

**Attendances booming at
women's football**

Women's football in Scotland is booming with attendance at matches increasing and enthusiasm growing for the match-day experience, research shows.

A new study shows a fifth of clubs in the Scottish Women's Premier League (SWPL) have doubled their average attendance at match-days between the 2022/23 and 2023/24 seasons.

The survey, by the University of Edinburgh's Academy of Sport, also finds 83 per cent of respondents were highly satisfied with their match-day experience at SWPL games.

Researchers used focus groups, surveys and social media analysis to assess what fans enjoy and want from SWPL football.

Findings show that positive attitudes towards women's club football is significantly higher and online engagement has more than doubled between 2021 and 2024.

The report reveals more than 2 million people watched the SWPL on television or online during the 2023/24 season. The most recent data for the current season also points to that number rising significantly in 2024/2025.

It also finds that 88 per cent of SWPL supporters say that shared experiences with family and friends are just as important as winning.

Some 55 per cent of respondents were female and 53 per cent were aged 41 and above.

The report found 47 per cent of SWPL fans come from households with an average annual income above £50,000 a year. The majority of fans reported an annual household income of above £20,000.

Professor Grant Jarvie, of the University of Edinburgh's Moray House School of Education and Sport, said: "The report provides the most comprehensive account of fan engagement at SWPL matches. Our intention is to help close the data gap between women and men's football so we can give the sports industry in Scotland vital insights into who the SWPL fans are and what they want."

The SWPL's Managing Director, Fiona McIntyre, said: "These findings are incredibly encouraging as they point to a growing and engaged SWPL fanbase. We are really grateful to the University of Edinburgh for undertaking this study and providing us with a greater understanding of who is attending SWPL matches and importantly, what matters to them. These insights are invaluable as we seek to engage with fans of the SWPL and increase attendances at SWPL matches."

Ebru Köksal, Chair of Women in Football UK, said: "This report reinforces what I have long championed – women's football is on an exciting trajectory, and this report shows just how engaged and passionate SWPL fans are.

"The surge in attendance, online engagement, and positive match-day experiences highlight the sport's immense potential.

"The increasing numbers reflect a deeper cultural shift, proving that when women's football is given the platform it deserves, the appetite for the game flourishes.

Now is the time to build on this success, ensure sustainable investment, and expand opportunities to amplify the sport's impact even further."

The report makes 25 key observations and recommendations on how to support further development of women's football.

These include maximising prospects for international engagement and exposure, recognising the opportunity for increased merchandising both inside and out stadiums, and growing crowds at the professional elite level.



Hibs' women move within 2 points of SWPL league leaders, Glasgow City, after comfortably beating them 3-1 at Meadowbank.

Credit: Ian Jacobs