

# **EC / IRIS - GREECE**

## **SEMINAR “FIGHT AGAINST MATCH FIXING”**

**Date:** 6 May 2014

**Place:** Athens (Greece)

**Participants:** cf. appendix

### **Main issues raised during the seminar:**

#### **Level of match fixing risk and awareness:**

- The match fixing risk in Greece is considered as very high;
- There seems to be a quite good level of awareness about match fixing in Greece. Nevertheless, representatives of the sports movement and Transparency International stressed the fact that there is still a strong need for additional information;
- Many match fixing cases have been reported in Greece.

#### **Who has to fight against match fixing?**

- In Greece, public authorities respect the autonomy of sports organisations. Nevertheless, legislation might include the possibility for sports actors to be sanctioned through disciplinary procedures (cf. Law 2725/1999 - Article 132 - § 5). At the moment, public authorities admit that they didn't really implement measures against match fixing, except a dedicated legislation and investigation procedures.
- From its part, the sports movement seems to be ready to accept public intervention in case of public order risks (for instance intrusion of organised Crime within sports structures).
- The idea of developing new strong measures to protect sports integrity and to share information in a national cooperative way is considered important by all participants.
- Greece takes part to the debates on the EPAS convention to fight against match fixing and expressed (through General Secretariat of Sport) strong support to the project.

#### **Sports betting:**

- Many participants had a good level of expertise in betting.
- In Greece, there is a system of monopoly for betting, awarded to OPAP. Nevertheless, some temporary/interim online licences have been granted to 24 betting companies under conditions (including payment of taxes). This creates a quite complex situation, because nobody knows if these licences would be confirmed or not, and because the tax obligations are not met by these

companies. OPAP strongly advocates for a responsible and clear framework, recognizing its monopoly both offline and online.

- Greece fights against illegal betting (black list, IP blocking, advertising ban, payment blocking). Several participants mentioned that some measures are not easy to implement on an operational way (payment blocking for instance).

#### Measures to protect sports integrity:

- Participants give overwhelming support to education and information measures. Representatives of Transparency International and of the State stressed this issue.
- Since 2013, the Hellenic football federation has set up an action plan (still in a pilot phase) to prevent match fixing (using materials provided by FIFA, UEFA, SportAccord, etc.):
  - o Training seminars: national teams (young women and men from national teams, for example U19, Final 4 Pan Hellenic Tournament, etc.);
  - o Train the trainers (to be organised during summer 2014);
  - o All the clubs of the non professional level should be informed before the end of 2015;
  - o The representative of the football federation advocated for the creation of a national task force dealing with match fixing in football (in particular in charge of analysing SportRadar's reports and managing suspicious cases);
  - o Participants (especially representatives from the player's union, already involved in the FIFPro "Don't fix it" project) insisted on the need to develop enhanced report procedures for the players (for example the "Red Button" promoted by FIFPro).
- Transparency International presented the programme co-funded by the EU in 5 different countries (Italy, Germany, UK, Portugal and Greece) and called "Staying on side". Different tools are tested in the participating countries: leaflets on the match fixing risks, booklets for coaches, ombudsman (Germany), face-to-face awareness sessions (especially targeting under 19), online educational game through social media (Facebook), anonymous hotline 24/7 for whistle blowers, etc. Some of these measures will be implemented in Greece in the next months. Super League is also part of this initiative.
- The representative of the Hellenic volleyball federation presented the EU-Athletes programme (proposed in 13 different countries, including Greece). The programme plans to train 14,000 athletes. It is to be noted that, according to a EU-Athletes survey, 55% of the interviewed players were unaware of the regulations on match fixing.
- In Greece, there is a dedicated criminal legislation for Corruption (active and passive bribery for alteration of the result of the Game - Law n°2725/1999 - Article 132). Sanctions are not so important regarding other offences like drugs detention for instance: Imprisonment from 3 months (6 months if the result intended by the perpetrator is achieved) and a fine from around € 3,000;
- Representatives of the Police explained that Greece created a special Division against organised Crime (around 60 employees). It jointly works with the financial intelligence unit against money laundering and illegal gambling;
- The Public Prosecutor insisted on the fact that the burden of proof is a key issue. Indeed, it is very difficult to find evidence regarding match fixing (lawful

interception of telecommunications/lifting the confidentiality of telecommunications is probably the most effective way).

- Several participants stressed the importance of efficient whistle-blowing procedures. Indeed, many (around 50% of them) athletes hesitate to report approaches or match fixing rumours (even those through Facebook or Twitter). In the Greek culture, people don't like to denounce.

Measures	Existing (Yes / No)
<b>Betting: Fight against illegal betting</b>	YES (black list, IP blocking, advertising ban)
<b>Betting: Authorised list of bets</b>	YES (restrictions, no bets on the second Hellenic football division for example)
<b>Betting: Other restrictions (pay out)</b>	NO
<b>Sport: Education programs</b>	YES (starting at least for football, volleyball)
<b>Betting prohibition for sport actors</b>	YES (for football players, it is not possible to bet on the Greek football)
<b>Conflicts of interest: Disclosure of inside information</b>	YES, Disciplinary Code of Football Federation, article 17 par. 2,c
<b>Integrity officer</b>	YES (at least for football)
<b>Sport: Prohibition to control betting operators</b>	NO
<b>Criminal offence &amp; Sanctions</b>	YES (dedicated offence for match fixing – Greek Sports Code : Law 2725/1999 - Article 132)
<b>Betting: Prohibition to control sports when bets are offered</b>	NO
<b>Contract between sport and betting</b>	NO
<b>Intelligence and monitoring</b>	YES in football (through OPAP/ELMS and UEFA / SportRadar)

#### Next steps and recommendations:

Greece may possibly look into the 5 following priority items:

- Implementation of official cooperation at a national level, not only in football (towards a national action plan), for example through a specific working group (proposal: representatives of the Ministries of Finance, Interior, Justice and Sport, of the National Olympic Committee and the Sports Confederation, of the main sports federations and of OPAP, the legal betting operator). The aim of this group could be to think jointly about model rules, conflicts of interests procedures and measures to fight against match fixing.
- Appointment of an “integrity officer” in each “big” sport Federation, and in the Hellenic Olympic Committee.
- Implementation of education programmes focusing on face-to-face (players, referees) and “train the trainers” in the main federations (including first of all professional football teams). Transparency International suggested creating a special national unit dedicated to education. It could be managed by both TI and the General Secretariat of Sport.
- Set up of some conflicts of interest rules and first of all betting prohibition for all the sports stakeholders (players, referees, coaches, etc.), not only for football.

- Development of enhanced cooperation between sports organisations and OPAP about betting expertise and betting related risks.

# APPENDIX

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