

Integrity in football – combatting match manipulation

Background information

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1. Zero-tolerance approach

Match manipulation is a threat that undermines the integrity and credibility of football at different levels of the game.

Match-fixers can be motivated to achieve sporting advantage or to turn a profit from betting markets. In the latter case, match manipulation is often instigated by organised crime networks that infiltrate the sport in an attempt to corrupt players, referees and officials.

The enormous growth of online gambling has seen websites offer live “in-game” betting to users. This is frequently offered internationally and creates opportunities for betting fraud related to football.

The football community, including players, referees, officials, clubs, member associations (MAs), confederations and FIFA, are potential targets for match-fixers who aim to manipulate competition results for betting purposes.

Domestic legal rulings in various countries have highlighted significant loopholes that have restricted courts in their attempts to sentence match-fixers. This has allowed match-fixers to continue to operate in a low-risk but high-profit environment without fear of sanction.

FIFA has a zero-tolerance policy on match manipulation and is committed to protecting the integrity of football by all means necessary.

2. FIFA’s Integrity Initiative

FIFA has developed a wide range of measures and initiatives to support the international football community in its efforts to protect the integrity of the game. The FIFA Security Division continues to develop and coordinate FIFA’s initiatives to tackle and combat match manipulation.

The implementation of integrity initiatives by MAs at national level is encouraged and recommended by FIFA. In this respect, networks of key contact persons responsible for matters relating to match manipulation within each MA are being established. To bolster this activity, FIFA has issued [Specific Recommendations](#) to Combat Match Manipulation, a set of guidelines for MAs which builds on the five pillars of FIFA’s Integrity Initiative: prevention, risk management, information gathering, investigations, and disciplinary proceedings and sanctions.

2.1. Regulatory framework, judicial bodies and enforcement

One of FIFA’s statutory objectives is to promote integrity, ethics and fair play while striving to prevent activities which could jeopardise the integrity of matches, competitions, players, officials and MAs or which could give rise to abuse of [association football](#). FIFA has adapted various codes ([FIFA Code of Ethics](#), [FIFA](#)

[Disciplinary Code](#) and [FIFA Code of Conduct](#)) within its regulatory framework relating to match manipulation to ensure that the objectives set out in its statutes are met.

Additionally, FIFA has issued specific regulations governing international matches which set out the authorisations, notifications and other requirements necessary to organise international matches and/or competitions. These regulations are designed to protect the integrity of the game by creating a framework that allows MAs, confederations and FIFA itself to oversee [international matches and competitions](#).

FIFA has reorganised its judicial bodies to strengthen the enforcement of applicable regulations and introduced the direct election of these judicial bodies by the FIFA Congress and integrity checks for officials serving in certain positions. The FIFA Ethics Committee has been further strengthened by the introduction of a bicameral system which requires the chairmen and deputy chairmen to fulfil [specific independence criteria](#).

In terms of disciplinary action, the FIFA Disciplinary Committee and its chairman act decisively when cases of match manipulation are detected within FIFA's MAs, for example by extending [sanctions](#) to have worldwide effect in accordance with the relevant provisions of the FIFA Disciplinary Code.

2.2. Cooperation and alliances

In the areas of prevention, education and training, FIFA has established partnerships and alliances with key stakeholders at national and international level to combat the global problem of match manipulation. In cooperation with FIFPro, the worldwide representative organisation for all professional football players, FIFA has launched a global awareness-raising campaign primarily focused on players.

Furthermore, FIFA also works closely with law enforcement agencies as well as the relevant public authorities and other sports organisations at national, regional and global level to address issues relating to match manipulation.

2.3. Awareness-raising and education programmes

Increasing awareness of the threat match manipulation poses and how to prevent it is key. In order to raise awareness of the issue, 196 of FIFA's 209 MAs (93%) are involved in associated initiatives, programmes and campaigns. Activities FIFA and its members have undertaken recently include:

- National and regional workshops and conferences designed to bring key stakeholders together in order to benefit the sports community, betting operators and law enforcement agencies (previously organised in collaboration with INTERPOL)
- Training workshops for FIFA officials (e.g. security officers, referees and assistant referees, development officers, instructors, administrators, team delegations and coaches)
- Partnership Development Meetings (PDMs), created following successive collaborative initiatives between FIFA and INTERPOL: these workshops are organised with MAs, relevant government and police authorities, law enforcement agencies, stakeholders from sport and the broader football community as well as betting operators. The objective of the meetings is to support capacity-building and create national-level partnerships.
- Training courses for MA fact finders, developed to better prepare those tasked with establishing the facts in relation to reports, or suspicions, of cases of match manipulation received by MAs and confederations. This should help them conduct an effective inquiry and clearly present the results to

a disciplinary panel. These courses are a key component of FIFA's strategy to address the increasing reports of match manipulation and to enable an effective, coordinated response from MAs.

- Pre-competition briefings of players, referees and officials for all FIFA tournaments
- E-learning programmes aimed at players, coaches, referees and other officials, organised following previous cooperative initiatives between [FIFA and INTERPOL](#)
- Global FIFA/INTERPOL/FIFPro "No to Match-Fixing" campaign primarily targeting players and aiming to raise awareness of the dangers of match manipulation and to provide positive role models for players, as well as educating them on how to recognise, resist and report any attempts to manipulate matches. The three organisations will distribute and utilise a DVD created by FIFPro to raise awareness of this initiative.
- [FIFA Code of Ethics e-learning](#) tool designed to help football officials across the 209 MAs become more familiar with its provisions and thus ensure [compliance](#)
- [Integrity declarations](#) for international, assistant, futsal and beach soccer [referees](#)
- FIFA's guidelines and recommendations on minimum requirements for [contracts of professional football players](#), with provisions relating to match manipulation (e.g. ban on gambling)
- Communications strategy highlighting FIFA's zero-tolerance approach (e.g. [anti-match manipulation TV spot](#) for the FIFA World Cup™)

2.4. Monitoring of the betting market

In 2005, FIFA created Early Warning System GmbH (EWS) to monitor patterns suggestive of suspicious activity within the international sports betting market for all FIFA competitions (including qualification matches) and selected international friendlies. EWS also monitors and analyses matches organised by FIFA's MAs and the confederations on an ad hoc basis. It was announced at the 64th FIFA Congress that EWS would monitor top-flight matches outside Europe – in addition to FIFA competitions. The EWS actively raises awareness of match manipulation via international congresses and seminars attended by members of the football community as well as betting operators and other stakeholders.

2.5. Reporting mechanisms

FIFA has made various channels available which can be used to confidentially report suspected match manipulation activities:

- The FIFA/EWS Integrity Hotline, which is available to the football community for anonymous 24/7 reporting on match manipulation and corruption;
- The confidential [reporting mechanism](#) for potential infringements of the FIFA Code of Ethics and the relevant FIFA regulations and for suspected match manipulation incidents (<https://www.bkms-system.net/FIFA>).

***All information pertaining to the above is available on [FIFA.com](#)