

## **Abstract**

**Title:** The Impact of Stadium Spectators on the Home Advantage Phenomenon in European Football

**Objective:** The aim of this thesis is to identify the magnitude of home advantage in selected football leagues during the seasons before COVID-19 and in the 2020/21 season, and to determine whether the presence of spectators significantly influences HA. If confirmed, the study will also examine whether the number of spectators is a significant factor.

**Methods:** The magnitude of HA is identified using the method of percentage home point success. To test the significance of the presence and number of spectators on HA, paired and unpaired two-sample t-tests are used, respectively. The normality of input data is verified using histograms and the Shapiro-Wilk test. Visualization of the dataset distribution is conducted using boxplots.

**Results:** The results of all examined leagues collectively show a statistically significant decline in HA during the COVID-19 season compared to the ten-year pre-pandemic average. This finding indicates that the presence of spectators is very important for HA. Conversely, the difference in HA decline between two groups of leagues, categorized by the size of their spectator attendance, was not statistically significant. This suggests that the mere number of spectators may not play a crucial role in the development of HA. The study also identifies that not all leagues respond to the absence of spectators in the same way, indicating that other factors such as cultural and geographical aspects, competitive balance, and specific characteristics of individual leagues may influence HA. Additionally, the element of randomness cannot be overlooked, given that only one season was played entirely without spectators.

**Key words:** football leagues, stadium spectators, football, COVID-19, spectator ban