

## **Soccer, Stadiums and Violence**

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### ABSTRACT / RESUMEN

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In more than a century of soccer history, violent conflicts among spectators, fans and hooligans have consistently influenced the sports public perception. Research on this phenomenon has shown that it is of a complex sociological nature and is caused by an abundance of factors.

However, such violent interactions are especially induced by both the intrinsic structure of stadiums, and the general management of a stadium's capacity to accommodate spectators. Some outstanding events reflect the implications of these factors, such as the tragedies that occurred in England (Hillsborough Stadium, Sheffield, 1989) and Scotland (Ibrox Stadium, Glasgow 1971), as well as in the Heysel Stadium in Brussels 1985. Obsolete stadiums and the neglect of urban infrastructure, resulting in a "crowd management" that is strongly influenced by a "law and order" policy, exemplify the above observation.

The connection between the structure of sports complexes and recurring outbreaks of violence among spectators and fans will be historically examined in a comparative approach, focusing on examples from the European soccer sport (United Kingdom, Germany, France and the Netherlands).