



GLOBALISING WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

Europe, Migration and Professionalization

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Introduction: Europe, Patterns of Migration and the Professionalization of Women's Football

How should a history of Europe be configured? This should not be a simple collection of individual national stories. This is not the only, or perhaps even the best way, to attempt to trace a process of European historical development...In the context of sport, Lanfranchi and Taylor's study of the patterns of professional footballer migration serves as a guide on how to break away from a national fixation...What is Europe? How is it represented to us? To what extent do we feel European? Our notion of «Europe» must be seen in terms of these various issues, and not as territory constructed with western-Eurocentric vision (Hill 2010: 1).

1. Post-war Europe and the rise of women's football

When, in 1951, six European states formed the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), via the Treaty of Paris, economic integration on the continent accelerated. The ensuing Treaty of Rome, signed in 1957 by Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, began to merge some areas of fiscal policy. More than fifty years later, over thirty states have become involved in a complex arrangement of political, social and cultural ties in the European Union (EU). However, there have been significant exceptions. Cold War politics particularly affected central and eastern regions (Edelman 1993: 5-10). While federalists before the war described a possible union including the USSR, communist government in the countries of central and eastern Europe saw a Soviet «sphere of influence» become, in Churchill's words, an «iron curtain» by March 1946 (Kowalski and Porter 1997: 100-21). The subsequent recommencement of the civil war in Greece, territorial demands on Turkey and claims on Persia then combined with the exit of the Soviet representative from the Four-Power Council of Foreign Ministers in 1947. From this point on, the division of Germany into a Federal Republic (West Germany) and the Democratic Republic (East Germany) determined different notions of

European-identity until the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of the country in October 1990. Across Europe, diplomacy and policy «faced» East or West, although, as a recent exhibition at the V&A Museum in London indicated, social, political, economic and cultural influences crossed physical and ideological divides (V&A 2009). Since 1990 a number of new European states have become independent; marking a growth in the size and intricacy of migration across the region as a whole.

While sport, identity and representation are therefore central to this study, a detailed assessment of changing political systems in Europe since 1945 is beyond its scope¹. One academic approach to the subject of the EU has tended to emphasize the role of political parties in power at a given time (inter-governmentalism). However, from its antecedents before the Second World War, the EU was conceptualised as having a much wider and more powerful role (supranationalism). From this scholarly perspective, the union, its institutions and activities are treated as a progressively autonomous body. The first expansion of what was the European Community (EC) in 1973, with the accession of Denmark, Britain and Ireland, was part of a growth about which many people remain ambivalent. Britain's previous application to join had been vetoed by French President de Gaulle in 1963; Norway had applied to join the EC in June 1970 but voters rejected the idea in a referendum held in 1972 and both countries remain, by and large, Euro-sceptic. Extending the EC to Greece, Portugal and Spain involved protracted negotiations. The Mediterranean enlargements were eventually agreed in 1979 in the case of Greece, and 1985 for Portugal and Spain (coming into force in 1981 and 1986 respectively).

Subsequent regional conflicts and economic difficulty have made further augmentation of the EU's role a relatively slow and precarious affair. Nevertheless, in this increasing sense of Europeanization, the four most significant aspects debated in the public domain have been federalism, a widening and deepening of the union and a degree of flexible integration. These are worth outlining briefly because the same processes can be said to be, more or less, present in the changing Europeanisation of football over the same period. Federalism involved nation-states entering various forms of partnership involving supranational organization. Widening the EU has also been contentious. The current membership of twenty-seven states has been scheduled to expand further still, in spite of acute economic circum-

1 Appendix 1 summarizes the necessary context of the expansion of the European Union since the ECSC agreement to the present (European Commission 2010).