**England**

**Not surprisingly, English clubs feature prominently in the benchmarking report, which brings together a decade’s worth of detailed comparable analyses of 700 sets of audited annual financial statements and a number of other major UEFA benchmarking studies looking at off-pitch developments.**

* Even before the latest Premier League TV deal (from 2016/17), English clubs have extended their revenue and spending power compared with other leagues. Over the last six years, Premier League club revenue has grown by €99.2m per club, with German clubs consolidating their position in second spot ahead of Spain by increasing revenues to the tune of €48.1m per club, compared with €27.4m per Spanish club.
* For the first time on record, the total wage bill of the highest paying league (English Premier League) was more than double that of the next highest paying league (Italy’s Serie A), with the strength of the British pound in 2015 just pushing them over this symbolic line. Officially, 8 of the top 20 wage bills in 2015 were held by Premier League clubs, with Chelsea FC, Manchester City FC and Manchester United FC not surprisingly in the top five, joined lower down the list by Swansea City AFC (19th) and Aston Villa FC (20th).
* Audited accounts confirm that the average Premier League squad was assembled for €212m in transfer fees. This is almost double the Italian club average and three times the German average. Manchester United’s squad at the end of 2015 was officially the second most expensive after Real Madrid CF, with unofficial reported transfer deals since suggesting it is now the most expensive squad (in terms of transfer fees).
* According to club balance sheets, England’s ‘big six’ all feature in the top ten European clubs by player assets (original transfer cost of each player reduced over length of contract).
* Over the next three financial periods (FY2016 to FY2018), the absolute revenue gap between leagues is set to grow despite the drop in the value of the British pound, with anticipated increases in broadcast revenue pointing to Premier League clubs sharing an extra €1,000m per year, Spanish La Liga clubs €850-900m, German Bundesliga clubs €500-550m and Italy’s Serie A and France’s Ligue 1 clubs between €200-250m.
* The 20 Premier League clubs together reported more revenue than the 597 top division clubs from the 48 smaller UEFA countries combined (all except Germany, Spain, Italy, France, Russia and Turkey).
* Underlining that financial superiority, there are 14 English clubs in the top 30 revenue-earning clubs in Europe.
* Across all revenue streams, English top division clubs generated €220.3m on average and €4.4bn in aggregate.
* By broadcast revenue, 17 of the top 20 are English clubs – with FC Barcelona and Real Madrid CF (the top two broadcast revenue earners in 2015) and Juventus the only non-English clubs in the top 20.
* Direct revenue from UEFA competitions (€179m) represented 4% of total Premier League club revenues, the smallest proportion of any of Europe’s top division leagues.
* Premier League clubs averaged €35.9m in gate receipts during FY2015, an average €9.5m per club more than in the German Bundesliga. Arsenal FC earned the second highest gate receipts (€131m), just behind Real Madrid CF (also €131m), with Manchester United FC (5th), Chelsea FC (6th), Liverpool FC (7th) and Manchester City FC (8th) also in the top 10.
* England has the highest level of club stadium ownership in Europe, with 17 out of 20 clubs owning their stadiums according to the 2015 figures. The European average is 18% of top division clubs.
* English football has benefitted from 12 major stadium projects since 2007 (capacity of 5,000+), exceeded only by Germany (16), Russia (16), Turkey (20) and Poland (31).
* The Premier League clubs were also number one in the FY2015 sponsorship and commercial revenue rankings, generating €1,296m overall. The English club average of €64.8m is 2.3 times the Spanish and French club average and 3.4 times the Italian club average.
* Commercial stadium naming right deals are growing in popularity, now at 35% in the Premier League, where they are still much less common than in Denmark and Germany, for example.
* The Premier League has the highest sector concentration of shirt sponsorship of any of the major European leagues, with betting companies responsible for 45% of shirt deals.
* Together with revenue increases, UEFA’s and domestic financial fair play rules have had a clear impact on club profitability, either directly through spending limits or indirectly by attracting a new breed of owner. The top 20 European clubs by operating profits includes 11 Premier League clubs, with Manchester United FC top of the pile (€143m) and less celebrated clubs such as Burnley FC (10th), Hull City FC (17th)and Crystal Palace FC (20th) also featuring.
* After transfers, financing and tax, 13 of the 20 Premier League clubs reported bottom-line profits, compared with just 4 clubs in 2010. Only Spain (14 clubs) and Norway (13 clubs) exceeded or matched this number in 2015. Nonetheless, 5 English clubs are in the top 20 for bottom-line losses, with Queens Park Rangers FC and Aston Villa FC among the top 10.
* Financial fair play has played a significant two-fold role in improving club balance sheets, first by limiting major losses and second by requiring owners to permanently inject capital rather than letting soft loans build up year after year. English clubs have enjoyed equity increases or capital injections (either through new capital injections or debt write-offs) totalling €2.3bn in the last five years. Italian clubs are the next largest beneficiaries, to the tune of €1.1bn.
* 2016 was a record year for foreign club ownership across Europe. Foreign owners in the Premier League (15 clubs) and Championship (13 clubs) represent comfortably the highest proportion of any of the European leagues, far exceeding the French Ligue 1 (5 clubs).
* In 2016, Chinese owners have taken over from US owners in having the largest number of European club investments within the major leagues, and nowhere is this better demonstrated than in the West Midlands.
* The highest aggregate crowds in Europe in 2015/16 were in the Premier League (13,855,180), just ahead of the German Bundesliga, which had a higher average. The Championship had the fourth highest aggregate at 9,578,304 and England’s League One was ninth in the list with 3,886,080.
* The three most visited official club websites in world football in 2016 were those of Manchester United FC, Arsenal FC and Liverpool FC, with the two Spanish giants taking fourth and fifth in the list. Chelsea FC, Tottenham Hotspur FC, Leicester City FC and Manchester City FC’s websites were also among the 20 most visited, each welcoming a monthly peak of more than 1 million visitors.
* The Premier League had the highest proportion of expatriate players of the 175 leagues analysed (69.2%, representing 65 different nationalities). However, the largest nationality groups (French and Spanish) account for less than 5% of the players in first-team squads, pointing to a relatively low concentration.
* At 75%, the Premier League also had the highest proportion of foreign head coaches in Europe (ten different nationalities). The Championship holds third place, with 63% of its head coaches coming from outside England.

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