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Match-Fixing in Greece and Turkey, and UEFA's Policy Responses to It: A Comparative Study

Abstract

Through the increased attention match-fixing has received from both academia and policy makers in recent years, its complexity and the consequent inability to identify a one-fits-all description of the phenomenon have been underlined, highlighting that we have yet to fully capture the various forms of its manifestation in modern day sport. At the same time, and despite academic endeavours, the scholarly work on policy responses against match-fixing is remarkably scarce. In addressing these gaps, this study aims to examine two high-profile match-fixing cases in Greece and Turkey, the '*Koriopolis*' and the '*Şike Davası*' scandals, respectively, while considering the policy responses of UEFA, through the analysis of its normative framework and the way in which it was implemented in the two cases. This comparative study offers details of the social organisation of the two scandals, highlighting the various actors, structures and processes within them, as well as the UEFA policy responses they were met with. What is underlined through the study is not only the key role of individuals embedded in the football ecosystem, but also the potentially adverse effects of adopting the 'organised crime' narrative in both official and media accounts, preventing us from truly capturing the phenomenon and policy makers from responding to it. Simultaneously, this study highlights that despite its existing detailed and thorough normative framework, UEFA's inconsistency in its implementation in the two cases sends a mixed message about tolerating match-fixing, while inviting much needed further research on the matter.

Keywords: Manipulation of sport competitions; Sport corruption; Sport Integrity; Football corruption; Football integrity

Introduction

Over the course of the last two decades, match-fixing, or the active manipulation of the outcome of sport competitions, has become a major integrity issue posing one of the biggest threats to sport world-wide (Carpenter, 2012). The frequency of the phenomenon in the world of sport, and in particular in football, has been documented repeatedly, with studies investigating its manifestation in numerous contexts, such as professional football in Malta (Aquilina and Chetcuti, 2014), Greece (Manoli and Antonopoulos, 2015; Manoli, Antonopoulos and Levi, 2016), Turkey (Yilmaz, Manoli and Antonopoulos, 2018), the Netherlands (Spapens and Olfers, 2015), Western Europe (Feldes, 2013), and even in grassroots football in Europe (Nowy and Breuer, 2017). Comprehensive accounts of match-fixing scandals in various other sports have been also provided, notably by Carpenter (2012) and Serby (2015). Theoretically, the works of Hill (2009a, 2009b, 2010) have contributed to the field by developing a conceptual understanding about organised crime and its relations with match-fixing, particularly in the context of betting-related fixing. At the same time, Numerato (2016), through a sociological perspective, adopted public secrecy as a concept to explain the manifestation of match-fixing through social structures (football clubs) which are aware of it

but remain silent to protect their power positions. Nowy and Breuer (2017) considered match-fixing from a sociological and economic perspective and analysed it within the organisational capacity framework.

Despite the empirical and theoretical academic endeavours on match-fixing, the scholarly work on policy responses aiming to tackle the problem in sport is scarce within the academic literature. Numerato (2016, p.713) emphasises this lack, while underlining the importance of countermeasures and inviting them to be ‘critically examined’. This paper aims to address this gap by considering policy responses of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), the governing body of European football, in the context of two high profile match-fixing cases in professional football located in Greece and Turkey.

Policy responses adopted against match-fixing consist of a wide range of countermeasures. Tak (2018) classified them into three broad categories: (a) education; (b) betting pattern monitoring; and (c) sanctions. Educational initiatives intend to raise awareness and knowledge of match-fixing amongst various stakeholders, whilst monitoring systems, also known as the early warning systems, are used for the detection of irregular betting movements. Sanctions on the other hand are the most coercive approach to match-fixing, embedded within normative frameworks consisting of private regulations of sport governing bodies and national and international legislative tools (Anderson *et al.*, 2014). Disciplinary regulations and competition specific regulations are the primary pillars of the normative frameworks by sport governing bodies (SGBs), defining match-fixing as a disciplinary offence and allowing disciplinary jurisdiction for sanctioning. Public authorities have been supportive of sports’ efforts in this line, through criminalising match-fixing by legislation at national and international level (Husting, 2012). As such, a number of important intergovernmental initiatives have emerged, including the European Commission’s Expert Groups on Match-Fixing, Good Governance and Sport Integrity, and the Council of Europe’s ‘Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions’ (Council of Europe, 2014).

Normative frameworks as a policy response, despite their importance, have been hardly examined in the existing literature on match-fixing. Husting (2012) identifies a lack of research around national legislations dealing with the manipulation of sports results in Europe. At the same time, Anderson *et al.* (2014, p. 104) note variations in match-fixing related regulations of football associations at national levels and recognise the difficulty in fully assessing the quality and efficiency of a specific regulatory framework without ‘an in depth comparative study of each regulatory context’. Yet, the efficacy of sport’s normative frameworks requires a closer scrutiny as the capabilities of governing bodies in dealing with match-fixing are being questioned. Tak, Sam and Jackson (2018, p.33) argue that the focus of sport governing bodies appears to be ‘primarily promoting how much these organisations are doing (or are seen to be doing) to combat match-fixing’ rather than effectiveness of their policy measures in tackling the issue. Nowy and Breuer (2017, p. 28) also highlight the limitations of the self-regulatory powers of football, caused and promoted by sporting autonomy, yet generally lacking binding rules to properly sanction deviating behaviours within football that threaten its integrity.

Taking all the above into consideration, it is thus clear that there is a need to critically analyse sport’s normative frameworks against match-fixing. In addressing this gap, the aim of this paper is to focus on UEFA’s normative framework in order to examine its effectiveness in two match-fixing cases in Greece and Turkey, the ‘*Koriopolis*’ and the ‘*Şike Davası*’ scandals, respectively. Through the comparative analysis that follows, this study contributes in our understanding of the complexity of the multifaceted social and organisational structure of match-fixing, through the presentation of the actors and processes in the two cases examined, while offering insights to the previously unexplored effectiveness and implementation of UEFA’s normative framework as a response to the two cases. The findings of the study highlight the inconsistency in the implementation of the responses to match-fixing, while

stressing the existence of significant gaps in the governance of the sport and the protection of its integrity.

The selection of these two cases offers a useful context for the analysis of UEFA's policy response for a number of reasons. Firstly, the two jurisdictions bear many similarities. Greece and Turkey, apart from being neighbouring countries, share a *relatively* similar socio-cultural environment, with related civic and social norms. In terms of their professional football leagues, both countries have football championships, widely known for the limited outcome unpredictability and competitive balance. In the case of Greece, there have only been four teams that have won the championship since 1979, when football became professionalised, and from 1996/1997 to 2019/2020 (24 seasons), Olympiakos FC has won the league 20 times. In Turkey only six clubs have won the Super League (*Süper Lig* in Turkish) since its inception in 1959 (two of them only once).¹ This lack of outcome unpredictability, paired with the financial benefits of winning the league and thus participating in UEFA (European) competitions, has further widened the gaps between the leagues' clubs, decreasing their competitive balance and thus making the ground fertile for potential inconsistencies in the ways in which they operate. It has in fact been argued that it is these very circumstances that have allowed for match-fixing to take place in the first place, since they present potential match-fixing actors with the need to seek alternative avenues to respond to the ferocious economic pressures of the leagues (see, for example, Manoli, Antonopoulos & Bairner, 2019).

At the same time, these cases of match-fixing in European football we discuss took place in the same timeframe in the two neighbouring countries, allowing for their different match-fixing structures and operations to be examined in detail simultaneously, which can in turn allow us to juxtapose their actors and processes, as well as the responses they were met with by UEFA. This cross-examination offers valuable insights to the social structure of match-fixing organisations embedded within football ecosystems of both countries, comprising of inner structures and actors that are within clubs and under direct jurisdictional authority of football governing bodies. Additionally, both cases involved clubs that eventually qualified for European competitions bringing them under UEFA's disciplinary competency.

This article proceeds as follows: first, the issue of match-fixing and the policy of UEFA against match-fixing is explored in order to provide the context for the analysis of the two cases. Second, the methodology adopted is put forward. Third, a comparative analysis of the two cases is undertaken, and finally, the discussion emerging from our analysis is presented, along with its limitations and suggestions for further research.

Literature review

Match-fixing

The increasing interest that the manipulation of sport competitions has received from both academia and policy makers has allowed for a number of definitions to emerge which in turn enable us to better capture match-fixing and the various ways in which it is manifested. One of the best examples is the definition suggested by the Council of Europe in 2014 (Article 3), which suggests that:

Manipulation of sport competitions means an intentional arrangement, act or omission aimed at an improper alteration of the result or the course of a sport competition in order to remove all or part of the unpredictable nature of the aforementioned sport competition with a view to obtaining an undue advantage for oneself or for others.

¹ A minor but nevertheless interesting point about the relevance of these two case studies is that both Greece and Turkey have their dominant football clubs located in one city/area (Athens/Piraeus and Istanbul, respectively), in contrast to Spain (Madrid and Barcelona), Italy (Turin and Milan), France (Paris, Marseilles, and Lyon), Portugal (Lisbon and Porto) or England (Liverpool, Manchester and London).

This comprehensive definition captures not only the aim to achieve a pre-determined final result, but also the efforts to achieve a partially pre-determined result as elements of a possible manipulation of a sport competition. As such, previously uncovered activities such as spot-fixing, point-saving and tanking can be also encapsulated in the definition. Spot-fixing refers to the arrangement of particular actions to take place in a pre-determined way during a sport event or competition, such as injuring a player or attempting to score in a certain way, in order for a pre-arranged bet to be won, favouring individuals who have gambled on these particular events. Point-saving involves the manipulation of an event in order to keep its final result within or outside a pre-determined range, in order to once again benefit individuals, who have invested interests on the pre-arranged result, often related to gambling. Tanking refers to a non-gambling form of match-fixing, which entails the underperformance/non-performance of a player or a team in order for a match to be lost, aiming at favouring another athlete or team. This way of manipulating a sport event can favour not only the immediate opponent of a match, but also a team or athlete that could avoid relegation due to a team's or athletes' choice to conduct tanking (McManus, 2019). While these three manifestations of match-fixing have been previously discussed in academic studies (Aquilina & Chetcuti, 2014), it is worth noting that additional and often creative types of manipulations are constantly uncovered through new research, suggesting that match-fixing is a broader and more complex issue than previously presented (Bag & Saha, 2011).

As the above discussion suggests, a close relationship seems to exist between match-fixing and betting, with the two often being closely intertwined. While much of the existing literature has captured this gambling-related match-fixing (Chappelet, 2015; Hill, 2013), recent research highlights the existence and sometimes prevalence of sporting-related or non-gambling related match-fixing (Van Der Hoeven et al., 2019; Yilmaz, Manoli and Antonopoulos, 2018), while Manoli and Antonopoulos (2015) argue that match-fixing can simultaneously occur for both gambling *and* non-gambling reasons. Their argument is that a sport event's outcome manipulation can be both profit and non-profit driven, guided by motives such as greed, image laundering and political aspirations and pressures, underlining once again the complexity of the issue. An interesting case of the latter is Italy. Although Italy is not, of course, the only context in which match-fixing and politics 'converge' or even exist in a symbiotic relationship (see, for instance, Haberfeld and Sheehan, 2013; The Guardian, 2010), the phenomenon is perhaps best exemplified by the particular context. Foot (2007) considers corruption in the Italian football as a historical, cultural and political product of a particular world-view that permeates the whole of Italian society and its institutions (see also Testa and Sergi, 2018). According to Agnew (2007), the '*Calciopoli*' scandal in the 2000s, which involved major clubs including – among other - Serie A league champions, Juventus, as well as AC Milan, Inter, Fiorentina and Lazio, 'echoed' the political bribery scandal ('*Tangentopoli*') in the 1990s. Italian football clubs are owned by powerful and well-connected businesspeople, who are also politicians, and this allows them to operate (and consolidate their position) within the Italian power elite (Doidge, 2015; 2018). Media tycoon and former Prime Minister of Italy, Silvio Berlusconi, rose to political prominence on the back of his ownership of a European football 'heavyweight', AC Milan. This centralisation of power, according to Doidge (2015), inhibits any positive change.

Finally, another key element of the complexity of the match-fixing phenomenon is the heterogeneity of its organisational characteristics, such as its actors, processes and structures, as they have been highlighted through existing studies on particular match-fixing cases. It is worth noting that in some studies on the topic the existence of a hierarchical, 'mafia-type' structure within sports that is organising and managing the manipulation of sport events is

presented (e.g. in Belgian football; see Hill, 2010)², while other studies suggest that match-fixing can be instead managed by corporate structures, flat networks or small un-organised clusters of opportunity driven individuals (Manoli & Antonopoulos, 2015; Yilmaz, Manoli and Antonopoulos, 2018). It is this complexity and the inability to identify a one-fits-all description of the phenomenon that invite additional research on the issue, while underlining the need for adequate and appropriately fitted responses as well.

UEFA's Policy Responses to Match-fixing

UEFA operates a comprehensive 'zero-tolerance policy' against match-fixing (UEFA, 2017a) comprising types of countermeasures that correspond with the classification of Tak (2018); sanctions through its normative framework, education, and monitoring. UEFA's normative framework consists of rule sets including its Statutes (UEFA 2018a), disciplinary regulations (UEFA, 2020), and competition-specific regulations (UEFA, 2018b; 2018c) empowering the governing body with investigative, adjudicative, and sanctioning powers against match-fixing. The educational policy initiatives aim to target all participants of the game including players, club officials and referees and incorporate both on-site and online educational programmes offering general advice around issues surrounding betting and match-fixing (UEFA 2017b). With regards to the monitoring of match-fixing, UEFA established the Betting Fraud Detection System (BFDS) in 2009 in cooperation with Sportradar, to detect irregular betting movements occurring both pre-game and in-game within all core betting markets in Europe and Asia. Reports of the BFDS are constantly analysed by UEFA's national integrity officers, a network of officers that was established in 2011, which oversees the cooperation with national associations in order to investigate any dubious activities as they emerge (UEFA 2017b).

An operationalisation of UEFA's normative framework against match-fixing is directly underpinned by the governance framework of European football. As a confederation recognised by FIFA, the world governing body for football, UEFA sits at the apex of European football entrusted with an authority to govern and organise it in this territory. Through the membership, 55 members associations of UEFA are then allowed to participate in organised football in Europe and govern it in their respective countries. This hierarchical relationship between the actors of European football also enables UEFA to push down its rules and regulations at national level through a top-down regulatory model. The member associations, including Greece and Turkey, and their members including leagues, clubs, players, and officials are required to adhere and comply with UEFA's normative framework allowing the governing body to sanction any non-compliance or infringement. In other words, through this subordination to the authority, UEFA is able to enjoy jurisdictional authority over all participants of European football to adopt sanctions against actors in the case of any breach of the regulations around match-fixing.

UEFA's normative framework around match-fixing has developed over the years and consists of several rules empowering UEFA with specific sanctions against the manipulation of matches. Sanctions are based on disciplinary measures defined under the disciplinary regulations (UEFA, 2020) and restrictions around participating in UEFA's competitions (UEFA 2018a, 2018b, 2018c). With regards to disciplinary measures, UEFA is able to apply them to all member associations and their respective members, all clubs and their officials, all match officials and all players (UEFA, 2020, Article 3). The member associations and clubs

² Although in Hill's work a much more diverse set of entities in match-fixing is put forward.

could be held liable and face disciplinary proceedings for the actions of their officials and players without their fault or negligence in the process (UEFA, 2020).

Match-fixing is specifically defined as a disciplinary offence under the regulations (UEFA, 2020, Article 12). In fact, UEFA considers it as an offence not only when an individual is involved directly or indirectly in match-fixing, but also in the case where UEFA is not immediately and voluntarily informed about such an approach or awareness of such conduct. At the same time, no statutory limitation concerning match-fixing seems to exist, potentially allowing UEFA to act against those involved in match-fixing without any time limitation (UEFA, 2020, Article 10). UEFA's Control, Ethics and Disciplinary Body (CEDB) is a competent authority with jurisdiction to rule on disciplinary and ethical issues including match-fixing (UEFA, 2020, Article 29.3). Importantly, the CEDB has jurisdiction in the event of a UEFA member association, and/or its member, fail to prosecute or prosecute in an inappropriate manner enabling the body to take actions (UEFA, 2020, Article 29.4). In terms of disciplinary measures as sanctions, the members associations, clubs and individuals may be imposed with disqualifications from competitions in progress and/or exclusion from future competitions, while an individual might be suspended from carrying out certain functions for a specified or unspecified period, or banned from exercising any football related activity (UEFA, 2020, Article 6).

The competition-specific measures concern the restrictions related to the admission to competitions organised and sanctioned by UEFA. Both the UEFA Statutes (UEFA 2018a) and specific regulations (UEFA 2018b, 2018c) governing UEFA's two flagship competitions, the Champions League and the Europa League, incorporate strict admission criteria empowering UEFA to declare any member association or club directly or indirectly involved in any activity aimed at arranging or influencing the outcome of a match at national or international level, ineligible to participate in its competitions with immediate effect without prejudice to any possible disciplinary measures. When taking such decision of ineligibility, UEFA can rely upon a decision of national or international sporting body, arbitral tribunal, or a state court. So, in effect, UEFA's disciplinary provisions against match-fixing are strengthened and complimented by specific regulations governing UEFA competitions (UEFA, 2018b, 2018c). Despite the strength of UEFA's powers and sanctions embedded within its normative framework against match-fixing, a real limitation of the policy is about the lack of authority over entities and individuals who sit outside its jurisdiction. While SGBs, such as UEFA, focus their efforts on the policy responses and sanctioning of actors involved in sport, the criminalisation of the manipulation of sport events has been called upon by sports' authorities, gaining momentum particularly over the course of the last decade in order to better and more comprehensively respond to match-fixing in order to bring those sitting outside of sport under the jurisdiction of the authorities (KEA, 2012). There appears to be a preference on a public/private partnership model involving public authorities and SGBs, as a comprehensive response to match-fixing. Cooperation frameworks with other stakeholders and law enforcement agencies aim to coordinate actions against the issue, and exchange information and know-how on match-fixing and related 'organised crime'. In May 2014, UEFA signed a cooperation agreement with EUROPOL, the European law enforcement agency, to work together against match-fixing. EUROPOL coordinates these efforts with the EU member states and relevant national law enforcement agencies at a Pan-European level to offer a more strategic approach to the problem in Europe (UEFA, 2014). UEFA's Professional Football Strategy Council (PFSC) is another cooperation platform bringing together the main stakeholders of European football including the European Club Association (ECA), the European division of FIFPro, and the European Leagues. In 2014, the PFSC adopted a code of conduct (Professional Football Strategy Council, 2014) setting out guiding principles for all participants on issues surrounding the integrity of football. The document serves a reference

point for the adoption of each nation's code of conducts. Finally, in order to strengthen the level of cooperation amongst all parties, in 2014, UEFA also established a permanent working group on match-fixing, consisting of members of law enforcements agencies, Europol representatives, politicians and experts who have contributed in the fight against match-fixing (UEFA 2017b).

Methodology

In order for the analysis of the cases to be conducted, data collected through a number of sources were used. First, the official legal files of the Greek match-fixing scandal of 2011, including the telephone conversations obtained through the National Intelligence Agency's wiretapping efforts, as well as the authorities' indictment and UEFA's disciplinary proceedings were used. Second, the official legal files of four criminal and seven disciplinary proceedings on the Turkish match-fixing case of 2011 were examined, including two disciplinary proceedings by UEFA and four arbitration proceedings before the CAS. In both cases, the legal files obtain ample details on the cases, including their structure and organisation, while the disciplinary proceedings offer insights to how UEFA responded to the cases, implementing their policy framework against match-fixing.

Moreover, in both the Greek and Turkish cases, we collected, examined and analysed media/open sources, which allowed us to obtain information not only on the process behind football match-fixing, but also on the key actors involved. The content of newspaper articles found on the internet was used. Because match-fixing covers a wide range of phenomena and because we were interested in many aspects of match-fixing such as activities, structures, and the general context in which match-fixing takes place, in electronic archives of newspapers and/or search engines, we used combinations of a number of alternative and relative search terms: 'match-fixing', 'criminal organisation and football', 'network and football', 'money laundering and football'.

Finally, for the Greek case only, and in order for some 'grey' areas to be clarified, 19 informed actors from the realm of Greek football (e.g. individuals working within football clubs) were also interviewed, offering their valuable insight on the matter. These informed actors were accessed by the first author who used to work for a major Super League club and a Football League club, and were used in order to shed additional light on particular areas of match-fixing within the country. These informed interviewees were selected using criterion sampling, based on their key knowledge of how match-fixing was organised due to their long-term involvement in the industry.

Data analysis consisted of three phases. First, the official legal files of both cases were analysed using thematic analysis, in order to identify the patterns that emerged in terms of the key actors, processes and responses to match fixing in each country. This allowed us to identify the key themes and sub-themes for each case, which in turn enabled us to design a thematic map for each country's match-fixing. Second, the media sources collated were also analysed thematically, in order to review and refine the themes and sub-themes identified in the previous phase and revise the thematic maps. Third, the interview data were transcribed and analysed thematically in order to clarify grey areas within the themes and sub-themes that emerged and further revise and refine the thematic map of Greek match-fixing. Finally, the data analysis was verified through intra (in two different occasions) and inter (among different members of the research team) coding.

Match-fixing in Greece

While manipulation in Greek sport is not regarded as a new phenomenon, with a number of sport corruption scandals emerging in the last decades (see Manoli, Antonopoulos & Levi, 2016; Manoli, Antonopoulos & Bairner, 2019), this study will focus on the 2011 *Koriopolis*

match-fixing scandal involving 26 football clubs playing in the Super League (first division) and Football League (second division) of the country at the time when it occurred. It is worth underlining that uncovering the scandal was initiated by UEFA, when the BFDS identified more than 40 matches played in the 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11 seasons as 'exceptionally questionable'. UEFA's detection begun unravelling the details behind the scandal that, following the Hellenic Football Federation's and the Greek authorities' investigation, resulted in charges being raised against more than 200 individuals, including key figures in major football clubs such as Olympiakos, Olympiakos Volou, Kavala, Asteras Tripolis, as well as in the Hellenic Football Federation itself. The key organisational aspects of the Greek match-fixing case (i.e., its actors, structure and processes), as well as the policy response from UEFA are discussed below.

Actors

As the evidence suggests, a number of individuals were involved in the Greek match-fixing case, holding either a primary/key role or a secondary/supportive one. First, club presidents and board members were identified as primary actors in match-fixing, since they were often the ones who initiated the fixing process. Football players were also heavily involved in the process due to their key role in influencing the outcomes of the matches, and some of these were not connected with any others in a match-fixing case. Referees were in the epicentre of the manipulation as well, in accordance with the power they hold in potentially altering the progress of a match. In addition, bookmakers operating under a legal framework of a number of Asia counties were found to be influencing the rates offered for particular matches to incentivise their manipulation. At the same time, illegal agents, individuals operating as middle-men between the bookmakers and the people placing bets appeared to also hold a key role in the match-fixing mechanism. Moreover, enforcers, individuals in charge of the intimidation of other potential participants were identified as key actors, while football managers and player agents were found to hold a secondary role, acting primarily as middle-men in order to inform and persuade key actors, such as football players, to agree to manipulate matches. Finally, members of the media and representatives of the national football governing bodies were also found to be indirectly involved, mostly holding secondary roles, as the wiretapped conversations revealed, which nonetheless did not result in any individuals being indicted.

Process

As the legal files reveal a four step process was followed in order for a match manipulation to be arranged. The first step involved the initial communication and arrangement between the initiators, the football club presidents. Once an agreement was reached, the presidents would initiate the process of fixing independently, while arranging the bets to be placed to bookmakers through the illegal agents. The second step would take place once the officials of each match were revealed, with the initiators assessing whether they were needed for the manipulation of the match. If their involvement was deemed possible, then referees would also be approached and 'recruited' for the fixing. The third step involved the 'recruitment' of the football players, which would often occur on the day when the match was played and would sometimes involve the use of middle-men, such as their agents or the club's manager. Finally, the fourth step would take place during the manipulated match, often during half time, when the progress of the manipulation would be evaluated for any last-minute changes to be made so that the pre-arranged result is achieved.

Structure

As it emerges from the legal files, the organisation and management of match-fixing in Greece was structured around a rather flat network of actors that appeared to have a flexible form. While the initiators could be considered the centre of the web, their relations with other actors were both long-term, well-established and repetitive, and short-term, occasional and sporadic, further enhancing the flexibility and adaptability of the web. This rather unorthodox web network appeared to be rather open to new actors, while being often indiscreet in its additions and management of the manipulation of matches. Finally, as the legal files reveal, the main means used among actors, both for already existing relations and for new ones to be created appeared to be either intimidation or reward. The former, entailed possible threats against individuals' safety, family and career, while the latter involved mostly financial benefits and promise of career advancement.

Policy response by UEFA

The Koriopolis scandal attracted intense attention from legal authorities, and national and international policy makers, with charges being pressed against more than 200 individuals. In terms of the response it received from UEFA, one could argue that it was rather cautious to say the least. It is worth emphasising that the case was initially uncovered after UEFA's system identified that the betting patterns around matches raised red flags. UEFA has since expressed that they are very interested and indeed have invested in solving the match-fixing problem of Greek football and in promoting its integrity (UEFA, 2018d). As such, they have welcomed the sanctions of the Greek authorities against the individuals accused of match-fixing. Regarding its own disciplinary actions against match-fixing, UEFA decided to impose a life-ban on a single individual, who was at the time the President of one of the clubs involved in the scandal. However, such sanction imposed on only one individual when more than 200 individuals were indicted at national courts in Greece, seems to be very limited. While it was made clear that the individual was not to be involved as the President of the club, if the club was to participate in European competitions, his involvement as the club's main shareholder was allowed, rendering the rather lax implementation of the ban.

It is worth highlighting on the other hand that no disciplinary measures were imposed on any Greek clubs with all clubs being allowed to participate in UEFA competitions. Yet, UEFA's strict admission criteria under its competition regulations could have been applied in this case, enabling the governing body to immediately declare those clubs involved in the scandal that qualified for UEFA competitions to be ineligible, whilst the criminal proceedings in Greece were pending. This approach would have better aligned with the overall protection and promotion of the integrity of UEFA competitions while sending a strong zero tolerance message out to the European football ecosystem. As such, and based on the lack of disciplinary actions against any of the Greek clubs involved, it is evident that UEFA's policy response to the Greek match-fixing case was rather limited.

Match-fixing in Turkey

One of the most prolific and scandalous events of Turkish football, the match-fixing case of Turkey was the result of eight months of investigation from December 2010 to July 2011 revealing match-fixing activities in the top two divisions of Turkey. 17 matches of the 2010/11 Turkish football season were suspected to be fixed, including 13 Super League (the top national division in Turkey) matches, and the final of the Turkish Cup. The prosecution files identified a total of 93 suspects and 31 of those were arrested and sent to prison in July 2011. Amongst those arrested were some of the most senior executives of leading Turkish Super League Clubs, including several executives of Fenerbahçe Spor Kulübü (hereafter 'Fenerbahçe'), such as its President and two Vice-Presidents, as well as a number of other key individuals involved in major Turkish clubs like Beşiktaş Jimnastik Kulübü (hereafter 'Beşiktaş'), Sivasspor Kulübü

(hereafter ‘Sivasspor’, Eskişehirspor Kulübü (hereafter ‘Eskişehirspor’) and Istanbul Büyükşehir Belediyespor (‘IBB’, currently known as ‘Basaksehirspor’). The key organisational aspects of the Turkish match-fixing case and its policy response from UEFA are discussed below.

Actors

In the Turkish match-fixing case, the prosecutor files clearly identified a hierarchical criminal organisation, consisting of actors operating within football clubs and holding key executive positions. These key actors included several executives of Fenerbahçe such as its president, vice-presidents, finance director, general manager, and the director of youth division, the executive member of Sivasspor, a licensed player’s agent, and numerous other businessmen. The secondary actors of the match-fixing process included players, presidents and club officials of opposition teams. Players with the ability and opportunity to influence the manipulation of football matches were the focus of the selection process of the hierarchical organisation. In this respect, the two strikers of IBB, the striker of Eskişehirspor and the goalkeeper of Sivasspor were all approached and eventually agreed to take part in the fixing of respective games and were subsequently convicted for match-fixing. Additionally, the coaching team of an opponent, namely the head coach of Eskişehirspor and his assistant, were also actively approached, and ultimately involved in fixing the matches.

Processes

The match-fixing process generally commenced with a meeting between higher members of the criminal organisation, i.e. the President of Fenerbahçe and the Vice-Presidents. The meetings were mostly held in the training ground of the club and entailed discussions around specific games to be manipulated, the possibility of manipulation, and the level of payments to be offered as incentives. In these initial meetings, a plan of action was also agreed in order to facilitate the manipulation, who to involve as middle-men, and who to approach in the opposition teams. In the aftermath of the initial meetings, the Vice-Presidents of Fenerbahçe would coordinate the fixing activities with the selected members of the organisation who would then commence the process. The actors used their personal network to approach the individuals in the opposition teams. Often, the individuals selected were either players that were represented by the agents involved in the organisation, or former players, managers and officials of Fenerbahçe who were now working for the opponents. If it was not possible to gain access into the opponent clubs with their existing network, these actors approached external individuals, such as former players or managers of the opponent, who then used their network in the team to gain the access required. The initial contact was discrete via phone, either through a text message or call, and was followed with a meeting to discuss the details. Once access to the secondary actors was achieved, the next stage was to negotiate the fix. Negotiations were usually organised in neutral venues, such as a restaurant or a hotel lobby. It is worth emphasising that no mention of a threat exists within the legal files, highlighting that the promise of reward was the only means used in the match-fixing case. If the fix was successful, the payments – rewards for fixing were made predominately after each game.

Structure

The structure within the Turkish match-fixing case involves a relatively rigid and hierarchical organisation involving the hierarchical structure that existed within the club, Fenerbahçe. The use of club as a vehicle in this respect is an important aspect of the case. As such, many of the match-fixing activities identified within the Turkish match-fixing case took place within the confines of the corporation that is Fenerbahçe, which afforded a relatively low visibility. As the process above describes, the hierarchical structure of how the actors were organised was

also evident in the way in which the match-fixing was carried out, with the rigid structure of the organisation reflected in the steps of the process followed. As the hierarchical structure within the club existed before the match-fixing process began, the relations between the actors were already existing and often reinforced with the formal links that their employment entailed. The links among primary and secondary actors were often less rigid than the ones in the top layers of the structure, however, they all represented pre-existing relations between professional connections built within the football industry. Throughout all relations, however, the element of hierarchy in the organisation of match-fixing, and with previously defined smaller tasks allocated to each actor, was evident in the legal files examined.

Policy response by UEFA

The criminal proceedings commenced in Turkey had ramifications not only for the individuals involved in the case but also for the clubs. Both the Turkish Football Federation (TFF) and UEFA initiated disciplinary investigations following their arrests in Turkey in July 2011. TFF withdrew Fenerbahçe from participating in the 2011/12 UEFA Champions League competition in August 2011, while allowing Trabzonspor, the runner up for the 2010/11 Turkish Super League season, to take part in the competition. Meanwhile, UEFA's CEDB closely monitored the criminal proceedings in Turkey and the TFF's disciplinary proceedings. The CEDB received the judgment of Turkish Criminal Court in November 2012 and subsequently issued its report against Fenerbahçe in May 2013. Beşiktaş was also referred to UEFA's CEDB in June 2013 marking the commencement of UEFA's disciplinary proceedings against both clubs which resulted in sanctions, excluding the clubs from participating in any UEFA club competitions for which they would qualify. Fenerbahçe was excluded from participating in the next three UEFA club competitions (2013/2014, 2014/2015, and 2015/2016 seasons), whilst Beşiktaş was excluded from participating in the UEFA Europa League 2013/14, which the Club had already qualified for. Both clubs appealed against these decisions before the UEFA Appeals Body who rejected Beşiktaş' appeal and reduced the exclusion period of Fenerbahçe to two years (for the 2013/14, 2014/15 seasons), whilst deferring the third season for a probationary period of five years. Both clubs also appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), the supreme body for sport-related disputes including appeal proceedings against the dispute resolution bodies of SGBs, in July 2013, but the decisions of UEFA's Appeals Body were upheld by the CAS panels.

UEFA also sanctioned two more Turkish clubs, Eskişehirspor and Sivasspor, from participating in the 2014/15 Europa League competitions because of both clubs' involvement in the Turkish match-fixing case. The clubs were sanctioned as they qualified for the UEFA competition, a sanctioning enabled by the strict admission criteria operated by UEFA under its normative framework around match-fixing. As it can be seen, UEFA's response included a strong stance against the Turkish match-fixing case, following the proceedings of the TFF, with a total of four clubs being banned from European competitions for one or more seasons. Yet, it is important to note that UEFA had not taken any actions against any of the club executives despite their indictment by the Turkish prosecutors in the criminal proceedings in Turkey. UEFA enjoys jurisdictional authority over these individuals with specific sanctions available under its disciplinary regulations. However, the European governing body somehow decided not to pursue the individuals and subsequently some of these individuals are still involved in the governance of clubs in Turkish football.

Discussion

On the basis of our analysis a number of observations can be made. Approaching the organisation of football match-fixing and corruption in Greece and Turkey from the perspective

of ‘organised crime’, which has been the case in official and media accounts (see also Mutschke, 2013), constitutes a ‘straightjacket’ that not only prevents us from having an accurate understanding of the phenomenon, but also prevents relevant policy-making bodies from designing effective policy against match-fixing and corruption. Our account on Greek and Turkish football match-fixing offered elements of the social organisation of Greek match-fixing on the basis of the ‘*Koriopolis*’ scandal and Turkish match-fixing on the basis of the ‘*Şike Davası*’ scandal, highlighting that the phenomenon of match-fixing internationally can take diverse forms some of which are potentially yet to be uncovered (see Di Ronco and Lavorgna, 2015, Hill, 2010). In our account, we have identified ‘lone-wolf’ cases, match-fixing by a single football player perpetrating the offence in the absence of communication with others (Holden and Rodenberg, 2017). We have also come across schemes that are rather ‘disorganised’ with multiple actors forming a horizontal network (match-fixing in Greece) to hierarchical entities which basically correspond to the structure of a corporation that is a professional football club (i.e. Fenerbahçe in Turkey).

In both cases the individuals who were involved in the manipulation were indeed already embedded in the sport ecosystem, even holding important positions within it. The structures of the systems were also reflected in the processes followed in the two cases, with the flat system utilising creative steps and flexible relations and the hierarchical system using relations built over a long period of time in both legal and illegal settings. In both cases, however, and despite the different structures, the processes followed bear many similarities with a small number of steps followed from the initiation to the fixing of the events. While secrecy and discretion do not appear to be a priority in both cases, with the Greek case being often less covert than the Turkish, the two cases demonstrate the key role that middle-men played in ensuring that actors such as football players were convinced to participate in the fixing.³ In regard to convincing actors to participate, it is worth emphasising that while the use of the promise of a reward appears to be used in both cases, the use of threat or intimidation emerged only in the Greek case. All the above allow us to once again underline that despite the examination of match-fixing in the same sport, professional football, and in relatively similar contexts, manipulation of sport events is a complex phenomenon that can be thus difficult to generalise and, as a result, challenging to tackle.

With regards to UEFA responses to match-fixing, a relevant key issue to highlight is UEFA’s sanctioning against individuals, or lack thereof. Even though the individuals involved in these cases had been under its jurisdiction, UEFA tends to sanction the clubs rather than the individuals. This is despite of the fact that Article 6 of UEFA’s disciplinary regulations (UEFA, 2020) clearly stating member associations, clubs and individuals directly involved with football may be disqualified from current and future competitions, while individuals might be also faced with suspensions from their roles for a certain or indefinite amount of time, or even bans from any football related activity. Nevertheless, in the cases examined in both countries, in the criminal proceedings the majority of individuals were either acquitted or the decisions of imprisonment were overturned upon appeals (Manoli & Antonopoulos, 2015; Yilmaz, Manoli, & Antonopoulos, 2018). More importantly, some of the key individuals have remained active in the governance of Greek and Turkish football since then, raising numerous questions regarding the responses of the national and the international governing bodies of the sport. One potential reason behind this noted reluctance to enforce their sanctioning powers appears to be the interconnectivity between football and politics and the close connections that some

³ Of course, middle-men have been present in other contexts too. In ‘*Calciopoli*’, for instance, one of the main protagonists was the director of football at Juventus, Luciano Moggi, who was strategically situated in a wide network of politicians, administrators, referees, and journalists (Doidge, 2018).

individuals within the realm of football have developed with the national and international governing bodies' officials and politicians (Efimerida Syndakton, 2019), as it is discussed below.

This in turn highlights that the very nature of the phenomenon is not the only challenge to the tackling of match-fixing. There are national cultural and financial conditions that are conducive to corruption in sport. These cultural and economic conditions include, firstly, politics. Politicians in Greece and Turkey have been unjustifiably favourable towards football clubs either in a direct or an indirect manner, in fear of the significant political cost entailed in possibly denying them extravagant favours (see Dimitropoulos, 2006; 2010). In Greece the clubs participating in match-fixing and other corrupt activities are protected against any significant punishment by the politicians of the locality in which the clubs are based. The level of interconnectedness between football and politics in Greece is -among other- exemplified by the fact that the current mayor of Piraeus (hometown of Olympiakos FC), was formerly the vice-chairman of Olympiakos, and that other members of Piraeus municipal council include the *current* president and owner of the club. At the same time, the President of Olympiakos Volou who was even imprisoned for his involvement in the match-fixing scandal, was later elected and is until this day the Mayor of the club's hometown, Volos (Efimerida Syndakton, 2019). A similar situation has existed in Turkey where there has been an actively symbiotic relation between crime, corruption and the state authorities and actors (see Bovenkerk and Yeşilgöz, 2007). From the moment the *Sike Davasi* scandal hit the news, there were significant political interventions at critical moments including a decisive intervention in November 2011, when the Turkish parliament convened to amend Sports Law No.6222 that had only been in effect since April 2011, in Fenerbahçe's favour, to reduce sentences for match-fixing and other illegal activities around sports (Kuyumcu, 2014).

Secondly, policies against match-fixing ignore or overlook the *financial* football-related context in both countries. Since the professionalisation of the sport in both countries, football has been used as a platform of action for extremely powerful individuals who use clubs and the popular support for them not only as an income source *per se* (tickets, advertisements, merchandise, TV and other broadcasting rights, etc.) which is particularly the case for big clubs, but also as a vehicle for tax evasion and money laundering, as a protection shield against the state, and as leverage towards securing state bids (see Manoli et al., 2017). From the moment football clubs are companies that are to be protected as 'investments', sport itself becomes a secondary concern. Especially Champions League, a European-wide competition of top clubs organised by UEFA, generating large revenues for participation, distorts the European domestic leagues' balance by rewarding the successful football clubs even further (Vrooman, 2007). This is especially the case with domestic football leagues whose winner automatically enters the Champion League's group phase such as the Greek and Turkish football leagues. The stakes are too high to be left to football alone and club owners try to win at all cost (Anderson, 2013), especially when the overall football framework in a country is weak and susceptible, as we mentioned earlier, to external (and internal) influences. As such, in these already competitively imbalanced leagues, outcome unpredictability is no longer wanted, with football related success leading to financial rewards and further competitive imbalance among the teams. As a result, while competitive imbalance assists in making the ground fertile, it can only be considered one of the many reasons why manipulation of sport competitions can exist in these leagues, which appear to be in a ferocious and damaging vicious circle. This pervasive corruption in the world of Greek and Turkish football has been demonstrated to basically act as providing a comparative advantage to those structures which do not operate according to officially established rules, and in such an environment we find that it is hardly surprising that in both countries the clubs that are accused as constituting the basis for match-fixing schemes (irrespective of their longevity) are the main beneficiaries of match-fixing in their countries.

A key part of the challenges arising in regard to tackling match-fixing that emerges through the examination of the above two cases, and a distinct difference between the two cases, is the (in)consistency in the implementation of policy responses to fixing. As it was shown above, even though UEFA's responses to match-fixing are designed to be implemented in all countries that fall under its jurisdiction, the way in which bans from European competitions were implemented in the clubs involved in the two scandals, raise questions regarding policy implementation. As such, even though UEFA's comprehensive policy against football matches manipulation is clearly stated, its implementation, in particular the normative framework enabling sanctions against match-fixing, in the two cases reveals an inconsistency that can prove fundamentally problematic in the fight against match-fixing, notably by the implementation, or lack thereof, of bans against the clubs and the individuals involved. While it is worth highlighting that UEFA expressed their support to both countries' football and legal authorities in their efforts to investigate the two cases, the way in which they responded to the cases differs substantially, raising questions on what lessons can be learned in future cases of match-fixing. Perhaps the next step in the analysis of match-fixing is the focus on the most predominant football industry actors, the (national and international) football authorities, since these (directly or indirectly), by action, inaction or differential action, operate as the ultimate match-fixing determiners in the same way a ruling authority, democratic or otherwise, creates an illegal market by declaring certain preferences and conducts 'undesirable' and prohibiting relevant services and commodities (e.g. drugs). This 'criminogenic asymmetry' (Passas, 1998) embedded in UEFA's 'asymmetry of implementation' in the response to match-fixing in Greece and Turkey, sends a mixed message about tolerating match-fixing, and although it does not necessarily create the original circumstances that match-fixing actors capitalise upon (see Passas, 2001), it certainly unintentionally facilitates them. This asymmetry may in fact be an unintended consequence of football policy with governing bodies being an internal component of the match-fixing 'market' while the focus is on the 'usual suspects' of football match-fixing such as football players, clubs and referees.

To conclude, this study focused on two match-fixing cases in Greece and Turkey, in order to explore the complexity of the organisation of match-fixing, through the investigation of the key actors and processes involved, while also examining UEFA's response to the cases through the implementation of its normative framework. Through the study, insights to the multifaceted social and organisational structure of match-fixing were offered, from flat, flexible, horizontal networks to long-term relations in a hierarchical entity, enriching our understanding of how sport competitions can be manipulated, often by individuals already embedded in the sport ecosystem. At the same time, the examination of the inconsistency in which UEFA responded to the two cases allowed us to critically analyse the effectiveness of UEFA's normative framework based on the way in which it was implemented and its deviation from the self-proclaimed zero tolerance to match-fixing. This inconsistency identified, paired with the political embeddedness of football and the financial implications of football success, stemming in part from the competitive imbalance within the leagues, in both countries further stress the complexity of the phenomenon of match-fixing and the existence of significant gaps in the governance of the sport and the protection of its integrity.

Limitations and Further research

The limitations of our study reflect primarily the limitations of the data we have utilised for both country case studies. Firstly, official data and accounts -among other- in the form of trial transcripts and case files are the result of law enforcement activity, which in turn is the result of resource restrictions, the competency of agents involved, organisational priorities, as well as wider political priorities (see, for example, Kinzig, 2004). By the time researchers get to examine files, details irrelevant to the prospect of successful prosecution are removed.

Similarly, paperwork relating to relationships between the accused and individuals not connected with the specificities of a particular case will also be excluded, along with details of those whose guilt has been renegotiated as a result of the provision of information (see Hobbs and Antonopoulos, 2014).

Secondly, wiretap records from the authorities, such as the ones used in the Greek case, can stand in direct opposition to the monolithic hierarchical structures that tended to dominate media accounts. However, as Malm *et al.* (2008: 84) explicitly put it, “*it is impossible to collect all of the possible nodes (individuals) and edges (ties between individuals) in a network without surveying the individuals involved. However, the hidden, illicit nature of criminal networks makes surveying participants difficult*”. By extracting and disregarding all aspects of the offenders lifeworld (including their personal qualities) other than aspects of criminality relating to the evidential base of a specific police case, the variables of relationality upon which formal network analysis are founded are restricted (Hobbs and Antonopoulos, 2014). As any product of the authorities, the content of these files is the product of police activity.

Thirdly, there are limitations with the media (and other open) sources used. In this study, we have used media sources for the purely ‘technical’ information they provide which assist us in making inferences about match-fixing. However, when media sources are used as sources of technical information about any instance of illegal activity, they should be treated very cautiously for a variety of reasons. Not only do they most often refer to those cases which the authorities came across, thus ignoring cases of successful/undetected (match-fixing) schemes, but they also tend to present the issues relation to match-fixing or the activity/market itself in a sensational and morally charged manner something that has a limited analytical value. Moreover, sources such as search engines or newspaper archives, which material is drawn from, depend on the researcher providing keywords, a process which may lead to the exclusion of reports that are *peripherally* relevant but extremely important for the wider context of the study (Jewkes, 2011).

Finally, in relation to the interviews with the informed actors, one can never be absolutely certain about the validity of the accounts although practices such as ‘cross-checking’ and ‘member checking’ that we have employed can significantly contribute towards eliminating untruthful accounts.

We, of course, acknowledge that focusing on only two particular match-fixing cases in two contexts raises an issue in terms of the generalisability of our discussion. Nevertheless, through our study we do not aim to generalise the findings, but instead offer insights to two match-fixing cases and the policy responses by which they were met, which can act as an indication of similar patterns of match-fixing organisation or policy responses in similar cases. Future research could explore this topic on a wider scale and in similar or less similar settings, while a longitudinal study could also examine how the policy responses might have affected the sporting contexts in which match-fixing took place.

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