

**Abstract.** The purpose of this descriptive research is to present what kind of corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities English football clubs are implementing. The paper was designed by approaching the examples of the twenty clubs playing in the 2010-2011 season of the Premier League. A key finding is that football clubs are not only interested in the sporting outcome on the field, but they are also aware of their social status. An implication of this research would be to encourage academics to research more upon the use of CSR in professional sports, as there is a lack of literature regarding this topic. Diminishing the lack was the reason why sport has been chosen as an example, while the reason for selecting English clubs as case studies is backed up by the fact that these organizations have some of the most developed CSR programs in European sport. Limitations of the paper are that it does not offer financial implications of running CSR programs, nor does it trace very deep the implications of the programs on individuals. The originality of the research is provided by the combination between CSR and football, resulting in a topic that few academics have been concerned with researching.

**Keywords:** community, English football, Football CSR, football management, Premier League, sport business.

## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN ENGLISH FOOTBALL: HISTORY AND PRESENT

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## **1. Introduction**

Football clubs (FCs) aren't only interested in how to win matches at all cost, but, as Nick Hornby writes, they also owe a sense of decency to their fans (Arsenal Community Review, p. 3). Football clubs have a privileged position (PP) in the community, being institutions that can very good and easy represent the community to which they belong. A football club is an ambassador of its community, representing it through the results on the pitch and the activities outside the playing field, and, more important, it is an identification vehicle for the citizens. Alexander Colin Wynn (2007, p. 4) writes the following about football: "Clubs from towns, cities or regions command the hearts and minds of their fans. Each club, so its followers believe, embodies the local character, traditions and spirit that define the community. [...] Football teams can be fashioned to reflect local and national ideologies, characteristics, spirits, beliefs, practices, and symbols that constitute cultures". Whatever its sporting results, a football club cannot remain uninfluenced by the society, by the local community. In its activity, the club takes over values of the community of which it is a member and reproduces them onto the football pitch or in each other activities it runs.

If the football club is involved in the community/civil society otherwise than just simply producing football matches for the fans to watch, then the privileged position offers a one of a kind power to engage people. Due to the PP a strong link between the FC and its community is created. Because fans show their support for the club, the club chooses to pay them back with something more than the game of football. The club offers to help the community through various educational, health or social inclusion programs, as well as through charity. When the club does so, citizens are thankful, and due to the strong bound between the two parties, the latter ones even show their support to the cause. Because, as well as the citizens, the football club is a member and a driving force of the community. Being part of a knowledge-based society (Brătianu & Orzea, 2010) football clubs have to develop expertise not just on the playing field, but also through external activities, such as CSR.

## **2. Literature and Methodology**

The first step of this descriptive research consisted in reading and analyzing literature concerning corporate social responsibility, in order to identify patterns of action. Some of the latest articles on various topics (Bibu et al., 2010; Mitra & Borza, 2010; Olaru et al., 2011; Sova et al., 2011; Smeureanu et al., 2011; Ţerban & Kaufmann, 2011) provided valuable information for starting to create a model suitable for researching the social implications of football clubs. In recent years, CSR has attracted the attention of many researchers, but the topics were focused on business sectors such as constructions, manufacturing, metallurgical industry (Ciora & Anica-Popa, 2011), banking (Dumitru et al., 2011), accounting (Albu et al., 2011), education (Deaconu et al., 2011; Radu et al. 2011), environment (Grădinaru

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& Ignat, 2008), chemical industry (Todd, 2009) or telecommunications (Gogoneață, 2011), rather than on sports. Therefore, the originality of the article is given by the combination of CSR and football. Although sport is a business upon which intense scientific research has been done, there is a lack in what concerns the literature about the corporate social responsibility of the sporting organizations. Just few authors have researched about the community implications of sport clubs (Misener & Mason, 2009; Heere & James, 2007; Siegfried & Zimbalist, 2000; Noll & Zimbalist, 1997; Fløysand & Jakobsen, 2007; Sparvero & Chalip, 2007) and even fewer about their social responsibilities (Godfrey, 2009; Babiak & Wolfe, 2006; Briebarth & Harris, 2008; Genzale, 2006; Smith & Westerbeek, 2007). According to Walker & Parent (2010, p. 199), a cause for the lack of research about corporate social responsibility in sport is that the broader management literature has not tried to develop social involvement models for a particular industry, such as sport. The literature offers a high quality theory of the CSR, but just at a general level, applicable to different industries. However, set in practice, a CSR program may differ from one industry to another. As part this research specialization, the aforementioned works on CSR in sport were analyzed. The gathered knowledge was useful in designing the seven programs model used for this study.

After studying the academic literature, a further step was to gather information about the CSR programs of Premier League clubs. Thus, the focus was set on the particular case study that was chosen, trying to identify specific patterns of CSR in English football. As large interest media – such as local, national, or, even international newspapers or televisions – did not offer too much and detailed information about the CSR activities of the football clubs, the best informational support to collect the necessary insider data proved to be official websites of the clubs, which largely communicated the community dedication of the clubs (Briebarth & Harris, 2008). Even though the structure of the sites and the quantity and quality of the pieces of information offered varied from a club to another (Walker & Parent, 2010), the Internet webpage communication channels were chosen because they offered official, unaltered, information. Next to CSR news, the websites of the clubs offer active community information (Esrock & Leichty, 1998) for the visitors who really want to find out what initiatives the FCs have. Thus, the research was performed with information accumulated from secondary sources, which have been found on the Internet. Then, the contents of CSR activities in the football clubs were compared, which led to making a decision regarding which pieces information are useful to analyze (Krippendorff, 1980), bearing in mind the purpose of this paper. After the comparison, a synthesis was made. This was the ignition for the presentation of the cases.

The research was limited at the twenty clubs of the 2010-2011 Premier League season, having the objective to give an insight of the CSR involvement of the English FCs, as the practices are similar at other league clubs too, just that the degree of involvement is different from club to club, depending on the financial and material power of the FC and its representativeness in the community, but also by the

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dimensions and the characteristics of the community. Another purpose of the article would be to represent a starting point for further academic research regarding CSR in sport.

The social implication of sports clubs was classified by Walker & Parent (2010, p. 203) in different types of programs. The classification was helpful in creating the seven program types which are going to be used in this research, in order to categorize the CSR activities of the analyzed football clubs: 1) Educational Programs (EP), 2) Sport Programs (SP - Advance Amateur Football and Amateur Sport Programs), 3) Social Inclusion Programs (SIP), 4) Cultural Integration Programs (CIP), 5) Family Programs (FP), 6) Health Programs (HP), 7) Charity Programs (CP).

Although some of the community activities of the clubs could have been classified into other program types as well, like for example Gender Equality Programs or Poverty Reduction Programs, a concentration upon the seven mentioned programs offered a better insight and a better understanding of how FCs are socially responsible. That is why, for example, the programs for people with special needs or the international community programs were analyzed as part of the Social Inclusion Programs.

### **3. The football club and its community**

CSR principles insist upon the reality that businesses – hence, football clubs also – must realize that they have an impact on society and they must be responsible for it (Walker & Parent, 2010; Mohr, Webb & Harris, 2001; Quazi, 2003). Waddock (2004) thinks that CSR describes an organization's relationship with the people in the society and with the community stakeholders. Other authors march upon the same idea, presenting CSR as an activity or a set of activities of an organization with respect to its community stakeholders' obligations (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001).

By practicing CSR activities, a football club strengthens its bound with the citizens with whom it forms a community (Windsor, 2001; Wood & Logsdon, 2001), therefore the devotion of the fans for the football club increases. The increased devotion is one of the most important returns on CSR investment for the club. Over the long run, the club can capitalize upon the devotion and sell more and better to the fans, thus raising its incomes.

Through CSR, football clubs target to achieve the sustainable development of their community. The development may occur in three sectors: economy, environment and society. This research will concentrate more on the social improvements the CSR activities of English FC's bring.

The fans of a FC come, mainly, from the community in which the club is active (Roșca, 2010) - that may be a district, a city, a region, but also a country or even a larger international territory. In general, the most supportive communities are formed around districts or cities. The FC tries to win the support of the fans by showing them that the club cares about them. One of the tools of doing it is through social involvement.

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Because the article insists on the link between the FC and its community, let us give just an example in order to understand what exactly a community means for a FC. Let us consider the Arsenal Football Club of London. Established in 1886 in south-east London, Arsenal moved to the north of the town in 1913, once with the construction of a new stadium, situated in the Highbury borough. The citizens of the northern part of London, excepting the Tottenham Hotspur fans, immediately adopted the club and made it one of “theirs”. Soon, many of the inhabitants of the northern boroughs of London became Arsenal fans, being proud to have a team which to represent their part of the town. The strong link between the citizens from northern London and Arsenal still exists. Due to the geographical proximity, a big part of today’s Arsenal fans is coming from up north. The club is aware of its importance for the population of that part of the town, so it runs various CSR programs in the surrounding boroughs of Hackney, Highbury or Islington, trying to use its power in order to offer something that can make citizens feel better.

The corporate social responsibility is part of the business ethic of a football club. Many authors link the mission of an organization with ethics (Tanău & Bock, 2010, p. 49), putting the organization in relationship with the three factors mentioned earlier (economy, environment and society). It must be stated that, in football, the main goal of a club is to increase its welfare, through sporting success on the field and through business success outside of it. It wouldn’t be bad to bear in mind that the welfare of a club doesn’t consist just of the team’s record, but also of its financial, technical or commercial stability. Being too absorbed by the quest to achieve the desired sporting and business performances, many clubs don’t show much interest for ethics. Many clubs are interested in winning trophies, money and fans, but do not realize that these goals can be achieved through a socially responsible orientation of the club’s activity. Doing good business and increasing the number of fans are important, but a FC which aims to be socially responsible must not consider only the sporting and economic standards, but also the ethical, social and moral ones (Walker & Parent, 2010; David et al., 2005).

### **4. The early days of CSR in football**

It is interesting to know that CSR can be traced back in the history of football from the early days of the organized game, that is, the 19th century. More than one hundred and fifty years ago, people made ethic decisions, but without thinking of CSR, simply because the notion of CSR didn’t exist back then. The first to have written about CSR was Andrew Carnegie in 1899. But, at the time Carnegie published “The Gospel of Wealth”, football clubs already existed, and many of them were socially involved.

The first football clubs in the English society, and then in Europe, were established by churches, corporations, pubs or public schools (Mason, 1980):

- For the churches, football was an excellent way to help the homeless youngsters. Children and teenagers were taken from the streets and brought next to the

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church. Football clubs established by churches, such as Everton, Aston Villa, Fulham or Southampton, „recruited” their players from the homeless youngsters (Bausenwein, 2006, p. 269). By coming to play for the church’s club, the youngsters were given food and the possibilities to have a socially active life by playing football with other youngsters, to integrate themselves in a group of people, but also to learn how to write and read, which wouldn’t have happened if they would have stayed on the streets.

- Beginning with 1877, corporations established their own football teams in order to entertain their workers (Schulze-Marmeling, 2000, p. 40). In the era of the British Industrial Revolution, the working men had a tough life, with almost no free time for themselves. Work was hard and one of the few possibilities of the employees in the industrial sector to have some fun was booze in the pubs (White, 2009, p. 18). Enterprises realized the danger of an alcoholic community of employees and began brainstorming for solutions which to help workers stay away from drinking and feel good in their free time. Soon, the enterprises established football clubs, where their workers could play the game and make a better use of their free time. Football also relaxed its players after a week of hard work, and this was an advantage for the employers, because it gave power to their employees, which came with a better working capacity for the next days. If the directors of the guns manufacturer “Woolwich” and of the “Newton Heath Lancashire and York Railway Company” wouldn’t have been socially responsible enough, there probably wouldn’t have been any of Arsenal Football Club and Manchester United Football Club today. A particular example is the one of West Ham United, a football club established in 1895 by the Thames Ironworks in London in order to improve the cold relations between the workers who went on strike and the management (Schulze-Marmeling, 2000, p. 41; Bausenwein, 2006, p. 270).

- Many football clubs emerged from pubs, the latter ones being important “institutions” of the mid-nineteenth century working society. Some pub owners organized football matches in order to please the clients and to make them come back and buy drinks, but other ones realized that they had costumers who spent too much time in the pub, and who should do something better with their lives. In both cases, the football club helped building a tight community between the members of the society. Well-known clubs which were established in pubs are Manchester City, Blackburn Rovers or Nottingham Forrest.

- The public schools were the first place where organized football was played. Although skeptical at the beginning, professors soon realized the power of football to keep the pupils away from dangerous addictions, such as drinking or smoking, by training them the capacity to reflect upon themselves and the surrounding world, giving them a better perception of the society and improving their self-esteem. Thus, football was accepted as a game to be practiced at the physical education classes in schools.

The mentioned examples show just how socially responsible priests, corporation managers, pub owners and school professors were more than one hundred years ago, even before Carnegie published his work on CSR. They used their power

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and football in order to create better living and working conditions for the poor, for the employees or for the scholars.

What was left after them are some well known football clubs that try to follow the examples of their founders and give something back to the society.

### **5. The Present: The CSR Programs of the 2010-2011 Premier League Clubs**

In England, football clubs became even more aware about their role in the society at the beginning of the 1980's. In the summer of 1981, racial tensions led to serious riots in London, Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool. The riots were caused by poor racial communities, where people could barely find something to work and to eat. The British Government reacted through launching various social inclusion programs. One of them, called "Action Sport", had the goal to improve the living conditions in the poor neighborhoods by encouraging participation in sports. It was found out that sports facilities in the inner city areas were not being used at a reasonable capacity. The Government called for the help of the football clubs, as these were among the organizations with the strongest connections to the citizens in the local communities. Thanks to the high degree of affiliation between FCs and locals, clubs could easily motivate fans and encourage them to take part in sporting activities.

Nowadays, English FCs approach social implication issues offering support (Walker & Kent, 2009) through volunteerism or philanthropy (Walker & Parent, 2010). For financing the CSR programs, the clubs use their increased financial power and the knowledge and links accumulated and established over many years.

In the following lines, the article will present the types and the number of CSR programs run by the Premier League (the top flight football league in England, lining twenty teams at the start each season) clubs at the start of the 2010-2011 season.

Many of the CSR programs run by the Premier League football clubs are, as Ackerman (1973) describes them, anticipatory and preventive, often targeting youngsters and their future. Many clubs cooperate with local schools, offering educational programs for shaping the next generation. The proactive movement of the clubs can be explained through the fact that a better skilled and educated society may bring up football fans of a higher value, or even future footballers, for the club. The possible fans and players will have a better understanding of the world, thus also of the game of football, and their fidelity for the colors of the club that socially helped them will be high. Devoted fans and players offer moral aid to the club. Over the long run, investing in the society means investing in the club.

The quantity and the quality of the CSR activities may depend on the wealth of the FC or on the role the club plays in its community. Two of the wealthiest English clubs, Chelsea and Arsenal, run the most CSR initiatives in the Premier League: 44, respectively 34. But, it must be mentioned that a program may include more initiatives or schemes under the same roof, like for example at Liverpool. Although it is the most successful club in England and it has a large fan-base, Liverpool runs just 9 programs,

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but each of them reunites other sub-programs, which make the club be one of the most community-active in the country. At the other end of the standing which can be seen in Figure 1, we can find less sporting successful and less economically powerful clubs like Wigan or Stoke City, which do not present on their website more than 5, respectively 3 CSR programs. Each of the seven types of programs will be described in the following lines. It is interesting to observe that out of the top five clubs according to the number of social schemes run, four teams come from London: Chelsea, Arsenal, Tottenham and Fulham. The size of the city and its many neighborhoods may be an explanation for the reason why its football clubs are so involved in the community. What the Figure also shows is that the Manchester clubs, United and City, run almost the same number of schemes: nineteen and eighteen.

*Table 1*  
**Number of CSR programs each FC in the 2010-2011 Premier League runs**

Pos.	Club	No. of programs
1	Chelsea	44
2	Arsenal	34
3	West Bromwich Albion	34
4	Tottenham	31
5	Fulham	24
6	Sunderland	21
7	Blackburn Rovers	20
8	Manchester United	19
9	Manchester City	18
10	Wolverhampton	18
11	Everton	16
12	Newcastle United	15
13	Aston Villa	13
14	Bolton Wanderers	11
15	Blackpool	9
16	Liverpool*	9
17	West Ham United*	7
18	Wigan Athletic	5
19	Birmingham City	4
20	Stoke City	3

**Source:** Own representation. Information collected from the official websites of the Premier League clubs.

**Legend:** \* Clubs which do not present all the sub-programs.

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**Educational Programs (EP):** If it were to make a comparison, the social involvement of today's FCs would most resemble the social responsibility characterizing the clubs established by churches. As the churches did more than one hundred years ago, today's Premier League clubs are highly involved in educating youngsters, no less than 112 Educational Programs (EP) being run at the beginning of the 2010-2011 season. FCs realized their potential to enhance youngsters through football and to help and encourage them to learn and develop their skills. Most of the English FCs educational programs are targeted for Primary and Secondary Schools, such initiatives taking place as well in the classroom, as outside of it, sometimes even in the FC's venues. Next, there are education programs dedicated to teenagers and adults, aimed at encouraging lifelong learning or at preparing for employment. West Bromwich Albion is one of the most active clubs in educating youngsters, with 25 EP, followed by three London clubs: Tottenham with 12 EP, Chelsea with 11 EP and Arsenal with 9 EP. One of Arsenal's most successful social programs is the „Double Club”, an after-school club created for pupils in primary and secondary schools.

Double Club offers education through football and through the knowledge accumulated by the Arsenal Football Club. As a result, the pupils learn foreign languages from the foreign players of Arsenal, informatics with the help of Arsenal's IT partners, British history by starting from Arsenal's role in the British society during the years, Art&Design by visiting the Emirates Stadium and The Arsenal Museum, and also learning about the legendary Highbury Stadium. Business lessons are also taught, by using the practical example of Arsenal. Children learn from the very core of the club, studying how business is done at Arsenal.

**Sport Programs (SP):** In what concerns the number of CSR activities at the level of the whole Premier League, the EP are followed by Sport Programs (SP), which are run by the FCs not only because they are in the clubs' field of activity, but also because of the many benefits brought by physical education. For a FC, offering a sports program for the local community tends to be easier than implementing other kinds of programs, because the club already holds the necessary resources and knowledge for supporting a program with its own forces, particularly when it comes to football schemes, so it isn't any wonder that each club in the Premier League offers at least one SP based on football. The community use of the club's facilities and resources is one of the easiest ways to describe sports programs: FCs offer their facilities for the people in the community to use them. But, there are also more complex sport programs, which serve to achieve the goals of other programs too, like for example promoting a better social integration and cultural diversity (due to the fact that people meet on the field and communicate, indifferent of their background) or encouraging a healthier life through practicing sport. An example comes from Manchester United, which, through its Foundation, runs the „Football in the Community” scheme since 1992. Each Saturday, Coaching Clubs are organized for children aged 6 to 14 years. A coaching session with a youth coach from Manchester United spreads over two hours, the individual cost of participation being of four pounds per session. The Coaching Club gives parents the possibility to head their

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children towards practicing physical exercise and meeting other children. Next to exercising for a healthier body, children may also make new friends and develop their social skills. Considering that the training sessions are conducted by qualified coaches, Manchester United also has the possibility to recruit young players for the club's Academy, where they are going to enter a professional training program, which can lead them to becoming professional footballers.

**Social Inclusion Programs (SIP):** As already mentioned, sport programs may help achieving not only physical benefits, but also social ones. FCs do not rely only on sport programs to improve the social relationships in the community, but also offer special Social Inclusion Programs (SIP). Ever since the nineteenth century, but more intense after the 1981 riots, English FCs used to address social issues faced by the community, trying to give solutions to the complex problems citizens met. Through Social Inclusion Schemes, FCs give positive examples which to show vulnerable citizens, like addicts or criminals, that there is also a brighter part of life. In this context, the footballers of the club play a vital role, as they serve as role models for the negatively influenced people. Some of the schemes are based on football and sports, offering the vulnerable citizens the possibility to be physically active, and targeting to distract the thoughts of the individual from negativism by making him think at the game he plays. Other programs, however, are more complex, based on the knowledge of experts, such as professors or doctors, and their conciliation.

In the whole Premier League, 69 SIP are set in the service of the citizens, with Chelsea having 14 and Tottenham 11. During the past thirty years, Chelsea has shown a great support for youngsters and vulnerable individuals, such as drug addicts, gun carriers or unemployed. The club has built strong connections to disengaged individuals from the boroughs of London, offering help for reintegrating these people into the society. Alongside with the "Street League", Chelsea provides weekly training sessions and educational courses which help the participants get back to school or find a job. The "Youth Club Program" offers weekly training sessions for the youngsters aged 12 to 16 years with the goal to engage them in a positive way, while the club also cooperates with "Princes Trust", England's leading youth charity, in order to help young people make a better use of their lives.

The Tottenham Hotspur Foundation, at its way, is working with specialized partners aiming to help disabled people, people with learning difficulties or people which suffer of mental health. Among the most successful SIP offered by Tottenham are:

- Epping Forest Inclusive Sports (EFIS): Together with EFIS, Tottenham provides sport sessions for disabled people in the Epping Forest District and it supports schools who need help to develop their physical education programs;
- Haringey Disability Sports Unlimited (HDSU): Together with HDSU, Tottenham supports disability sports in the Borough of Haringey, providing ten-week blocks of training for people with disabilities and trying to better integrate the latter ones into the society;

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- HOPE: HOPE is a project launched by Tottenham encouraging people aged over 60 years to come together and to take part in social and physical activities, such as ballroom dances or nature walks.

The SIP programs offered by the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation are opened to individuals indifferent of their race or nationality. As we will further see, some football clubs offer also extra Cultural Integration Programs (CIP).

**Cultural Integration Programs (CIP):** The CIP have the same main goal with the SIP, to integrate citizens into the society, just that the CIP are exclusively addressed to people of foreign nationality living in England. There is no secret any more that people live in a global world, and that football is one of the drivers of globalization. For example, players coming from no less than 90 different states of the world have played in the English Premier League between 1992 and 2010. Still, racism remains one of the major problems met in football and it tends to become more aggressive as the cultural diversity enlarges. Clubs are aware of the problem and contribute to eradicating racism from football, but also from the general society. Cultural Integration Programs target goodwill, diversity and equality in the community, indifferent of gender or race.

As part of the club's cultural diversity policy, Arsenal London offers religious exchange programs which help children of different faiths come together and socialize. In partnership with the Maimonides Foundation, Arsenal organizes football matches for youngsters of Jewish and Muslim origins in order to improve the interfaith relations between them. Next to that, Arsenal manages the Galilee United Program in northern Israel, which brings Jewish and Arab youngsters to play next to each other in the same football teams (Arsenal Community Review, p. 28), aiming to diminish the effects of the negative relationships between the two cultures. "World on our Doorstep" is another Arsenal project, which yearly counsels more than 1000 scholars, helping them to build better relationships with their colleagues of different nationalities.

**Family Programs (FP):** Just as they encourage goodwill and a together living in harmony for people of different races and nationalities, the English football clubs do the same for families. FCs have realized the importance of the family and have set in practice initiatives which target to support positive family relationships. The stronger the bound in a family, the better it is for the community – which will deal with positive thinking people, due to the good atmosphere back in the families - and thus for the FC (the FC that the individual supports – because the FC is part of the community and is influenced by the citizens living in it, through the way they support the club and think about it. A better family relationship leads to a more mature citizen, who will also more maturely support his favorite FC).

Liverpool is one of the English clubs with the strongest implications in family life, using the power of football "to encourage positive family relationships" (cit: [www.liverpoolfc.tv](http://www.liverpoolfc.tv): "Dads and lads"). Two of the most successful schemes offered by the club are "Dads & Lads" and "Reading for Families". The former one invites dads and their boys to come together and to build football teams which to play against each

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other at Anfield Road, the stadium of the club. The latter one is a reading program managed in partnership with the city's libraries. Families build teams and compete in various social games, such as quizzes, scrabble or other word games. When their schedule is flexible, Liverpool's football players join the teams. At the end of a game session, each team has the right to pick up books from the library which the members of the family have to read before the next meeting.

**Health Programs (HP):** Another type of CSR program launched by FCs is aimed at protecting and improving human health. The clubs offer support for reducing the risk of disease and for promoting a healthier lifestyle, through tackling health determinants. Some of the health programs (HP) are linked with other community programs of the FC, like for example with educational ones, where children are thought and given information about how to live a healthier life, by having a proper nutrition. Or, other programs encourage a healthier lifestyle through practicing sports, so such programs are also linked with sporting ones. 26 health programs are to be found in the Premier League, Blackburn Rovers and Manchester City offering four each. Manchester City has even hired a health trainer which to help people in the community become healthier through more physical activity. The local rivals, Manchester United have implemented a similar service through the "Manchester Community Health Trainers" Scheme. The Health Trainer of the Manchester United Foundation manages a team of twenty trainers around the city of Manchester. The trainers were instructed how to help citizens eat healthier, become physically active or quit addictions. Any citizen of Manchester who needs help has the possibility to call the Foundation and talk his problem with the main Health Trainer, and the latter one will send one of the twenty people he is working with to help the respective person.

**Charity Programs (CP):** Last but not least, English football clubs are proud fundraisers for charity, eager to assist whatever other good causes than the ones already presented in the article. FCs offer their financial and material support, using their reputation for raising funds which are further donated to schools, hospitals or other institutions in need of them. Many of the clubs have even created own Charity Trusts, while footballers play an important role in fundraising, as often they are the ones at the core of the activities, by taking part in different events, such as charitable football matches, by encouraging people to contribute or by donating parts of their wages. Although not all the Premier League clubs have publicly presented their charity activities, it is probably that most of the FCs are involved in charity, as it is one of the simplest ways to return help to the community.

As we could read in the previous lines, the English football clubs are deeply rooted in the community life, responding to the needs of the society with a multitude of Corporate Responsibility Programs, which can be classified into seven types. The research focused more on analyzing the general situation met in the Premier League, wanting to show some CSR principles met at every football club in England. For a deeper inside look at the CSR activities, Table 2 lists some of the programs run by clubs that weren't mentioned in the research.

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*Table 2*

**List of CSR Programs implemented by the Premier League football Clubs  
in the 2010/2011 Season**

Football Club	CSR Program
ASTON VILLA	Acorns (care for life-limited children, HP); Villa Vitality (children learn about healthy nutrition, EP); KICKZ (reduce anti-social behavior among 13-18 year olds in surrounding hoods, SIP); Armed Forces („Tickets for Troops“ initiative offers discounted price tickets for army troops. Also, The Army, The Royal Navy and The Royal Air Force are financially helped by Villa, C); Villa in Harmony (encourages race equality and diversity in the community, CIP)
BIRMINGHAM CITY	Smokefree United (virtual club for smoking quitters, HP), Summer Football Camps (football training units offered during the summer in partnership with local schools, S)
BLACKBURN ROVERS	Part of the Crowd (support for disabled fans, SIP); Not Under Our Roof (Combat racial behaviour, CIP); Religious Education Day (one day visit to a local place of worship so that the children learn the respective religious belief and practices, EP)
BLACKPOOL	Soccer Skills Clinics (units aimed at developing the football skills of the children, SP); Soccer Schools (football training sessions, SP)
BOLTON WANDERERS	Unity in Diversity (CIP); Student Information (the club offers free information to students who work on research projects, EP); School of Football (local partnerships in the borough of Bolton to help improve grassroots football, SP)
EVERTON	Everton Disability Program (one of world's largest disability football programs, with more than 10,000 football opportunities for disabled persons yearly. Includes four schemes, SIP); Goodison Experience (one-day soccer school at Goodison Park – Everton's Stadium – for children aged 5-14, for 50 pounds per session, SP)
FULHAM	Aspired2Move (project aimed at socially engaging girls between 14 and 25 years old, SI); Different Cultures - Same Game (anti-racist program, CIP); Active Autism (Program run each Saturday morning in order to improve the health, concentration and self-esteem of autistic children, HP); Fulham Deaf FC (largest deaf football club in England, SIP)
WEST HAM UNITED	Asians in Football (project aiming to better integrate Asian people into the British society, CIP)
WIGAN	Football Sessions (grassroots football sessions for children in Wigan and the surrounding areas, SP); Never Watch Alone Initiative (the initiative enables supporters with disabilities to attend matches next to another fan of Wigan, SIP); Lactics Literacy (program targeting to improve children's interest in reading by using football as a driver, EP)
WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS	Summer Soccer Schools (grassroots football sessions for children, SP); Tackle Diabetes (£ 500, 000 program for people with diabetes living in Wolverhampton, HP); "Dusk/Twilight/Midnight League" (social inclusion scheme that tackles the problems of crime and social exclusion in and around Wolverhampton through football related activities, SIP); Players Go Back To School (foreign footballers of Wolverhampton join foreign pupils at

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Football Club	CSR Program
	the Woden Primary School and learn English alongside them, EP); Wolves Aid (charity for persons and organizations in Wolverhampton, C)
MANCHESTER CITY	Enterprise City (Manchester City gives young people an insight into how a professional football club is run, helping them better understand the business of football, EP); Getting Manchester Moving (Program aiming at making physical movement an everyday activity for the people in Manchester, HP)
NEWCASTLE UNITED	Goalkeeping Center (goalkeeping coaching center for children aged 7 to 14 years, SP); Match Fit (project promoting healthy eating among children, HP); Enterprise Academy (program giving children the possibility to improve their business skills whilst mixing their love for football, EP)
STOKE CITY	Stoke City has a general community program that offers grassroots sports coaching sessions, including football, rugby, cricket or athletics, and educational programs in 350 schools in the surrounding boroughs.
SUNDERLAND	Learning Through Football (scholars visit the Stadium of Light with their teachers and undertake practical learning, EP); Total Football (teaches course participants the morals, ethics and values of football, improving their understanding of the game, EP)

**Abbreviations:** EP: Educational Programs; SP: Sport Programs; SIP: Social Inclusion Programs; CIP: Cultural Integration Programs; HP: Health Programs; CP: Charity Programs.

**Observation:** Information was gathered from the clubs' official websites and analyzed by the author.

A lack of this paper is that, during the research, no report which to synthesize the contributions of all the programs could be found. Computing all the benefits into a general result was also impossible, as there was not enough, nor complete data. Even though, each particular program has implications for the community. Some pieces of information are publicly provided by football clubs, but no macroeconomic statistics on the implications of CSR activities of English football clubs were to be found. The official websites of the analyzed football clubs provided interesting information about the results of the programs. The Reading Stars scheme, conducted with more than one hundred Premier League football players, helps about 16,000 persons annually to improve their reading skills, while Aston Villa helps about 9400 children improve their learning skills, during the same period. Arsenal London provides some of the most facts: yearly, over 1,000 children participate in a program that makes them more aware of multiculturality, while on each match day, the club creates workplaces, by employing 700 stewards which to monitor the behavior of supporters. Arsenal is supported in its CSR schemes by its state-of-the-art Emirates Stadium, whose construction created 2,600 new jobs. Furthermore, Arsenal Football Club invested 60 million £ (British Pounds) in a Waste Recycling Center, which monthly recycles 10 tones of cardboard and plastic, and 1.5 tons of glass, all of them being left by fans after the football matches the team plays in London.

## **6. Conclusions and further research**

A football club's work in the community doesn't resume to sport. The passion for football is used as an anchor to attract and motivate people to participate in various activities. Given the symbolic role it plays in its community, the football club responds to the support of the fans and of the authorities through Corporate Social Responsibility programs.

In England, football clubs are at the heart of the community. Due to the fact that cities/towns are divided into boroughs, football clubs often do not represent the entire city/town, but just the borough it comes from and some of the surrounding boroughs. Arsenal FC stands for the people in Islington, Tottenham for the ones in Haringy and Chelsea for the ones in Hammersmith. Each club has its supporters coming from the districts near the stadium, forming together a local community.

Started in 1981, the "football in the community" schemes of the English football clubs helped improving the skills of the people and created opportunities for a better life, among others through social inclusion, education and physical activity. As a matter of fact, English football clubs have been deeply rooted to their community ever since they were established. More than 130 years ago, priests, businessmen, pub owners and professors used football (clubs) in order to help the people they regularly came in contact with have a better life. After 1981, large sums of money were collected into budgets especially designed to be allocated for programs meant to respond the social issues faced by the community. In the 2005/2006 season alone, Chelsea Football Club invested 2.8% of the club's annual turnover, so £ 4,34 million, in corporate social responsibility: £ 3,02 million were used for community investment, £ 1,32 million for charity. 200,000 pupils and 113 schools were part of Chelsea's 2005/2006 educational programs, while the charity trust donated £ 573,000 to more than 700 families whose children suffered from cancer (Chelsea Corporate Social Responsibility Report for the 2005/2006 Season, p. 6). In the same season, under the coaching of Jose Mourinho, Chelsea won the champion's title in the Premier League. The club could have concentrated only on football, but it chose to give back more to the society. Outscoring the opponent is not all sporting success is about (Wooden & Jamison, 2004). The privileged position in the community makes the directors think more about what their football club means to the people. In order to respect their privileged positions, FCs invest in CSR programs, trying to pay back the members of the community for their support. As a result, the 2010/2011 Premier League season counted a total of more than 300 CSR programs. The most of them (112) targeted the education of the individual. Taking into account that many of the 103 sport programs also try to educate a conclusion is that English football clubs show a high interest in educating the community. As stated in the research, a better educated community means nothing else than a better support for the club over the long run. The quality of life is the next hotspot clubs are interested in. With 69 social inclusion programs, 12 cultural integration programs and 26 health programs implemented by the clubs of the

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Premier League, the English football uses its forces to make people communicate better, develop their social skills, but also improve each own's health.

This research has tried to complete the literature by presenting how a particular industry – sport – implements CSR. A limitation of the paper is that it does not show into detail how a football club is socially responsible. It makes just a general presentation, at the level of the Premier League, in order to find out some social responsibility principles adopted by the English football clubs.

As stated in the beginning of the paper, one importance of this research is that it may encourage further academic research, which could concentrate upon how a football club manages its CSR activities, by also giving practical examples: which persons in the club run the CSR schemes, whom do they report to, how many employees and volunteers does the club have for CSR programs, how many financial resources are invested, what partnerships do there exist and how exactly have these been sealed, or how is each program run?

A good research idea would be to start from the findings of the present paper and further develop and better explain them by using the real example of a football club.

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