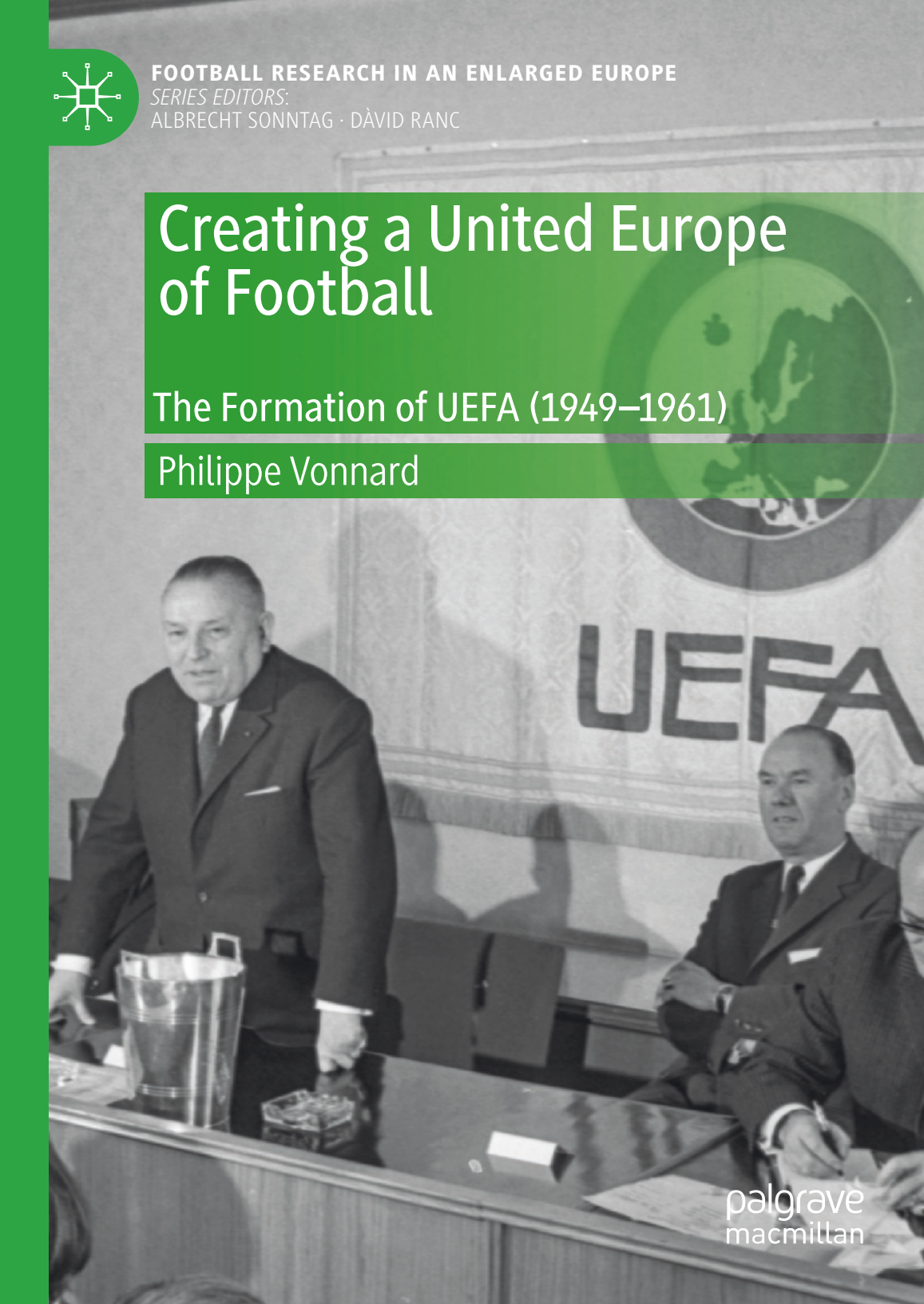

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Creating a United Europe of Football

The Formation of UEFA (1949–1961)

Philippe Vonnard

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The Formation of UEFA (1949–1961)

UNIL | Université de Lausanne
Faculté des sciences sociales et politiques

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Institut des sciences du sport de l'Université de Lausanne

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This book is dedicated to André Vieli
… and more generally to the numerous employees (often forgotten) who have worked for the development of UEFA

Preface

This manuscript is the result of ten years of research on the establishment of a European perspective in football. I wanted to understand the process by which playing at the European level became something 'natural', arguing that the *Union des associations européennes de football* (UEFA), founded in 1954, was a key actor of this process. Due to the lack of studies about the creation and early years of UEFA, most of my work focused on this topic and, more generally, on understanding the European turning point of football unfolding from the end of the 1920s to the beginning of the 1970s. It is important to note here that the book focuses exclusively on men's football (women's football was not very developed during the period studied).

The present book is a synthesis of these researches even if it focusses mainly on what happened during the 1950s. It takes into account the reflexions developed from my master thesis (published in 2012 under the title *La Genèse de la Coupe des clubs champions*, CIES), then enlarged with a Ph.D. thesis realised at the University of Lausanne (published in 2018 under the title *Europe dans le monde du football*, P.I.E. Peter Lang) and during a postdoc conducted at the University Paris-Sorbonne between

2017 and 2018. Several research results have already been published in sport sciences journals (*Soccer & Society*, *Sport in Society*, *Sport in History*, *Sport History Review*, *European Study of Sport History*, *Sport et sciences sociales* and *Staps. Revue internationale de sciences du sport, Storia dello Sport. Rivista di Storia Contemporanea*) and in generalist contemporary history journals (*20 & 21 siècle. Revue d'histoire, Journal of European Integration History*, *Contemporary European History, Hispania Nova* and the *Revue Suisse d'histoire*).

I have also developed some thoughts on the history of European football thanks to collaborative projects like the editing of several books including *Building Europe with the Ball* (Peter Lang, 2016),*Beyond Boycotts, Sport During the Cold War in Europe* (De Gruyter, 2017) and *Des réseaux et des hommes. Participation et contribution de la Suisse à l'internationalisation du sport* (Alphil, 2019); and the coordination of different projects: two special issues, one on the international sport bodies (*Sport in History*, 2017), the other on the transnational history of the World cup (*Soccer & Society*, forthcoming); and the ongoing work on European exchanges in sport for the online Encyclopdia 'Ecrire une histoire nouvelle de l'Europe' (EHNE) (www.ehne.fr).

As I will explain in more detail in the introduction (Chapter 1), I have a great debt to the former generations of social sciences researchers (anthropologists, historians, political scientists and sociologists) who have worked for more than 30 years in developing the field of European football studies. Furthermore, I have been able to deepen and widen my knowledge of European (men's and women's) football history and sociology thanks to the participation in several projects, including the Football Research in an Enlarged Europe (FREE), the workshops organised by Prof. William Gasparini (University of Strasbourg) and Prof. Jürgen Mittag (Deutsche Sporthochschule) on the topic of sport and Europe, and numerous scientific events on football studies held notably in Angers (run by Prof. Albrecht Sonntag and Prof. Paul Dietschy), Brussels (run by Prof. Jean-Michel De Waele), Moscow (run by Dr. Sylvain Dufraisse), Oxford (run by Kausik Bandyopadhyay and Souvik Naha), Paris (run by Dr. Piepaolo Naccarella and Dr. Nicola Sbetti), Neuchâtel (run by Thomas Busset), SchwabenAkademie (run by Dr. Markwart Herzog) and Warsaw (run by Dr. Seweryn Dmowski). I also have the good

fortune to be part of the Réseau d'études des relations internationals sportives (RERIS) (www.reris.net), which enables me to develop my ideas and understanding of the history of sport through detailed, informed discussions with a supportive and friendly network of inspiring researchers.

Lausanne, Switzerland
March 2020

Philippe Vonnard

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This book has benefited from financial support from different institutions. I am particularly grateful to the University of Lausanne (Institute of sport sciences and Faculty of political and social sciences) and UEFA for supporting my project. Here I thank notably all the UEFA's staff members who help me in my research, particularly Nicolas Bouchet (Archivist of UEFA) for his great help since many years (!), and Thomas Junod (Head of UEFA Academy) and Emmanuel Deconche (Publications manager) for their strong support regarding this project of publications.

Concerning the writing process, I am grateful to Prof. Albrecht Sonntag and Dr. David Ranc, co-editors of the Football in an Enlarged Europe series, to have accepted the idea of this book and for their constant support all along the process. I would also like to thank the staff at Palgrave Macmillan, notably Sharla Plant and Poppy Hull, for their interest in my work and for their availability. Moreover, I am very indebted to Shani D'Cruze and Paul Henderson for the excellent review and proofreading of the first draft of the manuscript.

Although writing a book is a personal adventure, this process is possible thanks to a collective work (like a football game!). Of course, many people would have to be thanked here, however, due to the place at my disposal for this section, I will just thank my brilliant and inspiring colleagues of the Institute of sport sciences from the University of Lausanne (ISSUL) and four essential people.

First, I thank André Vieli—UEFA employee from 1982 to 2012 and who authored the 60 years Union commemorative book—with whom I have regular and interesting discussions about UEFA and European football. Secondly, I am grateful to Prof. Jürgen Mittag for his constant support beginning with my research stay in Cologne at his institute between 2014 and 2015. Thirdly, I also wish to extend my gratitude to Dr. Kevin Tallec Marston, research fellow at the Centre international d'étude du sport (CIES) de Neuchâtel, for our pleasant discussions about European football history. Fourthly, I address a particular thought to my colleague, and close friend, Dr. Grégory Quin, with whom I have shared the passion for contemporary sports history for many years. His advice, his (unconditional) support and his (great) enthusiasm are helpful, particularly during the rough times of research (and life).

Finally, I really want to thank my wife, Luz Romero, who has helped me to open my mind to the diversity of the world, who has fostered my desire to improve my knowledge of foreign languages and *last but not the least*, for her great work in the translation process. Without her help, the present book would not have been in your hand!

Contents

Abbreviations

ASF	Switzerland Football Association
DFB	German Football Association
EBU	European Broadcasting Union
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
FA	Football Association
FFF	French Football Association
FIFA	Fédération internationale de football association
IBU	International Broadcasting Union
ILLC	International Liaison League Committee
IOC	International Olympic Committee
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
UEFA	Union des associations européennes de football
URBSFA	Belgian Football Association

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Introduction

'Creating a United Europe of Football'. These words were pronounced by the Swiss football leader, Ernst Thommen, at the beginning of a congress held in Basel in June 1954 among 27 European football national associations that came from all parts of Europe. The goal of this meeting was to create a European body. For Thommen, football leaders had the opportunity to give an example to European citizens because—as I will describe later in detail—while other European organisations were founded in the fields of economy, culture, sciences and telecommunication during the same period, these bodies were composed of countries that came from Western Europe or were 'neutral' in international relations (like Switzerland). Thus, the will to create a pan-European body in football was something special and had the potential not only to impact the administration of the game, but more generally the European integration process.

More than sixty years after this congress, every season around 300 men's and women's football clubs from all over Europe take part in European competitions, playing a total of over 500 matches. In addition, each national team plays around ten official or friendly games each year, not counting the finals of the European Championship (known as the Euro), which take place every four years. These professional competitions have

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created a true football tourism sector, due to the thousands of fans who readily travel hundreds, if not thousands, of kilometres to see their club or national team play. However, this movement of people is not restricted to professional football, as many youth teams and amateur clubs also play international matches. What is more, most international matches involving professional teams are broadcast live and innumerable television programmes cover European professional football on an almost daily basis. Additional movements of people—mostly players and coaches—but also of capital and data on players (through the media and private statistics agencies) occur during the transfer market's two 'transfer windows', from June to August and from December to January. Therefore, saying that exchanges within European football are substantial is a massive understatement.

It was considerations such as these that led Manuel Schotté to claim: 'while the national level has historically been the main factor in structuring football in Europe, the European level has gradually become very important' (freely translated from the French, 2014, p. 14). Football does, indeed, have a unique place within Europe, leading scholars to suggest that it could play a key role in creating a European identity (Sonntag 2008a)[1] or a European public space (Sonntag 2008b; Kennedy 2017),[2] with some going as far as considering European club competitions (such as the Champions League) a European 'site of memory' (Groll 2015).

1.1 Why Study the Relationship Between Football and Europe?

Interestingly, although European football[3] has been beset by frequent scandals (violence between supporters, rigged betting, corruption, illegal transfers of players, match-fixing, corrupt referees, etc.), they have not

[1]For a critical discussion about the literature around the Champions League, see Niemann and Brand (2020).

[2]The concept of European identity is subject to much debate (see Duchesne 2010), not addressed in detail within the present study.

[3]This book focuses on men's football. For some developments about European women football, see for e.g.: Breuil (2010) and Williams (2013).

affected the popularity of European matches or threatened the existence of European competitions. This is even more surprising given the scepticism towards European integration currently prevalent in many countries of the Old Continent (Wassenberg et al. 2010; Bouillaud 2014). However, as Andy Smith (2001) noted in the early 2000s, just because football fans follow European competitions, it does not mean they endorse the idea of creating a Europe-wide political community. William Gasparini (2017) recently made a similar point when he suggested that claims concerning football's ability to build closer relations between Europe and its citizens should be treated with circumspection. Nevertheless, because European football competitions repeatedly bring to life the idea of a united Europe, analyses of European integration must take their effects into account, especially given the fact that integration processes have been 'both more numerous and quite different from the major post-war political projects such as the European Community' (freely translated from the French, Rask Madsen [2008, p. 9]). It was this realisation that led Laurent Warlouzet to prefer the expression 'history of European cooperations', which he believes does more 'justice to the profound reassessment of the history of European integration over the last two decades' (freely translated from the French, Warlouzet [2014, p. 116]), over the term 'European integration'.

My focus on the history of European football is part of this shift in perspective. In fact, three characteristics of football make it an interesting starting point from which to examine the history of European cooperation. These characteristics are not unique to football, but they are exemplified by it.

First, football is extremely popular throughout Europe and innumerable matches involving teams from different European countries are played every year. As Weill (2011) found, the game interests a large proportion of Europeans, including the working classes, who know and understand the driving forces behind football exchanges.[4] In this respect, football is similar to fields such as technology (Badenoch and Fickers 2010; Laborie 2010) and culture (Fleury and Jilek 2009; Mikkonen and

[4]For more on the different representations of Europe held by its citizens, see Gaxie et al. (2010) and Olivier and Magnette (2007).

Koivunen 2015), which directly impact a large part of the continent's population almost every day—even more than the European institutions in Brussels (Broad and Kansikas, forthcoming).

Football's second characteristic is that it quickly became structured around a supranational competitive framework. Although international tournaments for clubs and national teams—most of which were created in the 1920s (Quin 2016; Vonnard 2019a)—soon became occasions for heightened nationalism and provided an international stage on which states could demonstrate their power (e.g. Archambault et al. 2016), it was only possible to create these competitions because their participants agreed to follow standardised rules. This argument is often wielded by promoters of international football competitions (sport leaders, journalists, even politicians), who maintain that sport can help create bridges between peoples (Kissoudi 2003). Despite the somewhat utopian nature of this view, football undeniably offers many opportunities for bringing together clubs or national teams from countries that are widely separated geographically, and sometimes politically (Vonnard and Marston 2017, Dietschy 2020a, b).

Third, European football is administered by non-governmental organisations that have grown in importance over the years. World football's governing body, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), which was created in 1904 (Eisenberg et al. 2004), authorises (or not) matches between national teams and draws up binding regulatory frameworks for organising these matches. Because it is FIFA's rules that govern international football, even states—which began trying to politicise the game during the interwar years (Macon 2007)—must take heed of FIFA. FIFA is composed of national football associations, with each country being represented by a single association (Sugden and Tomlinson 1998). Some governments, especially totalitarian regimes that held sway over their country's football association, have attempted to use this to their advantage. However, FIFA's ruling elite[5] tries to ignore the constraints of international politics, a stance that was also adopted by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) when it was founded

[5]We define the ruling elite in terms of the position each person holds within an organisation (Genieys 2007). Hence, the ruling elite includes all members of the executive committees of the organisations considered in this book.

in 1954. Remaining (as far as possible) outside world politics allows both FIFA and UEFA to view football as an intermediary for encouraging international dialogue and to promote the idea that the innumerable international exchanges fostered by football can create closer ties between peoples. In addition, as non-governmental organisations, they provide forums in which national associations can come together, talk and, in some circumstances, create alliances which international politics would otherwise render impossible.

These factors show the value of looking more closely at the dynamics underlying the current structure of European football, which emerged between the late 1940s and the early 1960s. The present research focuses on this pivotal period in establishing European football exchanges and asks whether the development of this structure was inevitable given the political and footballing context of the time.

1.2 Football in Europe: A Historical Perspective

The long history of exchanges in European football has been widely studied over the past 30 years, most notably by historians such as Pierre Lanfranchi (1991, 1998, 2002), who set the ball rolling with a now-seminal piece of research in which he highlighted the cosmopolitanism of the men who spread the game across Europe in the first quarter of the twentieth century. His pioneering work was quickly followed by studies examining the transnational careers of several major figures in football (mainly players and coaches, e.g., Poli 2004; Taylor 2010), which, in turn, paved the way for analyses of other aspects of European football, most notably the creation and development of supranational competitions. Examples include studies of the Mittel-Europa (Mitropa) Cup for clubs, which ran from 1927 to 1938, the Balkans Cup and the International Cup for Nations—which were set up between the two world wars (Mittag 2007; Vonnard 2019a). As well as providing regular opportunities for exchanges between clubs and national football associations, most

of which were created in the late 1800s and early 1900s, these tournaments led to greater movement across Europe by all of football's stakeholders, including players, coaches, journalists and even supporters (Vonnard 2018a, see Chapter 1). These competitions also helped popularise the game among national audiences and spread information about football between nations thanks to early and widespread coverage by both the specialist press, which emerged during the 1920s, and the generalist press. For example, although the Mitropa Cup was created for clubs from Austria, Hungary, Italy and Czechoslovakia (with occasional participation by clubs from Romania, Switzerland and Yugoslavia), it was covered by sports newspapers as far afield as Germany, Belgium, France and the Netherlands, which did not have teams in the competition. The longevity of these European football exchanges led Paul Dietschy to suggest there was a 'Europe of football', whose beginnings could be traced back to the Belle Époque (Dietschy 2016) and which was consolidated during the interwar years (Dietschy 2015). Christian Koller did not use the same terms as Dietschy, but he also considered the period from 1919 to 1939 to be a turning point in establishing different types of football exchanges—economic, institutional, even political—across the continent (Koller 2009).

Although many European football competitions have existed since the first quarter of the last century, the dynamics of European football appear to have reached a new level during the 1950s, reflected in the creation of the European Champion Clubs' Cup (Vonnard 2014). This period was also when Europe's football associations came together to form a governing body for European football, thereby contributing to what Robert Frank (2004) called the 'Europe-organisation' process in which supranational bodies were set up in a wide variety of fields (culture, economics, politics, science, sport, technology, etc.) in order to promote exchanges across Europe. Despite large differences in their size, geographical extent, objectives and social impact, the creation of all these bodies reflects an era favourable to creating connections across Europe. In football, the result was UEFA, which was founded in 1954 and quickly became a 'key player' (Keys 2006, p. 5) in developing Europe-wide competitions, programmes and discussions.

In its first five years, UEFA greatly increased the number of international matches played within Europe by launching European competitions for clubs (European Champion Clubs' Cup; European Cup Winners' Cup), nations (European Cup of Nations) and young players (International Youth Tournament). Unlike the events held between the two world wars, these tournaments were open to the vast majority of European countries. They were also highly popular with the public, partly thanks to extensive media coverage that included special sections in major sports newspapers. In addition, the second half of the 1950s saw the start of television coverage of European football matches, thanks to the European Broadcasting Union's (EBU) Eurovision network, formed in 1954 (Meyer 2016). Thus, the creation of UEFA coincided with significant changes in European football and led to a new phase in its development.

1.3 Historical Studies of UEFA: State of Play

Although the literature on UEFA is relatively abundant, it is mostly the work of economists, management specialists and sociologists, who have addressed specific aspects of the organisation from the 1990s to the present.[6] In contrast, historical studies of UEFA are rare, as are more general studies of European football between 1950 and 1990, and the few studies covering these decades have focused mostly on the creation of European competitions (e.g., Mittag and Legrand 2010; Dietschy 2017).

Europe's first continent-wide club competition, the European Champion Clubs' Cup, was designed to bring together the winners of each country's league. The original idea for the competition had come from a group of journalists at *L'Équipe* (Montérémal 2007; Vonnard 2014), but it was UEFA that brought the idea to fruition and ensured the tournament's longevity. UEFA also organised the competition and expanded its reach beyond the area envisaged by the French journalists by including countries such as East Germany, Bulgaria and Romania. Finally, UEFA

[6]For a review of the literature, see Vonnard et al. (2016, pp. 231–243).

took steps to increase the competition's popularity, most notably accepting television coverage of the event, albeit minimal at first, via the Eurovision network (Vonnard 2016). Details of the first broadcasting contract were agreed during a meeting between UEFA's leaders and the EBU in 1956 (Mittag and Nieland 2013; Vonnard and Laborie 2019). Hence, within a few months of its creation, when it was still a very modest entity (it did not have a fixed headquarters or a paid, full-time secretary), UEFA was already playing a leading role in organising and popularising European football.

As noted at the beginning of this section, the literature covering UEFA's foundation and early development is sparse, but it provides precious information on the chronology of events and the main protagonists. First, the three books produced to mark the organisation's 25th, 50th and 60th anniversaries (Rothenbuehler 1979, 2005; Vieli 2016) describe UEFA's development, its activities and the actions taken by its leading executives. Laurent Barcelo's (2007) interesting paper gives further details of UEFA's history, including its foundation, membership and activities, although it is a purely descriptive account that does not really explain why UEFA was founded and why it became such an important player so quickly. John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson provide insights into the restructuring of FIFA in the early 1950s, which paved the way for the creation of UEFA, via studies based essentially on official FIFA reports and the sports press (e.g. Sugden and Tomlinson 1998; Tomlinson 2014). FIFA's 100th anniversary book, which was compiled by four experienced historians,[7] contains further information about FIFA's restructuring and therefore touches on the formation of continental confederations (Eisenberg et al. 2004). Finally, ancillary information about the birth of UEFA can be found in works on the history of football in general, especially the book by Paul Dietschy (2010).[8]

[7] Christiane Eisenberg, Pierre Lanfranchi, Tony Mason and Alfred Wahl, with help from two other historians, Paul Dietschy and Heidrun Homburg.

[8] Several books on the history of football have been written, for instance, by David Goldblatt. Although they are valuable in that they provide chronological outlines of football's development, they are based mostly on the press and secondary, English-language sources and are therefore largely descriptive. In contrast, Dietschy drew mostly on primary sources, especially FIFA's archives, and was therefore able to put forward more solid arguments and provide a more analytical and scientifically robust reading of events.

Work focusing more precisely on UEFA's early years can, to the best of my knowledge, be placed in three main categories. First, studies such as those carried out by Gregory Quin under a UEFA research grant show how the creation of UEFA is rooted in FIFA's expansion in the 1920s and 1930s (Quin 2012). By analysing FIFA's finances during this period, viewing the newly created World Cup as an additional expense for the federation, and brief examining the actions of FIFA's ruling elite, Quin was able to produce some interesting insights into FIFA's structure during the interwar period. He also postulated that FIFA should be considered a 'pre-organisation' for European football because it stimulated exchanges between its member associations.

Another body of work focuses on the relationship between UEFA's leaders and international politics, especially the way they negotiated the Cold War.[9] This category includes an interesting Master's thesis by Antoine Maumon de Longevialle (2009), a political sciences student at the University of Strasbourg. Maumon de Longevialle highlighted the fact that, even in its earliest days, UEFA managed to avoid the usual Cold War divisions because it contained as many football associations from Eastern Europe as from Western Europe. He also uses information drawn from FIFA's archives to briefly discuss UEFA's geographical outreach and Turkey's application for UEFA membership. Jürgen Mittag, who holds the Jean Monnet Chair of Sport and Politics at the Deutsche Sporthochschule in Cologne, also analysed UEFA's desire to rise above Cold War tensions and the way its ruling elite negotiated this situation (Mittag 2015). Like Maumon de Longevialle, Mittag believes that UEFA's early development must be viewed against the broader framework of European cooperation and supports the idea that football's leaders had political, as well as sporting, objectives, most notably to use football to overcome the divisions caused by the Cold War.

The third group of studies includes both Paul Dietschy's (2013) preliminary investigations of the impact of FIFA's global expansion on its governance and the research I am carrying out with Grégory Quin

[9]On this aspect, I was notably inspired by the study of Gaiduk about the US-USSR relations within the United Nations (2012).

(2017) into the influence of South America's football leaders on the continentalisation of FIFA during the 1950s.

The present book pursues and broadens all of these reflections in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the development of European football and the processes that produced football's deep European roots. By doing so, it will help fill a major gap in research into the history of European football.

1.4 Studying the Creation of UEFA

This book covers the period from the late 1940s, when the idea of creating a European football confederation took shape, to the early 1960s, when UEFA was well-established and already had a monopoly on certain aspects of the administration of European football. It combines three main lines of inquiry.

The first focuses on UEFA's role in creating international football within an evolving football context. UEFA not only increased the number of football matches played in Europe, most notably by creating supranational competitions, it also organised regular forums (mainly ordinary and extraordinary congresses) at which football executives could meet to draw up, discuss and decide on actions to develop European football. Over the years, it has helped create and develop a tight network of European football executives, whose objective is to cultivate the game within the continent and even to initiate—and maintain—links between European countries, regardless of international political tensions. This raises the question of the role UEFA played in expanding European football. Given that FIFA provided a framework for organising international football matches within Europe during the interwar period, I suggest that creating UEFA was a new milestone because the decisions it took strengthened this dynamic.

The second line of enquiry focuses on the relationship between UEFA's ruling elite and politics. In other words, it explores how UEFA was able to bring together individuals, clubs and even nations that would otherwise have remained separated by international politics and, more generally, how it managed to maintain its autonomy on the international

scene. It also investigates how these leaders asserted UEFA's power by analysing two aspects of their operations: the governance strategies they adopted and the policies they introduced in order to safeguard their positions. UEFA created a specific governance strategy that it applied over the long term, while accepting temporary compromises that were negotiated in response to changes in the international situation. These compromises were crucial because they strengthened the organisation's internal cohesion, which is a *sine qua non* for any important player on the international scene. In addition, UEFA implemented policies to safeguard its position and curtail possible competition that could call its authority into question. This raises the question of how UEFA has managed to retain such a large degree of autonomy. I argue that UEFA's ruling elite was largely inspired by the governance strategies used by FIFA (in particular by its governing elite) since the 1930s. These strategies, which were gradually revised over the years, were designed to help UEFA maintain a special position on the international scene so it could pursue its primary goal of developing European football without being (excessively) constrained by international politics.

The third line of enquiry examines the reasons underlying UEFA's creation in the mid-1950s and the type of structure chosen by the organisation's promoters. In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to look at UEFA's origins from a global perspective that incorporates the influence of non-European actors. Adopting a global perspective is especially important here because—as in other sports (Ravenel et al. 2010)—geopolitical considerations were paramount in determining how football's international governance developed. For the first few decades of its existence, FIFA, and therefore international football, had been controlled almost entirely by Europe's national football associations. However, changes in the international context during the 1940s (especially the beginnings of decolonisation) and football's global expansion were making this situation increasingly untenable and FIFA was forced to reform its governance. Hence, the creation of UEFA in the mid-1950s must be examined from a global point of view that takes into account both the disagreements and the transfers of ideas between the leaders of European and South American football between the 1930s and the 1960s.

I have combined these three lines of enquiry into a chronological narrative that traces the stages leading to the establishment (genesis and formation) of UEFA. As well as building on the above-mentioned historical studies of European cooperation and international football, I drew on recent research into the history of international relations, which has examined the impact of culture (e.g. Dulphy et al. 2010; Romijn et al. 2012; Mikkonen and Suutari 2015), engineers and experts (e.g. Kaiser and Schot 2014), dance (Goncalves 2018) and sport (e.g. Frank 2012; Rofe and Dichter 2016; Rofe 2018) notably during the Cold War.[10] Further information was provided by biographical studies of FIFA's leaders (Tomlinson 2000; Dietschy 2011; Vonnard 2017; Vonnard and Quin 2018b; Vonnard 2019c; Zumwald 2019; Nicolas and Vonnard 2019) and, more generally, reflections on the lives and careers of international sport's most prominent leaders (e.g. Cervin and Nicolas 2019; Quin and Polycarpe 2019). Finally, it also draws on research into the history and sociology of international organisations (e.g. Kott 2011b; Sluga 2011; Herren 2014; Kaiser and Patel 2018), particularly studies of international sport organisations carried out over the last 10 years (e.g. Bernasconi 2010; Beacom 2012; Quin and Vonnard 2017; Krieger et al. in press). The result lies at the crossroads between different fields of history and incorporates approaches and findings from sociology and the political sciences.

1.5 Drawing on the 'Football Archives'

The documents on which my research is based were mostly drawn from UEFA's and FIFA's archives, which are stored at their headquarters in the Swiss cities of Nyon and Zurich, respectively, and which form a resource Alfred Wahl (1989) called 'the football archives'. These documents include minutes of the organisations' various commissions and general assemblies, their secretariats' annual reports, correspondence

[10]For a state of art about Cold War studies, see Romero (2014). About International relations studies, see the interesting overview written by Pierre Grosser (2014). More specifically about sport, see the following three recent publications: Vonnard et al. (2017), Edelman and Young (2019), and Dietschy (2020a, b).

between UEFA's secretary and national associations and FIFA circulars to members of its executive committee. My explorations of this rich and largely unplumbed source of material showed that, as for other international organisations, histories of football bodies do not have to be based on official documents and periodicals; they can also be drawn from an organisation's archives. In this respect, I was following in the footsteps of historians such as Paul Dietschy and Grégory Quin, who had already made use of FIFA's extensive archives (e.g. Dietschy 2004). Nevertheless, my research brought to light new documents, most notably files containing correspondence by executive committee members,[11] between FIFA and national associations,[12] and between FIFA and the continental confederations.[13]

In order to corroborate, question or expand specific points, I cross-referenced information from these archives with documents from national association archives (former East and West Germany, Belgium, England, France and Switzerland). These documents (especially minutes of executive committee meetings) revealed new information and helped clarify the most important issues affecting both FIFA and UEFA.

I also consulted articles in both the specialist and generalist press and conducted interviews with key figures in football during the period under study. The information provided by specialist newspapers, such as the weeklies *France Football* and *La Semaine Sportive*, and the daily newspaper *L'Equipe*, is extremely valuable because journalists attending official meetings often gave details of informal, behind-the-scenes discussions. In addition, newspaper editors were often close to sports leaders and therefore quite well informed, so they were frequently able to predict

[11] Essentially, the correspondence of Rodolphe Seeldrayers and Jules Rimet, which is an extremely rich source of information. Rimet's file alone contains around 1500 letters (estimation made in association with Grégory Quin).

[12] These countries were selected due to different criteria: importance within the FIFA (notably their financial support), geography activities of their leaders and, sometimes, discussion around their case. The countries are (in alphabetical order): Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, Egypt, France, Germany (West), Ghana, Israël, Italy, Hungary, Netherland, Rumania, Soviet Union, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

[13] Mostly the FIFA-South American confederation file, which contains letters and minutes of the South American confederation's general assemblies. The files for the African and Asian confederations for the years until the early 1960s contain very few documents.

the decisions an organisation might make even before the relevant meeting took place. It is important to understand that *L'Equipe* and *France Football* were strong actors in the field of sport during the 1950s and 1960s. As shown notably by Gilles Montérémal (2007, 2010), the two newspapers—who were part of the same media group—were at the forefront of the development of European tournaments in football, basketball and, later, also defended the idea of the alpine ski world cup. Their journalists—most notably Jacques Ferran, Jacques Goddet and Gabriel Hanot—strongly supported every new projet and often developed their own idea which was quickly disseminated in other countries thanks to an extended network of international correspondents.

I was lucky enough to be able to meet with several key figures in football, including Jacques Ferran (interviewed twice), Pierre Delaunay and Hans Bangerter. All these discussions were conducted as semi-structured interviews. Jacques Ferran was a journalist for *L'Équipe*, which he joined in 1948 and where he stayed for 40 years, becoming its editor-in-chief in the 1970s. Pierre Delaunay was the son of Henri Delaunay, UEFA's first general secretary and an influential leader of European football from the 1920s to the 1950s. Pierre took over from his father as UEFA's general secretary in 1955 and was a member of its executive committee from 1960 to 1962. Bangerter was a contemporary of Delaunay's who served as FIFA's deputy general secretary from 1953 to 1959 and as UEFA's general secretary from 1960 to 1989. As head of UEFA's secretariat for nearly 30 years, Bangerter played an integral role in the organisation's development. Additional first-hand accounts were taken from interviews conducted as part of other studies on European football.[14]

Although the resulting corpus was extremely rich, it has three main limits, one for each axis (see Sect. 1.5). First, as the source outside FIFA and UEFA came mainly from Western national associations and Western

[14]I had several discussions with André Vieli, who joined UEFA's communications department in 1982. In addition to the numerous articles he published in UEFA's official magazine, *UEFA Direct*, Vieli also wrote UEFA's 60th anniversary book. As a result, he has unparalleled knowledge of the organisation's history and its archives. I also had two meetings with Gerhard Aigner, who joined UEFA's secretariat in 1969 and was its general secretary from 1989 to 2002. In addition, a three-month research placement within UEFA, in the spring of 2012, allowed me to talk to many members of staff and thereby gain a better understanding of how the organisation functions and of recent developments.

press, the history proposed here is mainly a Western point of view. In this matter, documents from ex-Soviet bloc football association would help to broad a more complete picture of the UEFA's building process, and more generally about the European football developments. Second, because it did not include information from government archives, most notably foreign ministry archives (e.g. Beck 1999; Dichter 2015; Tonnerre 2019; Rofe and Tomlinson 2019), some conclusions regarding government intervention (or lack of intervention) in UEFA's work remain hypothetical. Third, it does not give 'equal weight' to South America's influence on UEFA's leaders (Bertrand 2011) because I did not have access to the archives of the South American confederation or its member associations. Once again, any conclusions drawn in this area must be treated with caution and should be re-examined using information from non-European sources.

Despite these limitations, which are a feature of all research projects, bringing together information from such a large, varied and multilingual (English, French, German and Spanish)[15] corpus that encompasses both primary and secondary sources enables this book to provide a hitherto unseen history of UEFA.

1.6 Structure of the Book

The book is divided into two parts, each containing three chapters. The first chapter examines the context that led to the creation of a European football confederation. By the early 1950s, the conjuncture seemed favourable to forming an umbrella organisation for European football, as several important figures in European football (leaders of national associations, club executives, journalists) had begun looking for ways of increasing synergies across the continent (Chapter 2). This context led the new generation of national association leaders who were rising to the forefront of FIFA, in particular Ottorino Barassi, Stanley Rous

[15]Thanks to many years of invaluable discussions with my friends and colleagues Yannick Deschamps, Sylvain Dufraisse and Nicola Sbetti, I also had access to documents in Italian and Russian.

and Ernst Thommen, to begin contemplating the idea of forming a continental organisation (Chapter 3). However, the initial projects mainly involved associations in Western Europe, as the exacerbation of Cold War tensions that had followed the outbreak of the Korean War precluded regular exchanges between the football associations of Eastern and Western Europe. At the same time, South America's football associations were demanding a greater say in FIFA's decisions, which they hoped to achieve by restructuring the international federation around continental groups, set up along the lines of the South American confederation and which would take over responsibility for regulating football on their continent. After three years of discussion, this issue was resolved in November 1953 at an extraordinary FIFA congress in Paris (Chapter 4).

Part II examines the repercussions of the congress' decision on the creation of continental confederations. Because FIFA's new statutes allocated at least one seat on the federation's executive committee to each continent, each continent had to create a confederation whose president could sit on the committee. In Europe, these moves coincided with a reduction in tension between East and West, a period historians refer to as the 'Thaw', which allowed football associations from both sides of the Iron Curtain to form a Europe-wide group of football associations. The new body came into being in June 1954 and was renamed UEFA in October of the same year. By immediately capitalising on and developing a context that was conducive to football exchanges across Europe (truly Europe-wide competitions were being launched for the first time in history), it took UEFA less than five years to become the most important organisation in European football (Chapter 5). This rapid development was largely the result of UEFA's success in overcoming the political divisions of the Cold War and bringing together associations from both the Eastern and Western blocs. Adopting and adapting the strategies FIFA had developed during the interwar period, they succeeded in giving a UEFA monopoly over the management of European football, both internally (especially with respect to FIFA) and externally (e.g. with respect to the European Broadcasting Union). In addition, UEFA's competitions (e.g. European Champion Clubs' Cup) helped create or maintain regular links between countries on opposite sides of the political divide, thereby enabling it to quickly become FIFA's largest confederation (Chapter 6).

In the late 1950s, FIFA restructured itself along continental lines, allocating positions of power and seats on its executive committee to each of the continental confederations, which now covered Africa and Asia, as well as South America and Europe. Until then, the South American confederation had been the model to follow, but UEFA's rapid development had turned it into a major player in the continentalisation of football and made it a source of inspiration for other continents (Chapter 7).

Part I

The road to creating a governing body for European football. 1949–1953.

This Part covers the period from 1949 to 1953, during which an evolving international context, both within and outside football, led FIFA to reform its executive committee along continental lines. FIFA's decision, taken at its November 1953 extraordinary congress, in Paris, opened the way for the creation of a pan-European confederation of football associations.

Chapter 2 describes the situation within European football in the early 1950s, which had become more favourable to forming an umbrella organisation for the continent's national associations. In fact, European football had developed rapidly during the period from 1949 to 1951, despite the Cold War tensions between East and West, and was seeing the creation of more ambitious supranational club competitions, such as the Grasshopper Cup, which took place between 1952 and 1957. In addition, a new generation of executives (notably Ottorino Barassi, Stanley Rous and Ernst Thommen) was rising to the top of Europe's football associations and gaining influence within FIFA. These men felt there were numerous issues that needed to be addressed at the European level (e.g., establishing an annual calendar of international matches) and that the best way to do this would be to set up a coordinating body for

European football. Discussions aimed at creating such a body began in the spring of 1952.

Chapter 3 examines the background to the restructuring of FIFA in the early 1950s, without which UEFA would not have come into being when it did. Reforming FIFA's statutes, especially those relating to the composition of the executive committee, proved to be a complex process, as FIFA's members had highly divergent views on the issue. What is more, these differences were often exacerbated by political factors, notably the Cold War tensions between East and West. Here, FIFA's executive committee worked hard to avoid internal conflict and overcome differences of opinion so they did not prevent it implementing its policies.

The final chapter (Chapter 4) in this Part focuses on the role played by South America's football associations in FIFA, as it was they who had instigated the process and who championed the idea of creating continental groups, mostly through their delegates on the committee that was set up to address the issue. Finally, after three years of discussions, the South American confederation reached an agreement with Western Europe's associations (the Thommen Compromise) that enabled FIFA to approve a set of new statutes at an extraordinary congress in 1953, in Paris.

2

Reorganising European Football

Exchanges within European football increased substantially during the early 1950s, thanks to the creation of new competitions and closer contacts between the sport's leaders. In this respect, football was following in the footsteps of sports such as cycling, where the idea of a European cycling tour was being mooted,[1] and judo, which had created a European governing body in 1949.

2.1 A New Phase of the Europeanisation of the Game

The early 1950s heralded a new phase of development for European football and saw the launch of several new competitions. In international football, the Mediterranean Cup, created in the wake of the first

[1] 'Le Tour d'Europe empêche l'élaboration définitive du calendrier routier français', *L'Équipe*, 18 November 1953.

P. Vonnard, *Creating a United Europe of Football*,
Football Research in an Enlarged Europe,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42343-8_2

Mediterranean Games in 1951, brought together France's and Italy's national B teams and Egypt's, Greece's and Turkey's national teams.[2] It even seems that the United Kingdom considered opening up its 'home internationals' championship (between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) to other countries.[3]

New European club tournaments included the Latin Cup and the 'British Festival'. The Latin Cup, launched in 1949, was an annual, one-week mini-championship between a Spanish, a French, an Italian and a Portuguese club that was played in the summer, a time of year that also saw numerous friendly international matches (Mourlane 2015). The 'British Festival', set up two years later by the English FA, was a multi-day tournament in which British teams of all levels played teams from several European countries, including West Germany. Although the West German State (Federal Republic of Germany, FRG) had only come into being in May 1949, the country had immediately been reintegrated into international football. In fact, according to Heather Dichter (2013), the decision taken by the heads of Swiss football in October 1948 to play three matches against German cities in the American occupation zone had put FIFA under pressure to recognise West German football even before the country existed. As a result, FIFA's executive committee began seriously considering the highly sensitive issue of readmitting the German Federation in early 1949. Two months later, on 6 May 1949—just 17 days before the FRG came into being—FIFA's executive committee agreed to allow member associations to play German clubs provided the matches were approved by the occupying authorities. This decision legitimised the actions of executives such as Peco Bauwens, who had worked hard since 1948 to recreate a German football association in the American, English and French occupation zones.[4] Modelled on the pre-war German association, whose name (Deutscher Fußball Bund—DFB) it

[2]It was envisaged to extend the competition to other Mediterranean countries, such as Spain. 'L'Italie sur la voie de la conquête de la suprématie européenne', *France Football*, 3 May 1949.

[3]'Ainsi tourne la boule', *France Football*, 28 August 1951.

[4]A 'football coordination committee' was set up in 1948 to prepare the rebuilding of the DFB. Minutes of the Founding Committee for German Football, 10 April 1948. Fédération Internationale de Football Association Archives (thereafter FIFAA), correspondence with Germany (1938–1950).

adopted, the new association was finally formed with Bauwens, German football's most prominent pre-war executive, as its first president. Soon after, several countries expressed their wish to resume playing the German national team and the Swiss FA officially requested Germany's reintegration into FIFA at the federation's 1950 congress in Brazil (Wahlig 2010). At the same time, the Saarland, a French-administered but semi-autonomous region of Germany, also gained FIFA membership, thereby allowing it to enter a team in international competitions (Lanfranchi 1990).[5] The Communist Bloc's absence from the congress[6] greatly facilitated FIFA's decision to reinstate West Germany, because these countries' delegates would certainly have voted against the motion, in accordance with their governments' opposition to the partition of Germany (Filitov 2007). In November of the same year, Switzerland's national team endorsed FIFA's decision by making the short trip to Stuttgart for a match against West Germany. Other countries followed suit, most notably France, which played West Germany in Paris in 1952.

The rapid reintegration of West German clubs into international football is significant because German players, technicians and executives had been among the most active in Europe since World War II. For example, Grasshopper Zurich's German coach, Willy Treml, devised a highly ambitious competition in which clubs from Germany, Austria, Spain, France, Italy and Switzerland would play a series of two-leg matches over two seasons. His project included a detailed financial component that allowed participants to claim their expenses on away games, or even make a profit, thereby adding to the revenues earned from home matches.[7] This was crucial for clubs and their executives, who were looking for additional income to fund the professionalisation of football, especially in Spain and Italy, where footballers were now earning large sums of money (Dietschy 2010). Their support enabled the Grasshopper Cup to come into being in June 1952. Although it prefigured future European club competitions, it did not include any Eastern Bloc teams, mainly due to the Cold War tensions between East and West, which were running

[5]For more details on Saarland football, see Reichelt, 2014.

[6]Due mainly to the fact that USSR and Brazil did not have diplomatic relations at that time.

[7]'La Coupe internationale des Grasshopper amorce d'un championnat d'Europe', *France Football*, 5 February 1952.

very high following the 1948–1949 Berlin Blockade and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. If these events had not interrupted football exchanges between Eastern and Western Europe, given the Grasshopper Cup's geographical extent and the example set by the interwar Mitropa Cup (which involved clubs from Central and Eastern Europe) it would have been logical for it to include clubs from Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

The Cold War also caused the demise of the International Cup in 1949, just three years after its launch, because, as *France Football* noted in October 1950, it had become impossible for Western European associations to stay in contact with their Hungarian and Czechoslovakian counterparts (Sbetti 2020, p. 111). Yugoslavia, which occupied a distinct position within the Communist Bloc, was the only Eastern country to play Western European opponents in 1950 and 1951, but this began to change in 1952 (Mills 2018). Discussions on the possibility of resurrecting the International Cup, which began in February of that year, bore fruit a few months later to the great satisfaction of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, which were very keen to take part in the competition.[8] Just as importantly, FIFA's congress, meeting in Helsinki, welcomed East Germany into its fold almost unanimously, with the only dissenting voice coming from West Germany, whose delegates abstained from the vote (Vonnard and Cala in press). A year later, Stalin's death and the end of the Korean War opened the way for a gradual improvement in East–West relations, an episode that historians call the 'Thaw'.[9]

In some respects, football was a pioneer in embracing the thaw in East–West relations, but its approach to the issue remained quite hesitant, as is illustrated by the 1953 FIFA match to commemorate the English FA's 90th anniversary. As for the matches held in 1938 and 1948 to mark the FA's 75th and 85th birthdays, England was to play a Rest-of-Europe team (Beck 2000). The task of selecting the European team was entrusted to Karel Lotsy, aided by two technical advisors, France's Gaston Barreau and Austria's Walter Neusch. Although FIFA expected them

[8]'Ainsi tourne la boule', *France Football*, 13 February 1952.

[9]For more about the Thaw, see the 2006 special issue of *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 'Repenser le Dégel', edited by Eleonory Gilburd and Larissa Zakharova. Lipkin (2011) discusses the origins of the Thaw.

to choose Europe's best players,[10] their team consisted entirely of players from Western Europe, partly due to the reluctance of some associations, notably Hungary, to make their best players available. Nevertheless, as in 1938 and 1948, the match was intended to create closer ties between Europe's football associations. From this perspective, the presence of Hungarian exile László Kubala[11] in the Europe team, alongside players from West Germany, Austria, Spain, Italy, Sweden and Yugoslavia, can be seen as a call for greater unity between Eastern European and Western European football. And, like the previous England-Europe matches, it brought together much of the European football community, with no fewer than 200 journalists travelling to London to cover the game.[12]

England was at Wembley again the following month to play Hungary's national side, which journalists had dubbed the 'Golden Team' (Hadas 1999) after it had remained unbeaten for more than a year. This game overshadowed the FIFA match and was probably the most significant football event of 1953, as not only did it bring together two of the world's best teams, it also had great political significance. In fact, the Golden Team was a great international ambassador for Hungry (Majtényi 2016), having played numerous matches against Western European countries since September 1952, including Sweden, Switzerland, Italy and Austria. These games did a lot to maintain links between East and West, because the quality of Hungary's team at this time meant its matches were reported throughout Europe by the specialist press. In London, the Hungarians shocked the football world by becoming the first foreign team to beat England at home (Kowalski and Porter 2003).

Hungary's foremost position in promoting football between East and West is further underlined by the fact that it was the only country in the Soviet Bloc to send a team to the International Youth Tournament. Created in 1948 on the initiative of Stanley Rous, the International Youth Tournament gave young players their first taste of international

[10]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 27–28 March 1953. FIFAA, executive committee (1953–1954).

[11]Kubala left Hungary at the end of the 1940s and finally settled in Spain (Simón 2012).

[12]'Angleterre contre reste du monde: une grande parade à valeur symbolique et commémorative', *France Football*, 20 October 1953.

football. After a successful first edition involving eight countries (England, Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and Wales), FIFA took over the tournament, as requested by Rous.[13] FIFA's president, Jules Rimet, shared Rous' view of the tournament's educational value and its potential for bringing together Europe's youth after the traumas of World War II, and therefore gave it his full support (Marston 2016a). Becoming an official FIFA competition ensured the tournament's future development and enabled it to attract more and more teams from Europe, as well as large numbers of spectators, who came in their thousands to watch some of the games. Nevertheless, countries from the Soviet Bloc, except Hungary, and Scandinavia, where youth football was less developed, were notable for their absence (Table 2.1).

The launch of the International Youth Tournament not only signalled a new phase in the development of European football, it also showed that FIFA was no longer the best body to run European football. Indeed, FIFA did not have a specific commission to oversee the tournament and the federation's secretary general frequently complained about the organisational difficulties the event caused. According to Jacques Ferran, FIFA was 'a totally sclerotic association, which was only looking to grow, to assert itself, to play a role it was not able to play'.[14] In the mid-1950s, Ferran was a dynamic, young journalist who, like his older colleagues Jacques de Ryswick, Gabriel Hanot and Jacques Goddet, was keen to use to *L'Équipe* and *France Football* to promote new ideas to boost European football (Montérémal 2007; Vonnard 2012). In contrast, FIFA was run by older individuals who seemed somewhat exhausted by their years at the helm and overwhelmed by football's ongoing transformations. Hans Bangerter, who became FIFA's deputy secretary general in 1953, told me that when he joined the organisation, at the age of 30, he felt like a 'kid'[15] compared with the other executive committee members. In fact, this was

[13]Letter from R. W. Seeldrayers to I. Schricker, 30 November 1948. FIFA, correspondence of R. W. Seeldrayers (1939–1950).

[14]Freely translated from the French. Interview with Jacques Ferran conducted on 19 September 2012 in Paris.

[15]Freely translated from the French. Interview with Hans Bangerter conducted on 1 October 2012 in Bolligen.

Table 2.1 European countries that took part in the International Youth Tournament from 1949 to 1953

Countries	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Austria	X	X	X	X	X
Belgium	X		X	X	X
Bulgaria					
Czechoslovakia					
East Germany					
England	X	X	X	X	X
France	X	X	X	X	X
Hungary					X
Republic of Ireland					X
Italy					
Luxembourg		X			X
The Netherlands	X	X	X		X
Northern Ireland	X		X		X
Poland					
Portugal					
Romania					
Saarland					X
Spain				X	X
Scotland		X			
Switzerland		X	X	X	X
Turkey					X
West Germany					X
Yugoslavia			X		X
Total	7	6	8	6	15

Note X = participation
Source Table based on the information provided by the website rsssf.com

a transition period for FIFA, as its elder statesmen were starting to make way for new leaders who were more open to reforming the federation's statutes and internal structure, so it would be better able to respond to the changes that were affecting international football.

2.2 New Ideas, New Leaders

Ivo Schricker's resignation as FIFA secretary general at the beginning of 1950 led to a significant change at the top of the federation. Schricker was 73 and appeared tired after two decades working with FIFA. Writing

in *France Football*, the journalist Maurice Pefferkorn wondered who would take over as secretary general. He felt that Ottorino Barassi and Stanley Rous, both of whom had had a certain amount of influence within FIFA before the war, were strong candidates due to their personalities and the experience they had accumulated from working on various FIFA committees since the 1930s. However, Pefferkorn felt that neither of them was the right person to take over FIFA's secretariat: Rous was too busy at the FA to be able to do both jobs and Barassi did not have the right profile for the job, as he was 'a man of action and a fighter',[16] rather than a diplomat, as the secretary general's job requires. In his autobiography, Rous briefly mentions discussing taking over Schricker's position with the FA's chairman, Arthur Drewry, who was also a FIFA vice-president, but says he withdrew because he would have had to give up his duties as secretary of the FA in order to cope with the heavy workload at FIFA (Rous 1979, pp. 128–129). In fact, Schricker had no obvious successor, as can be seen from a letter Karel Lotsy wrote to him. Although Lotsy was convalescing in hospital at this time and could only follow events at FIFA from afar, he mentioned both Barassi and Rous as possible candidates, while also enclosing an application from an acquaintance, Herman Wilhelm Glerum.[17] Lotsy's letter shows that the members of FIFA's executive committee were keen to make sure they were close to the new secretary general. This was especially the case for younger members, such as Lotsy, and newcomers, such as Switzerland's Ernst Thommen, who would go on to become FIFA's acting president for a brief period in 1961. Having a good relationship with the secretary general was, of course, a *sine qua non* for anyone wishing to play a role on FIFA's executive committee.

In the end, neither Barassi nor Rous applied for the position, but Schricker's succession shows the two men's growing importance within FIFA. Thommen was also rising in stature. As president of the Swiss FA, he had contributed greatly to the development of European football after

[16]'Qui succédera au docteur Schricker au poste de secrétaire général de la FIFA?' *France Football*, 12 July 1950.

[17]Letter from K. Lotsy to I. Schricker, 9 November 1950. FIFAA, correspondence of K. Lotsy (1949–1950).

World War II and played a significant role in persuading FIFA to recognise the West German FA, which expressed its gratitude by making him the DFB's first non-German honorary member.[18] FIFA's 1950 congress, in Rio, recognised Thommen's contribution to football by electing him to the executive committee (Vonnard 2019c).

For several months, Barassi, Rous and Thommen formed a small committee (called the FIFA Office Delegation) that operated in parallel to the executive committee and dealt with FIFA's administrative management. This position gave them access to FIFA's elite meetings, as *France Football* noted in March 1952:

> It was surprising to learn that the recent meeting of the FIFA executive committee in London was attended by two prominent figures in international football, Sir Stanley Rous and Mr Barassi, who are not committee members. They were there as advisors. Their influence in international football circles makes them unofficial members of the executive committee. Their experience and knowledge cannot be overlooked when important FIFA issues are discussed.[19]

Pending the appointment of a new secretary general, the three men divided the secretariat's work between them, with Barassi and Rous taking care of administrative tasks, while Thommen looked for a new secretary general he could present to the executive committee.[20] However, the trio did more than choose the new appointee; they also redefined the secretary general's function and reviewed the way FIFA's secretariat operated. In addition to being responsible for administrating FIFA, they felt that a secretary general should put forward ideas and study issues submitted to the executive committee.[21] Barassi even suggested that, in future, the secretary general should canvass FIFA's members on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from style of play to professionalism and administrative

[18] 'M. Thommen. Membre d'honneur du DFB', *La Semaine Sportive*, 23 November 1950.

[19] Freely translated from the French. 'Ainsi tourne la boule', *France Football*, 4 March 1952.

[20] Minutes of the FIFA Office Delegation, 29 December 1950. FIFAA, executive committee (1947–1950).

[21] Minutes of a meeting between E. Thommen, O. Barassi, S. Rous, I. Schricker and Mrs. Kurmann [from the FIFA secretariat], 11 October 1950. FIFAA, executive committee (1947–1950).

management. He also proposed recruiting an assistant general secretary to take over certain tasks and responsibilities and who would therefore have to be fluent in English, French and Spanish, the main languages used within FIFA. These measures were intended to make the secretariat more professional and better able to meet demands placed on FIFA by football's international expansion and issues such as the mediatisation and commercialisation of the World Cup.

By December 1950, Barassi, Rous and Thommen were finding that their other professional commitments meant they were unable to devote enough time to the secretary general's sometimes tedious tasks. As a result, Thommen proposed appointing an interim secretary general until a permanent replacement could be found. As Thommen explained to his colleagues, he was looking for 'a person with a thorough knowledge of football and of the work of this kind of secretariat'.[22] The man he had in mind (and had already approached) was Kurt Gassmann, who had been secretary general of the Swiss FA from 1916 to 1942 and therefore had the required experience, football knowledge and ability to work with the secretariat's two employees (Zumwald 2019). In addition, during his work at the Swiss FA he had attended many FIFA congresses and knew and had worked with most of Europe's senior football executives, including Thommen, with whom he appears to have forged close ties.[23] His administrative skills were also recognised outside football, including by the IOC, which had considered Gassmann for the position of chancellor (secretary general) after World War II. The IOC's assessment highlighted Gassmann's international experience, honesty and conscientiousness and added that he was a trustworthy manager.[24] Hence, Gassmann had similar qualities to Schricker. Barassi and Rous were happy with Thommen's proposal, but felt that Gassmann would have to be present at the

[22] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the FIFA Office Delegation 29 December 1950. FIFAA, executive committee (1947–1950).

[23] Daniel Schaub's hagiographical biography of Thommen mentions Kurt Gassmann under the heading 'friends and benefactors' (2013, p. 143).

[24] 'Renseignement confidentiel', 6 May 1946. International Olympic Committee Archives (thereafter IOCA), correspondence with the Swiss Olympic Committee, D-RM01-SUISS/006. Information kindly provided by Quentin Tonnerre.

office every day.[25] Finally, after months of discussions, during which they received dozens of applications for the position of secretary general, the three men decided they would like to continue working with Gassmann, a decision FIFA's executive committee welcomed and quickly ratified.[26]

Becoming FIFA's general secretary had brought Gassmann back to the forefront of international football following a long period of inactivity after his departure from the Swiss FA, and would allow him to finish his career in style. For this, he was indebted to Barassi, Rous and Thommen, who therefore knew they could rely on his loyalty. What is more, Gassmann fulfilled the three men's expectations by making FIFA's secretariat more professional. One of Gassmann's first initiatives was to modernise the secretariat's equipment by ordering new typewriters and furniture. More importantly, he adopted standard formats for official documents (minutes of committee meetings and congresses, circulars), and made sure they were more accurate, dated and, in most cases, attributed to their authors. This more professional approach aimed at keeping the national associations better informed, a goal that was achieved by relaunching an official newsletter to 'publish all important decisions of a general nature, as well as inform associations about the work and intentions of FIFA's bodies'.[27] The first edition of the *official FIFA bulletin*, as it was named, was published just a few months after Gassmann's appointment.

Another major task which Gassmann undertook, in conjunction with Thommen, was to find a new headquarters for FIFA. Gassmann had quickly made it known that the premises on Bahnhofstrasse (in Zurich) were too small for FIFA's expanding activities[28] and had insufficient space for storing documents. The executive committee discussed

[25] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 2 December 1950. FIFAA, executive committee (1947–1950).

[26] Seeldrayers wrote to Gassmann to say: 'I take this opportunity, my dear Gassmann, to tell you how pleased I am with your work with FIFA'. Freely translated from the French. Letter from R. W. Seeldrayers to K. Gassmann, 15 January 1951. FIFAA, reorganisation 50–53 (folder 1: Study commission).

[27] Freely translated from the French. K. Gassmann, Minutes of the FIFA Office Delegation, 16–17 August 1951. FIFAA, executive committee (minutes 1951–1952).

[28] Letter from K. Gassmann to J. Rimet, O. Barassi, S. Rous and E. Thommen, 18 May 1951. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1952).

the issue on several occasions but felt it would be difficult to find a suitable location, primarily due to the cost of buying a building. Its concerns were well founded, as, despite extending the search to the Swiss cities of Bern and Geneva, in addition to Zurich, little progress was made. Gassmann expressed his frustration on 25 September 1954, when he reminded the committee of the 'decidedly insufficient state of the current offices'.[29] Gassmann and Thommen finally found a solution a few weeks later and the executive committee followed their recommendation when it 'unanimously decided to buy the building at Hitzigweg 11, in Zurich'.[30] The process had taken more than three years, but FIFA finally had a new headquarters, which opened in 1955.

The final step in FIFA's organisational transformation was to appoint an assistant secretary. As Gassmann pointed out when he took office, the secretariat must be able to function when the secretary general is on vacation or should he fall ill. Just before the 1952 congress in Helsinki, Thommen responded to Gassmann's repeated calls for help by temporarily delegating the personnel manager of Sport Toto—Switzerland's official sports betting organisation—to help him cope with the workload (Vonnard 2019c). A few weeks later, Thommen again 'indicate[d] that a qualified person would be available'.[31] The person he had in mind was Hans Bangerter, who was hired as deputy secretary in 1953. When interviewed by the author in 2012, Bangerter was not particularly forthcoming about why he was offered the job at FIFA, he simply stated: 'I had worked at the Federal School of Sport in Magglingen. I was mainly involved in international relations, so I certainly met foreign dignitaries visiting Magglingen, and that is where I met leaders, especially from football and from FIFA, and they asked me to [come] to FIFA. That's how I started'.[32]

[29] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the FIFA emergency committee, 25 September 1954. FIFAA, executive committee (1953–1954).

[30] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 18 November 1954. FIFAA, executive committee (1953–1954).

[31] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 8–9 September 1952. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1952).

[32] Freely translated from the French. Interview with Hans Bangerter conducted on 1 October 2012 in Bolligen.

The changes introduced by Barassi, Rous and Thommen, in conjunction with Gassmann, show they were trying to modernise FIFA and adapt its operations to the growing demands placed by the development of world football. These three men were also representative of the new generation of leaders that was taking over the reins at FIFA, as the old guard, which had governed the federation since the 1930s, gradually stepped down from the executive committee. Even FIFA's long-serving president, Jules Rimet, had seen his aura diminish by the 1950s. In fact, according to the press, football had been rocked by its own 'Hiroshima'[33] in 1949, when Rimet lost the presidency of the French FA, a post he had held for 30 years. In the early 1950s, he was beset by health problems, so even though the 1952 FIFA congress reappointed him president for another term, at the age of 80, he was increasingly distant from the secretariat's work and informed the congress from the outset that he would step down in 1954 (Vonnard and Quin 2018b). Seeldrayers was also feeling tired, both from his work as a lawyer and from his activities with the International Olympic Committee (he had been a member of the IOC since 1945), as he admitted in several letters to Gassmann. Furthermore, his credibility had been damaged by his support for the Belgium FA's long-serving secretary, Alfred Verdyck, who was forced to resign in 1949 following accusations of embezzlement. Finally, Giovanni Mauro had to retire from the executive committee because of illness, allowing the 1952 congress to offer his seat to his fellow Italian Barassi. These developments marked the turning of a new page for FIFA's elite.

However, the new men at the top did not change everything and they kept in touch with many of their predecessors, whom they had known since the 1930s. Barassi and Mauro, for example, were close friends, and Thommen appeared to get along well with Seeldrayers, as is shown by a 1955 letter in which Seeldrayers wrote: 'It's a pity you couldn't come to London. You would have seen a fantastic Stanley Matthews exhibition on Friday evening at the Arsenal ground'.[34] What is more, the new leaders had similar social, sporting and professional backgrounds to their

[33] 'Hiroshima du football', *France Football*, 26 July 1949.

[34] Freely translated from the French. Letter from R. W. Seeldrayers to E. Thommen, 10 May 1955. FIFAA, correspondence of R. W. Seeldrayers (1939–1950).

predecessors, as they had had long careers on the pitch, either as players (Thommen) or as referees (Barassi and Rous) and they had all held management positions in their respective national associations for many years (Quin 2012; Vonnard 2017). Barassi was one of Italian football's most prominent leaders under fascism, during which time he was secretary general of the Italian FA and played an active role in organising the 1934 World Cup (Wahl 2012). After Mussolini's downfall, he worked hard to re-establish the Italian FA, of which he became president. Rous had been general secretary of England's powerful FA since 1934 and had helped bring the United Kingdom's associations back into FIFA after World War II (Beck 2000). Thommen was a delegate and then president of the Swiss FA's influential non-professional league. In the late 1930s, he drew up the 'Thommen Plan' to reorganise non-professional football in Switzerland and later rose quickly through the ranks to become vice-president and then president (in 1947) of the Swiss FA (Berthoud et al. 2016, p. 66).

In addition, Barassi, Rous and Thommen were at home within the cosmopolitan world of international affairs and their commitment to the game had enhanced their reputations throughout the world. Football had given them the opportunity to travel extensively and allowed them to familiarise themselves with the customs of international football. Barassi could switch between Italian, French and English, and Thommen could speak English and French, as well as German, his mother tongue. Although Rous spoke only English, Matthew Taylor considered him to be a 'Europhile' and open-minded to the world (2006, p. 68). All three contributed greatly to reviving European football after World War II by helping create and develop a number of international events (Barassi)[35] and by setting up the International Youth Tournament (Rous). Heidrun Homburg (2007) describes Thommen as a man who had a fervent desire to develop international football and highlights the role he played in bringing the 1954 World Cup to Switzerland, as well as the work he did in the early 1950s as a member of FIFA's executive committee.

[35]He was the Italian Federation's delegate to the International Cup's executive committee, helped create the Latin Cup and helped organise the Mediterranean Cup.

Thirdly, Barassi, Rous and Thommen all had professions. Barassi had trained as an engineer before going on to manage a steel company; Thommen was also a qualified engineer and had worked for the Basel city council's building department between 1921 and the late 1930s before managing Sport Toto; and Rous was a teacher before he became the FA's general secretary.

Although these similarities with earlier leaders show a certain continuity at the top of FIFA, the three men differed from their predecessors in a number of ways. First, they were more open to the commercialisation of football, at least in the sense of cooperating with commercial interests in order to develop the game; they would of course never have contemplated handing the sport over to big business. For example, they felt that sports betting could be used to finance the activities of football associations and were beginning to consider creating new competitions. They also believed there was a need for a clear distinction between amateur and professional football and that national associations should support amateur football, but not to the detriment of the professional game, which had to ensure a high level of play in order to attract the public. Hence, it was essential for competitions to include the best teams, a view that contradicted Rimet's universalist vision of football (Dietschy 2011; Vonnard and Quin 2018b). During the 1950 World Cup, in Brazil, Rous readily imparted to the journalist Jacques De Ryswick his views on the need to revise the current competition formula because 'making a team like Switzerland travel 20,000 kilometres to play two matches and go home is illogical'.[36] Rous advocated holding a qualifying round on each continent and reducing the number of matches played during the finals. This format was adopted for the 1954 World Cup in Switzerland, whose organising committee was presided by Thommen. *France Football* noted that 'the qualifying stage seem[ed] to be very long, if not discouraging for some, but this ensured that only the best in world football would be in Switzerland'.[37]

[36] Freely translated from the French. 'Sir, Stanley Rous. "Sportivement et économiquement la formule actuelle de la Coupe du monde est périmée"', *L'Équipe*, 21 June 1950.

[37] Freely translated from the French. 'Pour la Coupe du monde, Jules Rimet de 1954', *France Football*, 10 June 1952.

They also differed from their predecessors, particularly Rimet and Seeldrayers, in their vision of FIFA's structure. According to Rous' entry in the 1963/1964 *UEFA Handbook*, during the early 1950s, he and several colleagues (who he did not name) were 'of the opinion that changes among the members and in the constitution of FIFA's executive committee [were] necessary given that more countries [had become] independent and had therefore [left] the national association to which they had previously belonged'.[38] Changing FIFA's structure by creating continental bodies would make it possible to meet the demands of the South American associations, whose leaders were quite close to Barassi and Rous, but the reforms they envisaged were also intended to protect Europe's control over FIFA. Their ideas were all the more likely to be heard because, thanks to their long careers in football, all three had extensive relational capital.[39]

Hence, Barassi, Rous and Thommen were at the crossroads between two generations of European football executives. The pre-war generation, represented by Mauro, Rimet and Seeldrayers, was retiring and the influence of 'elder statesmen', such as Bauwens and Delaunay, who were still active but no longer officially members of the executive committee, was waning. They were being replaced by younger executives, both on FIFA's executive committee (e.g., Lotsy and Andrejevic, who returned in 1954) and within FIFA's congress, where men such as Belgium's François Meert and José Crahay, Denmark's Ebbe Schwartz, Greece's Constantin Constantaras and Switzerland's Gustav Wiederkehr began making their voices heard. This changing of the guard resulted in Barassi, Rous and Thommen spending much of the spring of 1952 creating new ties among Europe's leaders.

[38] Freely translated from the French. Paper entitled: 'Le rôle des confédérations'.

[39] In his autobiography, Rous noted that European football executives visited him regularly at FA headquarters during the late 1940s (1978).

2.3 A 'Little Council of Europe in Football'

In April 1949, Barassi introduced the idea of creating a 'European confederation'[40] that could, among other things, organise a European competition for national teams. Barassi appears to have been inspired by the South American model, which he would have been well aware of thanks to his numerous business trips to South America.[41] Three years later, he put forward a more complete version of his idea and took advantage of the discussions on reorganising FIFA (see Sect. 3.2) to begin informal discussions with his Belgian and French colleagues. By March 1952, the Belgian, French and Italian FAs had agreed on a proposition to submit to the forthcoming FIFA congress.[42] However, they also felt that an issue of this importance should be discussed with other national associations across Europe and that this would be best achieved by each association contacting the associations with which it had the closest ties. For example, Belgium's football executives liaised with their counterparts in the Netherlands and Luxembourg. After the meeting between France, Italy and Belgium, François Meert, the Belgian FA's vice-president, told his executive committee colleagues that creating a supranational coalition would 'prove very useful, given that the American associations have come together in a similar grouping and form a homogeneous block whose delegates attend congresses with an executive mandate'.[43]

Barassi followed up these preliminary discussions by inviting several European associations to meet him in Geneva on 22 April 1952. Importantly, Barassi not only briefed his European colleagues on the proposed reforms to FIFA, he also provided additional information to that which had been discussed with the Belgian and French FAs. In fact, Barassi had

[40] 'La Coupe internationale a-t-elle vécu? L'Italie n'aura pas terminé son programme l'an prochain', *France Football*, 19 April 1949.

[41] FIFA's executive committee made use of Barassi's presence in South America by asking him to consult with the South American confederation's leaders in order to solve problems such as the Brazilian association's delay in paying FIFA the sums it owed for the 1950 World Cup.

[42] Minutes of the Belgian FA, 1 March 1952. State Archives of Belgium (thereafter SAB), URBSFA, executive committee (1951–1952).

[43] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the Belgian FA, 29 March 1952. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1951–1952).

taken advantage of the discussions on reforming FIFA to launch a general consultation on establishing a European football confederation. As the French FA noted, Barassi's proposal 'differs in character and in the number of countries invited to take part from the initiative agreed in Paris'.[44] The Belgian FA's executive committee also felt that the objective of the planned meeting had 'changed considerably since it was first envisaged'.[45]

The ambitious nature of Barassi's project seems to have unsettled the associations concerned, as they decided to postpone the meeting until the end of May so they would have more time to study the proposal. Barassi also decided he needed to clarify his ideas before the meeting, now scheduled for 28 May, in Zurich. A few days before the meeting, he wrote to all of the associations involved, outlining some of the rights that would be granted to certain groups within FIFA, most notably the allocation of executive committee vice-presidencies to representatives of the South American confederation, the British associations and the USSR (see Sect. 3.1). He also noted the possibility of other continental groups (e.g. Asia) emerging in the future and the risk this presented for associations that remained isolated. He worried that Europe's associations, 'which had practically founded FIFA, either by providing it with financial resources or by sustaining its activities, [might] end up with no authority and no rights if the tendency of others to join forces were to increase'.[46] He hoped this concern would provoke a reaction from Europe's football associations and encourage them to create an organisation to defend their interests within FIFA. What is more, recent developments in international football were turning FIFA into a truly global organisation, so it was becoming less able to address purely European matters. Such issues could, however, 'find a satisfactory solution in a

[44]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the French FA, 25 April 1952. French FA Archives (thereafter FFAA), executive committee, vol. 30 (August 1951–May 1952).

[45]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the Belgian FA, 3 May 1952. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1951–1952).

[46]Freely translated from the French. Appendix to a letter from O. Barassi to R. W. Seeldrayers. FIFAA, reorganisation 50–53 (folder 1: Study commission).

grouping of geographically close associations, with markedly similar living conditions and values'.[47] Moreover, Barassi felt that a European body would facilitate the formation of technical (refereeing, training), social (hygiene, health), ethical (amateurism and professionalism) and organisational (international calendar, European tournament) initiatives. It was an ambitious idea, inspired by the South American confederation, which was the only organisation that resembled Barassi's proposed model. Nevertheless, he insisted that any European body would have to work with FIFA and operate under its guidance.

Although Barassi stressed the need to cooperate with FIFA, the federation's senior executives, such as Seeldrayers, do not appear to have been told of the meeting with the European associations until very late in the process. Seeldrayers went as far as to write to Gassmann, on 16 May 1952, to say he had not been informed of Barassi's initiative and that he would not participate in it because his position as chairman of FIFA's reorganisation committee required him to remain impartial. Nevertheless, he hoped the other leaders would stop the initiative, believing 'Rous will do a good job behind the scenes and [he] relies on Crahay [the secretary of the Belgian FA] to act as a moderating influence'.[48] However, Seeldrayers might not have been aware of all the parties' opinions because Rous and Crahay both supported Barassi's proposal during later discussions.

Barassi had obviously been influenced by the South American confederation, but to what extent was he also influenced by moves towards European integration in other domains? Many new types of economic and military cooperation between the countries of Western Europe had emerged since 1948–1949, most notably the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Council of Europe (created in 1949), whose aim was to achieve greater unity between its members in order to safeguard and promote their shared ideals and foster economic growth and social progress (Rousselier 2007, p. 34). In addition, the Benelux countries, Italy, France and Germany came together in 1951 to found the

[47] Ibid.

[48] Letter from R. W. Seeldrayers to K. Gassmann, 16 May 1952. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder: 1. Study commission).

European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). As Jürgen Mittag noted (2015), these countries were the same as those that formed the core of the European football confederation project. In fact, the two initiatives shared many similarities, which is not surprising given the close links between football and politics in Europe. For example, the sports press often reported European projects and occasionally put forward ideas for future collaborations, as shown by *France Football*'s suggestion, in 1950, that Strasbourg would be an excellent venue for a European inter-club championship because it was the seat of the Council of Europe.[49] Conversely, many politicians perceived football as an excellent vehicle for disseminating their ideas. This can be seen in the European Movement's call, in the summer of 1952, to use European football matches to promote closer ties across Europe.[50] Such a competition could only be organised with approval from the national football associations, but their leaders refused because they would not allow their clubs to take part in competitions organised by a body with a 'political objective'.[51] This episode suggests that, although Barassi's endeavours may have been influenced by others projects to promote European cooperation, his efforts to bring Europe's football associations closer together were motivated as much by a desire to consolidate their control over the game, as to improve footballing relations across the continent. In other words, as in other sectors which were building European organisations, an umbrella organisation for European football would provide a spokesperson for the continent's national associations.

[49] 'Vers un Championnat d'Europe disputé à Strasbourg, "capitale"', *France Football*, 22 August 1950. According to *France Football*, this idea was supported by the Council of Europe's new president, Belgium's Paul-Henri Spaak, who was a major figure in European integration during the 1950s and who is described as 'an enlightened football fan'. In his biography of Spaak, Michel Dumoulin confirmed Spaak's enthusiasm for football (1999).

[50] Minutes of the Belgian FA, 21 June 1952. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1951–1952). At the same time, Jean Monnet, who was president of the High Authority managing the ECSC and a fervent believer in European integration, scribbled on a piece of paper the idea of setting up a European 'steel against coal' football match. Jean Monnet's note from 4 February 1952. Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe Archives, CD01.1, AMH, 4/2/52: Equipe de football européenne.

[51] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the Belgian FA, 7 March 1953. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1953–1954).

Europe's football associations met in Zurich at the end of May 1952, prior to a match between Switzerland and England, which the delegates used to continue their discussions in a more informal setting. Barassi's proposal was, in fact, a joint initiative by a group of European football executives, primarily Barassi, Rous and Thommen, so it was Thommen who organised the meeting, even though Barassi issued the invitations. According to the French journalist Maurice Pefferkorn, writing a few hours before the meeting, its main aim was 'to create an embryo European federation to stand up to the coalition of American associations'.[52]

Although Pefferkorn referred to 'European' associations (as do a number of commemorative UEFA books), only associations from Western Europe were at the meeting, in other words (in alphabetical order): Austria, Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Switzerland and West Germany.[53] Denmark spoke on behalf of the Scandinavian associations (Sweden, Norway and Finland), while Switzerland represented Scotland, Spain, Portugal and Yugoslavia. It remains unclear why the Eastern European associations did not take part in the discussions, but José Crahay provides a clue in the 1963/1964 UEFA Handbook, where he notes that invitations to the meeting were sent only to those national associations that had 'given their agreement in principle during preliminary conversations with Mr Barassi'[54] and that Barassi used his trips with the Italian team to broach the subject with other European associations. Given that the only Eastern Bloc team Italy played in the early 1950s was Yugoslavia, in 1951 (Sbetti 2018), Barassi would have had few opportunities to discuss his ideas with his Eastern European counterparts. As a result, the Cold War dividing line also ran through the initial discussions on building a European confederation, with only the Western European countries being invited to the table.

[52]Freely translated from the French. 'Deux événements européens à Zurich: entretiens européens et Suisse-Angleterre', *L'Équipe*, 25 May 1952.

[53]Letter from H. Käser to K. Gassmann, 7 January 1952. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder: 1. Study commission).

[54]Freely translated from the French. Rothenbuehler (1979, p. 19).

Nevertheless, the meeting, which *France Football* called a mini Council of Europe for football,[55] proposed enlarging the European grouping beyond the six countries of the ECSC.

The meeting began by discussing the proposed reforms to FIFA's statutes, but quickly decided the issue needed further study. To this end, a standing committee, consisting of Italy's Barassi, Belgium's Crahay, and France's Delaunay, was tasked with collating the European associations' comments on the changes to FIFA's statutes which its executive committee was intending to present to the 1952 congress. Barassi, Crahay and Delaunay were chosen for this task because they were at the heart of the move to create a European confederation and, as former (Barassi) or current (Crahay and Delaunay) secretaries of their respective national associations, they had the experience of managing administrative issues. They could also write in several languages, notably English, German and French, which would facilitate exchanges with national associations. The Zurich meeting appears to have been beneficial, as it resulted in an agreement between the European associations present, who decided to meet again a few days before the FIFA congress in Helsinki. However, they failed to reach a consensus on Barassi's idea to create a European football confederation, despite intense discussion on the morning of the second day.[56] For the Belgian FA's executive committee, meeting a few days later, 'the principle of creating a European body […] had not yet been achieved'.[57] Just as importantly, many of the leaders at the meeting felt that moves to create a continental body were premature—they preferred to wait for the outcome of FIFA's reorganisation before taking a decision. For the time being, the project had come to a halt.

The possibility of founding a European football organisation was discussed again on 27 June 1952, in Paris, at a meeting involving 18 leaders from 11 national associations (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, Switzerland, West Germany and Yugoslavia; Austria and England sent apologies). This time, Yugoslavia

[55] 'À Zurich, les représentants de 13 nations jettent les bases d'une entente européenne', *L'Équipe*, 28 May 1952.

[56] 'Les "treize" ont terminé leurs travaux et nommé leur Bureau', *L'Équipe*, 29 May 1952.

[57] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the Belgian FA, 7 June 1952. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1951–1952).

was invited to the meeting, a reminder of its distinct position within the Communist Bloc (Rajak 2011). As at the first meeting, nearly all the men who would play leading roles in European football in the late 1950s were present (in alphabetical order: Andrejevic, Barassi, Crahay, Delaunay, Graham, Lotsy, Meert and Wiederkehr). Thommen sent a short note to the assembly to apologise for being unable to attend and to encourage the other leaders to pursue the discussions begun in Zurich.[58] Older leaders, who might have had reasons to feel 'revengeful', such as Bauwens and Delaunay, also attended the meeting,[59] but most of the Eastern European associations were absent. This may have been their own choice, because the minutes of the meeting, kept by the Swiss delegate, Helmut Käser, indicate that several associations did not reply to Barassi's invitation letter of 20 June.

Barassi, Crahay and Delaunay presented the Paris meeting with their response to the proposed changes to FIFA's statutes, entitled 'Draft additions and revisions to the most recent modifications to the Statutes and Regulations prepared by the FIFA study group'.[60] This document, which put forward a European vision of FIFA's new statutes, was ratified by all eighteen European associations present at the meeting[61] (Fig. 2.1).

The discussions undertaken by the 18 European associations between late May and late June marked a shift in the way they approached FIFA congresses, because it was the first time they had come together to establish a united position on the issues under debate. And they obviously intended to continue working together, as Barassi's cover letter to the standing committee's amendments to FIFA's statutes mentions a further

[58] Minutes of the European associations meeting, 27 June 1952. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder: 1. Study commission).

[59] Bauwens' long-term ambition was to regain his place on FIFA's executive committee. As for Delaunay, the reform project jeopardised his position as secretary of the Laws of the Game Commission, which he had held since the interwar period.

[60] Freely translated from the French. O. Barassi, J. Crahay, H. Delaunay, 'Projets d'additifs ou d'amendements aux derniers projets de modifications aux statuts et règlements élaborés par la commission d'étude de la FIFA', 27 June 1952. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder: 3. Proposals).

[61] In alphabetical order: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Saarland, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

Fig. 2.1 European countries that ratified the proposed amendment to FIFA's statutes (*Note* In grey, the national associations that ratified Europe's proposed amendments to FIFA's statutes. *Source* Map based European vision of FIFA's new statutes, June 1952)

meeting on 22 July,[62] during the FIFA congress. Nevertheless, they were not yet ready to set up a specific organisation for this purpose. Thommen neatly summarised the general feeling in a short note to the leaders

[62]Letter from O. Barassi to H. Käser, 10 July 1952. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder: 4. Proposals and projects).

present in Paris, in which he repeated his support for building an arrangement between European associations in order to safeguard their interests, while stressing that FIFA:

> … must remain an entity bringing together national associations, and if a continental entente of national associations promotes greater discussion of internal matters, which would certainly strengthen FIFA, we must not take hasty decisions on this issue, because this would risk giving this entente a meaning or direction that is not intended.[63]

Thommen envisaged this 'entente' as a forum that would allow associations with common interests to come together but without being too constraining. Barassi had a similar vision and was therefore happy to be able to report to Thommen a few days later that the tone of the meetings in Zurich and Paris had been 'friendly and not at all imperative'.[64]

Although the leaders of Western Europe's football associations were not yet ready to create a continental grouping, the meetings in Zurich and Paris, and then in Helsinki, on the eve of the 1952 FIFA congress, were noteworthy because, for the first time, they brought together an extended group of European associations (initially just those from Western Europe) to discuss matters relating to FIFA congresses and European football.

[63] Freely translated from the German. Minutes of the European associations meeting, 27 June 1952. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder: 1. Study commission).

[64] Freely translated from the French. Letter from O. Barassi to H. Käser, 10 July 1952. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder: 4. Proposals and projects).

3

Between Internationalism and Cold War

The international political situation at the end of World War II was very different to the context in which FIFA had operated prior to the conflict, most notably due to the beginnings of decolonisation and the outbreak of the Cold War. What is more, the world governing body's rapid expansion during this period, mostly due to the affiliation of newly decolonised nations, was raising a number of administrative challenges. How could FIFA best respond to this new context?

A possible answer, favoured in particular by a new generation of leaders (see Sect. 2.2), including Barassi, Rous and Thommen, was to restructure FIFA. Regionalising—or decentralising—FIFA was not a new idea; South America's associations had been demanding such a reform since the 1930s. However, the new international and internal context in which FIFA found itself had created a situation in which this idea could come to fruition.

P. Vonnard, *Creating a United Europe of Football*,
Football Research in an Enlarged Europe,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42343-8_3

3.1 FIFA Facing the New World Order

The process of decolonisation that began after World War II, heralded a new phase of international expansion for FIFA, as the football associations of the newly independent states that were emerging in the Middle East and South-East Asia were now eligible to join the world governing body (Dietschy 2020a, b). In fact, these countries were keen to achieve international recognition by taking their place within a wide range of international organisations, especially the United Nations, which most applied to join as soon as they gained independence.

Given the increasing importance of sport across the world, being accepted into international sport organisations, especially the IOC and FIFA, was considered another important step in this process (Nicolas 2019). Consequently, FIFA saw its membership increase by almost 40% between 1946 and 1950, as it incorporated 21 new associations, two-thirds of which were from Asia, the Americas, Africa and Oceania, with only one-third from Europe.[1] This expansion gradually turned FIFA from a primarily European federation into a truly global organisation, with members on every inhabited continent on Earth. In recognition of this new global status, FIFA decided its 1950 congress would be held in Rio Janeiro, Brazil, during the World Cup, thereby making it the first ever to take place outside Europe. Similarly, its executive committee began seriously contemplating the idea of holding meetings outside Europe[2] (Fig. 3.1).

This global expansion had several consequences for FIFA. First, it complicated the executive committee's and secretariat's work, largely due to the new issues the incoming associations brought with them, many of which were political. For example, in 1946, the Lebanese FA proposed

[1]By arrival date and in alphabetical order: Guatemala, Syria (1946); Afghanistan, Burma, Canada, South Korea, Gold Coast, Honduras, Iran, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sudan (1948); Iraq, Nicaragua (1950). There were seven European newcomers: the four UK associations and the Soviet Union in 1946, Cyprus in 1948 and Saarland in 1950. These information came from the *1950 FIFA Handbook*.

[2]Plans to hold an executive committee meeting in New York in 1951 were finally abandoned due to the cost of getting all the executive committee members, most of whom were from Europe, to New York. Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 6–7 October 1951. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1952).

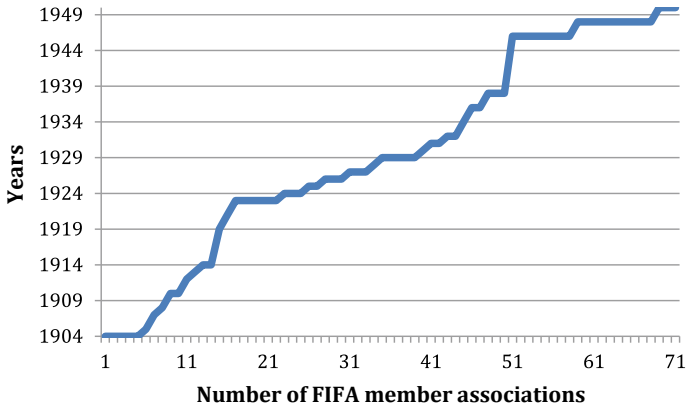

Fig. 3.1 Increase in the number of FIFA member associations from 1904 to 1950 (*Source* Figure based on the *FIFA Handbook* [1950])

organising a Middle East championship that would include Arab clubs from Palestine.[3] The executive committee refused to consider the matter, arguing that the Palestinian association did not represent the entire territory due to the presence of another association for the country's Jewish clubs. The executive committee also refused to heed Egypt's demand, in 1948, to refuse Sudan FIFA membership because Egypt's protests were motivated by national politics, in this case, a territorial dispute with Sudan.

Second, many of the new member associations wanted FIFA to help them develop football in their region, as they lagged far behind Europe in terms of football infrastructure and exchanges with neighbouring countries. Dealing with these requests further increased the workload of FIFA's elite. What is more, some African leaders were beginning to feel that the best way to develop football on the continent was to build stronger relations between national associations by creating inter-African bodies (Dietschy 2010, see Chapter 7; Nicolas and Vonnard 2019, pp. 37–38). The first country to suggest this was Egypt, whose football association had been active within FIFA since the 1930s. In 1945, the Egyptian FA requested 'permission to set up a FIFA group

[3]Minutes of the FIFA congress, 25–26 July 1946. FIFAA, congress (1946–1952).

in the Middle East',[4] while reassuring FIFA that they did not want to challenge its authority and that the new group would continue to follow FIFA regulations. FIFA's secretary general, Ivo Schricker, responded by gathering information on the subject and, in a move that can be interpreted as a reminder of FIFA's authority over world football, informed the Egyptians that prior approval from FIFA was required before matches could be played against non-FIFA member associations.[5] Although the Middle East grouping never came into being, Egypt's proposal showed the willingness of FIFA's newer associations to create supranational bodies as a way of developing football in their region. This approach would eventually call into question the way FIFA was organised.

By the late 1940s, Europe's colonial powers had begun relaxing their grip on Africa, thereby making it easier for African countries to set up joint organisations (Boukari-Yabara 2014). A group of countries from sub-Saharan Africa capitalised on this new-found freedom to draw up a proposal to create a United African Football Association that would 'promote closer links between the African Football Associations, share ideas, pool financial contributions, provide regular exchanges of ideas, hold regular inter-colonial matches and, ultimately, set up an annual Inter-colonial competition'.[6] The project presented for consideration at the 1950 FIFA congress named six participating countries—South Africa, Ivory Coast, Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo—most of which were still colonies. Because of this, the executive committee refused to discuss the proposal, citing FIFA's rule that the footballing affairs of colonies are controlled by the colonising country's association, rather than by a national association that can be affiliated to FIFA.[7] Nevertheless, FIFA's leaders demonstrated their growing willingness to take into account the demands of non-European associations by adding the issue to the agenda for the 1950 congress. Of course, the absence

[4]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 10–12 November 1945. FIFAA, executive committee (1940–1946).

[5]Letter from I. Schricker to the Egyptian Football Association, 4 December 1945. FIFAA, correspondence with Egypt (1932–1994).

[6]Agenda of the FIFA congress, 22–23 June 1950. FIFAA, congress (1946–1952).

[7]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 21 June 1950. FIFAA, executive committee (1947–1950).

of delegates from Africa left the floor open to the leaders of the colonial powers, whose statements reflected their country's attitudes to their colonies. For example, France's reluctance to accept the loss of its colonies can be seen in Henri Delaunay's insistence that two of the countries listed in the Gold Coast's proposal operated under the auspices of the French FA and had not expressed any desire to form an African Union. These two countries are not named in the minutes, but it can be surmised that they were Ivory Coast and Togo, which were part of French West Africa. In contrast, Britain's policy was to help its colonies move towards independence by gradually giving them more political 'autonomy', which included helping them to develop their own sporting infrastructure (Charitas 2015). This strategy was designed to maintain close ties between Britain and its former empire within a 'new Commonwealth'. Thus, the chairman of the English FA, Arthur Drewry, noted that even though some of these African countries were affiliated to the FA, they 'were in a position to take measures and decisions at their convenience'.[8] Despite Drewry's comments, FIFA's French president, Jules Rimet, ended the discussion by insisting the congress follow the executive committee's original recommendations, which were based on FIFA's statutes.[9]

Requests to form continental groupings, such as those from Egypt and Gold Coast, were nothing new, as South America's associations had made similar demands in the 1930s (Vonnard and Quin 2017). Although FIFA had agreed to the formation of a South American confederation, as noted by Sugden and Tomlinson (1998), Europe's continued domination of the world governing body remained a bone of contention. The subject was raised again at the South American confederation's 1949 congress, alongside two topical issues relating to the qualifying rounds for the upcoming

[8]Minutes of the FIFA congress, 22–23 June 1950. FIFAA, congress (1946–1952).

[9]'Associations established in a Colony or Dominion may, in agreement with the national association of their metropolitan area, remain a subordinate group to it or affiliate directly to the Federation'. *Statutes of the FIFA* [1954], art. 1. FIFAA, statutes (1904–1981).

1950 World Cup and a conflict in Colombian football.[10] The importance accorded to decentralising FIFA is demonstrated by the fact that all nine of the confederation's members attended the congress,[11] making it the largest congress in the organisation's history. Their debate on possible reforms to FIFA's statutes continued at great length, led mostly by Argentina and Uruguay.

Argentina's aim was to persuade FIFA to allocate additional seats on its executive committee to the South American associations. However, more ambitious ideas were also being put forward, most notably, a proposal to completely overhaul FIFA's structure. The delegates decided to raise the issue at FIFA's next congress and to set up a committee to draft a proposal for consideration by the federation. In addition to reducing Europe's control over world football, the South American confederation wanted to obtain more power for its own leaders and to protect this power within a rapidly expanding FIFA. As Hans Bangerter, FIFA's deputy secretary from 1953 to 1959, noted when I interviewed him, 'it should not be forgotten that CONMEBOL has [only] ten associations, some of which are small'.[12] South America's proposal was to create a confederation for each continent and to give each of these confederations' executive committees the right to choose a certain number of members to sit on FIFA's executive committee. Implementing this proposal would, of course, mean completely restructuring FIFA. In order to avoid possible tensions within their own confederation, delegates at the congress[13] set a 30-day reflection period in order to give its member associations time to consider and comment on the draft document.

[10]The conflict, which involved a split between the federation and the professional league (Dimayor League), impacted all South American football because the Dimayor League paid high salaries to players. Decisions such as not paying compensation for player transfers and refusing to release players for national team matches put the Dimayor League at odds with the South American football authorities.

[11]Minutes of the CONMEBOL congress, March–May 1949. FIFAA, correspondence with CONMEBOL (1941–1961).

[12]Freely translated from the French. Interview with Hans Bangerter, conducted on 1 October 2012 in Bolligen.

[13]The confederation had not yet adopted the name CONMEBOL and was still called the South American Football Confederation.

Two South American associations submitted proposals to FIFA's secretary general during the following months, thereby showing that although they agreed on the need to reform FIFA's structure, they had different ideas on how this should be done. Argentina, seconded by Paraguay and Uruguay,[14] proposed dividing seats on FIFA's executive committee evenly between the continental confederations and giving each confederation the right to appoint one vice-president, who would serve for four years. If a vice-president stood down within this four-year period, the continental confederation would appoint a replacement from within its ranks. This innovative proposition made the office more important than the office-holder. FIFA's congress would remain responsible for electing the federation's president. Argentina's proposal also required FIFA to change its statutes in order to give official recognition to the continental confederations, something the South American confederation had been requesting since the 1920s but FIFA had always rejected. However, a confederation would only be recognised if it included more than three-quarters of its home continent's FIFA member associations.[15] This measure would have favoured South America, where nine of the continent's ten FIFA member associations were already members of the confederation (the exception was Venezuela), while forming a huge stumbling block for Europe, which was divided by the Cold War. Argentina's proposition was clearly designed to undermine Europe's hegemony over FIFA, but it was also a way for South America's leaders to defend their interests within the world federation, as it would have made it difficult to create confederations in Asia and Africa, which contained enough countries to become dominant groups within FIFA. The proposal's final component was to amend Article 22 of FIFA's statutes in order to give the continental confederations control over football matters concerning their member associations. Thus, even though Argentina's project did not call into question FIFA's overall power and did not take away the FIFA congress' right to reject decisions taken by the continental confederations, it required fundamental changes to FIFA's structure and governance.

[14]FIFA's congress will consider an amendment to the federation's statutes if it is proposed and seconded by a total of three national associations.

[15]Agenda of the FIFA congress, 22–23 June 1950. FIFAA, congress (1946–1952).

The second proposal was made by Chile, seconded by Peru and Bolivia. It was generally similar to Argentina's submission except in its vision of FIFA's executive committee. Chile proposed a 14-member executive committee consisting of a president, five vice-presidents and eight ordinary members. The four British associations, the USSR's centralised sports organisation (USSR football section) and the South American confederation would each select one vice-president, with the congress electing the remaining two. The ordinary members would be elected by the South American confederation (one member), a new Central and North America confederation (one member) and the congress (six members). This was very similar to the existing system for appointing the executive committee, with the only significant change being attributing a place on the executive committee to a Central and North American confederation. Where Chile's proposal was more ambitious than Argentina's vision was in its idea of dividing FIFA into separate groups by creating South American-style confederations on each continent and giving them responsibility for administering football in their region. In fact, Chile and Peru had long been two of the strongest critics of FIFA's dominance over world football (Dietschy 2013), so it is not surprising that they suggested giving the continental confederations such a large degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the world federation.

Hence, the South American associations submitted two concrete proposals to restructure the federation in a way that would protect and reinforce their position and allow them to challenge Europe's hegemony over world football. FIFA may have been able to push aside Africa's requests to set up continental groups, but the South American associations were too strong to ignore, so the 1950 congress had to grasp the nettle and decide whether and how to reform FIFA. As a journalist from *L'Équipe* noted a few hours before the congress, South America's proposals could 'be a prelude to the formation of continental confederations, as is already the case in South America'.[16] The pressure on congress delegates was made even greater by the fact that the British associations also wanted to restructure FIFA and had shown a willingness to work with Argentina on this

[16]Freely translated from the French. '22 et 23 juin: congrès de la FIFA. La FIFA envisagera-t-elle aussi des réformes de structure?', *L'Équipe*, 21 June 1950.

issue.[17] In fact, immediately prior to the congress, which was held in Rio de Janeiro during the World Cup, the English FA's leaders, Arthur Drewry and Stanley Rous, had made a detour to Buenos Aires in order to discuss possible reforms to FIFA's statutes with their Argentinian counterparts.

3.2 Reorganisation: A Response to the New Challenge?

Writing on the eve of the 1950 congress, *France Football*'s veteran journalist Maurice Pefferkorn noted that FIFA 'was on the cusp of structural reforms'.[18] President Rimet confirmed this view in his opening speech, when he told delegates they were at a turning point in the history of football and that they would have to address the challenges raised by the game's expansion around the world. A number of changes would undoubtedly be required, particularly in FIFA's structure, but he warned against making excessive and ill-considered alterations to the federation's statutes:

> Does this mean, *he exclaimed*, that FIFA must remain immutably fixed in an intangible conformity in a world that is in constant evolution? Assuredly not. But it is essential to its mission that that ideal of solidarity among the national associations that inspired its founders should be maintained intact; that nothing should be undertaken to diminish its authority, an authority which springs from the agreement of all and will provide a useful protection to each; that no change should be made in its structure without having been thoroughly studied and debated. Improvisation is the expedient of the irresponsible.[19]

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[17] Minutes of the FA's national selection committee, 7 November 1949. Football Association archives (thereafter FAA), FA minutes (1949–1950). Since it was founded in the 1880s, the Argentinian FA had had a close relationship with the English FA and had even asked to be incorporated into the English FA.

[18] Freely translated from the French. 'Qui succédera au docteur Schricker au poste de secrétaire général de la FIFA?' *France Football*, 12 July 1950.

[19] Minutes of the FIFA congress, 22–23 June 1950. FIFAA, congress (1946–1952).

Rimet's speech encouraged the congress not to approve any major reforms and made clear his opposition to changing FIFA's structure. He reiterated this message just before the discussion on reorganisation began, when he reminded delegates of FIFA's unique position as the only international organisation to include associations from all around the world. Any reforms to FIFA should therefore be approached with great caution so as not to interfere with statutes that had proven their worth over time and underlain the organisation's success. In fact, Rimet had always championed the universalist ideal of FIFA as a global and indivisible organisation (Tomlinson 2000; Dietschy 2011), and he feared that reforming the federation would result in it losing both its control over the regional bodies and its role as the guarantor of world football's best interests (Vonnard and Quin 2018b). But Rimet's aura within FIFA was waning and the congress no longer felt constrained to follow his advice to the letter. There were even differences of opinion on the executive committee, whose newer members (see Sect. 2.2) did not necessarily share Rimet's views and were in favour of setting up an *ad hoc* committee to begin the reorganisation process.[20]

When the congress convened, it was immediately realised that only 35 of FIFA's 71 member associations had sent delegates to Rio, so the congress did not have the quorum required (at least half of FIFA's affiliated associations)[21] to make a final decision on reforming FIFA's statutes. The executive committee used this impasse to suggest channelling the discussions through a small reorganisation committee, which would examine the different options and draw up a concrete proposal to present to the next congress. The delegates readily approved this approach, which had the added advantage of reducing the potential for conflict. Arthur Drewry, who was the chairman of the English FA and a FIFA vice president—the British associations (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales)—came back into FIFA in 1946 and obtained the right to have a vice-president (Beck 2000; Vonnard 2018a, pp. 132–137), as well as one of the main supporters of this solution, suggested that the reorganisation

[20] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 21 June 1950. FIFAA, executive committee (1947–1950).

[21] *Statutes of the FIFA* [1954], art. 11. FIFAA, statutes (1904–1981).

committee should include a representative from each of the following associations or blocs of associations: northern Europe, Spain, Yugoslavia, the United Kingdom, Argentina and Chile, plus a delegate from the executive committee. The congress approved Drewry's proposal following a debate in which most of FIFA's members showed themselves to be in favour of reforming the federation's statutes (Table 3.1).

England, Argentina and Chile were given seats on the reorganisation committee because these associations had proposed amendments to FIFA's statutes prior to the congress, but what were the reasons for choosing the other representatives?

Yugoslavia's seat on the committee was a way of meeting potential demands from the Eastern European associations while limiting their ability to influence the discussions. Although Hungary and Czechoslovakia had put forward amendments to FIFA's statutes, Yugoslavia was seen as a better alternative because it was independent from the USSR (Rajak 2011). It nevertheless shared a similar ideology to the countries of the Soviet bloc and could therefore be considered to represent their interests. In addition, Yugoslavia's delegate, Mihailo Andrejevic, had been active in FIFA since the interwar period and was trusted to represent

Table 3.1 Composition of the FIFA reorganisation committee (1950–1953)

Name	Position	Country represented	Bloc represented
R. Seeldrayers	Chairman	Belgium	None
M. Andrejevic	Member	Yugoslavia	None
A. Drewry	Member	England	British
A. Pujol	Member	Spain	Latin
J. Russo/A. Ramirez	Member	Argentina	South America
E. Schwartz	Member	Denmark	Scandinavia
L. Valenzuela/E. Alveal	Member	Chile	South America
K. Gassmann	Secretary General[a]	Switzerland	None
O. Barassi	Secretary[a]	Italy	None
S. Rous	Secretary[a]	England	None

Note [a]Without voting rights
Source Table based on the minutes of the 1950 and 1952 FIFA congress

the interests of countries such as Austria and Italy, which had been considered part of Central Europe prior to World War II (Sbetti 2018). Italy's Giovanni Mauro alluded to this at an executive committee meeting in March 1951, when he noted that Andrejevic's absence from the reorganisation committee's meetings resulted in 'the Central European countries being unable to express their point of view'.[22] The Spanish FA was invited to join the commission because it was seen as a potential bridge between the Western European countries and the Latin countries of Europe and South America (Cavallaro 2009). In addition, Francoist Spain was resolutely anti-communist and therefore seen as a counterweight to Yugoslavia, a country with which it did not have diplomatic relations. Finally, Scandinavia was given a seat on the commission, occupied by Denmark's Ebbe Schwartz, because the Nordic countries had had a representative on FIFA's executive committee since the interwar period.[23]

Another reason for ensuring this committee included all the different forces within FIFA was to reduce the potential for conflict within the organisation, an eternal preoccupation for FIFA's elite (Vonnard 2018a, see Chapter 2). The committee's ordinary members were joined by three non-voting members in the person of FIFA's general secretary, Kurt Gassmann, and its two deputy secretaries, Ottorino Barrasi and Stanley Rous. Both Barrasi and Rous were keen to reform FIFA's structure and their presence on the committee allowed them to play a major role in the process, especially as they, along with the secretary general, were responsible for receiving, sorting and classifying the proposals submitted by the national associations.

The committee's final member, its chairman, was not appointed until December 1950, when FIFA's executive committee chose Rodolphe Seeldrayers for the role. Although Rimet had hoped to be given this position, Seeldrayers was seen as a better choice because, as Finland's Erik von Frenckell pointed out, Rimet spoke only French. Hence, Rimet was not given the opportunity to defend the universalist ideal he had alluded to in

[22]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 31 March–2 April. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1952).

[23]Minutes of the FIFA reorganisation committee, 29–31 March 1951. FIFAA, reorganisation (1950–1953) [folder: 1. Minutes].

his 1950 congress speech and which he felt would be threatened by far-reaching changes to the federation's statutes, especially if they involved creating continental groups. Rimet even went as far as to tell the executive committee that, if he had been appointed chairman of the reorganisation committee, he 'would have worked to prevent fundamental alterations being made to the construction of FIFA, since the excellence of its structure has been proven by its 50 years of existence and success, and it is the only international organisation to have united all the world's nations in a single bond of friendship'.[24] Although Seeldrayers was also part of FIFA's 'old guard', he was more receptive than Rimet to the idea of modifying its structure. Another point in Seeldrayers' favour was his neutrality with respect to the various blocs within FIFA. He mentioned this himself during the executive committee's deliberations, as did von Frenckell, who noted that the committee chairman should not dictate the committee's conduct. Therefore, Seeldrayers appeared to be a wise choice whose detailed knowledge of FIFA's workings, gained during his long tenure on the executive committee, meant that he would probably be able to limit the changes made to FIFA's statutes.

The reorganisation committee's first task was to review the 24 articles of FIFA's statutes and the 39 articles of the federation's regulations. Because the goal was to put a set of draft statutes to the next FIFA congress, in Helsinki in 1952, the national associations were given until September 1950 to submit their proposals. The committee would then review these proposals and draw up a set of draft statutes to present to the congress. This short timetable imposed a huge workload on the committee's members, who also had to reconcile the different points of view within the committee, and more generally within FIFA, in order to produce a draft on which they could agree.

[24]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 2 December 1950. FIFAA, executive committee (1947–1950).

3.3 Facing the Claims of the Soviet Bloc

After long refusing to become involved in the international sport system (Keys 2006, Chapter 7; Dufraisse 2019, Chapter 1), the Soviet Union changed its position following World War II with the aim of beating the capitalist countries at their own game (especially in international sport). In order to pursue this goal, it began applying to join certain international federations (Parks 2016, Chapters 1 and 2; Dufraisse 2020, pp. 76–80). Regarding the popularity of football in the world and, also the constant development of the game in Soviet Union (e.g. Edelman 1993; Zeller 2018), in 1946 it seemed quite obvious for FIFA's leaders that Soviet Union will send a request of membership soon. After a first discussion during the 1946 congress, a year later FIFA's leaders accepted to open the door to the Soviet Union. Although they also agreed to allocate the Soviet Union a vice-president position, they refused its request to make Russian one of FIFA's official languages and to exclude Spain from the organization (Gounot 2007; Vonnard 2018a, pp. 137–142). The Soviet Union's arrival impacted FIFA's governance for two reasons. First, Soviet Union's delegates wanted to have a say in federation's development; second, the beginning of Cold War led to a 'Soviet bloc' coming together within FIFA in 1947–1948,[25] as had happened in many other fields (Egorova 2007).[26] However the international political context progressively impacted the Eastern bloc countries' participation in FIFA's work. For example, the Soviet Union's Valentin Granatkine—who was elected a FIFA vice-president in 1947—was only able to attend one executive committee meeting during his tenure from 1947 to 1950, partly for health reasons, but mostly because of the difficulty in obtaining visas.[27] On one occasion, the Soviet Union asked if the Soviet FA's president, Konstantin Andrianov—one of Soviet sport's most important—could

[25]The strengthening ties within the Soviet bloc are reflected in the numerous sporting exchanges that were organised between the countries of Eastern Europe at this time (Dufraisse 2017). On the Soviet bloc in sport see for e.g. Terret (2009).

[26]This idea of a Soviet or Communist bloc remains controversial among scholars. For more on this question, see for e.g. Kott and Faure (2011). However, for convenience I will use this term in the present book.

[27]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 16 May 1949. FIFAA, executive committee (1947–1950).

deputise for Granatkine, but their request was refused. Under FIFA's rules, only people elected by FIFA congresses were eligible to attend executive committee meetings, but FIFA may also have been suspicious of Andrianov, who was not the president of the Soviet FA, a man called Kozlov, to whom Schricker had been introduced on an earlier occasion.[28] In 1950, Granatkine was replaced as the Soviet Union's FIFA vice-president by Serguei Savin,[29] who also missed several executive committee meetings (e.g. those in Madrid, in March 1951, and in Copenhagen, in March 1953) because he was unable to obtain visas. As well as making it difficult for him to build trust with his fellow FIFA executives, it created a divide between the associations of Western and Eastern Europe, as the Eastern European associations felt they were not properly represented among FIFA's elite.

Another issue that strained relations between East and West was athletes from the Soviet bloc using trips abroad to seek political asylum in the country in which they were competing (Rider 2013; Dufraisse 2019). Such defections had become quite common by the early 1950s. In football, several Hungarian players defected to Spain, knowing they would be welcomed by General Franco's staunchly anti-communist regime. The best-known and most controversial case involved László Kubala, one of Hungary's best young talents, whose defection led to an acrimonious dispute between the Hungarian and Spanish FAs. FIFA's rules on players who leave their home countries illegally had led to Kubala being suspended, but Spain challenged FIFA's decision on the grounds that Kubala had defected in order to avoid 'an imminent death threat'.[30] The Hungarian FA contested Spain's version of events and argued that Kubala should be suspended permanently from all football activity. After several

[28]Letter from I. Schricker to FIFA's executive committee, 13 December 1946. FIFAA, executive committee (circulars to members 1946–1957).

[29]Granatkine was officialy replaced for health reasons. He continued to serve as president of the USSR's football association and he returned to FIFA in 1954.

[30]Comments by Manuel Valdes in a letter to FIFA dated 24 September 1951 (quoted in Dietschy 2010, p. 366). Franco's regime used Kubala as an example in its anti-communist propaganda. In 1954, Kubala played himself in a film entitled *Los Ases Buscan La Paz* (Simón 2012).

years of wrangling and many attempts at mediation by FIFA's executive committee, Kubala was eventually allowed to play again in the late 1950s, when he took the field for FC Barcelona (Dietschy 2020b, p. 35).

Increased Cold War tensions between East and West in the early 1950s had led to a hardening of positions among the different factions in FIFA, as it had in other international organisations, notably the IOC (Charitas 2009). This was particularly noticeable during FIFA's reorganisation process, where the Soviet bloc had a very different view of how the reforms should be carried out to most of the Western European associations and showed little willingness to compromise.

In fact, the Hungarian FA, seconded by the Czechoslovakian and Polish FAs, put forward several proposals for amending FIFA's statutes to the 1950 congress. One of their aims was to make the executive committee more representative by electing a member from the Hungarian, Czechoslovakian or Polish FAs, which were 'not represented on the present FIFA committee'.[31] They also felt that, apart from the president, FIFA's executive committee should be made up of representatives of the national associations, rather than specific people. In other words, the position should take precedence, not the person filling that position, so the associations should be able to appoint and replace their representatives on the executive committee at any time during a mandate. This proposal was supported by the other Soviet bloc countries. However, the Rio congress did not discuss any of these proposals because none of the Soviet bloc countries were present. On 5 December 1950, the Hungarian FA wrote to FIFA's secretary general expressing its anger that it had not been asked to participate in the reorganisation committee's work. The letter also contested the legitimacy of the committee's members, because they were all from associations with seats on FIFA's executive committee. Hungary's indignation can be seen clearly in the wording of its letter:

> We find [the] treatment we have been subjected to recently is all the more inexplicable given that our association is a long-standing and significant member of your federation. We can no longer accept being continually and tendentiously pushed into the background and will use all means in

[31] Agenda of the FIFA congress, 22–23 June 1950. FIFAA, congress (1946–1952).

> our power to change the biased attitude of FIFA's current management, which we consider harmful to the common cause of universal football.[32]

The Hungarian FA also stated its opposition to regionalising FIFA by creating continental bodies, as this would transfer some of FIFA's responsibilities to the confederations and thereby its reduce power. Its stance on this issue can be explained by the fact that the easiest way for the Soviet bloc to influence FIFA's governance was to create alliances with individual national associations, a tactic it had already used within the IOC, as Jenifer Parks (2016) describes. Moreover, if FIFA was divided into continental groupings, the Cold War context would probably have required the Soviet bloc associations to create a separate grouping (as had happened in other fields, such as telecommunications, see Heinrich-Franke 2012). Given the small number of countries in the Soviet bloc, an Eastern European confederation would have been small and therefore have few seats on the executive committee and little if any influence over FIFA's governance.

In line with its strategy of avoiding discord, FIFA's executive committee decided not to respond to the Hungarian FA's criticisms, hoping that the issue would resolve itself with time. However, the reorganisation committee's work did not escape from the effects of the Cold War. Spain's Augustin Pujol fired the opening shot at the committee's first meeting, in Madrid in March 1951, where he took advantage of Andrejevic's absence (the Yugoslav government had prevented him travelling to Spain) to call into question the attribution of a vice-president post to the USSR,[33] on the basis that the Soviet Union did not make a large enough contribution to FIFA's work to deserve such an important position. Admittedly, the Soviet Union contributed little to international football, but, given the antagonism between Franco's Spain and the Soviet bloc, Pujol's statement was undoubtedly motivated more by politics than sporting considerations. The reorganisation committee refused to take a decision on

[32] Freely translated from the French. Letter from the secretary general of the Hungarian FA to FIFA's secretary general, 5 December 1950. FIFA, reorganisation 50–53 (folder: 3. Proposals and projects).

[33] Although Andrejevic did not represent the Soviet bloc, due to the continuing rift between Belgrade and Moscow, he supported similar positions to those of the Eastern bloc countries.

Spain's proposal at this first meeting, but Pujol was not deterred and he raised the issue again at the committee's second meeting, in London in September 1951.[34] Although the committee's chairman, Seeldrayers, pointed out that the subject had already been dealt with in Madrid, a lengthy discussion ensued and Seeldrayers was only able to bring it to an end by calling for a vote. Spain's proposal was narrowly rejected by three votes to two, with one abstention, a sign that FIFA's long-cherished policy of neutrality could not keep politics out of football entirely.

A few hours later, at the subsequent executive committee meeting, FIFA's Soviet vice-president, Savin, strongly criticised Spain's proposal, which he felt went against the unifying principles FIFA claimed to promote. He also pointed out that this was the first executive committee meeting he had been able to attend since being elected vice-president in 1950, having been excluded from the 1950 congress in Rio and the executive committee meeting in Madrid because the USSR did not have diplomatic relations with either Brazil or Spain. He requested that this situation be taken into account in the future in order to preserve FIFA's unity.[35] His speech typified the rhetoric the Soviet Union used when trying to develop international relations—advocating peace in order to engender a sympathetic response to what was seen as imperialist aggression by the Western bloc (Dufraisse 2019, p. 227). Seeldrayers used his considerable diplomatic skills to try and minimise the impact of Pujol's statements, suggesting that the discussion focus on deciding which groups of national associations should be eligible for a vice-president's seat and adding that no malice had been intended against the USSR. FIFA's other leaders supported Seeldrayers' efforts to avoid a potential crisis by conveying a similar message. Perhaps fearing that the discussions might turn against his national association, Spain's executive committee member, the fiercely anti-communist Falangist Armando Munoz Calero, who had fought with the Blue Division during World

[34]Minutes of the FIFA reorganisation committee, 4–5 October 1951. FIFAA, reorganisation (1950–1953) [folder: 1. Minutes].

[35]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 6–7 October 1951. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1952).

War II,[36] also tried to defuse the situation by welcoming Serguei Savin to the meeting. He also stressed that only sporting matters should be discussed within FIFA and that Pujol's proposals should be considered uniquely from a sporting perspective.

This case illustrates the importance FIFA's elite attached to neutralising conflicts within the federation and, above all, to avoiding potentially contentious political issues (Vonnard 2018a, see Chapter 2). As a result, Munoz Calero would have felt compelled to avoid inflaming the situation and to reconsider the stance taken by his countryman, Pujol. Although the new draft statutes the reorganisation committee drew up in the spring of 1952 did not call into question the USSR's position, this was not the end of the tension between East and West.

In fact, the Soviet bloc was highly critical of the draft statutes and wanted them to be revised. Savin made this point to Gassmann in a letter dated 31 May 1952, in which he also highlighted the small number of executive committee seats allocated to the Asian and African associations. For Savin, this showed that the statutes had been 'drafted in such a way as to undermine the rights of athletes from colonial and dependent countries [and to favour] athletes from Britain, the USA and South America over other countries'.[37] Savin's stance on this issue can be seen as another instance of the USSR showing solidarity with non-European countries in order to create alliances which would give the Soviet bloc greater influence or even, eventually, control over FIFA. Because the Soviet Union was not the only country unhappy with the draft statutes—the Scandinavian and South American associations had also expressed reservations—the executive committee presented the 1952 congress with a motion postponing the decision on reforming FIFA to a special congress, explicitly convened for the purpose.

Although this motion was passed, it did not prevent the issue being raised at the 1952 congress, with Savin submitting a proposal to expand the reorganisation committee to include representatives from Africa and

[36] A Spanish volunteer division that fought alongside the Germans on the Eastern Front (Viuda-Serrano 2010, p. 1085).

[37] Freely translated from the French. Translation of a letter from Serguei Savin to Kurt Gassmann, 31 May 1952. FIFAA, reorganisation (1950–1953) [folder: 4. Reorganization Commission].

Asia, and from 'associations from the East and China'.[38] The executive committee considered this demand to be excessive, but suggested a compromise solution in which Savin was given a seat on the reorganisation commission. Support from President Rimet ensured the congress accepted this proposal and it was passed by a two-thirds majority, 22 votes to 11. This decision was crucial because it gave the Soviet bloc a much stronger voice on the reorganisation committee. The 1952 congress was presented another opportunity to neutralise some of the political difficulties raised by the Cold War, when delegates were asked to consider the German Democratic Republic's (GDR) affiliation to FIFA. Their decision in favour of the GDR was almost unanimous, with only West Germany abstaining from the vote (Vonnard and Cala in press). Approving the GDR's membership set FIFA apart from most other international sport federations, including the International Gymnastic Federation (Cervin et al. 2017) and the International Fencing Federation (Ottogalli-Mazzacavallo et al. 2013), which had turned down the country's membership applications. The IOC also refused to recognise the partition of Germany (Balbier 2007) and, as of 1956, required the two countries to send a joint delegation to the Olympic Games (Lanz 2011). FIFA's decision was also very bold from a diplomatic perspective, as many western countries still refused to recognise the GDR. That East Germany's accession to FIFA was approved in Helsinki was highly symbolic, as the city lay at the crossroads between East and West and was preparing to host the first Olympic Games to include a delegation from the Soviet Union (Dufraisse 2015).

These decisions were not, of course, enough to overcome all the friction between East and West. Despite his earlier conciliatory actions, Spain's Munoz Calero struck a blow against the Soviet bloc by pointing out to FIFA's secretary general that Savin's election to the reorganisation committee had not followed the procedures set down by the president, which would have ruled out Savin de facto.[39] After several discussions with the emergency committee, the secretary general was forced

[38]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 20–23 July 1952. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1952).

[39]Letter from A. Munoz Calero to K. Gassmann, 3 September 1952. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder: 4. Reorganisation Commission).

to accept that Savin's election had been unconstitutional and stop him attending the reorganisation committee's meetings.[40] Aware of the discord this decision was likely to create, the executive committee invited Savin to take part in the informal discussions that were held outside official reorganisation committee meetings, an offer Savin declined, thereby further marginalising the Soviet bloc from the reorganisation process. Side-lining Savin did, however, facilitate the reorganisation committee's task, because he would undoubtedly have objected to several aspects of the proposed reform, especially the idea of regionalising FIFA.[41]

Thus, despite the Soviet bloc's continuing hostility to any change in FIFA's structure, the reorganisation committee finally agreed on a set of draft statutes that could be presented to the extraordinary congress in Paris in November 1953. Once again, Eastern Europe's associations were critical of the proposed reforms. Yugoslavia's delegate, Ratko Pleic, stepped up first to call for all FIFA members to be given equal rights and for all privileges within FIFA to be abolished. Pleic based his arguments on a study by the French scholar, J. M. A. Paroutaud (1953),[42] who had accused FIFA of being 'undemocratic' because its members did not all have the same rights and because associations in regions such as North America and Asia did not have representatives on the executive committee. Pleic's proposals included making the congress responsible for electing all executive committee members, rather than allocating some seats to certain associations. He also proposed creating regional bodies to develop football in their respective continents, but these bodies would, under no circumstances, represent the continents on FIFA's executive committee.

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[40] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 8–9 September 1952. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1952).

[41] In March 1953, Seeldrayers wrote to Secretary General Kurt Gassmann about the Yugoslav delegate, Andrejevic, who, despite holding less categorical positions than his Soviet counterpart, was also calling for greater equality between FIFA members: 'If he continues [to do so], he will be called Gromyko because he insists on saying: "niet"'. Freely translated from the French. Letter from R. W. Seeldrayers to K. Gassmann, 10 March 1953. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder: 4. Reorganisation Commission). The Gromyko Seeldrayers refers to is Andrei Gromyko, a Russian diplomat who was ambassador to the United States from 1943 to 1946, and later Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was nicknamed 'Mr. Niet' because of his ability to stand up to Westerners and defend Soviet policies.

[42] The paper, entitled 'Sport et Droit International, Les Statutes de la Fédération Internationale de Football Association', was published in *NGOC-OGN Bulletin*, August–September 1953.

The next person to speak was the Soviet Union's delegate Savin, who issued a much more forceful demand for all associations to be given the same rights, something the Yugoslavian proposal did not guarantee,[43] and for the congress to be given more power. Czechoslovakia's delegate, Joseph Vogl, also insisted on the need for greater democracy and called for the president, vice-presidents and executive committee members to be appointed directly by the congress. However, unlike Savin, he was willing to make some concessions, such as giving the British, South American and Soviet associations the right to each elect a vice-president.

How should the contrast between Savin's uncompromising speech and Vogl's more conciliatory approach be interpreted? Was it a tactical move by Czechoslovakia to enable it to make alliances with other associations or was it a sign of real divergences within the Soviet bloc? The latter interpretation is in line with Xavier Breuil's (2016) conclusion that the Soviet Union's satellites did not always agree with their 'big brother' when it came to football. The documents collected for the present study do not shed much light onto these questions, but they do show that the Soviet bloc was unsuccessful in pressing its demands. In fact, Western Europe's and South America's associations had already scheduled a meeting for the first evening of the congress so they could present a common position on FIFA's reorganisation (see Chapter 4). The consensus they reached was not, of course, the fruit of a single evening's negotiations; it had emerged gradually from the long series of discussions the South American confederation had held with the new generation of European football leaders between 1950 and 1953.

[43] Relations between the two countries were still very cold.

4

Following the South American Model

The idea of reorganising FIFA appears to have been generally accepted by the early 1950s. But, what was far from being settled was how this should be done. The South Americans would play a particularly important role in the ensuing discussion, and their proposal and campaigning would lead to the continentalisation of FIFA. In other words, the South American confederation, created between 1915 and 1916, would provide the model that was to be exported to the other continents.

4.1 A 'Game' Between South Americans and Europeans

At the end of World War II, FIFA was still a highly Eurocentric organisation. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, the joint effects of decolonisation and the Cold War presented a major challenge to this Eurocentric view. In fact, the new geopolitical context that emerged in the 1940s resulted in non-European voices playing a major role in international discussions whether they related to the International Labor Office (Plata-Stenger 2015) or the 1944 Bretton Woods agreement,

P. Vonnard, *Creating a United Europe of Football*,
Football Research in an Enlarged Europe,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42343-8_4

as described by Eric Helleiner (2014). This was also the case within FIFA, where the importance of South American football in the world of sport—confirmed by the popular and economic success of the 1950 World cup organised in Brazil (Wahl 2012)—meant Europe's football leaders could not simply ignore their South American colleagues.[1] What is more, South America's associations were united in their determination to reform FIFA.

This final aspect was made clear during the first meeting of the reorganisation committee set up by FIFA's 1950 congress (see Chapter 4). At this meeting, held in Madrid in March 1951, Chile's Luis Valenzuela highlighted an error in the documents presented to the committee's members, which attributed one of the South American confederation's proposals solely to Uruguay.[2] Valenzuela's comment was also intended to remind his colleagues on the committee that its two South American members spoke for the whole continent. One of their first proposals was to protect the executive committee seats attributed to North and South America under FIFA's existing statutes, a move Argentina's Juan Russo argued was necessary in order to 'ensure the participation of all associations, in proportion to their importance and activity, within FIFA's governing body'.[3] There was not, therefore, anything egalitarian about South America's desire to open up FIFA's executive committee to associations from outside Europe. Rather, attributing seats according to the strength of a continent's national associations would favour South America, whose associations were powerful but small in number, over Africa and Asia, whose more numerous associations were quite weak. In contrast, choosing executive committee members via a one country, one vote system, as used at FIFA congresses, would place the South American associations at a great disadvantage.

[1]For an overview of the development of football in South America see notably: Mason (1995), Elsey (2011), Archambault (2014), and Armus and Rinke (2014). About sport more generally, see Fernandez L'Hoeste et al. (2015).

[2]Letter from R. W. Seeldrayers to K. Gassmann, 3 March 1951. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder 1: Study commission).

[3]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the FIFA reorganisation committee, 29–31 March 1951. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (folder 1: Study commission).

During the first two years of the reorganisation process, and despite their efforts, the South Americans failed to win over the committee's five European members who were still against the idea of decentralising FIFA. In fact, Europe's football leaders wanted either to maintain the *status quo* or, like Yugoslavia's Andrejevic, to see transferred more power to the national associations, as advocated by the Soviet Union. There were two main reasons for Europe's reluctance to accept significant changes to FIFA's structure. First, the European associations felt that football in Africa, Central America and Asia was not mature enough for these regions to be allocated seats on the executive committee and that the leaders of their national associations did not have the stature or experience a seat on the executive committee required. Second, the Cold War division of Europe into two opposing blocs made it difficult to envisage creating a body capable of representing football throughout the continent.

These two factors are reflected in the reform put forward by the British associations, which proposed dividing FIFA into nine geographical groups, each with one seat on the executive committee. Although the British proposal gave improved representation to the smaller footballing nations, there was no question of equality between members, as Europe was to have five seats, obtained by dividing the continent's 30 or so associations into five groups. Of the remaining seats, three were allocated to Central, North and South America, which left just one seat for the FIFA's 17 African and Asian associations.[4] As well as being Eurocentric, the British proposal was highly conservative because it did not envisage the continental groups having any power other than to elect a member of the executive committee. It also took into account the current political situation when defining the five groups that would elect Europe's committee members:

[4]'Mémorandum. Propositions soumises par la "Football Association" (anglaise) à la Fédération internationale de Football Association visant à modifier les articles 8 et 36 et le Statut 10'. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (file: 2. proposals).

- Eastern Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Soviet Union);
- Southern Europe (Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Yugoslavia);
- Northern Europe (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden);
- Western Europe (Belgium, France, Eire, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Switzerland, plus Germany, if the congress confirmed its reaffiliation);
- Great Britain (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland).

The reorganisation committee's first two meetings—held in Madrid and London in March and October 1951—enabled the committee's newly formed bureau to draw up a set of draft statutes for consideration by the executive committee at its meeting in March 1952. As the reorganisation committee's chairman, Rodolphe Seeldrayers, pointed out, the only significant change included in this document, which did not advocate regionalising FIFA, was to make the executive committee more representative.[5] This was to be achieved by adding three seats to the committee and attributing one each seat to the Central American, North American confederation and South American confederations and to the African associations and the Asian associations (Table 4.1).[6]

The reorganisation committee's European members saw allocating seats on the executive committee to the African and Asian associations as a concession, but this was not enough for the South American associations. What they wanted was to strengthen their confederation's prerogatives, which they felt could best be achieved by adopting a more decentralised structure for FIFA based on South American-style continental groupings. Consequently, they tabled a counter-proposal for discussion at the congress in Helsinki in the summer of 1952.[7] The forceful attitude adopted by South America's delegates to the congress, during which they

[5]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 9–10 March. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1952).

[6]'Projet pour les statuts, le règlement et le règlement du congrès de la FIFA'. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (file: 3. proposals).

[7]'Associación Uruguaya de Fútbol, Montevideo. Contre-proposition aux projets des Statuts, du Règlement et du Règlement du congrès de la FIFA'. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (file: 3. proposals).

Table 4.1 Comparison between the original composition of the executive committee and that proposed by the new draft FIFA Statutes

Functions	Current number	Current voting body	Proposed number	Proposed voting body
President	1	Congress	1	Congress
Vice-presidents	5	South American confederation (1), British associations (1), Soviet Union (1), Congress (2)	5	South American confederation (1), British associations (1), Soviet Union (1), Congress (2)
Members	6	Congress (mainly composed by European national associations)	9	South American confederation (1), Central American confederation (1), North American confederation (1), African associations (1), Asian associations (1), Congress (4)

Note Figures in brackets show the number of seats allocated

confronted Europe's leaders over their Eurocentric attitudes, was motivated both by their dissatisfaction with the way the reform process was being conducted and by a desire to extend the debate so the congress would be unable to make a decision on the reform.

Two aspects of the Helsinki congress added to the singular nature of the event. First, Helsinki was soon to host the first Olympic Games in which the Soviet Union would compete (Dufraisse 2015); second, it was Jules Rimet's final congress as FIFA's president (Vonnard and Quin 2018b).[8] The Helsinki congress would also mark a turning point in the discussions over reorganising FIFA. Uruguay's Celestino Mibelli set the tone by beginning his speech with the phrase 'On behalf of the South American associations…', and then went on to criticise the Finnish delegate, von Frenckell, whose opening address to the congress had referred

[8]He had been president since 1921.

to the previous congress in Helsinki, in 1927, which had ended with the British associations deciding to leave FIFA. Mibelli saw this as a veiled insinuation that the South American delegates might mimic the British and walk out from FIFA, to which he responded by insisting that the South Americans had come to Helsinki in a spirit of understanding. Despite Rimet's attempts to calm the situation and von Frenckell's denials, the atmosphere when the debates began was already quite heated. Unfortunately, this initial expression of South American discontent was just an appetiser for the protracted discussions that were to come. Mibelli's next target was FIFA's secretary general, Kurt Gassmann, with whom he raised a variety of issues, ranging from the failure to invite any South Americans to discuss the upcoming World Cup to the procedure for obtaining the minutes of FIFA meetings. In the end, the South Americans' strategy was successful, as the congress decided not to rule on FIFA's new statutes in Helsinki but to hold an extraordinary congress on the issue the following year.

One controversy the Helsinki congress did address was the composition of the reorganisation committee. The South American associations, like their counterparts in the Soviet bloc, wanted to see the committee expanded to include representatives from other continents, which would allow them to strengthen alliances with other non-European associations in order to produce a more equitable balance of power within the committee. The leaders of several Western European associations, who had met the day before the congress, reacted strongly to South America's request.[9] Nevertheless, South America's motion to include representatives from Asia and Africa was put to the vote. Although a small majority of the delegates supported the motion (23 votes for, 21 votes against), it was rejected, since it did not achieve the three-quarters majority required to pass. Details of how the delegates voted were not recorded, but the South American and Eastern European associations are likely to have voted for the proposal, and the Western European and British associations are likely to have voted against it.

Undaunted by their failure to change the composition of the reorganisation committee, the South American associations raised tensions

[9]Comments on the agenda for the FIFA executive committee meeting of 20–23 July 1952. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1952).

still further by launching a new challenge to the European associations. After the congress had re-elected Rimet for a final term as president, attention turned to the vice-presidents who had come to the end of their mandates, most notably Seeldrayers, from Belgium. The election was expected to be a formality, as Seeldrayers had held the position for more than 20 years, so it was a shock when the South American associations nominated Argentina's Domingo Peluffo to stand against him. South America's move was supported by the Central American associations, thereby showing that the Central and South American associations were capable of presenting a united front on certain issues.[10] In this case, as one Guatemalan delegate made clear, the aim was to give the Americas greater representation on the executive committee. The European associations (again, except those in the Soviet bloc) took a poor view of South America's move and contested its legitimacy. Thommen, an influential member of the executive committee, felt that the procedure contravened FIFA's statutes because South America had already appointed its representative to the executive committee. His opinion was seconded by Belgium's François Meert, who asked the South American delegates to withdraw their candidate, whereas Denmark's Ebbe Schwartz deemed the move to be 'scandalous'. But the South Americans refused to back down and insisted that an election be held. In the end, Seeldrayers won by a large majority.

The confrontations at the Helsinki congress, which *France Football* described as a 'tiff between Europe and South America,[11] would have far-reaching consequences for FIFA's reorganisation. In fact, two observations can be made concerning the events in Helsinki. First, the meeting may have been 'characterised by its disorder and total lack of constructive work',[12] as José Crahay reported to his colleagues at the Belgian FA,

[10]A Pan-American football confederation had been set up in 1946 (Vonnard and Quin 2017, p. 7). More needs to be known about this organisation, especially whether it conducted discussions on reorganising FIFA.

[11]Freely translated from the French. 'M. Jules Rimet réelu président de la FIFA', *L'Équipe*, 28 July 1952.

[12]Minutes of the Belgian FA executive committee, 9 August 1952. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1952–1953).

but the discussions, especially those relating to organising an extraordinary congress to address the issue, showed there was now a consensus within FIFA on the need for structural reforms. Second, South America's unity seems to have inspired Europe's football associations. Looking back on this congress for UEFA's 25th anniversary book, Crahay recalled that 'on each of the subjects, a delegate from South America, not always the same, took the floor to discuss the general policy. It was apparent that each point had been considered, and that delegates had probably been appointed to press a point of view' (Rothenbuehler 1979, p. 76). The South American associations' modus operandi of holding regular meetings to discuss issues relating to South American football showed how important it was for Europe's associations to continue meeting at frequent intervals, as they had begun doing at the end of May.

The Helsinki congress finally agreed to launch a new series of consultations on how to reform FIFA's statutes and gave the national associations until September 1952 to submit proposals. Many national associations had obviously been dissatisfied with the reorganisation committee's initial draft proposals, because FIFA's secretariat received a total of 124 proposals, some reiterating suggestions made the previous year, others putting forward new ideas.

The committee's bureau (composed of Seeldrayers, Gassmann, Barassi and Rous) met in London in November 1952 in order to sort through all the proposals, old and new, and to prioritise them, but the meeting did not include a representative from South America. These discussions produced a summary document, accompanied by a brief commentary co-signed by the four members of the bureau, which would be used as a working document for the subsequent reorganisation commission meeting.[13] According to this document, two European associations, West Germany and Yugoslavia, had proposed setting up continental bodies within FIFA, although they differed in the form they felt these bodies should take. The idea of regionalising FIFA, long promoted by South

[13]'Note préliminaire à l'examen des 124 propositions que le congrès d'Helsinki a renvoyées devant la Commission de révision des statuts et règlements de la FIFA nommée en 1950 au congrès de Rio de Janeiro'. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (file: 4. reorganisation committee).

America, clearly appears to have taken root among some European associations, even if the reorganisation committee's bureau were yet to be won over. In fact, Seeldrayers, Gassmann, Barassi and Rous had come to accept creating regional bodies as a possibility for the near future, but they felt it was still too early to start the process.

Although the West German and Yugoslavian associations' proposals were seen as 'revolutionary', they were both based on a Europe divided by the Cold War. This allowed the bureau to counter their proposals by arguing that a European confederation should include all 32 European football associations,[14] a vision of European football that harked back to the situation before World War II (Vonnard 2018a, see Chapter 4). Their argument appeared irrefutable because, even if matches involving teams from both sides of the Iron Curtain were again being played,[15] a pan-European confederation including football associations from East and West was still inconceivable, despite some initial discussions, and no such organisation existed in any field (e.g. science, culture, technology). The bureau therefore proposed maintaining the status quo, while confirming the previous year's proposal to allocate seats on the executive committee to the African and Asian associations.

After examining the bureau's summary document at its next meeting, in March 1953 in Paris, the reorganisation committee endorsed adding a further three members to the executive committee, which would allow seats to be allocated to the African and Asian associations. It also decided that executive committee members should be elected as follows:

- By a national association in the case of the Soviet bloc's vice-president;
- By groups of national associations in the case of the British vice-president, the South American vice-president and ordinary member, and the Central American, North American, African and Asian ordinary members;

[14]In alphabetical order (as listed in the document): Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, Finland, France, East Germany, West Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Saarland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Soviet Union, 'European Turkey', Wales and Yugoslavia.

[15]Switzerland took the first steps in reviving footballing relation between East and West by playing Hungary in September 1952.

– By the rest of the national associations at the congress in the case of the remaining two vice-presidents and four ordinary members.[16]

These decisions were accepted by the reorganisation committee's two South American members, who nevertheless proposed replacing the term 'rest of the national associations' by 'Europe'. The new wording would have benefitted the South American associations in a number of ways. First, it would help them convince the European associations of the advantages of creating regional bodies within FIFA, as it showed that South America's goal was not to completely overturn Europe's domination of FIFA. Second, allocating the additional executive committee seats to the European associations would limit the number of non-European executive committee members and thereby protect South America's position as the second most influential grouping within FIFA, with both a vice-president and an ordinary member. This desire to avoid giving the African and Asian associations too many seats on the executive committee was shared by Western Europe's associations. Third, if executive committee seats were allocated to the European associations, they would have to choose the people who would occupy these seats and the most obvious way of doing this would be to create a continental body. However, Cold War divisions were likely to prevent this body presenting a truly united front and thereby give the South Americans, which had demonstrated their ability to work together at the 1952 congress, wider scope for action within FIFA.

Once again, the South Americans' failed to obtain widespread support for their proposal among the other members of the committee. This was not due only to diverging views on how FIFA should be reformed; it was also the result of the difficulty the South American members had in creating alliances with their European counterparts. Unlike the other committee members, Ernesto Alveal and Alvaro Ramirez, the two South American delegates, were newcomers to the reorganisation committee, having been brought into replace Luis Valenzuela and Juan Russo in

[16]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the FIFA reorganisation committee 1950–1953, 6 March 1953. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (file: Study commission).

1952.[17] This lack of continuity was unhelpful and undoubtedly made it more difficult for the South Americans to gain the European members' trust. An illustration of this is provided by a letter Seeldrayers wrote to FIFA's secretary general, Kurt Gassmann, just after the reorganisation committee had rejected the South American motion, in which Seeldrayers acknowledged that their proposal made sense. Abandoning his usual reserve, he wrote: 'After all, it may be the best method. As long as the British vice-president voted with his delegates and the president were European, Europe would have a majority on the [FIFA executive] committee and, through the president, the casting vote'.[18] At the end of March, Seeldrayers told his executive committee colleagues that the proposed changes to FIFA's statutes would not reform the federation's structure and 'quickly allayed fears that a European confederation could be formed as a counterweight to the South American confederation'.[19] The challenge was now to convince the national associations to accept the new statutes.

The first stage in this process was to finalise the draft statutes that would be presented to FIFA's member associations. To this end, the reorganisation committee's bureau held a meeting at Thommen's house in Basel,[20] to which they also invited the committee's Scandinavian representative, Ebbe Schwartz, who was in the city for a match between Denmark and Switzerland. Why the bureau took the unusual step of inviting a non-bureau member is unknown, but it was probably in order to gather as many opinions as possible on their proposed reforms, especially from Western European associations: Rous represented the British, Barassi (and Thommen, who undoubtedly took part in discussions outside the official meetings) represented the 20 European associations that had met in May and June 1952, and Schwartz represented the Scandinavians.

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[17]Letter from Morreno Allendes J. Pinto Duran to K. Gassmann, 1 June 1953. FIFAA, correspondence with Chile (1932–1972).

[18]Freely translated from the French. Letter from R. W. Seeldrayers to K. Gassmann, 10 March 1953. FIFAA, reorganisation 1950–1953 (file: 4. reorganisation committee).

[19]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 27–28 March 1953. FIFAA, executive committee (1953–1954).

[20]Minutes of the FIFA reorganisation committee, 27 June 1953. FIFAA, reorganisation committee 1950–1953 (file: 4. reorganisation committee).

Discussions between the European associations that had co-signed a proposal to reform FIFA's statutes in May 1952 (see Chapter 2) continued at other football events throughout the summer of 1953. For example, Yugoslavia held a conference in Split on 7–8 August 1953 in order to examine ways of improving the standard of European football[21] and the possibility of creating a European youth tournament. Seven associations attended the conference,[22] often represented by senior executives, such as Rous and Thommen.[23] These men used the event as an additional opportunity to discuss the projected reforms to FIFA, including Yugoslavia's proposal to set up continental groups.

In the end, the draft statues that were sent to the national associations prior to the extraordinary congress in November 1953 made no mention of South America's proposal and did not explicitly allocate any seats on FIFA's executive committee to Europe. In fact, they were more a set of amendments than a radical reform of FIFA's structure.

So, what was the delegates' state of mind as they converged on Paris in November 1953 for the extraordinary congress that would decide the future structure of FIFA? Thommen had used the executive committee meeting immediately prior to the congress to reiterate his opposition to regionalising FIFA while accepting the idea of allowing a continent's national associations to join together in 'an organisation enabling them to safeguard their interests'.[24] His proposal reflects the concern felt by many European football leaders, who appeared to be preparing themselves for negotiations that could lead to a more substantial reform of FIFA's structure. Thus, for the first time, Thommen suggested to his executive committee colleagues the idea of creating a European body.

Although none of the delegates had put forward any major counter-proposals to the draft statutes, the tension was palpable at a congress which *L'Équipe* expected to be 'an rhetorical contest between Europe and

[21] Letter from K. Popovic to K. Gassmann, 1 August 1953. FIFAA, correspondence with Yugoslavia (1939–1974).

[22] In alphabetical order: Austria, England, Greece, Switzerland, Turkey, Yugoslavia and West Germany.

[23] Letter from S. Rous to K. Gassmann, 4 August 1953. FIFAA, correspondence with England (1927–1955).

[24] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the FIFA executive committee meeting of 12–13 November 1953. FIFAA, executive committee (1953–1954).

Latin America'.[25] The South American associations had come together in the run-up to the conference in order to define a common stance. A similar meeting was held by a group of 28 European associations, which, for the first time, included associations from the Soviet bloc. Although the European associations conceded the need to reform FIFA's structure, they did not want to change it any substantial way without further reflection. Most importantly, they did not want to allocate any seats on the executive committee to the North American, African and Asian associations, as they felt that football in these regions was not yet sufficiently developed.

The composition of the executive committee (Article 17 of the draft reform) was the most critical point on the agenda of the extraordinary congress that opened on 12 November 1953. Quite early in the proceedings, the new secretary of the South American confederation, Argentina's Antonio Rotili, declared:

> The [South American] associations wish to take part in this Congress, together with the other delegates, in order to ask for an assurance that South America will have the place within FIFA, to which it is entitled. Their intention [is] to co-operate with all, to work with and for FIFA. The unity which has been created in South America [is] proof of [our] respect for the greatness of FIFA itself.[26]

This speech showed the strength of the South (and Central) American associations' will to obtain more seats on FIFA's executive committee. Georges Hermesse, president of the Belgian FA, took the floor after Rotili and, in a completely new development, spoke on behalf of 'a group of European associations', which wanted to maintain the status quo and therefore proposed postponing the final decision to a future congress. Europe's tactic of obstructing the reorganisation of FIFA was not only intended to buy time, it was also designed to provoke a reaction from

[25] Freely translated from the French. 'Mais dès aujourd'hui au congrès de la FIFA joute oratoire Europe-Amérique latine', *L'Équipe*, 14–15 November 1955.

[26] Minutes of the FIFA extraordinary congress, 14–15 November 1953. FIFAA, congress (1953–1959).

the South American associations and, if necessary, pave the way for further discussions with them outside the congress in order to find common ground. In fact, FIFA's reorganisation would be agreed 'behind the scenes',[27] most notably at an informal meeting between South American and European leaders on the first evening of the congress.

4.2 The 'Thommen Compromise' and the Opening Route to UEFA's Creation

This meeting between the South American and European associations, at the end of the first day of the congress,[28] gave Thommen an opportunity to break the deadlock by proposing a compromise based on greater decentralisation of FIFA, as demanded by the South American associations, and allocating executive committee seats to the European associations. Thommen seems to have prepared the ground for this move by discussing his proposal with Barassi and Seeldrayers, and with Rotili and Brazil's Sotero Cosme. He was also counting on the support of Spain's Munoz Calero, who was trying to build bridges between Europe and South America by organising a match between the two continents, in Madrid in 1954, as part of FIFA's 50th anniversary celebrations.[29] Munoz Calero fulfilled Thommen's hopes the following day by reminding the congress that:

> the South Americans have come to cooperate, and they have been preparing for this for a long time. A step forward was taken at the Luxembourg congress [of 1946] by establishing a vice-president for the South American associations, and it [is] necessary to keep moving forward.[30]

[27] 'Au congrès extraordinaire de la FIFA (Samedi et dimanche)', *L'Équipe*, 16 November 1953.

[28] Statements made by the Soviet delegate, Savin, the day after this meeting, suggest that the Soviet bloc associations also took part in these discussions.

[29] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 12–13 November 1953. FIFAA, congress (1953–1954).

[30] Minutes of the FIFA extraordinary congress, 14–15 November 1953. FIFAA, congress (1953–1959).

The result of the meeting between the South American and European associations, which Thommen presented on day two of the congress, led to Article 17 being redrafted in order to give Africa and Asia the right to elect one ordinary executive committee member and the European associations the right to elect two vice-presidents and four ordinary members. Thommen explained that several of his colleagues at other European associations had come to see abandoning direct elections to the executive committee as inevitable. South America's constant pressure, which could have led to long-lasting splits within FIFA, was undoubtedly a major factor in overcoming the last traces of resistance from Europe's leaders. Thommen's proposal also reflected a desire to adapt FIFA's structure to the changes in international football being brought about by the new generation of European football executives, led by Thommen, Barassi and Rous. Thommen now had to convince the congress to approve his proposal. This would be a momentous decision for Europe because it would require football associations from both sides of the Iron Curtain to come together within a continental confederation. At that time, the only organisation to include all these countries was the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. It was even suggested that the new confederation could extend beyond Europe, as Thommen noted that the invitation to join the group 'would also be addressed to the associations of the Middle East and North Africa', many of which were still under colonial rule and could therefore be included within a European confederation. Nevertheless, the individual associations would be free to 'decide if they wanted to follow up [the offer]'.[31]

Continuing in his role as spokesperson for the European associations, Georges Hermesse addressed the assembly for a second time at the very end of the congress. He appealed to delegates to approve Thommen's proposal, pointing out the 'sacrifice' the European associations (at least those in Western Europe) had made by attributing seats on FIFA's executive committee to the African and Asian associations. Given that Europe, with its two vice-presidents and four ordinary members, would still dominate the executive committee, his choice of the word 'sacrifice' is highly revealing of the Eurocentric and chauvinistic mindset of Europe's football

[31] Ibid.

executives, who felt it was natural for Europe to lead FIFA. The European associations saw granting two executive committee seats to non-European associations as a concession made in the spirit of FIFA's policy of defusing conflicts wherever possible and using the term 'sacrifice' can be seen as a way of emphasising to FIFA's non-European leaders that Europe had taken a step in their direction.

Thommen's proposal was well received by most of the delegates, particularly those from Africa and Asia. According to an Egyptian delegate, who was warmly applauded, it fulfilled the expectations of the countries of his continent. FIFA's statutes, he added, must be adapted to the global context and safeguard the interests of all, a point of view that was reiterated by Vietnam's Luong-Van-Hoa and Laos' Oudong Sananikone. These reactions show the success of the Western European associations' tactics and the failure of the Soviet bloc's strategy to persuade non-European associations to support its position. Thanks to this Western European-South American alliance, the continentalisation of FIFA appeared to be moving forward. President Rimet called for a vote on whether or not the associations should create continental bodies, whose main task would be to elect the members of FIFA's executive committee (Article 17 of the new statutes). Further pressure was put on the delegates by the fact that the vote would be held as a roll-call vote, following a demand from Rotili, representing South America, which was in favour of the reform, and Savin, representing the Soviet Union, which opposed it. Their insistence on using what was a highly unusual procedure for a FIFA congress reflects the continued tension between the two sides, which were prepared to use all available means to win over undecided delegates. In the end, the congress approved the 'Thommen Compromise' by a huge majority of 39 votes to 6, thanks to a coalition of associations from Western Europe, South America and other non-European countries. The only dissenting voices were those of the Soviet bloc, which had failed to build the hoped-for alliances with the African and Asian associations, or even with Yugoslavia, which abstained (see Sect. 2.3).

Changing the process for electing the members of FIFA's executive committee had taken three years and numerous formal and informal discussions (see Sect. 2.1 and 2.2). The result was a system in which members would be chosen by continental groups, rather than the congress.

Table 4.2 Composition of the executive committee according to the new draft FIFA statutes

Functions	Number of seats	Voting body
President	1	Congress
Vice-presidents	5	Group of European associations (2)[a], South American confederation (1), British associations (1)[b], Soviet Union (1)[b]
Members	8	Group of European associations (4)[a], South American confederation (1), Central American confederation (1), Group of African associations (1)[a]; Group of Asian associations (1)[a]

Note [a]Group to be formed by the next FIFA congress in June 1954. If the group was not formed, the congress to elect the representatives of these associations; [b]These associations shall not take part in the elections of the representatives of the Group of European Associations to the FIFA executive committee

Aware of the decision's importance, Jules Rimet, who was attending his last congress as president, took the liberty of addressing the delegates in order to convey his support for his colleagues' decision. However, he also realised that creating continental groups could lead to divisions within FIFA, so he concluded by expressing his attachment to unity within FIFA (Table 4.2):

> all those who have had the honour of being placed at the head of the international federation, each appointed by his own country, bring to it a sentiment of unity, harmony and fairness which will enable your federation, which has already existed for 50 years, to go on for many years to come.[32]

Settling the highly contentious matter of the composition of the executive committee allowed the congress to move on to the many other decisions they had to make. However, these issues did not pose any real problems and were dealt with so quickly that Argentina's Antonio Carrioli confessed to being 'surprised at the pace of the debates and by the signs of impatience shown by delegates who had come from

[32]Ibid.

nearby countries, when others had come from much further away'.[33] In their congress report for *France Football*, Max Urbini and Jean-Philippe Réthacker pointed out, somewhat mischievously, that the last 42 articles were covered in two hours, compared with the nine hours spent on article 17 alone.[34] One of the congress' final actions was to appoint a committee to draw up the new statutes. It consisted of Seeldrayers, Gassmann, Rous (responsible for the English version of the text) Delaunay (responsible for the French version) and Alvaro Ramirez (who would translate the document into Spanish). Europeans had once again monopolised a highly important task, thereby confirming their continued control over FIFA (Sugden and Tomlinson 1998).

A few days after the congress, one of the main players in the discussion, Georges Hermesse, told his colleagues at the Belgian FA that a 'compromise formula concerning the composition of the executive committee and presented by the European associations had been accepted'.[35] However, he did not mention the grouping the European associations now had to create. Seeldrayers was more enthusiastic, writing to Gassmann that the assembly had been a 'triumph'[36] and that proposals to completely change FIFA's structure, in particular the idea of creating groups to run football on each continent, had been rejected.

In fact, the decisions taken in Paris did much more than introduce a new system for electing members to the executive committee; they launched a new era in FIFA's history. As the following chapter shows, they would lead to the federation's regionalisation and resulted in fundamental changes to how it functioned and a new division of tasks in the administration of international football. They also opened the door to creating a European football confederation. As I have tried to show

[33] Freely translated from the French. Ibid.

[34] 'Quand la FIFA passe un week-end à l'UNESCO ou l'article 17 revu, corrigé et… adopté', *France Football*, 17 November 1953.

[35] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the Belgian FA executive committee, 28 November 1953. BNA, URBSFA, executive committee (1953–1954).

[36] Letter from R. W. Seeldrayers to K. Gassmann, 25 November 1953. FIFAA, correspondence of R. W. Seeldrayers (1939–1950).

in this chapter, this process must be viewed from a global perspective (Dietschy 2013) because, even though it revolved around decisions taken by European football executives, these decisions were highly influenced, or even, to a certain extent, forced upon them, by their South American colleagues.

Part II

Unifying European Football 1954–1961

This part focuses on UEFA's formation and early development from 1954 to 1961. UEFA used this period to lay the foundations that would enable it to become the governing body for European football.

I begin (Chapter 5) by describing the events that took place between the spring of 1954, when the first discussions on creating a group of European football associations started within FIFA, and the late 1950s, when UEFA's leaders decided to set up a dedicated headquarters and appoint a permanent secretary general. I then go on to look at the organisation's geographical boundaries, focusing on the cases of Turkey and Israel. The decisions taken regarding these two countries were significant because they defined the territorial extent of European football (a definition that remained in place until the end of the Cold War). As mentioned in the previous chapter (see chapter 2), European football had already entered a new phase of development by the early 1950s, but the creation of UEFA undeniably reinforced this dynamic. Of special note in this respect are the launches of the European Champion Clubs' Cup, in 1955–1956, and the European Cup of Nations, which finally came into being in 1958 despite initial and, in some cases, continuing objections from several major European associations.

Chapter 6 looks at the impact the new European body had on football in the continent. Despite the political divisions between Western and Eastern Europe, UEFA developed extremely quickly and soon came to be seen to represent European football as a whole. One of the reasons for this success was the way UEFA's leaders dealt with the external (such as obtaining visas for teams and officials) and internal problems caused by the Cold War. In fact, avoiding conflict between its members was a major concern for UEFA, which it negotiated by adopting similar strategies to those that FIFA used to neutralise internal conflicts. UEFA was also keen to assert its independence from FIFA, which inevitably caused discord between the two organisations, as illustrated by UEFA's takeover of the International Youth Tournament at the end of the 1950s. The resulting negotiations between the two organisations led to UEFA taking charge of European football and FIFA retaining responsibility for world football. As UEFA's monopoly over European football grew, it inevitably came into contact with other organisations that wanted to launch European projects. Within the world of football, UEFA mostly had to deal with the International League Liaison Committee (ILLC), founded in 1959. Outside football, UEFA was involved in negotiations with the European Broadcasting Union, whose Eurovision network, launched in 1954, wanted to broadcast Champion Clubs' Cup matches. The results of UEFA's discussions with these two bodies strengthened its position and helped it become accepted as the legitimate governing body for European football. However, far from being confined to football, the impact of UEFA's actions also extended to European cooperation, in the broadest sense of the term, most notably through its competitions, which provided regular opportunities for exchanges between East and West.

The final chapter (Chapter 7) in this Part examines the speed at which UEFA rose to become FIFA's main continental confederation. The decisions taken at the 1953 FIFA extraordinary congress in Paris not only led to the foundation of UEFA, they also triggered the formation of continental bodies in Africa and Asia, generally modelled on the Central American, North American and, especially, South American confederations. However, these organisations had to strike a new deal with FIFA if they were going to develop. UEFA played a key role in achieving this by campaigning to be given a proportion of the revenues FIFA

received from international matches involving European teams (obtaining this would give UEFA the same rights as the South American confederation). UEFA began pressuring FIFA on this issue in 1955 and its proposal was finally accepted by the FIFA congress in 1956, partly thanks to the informal alliances it formed with the other confederations' leaders. Although this agreement greatly improved UEFA's financial security, it kept pushing FIFA by extending its demands to revenues from World Cup matches. FIFA's eventual acceptance of UEFA's innovative request helped it become the most important continental federation within FIFA by the late 1950s. UEFA's success meant that the other confederations were greatly influenced by the actions UEFA had taken to develop European football, even if they did not adopt the same structure as UEFA. For example, in 1959, the South American confederation followed UEFA's lead and set up its own continental club competition.

5

Energising European Football

A number of significant developments made the mid-1950s a major turning point for European football. In politics, a thaw in the relations between East and West made it possible for teams from opposite sides of the Iron Curtain to play each other, a change that was symbolised by two major events in 1954: the World Cup final in Switzerland, which brought together West Germany and Hungary, and the participation of 18 teams from Eastern and Western Europe in the 1954 International Youth Tournament. Inter-European club football was also seeing a renaissance, with several ideas for club competitions being launched, including one from France's sports daily *L'Équipe* in December 1954. Last, but by no means least, 1954 also saw the founding of a European football organisation that would encourage the further Europeanisation of the game.

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5.1 UEFA: A New Body for European Football

When the new statutes adopted by FIFA's extraordinary congress in November 1953 came into force, in February 1954,[1] Europe's associations had to come together to select their six representatives (two vice-presidents and four ordinary members) on FIFA's executive committee. This meeting also provided an opportunity to constitute a more formal body, as Ottorino Barassi had suggested in the spring of 1952 (see Sect. 2.3), in which national associations could discuss issues relating to European football.

The three members of the standing committee appointed at the meeting of European associations in Zurich in May 1952—Barassi, José Crahay and Henri Delaunay—took steps to organise this discussion.[2] Delaunay, the committee's secretary, contacted the 31 associations FIFA considered to be European,[3] but he was unsure where the borders of European football lay and had to ask FIFA's secretary general, Kurt Gassmann, whether Turkey could participate in the meeting. Gassmann consulted FIFA's leaders before replying, on 19 March 1954, that Turkey should be placed in the future Asian grouping because the Turkish FA's headquarters were in Ankara, on the Asian side of the Bosporus.[4] As a result, Turkey was not invited to the meeting of European associations, which the standing committee scheduled for 12 April 1954, in Paris, alongside a match between France and Italy.

[1] *Statutes of the FIFA* [1954]. FIFAA, statutes (1904–1981).

[2] Minutes of the Belgian FA executive committee, 3 April 1954. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1953–1954).

[3] Minutes of the European associations meeting, 12 April 1954. German National Archives (thereafter GNA), DY 12 Deutscher Turn und Sportbund (DTSB), folder: 2.081 Zusammenarbeit mit der FIFA, nos. 169–171. Contrary to what Ernst Thommen said during the 1953 FIFA extraordinary congress, Delaunay does not appear to have contacted the North African and the Middle Eastern associations.

[4] Letter from K. Gassmann to H. Delaunay, 19 March 1954. FIFAA, correspondence with France (1937–1954).

Out of the 31 associations Delaunay invited to Paris, 22 attended the meeting[5] and 9 sent apologies for their absence.[6] The presence of the English and Scottish associations was a sign that their leaders were gradually rallying to the idea of creating closer ties between Europe's associations, unlike the countries of Eastern European, whose reluctance to go down this road was shown by the absence of all the Soviet bloc associations except Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Both countries' associations supported Gustav Sebes' bid for a FIFA vice-presidency, but Czechoslovakia's Josef Vogl expressed his opposition to forming a European group. Henri Delaunay responded to this comment by reminding Vogl that the issue had already been decided at the meetings in Zurich, Paris and Helsinki. However, this was not entirely accurate: as I indicated in Chapter 2, the agreement reached during these meetings was to hold talks, not to appoint common representatives to FIFA's executive committee. In fact, whether and how a European body should be formed was still subject to much debate that the Paris meeting failed to settle, as Thommen noted a few days later in a letter to Rimet.[7] What is more, the delegates were also unable to agree on which of the 11 applicants (from 11 national associations) should be chosen to fill Europe's six seats on FIFA's executive committee. The need to turn down five of the applicants made this a highly sensitive issue, so Stanley Rous moved to postpone the decision until the eve of the next FIFA congress, due to be held in June in Switzerland, in order to allow further reflection. Rous' motion was designed to avoid conflict between the associations by giving them time to conduct the informal discussions needed to form alliances and reach compromises. It also shows how much the experience of working within FIFA since the interwar years had taught Europe's leaders about recognising and avoiding possible bones of contention (Vonnard 2018a, see Sect. 1.2).

[5]In alphabetical order: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, England, Finland, France, East Germany, West Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Saarland, Spain, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

[6]In alphabetical order: Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Iceland, Northern Ireland, Poland, Romania, Soviet Union and Wales.

[7]Letter from E. Thommen to J. Rimet, 25 April 1954. FIFAA, correspondence of Jules Rimet (1945–1950).

(1) Should the European Group only meet every two years or every four years, in order to elect two vice-presidents and four members to FIFA's executive committee?
(2) Should the European Group be a 'European Entente', that is, a consultative body that meets once or twice a year?
(3) If so, should the European associations elect a board comprising a president, a secretary and several members?
(4) Should the associations set up a head office or should each meeting be held in a different city?
(5) Should the European Group be given a legal form, have statutes, a budget?
(6) Should the Group thus constituted elect an executive committee every year or every two years?
(7) Should the Group, which could be called the 'European Federation of Football Associations', resolve issues relating to European football?
(8) Should it study the agendas of FIFA congresses in order to adopt a joint position on the issues to be discussed?
(9) If such a Federation is created, would you agree to asking FIFA to redistribute to the Group 1% of the revenues it collects from international matches, as it does for the South American confederation?
(10) Would you support the European Group or Federation organising a European Cup [of national teams] to be held every four years, between World Cups?

Fig. 5.1 Questionnaire sent to European associations in May 1954 (*Source* Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the Belgian FA executive committee, 24 April 1954. BNA, URBSFA, executive committee [1953–1954])

The meeting approved Rous' motion, as well as a proposal from Barassi that he and his two colleagues on the standing committee, Crahay and Delaunay, draw up draft statutes for a future European body,[8] so they could be discussed at the next meeting. This was an important step towards envisioning creating a continental organisation. In order to define the form this organisation should take, on 24 April, Delaunay sent a questionnaire (Fig. 5.1) to all of Europe's football associations.

[8]Minutes of the European associations meeting, 12 April 1954. GNA, DY 12 DTSB, 2.081 Zusammenarbeit mit der FIFA, nos. 169–171.

Delaunay sent out the questionnaire with a cover letter in which he described the three options available to the national associations. First, they could create a body whose main purpose would be to elect Europe's members on FIFA's executive committee, as set out in Article 17 of FIFA's new statutes. Second, they could set up a more ambitious organisation, referred to as a 'consultative entente', whose occasional meetings would provide a forum in which to exchange views and express wishes.[9] Third, they could choose the most comprehensive option of creating a group with a legal form, similar to the South American confederation, which Delaunay explicitly named. He also reminded them that whichever option they chose, the resulting body would remain subordinate to FIFA.

The response rate was very high, as 22 of the 31 associations contacted completed the questions, 4 (Bulgaria, East Germany, Iceland, Soviet Union) said they would prefer to wait before giving their answers, and only 5 (Albania, Hungary, Poland, Wales, Romania) failed to acknowledge receipt of the document.

A summary of the associations' replies,[10] drawn up by the standing committee, showed that most of the associations were in favour of creating a formal entity, similar to the second option proposed by Delaunay. This entity's main task would be to elect representatives to FIFA's executive committee and to meet once a year to discuss issues relating to European football. The favoured way of doing this was to appoint an executive body and to set up a head office at its secretary general's place of residence. Each committee meeting and annual general meeting would be held in a different European city as a way of involving as many associations as possible. Hence, in the spring of 1954, Europe's national associations decided to cross the Rubicon and form a continental entity.

[9]Letter from H. Delaunay to the secretary general of the East German FA, 20 April 1954. GNA, DY 12 2.081 Zusammenarbeit mit der FIFA, nos. 182–183.

[10]'Groupe des associations européennes de football. Analyse des réponses au questionnaire relatif à la forme constitutionnelle du groupe'. GNA, DY 12 DTSB, 2.081 Zusammenarbeit mit der FIFA, no. 176.

The standing committee used the answers to the questionnaire to continue its work and draft a set of statutes for the future grouping.[11] On 1 June 1954, Delaunay wrote to the national associations again in order to send them the minutes of the Paris meeting, a summary of the responses to the questionnaire, and the draft statutes for the future European grouping. This final document shows that the European Football Entente, as it was called, did 'not claim any official status for the moment'[12] and would remain subordinate to FIFA. The document header contains the word 'FIFA', whose executive committee was sent a copy for information.[13] These actions were designed to stress the resulting European entity's intention to respect FIFA's authority and to restrict itself to the following goals:

a. Address all questions concerning football in Europe.
b. Review the agendas of FIFA congresses.
c. Bring together the different viewpoints of FIFA members on issues on the congress' agenda and, if possible, agree on common positions on these issues.
d. Appoint the two vice-presidents—without the participation of the British associations or the USSR—and the four members of FIFA's executive committee who, under Article 17 of the FIFA Statutes, are eligible for election by the European associations.[14]

Whereas the first point gave the future grouping the right to deal with issues relating to European football, the other three emphasised the intention to remain close to FIFA and highlighted the fact that creating a European entity was primarily a response to the changes in FIFA's statutes. Hence, the organisation the European associations were asked to consider was one with limited prerogatives.

[11] Minutes of the Belgian FA executive committee, 29 May 1954. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1953–1955).

[12] Freely translated from the French. 'Entente européenne de football, projet de règlement'. GNA, DY 12, DTSB, 2.081 Zusammenarbeit mit der FIFA, nos. 173–175.

[13] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 12–13 June 1954. FIFAA, executive committee (1953–1954).

[14] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the Belgian FA executive committee, 29 May 1954. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1953–1954).

The next meeting, in Basel on 15 June 1954, was attended by the leaders of 25 associations,[15] who quickly agreed to create a European Grouping of Football Associations. They then moved on to the issue of who should be elected to FIFA's executive committee. As Rous had hoped, delaying the decision from the April meeting had enabled the associations to come to an agreement, with the result that every candidate was elected to either FIFA's executive committee or the European Grouping's executive committee. The leaders appointed to the European executive committee were (in alphabetical order): José Crahay, Henri Delaunay, Joseph Gerö, George Graham, Ebbe Schwartz and Gustav Sebes. Thus, the Basel meeting, which had taken place in 'a more friendly atmosphere than the Paris meeting [of 12 April]',[16] formally founded a representative body for European football, which was officially recognised by FIFA's executive committee on 21 June 1954.[17]

The European Grouping's priority was to get the national associations to approve the statutes drawn up by the standing committee. With this in mind, the new executive committee was charged with preparing a final draft for presentation to the Grouping's first congress, scheduled for 1955. The executive committee used its first meeting, held immediately after the FIFA congress, to appoint Ebbe Schwartz as president and Henri Delaunay as secretary general (see Sect. 6.1).[18] It also drew up a timetable for drafting the new statutes and agreed to meet again, in Copenhagen in October 1954, in order to continue the discussions. In the meantime, Delaunay corresponded regularly with the leaders of Europe's national associations as he continued working on the statutes.[19]

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[15]In alphabetical order: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, East Germany, West Germany, England, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Saarland, Scotland, the Soviet Union, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

[16]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the Belgian FA executive committee, 2 July 1954. SAB, URBSFA, executive committee (1953–1954).

[17]Minutes of the FIFA congress, 21 June 1954. FIFAA, congress (1953–1959).

[18]Minutes of the European body congress, 22 June 1954. Archives of the Union of European Football Associations (thereafter UEFAA), RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[19]Letter from H. Delaunay to the secretary general of the East German FA, 19 July 1954. GNA, DY 12 DTSB, 2.085 Zusammenarbeit mit der UEFA, no. 489.

As planned, the executive committee met again in Copenhagen, on 29–30 October, where they discussed the draft statutes and decided how best to consolidate the existence of the new confederation, which they named the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA). According to Gasparini (2011, p. 53), there were two advantages to using the term Union, rather than Grouping. First, Union is more legally binding and infers stronger links between the organisation's members. Second, it suggests a coalition in which each association remains autonomous, rather than delegating its power to a central authority. This important point mirrored the measures FIFA took in the 1930s to ensure it did not interfere in the internal affairs of its member associations (Vonnard 2018a, see Chapter 1).[20] The executive committee removed the sentence: '[the organisation] will not provisionally adopt any official character' from the draft statutes and decided that would adopt a legal form 'in the country where the Group's registered office is located'.[21] Finally, it set an annual membership fee of 250 Swiss francs per association (based on the 260 Swiss francs fee the associations paid to FIFA each year)[22] and agreed to send a registration form to every association. These decisions, which would be discussed at UEFA's first congress, in Vienna in March 1955, show that the executive committee wanted to act swiftly to give UEFA solid roots.

UEFA's elite also looked at measures it could use to develop European football, such as launching a European competition for national teams, thereby following the South American model (see Chapter 7). A competition such as this would have the added advantage of enhancing UEFA's legitimacy and the small amount of money raised from international matches would help cover the cost of executive committee meetings and the travel expenses of delegates attending UEFA's congress.

The delegates at UEFA's Vienna congress were keen to develop the organisation, but, as discussed below (see Sect. 5.4), they rejected the idea of setting up a competition for national teams. More positively, they

[20] However, not all European football leaders and journalists took care to use the organisation's correct name, and sometimes referred to it as the 'European Football Union'.

[21] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the European body executive committee, 29–30 October 1954. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[22] *Statutes of the FIFA* [1954], art. 30. FIFAA, statutes (1904–1981).

unanimously approved, with virtually no amendments, the new statutes put forward by the executive committee, decided to expand the executive committee from six to eight members, and agreed to UEFA sponsoring a match between Great Britain and the rest of Europe in the summer of 1955—inspired by the 'FIFA game' that were played between England and a FIFA team in 1938, 1947 and 1953 (Dietschy 2015; Vonnard 2019a)—in order to celebrate the Northern Ireland FA's 75th anniversary. The congress also proved itself to be a valuable forum for discussing a wide variety of questions relating to European football by addressing several other issues, including sports betting,[23] the broadcasting of matches and the possibility of drawing up a calendar for international matches.

Work to solidify UEFA's existence continued through May 1955 with the opening of a dedicated bank account in Paris and the creation of a letterhead bearing the acronym 'UEFA'.[24] The executive committee then moved on to the match between Great Britain and the 'Rest of Europe' that was due to be played that summer. This match would benefit UEFA in two main ways. First, the revenues it received from the game (a small percentage of the total) would boost the organisation's finances. Second, putting together a 'Rest of Europe' team to play a Great Britain team, was an excellent way of strengthening ties between national associations. The match was a success, attracting 58,000 spectators and reporters from several European sports dailies. Although some UEFA member associations were not represented on the pitch, this was due to circumstances rather than a deliberate decision by UEFA's executive committee. The game included players from Austria, Denmark, Belgium, France, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, Yugoslavia and the four British associations. Players from several other countries declined to take part in the match, to the disappointment of the British associations, which, according to *L'Équipe*, 'regret[ed] the absence of the Hungarians, [and] especially the Russians, Germans and Spaniards'.[25] By bringing together

[23]For a European perspective on this topic, see Breuil (2018).

[24]Minutes of the UEFA emergency committee, 6–7 May 1955. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[25]'À pied d'œuvre depuis la veille les 'Continentaux' s'entraînent sous la direction de Pierre Pibarot', *L'Équipe*, 12 August 1955.

the entire continent's football community, the match encouraged further rapprochement between the countries of Europe, and including as many countries as possible enabled UEFA to demonstrate its pan-European nature.

In 1956, UEFA adopted an official set of statutes and launched a quarterly newsletter, published in the organisation's three official languages (English, French and German) and which reported the executive committee's decisions and the results of UEFA competitions. 1956 also saw the first moves towards professionalising the secretariat, now run by Pierre Delaunay, who had taken on the role on an interim basis following the death of his father, Henri, in November 1955.[26] Consequently, delegates at the Lisbon congress, in the summer of 1956, were asked to choose a permanent secretary general and to consider acquiring its own office, rather than working out of premises provided by the French FA. Although the congress was not yet willing to create a permanent headquarters for UEFA or hire a full-time paid secretary, it followed the executive committee's advice to confirm Pierre Delaunay as secretary general, but converted the post into a purely administrative position, as is the case at FIFA, by removing the secretary general's executive committee voting rights.[27] When interviewed, Pierre Delaunay was evasive about why he was appointed secretary general, simply saying that his father had 'got [him] to take his place'.[28] Delaunay could speak and write French, German and English, and had experience of football administration from his time with the umbrella organisation for France's professional football clubs (*Groupement des Clubs Autorisés*) and the French FA after World War II. In simultaneously holding the secretary general positions at UEFA and the French FA, Pierre Delaunay was following in his father's footsteps, but he did not have the same stature in European football circles. Consequently, his decision to continue as the French FA's secretary general and his lack of authority led some UEFA members to call into question his position in UEFA in 1958–1959. What is more,

[26] Pour cause de maladie. 'Henri Delaunay n'est plus…', *L'Équipe*, 10 November 1955.

[27] Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 8 June 1956. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

[28] Freely translated from the French. Interview with Pierre Delaunay, conducted on 18 September 2012 in Versailles.

Table 5.1 UEFA standing committees (early 1959)

Commissions	Creation date	Number of members[a]
Executive	1954	9
Champion Clubs' Cup	1956	5
Appeals	1956	3
Finance	1957	4
Youth	1957	5
Cup of Nations[b]	1956	5
Television	1958	3

Note [a]excluding the secretary general; [b]a provisional commission had been set up in 1955
Source Table based on the *UEFA general secretary report* 1958 and 1959

UEFA had grown substantially since it was founded, resulting in the creation of seven standing committees, in addition to the executive committee, to oversee its new areas of responsibility. These committees were the Finance committee, Youth committee, Television issues study committee, European Champion Clubs' Cup organising committee, European Cup of Nations committee, and European Champion Clubs' Cup appeal committee[29] Table (5.1).

Coordinating the work of these commissions was a considerable task for the secretary general, especially as of October 1958, when the executive committee asked to be sent a copy of each committee's minutes so it could stay abreast of progress.[30] The secretary general also contributed to many other tasks, such as developing projects for new competitions, drawing up an international calendar, ensuring consistent standards of refereeing, maintaining relations with other continental confederations and producing the *UEFA Bulletin*, which had expanded to include articles on all aspects of European football. On the eve of the 1958 congress, the executive committee met without Delaunay, who was asked not to attend, to discuss ways of alleviating the secretary general's workload. Several solutions were put forward, particularly by José Crahay, the Belgian FA's and Belgian Olympic Committee's secretary general, who was

[29]UEFA secretary general report (1958–1959). UEFAA, RM00000917 (secretary general report, 1954–1985), 1.

[30]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 8 October 1958. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

sympathetic to Delaunay's situation and insisted he needed assistance. To this end, Crahay suggested appointing an administrative secretary who could take on some of Delaunay's work and who should be assisted by the subordinate staff essential to UEFA's smooth running. The congress that followed these discussions also decided that it was time for UEFA to employ a general secretary and to establish a permanent headquarters by asking the French FA to provide three new offices.[31] The executive committee sent its request to the French FA in the autumn of 1958 and quickly received a positive reply. However, UEFA's leaders felt that the work required to expand the French FA's premises accordingly would be too expensive.[32] On 5 March 1959, a sub-commission composed of UEFA's finance committee and UEFA's president, Ebbe Schwartz, met the president of the French FA, Pierre Pochonnet, who was told that UEFA had decided to leave Paris and set up a separate headquarters.

As a result, the executive committee started looking for a home for UEFA, finally settling on Switzerland, which had the advantages of being 'neutral',[33] thereby facilitating relations with countries from both sides of the Iron Curtain, and of having a well-developed banking system that would allow UEFA to manage its finances more effectively. In fact, problems with its bank account in Paris had led UEFA to open an account in Switzerland in 1957, in order to facilitate financial exchanges with its member associations.[34] Finally, the fact that FIFA and many other international organisations, including the IOC and FIFA but also the European Broadcasting Union (see Sect. 6.3), were based in Switzerland is also likely to have influenced UEFA's choice.

UEFA's move to Switzerland ended Delaunay's future as secretary general because he did not want to move his family (he had two young

[31] Minutes of the UEFA congress, 4 June 1958. UEFAA, RM00005986 (founding congress, 1954–ordinary congress, 1955–1957).

[32] Translation of a letter from de E. Schwartz to European associations. UEFAA, RM00005987 (congress, 1958–extraordinary congress, 1959).

[33] At this time, Switzerland was closer to the Western camp, as the country's political and economic elite were anti-communist (Bott et al. 2015). However, it was easier for countries from both the Eastern and Western blocs to obtain visas for Switzerland than for other countries.

[34] Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 7–8 November 1957. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

children at the time).[35] According to Jacques Ferran, 'Pierre Delaunay did not have the ambition or the desire to give up French football to go there, so we knew in advance he would say [no], that he [would] prefer to keep [his position at] the French Federation'.[36] The need to appoint a new secretary general appears to have been another factor in UEFA's choice of Switzerland for its headquarters, because the man they favoured for the position in the spring of 1959 was FIFA's deputy secretary, Hans Bangerter, who had made it clear he wanted to stay in Switzerland.[37] In his autobiography, the influential English leader Stanley Rous—who was appointed in 1959 UEFA vice-president—said that he had known Bangerter for several years and held him in high regard. Of course, Bangerter would have preferred to take over as FIFA's secretary general from the ageing Kurt Gassmann, who was expected to retire soon (he eventually retired in 1961). However, according to Rous (1979, pp. 134–135), Bangerter was too young to have a real chance of obtaining a position that tended to be awarded in recognition of a long career in football administration. On the other hand, Rous felt that Bangerter's dynamism would be a significant asset for the young UEFA.

Bangerter was only 30, but he already had a lot of experience in sports administration. After studying at a technical school in Bern, he worked at the Federal Gymnastics Centre in Magglingen, where he was responsible for welcoming foreign visitors and course participants. This is where he met Rous. His appointment as FIFA's deputy secretary in 1953 allowed him to work with the experienced Kurt Gassmann and to forge closer relations with European football's most influential leaders, such as Barassi and Thommen. Bangerter had three other qualities that made him an excellent candidate for the position of secretary general of an international organisation. First, he was from Switzerland, whose neutrality made him less liable to accusations of bias by either side of the political divide and made it easier for him to travel throughout Europe. Second, he had a strong sense of diplomacy, a crucial asset for this type of position (Quin 2012; Vonnard 2017), which he had cultivated during

[35]Interview with Pierre Delaunay conducted on 18 September 2012 in Versailles.

[36]Freely translated from the French. Interview with Jacques Ferran conducted on 19 September 2012 in Paris.

[37]Interview with Hans Bangerter conducted on 1 October in Bolligen.

his time in Magglingen and at FIFA. Third, he spoke and wrote all three of UEFA's official languages (English, French and German) fluently.

By the summer of 1959, UEFA was ready to move from Paris and Bangerter's appointment as secretary general sealed the decision to relocate to Switzerland. Now, it was a matter of finding suitable premises. When other avenues failed,[38] Bangerter, with help from Ernst Thommen, managed to secure offices for UEFA in the House of Sports currently being built in a Bern suburb, which would also house the Swiss FA's new headquarters (Vonnard 2019c).

In order to avoid offending Pierre Delaunay and the French FA, and to ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities to the new general secretary, the executive committee proposed adding another seat to its board, so UEFA's members would have 'the opportunity to elect Pierre Delaunay to the executive committee as a member'.[39] This proposal was accepted at an extraordinary UEFA congress in December 1959, which also approved a motion to move the organisation's headquarters to Switzerland by 16 votes to 9, with 3 abstentions. The congress' minutes do not provide further details of this vote but, according to an article in *L'Équipe* by Jacques Ferran, the countries of Eastern Europe, Greece and Portugal wanted to keep the headquarters in Paris.[40] Their objections to the move were explained by Yugoslavia's Mihailo Andrejevic, who felt that the issue had been pushed through by the executive committee without being formally discussed by the national associations.

The administrative decisions taken in Paris solidified UEFA's position. Moreover, the secretariat was growing rapidly, as Bangerter recruited three administrative secretaries, Ilse Schmidlin, Suzanne Otth and Ursula Krayenbuehl (Tonnerre et al. 2019), to help with the work. It was also becoming more professional, as can be seen in UEFA's official documents, which now followed standardised formats (with precise headings and numbered pages) and systematically included drafting dates and signatures.

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[38] FIFA was approached but refused to host UEFA's headquarters. Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 24 April 1959. FIFAA, executive committee (1959).

[39] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 30 October 1959. Scanned document provided by UEFA's archivist, Nicolas Bouchet.

[40] 'Incroyable mais vrai. La France n'a pas voté pour la France!', *L'Équipe*, 15 December 1959.

During its first years, UEFA emerged as an organisation that facilitated discussion of issues relating to European football. In addition to launching competitions, the subjects addressed during executive committee meetings and the congresses included:

- international sports betting;
- drawing up a calendar of international matches;
- establishing a training camp for coaches;
- defining a category of matches for promising players;
- organising the broadcasting of matches.

Moreover, UEFA's annual congresses provided a forum for around 60 delegates representing approximately 30 member associations. Like FIFA's congresses, these gatherings were also social occasions that helped strengthen the ties between the leaders in attendance. For example, all the delegates at the 1955 congress in Vienna visited the grave of Joseph Gerö, UEFA's first vice-president, who had passed away at the end of 1954. This ceremony projected an image of a united European organisation that commemorated its dead, which was strongly reflected in the speech given beside Gerö's grave.[41] Finally, from the very beginning UEFA had helped national associations take part in international competitions, either by providing financial support for team travel, especially in the case of the International Youth Tournament, or by facilitating the organisation of matches by standing as guarantor for any eventual deficit (as in 1958, when Luxembourg, a small association with limited resources, hosted some games of the International Youth Tournament).[42] As part of its efforts to improve the standard of European football, the executive committee decided in March 1960 to set up a course for coaches and trainers, which would be overseen by executive committee member and former Hungarian national team coach Gustav Sebes.[43]

[41]The speech was found in the German national archives. It is noteworthy that there was a photo of Gerö in the Austrian FA's meeting room, where the congress was held. 'Ils n'ont pas voulu du Championnat d'Europe!…', *France Football*, 8 March 1955.

[42]'4e Assemblée générale de l'UEFA à Stockholm. 10. Règlement du tournoi international juniors'. UEFAA, RM00005987 (congress, 1958–extraordinary congress, 1959).

[43]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 10 March 1960. UEFAA, RM00000750 (executive committee, 10 March and 8 July 1960).

These actions had enabled UEFA, in just five years, to establish itself as a significant player in the development of European football. At the same time, it had shown itself willing to test the geographical boundaries of European football.

5.2 Where Do UEFA's Borders Lie?

Since the interwar period, the demarcation lines of European football had been set by the World Cup qualifiers (Vonnard 2018a, see Sect. 1.1). However, the creation of a European grouping gave this issue new importance, especially with respect to the position of Turkey, which had applied for UEFA membership in 1955. Turkey was keen to join UEFA because, compared with playing in Asia, where football was still relatively undeveloped, playing in Europe would help Turkey raise the standard of its football. In addition, Turkish football had historical links with many European countries and the country had regularly played teams from southeast Europe in the Balkan Cup since becoming affiliated to FIFA in 1923 (Breuil and Constantin 2015, p. 594). In the early 1950s, Turkey began playing countries in Western Europe, including West Germany, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, and was included in the European section of the World Cup qualifiers, while Turkey's youth team had competed in the 1953 and 1954 International Youth Tournaments. As a result, by September 1955 Kurt Gassmann was able to note that Turkey played 'most of [its] international matches […] against European associations'.[44] Finally, the structure of the Turkish FA and the decisions its leaders took, particularly with regard to legalising professional football (in 1952), were similar to those of its European counterparts.

These factors suggest that Turkey should be considered part of the 'Europe of football', an opinion shared by Özgehan Senyuva and Sevecen Tunç, for whom Turkey's being part of UEFA was 'a natural thing' (2015, p. 575). More broadly, Turkey's involvement in European football was consistent with the Turkish government's desire to be part of

[44]Report of the agenda of the executive committee meeting, 17–18 September 1955. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

the emerging Europe. To this end, Turkey had joined the Council of Europe in 1949 and aimed to participate in the development of economic Europe (Vaner 2001). UEFA formally discussed Turkey's affiliation at its first official congress in Vienna in 1955.

UEFA's executive committee debated Turkey's membership application on the eve of the congress and decided to ask the congress to express its view. The delegates voted in favour of Turkey's application, thereby enabling 'the Turkish Association to be provisionally registered in the European Grouping, pending FIFA's approval'.[45] The congress also approved affiliation requests from Iceland, Greece and Poland, thereby increasing UEFA's membership to 31 associations. Turkey's affiliation was a more complex issue, but the warm reception its request received from UEFA's member associations shows that numerous leaders already considered Turkey to be part of Europe, at least in football terms. UEFA's president, Ebbe Schwartz, opened the discussion by endorsing Turkey's affiliation and by reading a supporting letter from Yugoslavia's Mihailo Andrejevic and Greece's Constantin Constantaras. Their support was due both to the close footballing ties these countries had enjoyed with Turkey since the 1920s and to the favourable geopolitical context that had been generated when Turkey signed political-economic-military alliances with these two countries in August 1954 (Oikonomidis 2011, p. 506).

In their letter, Andrejevic and Constantaras pointed out that the Turkish FA's sporting activities had 'always been carried out within the framework of the European continent'.[46] This was also Turkey's main argument, whose football executives highlighted the fact that Turkey had never been part of Asian football. However, UEFA's member associations were not all completely in favour of Turkey's affiliation. Sir Stanley Rous briefly looked back on the debate in the book commemorating UEFA's 25th anniversary (1979, p. 79), but without identifying the dissenting voices and the nature of their objections. Nevertheless, most of UEFA's member associations supported Turkey and the congress recommended asking FIFA to endorse the Turkish FA's affiliation. A few months later,

[45]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 1 March 1955. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[46]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA congress, 2 March 1955. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

the Turkish FA's president, Hasan Polat, laid out his association's case in a letter to FIFA in which he highlighted UEFA's position that 'the Turkish FA should be considered an Association belonging to this Union'.[47] The ball was now in FIFA's court. Leaving the final decision to FIFA seems to have been a way for UEFA's member associations to dispose of a troublesome issue, especially as they had received another thorny request in the form of a membership application from the Israeli FA.[48]

Although the Israeli leaders put forward some of the same arguments as their Turkish counterparts, Israel's request was more difficult for FIFA to deal with[49] for three main reasons. First, Israel's position on the international scene was controversial and diplomatic relations with its Arab neighbours had been severed following the 1948–1949 Arab-Israeli war, which led to Israeli independence. Tensions with its neighbours were to peak once again in 1956 due to the outbreak of the Suez crisis. These events prevented Israel 'having sports relations with the closest Asian associations'.[50] Therefore, Israel did not apply to join UEFA purely for sporting reasons; it was also motivated by political factors that prevented it finding opponents among its immediate neighbours.

Second, there was also tension between Israel and certain European countries with which it did not have diplomatic relations, notably Germany. In addition, the United States' support for Israel automatically led the countries of the Eastern Bloc to oppose it (Claude 2008), which is why Israel tried to make as much political capital as it could from its two 1956 Olympic Games qualifying matches against the Soviet Union (Harrif 2009). These diplomatic issues raised the question of whether admitting Israel would create problems within UEFA. What is more, Israel was a very young country, having come into existence in 1948 only, so, even though it had quickly been integrated into the international sports

[47] Freely translated from the French. Letter from H. Polat to R.W. Seeldrayers, 14 September 1955. FIFAA, correspondence with Turkey (1932–1970).

[48] Minutes of the FIFA emergency committee, 9 May 1955. FIFAA, executive committee (1951–1957).

[49] Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 6–7 May 1955. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[50] Report of the agenda of the executive committee meeting, 17–18 September 1955. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

scene,[51] it did not have a long tradition of playing football in Europe. As a result, it could not rely on significant support from UEFA's member associations, unlike Turkey.

The third reason was the question of whether Israel could be considered part of Europe. Where Europe's boundaries lie is debatable, but the definition adopted by UEFA's executive committee stems from a nineteenth-century geographical conception[52] which places Israel firmly outside Europe. Turkey, however, can be considered to belong to Europe because (a small) part of the country—the area around Istanbul—is within Europe. Israel, on the other hand, has no physical connection with Europe and was therefore considered part of the Middle East. Consequently, Israel differed greatly from Turkey in terms of its political situation, its (limited) footballing ties with Europe and its geographical location, and therefore had a much weaker case for being granted UEFA membership.

On 14 August 1955, UEFA's executive committee finally ruled that it 'does not accept [Israel's application], but decided, before taking a final decision, to seek FIFA's opinion'.[53] The minutes of this meeting do not provide any justification for this decision, but FIFA's subsequent discussions with UEFA shed light on its position. FIFA's executive committee examined Israel's, Turkey's and Cyprus' (which had also applied to join UEFA) requests at its meeting of 17–18 September 1955. Gassmann, commenting on the meeting's agenda, felt it was time for the executive committee to make a decision on an issue that he saw as unequivocal: 'geographically and politically speaking, [these] associations belong de facto and *de jure* to the Asian continent. Both federations have their headquarters in the capital of their country. To consider them as European associations would be to deny the obvious'.[54]

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[51] Israel was officially recognised by FIFA and the IOC in the early 1950s (Alperovich 2012).

[52] On this matter, see the 2013 special issue of the journal *Monde(s)*, 'Inventions des continents', edited by Isabelle Surun and Hughes Tertrais. For a more general overview, see Grataloup (2009).

[53] Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 14 August 1955. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[54] Report of the agenda of the executive committee meeting, 17–18 September 1955. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

By 'geographically speaking', Gassmann was referring to the fact that both countries' associations had their headquarters outside Europe, as the Turkish FA was based in Ankara, which was considered to be part of Asia. What he meant by 'politically speaking' is less clear, although he was probably referring to Turkey having its seat of government in Ankara, and therefore in Asia. Gassmann had made this point to Henri Delaunay in April 1954, when he asked him if Turkey could be invited to the discussions on creating a European grouping.[55] Gassmann's position may also have been influenced by footballing considerations that he does not mention, as the newly created Asian confederation would benefit from having the particularly dynamic Turkish and Israeli FAs as members. Hence, FIFA may have felt that depriving the Asian confederation of these two associations would work against the goal of boosting the game in the Near and Middle East. However, UEFA's door was not entirely closed to Turkey, Israel and Cyprus, because FIFA's secretary general gave UEFA the right to include them in its competitions, if it so wished. FIFA was also prepared to issue special authorisations, for example, to take part in the International Youth Tournament—created in 1948 (see Sect. 2.1)—especially given the absence of such an event in Asia. As a final point, Gassmann noted that the distribution of qualifying groups points for the World Cup is based on economic and sporting considerations, as well as geographical location, thereby implying that these three countries could sometimes be included in the European zone.

FIFA's executive committee applied the criteria set out by Gassmann and decided not to 'comply with these requests since the countries of these three associations are undoubtedly part of the Asian continent'.[56] On 20 September 1955, Gassmann wrote to all three associations informing them that they were indisputably part of Asia.[57] UEFA's executive committee took note of FIFA's ruling at its meeting on 18

[55]Letter from K. Gassmann to H. Delaunay, 19 March 1954. FIFAA, correspondence with France (1937–1954).

[56]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 17 September 1955. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

[57]Letter from K. Gassmann to H. Polat, 20 September 1955. FIFAA, correspondence with Turkey (1932–1970). A similar letter dating from the same period can be found in the correspondence with the Israeli FA.

March 1956, where it agreed to follow FIFA's advice in the case of Israel, but to contest it in the cases of Cyprus and Turkey. To this end, it requested permission to put the issue to the next FIFA congress, which could then decide 'clearly on the situation of these countries vis-à-vis the European Union'.[58] This request confirms that UEFA saw a big difference between Turkey and Israel, a view that was reiterated at the 1956 UEFA by a member of the Portuguese delegation, Joao Figueira, and which appears to have been shared by the vast majority of Europe's football executives. Figueira's argument that the Turkish FA should be able to join the confederation of its choosing because the country spans two continents, led UEFA's president and secretary general to propose 'that the European Union confirm its recognition of Turkey's national association, [so] this association can enjoy all its rights as a UEFA member'.[59] However, this was not enough to persuade FIFA to change its stance.

The Turkish FA tried to negate FIFA's position by actively participating in UEFA's activities, regularly attending its congress and, from 1958–1959, sending its national champion to take part in the Champions Clubs' Cup, which had been created in 1955. Similarly, Turkey's national team was one of the 17 teams that took part in the first edition of the European Cup of Nations, in 1958. The following year, FIFA's executive committee finally accepted the Turkish FA's request to be included in the European qualifying zone for the 1962 World Cup. Thus, Turkey had become a 'virtual member' of UEFA, to adopt the expression Peter Beck used to describe the British associations' position vis-à-vis FIFA in the 1930s (2000).

According to Senyuva and Tunç (2015, p. 575), the main opponent of Turkey's accession to UEFA was Gassmann, FIFA's secretary general. This being said, although Gassmann was indeed reluctant to see Turkey become part of UEFA, the decisive factor appears to have been FIFA's conception of Europe's boundaries, rather than Gassmann's personal point of view, as the Turkish FA was allowed to join UEFA when it

[58]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 18 March 1956, n.d. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[59]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA congress, 8 June 1956. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1994).

moved its headquarters from Ankara to Istanbul in 1962.[60] On the contrary, no progress was made in the case of Israel. FIFA's executive committee refused to consider a new request from the Israeli FA in 1958, as it arrived after the statutory deadline for inclusion on the congress agenda. Consequently, Israel continued to be considered part of Asia (Dietschy 2020b, p. 32). Two years later, it was UEFA's executive committee that refused Israel's request to include the winner of its national championship in the Champion Clubs' Cup, again on the grounds of the country's 'geographical situation'.[61]

Israel's and Turkey's[62] requests are interesting because they throw light on UEFA's conception of the 'Europe of football', which was mainly based on a nineteenth-century geographical definition of Europe (Pécout 2004). This conception of Europe's borders left a certain amount of leeway for incorporating Turkey into Europe, but it made it much more difficult to consider Israel a European country. It was within this territory that European football developed and that UEFA began setting up competitions, starting with a club tournament: the European Champion Clubs' Cup.

5.3 Creating Competitions for Clubs

UEFA's former deputy secretary general, Markus Studer, wrote in 1998 that UEFA had been founded to organise competitions (1998, p. 98). However, setting up an international sport organisation does not automatically lead to the creation of competitions. FIFA, for example, waited almost 25 years before organising its own tournament (Eisenberg et al. 2004; Dietschy 2010, see Chapter 2). At UEFA, only one of the six goals in the draft statutes presented to its first congress, in Vienna, explicitly

[60] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 8–9 February 1962. FIFAA, executive committee (1962).

[61] Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 10 March 1960. UEFAA, RM00000750 (executive committee, 10 March and 8 July 1960).

[62] To which must be added Cyprus, which was in a similar position to Turkey. The Cypriot FA was eventually admitted to UEFA in 1962. Israël was finally accepted as UEFA member in 1991.

addressed competitions, stating that UEFA reserved the right 'to organise at its convenience and at least every four years a European Championship for which [UEFA] alone will be competent to set the rules and conditions'.[63] The congress delegates even went as far as to reject the motion to create a European Cup of Nations, thereby showing that launching competitions was not at all a priority for them (see Sect. 5.4). However, Markus Studer's comment is not entirely unfounded, because organising competitions very quickly became UEFA's main focus. What was the reason for this shift?

Pan-European sports competitions were quite rare during the first half of the twentieth century. In fact, the only sports to set up European championships before World War II were boxing (launched in 1924) (Loudcher and Day 2013) and athletics (launched in 1934) (Roger and Terret 2012). This started to change in the mid-1950s, when many sports began discussing projects for new European competitions (Dufraisse et al. 2019). Basketball, for example, created an inter-city cup.[64] Football was a major contributor to this dynamic, with several actors (heads of national associations, club executives, journalists) proposing major competitions, especially for clubs. Two ambitious projects were launched almost simultaneously in the mid-1950s: the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup and a European cup for clubs.

The Inter-Cities Fairs Cup, a tournament between 'scratch teams' representing cities which had hosted major international fairs, was the brainchild of Barassi, Rous and Thommen, who conceived the event as a way of building new synergies between European football and business (Vonnard 2019a, pp. 1032–1033). Rous noted in his memoirs that the event was also intended to foster a new spirit of cooperation in the post-war period, through football's ability to overcome old rivalries and create new friendships (1978, p. 145).

The Inter-Cities Fairs Cup was officially launched on 4 June 1955 with a match between Basel XI and London XI. Twelve teams took part: Basel XI, FC Barcelona, Birmingham City, Cologne XI, Frankfurt XI, Leipzig

[63] Freely translated from the French. 'Union des associations européenne de football. Projet de statuts', 18 February 1955. FIFAA, correspondence with UEFA (1955–1958).

[64] 'La Coupe d'Europe intervilles de jeu à sept verra le jour ce soir', *L'Équipe*, 19 October 1956. On the development of basketball in Europe, see Archambault et al. (2015).

XI, London XI, FC Lausanne-sport, Inter Milan, Staevnet, Vienna XI and Zagreb XI.[65] Difficulties in scheduling matches led to this first tournament taking three years to complete, but it was still a success.[66] As an indication of its importance, the tournaments' annual congress brought together numerous national association leaders and influential European clubs. However, Barassi, Rous and Thommen knew the football world well enough to realise the importance of not stepping on the toes of the organisations in charge of European football (see Chapter 2), primarily FIFA, but also the young UEFA. One way they did this was by involving only city teams, whose lack of official status meant they did not come under the auspices of national and international football associations.

The promoters of the second project, a European cup for clubs, did not take this precaution. It was a far more ambitious proposal in terms of the number of teams involved, as the aim was to create a European cup between 16 clubs from 16 different countries. The competition was first mooted on 15 December 1954, by Gabriel Hanot, a senior football journalist at *L'Équipe*.[67] The history of the European Cup has been studied in great detail by some scholars (see notably Vonnard 2012 and for a summary see Vonnard 2014), so I will concentrate on UEFA's takeover of the project rather than describe the whole process involved in launch the competition.

Hanot's idea combined the new possibilities offered by air travel and by the introduction of floodlighting into stadiums, which meant midweek evening matches could be played throughout the year. His proposal would also help meet both the clubs' need for new sources of revenues in order to finance professional football and the sports press's eagerness for new events to cover (Montérémal 2007). As a result, he quickly obtained

[65] Cologne and Vienna cancelled their participation. Similarly, contrary to the organisers' initial wishes, some established clubs—such as FC Barcelona and Lausanne-sport—took part in the tournament.

[66] According to UEFA, average attendance at the matches was 20,000. *UEFA secretary general's report (1954–1955)*. UEFAA, RM00000917 (secretary général report, 1954–1985).

[67] 'Non, Wolverhampton n'est pas encore le "champion du monde des club"!' *L'Équipe*, 15 December 1954.

support from several major European clubs and influential sports newspapers (*Bola* in Portugal, *La Gazzetta dello Sport* in Italy, *Les Sports* in Belgium, *Marca* in Spain).

Hanot and his fellow *L'Équipe* journalist, Jacques Ferran, drafted an initial set of rules and then presented the project to UEFA's congress in March 1955. As for the Cup of Nations, the delegates rejected the idea, but the two journalists were undeterred. Hanot and Ferran's next step was to invite Europe's most prestigious clubs to a two-day meeting in Paris. Fifteen clubs attended the meeting (Ferran 1965),[68] where they drafted a set of regulations for an inter-club competition that would take place in September, and appointed an organising committee for the event, headed by Real Madrid's chairman, Santiago Bernabeu, and Gustav Sebes, from Hungary, who represented Budapest's two clubs: Honved and Voros Lobogos.[69] The clubs also decided who would play who in the first round of the tournament, thereby presenting UEFA with a fait accompli. UEFA's secretary general, Henri Delaunay, realised that UEFA would have to react, as he explained in a letter to FIFA's new president, Rodolphe Seeldrayers:

> If clubs, newspapers, and even national or professional leagues, can bypass the control and authority of the national associations, of FIFA and possibly of the statutory groups [Europe] has set up, the very existence of national associations may be put at risk, especially when it comes to such [a competition].[70]

In May 1955, UEFA's executive committee asked its FIFA counterpart for permission to take over the event and for the title 'Europe' to be

[68] Anderlecht (Belgium), Partizan Belgrade (Yugoslavia), Chelsea (England), FC Copenhagen (Denmark), Djugaarden (Sweden), Rot Weiss Essen (Germany), Servette Genève (Switzerland), Holland Sport (Netherlands), Sporting Lisbon (Portugal), Real Madrid (Spain), AC Milan (Italy), Stade de Reims (France), Saarbrücken (Saarland), Rapid Vienna (Austria) and Voros Lobogos (Hungary).

[69] 'Projet d'une Coupe d'Europe proposé par le journal *L'Équipe* et d'autres journaux européens'. FIFAA, correspondance with UEFA (1955–1958).

[70] Freely translated from the French. Letter from H. Delaunay to R.W. Seeldrayers, 28 April. FFAA, folder: Euro 60.

reserved for UEFA.[71] Claiming the exclusive right to include the word 'Europe' in a tournament name was a strong sign that UEFA wanted to exert a monopoly over European football. FIFA's executive committee approved UEFA's request and set three conditions for the event: clubs must gain their national association's consent before taking part; the word 'Europe' should be used only for matches involving national teams[72]; UEFA must manage the competition.

As soon as the committee set up by the clubs and journalists handed over the reins, on June 1955, UEFA's executive committee asserted its authority by renaming the event the European Champion Clubs' Cup. Although there was not enough time before the competition's first edition, scheduled for the coming September, to change the clubs involved, which had been chosen by *L'Équipe*'s journalists, it was decided that future editions of the tournament would be between the national champions of all UEFA's member associations.

Taking over the Champion Clubs' Cup was crucial to UEFA's development for a number of reasons (Vonnard 2016). First, it gave UEFA a new task: organising the first pan-European football tournament. FIFA's executive committee approved UEFA's rules for the competition at its meeting of 17–18 September 1955. It also asked UEFA to take over the Fairs Cup, whose first edition was already underway.[73] This request shows that UEFA was beginning to be seen as the main organiser of European competitions. Running the Champion Clubs' Cup not only gave greater weight to leading members of UEFA's executive committee, such as Crahay, Delaunay and Schwartz, who had campaigned for UEFA to set up competitions (especially the European Cup of Nations), it also increased UEFA's legitimacy with its member associations. As a result, associations that had not been represented at the meeting in Paris called by the Cup's initiators, Hanot and Ferran, quickly put forward clubs from their countries to take part in the competition. This was

[71] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 6–7 May 1955. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[72] Minutes of the FIFA emergency committee, 9[8] May 1955. FIFAA, emergency committee (1951–1957).

[73] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 17 September 1955. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

the case for CNAD Sofia (Bulgaria), Dudelange (Luxembourg), Gwardia Warsaw (Poland), Dinamo Bucharest (Romania) and Spartak Sokolovo Prague (Czechoslovakia), as well as Galatasaray Istanbul, even though its national association (Turkey) was not a UEFA member (see Sect. 5.2).[74]

Second, the Champion Clubs' Cup—whose successful first edition ensured it continued the following year—helped finance UEFA's activities, as the new rules introduced for the competition's second edition, in 1956–1957, allocated 1% of the gross revenue from every match and 5% of the gross revenue from the final to UEFA.[75] In his 1954–1955 report, UEFA's secretary general noted to his satisfaction that more than 800,000 spectators attended the 29 Champion Clubs' Cup matches, that is, an average of 28,000 spectators per match.[76] Demand for tickets for important matches far exceeded the capacity of the stadiums, as is illustrated by the 1956–1957 quarter-final between CDNA Sofia and Red Star Belgrade, when the Bulgarian club received 400,000 ticket requests for the 40,000 places available in its stadium.[77] According to *France Football*, more than two million spectators attended Champion Clubs' Cup matches during the 1959–1960 season, an average of 41,000 spectators per match. Only six matches were played in front of less than 10,000 spectators, allowing the article to conclude: 'everywhere, now [the Champion Clubs' Cup] is known and prized. It attracts crowds everywhere it goes'.[78] The additional revenues UEFA earned from the competition enabled it to expand its activities, especially in the field of training (for referees and coaches), in the late 1950s and beyond.

The third contribution resulted from the fact that administering the Champion Clubs' Cup forced UEFA to expand its structure. The competition's first edition had been organised by UEFA's executive committee, but it quickly became apparent that this task would be better

[74] Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 17 July 1955. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[75] Regulations of the ECCC [season 1956–1957], art. 16. UEFAA, RM0005986 (founding congress, 1954. I–III ordinary congress, 1955–1957).

[76] UEFA secretary general's report 1954–1955. UEFAA, RM00000917 (secretary general report, 1954–1985).

[77] 'Bojkov s'arrache les cheveux et pleure: Sofia ne jouera pas les demi-finales!' *France Football*, 26 February 1957.

[78] 'La balle au bond. Pas sympathique', *France Football*, 5 July 1960.

accomplished by a separate body. Consequently, a permanent commission was set up to organise the tournament, starting with the second edition, in 1956–1957. This was one of UEFA's first permanent commissions. Interestingly, its members were all men who were active in UEFA, namely Crahay, Sir George Graham and Augustin Pujol. The commission played a mostly technical and administrative role, conducting draws for matches, deciding on the match schedule and the dates and locations of the finals, and answering questions from the clubs. In parallel with establishing this body, the competition regulations were substantially revised and set out in 16 articles covering participants' rights and obligations, the competition's seasonal limits and recommendations on the refereeing of matches.

The Champion Clubs' Cup not only strengthened UEFA's existence, it marked a wider turning point in the history of European football, as it was the first truly pan-European club competition (Vonnard 2019a). Although other large, supranational tournaments existed before the Champion Clubs' Cup (Mittag 2007), most notably the Mitropa Cup (Quin 2016), created in the 1920s, the Champion Clubs' Cup was different in three significant ways. Most importantly, perhaps, it involved many more countries than previous competitions. At the height of its popularity, in the mid-1930s, the Mitropa Cup, involved clubs from just half a dozen countries,[79] which played a total of 32 matches. In contrast, the first edition of the Champion Clubs' Cup was contested by 16 clubs from 16 countries and the competition expanded rapidly: 22 clubs (all national champions) took part in the 1956–1957 edition and almost 30 national associations had teams registered for the competition at the end of the decade. This meant organising a large number of matches (55 during the 1958–1959 season), but it also fostered new exchanges between Europe's football associations.

The second major difference concerned the competition timetable. Champion Clubs' Cup matches were held throughout the football year, whereas Mitropa Cup games were concentrated into a four-to-five month

[79]The tournament was relaunched in 1955 but remained a secondary tournament, played in the summer, until it was abolished in the early 1990s.

period. Holding matches during the same period as the domestic championships was a novelty introduced by the Champion Clubs' Cup. In fact, the new competition helped boost the importance of the domestic championships because becoming national champion meant qualifying for the 'European Cup', which was rapidly gaining in popularity and receiving wide coverage in both the sports and generalist press. Many sports newspapers began creating special European Cup sections containing analyses of matches, sometimes several weeks before they were played. To this end, journalists would often use performances in recent domestic league matches to assess the current form of an opposing club.[80]

Finally, the Champion Clubs' Cup was open only to a country's national champion, so the same teams rarely featured in consecutive editions of the competition. For example, only seven of the twenty-six teams that took part in the 1958–1959 competition had competed in a previous edition of the tournament. This 'turnover' of clubs allowed new connections to be built across all the different sectors of Europe's football community, partly because of the number of people who accompanied teams to away matches. In fact, teams travelling to European matches generally had a large entourage of technical staff, club executives, national association members and journalists from the local and national press. This is why when the plane carrying the Manchester United team home from a match in Belgrade crashed near Munich in 1958 (Gaylor 2008), the victims included three members of the club's staff and eight journalists (from the local and national press), as well as eight players. Ties with other countries were also increased by the tendency for clubs to use their trips abroad to schedule other matches. For example, when the Hungarian team Voros Lobogos travelled to France in December 1955 for a match against Stade de Reims, the club's executives also scheduled three friendly games, against Grenoble and Nice, a week after the European Champions Clubs' Cup game, and against Lyon in January 1956, although this final match meant doing another trip to France.[81]

[80]Numerous examples of this can be found in *La Semaine Sportive* between the 1950s and the 1970s.

[81]'Voros Lobogos jouera à Grenoble le 19 décembre à Nice, le 22', *L'Équipe*, 14 December 1955.

Hence, the Champion Clubs' Cup was a true break with pre-existing supranational tournaments and marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of European competitions. By making success in a club's national championship the passport to a prestigious European competition, it also gave a boost to domestic football. As such, a European-level change had a significant impact on the development of football at the national level.

The success of the Champion Clubs' Cup encouraged UEFA to see it as the first step in establishing other European competitions. Thus, on 18 March 1956, its executive committee 'took note of a proposal by Dr Frey to create a similar event to the European Champion's Cup, to be played among the winners of national cups'.[82] Although no decision was taken on this matter, the proposal was discussed. The French journalist Gabriel Hanot was highly enthusiastic about the idea and used his coverage of UEFA's annual congress in Lisbon, in June 1956, to support it: '*L'Équipe* will encourage [UEFA's leaders], as it did for the [European champions clubs' cup]'.[83] *L'Équipe*'s influence should not be underestimated because the paper had already contributed greatly to the launch of the Champion Clubs' Cup. In fact, *L'Équipe* was keen to both foster sporting exchanges across Europe and develop its own network of journalists, which is why its journalists had actively contributed to creating a European club competition in basketball in October of that year.[84]

Nevertheless, the idea of a national cup winner's cup lay dormant until November 1957, when Spanish, Augustin Pujol, put a detailed proposal to his colleagues on UEFA's executive committee. Pujol believed 'this competition would interest the winners of the English, Spanish, French and Portuguese cups this year'.[85] The executive committee finally gave its blessing to a revised proposal submitted by Pujol just before the start of

[82]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 18 March 1956, UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959). National cups are knock-out tournaments played in parallel with a country's championship and include both elite and amateur clubs. This type of competition did not exist in every European country at this time.

[83]Freely translated from the French. 'À Lisbonne, UEFA et FIFA prêtes à siéger', *L'Équipe*, 8 June 1956.

[84]'La Coupe d'Europe intervilles de jeu à sept verra le jour ce soir', *L'Équipe*, 19 October 1956.

[85]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 7–8 November 1957. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

the 1958 annual congress and decided 'to form a committee, composed of Crahay, Graham, Frey and Pujol, to draw up the regulations, which would be submitted for approval to the next Congress, with the aim of implementing it for the 1959-1960 season'.[86]

When it proved too late to present the project to the 1958 congress, the executive committee launched a new consultation process with all of UEFA member associations and agreed 'to follow up on the study of the matter, if at least ten of them express an interest in the project'.[87] In March 1959, the executive committee discussed the results of the consultation, which were:

Associations refusing to participate: Albania, Belgium, Denmark, England, Iceland, Netherlands, Soviet Union, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and West Germany;
Associations not yet wishing to answer: France, Italy, Luxembourg and Northern Ireland;
Associations agreeing to participate: Austria, East Germany, Ireland, Romania, Scotland and Turkey.

Twenty-one of UEFA's thirty-one members replied to the consultation, which shows that most of Europe's national associations took UEFA's communications seriously. However, there was less support for the competition than the executive committee had expected, because 11 associations were unwilling to enter teams in the competition. And because it had been agreed that the competition would go ahead only if 10 associations or more were in favour, the executive committee did not take the idea forward.

The cup winners' cup project is interesting because it shows both the executive committee's desire to expand UEFA's activities and some associations' reluctance to move forward too quickly, despite the success of the Champion Clubs' Cup in increasing exchanges in European football.

[86]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA congress, 2–3 June 1958. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[87]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 28 October 1958. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

This contrast was made even clearer by the difficult birth of the European Cup of Nations.

5.4 The Difficult Road Towards a European Cup of Nations

In a paper published in 2012, Fabien Archambault (2012) highlighted the difficulties involved in developing the 'Europe du football' during the 1950s. The information presented in the previous paragraphs suggests a more nuanced picture. However, there was one issue for which Archambault's conclusion was justified: the launch of a European cup for nations.

Following the 1955 congress' refusal to support a European competition for national teams, the executive committee set up a special commission to examine the issue in greater detail.[88] Despite the commission's advances, UEFA's 1956 congress, in Lisbon, rejected the idea of creating such a competition[89] mainly due to 'differences of opinion on where football's geographical boundaries lie, the turbulence of European geopolitics and the rivalries dividing Europe's football leaders' (freely translated from the French, Dietschy 2017, p. 26). However, the congress asked the special commission to continue its work and even strengthened it by expanding it from three members to five.

It was hoped that the enlarged commission would encompass the opinions of all the different forces within UEFA, which could then work together to find a compromise that would enable the competition to go ahead. One of the new members was Poland's Lyzek Rylski, who joined Hungary's Gustav Sebes as a second representative of the Soviet bloc. The presence of two Eastern Europeans beside three Western Europeans reflects the rapprochement between East and West that had begun following Stalin's death. This process was given a boost in February 1956, when the Soviet Communist Party's first secretary published

[88] For example, a meeting was held in Bologna in February 1956.

[89] Minutes of the UEFA congress, 8 June 1956. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1994).

the 'Khrushchev Report', in which he recognised the crimes committed during Stalin's reign. This acknowledgement helped open the way for significant discussions between the leaders of the Eastern and Western blocs, ensuring that 1956 would be an 'important date in European history' (Rémond 2010, p. 351). The other new member of the commission was Spain's Augustin, who had shown his support for UEFA's expansion at the 1956 congress by backing both the idea of employing a full-time secretary general[90] and the proposal to create a cup winners' cup. The remaining two members of the commission were Austria's Alfred Frey, who was also in favour of creating a cup winners' cup, and Greece's Constantin Constantaras.

The congress ensured the different forces within UEFA were represented on the commission in order to make sure the discussions progressed as smoothly as possible. They also chose representatives from national associations that believed UEFA should expand. In this respect, it is interesting to note that they were from countries which were generally absent from the European organisations that had emerged since the early 1950s. For example, the Franco regime became increasingly active in international sport, especially basketball and football, in the second half of the 1950s (Simón 2015a). Was this desire to become involved in sport a way for the authoritarian regimes of countries such as Spain and the Soviet Union to avoid being excluded from European cooperation projects?[91]

In addition to these internal UEFA decisions, influential voices in European football were advocating the creation of a tournament for European national teams and putting pressure on UEFA's elite to make a final decision. Once again, Gabriel Hanot and Jacques Ferran were two of the competition's greatest proponents and readily used the pages of *L'Équipe* to push UEFA on the issue. Reporting from the 1956 Lisbon congress, Hanot wrote that the delegates had decided to create a European Cup of Nations[92] when they had, in fact, made no such decision.

[90]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 8 June 1958. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[91]As happened inside the European Documentation and Information Centre (Grossmann 2012). For the Soviet regime, see Rey (2005).

[92]'Lisbonne, confluent du football européen et mondial', *L'Équipe*, 9–10 June 1956.

A few months after the congress, Jacques Ferran, who had written a long series of articles aimed at trying to move the matter forward,[93] declared that the absence of a European competition involving all nations was a threat to European football's prestige. He added: 'the simplest, most obvious ideas encounter a thousand unexpected obstacles when they are confronted with the men responsible for putting them into practice. Since 1954, UEFA has been wavering, dithering and beating around the bush'.[94] Ferran was not, of course, an entirely disinterested observer, as a new competition would mean more news and therefore more sales for the newspaper. However, Ferran was also showing support for the UEFA secretary general, Pierre Delaunay, who had taken over his father's torch within UEFA but was struggling to bring the tournament into being.

The expanded study commission's discussions resulted in a new version of the tournament proposal, which was sent to the national associations on 25 April 1957. In the covering letter, Pierre Delaunay explained that the members of the commission had tried to address potential criticisms, in particular by 'reducing to a minimum the number of matches likely to be played by the countries involved, in order not to prejudice the establishment of their own international calendar'.[95] The new proposal also provided more details on how revenues from the competition would be shared.

The commission's proposal addressed the main concerns that had been raised over the past two years by limiting the time frame for the tournament, explaining how revenues would be distributed between the various bodies involved (UEFA, FIFA, national associations), and ensuring the tournament's independence from the World Cup. Furthermore, a few hours before the 1957 congress opened, UEFA's executive committee responded to a last-minute remark from the European members of FIFA's executive committee by adding an amendment to Article 1 of the proposal stating that the competition will not take place until FIFA's

[93] In March 1955, he had already highlighted the lack of development in European football (compared with South America): 'Pauvre vieille Europe, comme tu retardes!', 'Ils n'ont pas voulu du Championnat d'Europe!…', *France Football*, 8 March 1955.

[94] Freely translated from the French. 'L'Allemagne contre l'Europe', *L'Équipe*, 3 March 1957.

[95] Freely translated from the French. Letter from P. Delaunay to UEFA's member associations, 25 April 1957. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

executive committee has given its approval.[96] Despite the tournament supporter's measured proposals and willingness to compromise, there was still a lot of resistance to the proposal, especially from members of FIFA's executive committee. Barassi (and Rous), for example, expressed deep concerns that UEFA was trying to move too quickly and that the Cup of Nations would be a competition too many in an already crowded calendar. They even claimed that it could jeopardise friendly matches, which were very important sources of revenue for the national associations.[97]

Despite these reservations, the 1957 congress approved the proposal to set up a European Cup of Nations by 15 votes to 7, with 4 abstentions.[98] Most of the associations agreed on the need for further work to produce a detailed and comprehensive proposal for discussion and final approval at the next congress. Consequently, the competition's supporters spent the next year developing the project and convincing as many associations as possible to participate in the event. The 1958 congress would be the moment of truth: if a majority of the associations approved the proposals, the competition would go ahead; if not, the idea would be abandoned.

The debate was heated, but, thanks to the study commission's efforts, 17 associations agreed to take part in the competition and the tournament could be launched. But this did not stop the tournament's fiercest opponents, led by Barassi, Rous and Thommen, trying to postpone it once again, contending that further deliberation was needed. They even went as far as to suggest that UEFA was appropriating the national associations' right to choose their opponents for international matches. Nevertheless, these attempts to obstruct the competition failed, and the congress gave it its approval. Even the Soviet bloc had come to fully embrace the competition in an apparent instance of the Soviet Union applying its new political doctrine of 'peaceful coexistence' to football. Indeed, the country's policy was no longer to bring down capitalism

[96]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 26–27 June 1957. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[97]A document containing all the speeches is conserved in UEFA's archives. 'Projet de création d'une Coupe d'Europe des Nations (présenté par MM. Augustin Pujol et Pierre Delaunay)'. UEFAA, RM00005986 (founding congress, 1954–ordinary congress, 1955–1957).

[98]Minutes of the UEFA congress, 28–29 June 1957. UEFAA, RM00005984 (congress, 1954–1994).

but to prove the superiority of communism in all areas, including sport. Hence, the USSR's leaders were now keen to see the country and its satellites compete in major sports competitions and contribute to the work of international sports organisations (Dufraisse 2020). The European Cup of Nations was an opportunity to implement this policy because it would allow Soviet bloc countries to play those of the capitalist bloc. And, after winning gold at the 1956 Olympic Games and reaching the quarter-finals of the 1958 World Cup, the Soviet regime was confident it had a team capable of demonstrating the superiority of the communist system (Edelman 1993, pp. 128–133).

The draw for the first edition of the Cup of Nations was held just a few hours after the congress ended, partly as a way of ensuring there was no backtracking on the decision to launch the tournament and thereby avoid possible conflicts within UEFA, but also because the competition was due to start the following month. The 17 countries that went into the draw were (in alphabetical order): Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, East Germany, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Soviet Union, Spain, Turkey and Yugoslavia.

It is noteworthy that Spain, which had strongly supported the project, and France and Denmark, the home countries of UEFA's secretary general and president, took part in the competition, whereas the British, West German and Italian associations, which had fiercely opposed the competition, were absent, as were several small but influential European footballing nations, such as Belgium, Sweden and Switzerland. Consequently, the tournament would not have been able to go ahead without the participation of all eight Soviet bloc countries (including Yugoslavia).

The new competition continued and expanded the exchanges within European football that had begun during the interwar period, as the first rounds of the inaugural European Cup of Nations included matches between countries that had never played each other before, such as Spain versus Poland, and whose governments were at the opposite ends of the political spectrum—fascist Spain and communist Poland. Similarly, East Germany played Portugal for the first time, and the matches between Czechoslovakia and Ireland and between Austria and Norway were only the second time these countries had met in football history. However, the first edition of the tournament saw some problems.

On the hand, all the political barriers were not open so easily as illustrated the refusal of Spain to play against Soviet Union in the quarter of final (see Sect. 6.1).

On the other hand, attendances at the semi-finals and final, which were played in France in early July, were lower than hoped for, probably because the timing was far from ideal. This period, which was apparently chosen at the insistence of the Soviet bloc countries, not only clashed with another extremely popular competition, the Tour de France, it meant the matches took place at the end of the increasingly long domestic season, which ended in the middle of June and which was usually followed by friendly club matches. As a result, it was difficult for the teams to prepare properly and some of them were unable to field their best players.[99] Both these factors undoubtedly dented the competition's popularity with the public. Although the two semi-finals attracted 30,000 and 28,000 spectators, only 18,000 people braved the rain to watch the final between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia at the Parc des Princes in Paris.[100]

Nevertheless, by the early 1960s, the idea of European competitions had been accepted by most of the European football community, including the national association leaders who had initially opposed them. The undeniable success of the Champion Clubs' Cup paved the way for the creation of the European Cup Winners' Cup in 1961, while the vast majority of UEFA's member associations took part in the second edition of the European Cup of Nations. Even the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup, which remained outside UEFA's control, grew substantially, leading to discussions within UEFA as to whether it should gather the competition into its fold (see Sect. 8.2).

Creating and organising these competitions strengthened UEFA's position and fostered exchanges within the European football community.

[99]This was the case for the French team, which could not count on its best players (notably Raymond Kopa, who was injured and had to leave the tournament). 'France football répond aux questions que vous vous posez à propos de la Coupe d'Europe des nations', *France Football*, 5 July 1960.

[100]The rather low attendance may have also been partly due to the match being broadcast live on television and the bad weather. The Parc des Princes could hold up to 45,000 spectators. 'La Coupe d'Europe sous tous ses aspects', *France Football*, 12 July 1960.

They also increased the executive committee's desire to develop numerous aspects of European football, a goal that would not have appeared very realistic at the start given the political divisions between UEFA's member countries.

6

Managing the Cold War and Building Europe

As an organisation made up of national associations from both sides of the Iron Curtain, UEFA was particularly vulnerable to the vagaries of international politics. Consequently, in order to achieve one of its supporters' main goals, that is, to establish UEFA's authority over European football, UEFA's leaders responded to these challenges by adopting similar strategies to those devised by FIFA in the 1930s.

But, during UEFA's first few years, its leaders also had to negotiate the confederation's independence from FIFA and face up to other actors who wanted to develop European football. The actions and initiatives UEFA's main leaders employed to accomplish these aims during UEFA's first few decades produced an organisation whose architecture and prerogatives were truly unique compared with the other European bodies created at around the same time.

P. Vonnard, *Creating a United Europe of Football*,
Football Research in an Enlarged Europe,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42343-8_6

6.1 Managing the Cold War Context

The delegates who gathered in Basel on 15 June 1954 for UEFA's (then known as the Group of European Football Associations) constitutive assembly represented football associations from both sides of the Iron Curtain (see Sect. 5.1), as the map below shows (Fig. 6.1).

Fig. 6.1 European countries that attended the constitutive assembly of the Group of European Football Associations (*Note* In grey, countries which sent delegates to the congress. *Source* Map based on the Minutes of the Group of European Football Associations constitutive assembly, 22 June 1954)

Hence, the body they founded was pan-European, unlike most other European organisations that came into being at this time in fields such as:

– *economy*, e.g.: European Coal and Steel Community and European Economic Free Trade Association;
– *culture*, e.g.: European Centre for Culture (in Geneva), European Community of Writers and European Society of Culture;
– *technology*, e.g.: European Broadcasting Union and European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations;
– *science*, e.g.: European Organization for Nuclear Research.

In fact, European bodies were established in almost every field, a process Robert Frank called 'Europe-organisation' (2004, pp. 180–181), but the process was confined mostly to Western Europe and very rarely involved countries to the east of the Iron Curtain.

The supporters of a pan-European football confederation saw their project as a way of building a common understanding that would enable football to develop throughout Europe. Although this desire was based on, and probably facilitated by, Europe's long history of football exchanges (Quin 2012; Dietschy 2015; Vonnard et al. 2016; Vonnard 2018a, see Part I),[1] bringing together East and West within a single body would not be easy, because it would require reconciling vastly different views on many aspects of football[2] and overcoming the deep political divisions that had led some potential member countries to break off both diplomatic and sporting relations. This was the case for Spain/Portugal and the countries of the Soviet bloc and for the two Germanys. The project's supporters, led by Ottorino Barassi, José Crahay, Henri Delaunay, Karel Lotsy, Stanley Rous, Ebbe Schwartz and Ernst Thommen, had to deploy all their diplomatic skills and experience to overcome these obstacles (Vonnard 2017). A recurring aspect of their arguments was the

[1] In her study of the International Labor Organisation, Sandrine Kott (2011a) showed that relationships built up between the two world wars helped overcome the divisions caused by the Cold War.

[2] For example, on professionalism, youth football, media relations, etc.

idea of a 'United Europe',[3] which Thommen celebrated in his opening address to the constitutive assembly.

In addition, Barassi, who chaired the assembly, stressed the need to take into account the special nature of the meeting when deciding whether an absent association could be represented by another association. For example, the Romanian FA was unable to send a representative to the meeting because the Swiss embassy in Bucharest refused to issue the necessary visa. As a result, the Romanians filed an official request for Czechoslovakia to be allowed to represent its interests. Barassi supported Romania's request but felt constrained to point out that it was contrary to FIFA's statutes. After a lengthy discussion, the assembly voted, by 14 votes to 10, with 2 abstentions, to allow Romania votes to be transferred to another association except in the election of Europe's members to FIFA's executive committee. Each association's position in this close-run decision was not recorded, but it is likely that votes were split along the Cold War dividing line between East and West. This hypothesis is supported by the debate over Stanley Rous's claim he had been requested to represent the absent Welsh FA. Thommen and Barassi supported Wales' request, seeing it as similar to Romania's, but the Eastern bloc associations opposed it. According to the Soviet delegate, the two cases were different because Wales, unlike Romania, had not filed an official request. The Eastern bloc's objections were probably also a reaction to the ten votes cast against Romania's request. Despite these objections, and undoubtedly as a way of demonstrating equality of treatment and thereby preventing the conflict spreading, Barassi decided to put Rous' request to a vote. This time, the motion was passed by 12 votes to 9, with 4 abstentions. These two votes highlighted the divisions between East and West and their potential to prevent the group from finding a consensus. Barassi, Rous and Thommen realised that managing this situation would require a certain flexibility in interpreting FIFA's regulations, which would need to be adapted to Europe's political context.

Similar divisions emerged during the discussions surrounding the election of representatives to sit on FIFA's executive committee, which is

[3]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the constitutive assembly, 22 June 1954. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

one of UEFA's main tasks and one of the assembly's most important functions. For the two FIFA vice-presidencies in their remit, the delegates chose continuity by electing Thommen and Lotsy, who had been FIFA vice-presidents since 1934 and 1950, respectively. As well-respected members of FIFA's governing elite, they were considered the best candidates to represent Europe's interests within the world governing body; however, they were also chosen because they were from small countries. In fact, the strategy of attributing key positions to leaders from small countries, such as Belgium, Switzerland and the Netherlands, has frequently been used as a buffer to moderate the ambitions of larger powers (Fleury 2002).[4] The four remaining executive committee seats were attributed to Yugoslavia's Mihailo Andrejevic (20 votes), Italy's Ottorino Barassi (18 votes), Sweden's Lang (15 votes) and France's Marcel Lafarge, who gained his seat after a second-round runoff against Hungary's Gustav Sebes. The choice of Barassi, who had been a member of FIFA's executive committee since 1952, and Andrejevic, who had sat on the committee from 1938 to 1948, once again shows a preference for continuity. Interestingly, these choices also covered all the regional blocs within UEFA, as Lang represented Scandinavia, Barassi could be considered to represent the Latin countries, and Andrejevic was close to the countries of the Balkans.[5]

In addition, the British FAs and the Soviet Union's central directorate for sport each appointed a FIFA vice-president. The men chosen, Arthur Drewry and Vladimir Granatkin, were elected via a different procedure, but they (especially Drewry) had close ties to their European colleagues, so they were generally able to achieve a consensus on important issues and ensure Europe's voice was heard within FIFA (Table 6.1).

However, the defeat of the other four candidates who had stood for election was a bone of contention for some associations. Rous immediately tried to reduce the resulting tension by proposing that the four

[4]Paul Dietschy highlighted the extent to which Belgium and Switzerland were driving forces behind the internationalisation of football in the first half of the twentieth century (2018). For more about Switzerland in this respect, see Quin and Vonnard (2015, 2019).

[5]In addition to the six executive committee members elected by the congress, the British and the Soviet FAs each had the right to elect a FIFA vice-president, but they could not vote in the election conducted by the congress.

Table 6.1 FIFA executive committee members elected by the Group of European Football Associations

Leaders	Country	Function	Date first elected to the committee	Bloc represented
Drewry	England	Vice-president	1946	British[a]
Granatkine	Soviet Union	Vice-president	1948	Soviet Union[a]
Thommen	Switzerland	Vice-president	1950	None
Lotsy	Netherlands	Vice-president	1934	None
Andrejevic	Yugoslavia	Member	1938–1948/1954	Balkans
Barassi	Italy	Member	1952	Latin
Lafarge	France	Member	1954	None
Lang	Sweden	Member	1954	Scandinavian

Note [a]leader not elected by the Group of European Football Associations (the four British associations chose Drewry, and the USSR's central directorate for sport chose Granatkine)
Source Table based on the FIFA and UEFA executive committee minutes (1930–1954)

losing candidates, Germany's Peco Bauwens, Austria's Josef Gerö, Spain's Armando Munoz Calero and Sebes, be appointed directly to the European group's executive committee, rather than having to face election. To help in their task, he suggested adding another four members to the new executive committee. The people he had in mind were Belgium's José Crahay, France's Henri Delaunay, Denmark's Ebbe Schwartz and Scotland's George Graham.[6] Rous felt that Crahay and Delaunay would be valuable members of the committee because of their work on the standing committee that had laid the groundwork for the European group, whereas Schwartz and Graham had helped prepare the reforms to FIFA's statutes. Hence, the executive committee would consist of experienced leaders who had actively participated in numerous FIFA congress and who would be able to maintain links with both the new European members of FIFA's executive committee and South America's football executives. In addition to creating a team capable of defending the European group's interests, Rous's proposal for the new executive committee was designed to avoid possible conflicts by including representatives of all the blocs within the group. The strategy Rous used to achieve this goal, which was essential for such a young and fragile body, had originally been devised by FIFA between the two world wars (Vonnard 2018a, see Sect. 1.2).

The assembly accepted Rous' proposal, even though this meant changing the organisation's draft statutes to increase the executive committee from six members to eight.[7] In the end, making such a change was unnecessary, as both Bauwens and Munoz Calero declined the seats they were offered, possibly because of their disappointment at not being elected to FIFA's executive committee. The two men may also have felt that positions on UEFA's executive committee would not have enabled

[6]Although the British associations could not take part in the election for the European group's delegates to FIFA's executive committee, they could contribute to running UEFA. This was also the case for the USSR.

[7]'Entente europenne de football, Projet de règlement', Article 11. GNA, DY 12 Deutscher Turn und Sportbund (DTSB), folder: 2.081 Zusammenarbeit mit der FIFA, nos. 169–171.

them to defend their association's interests as effectively as positions of FIFA's executive committee.[8]

At its first meeting, the day after the congress, the European group's executive committee elected Ebbe Schwartz as its president. When I asked Hans Bangerter, UEFA's secretary general from 1969 to 1989, why they chose Schwartz, he highlighted Schwartz's pleasant personality and the fact that he was well-liked by his colleagues. More importantly, he added: 'There was also perhaps, I don't know, between the great personalities we mentioned earlier [Barassi, Rous and Thommen, in particular], they didn't want a country to have too much influence […]. That's why, I think, they chose a president from a small country'.[9] Schwarz's home country, Denmark, was not only small, it was a 'Western neutral' country (Hänhimaki 2015) that oscillated between non-partisanship and capitalism, so Schwartz's appointment could be seen to symbolise consensus. Another factor in his favour was his connections with other influential figures in European football, especially Rous (1978, p. 115), but also members of FIFA's executive committee and South America's football executives, who he knew through his work on FIFA's recent reforms. This made him a valuable asset in Europe's dealings with other organisations in international football. The committee also appointed Henri Delaunay as secretary general.[10] Delaunay was a logical choice for the standing committee and was an experienced administrator who had been secretary of both the French FA, since 1919, and FIFA's Laws of the Game committee (Wahl 1989; Dietschy 2011). What is more, he had got to know most of the leading figures in European football during the two-year consultation process with European associations that had preceded the formation of the European group (see Chapters 2 and 4).

The next few years saw the different blocs within what was known as UEFA consolidate their positions on the executive committee, which was

[8]Writing to Jules Rimet a few months later, Bauwens explicitly expressed his goal of regaining Germany's place on FIFA's executive committee, 'as has always been the case'. Freely translated from the French. Letter from P. Bauwens to J. Rimet, 10 February 1955. German FA archives (thereafter GFAA), correspondence of P. Bauwens.

[9]Freely translated from the French. Interview with Hans Bangerter conducted on 1 October 2012 in Bolligen.

[10]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 22 June 1954. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

expanded to eight members by the addition of Germany's Bauwens and Greece's Constantin Constantaras during UEFA's first congress, in March 1955. Bauwens' return to prominence gave a new role to the mighty West German FA, while the election of Constantaras meant the Balkan countries were now represented on the executive committee. In addition, Alfred Frey replaced his Austrian compatriot, Joseph Gerö, who had died a few weeks earlier. The losing candidates in these elections were Spain's Agusti Pujol and Czechoslovakia's Josef Vogl. If Vogl had been elected, two of the executive committee's five ordinary members would have been Eastern Europeans (the other being Sebes), so this bloc would have been over-represented compared to the other blocs within UEFA. Pujol was probably denied a seat in the interests of maintaining a good entente between members, because electing a member from a country as fiercely anti-communist as Franco's Spain would undoubtedly have caused tension within the young UEFA.

By 1958, UEFA's tasks had expanded so much (see Sect. 5.1) that it was deemed necessary to add a ninth member to the executive committee, which now included representatives of the British, Scandinavian, Eastern European, Benelux and Latin associations, in addition to the secretary general. This time, Pujol was elected, although the Spaniard's elevation to the committee was counterbalanced by the election of a second Eastern European representative, Poland's Leszek Rylski (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 Members of UEFA's executive committee in 1958

Name	Country	Bloc represented	Function	Date elected to the committee
Schwartz	Denmark	Scandinavia	President	1954
Sebes	Hungary	Soviet	Vice-president	1954
Crahay	Belgium	Benelux	Member	1954
Frey	Austria	None	Member	1955
Bauwens	Germany	None	Member	1955
Constantaras	Greece	Balkans	Member	1955
Rylski	Poland	Soviet	Member	1956
Pujol	Spain	Latin	Member	1956
Rous	English	British	Member	1958
Delaunay	France	None	Secretary general	1956

Source Table based on the UEFA executive committee minutes (1954–1958)

UEFA's desire to minimise the impact of the Cold War on its activities also influenced the choice of venues for its annual congresses. Of the six congresses held between 1955 and 1960, three (1956, 1958, 1960) were held in the same cities as FIFA's congress, which removed the need for UEFA's members to choose a venue and it made it easier for Eastern European delegates, especially those from the GDR,[11] to obtain visas (Vonnard and Cala in press). The 1955 congress was held in Vienna, a flagship city for European football between the two world wars (Horak and Maderthaner 1997) that had the twin advantages of lying in the centre of Europe and of being a reminder of the 'great alliance' between the four powers that emerged victorious from World War II.[12] Two years later, the congress took place in Denmark, the homeland of UEFA's president, while the 1959 extraordinary congress was held in the secretary general's home country, France.

Internal recruitment was another area in which UEFA took great care to facilitate dialogue between the Eastern and Western blocs. To this end, Bulgaria's Michel Daphinov was hired as deputy secretary general in the early 1960s, and one of UEFA's first secretaries, Ursula Krayenbuehl, was chosen because she could speak several Slavic languages.[13]

Three other aspects of UEFA's work demonstrate its determination to avoid becoming embroiled in Cold War politics (Mittag 2015). First, the secretary general's annual reports and the UEFA Bulletin not only presented UEFA's achievements, they frequently highlighted the harmonious nature of the relationships between its member associations, while omitting or minimising any conflicts within the organisation (Mittag and Vonnard 2017). Doing so enabled UEFA to present a united image both to its members and to other stakeholders in European football (especially the press).

Second, UEFA applied the informal rule FIFA had followed since the interwar period of not interfering in the affairs of its national associations. A notable example of this is provided by Eastern Europe which saw—as in other sports (Rider 2013)—some footballers fleeing their

[11] At the end of the 1950s, the GDR was not officially recognised by several European countries.

[12] It was still divided into American, British, French and Soviet zones and could therefore be considered a political, geographical and sporting meeting point between East and West.

[13] Information provided by Gerhard Aigner during an informal discussion.

country. Following a demand from the Hungarian FA, FIFA was forced to look into the issue, which was also raised within UEFA's executive committee. On the eve of its 1956 congress, UEFA ruled that it was not the competent authority to deal with the matter and forwarded 'the study of this case to FIFA, asking it to give its full attention to the player's attitude in order to provide a useful answer to the question asked'.[14] A request for clarification from a Norwegian delegate at the UEFA congress was answered by Yugoslavia's Andrejevic, who spoke as FIFA's representative[15] because UEFA's leaders maintained they were not the competent body to deal with the issue. Referring the matter back to FIFA was an astute way of avoiding disagreements within UEFA. Some months later, the events in Hungary led several European countries both to sever diplomatic relations with Hungary in protest at the Soviet Union's intervention to install a new government and to accept thousands of refugees. Sporting relations with Hungary were also affected, with some countries, including Francoist Spain, which boycotted the Melbourne Olympic Games in November 1956 over Hungary's continued participation. In February 1957, Sebes pleaded Hungary's case and asked his colleagues on the executive committee to intervene, but UEFA once again said they were not competent to judge the case and suggested the Hungarian FA forward its request to FIFA.[16]

Third, when the Cold War disrupted UEFA's activities, the executive committee rigorously applied the organisation's statutes, so the parties concerned could not accuse it of making arbitrary decisions. Spain's refusal to play the Soviet Union in the quarter-finals of the 1960 European Cup of Nations provides an excellent illustration of this. Spain and the Soviet Union did not have diplomatic relations, and two years earlier, the Franco regime had banned Real Madrid's basketball team from

[14]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 6 and 7 June 1956. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[15]Minutes of the UEFA congress, 8 June 1956. UEFAA, RM00005986 (founding congress, 1954–ordinary congress, 1955–1957).

[16]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 28 February 1957. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

travelling to Riga to play in the European Club Cup. The Spanish government would only agree to the match going ahead if it was played on neutral territory, a request the Soviets rejected (Simón 2015b).

UEFA's executive committee was aware of the difficulties posed by the match between Spain and the Soviet Union and had therefore decided, a few weeks before the game was due to take place, that UEFA's president, Ebbe Schwartz, would attend the match in Moscow as UEFA's official representative.[17] It was hoped that his presence would ensure the match went smoothly and prevent friction between the two associations. This significant gesture aimed to show how UEFA was succeeding in bringing together East and West, where other organisations had failed. Despite these attempts to calm the situation, the match was cancelled due to Spain's last-minute refusal to travel to the Soviet Union. UEFA's executive committee responded by strictly applying the tournament's rules, arguing that sport should be apolitical and therefore Spain's failure to play the match was unjustified. As a result, Spain was excluded from the competition and the Spanish FA was ordered to compensate its Soviet counterpart for the losses it had incurred. UEFA also asked the two countries to play a friendly match in the near future in order 'to demonstrate their goodwill'.[18]

Thus, the members of UEFA's executive committee, notably Schwartz, Crahay and Delaunay, dealt with the problems generated by the Cold War by insisting on the apolitical nature of sport and by applying similar strategies to those FIFA had developed to avoid and/or manage conflict (Vonnard 2018a, see Chapter 2). It was a crucial policy to reinforce the UEFA internal coherence. In the meantime, and to secure its power over European football, UEFA remained attentive to the actions of other stakeholders who might challenge its emerging monopoly.

[17]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 10 March 1960. UEFAA, RM00000750 (executive committee, 10 March and 8 July 1960).

[18]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 3 October 1962. UEFAA, RM00000754 (executive committee, 3 October 1962).

6.2 Securing UEFA's Position

As mentioned earlier in this book (see Sects. 2.1 and 5.1), numerous stakeholders wanted to develop exchanges within European football, in particular by creating European competitions. UEFA's executive committee took steps to neutralise these potential competitors and thereby strengthen its monopoly over the administration of European football.

The launch of two pan-European club competitions, the Champions Cup and the Fairs Cup, was a major turning point in European football, as previous European tournaments, including the Grasshopper Cup, Latin Cup and Mitropa Cup, were restricted to specific regions (Vonnard 2019a). Of these three competitions, only the Mitropa Cup, which was relaunched in 1957, was able to resist the challenge presented by the new tournaments.[19] The success of the Champions Cup, and the demise of the Grasshopper and Latin Cups, had put UEFA in a dominant position, but it did not yet have a monopoly on European competitions (see Sect. 5.1). Indeed, the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup[20] remained outside its control, even though FIFA's executive committee had expressed the wish in September 1955 that UEFA takes over the tournament. After a successful first edition, the organisers of the Fairs Cup planned a more ambitious second edition, beginning in 1958, in which 16 teams (rather than 12) would play a series of two-leg (home and away) matches. The teams involved were:

> Basel XI (Switzerland), FC Barcelona (Spain); Belgrade XI (Yugoslavia); Birmingham City (England); Cologne XI (Germany); Copenhagen XI (Denmark), Chelsea (England); Ujpesti Dozsa (Hungary); Hanover 96 (Germany); Lausanne-sports (Switzerland); Leipzig XI (Germany); Olympique Lyonnais (France); Inter Milan (Italy); AS Roma (Italy); Union St-Gilloise (Belgium); Zagreb XI (Yugoslavia).

[19] In his review of the Latin Cup, Stéphane Mourlane noted that: 'The Latin Cup was unable to resist the ambitions of the leading lights of FIFA and UEFA, supported too by the press, particularly in France, and based on the two-pronged logic of geographical expansion and financial visibility' (2015, p. 588).

[20] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 17 September 1955. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

Adopting a similar format to the Champions Cup made the Fairs Cup both more dynamic and more appealing, and positioned it as a serious competitor to UEFA's flagship competition. Hence, if UEFA wanted to extend its authority over European football, it would have to take control over the Fairs Cup and, more broadly, all European-scale tournaments. To this end, UEFA's executive committee asked the UEFA congress, meeting in Stockholm on 4 June 1958, to modify the organisation's statutes by adding 'a paragraph identical in all respects to that contained in the FIFA regulations, making UEFA's approval necessary for tournaments with more than three teams'.[21] However, following a short but intense debate, the motion was withdrawn because most of UEFA's members considered the clause too restrictive for national associations. The executive committee's next attempt to increase its control over European competitions came a few months later, when it asked UEFA's member associations to approve an authorisation procedure for European competitions. This procedure would require a potential competition organiser to submit an authorisation request to UEFA's secretariat, listing 'its Committee members' names, the list of teams taking part in the competition, as well as the competition's rules'.[22] The executive committee would then examine the request and approve the tournament or not. UEFA's leaders presented this procedure as a necessary response to the seemingly unending stream of new European competitions being proposed at the time, a glut Jacques Ferran described in a *France Football* article entitled 'It's raining ideas'.[23] This measure would, of course, helped regulate the number of matches clubs had to play, but it would also have given UEFA more control over European football and enabled it to block possible competitors.

[21] Minutes of the UEFA congress, 4 June 1958. UEFAA, RM00005986 (founding congress, 1954–ordinary congress, 1955–1957).

[22] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 28 October 1956. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

[23] 'Il pleut des idées', *France Football*, 26 February 1957.

A few months later, UEFA's executive committee decided to send a questionnaire to all its member associations in order to 'establish a complete picture of the competitions'[24] planned in Europe. This time, the request for more information came not only from UEFA, it was supported by several national associations, which wanted UEFA to ensure that places in competitions were awarded on the basis of objective criteria. For example, in March 1959, Rous forwarded to the executive committee a letter from the Spanish FA complaining about the arbitrary nature of team selection for the Inter-Cities Fair Cup and the fact that Spain was not represented on the organising committee. The letter also noted that the Spanish FA considered the Fairs Cup to be a friendly tournament because in order to be an official competition it would have to 'be organised under the aegis of UEFA and not by a committee outside UEFA's authority and discipline'.[25] UEFA's executive committee agreed with the Spanish FA's remarks. Although UEFA did not suggest taking over the competition, it wanted clubs to obtain their national association's approval before agreeing to take part. This objective was significant because it would link tournament participants more closely to their national associations and thereby increase UEFA's control over how the tournament was run.

The initiatives UEFA took at the end of the 1950s enabled it to keep track of existing and projected European competitions. Over the next few years, it extended its control by giving itself the sole right to organise events involving all European countries and by not allowing clubs wishing to take part in its events to compete in non-UEFA competitions (see Sect. 8.2).

UEFA's reaction to the creation of the International League Liaison Committee (ILLC) confirmed its intention to monopolise the administration of European football. The minutes of a FIFA executive committee meeting in April 1959 note that the heads of several national

[24] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 5 March 1959. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

[25] Freely translated from the French. Letter from A. de la Fuente to the Fairs Cup committee, 19 January 1959. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

leagues would soon hold a meeting.[26] It took place on 4 May, in Paris, and brought together representatives of the English, French and Italian professional football leagues. Although these leagues, some of which were created during the interwar years, recognised their national association's authority over domestic football, they controlled their country's professional league. By the late 1950s, they had also started running supranational tournaments, such as the Franco-Italian Friendship Cup, which was launched by the French and Italian leagues in 1958. This tournament involved around 15 clubs from the countries' first and second divisions, which played a series of two-leg matches on three Sundays in June. Following the Cup's second edition, discussions began on extending the competition to English and Swiss clubs.[27]

The meeting in Paris in May 1959 was part of this desire to strengthen the links between Europe's professional leagues, which were looking to achieve two main goals. Their first goal was to defend clubs' interests with respect to the national associations. For example, many clubs were concerned about the increasing number of international matches being played because they were expected to make their players available free of charge and with the risk that players would come back tired or injured.[28] Second, they were looking for new sources of revenue to cover the ever-rising costs associated with professionalism (Dietschy 2010, see Chapter 8; Vonnard 2012, see Part I). One way to do this was to create new club competitions that would enable them to play more European matches. These prospects posed a serious threat to the power of the national associations and, ultimately, to UEFA.

The Paris meeting resulted in the professional leagues appointing Luigi Scarambone, the secretary of the Italian Football League, as their secretary. Scarambone immediately began organising a second meeting, to which he invited several leagues that had not been in Paris. These initial discussions seem to have involved only professional or semi-professional leagues, as the meeting did not include any representatives from either

[26]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 24 April 1959. FIFAA, executive committee (1959).

[27]'La balle au bond. Saison à rallonge', *France Football*, 7 June 1960.

[28]'Le Comité et l'Union', *France Football*, 3 November 1959.

Scandinavia or the Soviet bloc, where all football was officially amateur.[29] For countries such as Spain, which had no specific body to manage professional football, Scarambone contacted the national association.[30] These contacts ensured UEFA remained abreast of the leagues' actions, as the Spanish FA kept UEFA's secretary, Pierre Delaunay, informed of Scarambone's actions. In the end, the Spanish FA decided not to take part in the discussions because they felt they would undermine what UEFA was trying to achieve. Nevertheless, the other leagues continued their efforts and scheduled a new meeting for 26 October 1959, in London.

This meeting officially established the ILLC. Its members were all professional leagues, but the presence at the meeting of representatives from Austria and Switzerland suggests that it was already considering including semi-professional leagues. According to Jacques Ferran, this shift in direction occurred because 'countries where professional clubs did not have any autonomous organisation, such as Greece, Sweden, Holland, Belgium and even Spain, were following the new organisation's actions with great attention. It also seemed to be the case of Eastern Europe.'[31] His remark highlights the variety of actors involved in European football, as, even in Spain, the managers of major clubs such as Real Madrid and FC Barcelona were likely to have been interested in this initiative. A few days after the London meeting, Scarambone sent UEFA's secretary the League Committee's statutes, which laid out its three objectives.[32] They were to examine issues relating to the professional leagues; to 'facilitate relations between the Leagues and the Clubs that belong to them within the framework of their respective federations and FIFA'[33]; and

[29]This was truly the case in Scandinavia, but football in the Soviet bloc was amateur in name only. Top players in the Soviet bloc were officially 'employees', 'workers' or 'servicemen', but they were free to devote themselves to football full time. What is more, they enjoyed benefits (financial and in-kind) that were otherwise reserved for their country's leaders and the best players had the privilege of being able to travel abroad (especially to the West).

[30]Letter from de A. de la Fuente to L. Scarambone, 23 March 1959. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[31]'Le Comité et l'Union', *France Football*, 3 November 1959.

[32]Letter from L. Scarambone to P. Delaunay, 23 November 1959. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[33]Freely translated from the French. It is noteworthy that the ILLC did not mention UEFA in its statutes, which is curious given UEFA's recent development. Statutes of the International

to actively support and defend the agreements reached. These objectives were all quite modest and did not include creating new competitions.

By the autumn of 1959, a new and relatively well-structured European football organisation had been created. It had an executive committee, composed of France's Jean-Bernard Dancausse, England's Joseph Richard, Italy's Giuseppe Pasquale and a Scot who had not yet been appointed, an annual general meeting and a small budget, initially provided by contributions from its members. Although the ILLC said it would abide by FIFA, UEFA and national association regulations, it still posed a threat to UEFA's monopoly over the administration of European football. UEFA's executive committee initially accepted the ILLC as long as it 'does not interfere in any way with UEFA's authority and competence'.[34] FIFA's executive committee adopted a similar position and took 'note of the Leagues' draft statutes and considers that as long as they respect their respective national associations as the sole and supreme authority for international relations and as long as they respect the statutes and regulations of their national associations as well as those of FIFA, it is not necessary to intervene'.[35]

The ILLC quickly began launching initiatives, including creating the Alpine Cup, a competition for clubs from Italy and Switzerland that was created in the summer of 1960. These initiatives triggered an immediate reaction from UEFA's leaders, who felt that 'some national leagues, members of the International Liaison Committee of Football Leagues, are trying to take over the duties and rights of national associations'.[36] They therefore set up a commission, consisting of Bauwens, Crahay, Schwartz and Pujol, to clarify the situation and began closely monitoring the ILLC's actions. FIFA's executive committee addressed the issue again in August 1960, at which time Ernst Thommen noted that he had written to the new body, inviting it to contact UEFA and not to go too far

League Committee, art. 4, 26 October 1959. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[34]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 11 December 1959. Digitised document provided by UEFA's archivist, Nicolas Bouchet.

[35]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 27 October 1959. FIFAA, executive committee (1959).

[36]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA congress, 19 August 1960. UEFAA, RM00000751 (executive committee, 1960–1961).

by not respecting the interests of the international federations.[37] Further discussions ensued, at the end of which UEFA decided to incorporate the ILLC (see Sect. 8.2).

By the early 1960s, UEFA had secured its position as the governing body for European football and contained or quashed the actions of other football stakeholders. However, football's popularity meant it was also of great interest to European organisations outside football which were establishing themselves at the same time as UEFA. Perhaps the most important of these organisations with respect to UEFA was the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

6.3 European Dialogue: UEFA-EBU Exchanges

Twenty years after the first programmes had been broadcast, sales of television sets were now increasing and television was starting to emerge as an important medium (Bignell and Fickers 2008). Television's proponents believed that the best way to encourage the new medium's growth was to cover subjects of interest to large sections of society. One of these subjects was football, which was not only popular, it was also well suited to television because the field of play can be covered using just one or two cameras positioned high in the stadium, it is slower and easier to film than many other sports, and there was a large number of international matches for broadcasters to choose from. In 1953, the owners (and families and friends) of the United Kingdom's two million television sets were able to watch the FA Cup final live on television (Haynes 2008). The previous year, fans had been able to enjoy live coverage of the first match between France and Germany since the end of the war (Tétart 2018). This match and its coverage aroused so much interest that several thousand television sets were sold in the run up to the game.

[37] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 19 August 1960. FIFAA, executive committee (1960).

Exchanging international television programmes was first suggested in 1951 by a Swiss European Broadcasting Union executive called Marcel Bezençon. EBU was founded one year before by the countries of the Western bloc, which had left the International Radio Union (IBU), created after World War II, because of the Cold War (Heinrich-Franke 2012, p. 35). Consequently, as in other fields, there was an East–West divide in telecommunications. The EBU, which was based in Geneva and had a technical centre in Brussels, was set up to defend the interests of national television channels and provide a forum for discussing issues relating to television. The idea of sharing programmes was quickly added to these objectives and first tested in June 1953 by simultaneously broadcasting Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland. It is only natural that sport, and especially football, soon attracted the attentions of the EBU's executives.

A key element in these discussions, which resulted in the creation of the Eurovision Network, was the opportunity to televise the 1954 World Cup.[38] The importance of this event was confirmed a few months later, when the EBU's newly created programming committee made the World Cup a central part of its 'Summer Season of European Television Exchanges'. Seven countries broadcast ten matches, notably the semi-finals and finals (Meyer 2016, pp. 50–52), which meant that nearly a third of the matches were broadcast live. This enthusiasm for international television coverage was not confined to football; it also extended to other sports, including cycling, which saw several live broadcasts from the 1954 Tour de France.[39] At the end of the 1954 World Cup, the chairman of the EBU's programming committee, Marcel Bezençon, stressed the importance of football in launching international television exchanges, saying: 'June was chosen because of the World Cup football matches that were being played in Switzerland at the time, which were, as you can image, of the greatest interest to the public'.[40] At the same time, Bezençon noted the problems the project had had to overcome, including technical difficulties in transmitting pictures and sound live, and the

[38] 'Activités de l'UER', *EBU Official Bulletin* 4, no. 20, July 1953, p. 503.

[39] 'Le tour en Eurovision', *Télé-Magazine*, no. 24, 8–24 April 1955.

[40] 'L'Eurovision est-elle un mythe?' *EBU Official Bulletin* 5, no. 27, September–October 1954, p. 590.

sometimes limited technical capacity of the participating national broadcasters. In addition, negotiating an agreement with FIFA over how the tournament should be televised had not been easy, due to its concerns, shared with other football bodies, about the effects of televising matches.

There were two main reasons why football organisations were reluctant to allow television broadcasts of too many matches. First, they worried about its effects on match attendance, especially in bad weather or in winter, when there was a danger of fans preferring to watch the match at home rather than going to the stadium. Second, they saw 'broadcasting an international match in another country, or the final of a national cup' as 'unfortunate competition for national matches'.[41] In addition, many of football's stakeholders saw the game as a means of promoting educational objectives and there was a fear, expressed by Ottorino Barassi, that televising matches could negate one such objective by encouraging young people to become spectators, rather than players.[42] Televising matches was a major issue at UEFA's 1955 congress, where, after lengthy discussion, the delegates agreed on three principles for broadcasting matches on television:

- A national association may only allow the [broadcasting] of an international match with the permission of the association it receives.
- The organising national association must ensure that the match is broadcast only within the borders of its country.
- It may not allow the [broadcasting] of the match in another country without the consent of the latter's national association.[43]

The decisions taken at this congress, which UEFA's executive committee referred to as the 'Vienna Agreements', showcased the organisation's role as a discussion forum for national associations. However, one of UEFA's

[41] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA congress, 2 March 1955. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

[42] Minutes of the UEFA congress, 28–29 June 1957. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

[43] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA congress, 2 March 1955. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

limitations was that the executive committee could only make recommendations, as there was no mechanism for compelling member associations to apply its decisions.[44] Nevertheless, the national associations appear to have followed UEFA's recommendations regarding television, as, in his address to the 1956 congress, UEFA's president acknowledged the 'great services rendered by the proper implementation [of the decisions taken] in Vienna'.[45] This comment suggests that member associations had sufficient regard for UEFA to respect its decisions.

Initially, the main issue in televising football was the relationship between national football associations and broadcasters in their home countries. This changed at the beginning of 1956, when the EBU approached UEFA about the possibility of covering the European Champion Clubs' Cup, just a few months after it had been launched (Vonnard and Laborie 2019, pp. 114–115). The EBU had moved so swiftly to televise the competition because they saw it as an excellent way of growing the Eurovision network. First, televising football matches was relatively cheap and therefore provided a way of offering programmes to broadcasters with limited resources.[46] Just as importantly, sports events such as the Champions Cup were extremely popular, so televised matches would undoubtedly attract large audiences. Obtaining the television rights to the Champions Cup also allowed the EBU to protect its interests against what the January–February 1956 edition of its Bulletin described as 'the attempts that certain private bodies appear to be making to secure exclusive television rights for certain international sporting events'.[47] In other words, the EBU wanted to consolidate its position as a broadcaster of European sports events and to do this they had to work with international sports organisations. Covering the Champions Cup would also contribute to its societal goal of using international television

[44] Article 4 (alinea C) notes that the goal was to create, if possible, a consensus between the associations. *Statutes of the UEFA* [1956], art. 4. UEFAA, RM00005779 (UEFA Statutes, 1954–1976).

[45] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA congress, 8 June 1956. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

[46] As noted in volume 35 of the EBU's Official Bulletin. 'Activités de l'UER', *EBU Official Bulletin*, no. 35, January–February 1956.

[47] Freely translated from the French. 'Les activités de l'UER', *EBU Official Bulletin*, no. 35, January–February 1956.

exchanges to strengthen ties between the peoples of Europe. The heads of the EBU's programming committee, especially its chairman, Marcel Bezençon, firmly supported this idea, so this was probably at least a contributing factor in the decision to televise the competition.

A delegation of senior EBU executives, notably Bezençon and Eurovision's technical advisor, Georges Straschnov, met with UEFA's executive committee on 19 March 1956. Their discussions led to an agreement to form a collaborative relationship 'taking into account their respective interests'.[48] In particular, UEFA agreed to inform the EBU of all matches involving national teams that were likely to be of interest to it, so the EBU could then contact the relevant national association in order to negotiate terms for televising the match. In the case of the Champions Cup, for which the EBU could deal directly with UEFA, the EBU would tell UEFA which matches it was interested in, and UEFA, as the competition organiser, would then discuss the matter with the appropriate member associations. However, implementing the agreement proved difficult. In the *EBU Bulletin* of May–June, Bezençon noted the problems Eurovision was having in its discussions with UEFA's leaders 'with[whom] we can gradually reach a good understanding. It will be slow. But why would you want to skip the steps?'[49] UEFA's 1956 congress saw television coverage as an excellent means of publicising football and decided to extend the Vienna Agreements.[50] It also passed two motions regarding the broadcasting of Champions Cup matches. First, it decided that television broadcasters would have to pay compensation for any loss of income due to reduced attendances at matches. Second, and more importantly, they agreed to distribute the revenues obtained from television rights between the clubs and UEFA, with the clubs receiving two-thirds of the sum and UEFA receiving the remaining third. UEFA's leaders were gradually realising the contribution television could make to financing the organisation's activities.

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[48]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 19 March 1956. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[49]Freely translated from the French. 'L'Eurovision à l'auscultation', *EBU Official Bulletin* 7, no. 37, May–June 1956, p. 361.

[50]Minutes of the UEFA congress, 4 June 1958. UEFAA, RM00005986 (founding congress, 1954–ordinary congress, 1955–1957).

The first final of the Champions Cup, in which Real Madrid beat Reims in Paris, was broadcast just a few days after the UEFA congress and provided a glimpse of the role television would play in the years to come. The Eurovision network broadcast the full match in France and the second half in Germany and Switzerland. Nearly two million people watched the match in France,[51] leading Marcel Leclerc, the editor of Télé-Programme magazine, to write: 'television was in the spotlight that evening. Let me repeat: several million people applauded both the winners and, unconsciously perhaps, the incredible magic, the excessive power of television'.[52] Despite this success, the EBU Bulletin for July–August 1956 noted the failure to reach agreement with UEFA on the financial terms for broadcasting the competition. In addition to the financial aspect, broadcasting matches posed a number of technical problems. For several months, there was no contact between the EBU and UEFA, but that did not prevent Champions Cup matches being televised by national television broadcasters because clubs, with their national association's agreement, were free to negotiate contracts for all their matches apart from the final. Consequently, the 1957–1958 tournament rules took into account the possible broadcasting of matches and included the measures taken in Lisbon a few months earlier.[53]

As in 1954, the 1958 World Cup, in Sweden, gave new impetus to the televising of football. Following intense negotiations between FIFA and the EBU, Eurovision was given the right to broadcast the competition. The agreement included placing a relay station in Denmark, which then failed to qualify for the finals. As a result, the Danish FA refused to broadcast World Cup matches in Denmark in order to avoid competition with the friendly matches Denmark's national side was due to play at the same time. UEFA's congress, held in Stockholm during the World Cup, once again addressed the issue of televising football matches. After a lengthy debate, the delegates took two important decisions. First,

[51] Estimate provided by *L'Equipe* but difficult to check. 'Apothéose de la première Coupe d'Europe des clubs', *L'Équipe*, 13 June 1956.

[52] Freely translated from the French. 'Une fenêtre ouverte sur le monde!', *Télévision Programme Magazine*, no. 35, 24–30 June 1956.

[53] Rules of the ECCC [1957–1958 season], UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

they agreed to use some of the revenues from television rights to set up a fund to help teams travel to UEFA's annual International Youth Tournament.[54] Second, in line with the desire to structure UEFA's activities, they made the 'study group for television issues' an official body.[55] Composed of three of UEFA's most experienced leaders—Belgium's José Crahay, England's Stanley Rous and UEFA's secretary general, Pierre Delaunay—its role was to determine UEFA's best interests vis-à-vis television companies. As well as enabling UEFA to monitor negotiations with television broadcasters, creating this study group showed organisations outside the world of football that UEFA was the central body in European football.

At the same time, the EBU was also working to improve its links with sports organisations. To this end, it sought legal advice on the issue of remunerating sports organisations for the right to broadcast events controlled by these organisations. According to its legal experts, remuneration is justified for events held in an enclosed space and involving paid admission.[56] In addition, in 1959, the programming committee asked Peter Dimmock, who had worked with the EBU almost since its inception, to take on the role of 'sports advisor'.[57] These preparations, combined with the fact that Eurovision was now well established, having produced almost 300 programmes in 1959,[58] put the EBU in a stronger position from which to negotiate with UEFA.

By the end of the 1950s, UEFA and the EBU were ready to reach agreement on the broadcasting of European football matches. The 1959–1960 Champions Cup had underlined the popularity of televised football, with large audiences for the 12 matches (out of a total of 52

[54]P. Delaunay, minutes of the UEFA congress of 4 June, n.d. UEFAA, RM00005986 (founding congress, 1954. I–III ordinary congress, 1955–1957), bound document: general assembly minutes 1954–1959.

[55]This committee had met in October 1957, after Barassi first mooted the idea of setting up a television committee, at the UEFA congress in Copenhagen, a few months earlier. However, it did not really begin its work until after the decision taken at the 1958 congress.

[56]'L'Eurovision et ses problèmes juridiques', *EBU Official Bulletin* (B), Issue 55 (1959), pp. 25–28.

[57]Freely translated from the French. Quoted in a paper written by Dimmock in 1968. *EBU Official Bulletin* (B), Issue 110 (1968), p. 12.

[58]The network had benefited from the growing number of television sets in EBU-affiliated countries (14,200,000 in 1959 compared with 3,200,000 in 1954).

matches) that were broadcast live.[59] The final was particularly popular, especially in Germany, Belgium and France. Immediately after this match, UEFA and EBU signed an agreement for televising the finals of the 1961 Champions Cup (Vonnard and Laborie 2019, pp. 117–118).

In a paper published in 2013, Jürgen Mittag and Jörg-Uwe Nieland's (2013) outlining the main phases of UEFA's collaboration with the EBU from the 1950s to the 1990s and showed that UEFA's aims during its discussions with the EBU went beyond football to encompass greater European cooperation in general. In fact, through its work administering an extremely popular sport that involved frequent exchanges between people from across Europe and which transcended the Iron Curtain, UEFA quickly established itself as an actor in the process of European integration.

6.4 An 'Atypical Actor' in European Cooperation

In a paper summarising his doctoral thesis, Gabriel Bernasconi (2010) noted that the IOC has been an 'atypical' actor in international relations since 1945, due to its ability to get governments to talk to each other, even when they are on opposite sides of a political divide. As I discuss in the following pages, UEFA has played a similar role in Europe and the way it has used its position, most notably as the organiser of the Champions Cup, has made it an atypical actor in European cooperation.

When *L'Équipe*'s journalists first proposed a European champions' cup, it was intended to fulfil both economic (increase newspaper sales) and sporting (raise the standard of French football by playing foreign clubs) objectives, but it also had a political objective (bring Europe together) because they intended the competition to cross the East–West divide. In fact, both Jacques Goddet and Jacques de Ryswick refer to this political objective in their autobiographies (De Ryswick 1962; Goddet 1991), as did Jacques Ferran during the interviews conducted for the present research and when he spoke to Antoine Maumon de Longevialle

[59] 'La balle au bond. Pas sympathique', *France Football*, 5 July 1960.

(2009, p. 42). The first draft of the competition's regulations, drawn up in February 1955, lists countries from throughout Europe, including both sides of the Iron Curtain (see Sect. 5.3).

UEFA, which took over the Champions Cup in June 1955, also saw it as a means for bringing together nations from both sides of the Iron Curtain and therefore included all the teams pre-selected by *L'Équipe*, with the only changes being those made due to last-minute withdrawals. The tournament's very first match, in September 1955, proved the Cup's ability to create connections across Europe's political divide by bringing together Partizan Belgrade, from Yugoslavia, and Sporting Lisbon, from Portugal. Given the political gulf between Antonio de Oliveira Salazar's anti-communist government in Portugal (Pinto 1999) and Marshal Tito's communist regime in Yugoslavia, which considered Portugal to be a fascist country, organising such a match would have seemed a daunting task.

However, by the mid-1950s, it looked as if it might be possible to get the two governments to agree to the game. The process was facilitated by the fact that Portugal was not isolated internationally and played an active role in many international and European organisations (it was a member of NATO and helped found the European Free Trade Association in 1958). Moreover, according to scholars who have studied Portuguese football, the people's game was not an important issue for Salazar (Léonard 2011, p. 251), so even though a victory would provide good political propaganda, Sporting Lisbon was not seen as representing the state or as an emblem of the regime's strength (Pereira 2016). This match also provides a good illustration of the general atmosphere surrounding the competition because it was not the result of a random draw; it was freely agreed by the clubs' representatives when the tournament was launched by *L'Équipe* in Paris in April 1955 (Vonnard 2012, p. 119). The Sporting Lisbon-Partizan Belgrade match enabled UEFA to show that it truly was a forum for Europe's national football associations and capable of promoting East–West rapprochement.

UEFA was given another opportunity to prove itself in this domain a few weeks later, when Partizan Belgrade, Yugoslavia's flagship team, was drawn to play Real Madrid, the emblem of Franco's Spain, in the quarter-finals (Gonzalez-Calleja 2006). For Jacques Ferran, who made the draw,

this was 'an explosive and slightly worrying game'[60] because the Spanish government saw football as a symbolic battleground in the fight against communism, a view that was reinforced by the defection of several Eastern Europe players to Spain during the 1950s. Given the government's position, Spain's national team had never played a team from the other side of the Iron Curtain. What is more, Spain and Yugoslavia had broken off diplomatic relations in the 1930s, and the climate between the two countries remained unconducive to sporting exchanges. Hence, when the draw was made, there was no guarantee the two-leg fixture would go ahead and UEFA realised it would have to work hard to ensure the matches were played. To this end, UEFA's secretary general, Pierre Delaunay, invited Real Madrid's senior executives to Paris on 11 November 1955 for the France-Yugoslavia match and so they could meet Andrejevic.[61] The meeting appears to have been a success, as dates were set for both matches, an issue that had not been settled at the draw in Paris on 4 November because too many of the clubs involved were absent. The two sides also discussed ways of ensuring the fixture went smoothly. Given the lack of sources, it is difficult to be certain, but they appear to have found common ground.

One of the main problems was obtaining visas for members of both clubs. Finally, a solution was found by going through the two countries' embassies in Paris. Following this agreement, Jean-Philippe Réthacker wrote in *L'Équipe*: 'Everyone will be delighted, throughout the world, to learn that sport has succeeded where everyone else has failed'.[62] Both matches were played without any problems and they even enabled political leaders from the two countries to meet. According to *France Football*'s report following the first match: 'In the euphoria of the discussion, the Yugoslav president went so far as to say to the Spanish representative: "I even believe that there is a Yugoslav consulate in Madrid, but since

[60] 'J'ai tiré un France Hongrie des clubs (Reims-Voros Lobogo) et un match explosif et un peu inquiétant: Real Madrid-Partizan de Belgrade', *L'Équipe*, 5–6 November 1955. Jacques Ferran stressed these challenges, arguing that Yugoslavia had, in the recent past, always refused to play Spanish teams, especially in basketball.

[61] Minutes of the UEFA emergency committee, 4 November 1955. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[62] Freely translated from the French. 'Real Madrid-Partizan conclu le 11 décembre. Le match retour ayant lieu à Belgrade le 8 ou le 15 ou le 25 janvier', *L'Équipe*, 11–12 November 1956.

it is unused it will have to be repaired"'.[63] While this comment should be taken with a pinch of salt, it supports the assertion made by many other scholars that sport can foster political dialogue (e.g. Gounot et al. 2007). These exchanges continued during the return match in Belgrade, to which Spain sent, with Yugoslavia's consent, an unusually large delegation containing 60 members, presented by the French press as supporters of Real Madrid, in addition to the Madrid team.[64]

Numerous matches between teams from the two sides of the Iron Curtain took place during subsequent editions of the Champions Cup, which covered the whole of Europe, as the map of participants in the second edition of the Champions Cup shows (Fig. 6.2). In fact, with almost a third of the Champions Cup matches (67 out of 228) played between 1955 and 1960 involving teams from Eastern and Western Europe, playing teams from the opposite bloc became commonplace. Cities such as Belgrade and Budapest, which had several leading clubs that monopolised their country's Champions Cup place during its early years, regularly hosted 'East–West matches' (nine matches for Belgrade and six matches for Budapest). Hence, the Champions Cup became a flag carrier for football's ability to overcome political barriers.

According to Juan Antonio Simón (2015), when Raimundo Saporta, Real Madrid's treasurer and a pillar of the International Basketball Federation, travelled with Real Madrid to Moscow in 1962, the first official visit to the Soviet Union by a Spanish delegation, he reported back to the Francoist government on living conditions in the country. It seems likely that officials accompanying clubs across the Iron Curtain for Champions Cup matches would have carried out similar actions.

These matches provided informal opportunities for meetings between countries which did not have diplomatic relations, with discussions taking place during associated festivities (visits, dinners), as well as during the matches. Consequently, the Champions Cup must be assessed in the light of history's recent reappraisal of the Cold War, which shows that the 'two blocs were certainly divided, but not disconnected' (Hochscherf

[63]Freely translated from the French. 'Quand Tito rime avec Franco', *France Football*, 27 December 1955.

[64]It would be interesting to know the identity of these individuals and their functions in Franco's regime.

Fig. 6.2 Clubs that took part in the second edition of the Champions Cup (Interestingly, this map does not show the border between East and West Germany. Was this an oversight or does it represent UEFA's vision of Europe at the time?) (*Source* Map published in the *UEFA Official Bulletin*, Issue 6, November 1957)

et al. 2010).[65] Adopting this perspective means examining the different ways in which the two blocs cooperated (still largely underestimated) throughout the Cold War. UEFA seems to have been at the forefront of these 'behind-the-scenes' exchanges in Europe, as the Champions Cup and subsequent UEFA competitions provided a regular platform for meetings between East and West.

[65]This point has been already well study for cultural exchanges, see notably: Fleury and Jilek (2009), Romijn et al. (2012), and Mikkonen and Koivunen (2015). See also the interesting study of Gaiduk about the US-USSR relationship in the United Nations (2012).

7

Becoming a Leading Continental Confederation

The decision to decentralise FIFA, taken by the extraordinary congress in Paris in November 1953, triggered the creation of continental confederations in Africa and Asia, just as it had in Europe. This process led not only to the 'continentalisation' of FIFA during the second half of the 1950s, but also to major changes in the way its executive committee managed the organisation.

One of the greatest impacts resulted from the continental confederations' demands that FIFA support their development, which gradually called into question FIFA's dominant position in world football. In this process, UEFA played a major role and at the end of the 1950s appeared as a leading continental confederation.

7.1 The Continentalisation of FIFA

Wishing to take stock of the reforms agreed by the extraordinary congress in November 1953 (see Sect. 4.2), FIFA's leaders reviewed the situation just before the 1954 congress. They realised that the actions taken by Asia's and Europe's associations meant that these two continents would

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Football Research in an Enlarged Europe,
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soon have their own confederations to stand alongside the existing Central American, North American and South American confederations.

Europe, they felt, had already formed its own grouping, even if such a body had not yet been officially created. For FIFA's executive committee, 'the minutes of the body's assembly held on 12 April in Paris',[1] which noted the drafting of statutes for a European body and the date of a meeting to discuss them—15 June 1954, two days after FIFA's congress—were enough to justify its supposition. It was, however, less certain about the situation in Asia and Africa. FIFA's secretariat had received information about a meeting in Manila in May 1954, but it involved only 12 of the 24 Asian associations affiliated to FIFA, and no action appeared to have been taken by Africa's associations.

Discussions on the executive committee's new composition spilled over into the debates at FIFA's congress, on 21 June 1954. Jules Rimet used his opening address, his last as FIFA president, to once again warn his colleagues of the risks that breaking-up FIFA's unity posed for its further development. His speech was followed by a debate on how the decisions taken at the 1953 extraordinary congress should be implemented, during which Rodolphe Seeldrayers conceded that the executive committee's interpretation of the Thommen compromise differed slightly from the exact wording agreed in Paris. Under this interpretation, national associations would have to join together in continental organisations in order to be eligible for the executive committee seats allocated to their region. Consequently, the 1954 congress would have to decide whether Africa and Asia had continental organisations. If not, the congress would be free to fill these seats by electing members from any region.

The discussion stopped here and did not resume until it was time for the elections. In fact, the only position up for election was president. Here, the congress opted for continuity by electing Seeldrayers, who had served on the executive committee since the 1920s, to take over from Jules Rimet. The congress then noted the nominees for the positions of vice-president put forward by the British associations

[1]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 12–13 June 1954. FIFAA, executive committee (1953–1954).

(1 vice-president), the Soviet Union (1 vice-president), the South American confederation (1 vice-president) and the European associations (2 vice-presidents). When it came to the committee's ordinary members, the North, Central and South American confederations each nominated one member and the grouping of European associations, whose constitutive congress had chosen four representatives a few days before FIFA's congress, nominated four members. This moment was when the debate on the seats allocated to the African and Asian associations resumed, and with great vigour. Sudan's delegate, Dr. Halim, acknowledged the absence of a continental organisation for Africa but felt that, 'the time has come for African and Asian associations to appoint their own representatives'.[2] His Egyptian colleague, Abdel Aziz Abdalla Salem, and Yugoslavia's Mihailo Andrejevic conveyed a similar message. Hence there was a clear divide between Western Europe and South America, which insisted that the African and Asian associations had to form continental organisations before being allocated seats on the executive committee, and Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe, which were demanding greater recognition for Africa and Asia within FIFA.

In the end, the only way to break the deadlock was to hold a vote. The result was a defeat for the executive committee, whose recommendations were rejected by 23 votes to 17, and a victory for the African associations, who were now able to choose their representative on the committee. Similarly, the Asian grouping, created in Manila in May 1954, also gained official recognition, but when the Asian associations named their executive committee representative, China protested because it had not been invited to the meeting in Manila and therefore maintained that the Asian grouping did not represent the Chinese association. Rimet ended the discussion by evoking FIFA's long-standing policy of not interfering in its members' internal affairs and declaring this to be a matter for the Asian confederation, not for FIFA.

The decisions taken by the 1954 congress were another sign of the changes being brought about by FIFA's growing non-European membership and the gradual erosion of Europe's domination (Dietschy 2013): By 1954, almost half of the federation's 52 members were from outside

[2]Minutes of the FIFA congress, 21 June 1954. FIFAA, congress (1953–1959).

Table 7.1 Composition of FIFA's executive committee under the 1954 statutes

Function	Voting body
President	Congress
Vice-president (1)	USSR
Vice-president (1)	4 British associations
Vice-president (2)	European associations
Vice-president (1)	South American confederation
Member (4)	European associations
Member (1)	South American confederation
Member (1)	Central American confederation
Member (1)	North American confederation
Member (1)	African associations
Member (1)	Asian associations

Source Table based on the minutes of the 1954 FIFA congress

Europe. The vote on Africa's executive committee seat, in which the associations of Western Europe failed to obtain a majority, was a clear reflection of this shift in the balance of power. Thus, Europe's hegemony over FIFA was under threat, even though it still had the largest block of executive committee members (Table 7.1).

The following months saw Africa's, Asia's and Europe's national associations begin the process of creating continental bodies and drawing up provisional statutes, which they then submitted to FIFA.[3] By 1956, the new continental bodies were up and running and able to hold meetings of their member associations prior to FIFA congresses in order to discuss organisational matters and their positions on the issues on the congress agenda. In terms of their structure, these bodies adopted similar models to FIFA and the South American confederation, whose continental competition they were also keen to emulate. Progress in this area was

[3]The correspondence between FIFA and the African Football Confederation (1954–1967) contains draft statutes for the confederation. They are undated but are marked as having been received by FIFA's secretariat on 15 February 1956. The executive committee discussed receiving draft statutes for statutes the Asian confederation at a meeting on 15 March 1957, but correspondence between the two bodies did not begin until the 1960s.

extremely rapid and Africa was ready to hold its first continental tournament, hosted by Sudan, in February 1957.[4]

Many of the new countries created by the decolonisation process reorganised the way they administered football and replaced the colonial-era elite with new, more politicised leaders who did not share the (Western) European elite's ideal that football should be apolitical (e.g. Ghana, Nicolas and Vonnard 2019). Furthermore, the newly decolonised countries wanted greater international recognition so, according to Paul Dietschy, "at the same time that these new nations started knocking on the door of the UN, they began applying for FIFA membership" (Dietschy 2020b, p. 33). As a result, the new leaders of these national associations did not hesitate to put pressure on FIFA to address political issues. South Africa offers a case in point. At this time, South Africa had two football associations because the country's white football association would not accept black players (Bolsmann 2010, pp. 36–37). In the late 1950s, the Asian and African confederations wanted FIFA to take action by excluding the South African FA until it accepted all players, no matter the colour of their skin. In contrast, FIFA's predominantly European executive committee refused to take a stand on the issue, citing the old mantra of not mixing politics with sport (Darby 2008).

Another of the continental confederations' aims was to boost football in their region, for which they requested logistical and financial support from FIFA. For example, in October 1957, Asia's executive committee member, Jack Skinner, expressed his wish to run a refereeing course during the 3rd Asian Games, due to be held in Tokyo from 20 May to 1 June 1958. His colleagues agreed to help by covering the travel and accommodation expenses involved in sending Stanley Rous to Tokyo as the course instructor.[5]

The new confederations' demand to receive a percentage of the gross revenues FIFA receives from international football matches was a much more substantial request. Doing so would give these confederations a

[4] *CAF secretary general's report (1956–1958)*. FIFAA, correspondence with the CAF (1954–1967). For some development about the first development of the CAF see Darby (2002) and Dietschy and Keimo-Kembou (2008).

[5] Minutes of the FIFA emergency committee, 13 October 1957. FIFAA, emergency committee (1951–1957).

similar right to that accorded to the South American confederation under Article 31, paragraph 5, of FIFA's statutes, according to which associations affiliated to the South American confederation 'shall pay only 1% [of a match's gross revenue] to FIFA for matches played between them, while the other 1% shall be paid to [their continental entity]'.[6] UEFA's executive committee set the ball rolling on this issue in 1955 when it expressed its intention to 'ask the Fédération Internationale de Football Association to include on its next congress agenda a proposal to ensure that only 1% of the gross revenue from international matches played between European countries is paid to FIFA; [and that] 1% is paid to the European Union'.[7] However, FIFA's European executive committee members, especially Barassi and Thommen, were unhappy with the request from their counterparts at UEFA. On 3 December 1955, FIFA's emergency committee—composed of Drewry, Lotsy and Thommen—reported that 'a reduction in this percentage would have a disastrous effect on FIFA's financial situation'.[8] In fact, in 1954 FIFA obtained almost 71% (158,878.28 Swiss francs) of its income (excluding World Cup income) from international matches.[9] Because a large percentage of these revenues undoubtedly derived from matches involving European teams (detailed figures are not available), redistributing a proportion to UEFA would significantly impact FIFA's finances. Aware of the need to provide financial support to UEFA (and the continental confederations in general), the members of the emergency committee, all of whom were European, began examining alternative solutions, such as abolishing the British associations' exemption from paying a percentage of its revenue from its 'Home Internationals' tournament (accorded when they re-joined FIFA in 1946), but without success.

[6]Freely translated from the French. *Statutes of the FIFA* [1954], art. 31. FIFAA, statutes (1904–1981).

[7]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 14 August 1955. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[8]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the FIFA emergency committee, 3 December 1957. FIFAA, emergency committee (1951–1957).

[9]'Tableau récapitulatif des recettes de la FIFA [1946–1954]', 13 September 1955. FIFAA, financial committee (1955–1962).

FIFA's delaying tactics did not weaken UEFA's resolve, especially given the similar demands now being made by the other continental confederations. For example, the Confederation of African Football's (CAF) draft statutes, which it sent to FIFA at the beginning of 1956, included a plan to finance its operations by 'splitting with FIFA the revenue from international matches played between members of the African Football Confederation'.[10] UEFA's conviction that FIFA had the means to support the continental confederations was bolstered by FIFA's increasingly solid financial position, as demonstrated by its ability to acquire a new headquarters in the centre of Zurich. Hence, UEFA's executive committee was extremely disappointed by the lack of support from FIFA's European executive committee members, who were supposed to represent and defend UEFA's interests within FIFA. This is why, at a meeting in March 1956, UEFA's executive committee decided to present its proposals for discussion at the next FIFA congress.[11]

In the weeks that followed, several measures were taken to resolve the problem. José Crahay and Pierre Delaunay paid an unofficial visit to FIFA's secretary general to discuss several items on the agenda of the forthcoming FIFA congress, particularly the UEFA's request to receive a proportion of the revenues from international matches collected by FIFA.[12] As he had done many times in the recent past (Vonnard 2019c), Ernst Thommen stepped in as mediator and drew up a possible compromise solution, which he presented to a FIFA executive committee meeting in Lisbon, a few days before the 1956 FIFA congress at which the matter was due to be discussed. Thommen's proposal was to increase the percentage of revenues FIFA received to 2% and for FIFA to redistribute a quarter of this amount to the relevant continental confederation. To convince the confederations to accept the proposal, he urged the members of the executive committee to actively discuss the matter with each one. However, the executive committee was not unanimously

[10]Freely translated from the French. 'Constitution and By-Laws of the African Football Confederation'. FIFAA, correspondence with CAF (1954–1967).

[11]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 18 March 1956. UEFAA, RM00005974, executive committee (1954–1959).

[12]Minutes of the FIFA emergency committee, 10 May 1956. FIFAA, emergency committee (1951–1957).

in favour of Thommen's idea, as its non-European members, especially the Asian confederation's member, Jack Skinner, preferred UEFA's proposal.[13]

At the same time, the South American confederation's new president, Carlos Dittborn, met with UEFA's executive committee during its preparatory meeting for the 1956 UEFA congress, which would take place a few days before the FIFA congress. Dittborn offered South America's support on a number of issues, including UEFA's proposal for sharing FIFA's earnings from international matches. A few hours later, UEFA's congress unanimously backed its executive committee's proposal and charged the French FA with presenting the motion to the forthcoming FIFA congress.[14] FIFA's congress quickly approved the motion, thanks to the support of a 'large majority'[15] of the other continental confederations, and it was added to FIFA's statutes. From now on, FIFA would redistribute half of the amount it received from each international match (2% of the match's gross revenues) to the continental confederation concerned. Although this measure did not apply to matches played as part of the World Cup, it was a key step in the continental confederations' gradual emancipation from FIFA, as it not only put them on a more secure financial footing, it also showed that, either individually or jointly, they could successfully bring issues before FIFA.

The confederations' growing independence made FIFA more difficult to manage and complicated the relations between the members of its executive committee, as they were now likely to put their continent's interests ahead of FIFA's. Doing so would greatly weaken FIFA's traditional collegial approach to management. On 22 July 1957, Karel Lotsy, who had been a member of the executive committee since the 1930s, exhorted his colleagues not to forget that they represented the executive

[13]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 6–7 June 1956. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

[14]Minutes of the UEFA congress, 8 June 1956. UEFAA, RM00000751 (executive committee, 1960–1961). As continental confederations are not recognised as members of FIFA, they cannot submit requests directly to the FIFA congress and are therefore obliged to go through their member associations.

[15]Minutes of the FIFA congress, 9–10 June 1956. FIFAA, congress (1953–1959).

committee and should always present its majority position during congresses.[16] However, undoubtedly aware that committee members' opinions diverged on numerous issues, a few months later a compromise was reached in which 'the president may [authorise an officer] of the executive committee to speak on behalf of the minority'.[17]

As Sugden and Tomlinson (1997) have shown with respect to the race for the FIFA presidency, relations between continental confederation and FIFA, and especially between UEFA and FIFA, were not always harmonious. This continental confederations' growing importance led to the idea that they should be made full members of FIFA and therefore have the right to submit amendments to FIFA's statutes. The idea was first discussed by UEFA's executive committee on the eve of the 1956 FIFA congress, but it did not put a concrete proposal to the assembly. UEFA's rapid development contributed to the continentalisation of the FIFA and played a role in the recognition of the continental confederations within the international federation.

7.2 Achieving Autonomy from FIFA

The decisions UEFA's elite took between 1955 and 1960 boosted European football and enabled UEFA to establish itself as its governing body. However, UEFA's rapid rise created tensions with the European members of FIFA's executive committee, who, despite having helped create UEFA and being in favour of it developing, believed it should remain subordinate to FIFA. A primary cause of these tensions was a series of decisions taken by UEFA's executive committee in 1956 and 1957 that called into question FIFA's superior status.

One of the first decisions UEFA took after it was founded was to stipulate in its statutes that Europe's FIFA executive committee members

[16]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 20–21 June 1957. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

[17]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 28 June 1958. FIFAA, executive committee (1958).

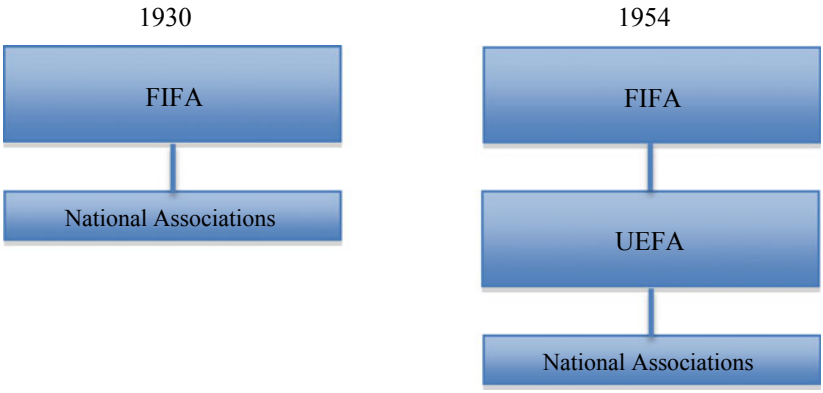

Fig. 7.1 European football bodies in 1930 and 1954

could not also sit on UEFA's executive committee.[18] This clause risked creating a divide between the two organisations because it meant that Europe's interests would now be represented by two different groups of people: Europe's members of FIFA's executive committee, whose main task was to protect Europe's interests within FIFA, and the members of UEFA's executive committee, who were responsible for developing the organisation and, above all, for overseeing European football (Fig. 7.1).

Although there were many subjects on which FIFA and UEFA agreed, as noted above with respect to the creation of the European Chamipons Clubs' Cup (see Sect. 5.3) and the issue of setting UEFA's geographical boundaries (see Sect. 6.2), disagreements began to emerge in 1955, triggered by UEFA's takeover of the International Youth Tournament. FIFA had run the tournament since 1949, but by the mid-1950s it was being suggested that it should be handed over to UEFA. One reason for this was the lack of a specific commission for youth tournaments within FIFA, which meant its secretariat had to organise the competition in conjunction with the host country's organising committee (see Sect. 2.1). These dealings with national associations often exasperated FIFA's secretary general, Gassmann, who expressed his frustration in September

[18]Minutes of the European body congress, 22 June 1954. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

1955: 'Once again, we had to remind the associations on several occasions to send us their comments and suggestions. Twelve of the nineteen accepted our invitation. It is with regret that we note this lack of collaboration'.[19] Given the tense political situation between Eastern and Western Europe, organising the tournament required a lot of work, which FIFA's secretariat had neither the time nor the resources to do. For example, FIFA was criticised for East Germany being unable to take part in the 1955 tournament because the Italian government failed to provide its team with the necessary visas. This intrusion of politics into football raised a huge outcry and resulted in FIFA's secretariat receiving nearly 80 telegrams and letters of protest from various members of Europe's football community. Another important reason for entrusting the tournament to UEFA was South America's desire to start a similar competition for its continent.[20]

Given all these considerations, in September 1955 FIFA decided to entrust the organisation of international youth tournaments to the relevant continental confederation. But this did not mean FIFA was prepared to give up all of its authority over youth tournaments, as its executive committee added the proviso:

> These tournaments must, however, be played in accordance with the provision of the regulations set up by the executive committee which shall be in force in all continents. The executive committee shall supervise the tournaments and delegate one or several members to control the application of the provisions of the general regulations.[21]

On 5 January 1956, Kurt Gassmann contacted UEFA's secretary general, Pierre Delaunay, to ask him if UEFA would be willing to take over the European version of the competition as of 1957. In his letter, Gassmann informed Delaunay that FIFA would devolve only the running of the tournament to UEFA and, consequently, '[UEFA's] executive committee

[19]Commentary on the agenda of the FIFA executive committee, 17 and 18 September. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

[20]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 18 November 1954. FIFAA, executive committee (1953–1954).

[21]Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 17 September 1955. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

[will] only deal with the general regulations governing the tournament, which would be the basis for it. It must be the same for all youth tournaments, no matter where they take place'.[22] Delaunay immediately agreed to include the issue on the agenda of the next UEFA executive committee meeting, scheduled for March.[23]

The transfer of responsibility for the tournament to UEFA was clearly acknowledged in Gassmann's secretary general's report for 1954–1955, which was published in March 1956. Gassmann wrote that 'in the future - i.e., from 1957 onwards - the tournament in Europe must be organised by the Union of European Football Associations',[24] which would, nevertheless, have to comply with the regulations established by FIFA, whose executive committee would retain control over the tournament. UEFA's executive committee formally accepted FIFA's proposal on 18 March 1956.[25]

Although FIFA saw passing responsibility for organising the tournament to UEFA as a simple transfer, UEFA felt it was an ideal time to review the competition's rules, especially the new rule under which there would be no designated winner. Ottorino Barassi had introduced this rule in his role as president of the organising committee for the 1955 edition in Italy, at least partly in response to Karel Lotsy's earlier criticisms of the declining spirit of fraternity in the competition (Marston 2016, p. 144). Not designating a winner was intended to make the tournament, which also included a programme of cultural activities, more convivial. UEFA's proposal to reinstate the idea of a tournament winner was not well received by FIFA's executive committee, especially its European members, who had been responsible for the recent amendments to the tournament's rules.

In order to ensure a smooth handover, delegates at the 1956 UEFA congress agreed to create a special committee for youth football. For this

[22]Letter from K. Gassmann to P. Delaunay, 5 January 1956. FIFAA, correspondence with UEFA (1955–1958).

[23]Letter from P. Delaunay to K. Gassmann, 7 January 1956. FIFAA, correspondence with UEFA (1955–1958).

[24]Freely translated from the French. FIFA secretary general's report (1954–1955). FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

[25]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 18 March 1956. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

task, they chose men who had experience of youth football,[26] including England's Stanley Rous, who had launched the tournament in 1948 and who was a great proponent of youth football; Germany's Karl Zimmermann, who had helped organise the 1953 tournament in Germany; France's Louis Pelletier, who chaired the French FA's youth commission; and Czechoslovakia's Joseph Vogl, who was involved in youth football in his country. They were joined by José Crahay, representing UEFA's executive committee, who was strongly in favour of UEFA developing competitions. In addition to their experience and desire to develop youth football, the committee's members represented all the different forces and blocs within UEFA, except Scandinavia. Creating this committee enabled UEFA to take over the organisation of the tournament. FIFA's and UEFA's secretary generals corresponded frequently on this subject throughout the summer of 1956. On July 6, Gassmann reminded Delaunay of the spirit in which FIFA's executive committee had entrusted the European youth tournament to UEFA.[27] He also sent Delaunay documents he felt would be useful and said he would be available to meet if necessary. Gassmann's actions were as much a way of demonstrating FIFA's hierarchical superiority as a way of supporting UEFA's secretary general. Delaunay responded by informing Gassmann that UEFA's executive committee had made all necessary provisions.[28]

A few weeks later, Delaunay provided an update on the progress that had been made, noting that a meeting of the UEFA committee set up to run the tournament would take place on 28–29 September and be followed by a discussion about the competition by UEFA's emergency committee. These meetings, he added, would examine possible changes to the tournament's rules because UEFA's leaders did not share FIFA's opinion on the conditions for organising the youth tournament. Delaunay's remarks were a turning point in the relations between UEFA and FIFA and elicited an immediate reaction from Gassmann, who wrote to

[26]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 13 June 1956. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

[27]Letter from K. Gassmann to P. Delaunay, 6 July 1956. FIFAA, correspondence with UEFA (1955–1958).

[28]Letter from P. Delaunay to K. Gassmann, 11 July 1956. FIFAA, correspondence with UEFA (1955–1958).

Delaunay to remind him that 'the tournament must be organised according to the guidelines established by the FIFA executive committee'.[29] For Gassmann, UEFA would be going beyond its remit if it tried to change the tournament's rules. Feeling that FIFA was losing its influence over UEFA, Gassmann wrote to FIFA's new president, Arthur Drewry, who had been appointed by the 1956 congress following the death of his predecessor, Rodolphe Seeldrayers. Drewry hoped the presence on UEFA's youth committee of Stanley Rous, who had similar views to the European members of FIFA's executive committee, would prevent any reforms being approved. However, Rous was in the minority on the committee and was therefore unable to block the proposed changes.[30]

UEFA obviously intended to run the tournament independently of FIFA's decisions and recommendations, and FIFA's executive committee realised it would be impossible to convince UEFA's leaders to act differently. FIFA could, however, express its disapproval of the way UEFA was managing the event, which it did by refusing its request to use the trophy from previous tournaments on the pretext that it was 'not intended for the junior tournament of a single continent'.[31]

In April 1957, a few weeks after the first UEFA-organised edition of the tournament, José Crahay presented the changes to the tournament's regulations as an attempt to 'increase the [tournament's] success in both sporting and entertaining terms'.[32] The main change was to reinforce the tournament's competitive aspect by reinstating the principle of an overall winner. In fact, even if the tournament committee approved of FIFA's attempt to reduce the focus on competition, it was obvious that the teams involved were still trying to win the tournament. The altercation over the youth tournament came to an end in June 1957, when FIFA's executive committee acknowledged 'that the organisation of this tournament had passed entirely into the hands of the Union of European

[29]Freely translated from the French. Letter from K. Gassmann to P. Delaunay, 19 September 1956. FIFAA, correspondence with UEFA (1955–1958).

[30]Letter from A. Drewry to K. Gassmann, 5 October 1956. FIFAA, correspondence with UEFA (1955–1958).

[31]Gassmann K., Minutes of the FIFA emergency committee, 15 March 1957. FIFAA, emergency committee (1951–1957).

[32]'Le tournoi international de juniors 1957', *UEFA Official Bulletin*, no 4, April 1957.

Football Associations'.[33] The youth tournament's transfer to UEFA highlighted not only the European confederation's growing independence from FIFA but also the differences in the way the European members of FIFA's executive committee, notably Barassi, Lotsy and even Thommen, viewed football administration compared with their UEFA counterparts. As Kevin Tallec Marston (2016, p. 152) rightly noted, UEFA's approach was not a complete break from FIFA's attitude; rather, it was a case of FIFA focusing on football as a means to build fraternity, whereas UEFA's priority was the competitive side of football.

The reasons why the two organisations had different outlooks may be found in their social and career backgrounds. Both organisations' leaders had had long careers in national football administration before rising to the top of FIFA or UEFA. Hence, as secretary general or president of their national association, they visited many of Europe's capitals to attend FIFA congresses and accompanied their national teams to matches around the world. These trips enabled them to build a large store of relational capital and to develop a cosmopolitan world view. Although little information is available about many of these leaders' early careers (Vonnard 2017), most of them appear to have come from middle-class backgrounds which suggests that most of them had enjoyed a university (or similar) education. As a result, the leaders of both organisations would have had similar cultural capital and most of them spoke two or three European languages. Some had also lived in a foreign country. This was the case for Delaunay, who lived in London when he was in his twenties, and Sebes, who spent several years in France during the 1930s.

Despite these similarities, there were other areas in which the profiles and backgrounds of FIFA's and UEFA's leaders differed. Most importantly, the men who composed UEFA's executive committee embodied a new generation of European football executives, most of whom had not been top-class players or referees. The two remaining members of the old guard, Gustav Sebes and Henry Delaunay, were rare exceptions to this rule, as Sebes had played briefly in France (Hadas 1999) and had coached

[33]Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 20–21 June 1957. FIFAA, executive committee (1955–1957).

Hungary's 1954 World Cup team, and Delaunay had been a national-level referee (Wahl 1989). In contrast, although the other members of the executive committee had played football in their youth, they never played at a high level and therefore probably had a different relationship to the game to their predecessors. Another difference was that three of the six members of UEFA's executive committee (Crahay, Delaunay and Graham, plus Stanley Rous, who can be seen as Graham's replacement, from 1958) had served as secretary general of their national association. This would have precluded them from rising to the top of FIFA, as football executives who had been paid for their services were not allowed to sit on its executive committee.[34] Thus, the election of Crahay, Delaunay and Graham to UEFA's executive committee shows that from the very beginning, UEFA's leaders wanted to distance themselves from FIFA's customs and traditions, and follow their own path. The presence of national association secretaries on UEFA's executive committee is significant, because their managerial experience would have given them a technocratic view of football administration, rather than the idealistic view typical of most national association presidents. Consequently, they are more likely to have seen developing football, especially professional football, as more important than more general ideals, such as football's social utility, which are more relevant to amateur football. Their presence was also a sign of the gradual professionalisation of European football that was occurring due to the need to effectively administer the growing number of matches being played and the ever-expanding range of tasks executives were being asked to carry out.

In 1956, FIFA also gave into the above-mentioned request for revenue redistribution. This was yet another step in the gradual moving apart of the two organisation's executive committees. The tension increased again two years later, when UEFA asked FIFA to redistribute revenues from World Cup matches. The percentage FIFA finally agreed to redistribute not only made a significant contribution to UEFA's finances and

[34]Article 17, alinea 14 of FIFA statutes stated: 'Paid officials shall not be allowed to serve on the executive committee'. *Statutes of the FIFA* [1954]. FIFAA, statutes (1904–1981).

its ability to expand its activities, it confirmed its ability to act independently from FIFA. UEFA's executive committee demonstrated this independence in October 1958, when it removed the acronym 'FIFA' from the header on UEFA correspondence and the organisation's statutes.[35]

However, having a strained relationship with FIFA would not be in Europe's long-term interest, as FIFA's continuing international expansion was certain to erode Europe's dominance over the world governing body. With this in mind, the European members of FIFA's executive committee met with UEFA's executive committee at the beginning of 1959 in order to try and get the relationship between the two bodies back onto a more favourable footing. Stanley Rous's election to UEFA's executive committee may have facilitated the dialogue, as Rous was on good terms with Barassi and Thommen. Whether or not this was the case, on 5 March 1959 UEFA's president, Ebbe Schwartz, expressed his satisfaction that relations between the two organisations were improving.[36] Thommen took the process further in December 1959 by setting up a FIFA-UEFA consultation committee, which he hoped would improve ties between the organisations' executive committees. The consultation committee held its first meeting in Paris, after which Thommen wrote to UEFA's executive committee to express both his satisfaction with the meeting and his conviction that the procedure was an important step in ensuring a good understanding between FIFA and UEFA.[37] The aborted European Cup of Nations quarter-final between the Soviet Union and Spain (see Sect. 6.1) provided an opportunity for FIFA and UEFA to demonstrate their new-found entente and their acceptance of each other's areas of responsibility. When the Soviet Union filed a complaint with FIFA, in May 1960, FIFA's emergency committee refused to consider the matter because it concerned a competition organised by UEFA and

[35]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 28 October 1958. UEFAA, RM00000749 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[36]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 5 March 1959. UEFAA, RM00005984 (UEFA congress, 1954–1959).

[37]Letter from E. Thommen to the UEFA executive committee, 27 July 1960. UEFAA, RM0000949 (UEFA-FIFA committee, 1959–1962).

'therefore the UEFA executive committee is competent to decide on the dispute'.[38]

During its first few years, UEFA gradually secured its independence from FIFA, which enabled it to establish a monopoly over the administration of European football. This policy influenced the other continental confederation and also the South American body who was until the mid-1950s a model for the new entities that were emerging in Africa, Asia and Europe.

7.3 Inspiring the South Americans in Return

In Europe, South America's approach served as inspiration for the discussions that led to the creation of the UEFA (see Sect. 2.3 and Chapter 4) and as noted in the previous section heavily influenced its request to receive a percentage of the revenues FIFA collected from international matches. South America's continental competitions, such as the Copa America, which date back to 1915, the South American youth tournament, first held in 1954, and the Pan-American confederation's Pan-American Championship, launched in 1952,[39] were also seen as examples to follow. However, UEFA's rapid development influenced the other confederations, even South America.

In a paper on 'contrastive history', Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann noted: 'When we study contacts between societies, we frequently observe that objects and practices are not only interrelated, they also evolve as a result of this relationship' (freely translated from the French, 2003, p. 12). This approach is closely linked to the concept of 'cultural transfer', which focuses on the arrival and development of a practice in a territory and illuminates its progressive change under the influence of the cultural context (Fontaine 2019).[40] Applying this

[38] Minutes of the FIFA executive committee, 7 July 1960. FIFAA, executive committee (1960).

[39] At the present stage of my research, the role of the Pan-American Confederation, which was created in 1948 (Vonnard and Quin 2017, pp. 1430–1431), remains unclear. Apart from organising the Pan-American Championship, in which few teams took part, and publishing an official bulletin, it does not seem to have had much influence.

[40] For a recent example on the case of football, see Koller (2017).

concept to football's new continental bodies suggests that interactions between their leaders are likely to have influenced the way they structured their confederations. Thus, given UEFA's rapid development and the well-organised nature of its national associations, its actions would be expected to influence those of non-European leaders, particularly those of the South American confederation.

The first example of this influence concerned UEFA's response to the need to find new sources of revenue to cover its ever-increasing expenses. As UEFA's activities expanded by, for example, taking over the organisation of the International Youth Tournament from FIFA—as explained in the previous section—its executive committee needed to cut costs and find additional income.[41] Having already obtained a percentage of the revenues FIFA received from non-World Cup international matches played in Europe (see Sect. 7.2), a request that was inspired by a similar agreement between FIFA and the South American confederation, it took the unprecedented step of asking FIFA to extend the system to World Cup matches. That UEFA was prepared to make such a groundbreaking request and that FIFA's executive committee considered it, in 1957 and 1958, shows the European confederation's growing self-confidence and increasing importance within the world governing body. In a tentative first step, UEFA wrote to FIFA's executive committee on 28 February 1957 to ask whether FIFA would contemplate sharing the percentage of gross revenues it received from World Cup matches, so 4% went to FIFA and 1% went to UEFA,[42] and whether such an agreement had been reached with any of the other confederations. FIFA's secretary general, Kurt Gassmann, conveyed the executive committee's unequivocal response: 'the 5% of gross revenues from the 1958 World Cup qualifiers

[41] Organising the tournament proved particularly costly in 1958, some games were held in Luxembourg, as the host association had few resources. Transcript of: '4e Assemblée générale de l'UEFA à Stockholm. 10. Règlement du tournoi international juniors'. UEFAA, RM00005987 (1958 ordinary congress and 1959 extraordinary congress).

[42] Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 28 February 1957. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

will go entirely to FIFA'.[43] Gassmann also noted that FIFA had no agreement to redistribute a percentage of these revenues with the other continental confederations and was not contemplating any such agreements. Undeterred by this response, UEFA's executive committee decided to go on the offensive and put the issue to FIFA's next congress.[44] Once again, UEFA was showing its willingness to challenge the authority of FIFA's executive committee.

UEFA felt its request was reasonable given the apparent robustness of FIFA's finances, a judgment that was based, at least partly, on FIFA's ability to record a surplus for the previous year. Although the 21,171.86 Swiss francs profit FIFA posted for 1956 may seem small, it was rare for FIFA to make a profit, especially in a non-World Cup year, so any profit was seen as a sign of financial good health. This was confirmed the following year, when FIFA's surplus increased to 74,671 Swiss francs.[45] In addition, FIFA had more than CHF2 million in assets.[46] Nevertheless, FIFA was unwilling to bow to UEFA's request. In his 1956–1957 activity report, UEFA's secretary general noted that FIFA's executive committee disagreed with the national associations that felt FIFA should the 5% of gross revenues it received from World Cup matches by redistributing 1% of these gross revenues to the appropriate continental confederation.[47] Delaunay's report refers to national associations, rather than continental bodies, because the confederations were not yet considered members of FIFA. Undoubtedly as a way of avoiding further discord, FIFA agreed to discuss the matter at its next congress.

As negotiations continued through the first few months of 1958, Barassi and Thommen attempted to mediate. Their discussions with a

[43] Freely translated from the French. Letter from K. Gassmann to P. Delaunay, 24 April 1957. FIFAA, correspondence with UEFA (1955–1958).

[44] Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 26–27 June 1958. UEFAA, RM00005974 (executive committee, 1954–1959).

[45] *Financial report of the secretary general (1957)*, 21 January 1958. FIFAA, financial committee (1955–1962).

[46] Minutes of the emergency committee, 15 March 1957. FIFAA, emergency committee (1951–1957).

[47] At the same time, FIFA was contesting a decision (described by its secretary general as unexpected) by Zurich's Cantonal Tax Office, which was asking FIFA to pay cantonal and municipal taxes, from which it had been exempt for more than 25 years. Despite long negotiations, the Swiss authorities rejected FIFA's request.

delegation from UEFA's finance committee finally resulted in a compromise under which FIFA would retain all the revenues it earned from the 1958 World Cup but accede to UEFA's request for the 1962 edition.

Why did FIFA, and especially Barassi and Thommen, change their minds? One reason may be the support UEFA had received from other continental confederations, particularly the South American confederation, which had made a similar request via the Brazilian FA. This demand was never mentioned by FIFA's executive committee, so it was probably filed after UEFA's request. Another possible hypothesis is that the continental confederations were preparing an alliance so they could present a united front at the FIFA congress. Whatever the reason for FIFA's decision, during UEFA's 1958 annual congress, the chairman of UEFA's finance committee, Peco Bauwens 'welcome[d] the fact that an agreement with FIFA seems to have been reached on this point'.[48] UEFA's member associations were also happy with Barassi and Thommen's proposed compromise, which they approved at the UEFA congress. A few days later, FIFA's congress agreed 'by a large majority'[49] that the confederations would now obtain 1% of the gross revenues from World Cup matches, out of the 5% received by FIFA. In addition to strengthening UEFA's and the other confederations' finances, this decision enabled UEFA's leading executives to position themselves as particularly active players in their confederation's development and made UEFA's actions a source of inspiration for the other continental bodies.

For example, a few weeks after the 1958 congress, the president of the South American confederation, José Ramos de Freitas, wrote to FIFA's secretary general, Kurt Gassmann, requesting, in the 'interests of South American sport',[50] access to the following documents relating to UEFA's activities:

- UEFA's statutes,
- the rules of the European Champion Clubs' Cup,

[48] Freely translated from the French. Minutes of the UEFA congress, 4 June 1958. UEFAA, RM00005986 (founding congress, 1954 - ordinary congress, 1955–1957).

[49] Minutes of the FIFA congress, 5 June 1958. FIFAA, congress (1958–1961).

[50] Freely translated from the French. Letter from J. Ramos de la Freitas to Kurt Gassmann, 28 July 1958. FIFAA, correspondence with CONMEBOL (1941–1961).

– the rules of Europe's referees commission,
– the rules of the International Youth Tournament.

This letter raises at least two interesting points. First, why did Ramos de Freitas contact FIFA for this information, rather than going directly to UEFA? Was it because he saw UEFA as subordinate to FIFA and therefore felt he should contact FIFA first? Second, why did the South American confederation need these documents? Was it considering reforming its own structure? None of the information provided by FIFA's correspondence with the South American confederation provides precise answers to these questions.

On the other hand, it is clear that the South Americans asked for the rules of the Champion Clubs' Cup because they were looking to create a similar competition for South American clubs. As *L'Équipe* reported in the summer of 1959,[51] the South American confederation was discussing the possibility of transposing the increasingly successful European Champion Clubs' Cup to South America. The result was the Copa Libertadores, the first edition of which took place during the 1959–1960 season, with matches taking place mainly in the spring. Of course, the Copa Libertadores did not follow exactly the same format as the Champions Cup, but it appears to have been inspired by the European competition.

The other continental confederations followed suit during the 1960s by launching their own club competitions. Thus, by the end of the 1950s, UEFA had become an inspiration for all the world's confederations and much more influential within FIFA.

[51] '1960: An I de la Coupe du monde des clubs car l'Amérique du Sud va imiter l'Europe', *L'Équip*e, 19 August 1959.

8

Conclusion

4 September 1960. Following a 5-1 home win over Peñarol Montevideo, Real Madrid lifts the first Intercontinental Cup. This new trophy brought together the winners of Europe's and South America's flagship club competitions: UEFA's Champion Clubs' Cup and the South American Football Confederation's Copa Libertadores. It was an occasion on which continental allegiances prevailed, with some journalists seeing Real Madrid as representing the whole of Europe.[1] Launching this event—the world's first transcontinental competition for clubs—had required more than two years of negotiations between the two continental bodies,[2] encouraged by *L'Équipe*.[3] Moreover, the competition was planned entirely outside the confines of FIFA, which did not recognise it.[4]

[1] 'Le Real Madrid portera les insignes de l'Europe', *France Football*, 28 June 1960.

[2] After preliminary discussions in 1958 and 1959, the two organisations came to an agreement at a meeting in Bern on 25 June 1960. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee meeting, 19 August 1960. UEFAA, RM00000751 (executive committee 1960–1961).

[3] 'Les deux sœurs', *France Football*, 27 October 1959; 'Havelange condamne les débordements de Maracanã', *L'Équipe*, 19 November 1963.

[4] Ernst Thommen reminded the executive committee meeting of 19 August 1960 that 'any intercontinental competition is the responsibility of FIFA'. FIFA's executive committee signalled its disapproval of the continental confederations' actions by deciding that none of its members

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Football Research in an Enlarged Europe,
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The Intercontinental Cup is a good illustration of the changes in international football that had taken place over the past two decades. First, it shows how the creation of continental confederations during the 1950s had resulted in more structured links between the continents. Second, it highlights the continental confederations' status as significant players in developing football, on their respective continents and more broadly around the world, where they compete with FIFA.

8.1 The Establishment of a European Football Confederation

In this book, I retrace the history of the founding of UEFA and show how it became a key player in developing the European scale in football. My research focused on three complementary themes: UEFA's role in increasing football exchanges within Europe; the ability of UEFA's leaders to create an organisation that transcended Cold War divisions; and the reasons why UEFA came into being in the mid-1950s.

My analysis of UEFA's role in increasing football exchanges within Europe was based on the hypothesis that its creation corresponded to a new stage in this process. Although there had been regular football-related exchanges between European countries since the end of World War I, a new stage began in the late 1940s, initiated by the reintegration of the British associations and the affiliation of the Soviet Union into FIFA. This expansion of the 'Europe of football' inspired many of the game's leading figures to launch more ambitious competitions and even to suggest creating a continental confederation. This latter idea was first reported in the French press in 1949 and attributed to Ottorino Barassi, the Italian FA's influential president, but the conditions required to create such an entity did not emerge until 1953, when FIFA adopted a more decentralised structure. UEFA was founded the following year and immediately began taking steps that would increase

attend would the second leg match, in Madrid, in an official capacity. Freely translated from the French. Minutes of FIFA executive committee, 5 October 1960. FIFAA, executive committee (1960).

exchanges within European football. Its efforts, which were primarily focused around creating new tournaments for national teams and clubs (e.g. European Cup of Nations and, later, the Cup Winners' Cup) and taking over existing competitions (e.g. European Champion Clubs' Cup, International Youth Tournament), successfully initiated new exchanges between national associations all across Europe, from Norway to Greece, from Turkey to Ireland. As well as becoming more numerous, European matches were now played throughout the football season, in contrast with the interwar competitions (such as the Mitropa Cup), which had been concentrated mostly into the summer months.

These developments were facilitated by improved transportation (including air travel, which enabled teams to play abroad during the week and be back in time to play in their domestic championship at the weekend) and stadium infrastructure (e.g. floodlighting, which allowed games to be played at night, even during the winter), but launching new competitions was not, of course, a linear process and some projects, notably the European Cup of Nations, were resisted by some influential national associations (England, Germany and Italy). Nevertheless, by the early 1960s there were more European matches than ever before, and some commentators were beginning to suggest that European tournaments had become at least as important as national and international competitions, albeit without eclipsing them entirely.

My second theme was how UEFA's leaders managed to create an organisation that overcame Cold War divisions. This unique achievement set UEFA apart from the supposedly pan-European entities that were founded in other fields at this time (e.g. culture, economics, science, technology) but which did not go beyond Western Europe. My aim was to examine the relationship between UEFA's ruling elite and politics, in order to determine how UEFA was able to bring together individuals, clubs and even nations that would otherwise have remained separated by international politics and, more generally, how it managed to maintain its autonomy on the international scene.

I found that in order to ensure their organisation's independence from other international bodies, UEFA's leaders applied similar governance strategies to those developed within FIFA since the 1930s, including

gaining financial independence, not intervening in the affairs of its member associations, consulting the different forces within UEFA when filling seats on the executive committee and appointing leaders who had diplomatic skills (a *sine qua non* for the secretary general) and experience of how their respective national associations worked, but, if possible, who did not hold political office. All these decisions strengthened UEFA and enabled it to establish itself as the dominant body in European football and to be seen as such by other entities both inside and outside (e.g. other international organisations) the world of football.

I dwelt on these points at length in order to provide a clear explanation of how, from the very beginning, UEFA managed to get associations from both sides of the Iron Curtain to work together and how its leaders managed to limit the impact of the Cold War on the organisation. UEFA's success in this respect, accomplished by applying similar conflict-avoidance strategies to those used by FIFA's leaders, enabled it to grow rapidly and establish itself as the regulating body for European football. Thus, despite the potential for political discord between its members, by the end of the 1950s UEFA had obtained a monopoly over European football competitions and prevented other football bodies (e.g. the ILLC created in 1959) from launching European competitions. At the same time, organisations outside the world of sport (e.g. the European Broadcasting Union) had come to consider UEFA as the governing body for European football. However, UEFA's rise was not universally welcomed, especially by FIFA, whose leaders were unhappy to see some of their responsibilities were being taken from them. Differences between UEFA and FIFA came to light over a wide variety of issues (e.g. UEFA's takeover of the International Youth Tournament) and risked causing antagonism between the two organisations. In order to avoid this possibility, a FIFA-UEFA consultative committee was set up to discuss issues before they became problematic. Last but not least, UEFA's competitions and annual congresses provided regular opportunities for official meetings between countries that otherwise had no diplomatic relations, such as Spain and Yugoslavia. This almost unique ability to bring countries together made UEFA an 'atypical actor' in the Europe integration process.

The third question I addressed in this book is why UEFA was created in the mid-1950s. Viewed from a global perspective, the primary factor

governing the timing of UEFA's formation can be seen to be the restructuring of FIFA along continental lines in 1953, which South America's associations had been campaigning for since the 1930s. Strengthened by their alliance with the Central American associations, via the creation in 1946 of the Pan-American Confederation, in the late 1940s South America's executives put forward concrete proposals to decentralise FIFA and thereby acquire additional seats on its executive committee. Their demands were given greater weight by Europe's concerns about losing its dominant position within FIFA due to the number of newly decolonised African and Asian countries that started joining the world governing body after World War II.

This influx of new associations meant FIFA not only had to address South America's demands, it had to take into account Africa's desire to create a supra-regional grouping. These ideas resonated with the new generation of European leaders, notably Barassi, Rous and Thommen, who were becoming increasingly influential within FIFA and who believed that the federation needed to be restructured in order to develop football around the world. FIFA's 1950 congress in Rio de Janeiro—the first congress to be held outside Europe—examined a variety of possible reforms to FIFA's structure but decided that further consultation was needed. After three years of negotiations, a comprehensive proposal for restructuring FIFA was ready to present to an extraordinary congress in Paris in November 1953. Despite intense debate between the different blocs within FIFA (South American, British, Soviet), each of which had its own position, an alliance between the Western European and South American associations resulted in the extraordinary congress finally approving a formal motion to create continental groups. Under the new statutes, Europe's associations were allocated six seats on FIFA's executive committee and would therefore have to create a continental grouping to choose the people who would fill these seats.

Restructuring FIFA along continental lines, a reform it had been demanding for two decades was not the South American confederation's only contribution; it also provided the model on which Europe's leaders based the new European grouping's organisational architecture when it was founded at the beginning of 1954. South America continued to influence UEFA throughout its early years, most notably when

it was looking for new sources of income. Thus, in 1955 UEFA asked to receive a proportion of the revenues FIFA collects from international matches involving European teams, using as its main argument the similar agreement FIFA had already signed with the South American confederation. After several months of discussions, FIFA finally agreed to UEFA's request.

However, UEFA developed so quickly during the 1950s that by the end of the decade, the roles had been reversed. Inspired by the success of UEFA's Champion Clubs' Cup, in 1959 the South American confederation approached FIFA for details of the European competition so it could study them before setting up its own continental club competition, the Copa Libertadores. It is noteworthy that the two confederations also conferred, and even formed alliances, within FIFA, as when UEFA asked FIFA to redistribute to the confederations a proportion of the revenues it earned from World Cup matches.

By the end of the 1950s, UEFA had a well-established structure and was starting to be recognised as the governing body for European football. It would consolidate this position throughout the coming decade.

8.2 UEFA's Consolidation during the 1960s

The early 1960s gave UEFA the opportunity to extend its territory by affiliating three new members: Malta, in 1960; Turkey, in 1962; and Cyprus, in 1963.[5] As discussed in Chapter 6, the Turkish FA had been refused UEFA membership in 1954, notably because it was based in Ankara, on the Asian side of the Bosporus, and therefore considered by FIFA to be an Asian association. This changed in the early 1960s, when the Turkish FA moved its headquarters to Istanbul, on the western side of the Bosporus, enabling FIFA to recategorise it as European. The door was now open for it to join UEFA.[6] These three arrivals increased UEFA's membership to 33 associations, a number that would remain unchanged

[5]Minutes of the UEFA congress, 17 April 1964. UEFAA, RM0005989 (VII Ordinary Congress, 1964, Madrid).

[6]Agenda of the FIFA executive committee, 12–13 December 1961. FIFAA, executive committee (1961–1962).

until the early 1990s, when the fall of the Iron Curtain and the resulting break-up of both the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia redrew the political boundaries within Eastern Europe.

UEFA was now respected as the governing body for European football and its congresses (biannual since 1962) were attended by most of its member associations. In addition to the almost 100 delegates and guests (notably the European members of FIFA's executive committee) who attended each congress, these gatherings brought together the entire European football community, including other leading figures with a direct or indirect interest in football (coaches, politicians, etc.) and journalists (Table 8.1).

UEFA had achieved its dominant position in European football primarily by securing a monopoly over European competitions. It is also important to note that clubs from the Soviet Union finally began taking part in UEFA's club competitions in 1966 (Zeller 2011). This shows how important UEFA's tournaments had become for UEFA's members and clubs and also the importance the Soviet Union government accorded to international sport exchanges (Dufraisse 2020). However, other organisations (e.g. the International League Liaison Committee, see Chapter 6) continued putting forward ideas for ambitious new tournaments with the potential to rival UEFA's competitions and challenge its monopoly. Two such proposals came to UEFA's attention in the mid-1960s, nearly a decade after a group of journalists at *L'Equipe* had launched Europe's first

Table 8.1 Number of countries and delegates present at UEFA congresses from 1960 to 1970

Congress venue	Year	Parallel events	Countries present	Delegates present[a]
Rome	1960	Olympic Games	29	80
London[b]	1961	FIFA Congress	29	81
Sofia	1962	–	30	67
Madrid	1964[c]	–	30	71
London	1966	World Cup (FIFA Congress)	32	89
Rome	1968	–	32	92
Dubrovnik	1970	–	32	79

Notes [a]Includes members of the execute committee; [b]Extraordinary congress; [c]Transition to a congress every two years
Source Table based on the minutes of UEFA congresses from 1960 to 1970

club competition, the Champion Clubs' Cup. The first of these proposals, the 'Télé-magazine Cup', was dreamed up by the French newspaper proprietor and president of Olympique de Marseille football club, Marcel Leclerc, who planned to use television to popularise the event (Vonnard 2019b). The second project was devised by the European Economic Community's (EEC) press office. Involving the eight clubs (one from each of the Common Market's six member countries, plus one English and one Scottish club) that finished second in their domestic leagues, it was conceived as a counterpart to the Champion Clubs' Cup (Vonnard 2018b). Neither project went ahead, but they show that many organisations, both inside and outside football, were interested in launching new European competitions. In a similar vein, several major European clubs held meetings in Monaco in 1967 in order to discuss issues such as reforming European football competitions and resurrecting the old idea (first put forward in the 1930s by journalists, including Gabriel Hanot) of creating a European club championship (King 2004)—an idea that is still in the air and regularly resurfaces in the media.

None of these ideas came to fruition, largely because of the measures UEFA's executive committee took to counter them, including reserving the sole right to organise European tournaments and prohibiting 'clubs participating in UEFA competitions from taking part in other international club competitions'.[7] Although this clause did not 'apply to club competitions held exclusively during summer breaks',[8] it undeniably made UEFA's competitions more attractive. Nevertheless, UEFA's monopoly over major European competitions was not complete, as the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup remained out of its control. Some member associations felt UEFA should take over the competition and called on the executive committee to do so in 1962.[9] Although the UEFA's leaders rejected this request, preferring just to have a say in the event's rules, the tournament's continued success soon led them to change their minds. In fact, by the mid-1960s the Fairs Cup had become Europe's largest football competition in terms of the number of clubs taking part (almost 60 clubs)

[7]Minutes of the UEFA executive committee, 26–27 March 1964. UEFAA, RM00000755 (executive committee, 26 March 1963).

[8]As the International (or Interoto) Cup or Mitropa Cup.

[9]Minutes of the UEFA congress, 17 April 1962. UEFAA, RM0005988 (V–VI Ordinary Congresses, 1960–1962. II Extraordinary Congress).

and was therefore a threat to UEFA's dominant position in European competitions (Ferran 1978). UEFA's 1966 congress readily approved a motion to take over the competition,[10] but five years of negotiations were needed before this decision came into effect, in 1971. UEFA marked this change by renaming the event the 'UEFA Cup'.[11]

UEFA's three European competitions, which journalists began calling the 'European Cups', received extensive media coverage (press, radio, television) and impacted Europe's football stage in two main ways. First, by awarding places in European competitions to only the top three or four clubs in each country's domestic league, they intensified national championship battles. Second, they gave great status to clubs capable of winning them and turned some teams (e.g. Real Madrid in the 1950s, Ajax Amsterdam, Bayern Munich and Liverpool FC in the 1970s) or players into legends (Holt et al. 1996). The prestige and financial windfall clubs derived from UEFA's competitions meant it was difficult to set up other tournaments that would be played at the same time of year. For this reason, most new tournaments, such as the International Cup (also known as the Intertoto Cup or the Karl Rappan Cup), created in 1960 by sports betting groups, and the Balkan Club Cup (Breuil and Constantin 2015), took place during the summer break.[12]

In the mid-1960s, UEFA decided to reform the European Cup of Nations and rename it the 'European Championship of Nations–Henri Delaunay Cup', in memory of UEFA's first secretary general. Instead of the two-leg, knockout format of the 1960 and 1964 editions, the revamped competition would take the form of a mini-championship in which the first three rounds (round of 32, round of 16 and quarter-finals) of the original competition were replaced by a qualifying phase played in groups of three to four teams. The new format increased the number of matches that would be played, as did the inclusion, for the

[10]Minutes of the UEFA congress, 6 July 1966. UEFAA, RM00005990 (VIII Ordinary Congress, London).

[11]To date, no research has been carried out on this issue. For some preliminary reflections, see Vonnard (2019a).

[12]This was also the case for existing competitions, such as the Mitropa Cup and the Aplin Cup. Most of these competitions disappeared in the 1980s or were taken over by UEFA (e.g. the Intertoto Cup, which UEFA took over in the 1990s).

first time, of all of Europe's football associations, including the British and German associations (Dietschy 2017). A similar process happened to the International Youth Tournament with the consequences to reinforce the competitional aspect of the competition to the detriment of the educational aspect wanted by its initial promoters (Marston 2016b).

Organising these tournaments not only increased UEFA's legitimacy, it gave it an additional source of revenue. According to its secretary general's report for 1972–1973,[13] Europe's national teams played 144 friendly matches and 113 competitive matches, and its clubs played 243 matches (with an average attendance of 18,000) in UEFA's three club competitions during that season. European matches had clearly become a major component of the continent's football scene. The calendar of matches agreed in the late 1960s, partly at the request of the EBU (Mittag and Nieland 2013; Vonnard and Laborie 2019), had resulted in most qualifying matches for the European Championship of Nations being grouped together into certain weeks (and usually played on Tuesdays and Wednesdays), allowing journalists to start talking about 'European football weeks'. In parallel with its work on competitions, UEFA was broadening the scope of its activities and assigning each area to a new standing committee. As a result, and based on information included in the 1970–1971 secretary general's report, it had 20 standing committees (including the Disciplinary Commission and Appeal Jury) in 1970 (Fig. 8.1). Its secretariat was also expanding, so by 1972, when UEFA moved to its new headquarters (in a building owned by UEFA) in the suburbs of Bern, it had ten employees, most of whom were women (Tonnerre et al. 2019, pp. 116–118).

Realising it needed to evolve to keep pace with its expansion, in 1962 UEFA adopted a new set of statutes, whose 33 articles were presented in a highly professional, 15-page document that included a table of contents and bore the date and the signatures of UEFA's president and secretary general. UEFA now had 13 'missions',[14] including bringing European

[13] *UEFA secretary general's report 1972–1973*, January 1974. UEFAA, annual secretary report (1954–1985), p. 19.

[14] *Statutes of the UEFA* [1962], art. 17. UEFAA, RM00005779 (UEFA Statutes, 1954–1976).

1960:
Executive Committee and Emergency Committee, Finance Committee, European Cup of Nations Committee, Champions Clubs' Cup Committee, Youth Committee, Amateur Committee, Publicity Committee, UEFA-FIFA Consultative Committee

1970:
Executive Committee and Emergency Committee, Finance Committee, European Championship Committee, Champions Clubs' Cup Committee, Youth Committee, Amateur Committee, UEFA-FIFA Consultative Committee
Cup Winners' Cup Committee, Referees Committee, Technical Committee, Non-Amateur and Professional Football Committee, Disciplinary Committee, Women's Football Committee, Committee for the Delivery of Licences to Agents Negotiating Matches, Committee on the Players' Unions and on the Common Market

Fig. 8.1 Comparison of UEFA's main standing committees in 1960 and 1970 (*Note* In bold—committees created after 1960. *Source* Compiled from the UEFA secretary general's annual reports. Here, I have noted included the Disciplinary commission and Appeal Jury of the competitions)

associations together, administrating competitions, representing European football in FIFA, and organising training courses (e.g. for referees). These new statutes clearly show UEFA's leaders' intention to pursue a range of initiatives to develop European football.

In 1961, UEFA began sponsoring two- to three-yearly training course for coaches so they can expand their skills, discuss problems they encounter and review different aspects of training. It also started holding biannual conferences for its member associations' secretaries, the first of which was held in Copenhagen in 1963. The agenda for the second conference, in Hamburg in September 1965, illustrates the variety of administrative issues the secretaries discussed at these events, as it lists no fewer than nine themes, ranging from television-related subjects to refereeing, and from organising sports events to UEFA's overall policy.[15] This clearly shows UEFA's desire to be a forum in which the heads of its member associations can meet, get to know each other and discuss their concerns. It was even hoped that such meetings would help homogenise

[15]'Rapport sur la deuxième Conférence des Secrétaires généraux des 9/10 septembre 1965 à Hambourg', December 1965. UEFAA, RM00010067 (records from the former UEFA Library: UEFA Handbooks).

the way football is played in Europe. With respect to the secretaries' conferences, UEFA's secretary general noted:

> It is important not to underestimate the role these personal contacts play in ensuring good relations between associations. This event also provides an opportunity for the associations to discuss many unresolved issues on a face-to-face basis, thus eliminating potential misunderstandings.[16]

UEFA also strengthened its position as the voice of European football within FIFA, which had adopted the format of UEFA's tournaments when it began launching its own competitions for clubs and nations. FIFA also took UEFA as a model for its relations with the other continental confederations when it set up a series of consultative committees similar to the one it had established with UEFA in 1959. In fact, this period saw all the confederations gradually assert themselves within FIFA, sometimes in concert, sometimes separately. For example, UEFA worked with the South American confederation to coordinate the Intercontinental Cup, even though FIFA had not authorised the competition, but clashed with the Confederation of African Football over the number of World Cup places (Darby 2019) and FIFA executive committee seats (Dietschy and Keimo-Kembou 2008; Nicolas and Vonnard 2019) allotted to each continent. These disagreements, coupled with other grievances against FIFA's European president Stanley Rous, notably his refusal to support the exclusion of the South African FA (Darby 2008; Rofe and Tomlinson 2019), had a significant impact and led FIFA to elect its first non-European president, Brazil's João Havelange, in 1974 (Dietschy 2013; Vonnard and Sbetti 2018).

In 1962, UEFA's congress chose Switzerland's Gustav Wiederkehr to take over as the organisation's president.[17] Wiederkehr, together with Belgium's José Crahay, Hungary's Sandor Barcs and UEFA's Swiss general secretary, Hans Bangerter, was part of a new generation of executives that rose to the top of European football in the 1960s. They were later joined on the executive committee by men such as Italy's Artemio Franchi and

[16]Freely translated from the French. Ibid., p. 4.

[17]Minutes of the UEFA congress, 17 April 1962. UEFAA, RM0005988 (V–VI Ordinary Congresses, 1960–1962. II Extraordinary Congress, 1961).

Czechoslovakia's Vaclav Jira, who contributed greatly to UEFA's development. Franchi and Jira also embodied UEFA's growing independence from FIFA, because, from now on, not all members of UEFA's executive committee had served on FIFA's executive committee and most of them had not held positions on any of its permanent committees. Being relatively detached from FIFA meant that protecting UEFA's interests within the world of international sport was the new leaders' top priority and this increased the executive committee's cohesion. In addition, some executive committee members were also secretaries of their national association and this gave them a more 'technical' view of football. Hence, their focus was to develop the sport, especially at the professional level, in contrast to FIFA's ruling elite, who saw football's contribution in more 'societal' terms.[18]

The new generation nevertheless shared a number of characteristics with their predecessors. For example, they had all had long careers in their national football associations before being elected to a position within UEFA and they all insisted on the need to keep politics out of football. UEFA's new president, Wiederkehr, epitomised this desire to develop football while pursuing a 'policy of apoliticism' (Defrance 2000). Being a citizen of 'neutral' Switzerland had facilitated his rise within European football, in which he had held numerous important positions, including president of the International Cup organising committee. He also appears to have had extensive relational capital and was therefore someone his colleagues listened to[19] (Table 8.2).

Wiederkehr, supported by UEFA's secretary general, Hans Bangerter, pursued a policy of building harmony between Europe's associations, which were divided on certain issues by Cold War politics. Despite making strenuous efforts to overcome these divisions since its very beginnings (Mittag and Vonnard 2017), there was still tension between the Eastern and Western blocs within UEFA. Consequently, a major component of

[18]The clause excluding individuals who hold paid positions in national associations from the executive committee is still in force.

[19]In an interview, former president of the Swiss FA Marcel Mathier told me that after the accidental death of 'Gusti' Wiederkehr in 1972, many European leaders met once or twice a year to commemorate his memory during a golf game in the Zurich region. Wiederkehr also appears to have been a close relative of Stanley Rous, according to Rous' autobiography (1979, p. 115).

Table 8.2 Members of UEFA's executive committee in 1966 (in alphabetical order)

Name	Nationality	Position in the national association[a]	First participation at a UEFA congress[b]	First year in office (UEFA)
Crahay J.	Belgian	Secretary	1955	1955
Pujol A.	Spanish	Secretary	1956	1956
Brunt L.	Dutch	Secretary	1955	1960
Barcs S.	Hungarian	President	1956	1962
Bangerter H.	Swiss	None	1960	1960
Powell H.	Welsh	Secretary	1955	1962
Wiederkehr G.	Swiss	President	1955	1962
Eckholm T.	Finnish	Secretary	1955	1962
Gösmann H.	West German	President	1960	1964
Pasquale G.	Italian	President	1960	1964

Notes [a]When elected to the executive committee; [b]I consider 1955 to be UEFA's first official congress
Source Table based on UEFA secretary general's reports from 1955 to 1966 and the minutes of UEFA congresses from the same period

Wiederkehr's policy throughout the 1960s was to increase the Eastern bloc's participation in UEFA's affairs, which he did by holding congresses in Sofia, in 1962, and in Dubrovnik, in 1970 (Mittag 2015), hiring an Eastern European deputy secretary (Michel Daphinov, from Bulgaria) in 1962,[20] and ensuring the secretariat's staff covered the languages needed to interact with most of UEFA's member associations.

Nevertheless, the East-West divide weakened UEFA's efforts to achieve what Wiederkehr and his colleagues considered a key goal—reforming FIFA's electoral system by replacing the one member-one vote system with a proportional system. UEFA's aim was to protect its position within a world governing body whose membership was growing rapidly thanks to the affiliation of the newly independent African and Asian countries produced by decolonisation, which were now eligible to join FIFA. As a result, of the 126 member associations listed in the 1965 *FIFA Handbook*, only 33 were European.

As scholars have already noted (Sugden and Tomlinson 1998; Broda 2017), UEFA's failure to obtain this reform was largely due to opposition from the African confederation (Darby 2008), although its case had not been helped by the lack of consensus among UEFA's members. Most importantly, the Soviet bloc refused to endorse the proportional voting system for reasons that were both ideological—they saw the proposed system as a way for Western Europe to continue its colonialist domination—and strategic—opposing proportional voting would help them increase their influence over FIFA's governance by allowing them to forge alliances with countries of Africa. This policy, which the Soviet bloc also pursued within the IOC (Charitas 2009; Parks 2014; Dufraisse 2020), meant Europe was unable to present a unified front on the voting issue.

The differences between UEFA's members tended to come to the fore when international tension was high, and Hans Bangerter told me that he had had 'huge problems from a political point of view' during the 1960s.[21] For example, following the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, East German teams were often denied visas to compete

[20] UEFA executive committee, 29 March 1961. UEFAA, RM00000751 (executive committee, 1960–1961).

[21] Freely translated from the French. Interview with Hans Bangerter conducted on 1 October 2012 in Bolligen.

in countries outside the Eastern bloc (e.g. Dichter 2014, McDougall 2015; Kalthof 2019). Another problem of geopolitical nature arose in September 1968, when most of the Soviet bloc (except Romania and Czechoslovakia) withdrew from European club competitions in protest against UEFA's decision to reduce the number of matches between East and West.[22] More positively, the speed with which this issue was resolved highlighted sport's openness to diplomacy (e.g. Frank 2012; Rofe 2018; Clastres, 2020), and Soviet bloc teams once again took part in the competitions during the 1969–1970 season. In fact, UEFA's leaders used numerous initiatives to limit the impact of international politics on European football. For example, in order to avoid problems with visas, it divided the draw for the European Cup of Nations into geographical groups, so, in the 1964 edition, East Germany only played teams from the Eastern bloc. Such strategies, combined with the long tradition of football exchanges across Europe, helped UEFA build bridges between East and West throughout the Cold War.[23]

In addition to these geopolitical differences, there was also discord within UEFA on how the organisation should be administered. As early as 1962, disagreement over the attribution of seats on the organisation's executive committee led the Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg FAs to form a bloc capable of negotiating with the other two groups within UEFA (Breuil 2016, p. 126; Dietschy 2020b, p. 30), that is, the Soviet bloc, and a bloc consisting of the British and Scandinavian associations. The Florence Entente, as the group came to be known, was a true pressure group that recorded its actions and had a secretariat.[24]

Despite these tensions, UEFA managed to reinforce its position as the governing body for European football and to become recognised as such

[22]This decision was designed to reduce the possibility that matches in some Western European countries would be hijacked for political demonstrations. Minutes of the UEFA executive committee [extraordinary session], 9 September 1968. UEFAA, RM00000769 (ExCo meeting, 9 September 1968).

[23]According to my estimate, during the Cold War about a third of the matches played every year in the European Champion Clubs' Cup brought together Eastern and Western clubs. These were also the only opportunity for encounters of East and West German teams (which were otherwise prohibited by the East German government).

[24]Interview with Hans Bangerter conducted on 1 October 2012 in Bolligen. The existence of these different blocs inside UEFA was confirmed by G. Aigner and A. Vieli during an informal conversation.

both within football and beyond. One of UEFA's most important partners outside football was the EBU, to which it sold the rights to televise the finals of the Champion Clubs' Cup and the Cup Winners' Cup. In 1968, after several years of negotiations, the two bodies signed an agreement that valued the television rights to these two matches at 1 million Swiss francs. This was a very large sum at the time and corresponded to almost half of UEFA's contingency fund (Vonnard and Laborie 2019, p. 120). According to my estimates (and therefore to be treated with caution), in the late 1960s UEFA earned between 60 and 70% of its annual income from the television rights to its matches.

UEFA also had extensive dealings with the EEC, especially over the issue of football transfers, as its rules did not comply with the provisions of the 1957 Treaty of Rome on the free movement of workers (Schotté 2016).[25] After a long series of negotiations, begun at the end of the 1960s, the EEC and UEFA reached a gentleman's agreement under which football was allowed to keep its special status. This agreement was renegotiated on several occasions but remained in place until 1995, when it was overturned by the Bosman ruling.[26]

By the early 1970s, UEFA had achieved a very solid position. More generally, European-level football, which, as this book shows, had developed thanks largely to UEFA's efforts, was well established. Consequently, although there were still calls to modify certain things (e.g. the format of competitions), debate over the desirability of European exchanges had virtually died out. Hence, at the very moment when important advances were being made in East-West cooperation, exemplified by the signature of the Helsinki Accords at the 1975 Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, UEFA's European Champion Clubs' Cup, which was broadcast live to a great many European countries, was already celebrating its 20th anniversary!

[25]There were limits on the number of foreign players (1 to 2, depending on the country) a club could line up for each match (Poli 2004).

[26]On this point, see also the UEFA commemorative book written by André Vieli (2016).

8.3 Further Researches on the Europeanisation of Football History

Hence, the actions of UEFA's executive committee ensured the continuation of football exchanges between countries from different parts of Europe and undeniably played a key role in making such exchanges an integral part of the continent's football landscape. Further research into the history of UEFA is now needed, especially with respect to the 1960s and 1980s. Recent work, most notably by Manuel Schotté (2014) and William Gasparini (2017), has shown that European football exchanges increased during this period, which contradicts a Anthony King's finding that it was a period of eurosclerosis (2004).[27] In fact, it was during these decades that the seeds were sown for the major transformations in European football of the 1990s and 2000s. More clarification should in the future be provided by in-depth studies of the pressure put by leading European clubs on UEFA with the aim of creating a European club championship—often referred to as 'Superleague'—and which resulted in the compromise of transforming the Champion Clubs' Cup being into the Champions League in the early 1990s (Holt 2007, Olsson 2011 pp. 21–24). Other areas worthy of further research include UEFA's structure, the profiles of its main leaders (Schotté 2014) and the organisation's administration (Tonnerre, Vonnard, and Sbetti 2019), as the arrival of individuals with training in business and a stronger focus on developing the commercial side of football has led to substantial changes within UEFA.

Looking more closely at the 1970s and 1980s would help (re)connect the work of sport historians with that of political scientists, who have analysed the recent Europeanisation of the game (e.g. Niemann et al. 2011), and sociologists, who have examined the different actors that make up the 'European soccer space ' (Gasparini and Polo 2012).

[27] Albrecht Sonntag already pointed out in 2008 that the analogy established by King between the political European integration process and the history of European football integration is tempting, but debatable (Sonntag 2008b, p. 193).

As stated in the introduction, one of this book's aims is to extend the scope of research into the history of European cooperation, which has tended to focus on the Brussels-based EEC or EU. The insights provided by studying UEFA's conception and early development confirm that the history of 'European cooperation' was not confined solely to the work of these entities (Warlouzet 2014).[28] When Bernard Hozé (2003) wondered whether the sports movement had a vision of Europe, his verdict was rather negative. However, the present research argues against this conclusion and suggests that analysing the (many) instances of European cooperation in sport will bring to light the countless—and still unknown—exchanges that take place across the continent. Hence, further research is needed in order to understand the true place of football, and of sport in general,[29] in the history of European cooperation.

This will mainly require examining two further, complementary, issues. First, a focus should be laid on the ambitions, objectives and agenda of European football leaders, especially with regard to their attitudes and connections with the European political integration process. This kind of research would tie in well with the reflection led notably by French scholars about European business owners (e.g. Cohen et al. 2007; Aldrin and Dakowska 2011). Secondly, and from a relational perspective (Patel 2013; Kaiser and Patel 2018), it would be interesting to study the consequences on European integration of the links UEFA formed with other European organisations (e.g. the EEC, the Council of Europe, for the 2000s see Garcia 2007; Gasparini and Heidmann 2011). Such an approach would provide new empirical evidence for what the historian Gérard Bossuat called the 'space of inter-European relations' (2012, p. 664), in which the role of sports is still underestimated. In addition, these studies would prove the potential for research into sport to make valuable contributions to our understanding of the history of European cooperations (Mittag 2018).

[28] On this aspect, see also *Beyond Brussels*, edited by Matthew Broad and Suvi Kansikas (Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming).

[29] Very few studies have been conducted on other sports than football. One exception is the book *Le continent basket* edited by Fabien Archambault, Loïc Artiaga and Gérard Bosc in (Peter Lang 2015).

As the different studies conducted by the FREE project have repeatedly confirmed (Sonntag 2015), football can undoubtedly be included in the long list of areas that have become highly Europeanised over recent decades and which are of interest and relevance to Europe's citizens in their daily lives (e.g. Badenoch and Fickers 2010; Bouvier and Laborie 2017). However, at a time when the very existence of a European Union is being questioned, it is essential to highlight the numerous links between Europeans and thereby challenge the oversimplified, often demagogic, discourse against European unity, which exaggerates differences and increases self-centredness and thereby risks once again propelling the continent into the abyss of ethnocentric nationalism. Moreover, and somewhat paradoxically given that many observers perceive football to be a catalyst of nationalism, a cause of violence or even the opium of the people,[30] studying European football reveals the many forms of cooperation, which are often unknown or simply overlooked, that have existed among Europeans for decades (for a discussion: Vonnard and Marston 2020).

Thus, I would argue that football made it possible for several generations of football followers to learn about Europe's geography, with European matches offering opportunities to travel, whether physically or by proxy through the media. Therefore, football brings this Europe to life by transcending barriers of social and cultural status, gender, age, nationality and, especially, language. While Albert Camus claimed to have understood a lot about morality through football,[31] football has certainly taught Europe's inhabitants a lot about the continent in which they live, and, according to an interesting study by Pierre-Edouard Weill, UEFA is today for many young people a better-known organisation than the European Union itself (2011).

Such a remarkable name recognition and positioning also entail a significant responsibility for UEFA in remaining truthful to the heritage of its own founders. Their goals of creating a 'united continent' and 'leading

[30] Most research in this area has been conducted within the field of "critical sociology" (notably developed by Jean-Marie Brohm). For a critical, but less contentious, vision, see also the special issue: 'Peut-on aimer le football?', *Mouvements* 78, Issue 2, 2016.

[31] Camus made this admission in April 1953, in the *Bulletin du Racing Universitaire d'Alger*—the club he played for in his youth.

by example', as Ernst Thommen reminded the attendants of the UEFA's founding congress in his inaugural address, are as important today as they were when the continent was still divided along the geopolitical fault lines. It is all the more important to be aware of the long and difficult journey that allowed UEFA to come into being in the first place, and this book has been nothing else than a modest attempt to contribute to this awareness, especially at a time when new, pending, reforms (notably concerning European clubs' competitions) may lead to a new, potentially disruptive, turning point in the Europeanisation of the game.[32]

[32]For some reflections on the state, stakes and challenges, of European contemporary football, see Poli et al. (2016).

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Chronology

Year	Competitions	Structure	Leaders
1949	*July* First edition of the Latin Cup.	*April* Ottorino Barassi evokes the idea to create a European organisation in *France football.* *May* South American national associations express their desire to reform FIFA statutes.	
1950		*June* FIFA congress decides to reform FIFA statutes. An *ad hoc* committee (FIFA reorganisation committee) is elected	*June* Ernst Thommen is elected at FIFA's executive committee.

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Year	Competitions	Structure	Leaders
1952	*February* The creation of a European championship for clubs is proposed by Willy Treml (finally launched as the Grasshopper Cup). *September* The International Cup is relaunched.	*May–June* 20 European national associations meet two times to discuss the FIFA reform and create a special commission (composed by Ottorino Barassi, José Crahay and Henry Delaunay) to make some proposal. *July* FIFA ordinary congress discusses FIFA's reform but does not take any decision.	*July* Ottorino Barassi is elected at FIFA's executive committee. Jules Rimet announces his last mandate as FIFA president.
1953		*March* FIFA reorganisation committee proposes to continentalise the body. *October* FIFA extraordinary congress accepts to revise FIFA statutes.	
1954	*December* The project of a European championship for clubs is launched by *L'Equipe.*	*June* 27 European national associations create a European body and elect an executive committee (6 members). *October* The executive committee of the European body decides to name it UEFA.	*June* Ebbe Schwartz is elected as UEFA president and Henri Delaunay as secretary general. Rodolphe Seeldrayers is elected as FIFA president.

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Year	Competitions	Structure	Leaders
1955	*June* The European Champions Club's Cup is created by UEFA First game of the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup *[UEFA will take over this competition in 1971 and will name it UEFA cup].* Mitropa Cup is relaunched. *September* First game of the European Champions Club's Cup.	*March* Greece, Iceland and Poland join the Union at the first ordinary congress of UEFA held in Vienna. Turkey and Israel do not receive the permission to become UEFA member. UEFA's headquarters is located in Paris (at the headquarters of French national association).	*November* Death of Henri Delaunay. His son, Pierre, replaces him as secretary general of UEFA and of French national federation. *October* Death of Rodolphe Seeldrayers. Arthur Drewry replaces him as FIFA president.
1956	*January* During the European Champions Club's Cup quarter of final, Real Madrid (Spain) plays versus Partizan Belgrade (Yugoslavia) despite the fact that these two countries have not had any diplomatic relations in two decades. *June* The final of the first European Champions Club's Cup is played and broadcasted live in the Eurovision network of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).	*June* UEFA congress adopts its first statutes and asks FIFA to obtain a percentage on the international games played between European associations. FIFA congress recognises the existence of continental confederation in Africa and Asia, and accepts to give a part of the percentage perceived by FIFA on international games to continental confederations.	*October* Death of Jules Rimet.
1957	*April* First edition of the UEFA International Youth Tournament		

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Year	Competitions	Structure	Leaders
1958	*June* A European Cup for *Nations* is created by UEFA. *November* The champion from Turkey participates for the first time in the European Champions Clubs' Cup [*Turkey will be accepted as UEFA member in 1963*].	*June* UEFA congress asks to FIFA to obtain a percentage on the World Cup play off played between European associations. *November* The mention of FIFA is removed from UEFA statutes and the idea to create a UEFA flag emerges. A commission to discuss the television issue is created within UEFA.	
1959	*June* First final of the Copa Libertadores (competition between the domestic champions of South American national associations).	*October* Creation of the International Liaison League Committee [*it will be incorporated within UEFA in 1963*]. *December* Creation of the FIFA-UEFA commission. UEFA's headquarters are relocated in Bern.	*December* Hans Bangerter is hired as UEFA secretary general [*he will quickly hire 3 employees, and then Michel Daphinov as adjoint secretary*].
1960	*June* First final of the European Cup for Nations. *December* First Intercontinental Cup between the European and South American champions. FIFA does not officially recognise this competition.		

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Year	Competitions	Structure	Leaders
1961	*September* First edition of the Cup Winners' Cup [*that will be taken over by UEFA in 1962*].	*September* UEFA and EBU sign a contract about the broadcasting of the final of the European Champions Clubs' Cup. New reform of the FIFA's statutes is adopted at an FIFA extraordinary congress.	*September* Stanley Rous is elected as FIFA president. and leaves his position as UEFA vice president.

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