

Research pre-registration template

Tentative Title: Evaluating the Impact of Financial Fair Play (FFP) Regulations on European Football

Author: Derek Siriboe

Description

Please give a brief description of your study, including some background, the purpose of the study, or broad research questions (use the headers provided below). What gap in knowledge does the research propose to fill? Use citations as appropriate.

Background: UEFA's Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules are meant to protect football clubs' finances by limiting how much they can spend compared to how much they earn. These rules have had a big effect on how football clubs work, how investors make decisions, and the overall economy of football.

Knowledge gap: It is clear what FFP is trying to do, but it is still unclear how it will actually affect clubs' behavior, competitive balance, and ability to stay in business. So I plan to get a full picture of these effects.

Purpose of study: To find out how FFP rules affect the financial health, competitiveness, and behavior in the transfer market of European football clubs.

Research Questions:

How have FFP regulations affected the financial health of European football clubs?

What impact have FFP regulations had on competitive balance within European football leagues?

How have transfer market activities and player valuations changed in response to FFP regulations?

Hypotheses

List specific, concise, testable hypotheses. Please state if the hypotheses are directional or non-directional. If directional, state the direction. A predicted effect is also appropriate here. If a specific interaction or moderation is important, you can list that as a separate hypothesis.

The FFP rules have made European football clubs' overall finances better by lowering their debt levels and raising their profits (directional).

The FFP rules have made it more competitive between clubs in European leagues (directional).

Overspending on transfers and overvaluing players have gone down since FFP rules were put in place (directional).

Study design

Describe your study design. Typical study designs for observation studies include cohort, cross sectional, and case-control studies. Will you be making paired comparison, time-series analysis, or meta-analysis, for example?

Time Series Analysis : compare financial indicators from before and after the FFP. It will focus on trends that show how the regulations have changed over time.

Data collection procedures

Please describe the process by which you will collect your data. For studies that use already existing datasets, include information about how you will collect samples, duration of data gathering efforts, source or location of samples, and inclusion criteria. If you are using human subjects, this should include the population from which you obtain subjects, recruitment efforts, IRB approval, how subjects will be selected for eligibility from the initial pool (e.g. inclusion and exclusion rules), and your study timeline. Data sources should clearly be cited, and your plan for assuring proper permission for data use or collection.

Financial databases like Deloitte Football Money League and transfer market databases like Transfermarkt will be used to gather information on club finances, league performance, and transfer activities. The study will look at information from the start of FFP in 2011 up to the present day.

("Transfer Income and Expenditure," Transfermarkt)

Sample size and rationale

Describe the sample size of your study. How many units will be analyzed in the study? This could be the number of people, birds, classrooms, plots, interactions, or countries included. If you are using a clustered or multilevel design, how many units are you collecting at each level of the analysis (i.e. number of players per team per year)? If you don't yet know the exact sample size for your study, describe what you think a sufficient sample size would be for your

study to be able to answer the central research question. What do you think the minimum sample size is? The ideal sample size? For example, if you're using continuously updated data, or data that needs to be searched for and aggregated or collected, how will you know that you have enough? What are the bounds to the data you will use, and why do these make sense given your research question?

Over the course of ten years, the study will look at all clubs in the top five European leagues (Premier League, La Liga, Bundesliga, Serie A, and Ligue 1). This will give a full sample of more than 100 clubs.

Measured variables

Describe each variable that you will measure. You do not need to include any variables that you plan on collecting if they are not going to be included in the main analyses of this study. For example, if you have a large dataset with 85 columns (variables), but you only plan to use 15 in the analysis, you can limit your list here to those 15 variables of interest. If you do not yet know which variables you will use, list the ones you think you will need, to the best of your ability.

Variables include club revenue, profit/loss, debt levels, league standings, points differential, and transfer expenditures.

Statistical models

What statistical model will you use to test each hypothesis listed above? Please include the general type of model (e.g., regression, clustering, classification, t-test, etc.). If it is possible to be more specific, please do so (e.g. ANOVA, multiple regression, SEM, boosted regression trees, etc). How will you interpret the results? Use citations as appropriate.

Checking the effects of FFP on club finances and competitive balance using multiple regression analysis. By looking at patterns in financial health and market behavior before and after FFP implementation, time-series analysis is most likely to be used.

Data exclusion

How will you determine which data points or samples if any to exclude from your analyses? How will outliers be handled?

Data points from clubs not subject to FFP regulations or those with incomplete financial records will be excluded. Outliers will be assessed case by case to determine their relevance.

Missing data

How will you deal with incomplete or missing data?

I hope to deal with the missing data using imputation techniques where appropriate, or by excluding cases with significant missing information relevant to the key variables of interest.

Preparation to carry out the project

Explain your preparation to carry out the project. You may need to learn new skills during the semester, but will mostly need to practice, implement, and hone skills you already have. What skills and methods do you require to complete the project? Where did you acquire them, or what tools or resources will you use to learn them? Specific to the topic/discipline, what intellectual or theoretical background does the project require and how did you develop this background? Use citations as appropriate (i.e. to cite a particular text, learning tool, program, etc.)

Skill preparation: (R, Python)

Disciplinary preparation: A solid understanding of the sports industry's economic and regulatory frameworks.

Additional information

If there is any additional information that you feel needs to be included in your pre-registration, please enter it here. Disclosures of any related work such as replications, research, or other courses that use the same data would be appropriate here.

(Müller, Lammert, and Hovemann 1985)
(Wikipedia contributors 2023)
("20180531 CLFFP_ 2018_en-Final.Pdf • Viewer • UEFA Documents," n.d.)
(Peeters & Szymanski, n.d.)

(Transfermarkt 2020)
("Financial Fair Play and Competitive Balance in European Football: A Long Term Perspective | Emerald Insight," 2021)
(Sport, Business and Management: an International Journal, 2021)
("Deloitte Football Money League 2024," n.d.)

Citations

There should be at least 6-10 citations that correspond to parenthetical citations in the boxes above. Please cite using a consistent format ([APA](#) recommended).

Müller, J. Christian, Joachim Lammert, and Gregor Hovemann. 1985. "The Financial Fair Play Regulations of UEFA: An Adequate Concept to Ensure the Long-Term Viability And..." ResearchGate, January.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/239808093_The_Financial_Fair_Play_Regulations_of_UEFA_An_Adequate_Concept_to_Ensure_the_Long-Term_Viability_and_Sustainability_of_European_Club_Football.

Wikipedia contributors. 2023. "UEFA Financial Fair Play Regulations." Wikipedia. November 29, 2023.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UEFA_Financial_Fair_Play_Regulations.

"20180531 CLFFP_2018_en-Final.Pdf • Viewer • UEFA Documents." n.d.

<https://documents.uefa.com/v/u/MFxeqLNKelkYyh5JSafuhg>.

Peeters, T., & Szymanski, S. (n.d.).

<https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/107369/ecop12031.pdf?sequence>

Transfermarkt. 2020. "UEFA Financial Fair Play - Regulations Eased Due to Covid-19 Pandemic," March 19, 2020.

<https://www.transfermarkt.com/uefa-financial-fair-play-regulations-eased-due-to-covid-19-pandemic/view/news/357295>.

Financial fair play and competitive balance in European football: a long term perspective | Emerald Insight. (2021). *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*, 13(1), 74–92. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBM>

Sport, Business and Management: an International Journal. (2021). Financial Fair Play and Competitive Balance in European Football: A long term perspective. Sport, Business, Management: An International Journal. Manuscript ID SBM-05-2021-0060.R2. Unpublished manuscript.

"Deloitte Football Money League 2024." n.d. Deloitte United Kingdom.

<https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/sports-business-group/articles/deloitte-football-money-league.html>.



Item	wgt	Corresponding pre-registration section(s)	Exemplary (A)
<i>Assignment Process and Attention to Detail</i>	20	Citations Polish and overall presentation	<p>All materials are turned in on time and in the right place. Assignment directions are followed. Required components are all present and submitted on time.</p> <p>Text within the pre-registration is well organized and flows logically, including attention to proofreading and language appropriate to a well-informed non-technical reader. There are ≥ 8 primary literature citations and each also appears in the main text, following standard format (APA or other, not footnotes).</p>
<i>Research Questions and Background</i>	30	Description Hypotheses	The project has a focused and well defined research question that can be addressed with computational, data-driven analysis. Clearly states the proposed research question and the contribution to the knowledge gap the research plans to fill. References clearly situate the project within the scholarly literature for the domain.
<i>Data</i>	30	Data Collection Procedures Sample Size and Rationale Measured Variables Data Exclusion Missing Variables	The focal data set and method(s) are appropriate for the research question. The data are fully described and properly cited. It is clear that the proposed data is accessible and that the student has permission to access and use the data, or that this is likely to be true, pending a request process.
<i>Data Analysis Methods and expected reporting/interpretation of results</i>	10	Study Design Statistical models	<p>Methods are specified clearly enough that it is clearly appropriate for a senior-level <u>data analytics</u> project for the proposed data and variables. Outside sources may be cited to justify why methods were selected, or how they will be learned, used, or interpreted.</p> <p>The expected output (e.g., a research paper, dataset, code, web-based tool, public vs. private...) is clear. Some idea of how the results will be used and interpreted to address the research question is provided.</p>
<i>Self-assessed Preparation</i>	10	Preparation to carry out the project	Explain the student's preparation for this project. Describes the skills and methods required to complete the project, and where the student acquired them, or what tools/resources they will use to learn them. Supported with citations.