

# EP SM

EVIDENCE-BASED PREVENTION OF SPORTING-RELATED MATCH-FIXING

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

Did you know that match-fixing is not always about betting on results or events in or during a match? Also for other reasons matches are 'fixed' and results are affected. It may cross paths of every athlete, coaches, board member or referees in competitive sport, on both the amateur and elite level. This phenomenon is called non-betting-related match-fixing or 'sporting-related match-fixing' and does not have to be related to betting.

## **EPOSM**

Sporting-related match-fixing is subject of study in the EPOSM project and collaborative partnership. EPOSM stands for Evidence-based Prevention Of Sporting-related Match-fixing, and is a partnership between academic and non-academic parties. The EPOSM project is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union and studies sporting-related match-fixing in different sport disciplines across Europe.

EPOSM conducts applied academic research in collaboration with many national sport organizations and governmental bodies in the following seven countries: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The project has started in 2020 and takes until 2022. EPOSM stands for "raising knowledge, awareness and moral judgment about sporting-related match-fixing among people involved in sport, by using an evidence-based approach that can inspire others."

The project aims to:

- Raise awareness about the prevalence of sporting-related match-fixing;
- Stimulate moral judgment regarding the fact that sporting-related match-fixing is wrong, as it threatens the credibility and attractiveness of sport;
- Share and transfer knowledge on sporting-related match-fixing through the organization of a training procedure.

## **Partners**

The project is coordinated by Ghent University, and the French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs (IRIS) is one of the non-academic partners. IRIS was responsible for the data collection and knowledge dissemination in France. Other project partners include Utrecht University, Play Fair Code, Croatian Olympic Committee, Lausanne University, Loughborough University, Panathlon International, International Centre Ethics in Sport (ICES), and Counter Sport Corruption Foundation for Sport Integrity (CSCF). The Council of Europe is an associated partner organization of the EPOSM project.

## **EPOSM study in France**

In France, the project focuses on football, tennis, and handball. In 2020, between April and November, an online survey was conducted among respondents in these three sport disciplines.

## **Survey results and next steps**

This document shows the first results of the survey among actors involved in football, tennis, and handball in France. On the basis of these results, IRIS will develop concrete action plans for these three sport disciplines. The action plans will serve as roadmaps toward raising knowledge, awareness and moral judgment on sporting-related match-fixing in France and will be implemented during several workshops with relevant actors in French football, tennis, and handball.



## **2 DATA COLLECTION METHOD**

### **2.1 Sampling method**

First of all, the questionnaire was widely distributed throughout France, thanks in particular to local clubs in the North, South West and South East of France. However, we cannot be certain that any of the people from the French overseas territories responded to the questionnaire, as the answers were anonymous.

In order to disseminate the questionnaire as widely as possible, we have chosen to develop a three-pronged approach.

First of all, we directly contacted federations and leagues in charge of the three sports we had to study: football, tennis and handball in order to ensure that these bodies could help us to disseminate this form among their practitioners and licensees.

Secondly, we also chose to communicate this questionnaire widely *via* social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram) thanks to customized messages. We widely disseminated the questionnaire on the social networks of the team members as well as the institution, which benefits from a very high visibility. In order to maximise the chances of being seen, we also made a short video<sup>1</sup> presenting the objective of this study and encouraging players, both professional and amateur, to participate.

Finally, we personally solicited players, both professional and amateur, coaches and referees, so that they could answer our questionnaire anonymously.

Although the results were initially very poor, the deployment of this three-pronged strategy has produced some interesting results.

Football and tennis were chosen as these sport disciplines have already been plagued by a large number of match-fixing incidents. As for the third sport, we chose handball for several reasons. On the one hand, because this sport was the subject of a match-fixing scandal in 2012 involving international players. This "Montpellier-Cesson" affair created a real awareness in the world of sport and handball in particular. This has led the federation, as well as the leagues and players' unions, to deploy different strategies to better train and raise awareness of these issues among players. On the other hand, handball is an important sport in France, especially among the school and university public. Moreover, the performances of French clubs and the French teams, both men's and women's, make this sport a high-profile one.

### **2.2 Contact method**

As described above, we have tried to work from a threefold approach.

Firstly, we contacted the federations and leagues of these sports directly, offering them an appointment and asking them to distribute the questionnaires to their players. They were also asked to participate in the project by involving them in the follow-up of the project.

Due to a low response, we decided to contact the French ministry of Sports and a fourth federation: badminton, which had also been involved in match-fixing cases. The response was immediate and the questionnaire was widely distributed among the clubs. In addition, we were able to obtain anonymous

<sup>1</sup> Video « L'IRIS recherche des joueurs/joueuses de football, tennis, handball pour participer à une étude », juillet 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuxNITz1jjQ>



testimonies from international players. Finally, the tennis federation and the association of professional handball players responded favourably to our requests and were able to distribute the questionnaire among their players, enabling us to obtain new responses.

At the same time, we decided to disseminate the questionnaire widely on social networks, firstly in an open and general way, secondly by tagging sports personalities, and thirdly by posting this message within private groups of players or clubs.

Finally, in order to maximise our chances of getting a response, we decided to personally contact players who are still active or not, both amateurs and professionals, referees and clubs with whom we have ties, in order to obtain more responses.

## 2.3 Reminders

We contacted the federations at the beginning of April and May, without much success, certainly due to the period corresponding to the first lockdown in France. The whole world of sport was at a standstill at the time and several federations told us that, in view of the circumstances, this investigation did not seem to be a priority.

We therefore communicated widely via social networks to obtain feedback, through messages (May, June) or a video (July). The results obtained in July 2020 were relatively poor, as only 16 people had completed the questionnaire.

On the advice of several federations, we contacted them again in September, and at that time we put the emphasis back on communication, both institutional and personal through our contacts, but also digital via social networks.

A last reminder was sent to every contact (league, federations, clubs, personal contacts) during October in order to collect some news testimonies.

In total, 2 475 people started the survey and 359 of them fully completed the questionnaire (response rate = 14,5%). We decided to retain the partially completed questionnaires that were completed for 37,5% or more, as questionnaires with less answers had no substantial value. Subsequently, we checked the main sport disciplines of the respondents. When there was a missing value for the question examining the main sport discipline, the respondent was removed from the sample, since the main sport discipline is vital information. Lastly, we checked the age of the respondents. All respondents under the age of 18 were removed from the sample, conform institutional ethics standards. A final sample of 359 respondents was obtained.

## 3 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was performed with SPSS 24 software. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the respondents' characteristics (section 4), the prevalence of match-fixing (section 6), the reporting of match-fixing suspicions and experiences (section 7), and the preventive measures against match-fixing in sport clubs (section 8). Additionally, one-way multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs, followed by univariate analyses) were used to examine the differences between the three sport disciplines (football, tennis, and handball) regarding several statements about match-fixing (section 5). Moreover, the number of match-fixing cases per sport discipline in the total sample of the project (sample of all seven countries together) was added to section 6.2.1, to compare the French prevalence figures of the three sport disciplines with the figures of the total sample.



## 4 RESPONDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS

Thanks to the different distribution channels of the survey (social networks, clubs, players' union etc.), the profiles of the respondents are relatively varied. The typical profile would be a 33-year-old player who has played for 17 and a half years at amateur level, at national level.

Table 1: Overview of the respondents' characteristics (n = 359)

	Total (n = 359)	Football (n = 81)	Tennis (n = 33)	Handball (n = 138)	Other (n = 107)
<b>Language</b>					
French	99,4%	98,8%	100%	99,3%	100%
English	0,6%	1,2%	0,0%	0,7%	0,0%
<b>Gender</b>					
Man	69,4%	65,4%	63,6%	69,6%	73,8%
Woman	30,6%	34,6%	36,4%	30,4%	26,2%
Other	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
I prefer not to say	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
<b>Age: M (SD)*</b>	33,3 (11,3)	32,9 (11,2)	29,9 (9,6)	31,7 (8,9)	36,8 (13,8)
<b>How long have you been involved in this sport (in years)? M (SD)*</b>	17,6 (9,6)	17,1 (10,7)	16,5 (8,3)	17,7 (8,4)	18,0 (10,5)
<b>How are (were) you mainly related to this sport?</b>					
Athlete	62,7%	84,0%	97,0%	45,7%	57,9%
Coach / Trainer / Assistant coach	2,5%	3,7%	3,0%	0,0%	4,7%
Medical staff	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
Referee / (Video) Assistant Referee / (Fourth) official / Jury member	31,5%	7,4%	0,0%	53,6%	30,8%
Board member / Assembly member / Manager of a sport club	1,7%	1,2%	0,0%	0,7%	3,7%
Other	1,4%	2,5%	0,0%	0,0%	2,8%
<b>At what level are (were) you mainly involved?</b>					
Professional	16,4%	3,7%	39,4%	22,5%	11,2%
Semi-professional	12,8%	4,9%	9,1%	20,3%	10,3%
Amateur	70,8%	91,4%	51,5%	57,2%	78,5%
<b>At what playing level are (were) you mainly involved?</b>					
International	13,6%	3,7%	39,4%	7,2%	21,5%
National	44,6%	12,3%	15,2%	73,9%	40,2%
Local	36,8%	76,5%	27,3%	17,4%	34,6%
Leisure activity / Recreational	5,0%	7,4%	18,2%	1,4%	3,7%



\*M = mean, SD = standard deviation

## 5 STATEMENTS

Respondents were asked to answer a number of statements about match-fixing on a seven-point Likert scale, whereby “1” means “strongly disagree,” and “7” means “strongly agree.”

Table 2: Match-fixing: its seriousness, and risks (n = 252)

	“Match-fixing is a real problem in my sport discipline in France.”	“I could be approached myself to fix a match. (regardless of whether or not you would agree to it)”
Sport discipline	(M ± SD)	(M ± SD)
Football (n = 81)	4,1 ± 1,3	1,9 ± 1,3
Tennis (n = 33)	4,7 ± 1,7	3,0 ± 2,3
Handball (n = 138)	2,8 ± 1,7	2,4 ± 1,8

M = mean, SD = standard deviation

A significant difference is noticed between the three sport disciplines regarding the statements (a) “Match-fixing is a real problem in my sport discipline in France,” and (b) “I could be approached myself to fix a match. (regardless of whether or not you would agree to it)” (one-way MANOVA: Wilks’  $\lambda = .779$ ,  $F(4, 496) = 16.511$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .118$ ). As shown in the first column of Table 2, a significant difference is noticed between the sport disciplines regarding the belief that their sport is compromised by match-fixing (univariate effect:  $F(2, 249) = 28.919$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .188$ ). The people involved in handball assess the risk of match-fixing in their sport significantly lower than do the actors in football (Tukey’s honestly significant difference test [Tukey’s HSD]  $p < .001$ ) and tennis (Tukey’s HSD  $p < .001$ ). Additionally, no significant difference is noticed between the people involved in tennis and football (Tukey’s HSD  $p > .10$ ) regarding the belief that their sport is compromised by match-fixing. As shown in the second column of Table 2, a significant difference is noticed between the sport disciplines regarding the estimation of whether they could be approached themselves for a match-fixing proposal (univariate effect:  $F(2, 249) = 4.827$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .037$ ). The people involved in football believe that there is a much lower chance that they could be confronted with proposals to fix a match than is the case with those involved in tennis (Tukey’s HSD  $p < .01$ ). Moreover, no significant difference was found between the people involved in football and those involved in handball (Tukey’s HSD  $p > .10$ ). Furthermore, no significant difference was noticed between those involved in tennis and handball (Tukey’s HSD  $p > .10$ ) when it comes to the estimation of whether or not they could be approached themselves for a match-fixing proposal.

Table 3: Uncomfortable feelings about others who have been involved in match-fixing (n = 252)

	“I feel somewhat uncomfortable when I hear that someone in my sporting environment has been involved in <b>sporting-related match-fixing</b> . (e.g. to avoid relegation of his / her team)”	“I feel somewhat uncomfortable when I hear that someone in my sporting environment has been involved in <b>betting-related match-fixing</b> .”
Sport discipline	(M ± SD)	(M ± SD)
Football (n = 81)	5,8 ± 1,3	6,1 ± 1,0



Tennis (n = 33)	6,4 ± 1,0	6,4 ± 1,0
Handball (n = 138)	6,1 ± 1,2	6,2 ± 1,2

M = mean, SD = standard deviation

No significant difference is noticed between the three sport disciplines regarding the statements (a) “I feel somewhat uncomfortable when I hear that someone in my sporting environment has been involved in sporting-related match-fixing. (e.g. to avoid relegation of his / her team),” and (b) “I feel somewhat uncomfortable when I hear that someone in my sporting environment has been involved in betting-related match-fixing” (one-way MANOVA: Wilks’  $\lambda = .975$ ,  $F(4, 496) = 1.595$ ,  $p > .10$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .013$ ). As shown in the first column of Table 3, a significant difference is noticed between the sport disciplines regarding uncomfortable feelings when hearing about others that have been involved in sporting-related match-fixing (univariate effect:  $F(2, 249) = 3.091$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .024$ ). A trend towards a significant difference is noticed between the people involved in football and tennis (Tukey’s HSD  $.10 > p > .05$ ) when it comes to uncomfortable feelings when hearing about others that have been involved in sporting-related match-fixing. No significant difference is found between those involved in football and handball (Tukey’s HSD  $p > .10$ ), and between those involved in tennis and handball (Tukey’s HSD  $p > .10$ ). As shown in the second column of Table 3, no significant difference is noticed between the sport disciplines regarding uncomfortable feelings when hearing about others that have been involved in betting-related match-fixing (univariate effect:  $F(2, 249) = 1.197$ ,  $p > .10$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .010$ ).

Table 4: Uncomfortable feelings about others who have not been punished for match-fixing (n = 252)

	“I feel somewhat uncomfortable when I hear that someone has not been punished for engaging in <b>sporting-related match-fixing.</b> ”	“I feel somewhat uncomfortable when I hear that someone has not been punished for engaging in <b>betting-related match-fixing.</b> ”
Sport discipline	(M ± SD)	(M ± SD)
Football (n = 81)	6,0 ± 1,3	5,9 ± 1,1
Tennis (n = 33)	6,2 ± 1,6	6,1 ± 1,3
Handball (n = 138)	6,2 ± 1,0	6,0 ± 1,3

M = mean, SD = standard deviation

No significant difference is noticed between the three sport disciplines regarding the statements (a) “I feel somewhat uncomfortable when I hear that someone has not been punished for engaging in sporting-related match-fixing,” and (b) “I feel somewhat uncomfortable when I hear that someone has not been punished for engaging in betting-related match-fixing” (one-way MANOVA: Wilks’  $\lambda = .990$ ,  $F(4, 496) = .650$ ,  $p > .10$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .005$ ). As shown in the first column of Table 4, no significant difference is noticed between the sport disciplines regarding uncomfortable feelings when hearing about others who have not been punished for engaging in sporting-related match-fixing (univariate effect:  $F(2, 249) = 1.165$ ,  $p > .10$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .009$ ). As shown in the second column of Table 4, no significant difference is noticed between the sport disciplines regarding uncomfortable feelings when hearing about others who have not been punished for engaging in betting-related match-fixing (univariate effect:  $F(2, 249) = .347$ ,  $p > .10$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .003$ ).





Table 5: Acceptability of match-fixing (n = 252)

	“Participating in match-fixing to avoid relegation of my team, is acceptable.”	“Participating in match-fixing to make money through betting, is acceptable.”
Sport discipline	(M ± SD)	(M ± SD)
Football (n = 81)	1,8 ± 1,2	1,5 ± 1,0
Tennis (n = 33)	1,3 ± 0,8	1,2 ± 0,6
Handball (n = 138)	1,3 ± 0,8	1,2 ± 0,6

M = mean, SD = standard deviation

A significant difference is noticed between the three sport disciplines regarding the statements (a) “Participating in match-fixing to avoid relegation of my team, is acceptable” and (b) “Participating in match-fixing to make money through betting, is acceptable” (one-way MANOVA: Wilks’  $\lambda = .935$ ,  $F(4, 496) = 4.233$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .033$ ). As shown in the first column of Table 5, a significant difference is noticed between the sport disciplines regarding the acceptability of match-fixing to avoid relegation of his / her team (univariate effect:  $F(2, 249) = 7.553$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .057$ ). People involved in football perceive match-fixing to avoid relegation of his / her team as more acceptable than do the actors in tennis (Tukey’s HSD  $p < .05$ ) and handball (Tukey’s HSD  $p = .001$ ). Additionally, no significant difference was found between those involved in tennis and handball (Tukey’s HSD  $p > .10$ ) regarding the acceptability of match-fixing to avoid relegation of someone’s team. As shown in the second column of Table 5, a significant difference is noticed between the sport disciplines regarding the acceptability of match-fixing to make money through betting (univariate effect:  $F(2, 249) = 3.876$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .030$ ). The people involved in football perceive match-fixing to make money through betting as more acceptable than those involved in handball (Tukey’s HSD  $p < .05$ ). Furthermore, no significant difference was found between those involved in football and tennis (Tukey’s HSD  $p > .10$ ), and those involved in tennis and handball (Tukey’s HSD  $p > .10$ ), regarding the acceptability of match-fixing to make money through betting.

To end the statements section, respondents were asked to answer two statements about gambling and betting. **The statements in Table 6 give an indication about the respondents’ gambling and betting experiences, BUT are not related to the prevalence of match-fixing!**

Table 6: Two statements about gambling and betting (n = 252)

Sport discipline	“I gambled during the past year.”		“I have already bet on a match in which I was personally involved.”	
	True	False	True	False
Football (n = 81)	42,0%	58,0%	2,5%	97,5%
Tennis (n = 33)	12,1%	87,9%	0,0%	100%
Handball (n = 138)	19,6%	80,4%	0,7%	99,3%



## 6 PREVALENCE OF MATCH-FIXING

### 6.1 Do you personally know anyone who has been approached to fix a game / match?

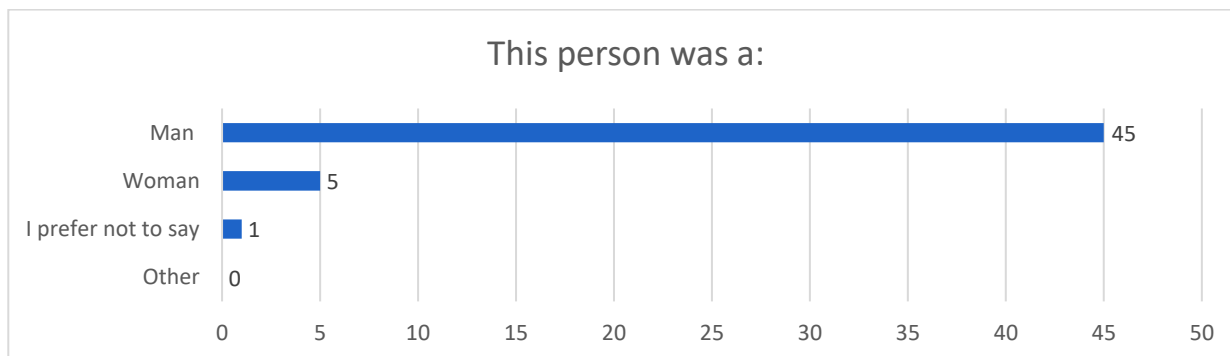
Respondents were asked whether they personally knew anyone who has been approached to fix a game / match. As shown in Table 7, in the vast majority of cases, respondents did not know anyone who had been approached (85,7%). **51 respondents (14,3%)** indicated that they personally knew one or more persons who had been approached to fix a game / match.

*Table 7: Respondents who personally knew someone who had been approached for match-fixing (n = 357)*

	“Do you personally know anyone who has been approached to fix a game / match?”	
	Figures	Percent
Yes, I know one person	30	8,4%
Yes, I know two persons	7	1,9%
Yes, I know three or more persons	14	3,9%
No	306	85,7%

When they thought of the approached person they knew best, they indicated that:

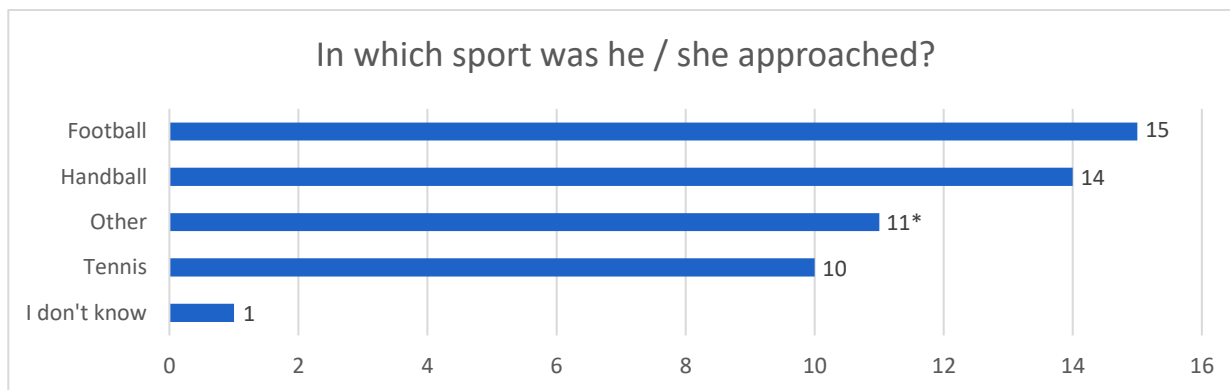
*Figure 1: Gender of the approached person they knew best (n = 51)*



In the vast majority of cases, the person approached was a man (88%), a figure higher than the percentage of men who responded to the questionnaire (69.4%). Men would therefore appear to be approached more than women.

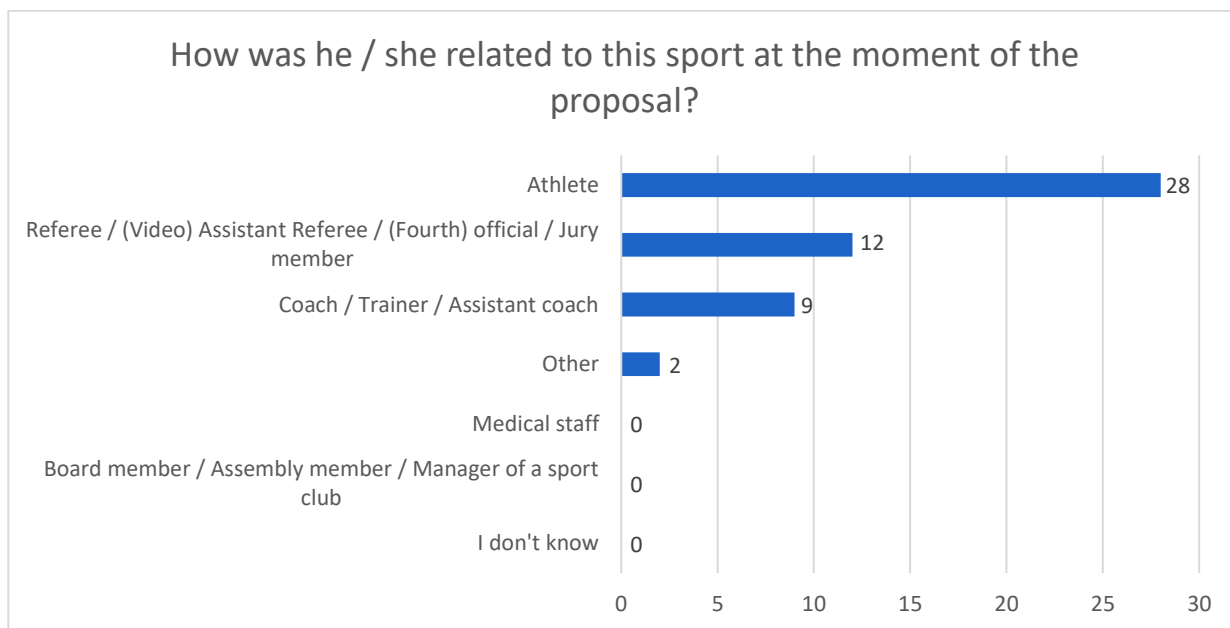


Figure 2: Sport discipline of the approached person they knew best (n = 51)



\*Eleven respondents indicated that the person they knew best was involved in “another sport discipline.” More specifically, they indicated the following sport disciplines: 5x badminton, 2x basketball, 2x fencing, 1x judo, and 1x rugby.

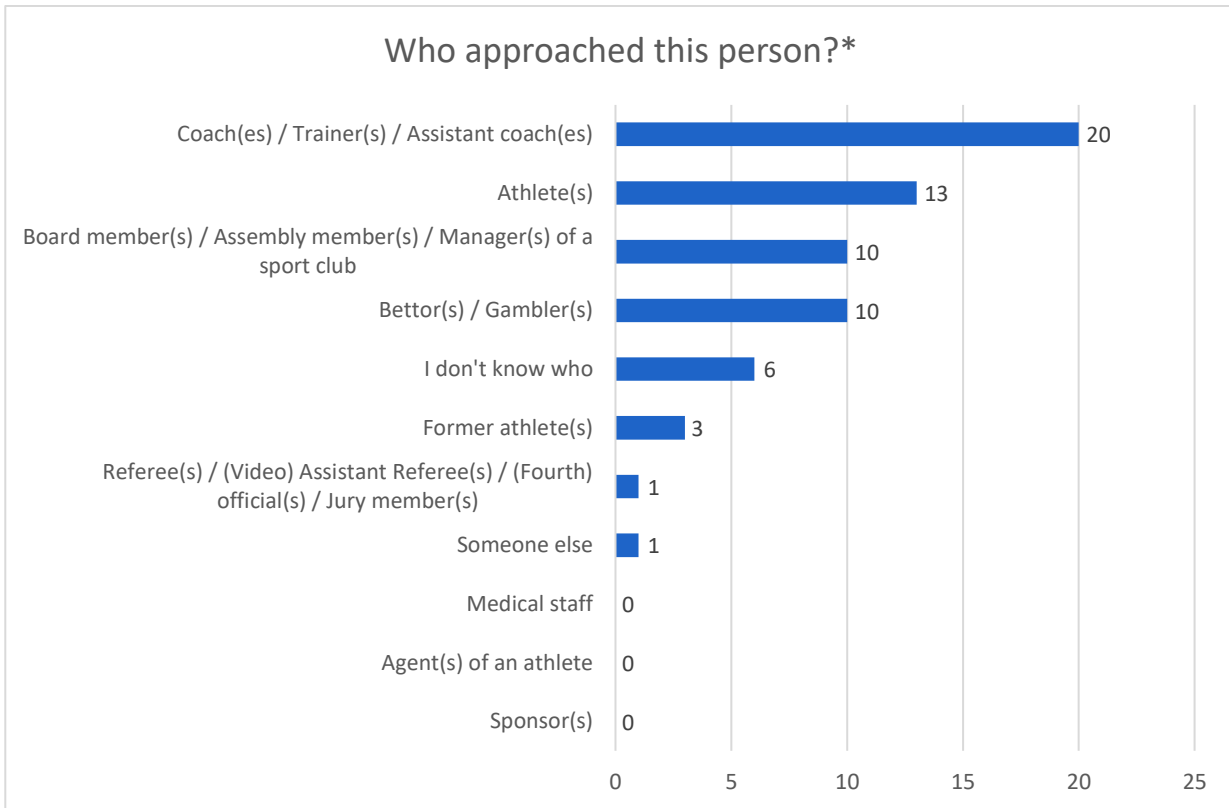
Figure 3: Way of involvement of the approached person they knew best (n = 51)



In more than half of the cases (55%), the person approached is a player. If we add the coach, this total rises to 73%.



Figure 4: The people who approached the person they knew best (n = 51)



\*The sum of the figures exceeds 51, because multiple answers were possible to the question.

## 6.2 Have you yourself ever been approached to fix a game / match?

### 6.2.1 Match-fixing cases in general

Respondents were asked whether they had already been approached personally for a match-fixing proposal. Table 8 depicts an overview of the number of match-fixing cases, reported by the respondents in the questionnaire.

Table 8: Cases of having been approached themselves in the French sample (n = 356)

Sport discipline	“Have you yourself ever been approached to fix a game / match?”	
	No	Yes
Football (n = 79)	72	7 (8,9%)
Tennis (n = 33)	28	5 (15,2%)
Handball (n = 138)	131	7 (5,1%)
Other (n = 106)	101	5 (4,7%)
Total	332	24

Tennis seems to be the sport that appears most vulnerable with a percentage (15,2%) that far exceeds the other disciplines (5,1% for handball and 8,9% in football). However, given the low number of responses (33), a larger survey should be conducted to corroborate this trend.



To get a better understanding of the abovementioned figures, we can compare the French figures with the number of match-fixing cases per sport discipline in the total sample (see Table 9).

*Table 9: Match-fixing cases per sport discipline in the total sample (n = 3859)*

Sport discipline	“Have you yourself ever been approached to fix a game / match?”
	Yes
Football (n = 2944)	278 (9,4%)
Tennis (n = 745)	64 (8,6%)
Handball (n = 170)	7 (4,1%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>349</b>

Regarding the extremely heterogeneous situations existing within the various member countries of the consortium, putting these figures into perspective is relatively delicate. However, it is interesting to note that the figures, in the French sample and in the total sample, for football and handball are on the same scale. However, we can note a clear difference between the French sample and the total regarding tennis. However, given the low number of responses from the French side (33), compared to the total number of responses at European level (745), no comparison can be made here.

Further details about the French match-fixing cases, show that 10 respondents indicated that they had only been approached once. At the moment of their **only** approach (n = 10), they were 23,3 years old on average (standard deviation 8,7).

Additionally, 10 respondents indicated that they had been approached two to three times to fix a match, and 3 persons indicated that they had been approached more than 3 times to fix a match. The average age of the first time (n = 13) they were approached to fix a match was 22,6 years old (standard deviation 7,2). The average age of the **last time** (n = 13) they were approached to fix a match was 29,7 years old (standard deviation 12,9).

## 6.2.2 Betting- and non-betting-related match-fixing cases

Regarding the **last (or only) time** they were approached to fix a match, 6 respondents revealed that they were only approached for a betting-related proposal (see Table 10).

On the other hand, 15 respondents (i.e., 62,5%) indicated that they were only approached for a non-betting-related proposal.

More specifically, in the case that only a non-betting-related proposal took place, the respondents indicated:

- 8 times that the proposal was made to prevent relegation of a specific club or player.
- 6 times that the proposal was made to enable a specific club or player to win the championship,
- 1 time that the proposal was made to determine who the next-round opponent would be, and
- 2 times that the proposal aimed to make the competition or tournament more exciting.

*Table 10: Motive of the match-fixing cases (n = 23)*

	Total (n = 23)	Football (n = 7)	Tennis (n = 5)	Handball (n = 7)	Other (n = 4)
<b>What was the motive of the people who approached you?</b>					

<b>Only</b> betting-related match-fixing	6	0	4	1	1
<b>Both</b> betting- and non-betting-related match-fixing	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Only</b> non-betting-related match-fixing	15	6	1	5	3
<b>Both</b> non-betting-related and “other motive”	0	0	0	0	0
Other motive*	1	0	0	1	0
I do not know	1	1	0	0	0

\*The exact “other motive” could not be identified due to a software bug.

### 6.2.2.1 Only non-betting-related (or sporting-related) proposals

The group of 15 respondents who revealed that they were **only approached for a non-betting-related or “sporting-related” match-fixing proposal**, indicated the following:

Figure 5: Gender of the respondents who have been approached (n = 15)

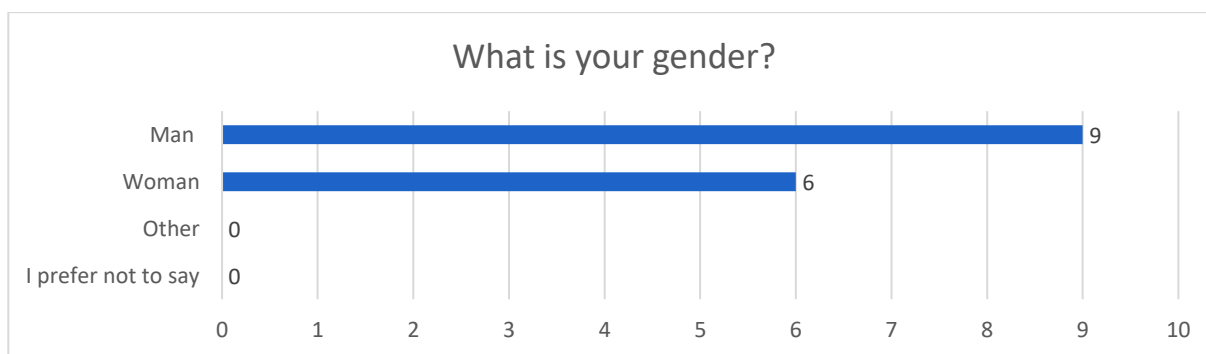
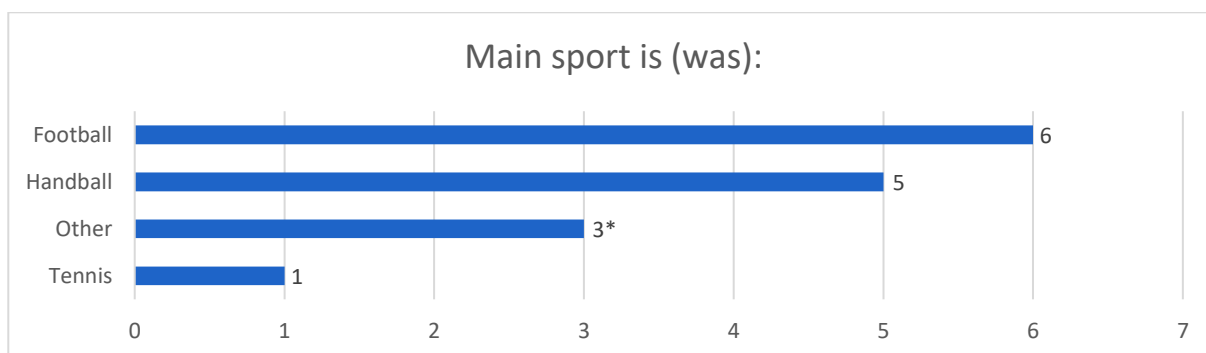


Figure 6: Main sport discipline of the respondents who have been approached (n = 15)



\*Three respondents indicated that they were involved in “another sport discipline.” More specifically, they indicated the following sport disciplines: 1x badminton, 1x swimming, and 1x rugby.



Figure 7: Way of involvement at the moment of the proposal (n = 15)

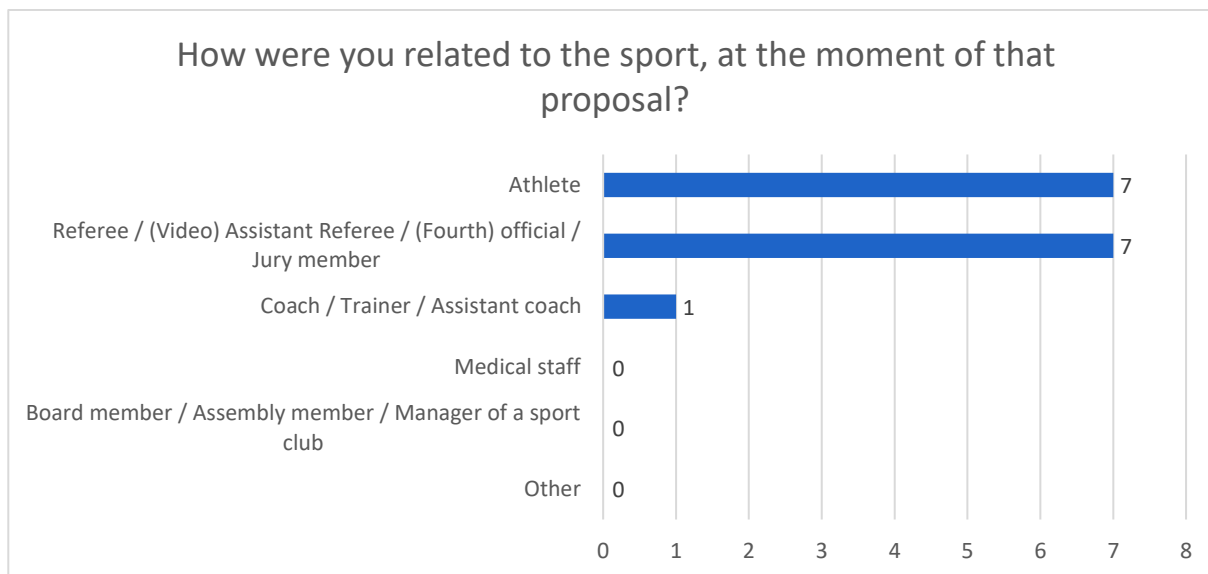


Figure 8: Level of the respondents at the moment of the proposal (n = 15)

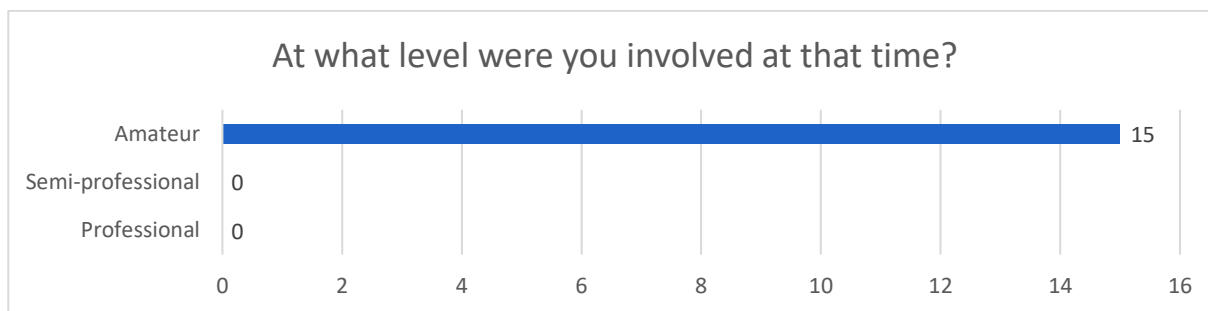


Figure 9: Playing level of the respondents at the moment of the proposal (n = 15)

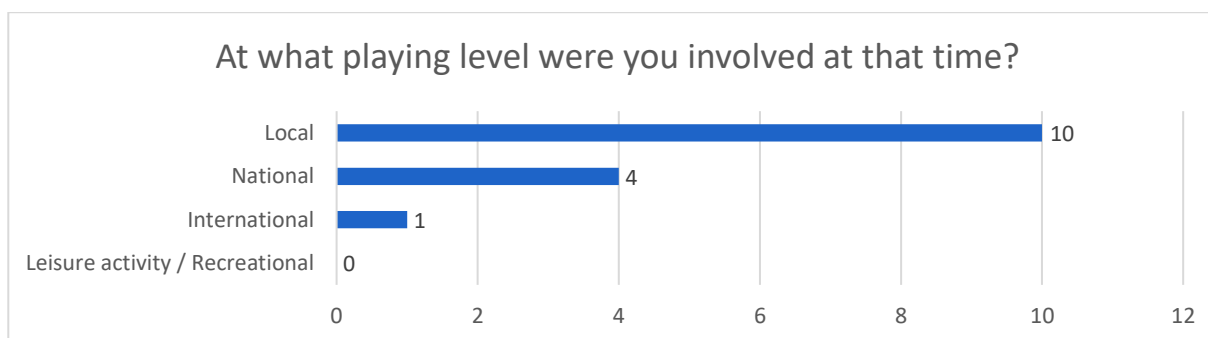
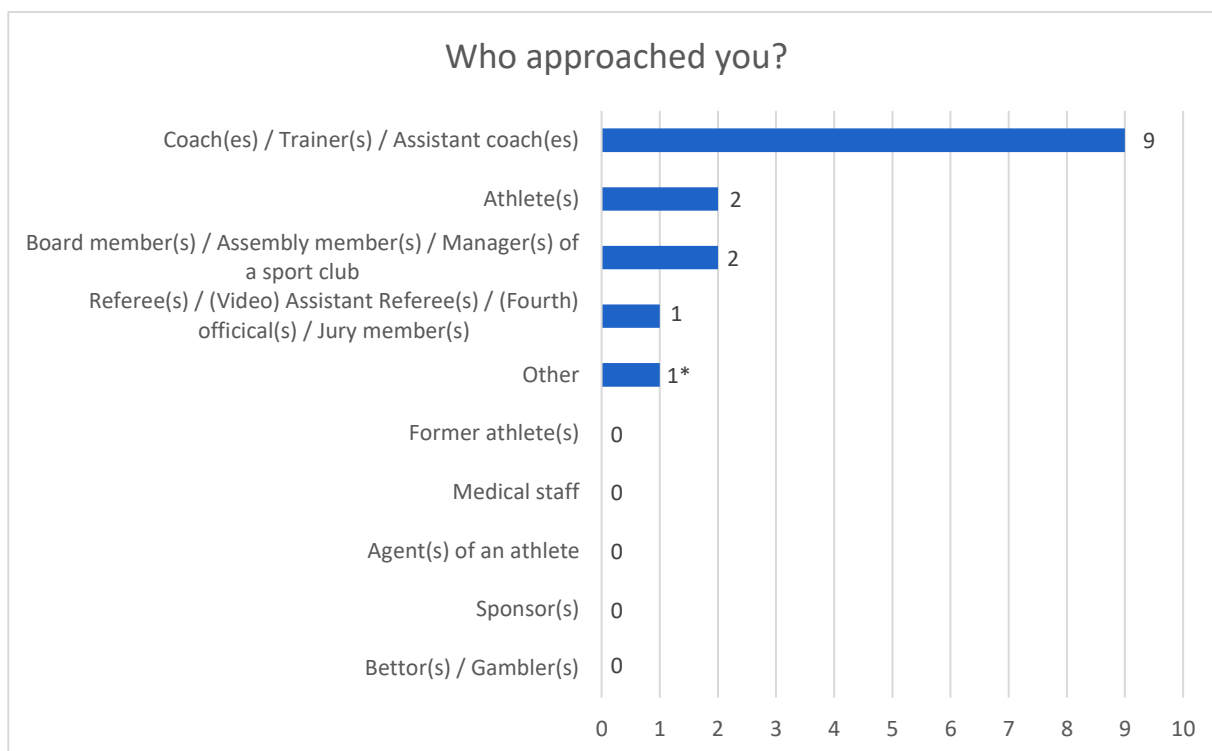


Figure 10: The people who approached the respondents at the moment of the proposal (n = 15)



\*The respondent who indicated “other”, specified that “the opponent’s father” approached her / him.

Figure 11: Details about the people who approached the respondents (n = 15)

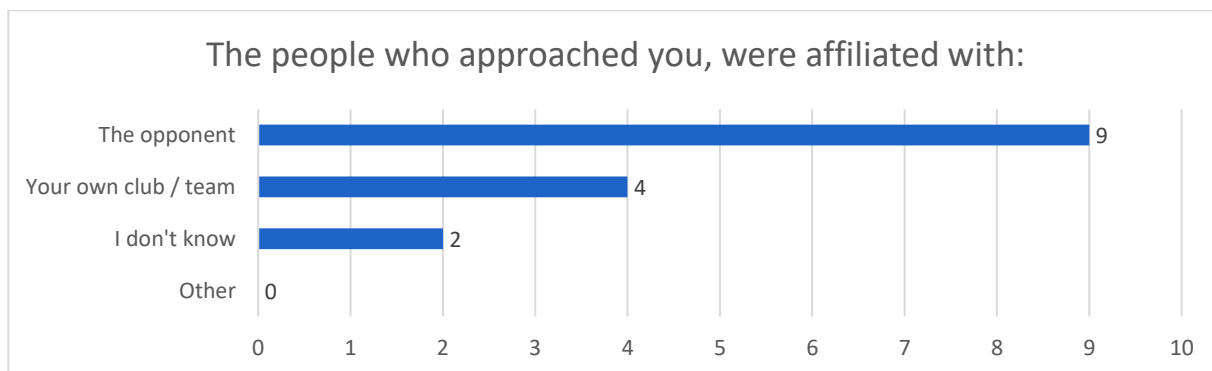
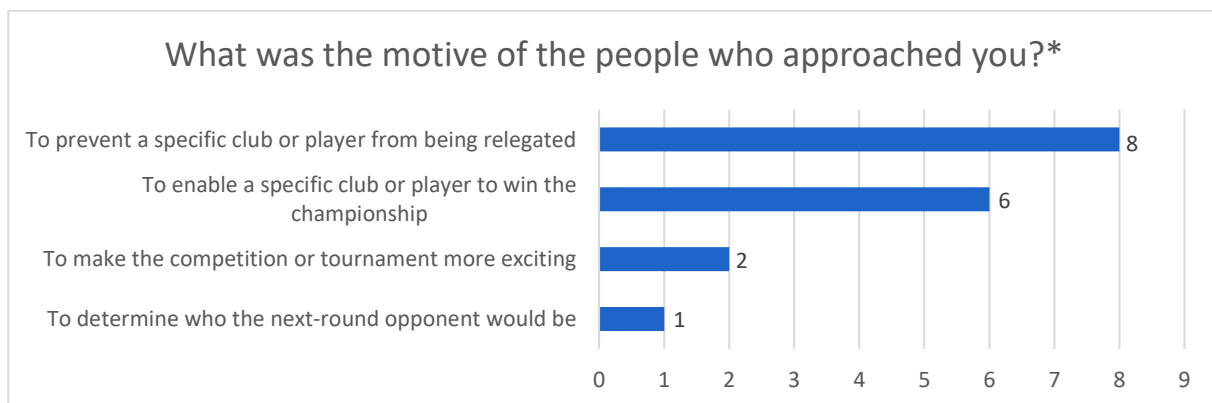


Figure 12: The motive of the people who approached the respondents (n = 15)

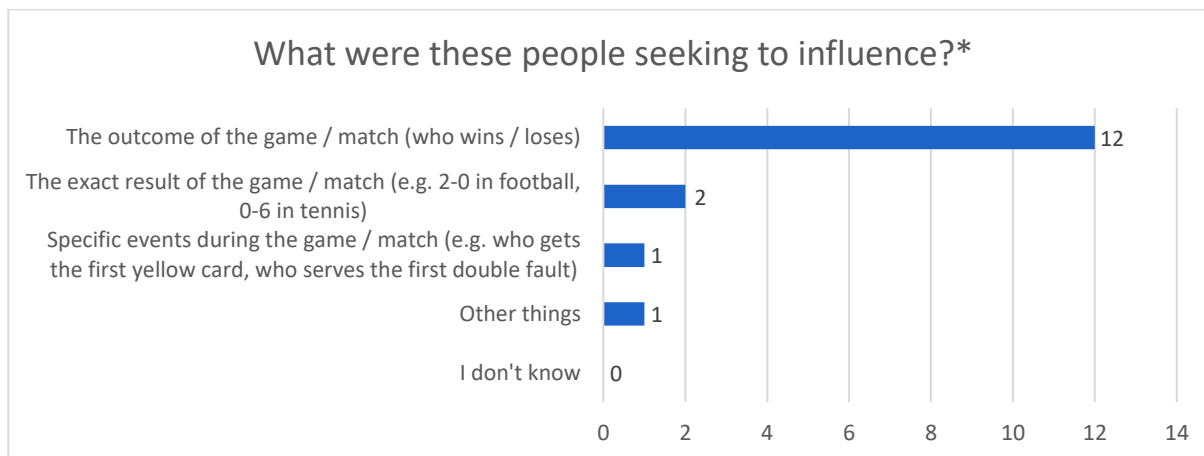


\*The sum of the figures exceeds 15, because multiple answers were possible to the question.



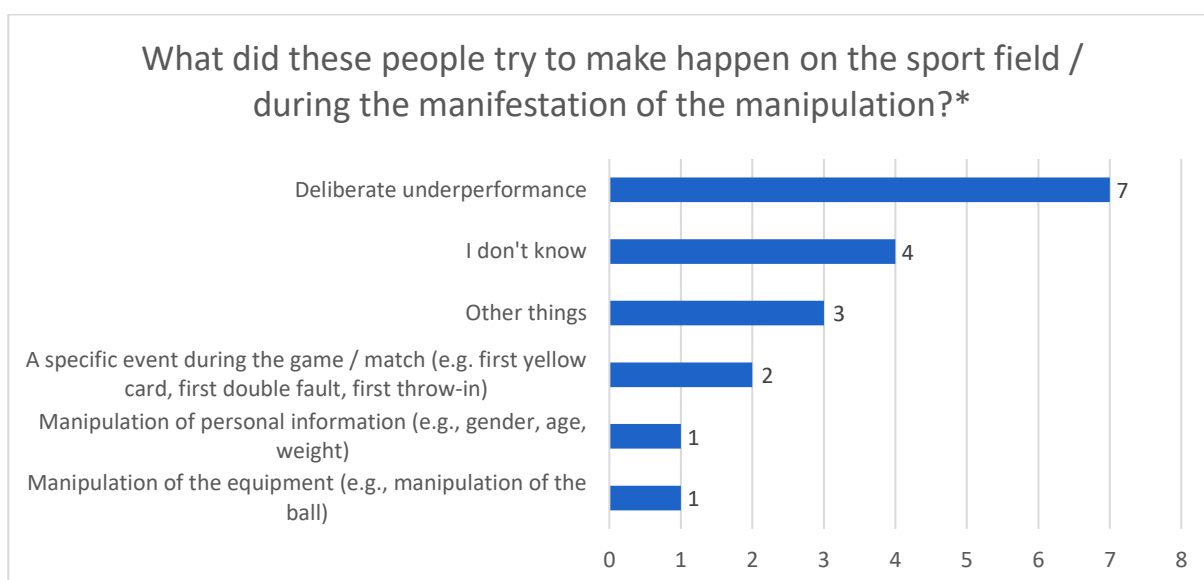


Figure 13: What they were trying to influence (n = 15)



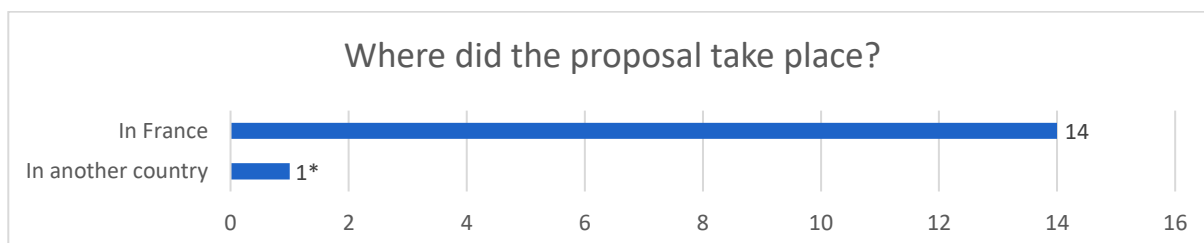
\*The sum of the figures exceeds 15, because multiple answers were possible to the question.

Figure 14: What did they try to make happen during the manifestation of the manipulation (n = 15)



\*The sum of the figures exceeds 15, because multiple answers were possible to the question.

Figure 15: Place of the proposal (n = 15)



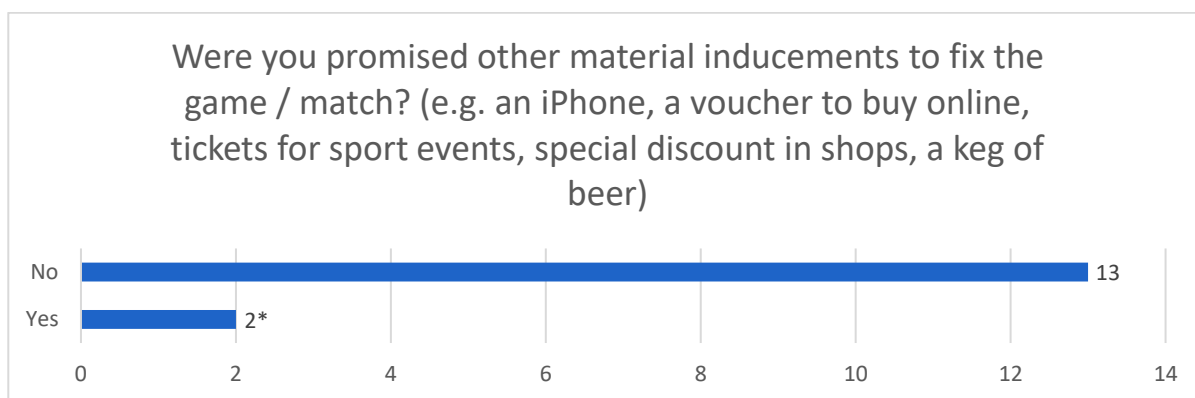
\*More specifically, one respondent indicated that the proposal took place in Montenegro.



Figure 16: Offered money at the moment of the proposal (n = 15)



Figure 17: Promised other material inducements (n = 15)



\*More specifically, one respondent revealed that (s)he was offered “beer after the match,” whereas another respondent indicated that (s)he was offered “a luxury watch.”

Figure 18: Threatened or pressured at the moment of the proposal (n = 15)

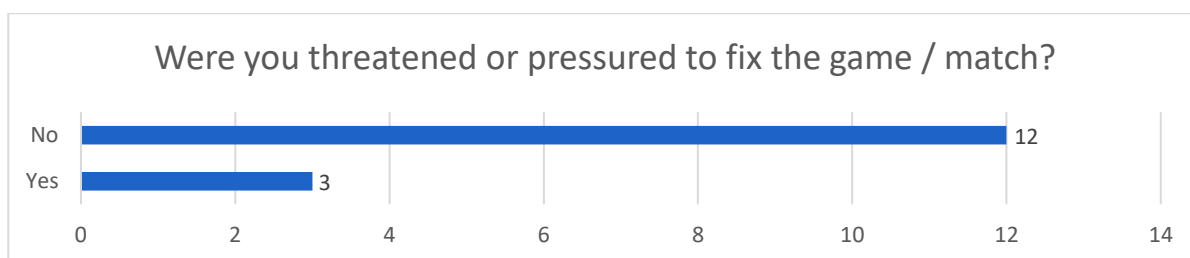
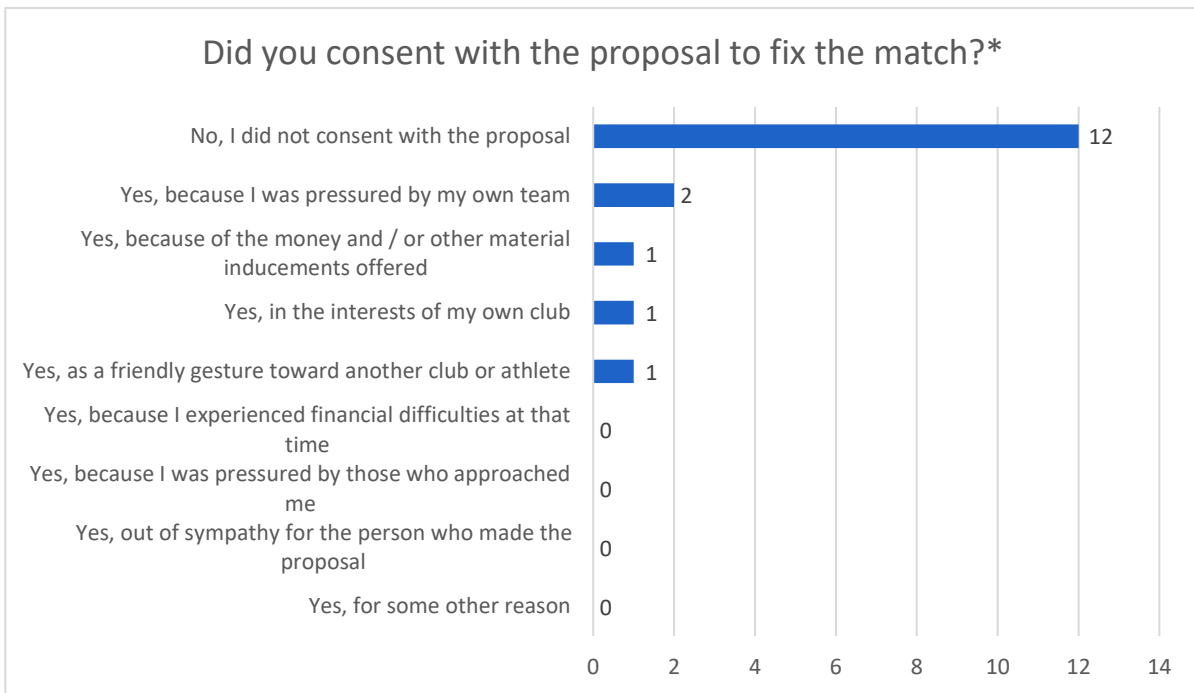




Figure 19: Consent with the proposal or not (n = 15)



\*The sum of the figures exceeds 15, because multiple answers were possible to the question.

### 6.2.2.2 Only betting-related proposals

Of the six respondents who revealed that they were only approached for a betting-related proposal, four of them were involved in tennis, one of them was involved in badminton, and one of them was involved in handball (gender is not specified to ensure confidentiality). The four people involved in tennis were involved as professional athletes on an international level, at the moment of the proposal. The person who was involved in badminton, was also involved as a professional athlete on an international level, at the moment of the proposal. The person who was involved in handball, was involved as an athlete on a semi-professional and national level, at the moment of the proposal.

The first person who was involved in tennis indicated that (s)he was approached by bettor(s) / gambler(s) of whom (s)he did not know with which organization they were affiliated. Moreover, (s)he revealed that they tried to influence the outcome of the game / match (who wins / loses), and that they expected a deliberate underperformance. Additionally, (s)he stated that the proposal took place in France, and that (s)he was not offered money or other material inducements. Furthermore, (s)he indicated that (s)he was not threatened or pressured to fix. Eventually, (s)he did not consent to the proposal.

The second person who was involved in tennis indicated that (s)he was approached by athlete(s) who were affiliated with a bettor. Moreover, (s)he indicated that they tried to influence the outcome, the exact result, and specific events during the game / match. Additionally, (s)he revealed that they expected a deliberate underperformance and specific events during the game / match. Furthermore, (s)he revealed that the proposal occurred in France, and that (s)he was not offered money or other material inducements. Eventually, (s)he indicated that (s)he was not threatened or pressured to fix and did not consent to the match-fixing proposal.



The third person who was involved in tennis indicated that (s)he was approached by bettor(s) / gambler(s). However, (s)he did not know with whom they were affiliated. Moreover, (s)he indicated that they tried to influence the outcome of the game / match (who wins / loses), and the exact result. Additionally, (s)he revealed that they expected a deliberate underperformance, and specific events during the match. Furthermore, (s)he indicated that the proposal took place in Cameroon, and that (s)he was offered between €1000 and €5000 to fix. In addition, (s)he indicated that (s)he was not offered other material inducements, and that (s)he was not threatened or pressured to fix. Eventually, (s)he did not consent to the proposal.

The fourth person who was involved in tennis indicated that (s)he was approached by bettor(s) / gambler(s) of whom (s)he did not know with whom they were affiliated. Moreover, (s)he indicated that they tried to influence the outcome (who wins / loses) and the exact result of the game / match. Additionally, (s)he revealed that they expected a deliberate underperformance. The proposal took place in France, (s)he was not offered money or other material inducements, and (s)he was not threatened or pressured to fix the game / match. Eventually, (s)he did not consent to the proposal.

The person who was involved in badminton indicated that (s)he was approached by former athlete(s) who were not affiliated with a certain organization or other persons. Moreover, (s)he revealed that they tried to influence the outcome, the exact result, and specific events during the game / match. Additionally, (s)he stated that they expected a deliberate underperformance and specific events during the match. Furthermore, the proposal took place in France, and (s)he was offered between €1000 and €5000. No other material inducements were offered, and (s)he was not threatened or pressured to fix the game / match. Eventually, (s)he did not consent to the proposal.

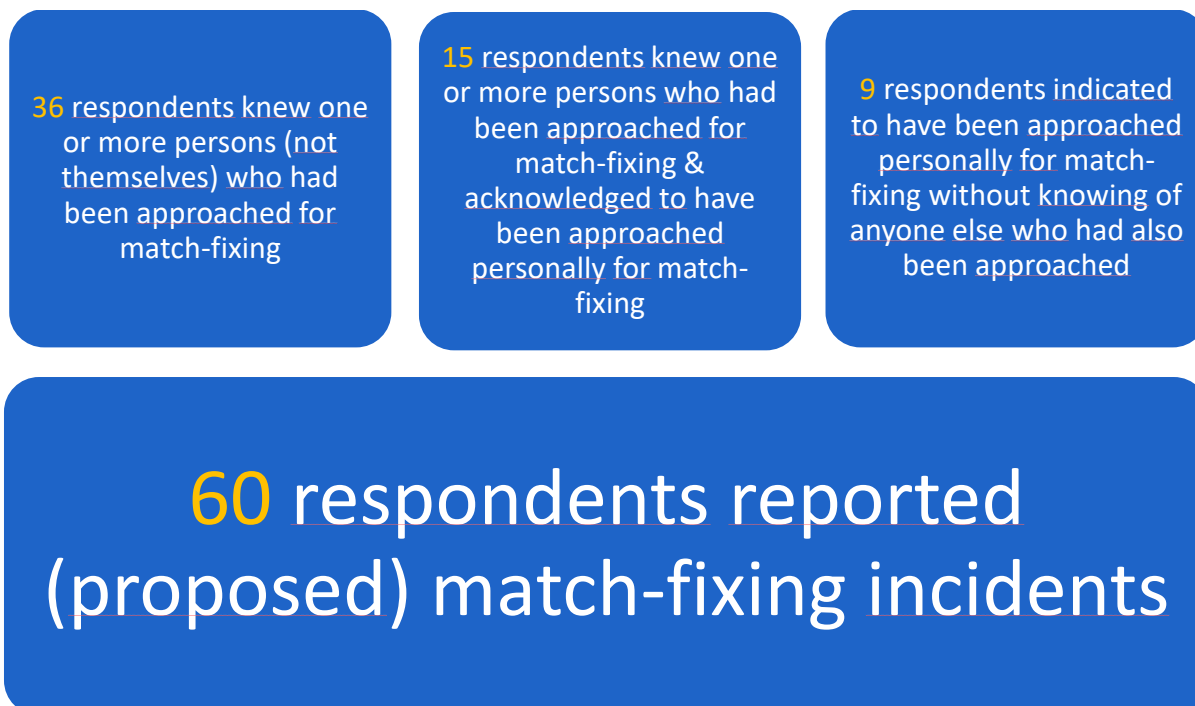
The person who was involved in handball indicated that (s)he was approached by a person who bets for a living, and who was not affiliated with other persons or organizations. Moreover, (s)he indicated that this person tried to influence the outcome of the game / match, and that (s)he expected a deliberate underperformance. Additionally, (s)he revealed that the proposal took place in Serbia, and that (s)he was offered between €1000 and €5000. Furthermore, (s)he indicated that no other material inducements were offered, and that (s)he was not threatened or pressured to fix. Eventually, (s)he did not consent to the proposal.



## 7 REPORTING SUSPICIONS OR EXPERIENCES OF MATCH-FIXING

Considering the figures of sections 6.1 and 6.2, Figure 20 depicts an overview of the (proposed) match-fixing incidents.

Figure 20: (Proposed) match-fixing incidents



Of the **60** respondents who indicated (proposed) match-fixing incidents, **30** respondents (50,0%) had never reported their suspicions or experiences of match-fixing to anyone. On the other hand, **29** respondents (48,3%) had reported their suspicions or experiences of match-fixing to someone (see Figure 21).

Figure 21: Reporting suspicions or experiences of match-fixing to anyone (n = 29)



\*The sum of the figures exceeds 29, because multiple answers were possible to the question.

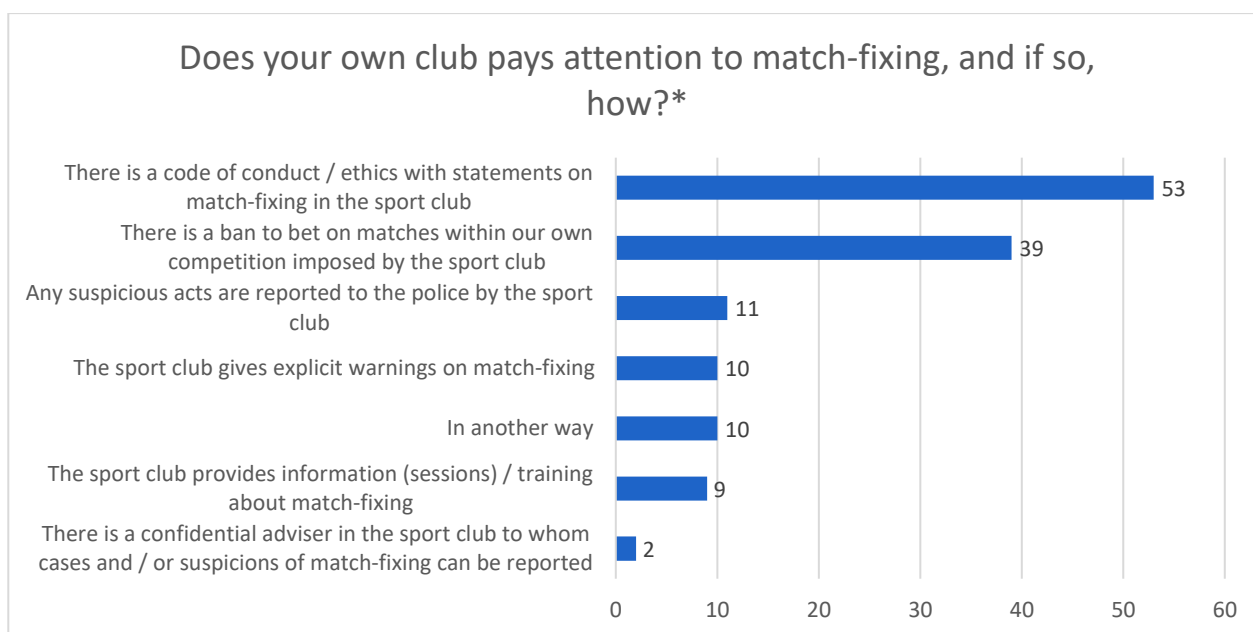


## 8 MATCH-FIXING PREVENTION IN SPORT CLUBS

At the end of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked whether their sport club pays attention to match-fixing or not. Of the **272** respondents who indicated that they were still involved in a sport club, **99** respondents (36,4%) indicated that their sport club does not pay attention to match-fixing and **96** respondents (35,3%) indicated that they do not know if their sport club pays attention to match-fixing.

On the other hand, **77** respondents (**28,3%**) indicated that their sport club pays attention to match-fixing. As shown in Figure 22, respondents mainly indicated that their sport club has a code of conduct / ethics with statements on match-fixing.

Figure 22: Match-fixing prevention in sport clubs (n = 77)



\*The sum of the figures exceeds 77, because multiple answers were possible to the question.



## 9 CONCLUSION

As we have seen from these results, France does not seem to be spared from the threat of match-fixing. Although the results are disparate between the sports we decided to focus, nevertheless they show that out of the sample of 359 responses, 16.7% have had knowledge of or been approached to fix a match.

About the results, some key data could be raised:

- 60 respondents reported (proposed) incidents of match-fixing;
- 24 were directly approached: 14 in football and handball, 5 in tennis and 5 in other sports;
- Respondents have been approached when they were young (around 23 years old);
- 15 cases were linked to non-betting-related motivation. They all happened at amateur level;
- 14 cases happened in France;
- Athletes and referees are most likely to be targeted in such situations (93%), in 60% by the opponent;
- On these 15 cases, 3 players/referees consented with the proposal to fix the match;
- 30 never reported this approach or did not report it to their authorities;
- 99 people consider that their club does not pay enough attention to this risk and 96 do not know if their club pays attention to this risk.

Beyond the results of this survey, several things could be highlighted.

To the contrary of betting, sporting-related forms of manipulation have attracted less mediatic and scientific interest, although they may be prevalent within sporting contexts. Hence, the dissemination of the questionnaires in France was crucial. It aimed at better understanding the reality of manipulation at local level. Although the sample size and representativity is limited, four major conclusions can be drawn from this research.

First at all, with this study, it is clear to note that competition manipulation in France is proved. More than 15% of the respondents either personally know someone who has been approached by a match-fixer or have been personally approached. Given the fact that the vast majority of the respondents are involved at amateur, if not local, level, and given the potential social desirability trends in the responses, it can be considered an important proportion. Thus, the results remain non neglectable and invite French sport governing bodies, public or private, to take the measure of the manipulation phenomenon, and react accordingly to protect the integrity of their competitions.

Second, the nature of sports manipulation in France is interesting to analyse. As the majority of the respondents operate at amateur level, where competitions are less likely to appear on the betting markets, the threat of betting-related manipulation has logically not been highlighted by the findings. However, even though this

Another inquiry focusing on the professional level is needed to assess the risks of betting-related corruption. The findings still underline the reality of sporting-related manipulation, particularly with end-of-seasons arrangements for teams willing to avoid relegation or qualify for the upper level of competition. The manipulation approaches emanate from individuals from the sport environment (teammates, coaches, officials, athletes). It indicates how corruption can not only be prevalent, it can also be integrated in the local norms. The findings therefore underline the internal, or consubstantial,



nature of sporting-related corruption, in contrast with traditional understandings of corruption as an external threat. The risk with the social nature of sporting-related manipulation is that it tends to normalise manipulation in general. It can therefore explain how betting-related corruption can also be tolerated by some stakeholders at the top-level of sport. If manipulation for sporting reasons is frequent and more or less tolerated at amateur level, why would not it be possible to manipulate games and make profits from the betting market? Also, both types of manipulation should not be automatically separated, as both motives can interact in one manipulation occurrence.

First, there is still room for improvement on the issue of reporting. Indeed, out of the 60 approaches identified, only 30 were transmitted.

In addition, of the 272 players still active, 99 responses mention insufficient prevention within clubs or uncertainty about this prevention (96 responses). Consequently, we can consider that a real strategic axis of information dissemination, awareness-raising and training can be carried out on this subject within the various clubs.

In conclusion, the EPOSM project and its objectives appear perfectly relevant to the French situation. 30 respondents (50%) never reported this approach, and 29 reported the situation, but it is not known whether these alerts have been dealt with or not.

The organisation of focus groups will also allow for the development of greater vigilance on the part of stakeholders regarding the issue of match-fixing, as well as the exchange of good practices between the different sports identified.