

# RESPONSIBALL

## **RESPONSIBALL Ranking 2016**

**The Sixth Annual Social Responsibility  
Ranking of Football Leagues in Europe**

**August 2016**



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## **Author**

Schwery Consulting

## **Contributing Researchers**

Bardapurkar, A., Basu, V., Cade, D., Caporal, C., Cortsen, K., Cruz, G., Dolphin, K., Fritz, M., Dabas, A., Fritz, M., Hendriks, G., Kurinko, R., Punzi, A., Schwery, A., Soares, J., Tzetzis, G., Wallenius, S., Yañez Miranda, M.

## **Charts and Illustrations**

M. Haegle & A. Schwery

# RESPONSIBALL Ranking 2016

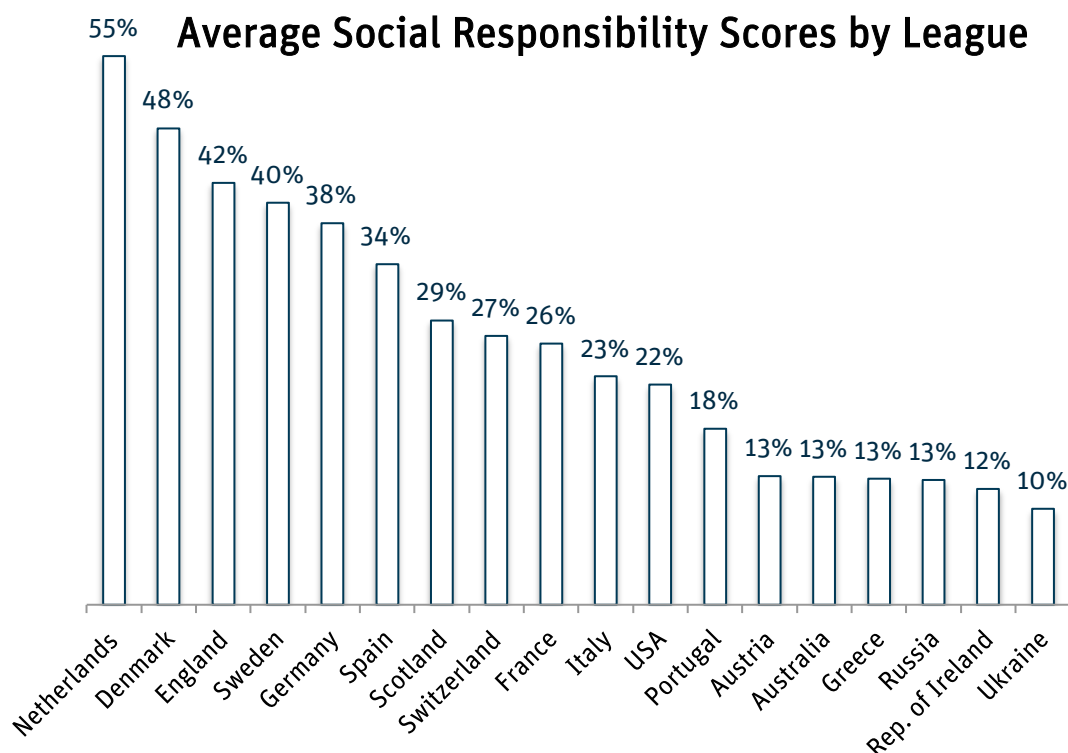
1	(1)	Netherlands		Eredivisie		
2	(2)	Denmark		Superliga		
3	(3)	England		Premier League		
4	(-)	Sweden		Allsvenskan		
5	(4)	Germany		Bundesliga		
6	(9)	Spain		La Liga		
7	(7)	Scotland		Premiership		
8	(5)	Switzerland		Super League		
9	(11)	France		Ligue 1		
10	(6)	Italy		Seria A		
11	(-)	USA		MLS		
12	(19)	Portugal		Primeira Liga		
13	(14)	Austria		Bundesliga		
14	(12)	Australia		A-League		
15	(17)	Greece		Superleague		
16	(15)	Russia		Premier League		
17	(10)	Rep. of Ireland		Premier Division		
18	(16)	Ukraine		Premier League		

# The Ranking

Welcome to the sixth annual RESPONSIBALL Ranking. This report details our research into the social responsibility of top level football clubs during the 15/16 season.

We have assessed football clubs' commitment to social responsibility - to the extent that information is communicated transparently across three main pillars: Governance, Community, and Environment.

This year, clubs playing in the top leagues of 18 different countries have been selected for the Ranking, the aim of which is to raise awareness of and demonstrate the level of SR in elite level professional football.



### **Top three unchanged**

The top three places in the Ranking remain unchanged. The three clubs that were promoted to the Dutch Eredivisie league at the end of the 2014/15 season - NEC, Roda and De Graafschap – only served to solidify the Netherlands' dominance at the top of the Ranking for the second year in a row.

If the rise to first place in 2014 of the Danish Superliga clubs was a surprise to some, their “bouncebackability” has been clear to see in the consecutive two seasons: they again finish a strong second, with the English Premier League clubs close behind in third.

### **High flying Swedes**

Just behind the EPL this year was the Swedish Allsvenskan. Given the proximity to Denmark, the high adherence to governance standards in both countries, and the long-standing commitment to social responsibility in general that clubs like Djurgården and IFK Göteborg have had, probably shouldn't be such a surprise that the league ranked so highly this season.

### **Sleeping Giants**

Also noteworthy, is the rise in overall social responsibility score of the Spanish La Liga (up 17.34% to 34.28%) and French Ligue 1 (up 11.56% to 26.23%) clubs. Akin to sleeping giants in RESPONSIBALL Rankings of past, the overall social responsibility scores of clubs in these leagues are beginning to reflect their prowess on the pitch.

Clubs such as Atlético Madrid and Barcelona in Spain and Olympique Lyonnais and OGC Nice in France have had historically high scores in this Ranking; this year others join them.

Professionalism is, in many respects, the foundation of social responsibility within an organisation – the values that a professional (and responsible) club projects no doubt contribute to attracting supporters.

Clubs in France and Spain that have been competing on a European level on the pitch, also compete fiercely for the hearts and minds of fans around the world. As our Ligue 1 researcher Corentin Caporal reflected, since these clubs become more professional, it seems logical to expect other clubs in the league to adopt similar initiatives.

### **Good practices**

One of the main goals of RESPONSIBALL is to seek out, share and showcase good practices in social responsibility at football clubs and this year's Ranking has provided us with ample opportunity to do just that.

As the researchers work their way through club websites, they note down the links to pages that show information relating to a specific indicator (more on this in the

[Methodology](#)). What has surprised us this year is the unique ways clubs are addressing social responsibility.

From FK Wien Austria's [Sustainability Report](#), which follows international standards; to Melbourne City's Fan Engagement Strategy, which comprises a [Fan Representative Club](#) that meets regularly with the club's CEO; and to LA Galaxy's [Protect the Pitch initiative](#), which focuses on community involvement, energy efficiency, water conservation, waste and recycling, and transportation; there is a wealth of good practices that other clubs can learn from and adopt.

This year's report features a [Good Practices section](#), which showcases one initiative from each league. The section aims to highlight clubs' unique approaches to social responsibility demonstrating that it is not just about ticking the boxes.

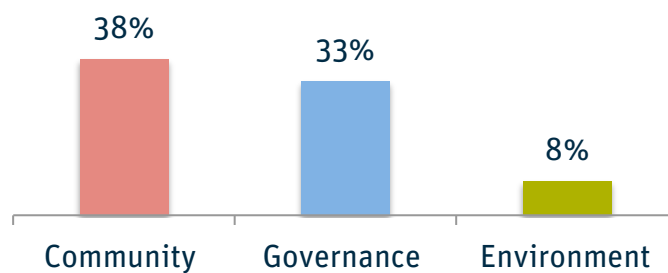
Don't miss these and more good practices on our new RESPONSIBALL website.

### Community still King

The average score across all clubs included in this ranking was 26%, up 5% on last year.

There was also no change in the overall **Environment** score for all clubs: for four out of the six years we've been doing the ranking it is at 7%. This despite evidence of some very impressive environmental investments being made – look no further than German Bundesliga [FC Augsburg's CO<sub>2</sub> neutral stadium](#).

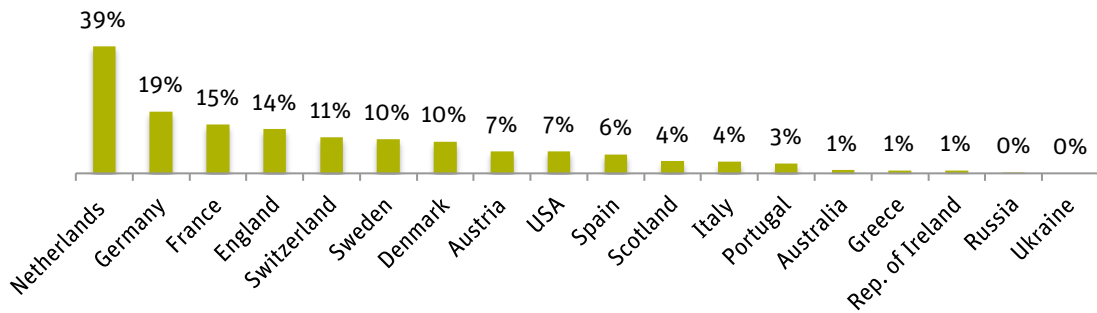
### Average Scores by Pillar



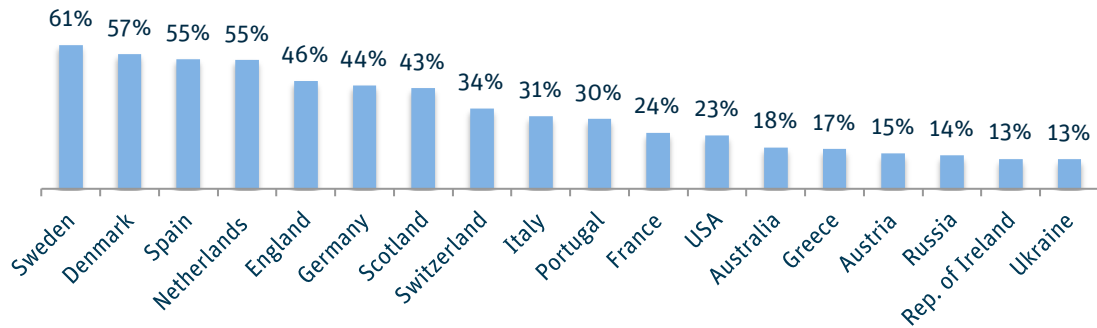
**Governance** is up this year from 27% to 33%, with Sweden's Allsvenskan clubs paying due respect to governance issues, such as providing information on the club's highest governance body, allowing for the democratic representation of fans at a decision-making level, and having female representation at board-level.

However, it is club's commitment to **Community** initiatives that shines through again in this year's Ranking. The pillar that clubs have historically found easiest to implement, which often forms the foundation of their social responsibility policy, is the highest scoring of the three pillars for the sixth year in a row, up 7% from last year to 38%.

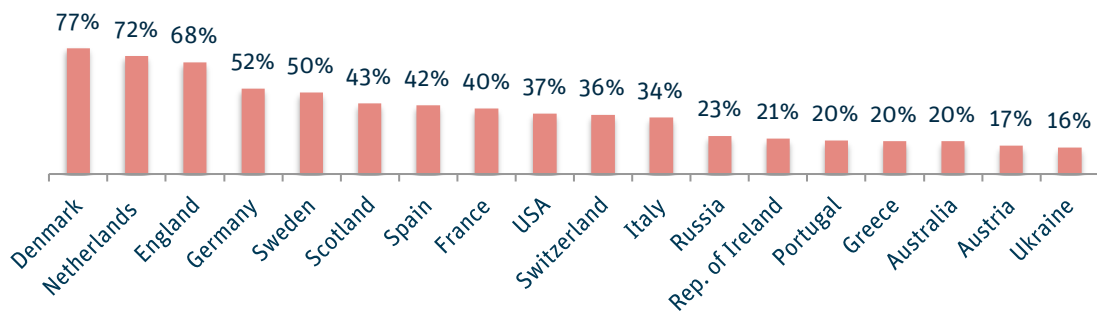
## Average Environment Scores by League



## Average Governance Scores by League



## Average Community Scores by League





# Good Practices

## **Australian A-League -> Melbourne City**

Melbourne has a Fan Representative Group that was established to create a key communications channel between the club and its fans. The group meets with key staff at the Club, including the CEO, to discuss a range of topics including marketing, match day experience, merchandise, strategic direction and various other topics.

<http://www.melbournecityfc.com.au/membership/melbourne-city-fan-representative-group-welcomes-new-members/1hjv0o6b43awa16xwtuy8nzipg6>

## **Austrian Bundesliga -> FK Austria Wien**

FK Austria has published a sustainability report – appropriately titled *Fairplay in Every Relationship* – using the international standards of the Global Reporting Initiative as a framework. The report covers everything from employee engagement, to various environmental and community projects, as well as cooperation with sponsors.

<http://www.fk-austria.at/de/business/violett-ist-mehr---/der-bericht/>

## **Danish Superliga -> Randers FC**

Randers FC has aligned objectives with the job centre in the city to work together and offer training, networking and recruitment opportunities to local people aged 18-67. The partnership also works in tandem with other local companies to allocate employees that have the right fit.

<http://www.randersfc.dk/index.php?menu=34&side=5761>

## **Dutch Eredivisie -> AZ Alkmaar**

AZ Alkmaar has set up the AZ Green Team to bring together local companies and organisations working in the field of renewable energy to encourage knowledge and network-building. The club organises events during home matches to connect SME's, public authorities, housing corporations, multinationals and universities.

<http://www.az.nl/greenteam>

## **English Premier League -> Manchester United FC**

Having identified that its catering facility has the largest procurement activity within the club, Manchester United has developed a policy that promises seek local, regional and UK suppliers of goods and services wherever feasible. Key suppliers will be asked to complete a questionnaire to verify environmental, social and economic performance. This, as the policy states, will be assessed prior to the renewal of contracts.

<http://csr.manutd.com/Sustainable Procurement Policy.html>

## **French Ligue 1 -> Olympique Lyonnais**

In its Registration Document, which is available on its website, Olympique Lyonnais sets out many policies governing the running of the club. For example, its Equal

Opportunities policy, outlined on page 60, promotes the equal treatment of men and women across recruitment, work and family-life balance, professional training, and remuneration.

<http://www.actusnews.com/documents/ACTUS-O-6571-ol-ddr1415-uk-web.pdf>

### **German Bundesliga**-> FC Augsburg

FC Augsburg claims to have the first CO<sub>2</sub> neutral stadium in the world. Apparently two large heat pumps that use shallow geothermal energy form the heart of the energy system, and the necessary water masses are obtained from two man-made wells located in the west of the stadium. The award-winning stadium lists a number of features that together save up to 750 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.

<http://www.fcaugsburg.de/cms/website.php?id=/index/stadion/co2neutralitaet.htm>

### **Greek Super League**-> AEK

Taking action to address a very prominent issue within its community, AEK has initiated a project called ‘Compassion for Refugees’. Coaching staff, players and administrative staff – including the club president – work together with various sponsors to support the provision of humanitarian aid to refugees in the region.

<http://www.aekfc.gr/newsdetails/i-proti-drasi-tis-aek-47589.htm?lang=el&path=1778857578>

### **Italian Serie A**-> Atalanta B.C.

Atalanta has continued with a project that was first established in 2001, in cooperation with an educational psychologist. Since then the ‘School Stadium’ project has visited 337 schools and a total of 17,533 students, with various objectives, including highlighting the educational and cultural value of football and preventing racism and discrimination.

<https://www.atalanta.it/site/mondo-atalanta/scuola-stadio.html>

### **Portuguese Primeira Liga**-> Sporting C.P.

Sporting has a page on its website, which is called ‘Privileged Information’. The club has opted to offer transparency on key information for all fans and visitors to the website. For example, player contracts are listed with details including fee, length of contract, extension options and termination clauses. Other club contracts, including television broadcasting rights and sponsorship, are also available.

<http://www.sporting.pt/pt/node/31289>

### **Republic of Ireland**-> Cork City

Cork City’s website includes a page dedicated to its Supporter Liaison Officer (SLO). Indicating that the SLO should be the first point of contact for any supporter wishing to raise an issue with the club, the page describes the role of the SLO and the close cooperation that the person has with the Safety & Security Officer and the club’s CEO.

<http://www.corkcityfc.ie/home/club-info/supporter-liaison-officer-slo/>

### **Russia**-> FC Zenit

The club provides clear information for supporters with disabilities to access the stadium and watch the matches. The details concern the number of wheelchair spaces, a contact phone number, car parking, the accompaniment of an additional person, and restroom facilities.

<http://fc-zenit.ru/club/petrovsky/places/>

### **Spain**-> Deportivo de La Coruña

Deportivo has a very detailed Code of Conduct incorporating many of its “founding values”, which it publishes openly on its website. The document refers to action against acts of violence, discrimination, harassment, racism, xenophobia and intolerance, as well as setting out policies against bribery and corruption at the club, health and safety at work, and respect for the environment.

[http://www.canaldeportivo.com/descargas/15-16/RCD\\_Codigo\\_Etico.pdf](http://www.canaldeportivo.com/descargas/15-16/RCD_Codigo_Etico.pdf)

### **Swedish Allsvenskan**-> IF Djurgården

IF Djurgården has a wealth of useful information on its Match Day Info page. Not only is there a map with directions of how to get there by car and public transport; it also explains how to get there on foot and by bike. The page also gives a good overview of the food and beverages on offer, and where in the stadium to find them, as well as offering vegetarian options and locally sourced food.

<http://dif.se/ga-pa-match/>

### **Switzerland**-> FC Luzern

FC Luzern sets out specific information for supporters with disabilities. It offers accessibility details for the visually impaired, hard of hearing, as well as wheelchair users. FCL Radio transmits all matches live and, even more impressively, the stadium meets the SIA 500 “Barrier-free buildings” standard.

[https://www.fcl.ch/menschen\\_mit\\_behinderung](https://www.fcl.ch/menschen_mit_behinderung)

### **Ukraine**-> Shakhtar Donetsk

Shakhtar has a family club to encourage parents and their children to go along and enjoy the matches. Children up to 17 years of age receive a ticket reduction of 50% and the second parent or guardian gets in free. The family enclosure is situated close to the pitch and, for those with small children, there is a play area that is supervised by professional animators.

<http://shakhtar.com/ua/junior/familyclub/>

### **US MLS**-> LA Galaxy

LA Galaxy’s Protect the Pitch initiative is focussed on reducing the environmental impact of LA Galaxy games, supporting environmental projects in the community, and inspiring fans to help create healthier, more sustainable communities. It involves various efforts designed to engage the community, save water, conserve energy, and reduce waste.

<http://www.lagalaxy.com/post/2016/03/18/la-galaxy-launch-protect-pitch-initiative>

# Methodology

## Data Sources

We have included 18 top-tier national leagues in our ranking. The Ranking is based on the analysis of information that football clubs communicate on their websites. This reflects a philosophy that good practices in social responsibility (SR) should be communicated and shared by football clubs.

## Analysis

The analysis covered three main SR pillars of Governance, Community, and Environment. It involved the evaluation of over 50 pre-defined SR indicators created by adapting guidelines from widely recognised SR standards, such as GRI G4 and ISO 20121.

## Review of indicators

Three internal stages and two external stages (direct feedback from partners and a public survey) made up a review to re-define the indicators in 2014. The objective of the review was to ensure that the indicators we use are current – up to date with international standards – and relevant to football, and also that they met three important principles 1) Applicable to all football clubs; 2) Reasonably expected to be found on the website of the football club; and 3) Relevant to making a positive and sustainable impact on communities.

## Results

Leagues were ranked across four main areas: the three SR pillars, and an overall SR ranking, which we got from taking the average score of the three pillars. Rankings are attained by calculating the average score for each club across the three pillars (weighted equally), and then combining these scores to find the average score for all clubs in a league.

## Limitations

The limitations to our methodology are as follows:

- 1) The indicators we use are not standards. We do not set required standards for SR at football clubs.
- 2) These indicators have been used because they are non-specific. They were chosen because they should apply to all clubs. Clubs must implement their SR strategy according to the needs of their stakeholders.
- 3) We check the information that is available on websites because we believe that communication is an essential facet of SR. A more thorough check would involve a physical audit of the club but, due to the extent of such a task, this was not possible.

# About RESPONSIBALL

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RESPONSIBALL is the first point of reference for responsible football clubs. It supports the progress of social responsibility at all football clubs.

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An initiative funded by the work of Schwery Consulting, RESPONSIBALL provides an online platform for a community of practitioners within the football sector to act in unison; thus promoting and maintaining high standards of meaningful social responsibility.

RESPONSIBALL has two main goals at the heart of its mission:

- To showcase good practice in governance, community development and environmental stewardship; and
- To support a community of practitioners who want to **connect** with others, **share** good practices, **compare** and progress.

## Connect

RESPONSIBALL supports a community of people who want to connect with others that share similar passions, interests and jobs - all of whom understand, or want to learn more, about the how football clubs can work in harmony with their communities and the environment.

## Share

RESPONSIBALL is built to house a community that can exchange knowledge and insights. It holds a Good Practice database that allows members to easily upload and share good practices that may be useful or interesting for others.

## Compare

RESPONSIBALL allows practitioners to compare club practices with others', according to our three main pillars and a corresponding sub-set of topics, and progress along their own path.

## Contact

RESPONSIBALL  
Gueterstrasse 13  
CH-2500 Biel/Bienne  
Switzerland

phone +41 32 325 80 80  
e-mail: [info@RESPONSIBALL.org](mailto:info@RESPONSIBALL.org)  
website: [www.RESPONSIBALL.org](http://www.RESPONSIBALL.org)

twitter: [@RESPONSIBALL](https://twitter.com/RESPONSIBALL)  
facebook: [www.facebook.com/RESPONSIBALL](https://www.facebook.com/RESPONSIBALL)  
linkedin group: [RESPONSIBALL](#)

