

## Football fan fury over European Super League

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The plan created by Europe's top football clubs to create a breakaway super league seems to be falling apart less than 48 hours after it was launched. A group of 12 of the richest football teams in Europe announced they would take part in the European Super League (ESL) starting in August. This created fury among fans, players, managers, Premier League teams and even the British Prime Minister and Britain's Prince William. They all said the new league would destroy football. They said it was created by greedy club owners. There has been so much anger that top clubs Chelsea and Manchester City are already preparing to withdraw from the ESL due to a backlash from fans.

Six of England's richest teams agreed to participate in the breakaway ESL, including Manchester United, Liverpool and Arsenal. Top teams from Spain (including Barcelona) and Italy also signed up. No teams from Germany and France are involved, making the ESL less European. In Germany, teams are 51-per-cent owned by fans, so fan power is bigger in Germany than in England. The UK government said it will take "whatever action is necessary," including legal options, to stop the ESL. Fourteen Premier League clubs said they would take legal action to expel the six English clubs from the Premier League. Football's governing bodies FIFA and UEFA said players who played in the ESL could be banned from the World Cup.

\* At the time of uploading this lesson, nine of the 12 teams have withdrawn from the ESL.

Sources: [espn.com](https://www.espn.com) / [yahoo.com](https://www.yahoo.com) / [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com)

### Writing

Football (soccer) is the best sport in the world. Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

plan / football / clubs / league / fury / fans / greedy / owners / withdraw / backlash / teams / participate / European / fan power / legal action / necessary / bodies / players

### True / False

- a) It took European clubs 48 hours to think of the European Super League. T / F
- b) The European Super League once had 12 of Europe's richest clubs in it. T / F
- c) The UK's Prime Minister strongly supported the European Super League. T / F
- d) People said greedy club owners created the European Super League. T / F
- e) Six teams from England initially joined the European Super League. T / F
- f) No teams from France and Germany joined the European Super League. T / F
- g) The UK government said it would not take legal action against the ESL. T / F
- h) Players from the ESL would have played in the FIFA World Cup. T / F

### Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1. <b>plan</b>          | a. included      |
| 2. <b>falling apart</b> | b. ruin          |
| 3. <b>fury</b>          | c. breaking up   |
| 4. <b>destroy</b>       | d. because of    |
| 5. <b>due to</b>        | e. organizations |
| 6. <b>participate</b>   | f. supporters    |
| 7. <b>involved</b>      | g. scheme        |
| 8. <b>fans</b>          | h. throw out     |
| 9. <b>expel</b>         | i. anger         |
| 10. <b>bodies</b>       | j. join          |

### Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of England's Premier League?
- c) What is the world's greatest football club?
- d) Should football fans own their clubs?
- e) Are greedy club owners harming football?
- f) What can clubs do to make football better?
- g) What three adjectives best describe this story?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the club owners?

## Phrase Match

- |                                          |                         |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. create a breakaway                    | a. could be banned      |
| 2. falling apart less than               | b. a backlash from fans |
| 3. This created fury                     | c. is necessary         |
| 4. created by greedy                     | d. 48 hours after       |
| 5. withdraw from the ESL due to          | e. by fans              |
| 6. Six of England's richest teams agreed | f. among fans           |
| 7. teams are 51-per-cent owned           | g. super league         |
| 8. it will take whatever action          | h. action               |
| 9. they would take legal                 | i. club owners          |
| 10. players who played in the ESL        | j. to participate       |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of football?
- What is the better word - 'football' or 'soccer'?
- Why is football so popular?
- What do you think of a European Super League?
- What do you think of the ESL falling apart within 48 hours?
- What do you think of fan power?
- What do you think of billionaire club owners?
- How important is football in your country?

## Spelling

- create a raaeabwky super league
- 48 hours after it was uedhanlc
- ucndnanoe they would take part
- the new league would rosdety football
- it was created by edyreg club owners
- due to a asclkhba from fans
- teams agreed to aetapprtci
- the UK ntogreevmn
- take whatever action is reanessyc
- take elagl action
- plexe the six English clubs
- Football's gerngnvoi bodies

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. c	3. i	4. b	5. d
6. j	7. a	8. f	9. h	10. e

## Role Play

### Role A – Football

You think football is the best sport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their sports. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): tennis, skiing or sailing.

### Role B – Tennis

You think tennis is the best sport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their sports. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): football, skiing or sailing.

### Role C – Skiing

You think skiing is the best sport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their sports. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): tennis, football or sailing.

### Role D – Sailing

You think sailing is the best sport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their sports. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): tennis, skiing or football.

## Speaking – Sports

Rank these with your partner. Put the best sports at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |            |              |
|------------|--------------|
| • Football | • Sailing    |
| • Cricket  | • Marathon   |
| • Tennis   | • Rugby      |
| • Skiing   | • Basketball |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.