compared with respect to the country in which specific actions are taken. It should be noted that in countries where enviable results have been achieved in terms of preventing violence at sports events, violent individuals have moved conflicts from sports fields to streets, squares, restaurants and other public places. We cannot neglect the fact that negative social conditions have great and maybe decisive impact on the behavior of young people. Today's most extreme hooligan groups gather mostly immature personalities, dissatisfied and violent individuals who are on the margins of society. Such individuals, through belonging to a certain group, look for a way to express destructive attitudes against those people who think or look differently, which often has a political connotation.

If they act individually, their actions certainly would not have strong impression on people, so by uniting with other who share the same "values", they try to achieve the set goals in an easier way. Nowadays, it is not possible to give a clear profile of a person prone to provoking violence at sporting events. Of course, a large number of researches have been conducted, but it is still impossible to give a unique definition of hooligan in a precise way. Nevertheless, the results of researches show that it is possible to identify the causes that lead young people to socially unacceptable forms of behavior. The reasons for destructive activities that are closely related to sports lie above all, in the natural human need to belonging to someone or something, however, the choice of socialization in this case was not made in the right way. Adverse family circumstances, such as violence, poverty, growing up without one or both parents, can also have a great impact on young people. From a pedagogical point

have not been linked to this corruption scandal. However, hooligan groups in Poland mainly procure narcotics in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, which largely coincides with reports from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBS) stating that 90% of crime related to hooligans has a connection with narcotics. A special problem represents the presence of numerous magazines available on the market that report on conflicts between hooligan groups or their confrontations with the police in an inappropriate manner, since glorifying such actions. (See more: G. Sedia, The Rise of the Polish Hooligan Mafias, *Krakow Post*, 27 February 2015).

of view, the countries have the most important role in such situations through educational institutions, because they must not allow these persons to be on the margins of society. If they feel endangered in some way, or that their rights are not recognized to the extent they deserve, according to their subjective conviction, young people become a vulnerable category ready for making wrong choices. Considering the above mentioned, these are primarily young people of teenage age (adolescents). Researches show that the largest number of hooligans is between the ages of twenty and thirty, although practice shows that even older age is not an obstacle to committing violence at sports events.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to put hooligans as an undesirable category into one frame, because there are big differences in their life activities that are not related to football violence. Namely, in the past it was understood that hooligans were mostly unemployed people, prone to crime, vagrants, fraudsters and people on whom society do not count on seriously. Now the situation is changed to the extent that it is no longer news that among hooligans there are lawyers, bankers, students, members of political organizations, therefore, people who have or will have an important role in creating patterns of society. Certainly, most hooligan groups are still made up of people who are justifiably said to be a social residue, however, their association with people who have some influence in society poses a great danger. This type of problem is faced by the countries of the Western Balkans, as the best example of disastrous combination of politics, crime and sports, which is actually the main cause of destructive and offensive behaviors at sports events. It is a particularly interesting circumstance that among violent groups there is contempt for socially acceptable norms of behavior, while these groups are actually based on well-established rules. Namely, one of the basic principles they are guided by is *fronting up*, which is a hooligan term for starting a conflict. Hooligans are looking for a conflict with others who are prone to violence, not with ordinary football fans or other members of the non-hooligan population, because the conflict with them will be much more certain. In fact, it is the first rule of hooligan law. Members of such groups can start a conflict only with members of a rival group.¹⁸

4. English legislative activity in prevention of hooliganism

In the early 1960s, England wanted to withdraw from European club competitions for fear of foreign fans and players. During the 1980s, it was often emphasized that this country was the best exporter of hooliganism, considering that countries such as the Netherlands, West Germany, Italy, Hungary and France

¹⁸G. Pearson, „The Researcher as Hooligan: Where ‘Participant’ Observation Means Breaking the Law”, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2009, 250.

also had hooligan groups that copied the English model of cheering.¹⁹ The problem of violence on European football fields escalated the most on the territory of the country in which this game originated, but also from which it spread to other countries of the Old Continent. For this reason, the British government has launched an initiative to define behaviors that were not incriminated by national criminal law as illegal. The main goal was to put the ban on people entering the stadium under the influence of alcohol, to prohibit bringing alcoholic beverages on trains or other means of travel to matches, to prevent racist outbursts, as well as the ticket resale. Former British Minister of Sport Colin Moynihan described the problem of hooliganism as "the cancer in a healthy body" during one of his speeches.²⁰ The fact that hooliganism disturbed internal peace and stability and damaged England's reputation at the international level meant that this specific problem had to be solved at the highest state level with the maximum engagement of all available forces. The ban which prevented English football clubs from competing in continental competitions, for the highest state authorities²¹ was a clear message of the seriousness of the problem that required urgent legislative action. English football clubs have become hostages of their own "fans", and the impossibility of competing against the best clubs from other countries has also meant a significant reduction in financial income.

In that situation everyone suffered, at first the true fans of the football game who expressed in the right way the affiliation with their favorite club, then

¹⁹Football and Football Hooliganism, Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research, Fact Sheet 1, University of Leicester, January 2001, [4.http://futbol.investigacion.uma.es/descargas/fs1.pdf](http://futbol.investigacion.uma.es/descargas/fs1.pdf) (22. 03. 2021).

²⁰R. Giulianotti / N. Bonney / M. Hepworth, *Football violence and social identity*, Routledge, London and New York, 1995, 33.

²¹ It is an indisputable fact that the greatest contribution in the fight against violence on football stadiums in England was made by the government of Margaret Thatcher. The former British Prime Minister earned the nickname "Iron Lady" because of the achieved results in the area that has burdened domestic and international public for many years. The decisive event took place in July 1985, at the meeting that Prime Minister held with football officials and police. On that occasion Thatcher stated that she felt personal responsibility for the unpleasant events in English stadiums, and proposed completely new approach to existing problems, which the Government applied in cooperation with police and all football workers. One of the main goals set on the meeting was to restore dignity to British football, which was completely lost after the riots at Heysel Stadium. Margaret Thatcher's government established a 250 000 pounds fund, which served to help the families of the victims. Almost three decades later, the achieved results went beyond all expectations. According to relevant statistics, there was no recorded arrests for hooligan outbursts in more than 70 percent of matches in England and Wales, while half of the matches were played without the presence of the police, whose capacities are used for other purposes. It is estimated that annually more than 60000 fans from England and Wales support their clubs abroad, traveling to matches, while forty games were played, and only fourteen people were arrested. (See more: Thatcher feared transfer fee impact on hooligan efforts, *BBC news*, United Kingdom, 30 December 2014).

the players, to whom playing against the most famous foreign clubs could have brought greater popularity and opportunity for lucrative future engagement, the country, since it had financial losses for not being able to broadcast sporting events abroad, and finally football clubs, whose financial balance was significantly reduced due to the outburst of irresponsible individuals. The adoption of new and stricter laws by which the English model of combating violence on football playgrounds will become recognizable and very often mentioned as a positive example, began in the mid-1980s. Interestingly, the first legislative steps were not the result of riots in England. Namely, the tragic events at the Scottish Ibrox Stadium, during the match between the city rivals Rangers and Celtic in 1971, were the consequence of unsatisfactory stadium capacity. At the same time, it was the biggest disaster on the football fields in Great Britain, during which 66 people lost their lives, while 145 people were injured while trying to leave the stadium. That is why the United Kingdom needed a document that will regulate the issue of safety on sports fields. The Safety of Sports Grounds Act from 1975 provided wide discretionary powers to the State Secretary, who was able to determine at his own will how many spectators could attend a certain sport event. Also, this document introduced the safety certificate for facilities where sports events supposed to be held. Ten years later was adopted the Sporting Events Act, which criminalized the availability of alcoholic beverages to visitors to football events, as well as persons in possession of the objects that might be used as a weapon against other people while watching football matches.

The next document was passed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom in 1986 and was called the Public Order Act. The legislator's main intention was to abolish crimes that had their roots in common law, such as riot, rout or unlawful assembly.²² On the other hand, this document introduced new offenses related to public order, such as the control of processions and gatherings, as well as defining the concept of racial hatred. It consisted of five parts. The first part (New Offenses) introduced the new terms into Criminal Law, such as violent disorder, affray, fear or provocation of violence, and the like. The second part (Processions and Assemblies) provided for the prior registration of public gatherings, prescribing the conditions for their holding, but also their prohibition. The third part referred to the regulation of the term racial hatred by defining closer what behaviors could be subsumed under that term. Most hooligan groups were composed mainly of members of the white race, who expressed open contempt for people of different backgrounds, cultures or religions.²³ Also, the

²²<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/64>. (10. 03. 2021).

²³ Unfortunately, hooliganism is still often accompanied by outbursts of racism and anti-Semitism, which leads to the conclusion that a large part of violent individuals are members of right-wing extremist groups. The link between hooligans and organized right-wing movements exists in most countries and is almost unbreakable. In England, the problem of racism at football matches escalated in the 1970s and 1980s. It is interesting to note that the number of racist

possession and distribution of racially flammable material and use of derogatory terms was incriminated, while this part at the same time prescribed the authorizations of competent authorities regarding search and entry into premises in order to find and seize inappropriate materials. The fourth part (Exclusion Orders) defined the offenses closely related to football, the necessary information, photos, as well as activities related to other sporting events. The last, fifth part (Miscellaneous and General) criminalized the intention to use means that could lead to general danger or public harassment, while the competent authorities were given the power to evacuate violators immediately. One of the most significant innovations introduced by the Public Order Act was certainly the courts authorization to ban the access of fans to the stadiums.

The fourth document that regulated the issue of football violence was adopted in November 1989 and consisted of three parts. It was called the Football Spectators Act. This document regulated the control of the admission of spectators to football matches in the territory of England and Wales through a national membership scheme and an appropriate license. Unfortunately, the idea of national membership scheme, as a kind of database or list of people associated with violence in stadiums, was not implemented in practice. On the other side, it is important to note that this Act regulated the execution of orders restricting the rights of persons convicted of certain crimes in order to prevent violence or cause riots at, or in connection with, certain football matches outside England and Wales.²⁴ The first part (Football matches in England and Wales) defined, among other things, violations of unauthorized attendance at football matches, the Secretary of State's competence to prescribe conditions in relation to the license for stadium seats, introducing the revocation and suspension of spectator licenses, as well as issuing permits regarding safety on football fields. The second part (Football matches outside England and Wales) envisaged the ban on violent individuals approaching the stadium, prescribing the manner of conducting government and local police, exemptions from the obligation to report, but also restrictions on orders arising from offenses outside England and Wales. The third

outbursts was reduced when the stadiums were reconstructed and capacities significantly expanded. Also, ticket prices were increased, which resulted in a reduced number of members of the working class in the stands. On the other hand, it was noticeable that middle class started more to visit football games, while number of racist incidents got reduced. In other European countries, and especially in Italy, Germany and Austria, there are indicators that this specific problem is far more serious. According to research, twenty percent of fans in Germany have sympathy for the neo-Nazi movement. It is certainly a good circumstance that the problem of racism is taken seriously throughout Europe, where a large number of activities have been undertaken to promote tolerance and togetherness, including campaigns such as 'When racism wins, sport loses' in the Netherlands, or "No al Razzismo" in Italy. See more: (G. Carnibella *et al.*, *Football violence in Europe, A report to the Amsterdam Group*, Social Issues Research Center (SIRC), July, 1996, 9).

²⁴<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/37> (10. 03. 2021).

part (General) regulated the issues of appeals, criminal acts of legal entities, as well as financial provisions. Among other things, the Football Spectators Act was important because it had banned domestic hooligans convicted of crimes of causing violence on football fields from attending international matches. Also, it imposed an obligation on persons prone to causing riots at football matches to appear at the police station during the matches of the national team outside England.

Two years later, in June 1991, the Football Offenses Act was adopted. This document, unlike the previous ones, was not divided into parts, but contained only six articles. One of the main set goals was to regulate in more detail certain, inappropriate behaviors of people who attended football matches.²⁵ It defined in detail the concept of a designated football match, prescribed punishable behaviors such as throwing on missiles, indecent or racist chanting or going into the playing area. The next document related to the prevention of hooliganism was passed in July 2000. This was the Football Disorder Act, which provided for the adoption of amendments to previously adopted documents in this area, but also to Criminal Appeal Act of 1968, the Document on Police and Criminal Evidence, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984, the Legal Aid Act of 1988 or the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994. It enabled the prohibitions on violent individuals attending football matches that nowadays are being widely applied (a combination of domestic and international prohibitions), gave to the courts the jurisdiction over imposition of prohibitions in a case where that will prevent violence or misconduct related to football events, as well as the possibility of confiscating passports from persons associated with hooliganism if the matches were played outside the United Kingdom.²⁶ Thus, the distinction between domestic and international bans on attending football matches has been abolished. Also, documents passed in the first decade of the XXI century must not be forgotten:

- 1) Football Spectators (Prescription) Order, which entered into force in October 2004 and extended the provisions of existing acts to lower-level competitions held in the territory of England and Wales,

- 2) Football Spectators (Prescription) (Amendment) Order from 2006, which as one of the most interesting novelties introduced the obligation for a person who is banned from attending football matches in England and Wales due to unauthorized sale, offer or display for sale of tickets in a public place, or in a place accessible to the general public, to report to the competent police institution if requested so, even though the match is played outside the territory of the two mentioned states,

²⁵<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/19>. (11. 03. 2021).

²⁶<https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199900/cmbills/160/00160--a.htm>. (11. 03. 2021).

3) The Football Spectators (Prescription) (Amendment) Order from 2010 which extended the powers to the territory of Scotland,

4) Safety on sport Grounds (Designation) Order from 2014 which defined sports field as a stadium where matches are played under the auspices of the football association, owned by the club that is a member of the latter, but according to the Secretary of State has the capacity to receive more than five thousand spectators,

5) The Football Spectators (2014 World Cup Control Period) (Amendment) Order from 2014 corrected the document issued due to the World Cup in Brazil, since in the original document as the date of its validity was incorrectly marked June 13, as the date of playing the last match of the championship, instead of July 13,

6) The Football Spectators (Seating) Order from 2016, which stipulated that at football matches all visitors must be provided with seated accommodation (chairs), therefore, the standing areas were completely abolished.

These documents indicate that it is possible to eliminate violence from football stadiums if there is a sufficiently strong state apparatus that will implement the adopted laws. The existence of a large number of amendments speaks in favor of the fact that lawmakers adapt legislative norms to modern forms of destructive behavior. The first positive impact of the implemented measures was noticed during the 1998 World Cup held in France. Namely, in that time was conducted an analysis of Scotland fans behavior during their support to national team. The results showed that they had relative absence of collective propensity for violence and dominance of non-violent norms of behavior. In short, in all cities that hosted Scots, people perceived them as tolerant, lenient and often very open to friendly gatherings with other fans, locals and police.²⁷ The introduction of bans on attending football matches is the measure that has contributed mostly that violent individuals are no longer so successful in their destructive intentions. In that way, inappropriate individuals are prevented from attending sports events, but at the same time, these bans act preventively on individuals who maybe wish to follow in their footsteps. Also, we must not omit the fact that Great Britain, as then Member State of the European Union, led the fight against hooliganism by applying the European Arrest Warrant introduced in January 2004.²⁸ The European Arrest Warrant is an instrument in the form of judicial decision on which a certain Member State of the European Union makes

²⁷C. Stott / P. Hutchison / J. Drury, „Hooligans’ abroad? Inter-group dynamics, social identity and participation in collective disorder at the 1998 World Cup Finals’’, *British Journal of Social Psychology*, The British Psychological Society, London, 2001, 375.

²⁸ For example, in 2005 Liverpool magazine *Echo* reported that European Arrest Warrant was executed by Merseyside officers who swooped on a suspected football hooligan from Lithuania. (See more: J. Siddle, Wanted European fugitives face extradition after being arrested on Merseyside, *Echo*, 08 April 2015).

a formal request for the arrest and / or surrender of an arrested or accused person for criminal prosecution or direct execution of sanction against him/her to another Member State. In that way, the procedure of bringing persons accused of committing criminal offenses before a court of another Member State has been significantly simplified and accelerated.²⁹

5. Hooliganism in the Balkans– the case of the Republic of Serbia

Football hooliganism goes beyond national borders and is subject to globalization processes.³⁰ On the other side, the Balkans are still the least developed part of the Old Continent for reasons that can be classified into all possible categories (historical, political, economic or social).³¹ In particular, the problem of hooliganism in the Balkans does not have such a rich history compared to the British one, since it appeared several decades ago. Violence at sporting events in the former Yugoslavia culminated in the 1980s, but contributed greatly to the unfortunate events that happened one decade later. Many people claim that the stadiums served as a kind of recruitment centers for young people who will replace the clashes in the stands in the coming years with active participation in the armed conflict. The very nature of Balkan hooliganism differs significantly from English or Italian hooliganism, because violent individuals are extremely nationally and religiously passionate, while hooligans from other countries are organized in accordance with club affiliations. Thus, the violence at the sports events in the former Yugoslavia meant not only physical conflict, but also generated a strong national charge, which negative consequences are still present. The greatest tragedy is certainly the disintegration of the country, given the sudden impoverishment of the newly formed states and the loss of basic social values. Even now, after three decades, we cannot say that many things have changed in the Balkans when it comes to the consciousness of young people who simply do not understand the purpose of sports events. Regardless of national affiliation or club characteristics, these are mostly individuals for whom the stadium serves as a place where they can find people who inherit retrograde and destructive attitudes. The most prominent among them are mostly people with criminal records and a rich history of hooligan excesses, which is actually the most important reference because it enables rapid progress in the structure of the group. Of course, the question is why the countries do not react, but only show

²⁹A. Ivanović / M. Totić, „Evropski nalog za hapšenje kao instrument borbe protiv organizovanog kriminala na teritoriji Evropske Unije”, *Strani pravni život*, Institut za uporedno pravo, Beograd, 2017, 133.

³⁰R. Spaaij, „Football Hooliganism as a Transnational Phenomenon: Past and Present Analysis: A Critique – More Specificity and Less Generality”, *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2007, 420.

³¹M. Totić, „Naponi država Zapadnog Balkana na putu ka članstvu u Evropskoj Uniji”, *Pravne teme*, Univerzitet u Novom Pazaru, Novi Pazar, 2016, 35.

the impotence of public institutions and lack of timely social reaction. That is why many people have the impression that hooliganism is deeply rooted and that countries created on the territory of former Yugoslavia have no capacity to deal with these specific problems.

This issue is especially expressed in the Republic of Serbia³² where, particularly in the last decade, many young men who were related to hooligan groups have been murdered. For example, in 1999 during the football derby between Partizan and Crvena Zvezda (Red Star) a signal rocket flew from the south side of the stadium and hit seventeen years old Aleksandar Radović in the neck, who died soon after.³³ Hooligans are also active internationally. In 2010, the football game between Italy and Serbia in Genoa was called off after only seven minutes of play. It was the right thing to do since the visiting fans threw flares on to the pitch and into the home supporter's section.³⁴ According to relevant research, violence on sports fields with fatal outcome is twice as expressed in national championship matches, which is quite logical, because within each country, domestic clubs play much more matches than national teams.³⁵ However, the main problem in the Republic of Serbia is that the murders of football hooligans are also connected to illegal activities (mostly drug trafficking), which clearly indicates close relations with criminals. Additional concern represents the increased recruitment of minors into hooligan groups. Life in a group begins to have a decisive influence on the formation of minor's personality, to determine his deviant behavior, to form wrong attitudes, reacts unusually and accepts unfounded values and ideals. By belonging to a certain group, young delinquents completely submit themselves to the standards of the latter.³⁶

³² On September 17, 2009, a few hours before the football match between French Toulouse and Belgrade's Partizan, a group of young men physically attacked a group of French team fans on Obilicev Venac in downtown Belgrade, including Brice Taton. The attack resulted in the death of twenty-eight-year-old Brice, who was deliberately thrown after the beating from a staircase about four meters high into the space between the staircase and the public garage. The hooligans beat him with their hands, legs, sticks, torches and other hard objects. They surrounded him and tried to light his face with a torch, and when he turned around, they set his hair on fire. They pressed him against the metal fence on Obilicev venac and then two or three hooligans threw him off the steps. (See more: <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/taton-puzigac-presuda/30058308.html>. (18. 01. 2022).

³³ <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/srbija-50219511> (17. 01. 2022).

³⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/football/2010/oct/12/italy-serbia-called-off-crowd-trouble> (18. 01. 2022).

³⁵ M. Alsiö. „The Hooligans' Death List, A global search for accountability between accidents and intentions'', Published on the Internet, (ISSN 1652-7224), 2013, 5. <https://idrottsforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/alsio130118.pdf> (24. 03. 2021).

³⁶ M. Totić, „Maloletnička delikvencija u Evropi – pravni i socijalni problem'', *Socijalna misao*, Beograd, 2016, 82.

Bearing in mind that Serbian hooligans are a popular instrument of politics, which means that they are politically usable, we can talk about the so-called politicization of hooliganism, which to a large extent complicates the institutional fight against this type of social violence.³⁷ Observed from the Republic of Serbia perspective, violence at sports events can be largely (if not completely) neutralized, but the solution lies in a general social consensus that cannot be reached. The main reason for such situation is the complete absence of civic awareness of what the country really represents, for what the latter serves and how it must be built. In Republic of Serbia, there are numerous factors that influence the problem of violence at sports events not to be solved for decades. These problems long time ago went beyond the state framework, given that clubs and national team participate in international competitions. This certainly further complicates the current situation, considering the conflicts in matches abroad, for which no one usually takes responsibility, or simply blames the others. Usually it happens that sports clubs must pay large sums of money because of their violent supporter's actions. However, the situation gets even worse since domestic clubs mainly represent state properties, which means that citizens are those who ultimately pay all the damage. Numerous economists, lawyers, sports workers and even politicians who claim that the problem of hooliganism will be most effectively solved by privatizing clubs seem to be right. Until the ownership over sports associations is not determined and until they do not become private property, the current situation will not change significantly. The country's impotence was the main reason why the unbreakable link between politics, criminals and sports clubs ever happened, which is best illustrated in the controversial transfers of young players, match-fixing or taking leading club positions by people with criminal records. In serious and well-organized countries, it is inconceivable that people with criminal history have significant roles in sports clubs. Such individuals have been the most prominent participants in hooligan conflicts in the past, which is exactly what qualified them to achieve high positions in disorganized Republic of Serbia society.

True sports fans are actually the biggest losers, because they no longer attend sports events. It is tragic that even the most interesting football match in the country, the one between Belgrade rivals Partizan and Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), at the same time represents the greatest security risk. Given the expressed poor quality of domestic football competitions, the wide selection of interesting sports events simply does not exist. People in Republic of Serbia know very well that there is no place for violence on football stadiums, and it is justified to expect that state officials, fans, police, political authorities and journalists would finally start perceiving and defining violence as an abnormal phenomenon, an

³⁷M. Đorić, „Povezanost između kockanja i huliganizma: slučaj Srbije“, *Politička revija*, Institut za političke studije, Beograd, 2017, 40.

interruption or unexpected result of a game of dramatic content and that will conclude that regardless of the importance of victories or defeats the violence cannot be tolerated.³⁸ Also, the state must invest more in equipping the stadiums with modern means. Stadium security mechanisms including metal detectors, facial recognition live scans, cameras and physical security will likely dissuade some spectators from entering into sport stadiums with weapons. Likewise, these measures should better fortify these events against potential unlawful actors since perpetrators of criminal and violent acts will quickly be identified, apprehended and brought to justice.³⁹

6. Conclusion

If we observe hooligan excesses as an independent phenomenon, it is clear that they send a very dangerous message. It tells us that these retrograde individuals and people who support them will bring only difficult times and inevitable backwardness to the developed world. Responsibility must become everyone's duty, starting with the highest state level, the competent judicial authorities, educational institutions and sports clubs, as the main factors that can ensure the efficient organization of sports events through coordinated activities. England and other Western European countries are the real examples that clear, decisive and persistent policy in this specific area can have a very effective result. The only correct and logical solution is to follow the positive examples of countries that have effectively eliminated the problem of hooliganism. For this reason, the example of England and its legislation measures was analyzed, since this country had big problems with suppressing hooliganism in stadiums for a long time. Nowadays, Poland stands out as Member State of the European Union as a country in which violence at football matches has been very common for more than a decade. There should be no illusions that violence in stadiums can be completely eradicated, but practical examples from developed European countries clearly indicate that hooliganism can be kept to a minimum.

Unfortunately, Western Balkans countries, and primarily the Republic of Serbia, have serious problems with hooliganism in stadiums for decades. Hooligan outbursts occur not only in domestic competitions, but also on international scale, regardless of whether we are talking about matches of domestic clubs or national teams. It is quite certain that the root of the problem is primarily of a social nature and is a consequence of the degradation of the basic moral values on which a serious society should be based. Therefore, it is illusory

³⁸ R. Giulianotti / N. Bonney / M. Hepworth, *Football, Violence and Social Identity*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, 37.

³⁹ B. Harte / R. Romano, „Violent Spectators: Enhanced Security as a Deterrent Against Extreme Stadium Violence”, *International Journal of Safety and Security in Tourism/Hospitality*, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas, Buenos Aires, 2021, 20.

to expect that the Republic of Serbia and other countries of the Western Balkans will soon become members of the European Union with such unsettled internal relations. Violence on sports fields is just one form of expressing people's dissatisfaction with the current state of society, which is in a decades-long crisis in the Balkan countries. The problem is even bigger if we consider the fact that the competent state authorities, which must deal and have all the authority to deal with the problem of hooliganism, persistently refuse to do that, and constantly use hooligan groups for their own political purposes. Sport must be seen as a form of entertainment and sporting events must be organized in such a way as to allow spectators to enjoy the charms of the game. For this very reason, violent individuals must be strictly prohibited from accessing sports events, which will result in the return of true sports people to Balkan stadiums. Of course, the financial possibilities of the Western Balkans countries should not be forgotten. They certainly cannot be compared to the developed countries of Western Europe in terms of investing in security systems at stadiums. However, what can be done is more effective law criminalization of violence at sporting events, which implies the independence of the judiciary and the police in exercising their entrusted powers, as well as their protection from undesirable influences from higher state instances.

Huliganizam na evropskim fudbalskim stadionima i britanski zakonodavni odgovor

Sažetak

Rad se bavi problemom huliganizma koji zaokuplja pažnju ne samo sportske javnosti, već i najvećih državnih autoriteta. Iako prvi primeri nedoličnog ponašanja na fudbalskim mečevima datiraju još sa kraja XIX veka, problem doživljava kulminaciju tokom osamdesetih godina prošlog veka. U radu su objašnjeni začeci huliganizma prvenstveno na prostoru Velike Britanije, ali se konkretan problem dodatno razrađuje na primerima Italije, Poljske i država Zapadnog Balkana. Engleska, kao kolevka nasilja na fudbalskim terenima, je na konkretnom području postigla zavidne rezultate i predstavlja dobar primer koji drugi sa većim ili manjim uspehom slede. Upravo iz tog razloga rad pruža uvid u najznačajnije dokumente koji su doneti na prostoru Velike Britanije u cilju uklanjanja huliganskih ispada sa stadiona, kao što su Public Order Act, Football Spectators Act, Football Offences Act i Football Disorder Act. Takođe, rad se bavi problemom rasizma, koji je rezultat povezanosti ekstremnih desničarskih grupa i navijačkih pokreta. Jedan deo rada je posvećen problemu huliganizma u Republici Srbiji.

Ključne reči: huliganizam, zakonodavstvo, Ujedinjeno Kraljevstvo, Republika Srbija, fudbal.