

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EUROPEAN AND SERBIAN FOOTBALL CLUBS

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**Abstract.** *The aim of this paper is to present guidelines and perspective on observing objective circumstances and subjective factors which explain why several European and two Serbian football clubs which have won the most trophies are where they are today. The sample for analysis consists of six top European clubs and two of the most successful football clubs from Serbia. Football club ownership structures primarily depend on the government arrangement, i.e. the legislative norms of the state in which they exist. Football clubs in Serbia function as civic organizations. A comparative analysis of European and Serbian clubs has been conducted, by using the generally accepted Polonsky model of sports organizations. It is easily applicable to football as well, and includes 12 factors that influence one sport, in this case football, organization. As in many spheres, the best Serbian clubs are far below European standards. Sports success in qualifications for European competitions and sporadic participation are more the result of sports performances and team strength than their organization and structure. While European football is becoming one of the most important elements of the economy and society, contributing to improvement and changing cities, regions or countries, Serbian football is primarily a burden and an expense for the economy and the society.*

**Key words:** *Model of Football Clubs, Top European Football Clubs, Top Serbian Football Clubs*

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## THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE PROBLEM

There are numerous difficulties when it comes to a good comparison of elite European and Serbian football clubs. The aim of this paper is to present guidelines for gaining perspective on observing objective circumstances and subjective factors which explain why several European, and two Serbian football clubs which have won the most trophies are where they are today, by using different models of a theoretical and practical type.

The basis of the theoretical approach can be the Polonsky model of sports organization (Polonsky, 1995). Primarily, because it is comprehensive and applicable even today in all sport branches including football, regardless of its specificity. This practically means that clubs are perceived through a prism of 12 factors which influence one sports organization.

It is clear that the choice of strategy depends solely on the ownership structure. Professional European football clubs operate as modern companies with all elements of management, by using different models and instruments in creating their strategies and the ways in which they are managed (Radaković, 2015). Manchester United is owned by the Glazer family. In their strategy, primarily their presence on the New York stock exchange and the fluctuation of their shares, they manage the club by using the classic corporate model of the company profitability (profit and yield in the first place). The strong influence of leading German companies as strategic partners and sponsors of Bayern Munich, i.e. their directors (who are at the same time members of either the board of directors or the watchdog committee) is the key influencing factor when it comes to their choice of maximum profit strategy.

Even though other clubs are privately owned, their choice for maximizing results is primarily the consequence of social and sports expectations of the community and the surroundings.

The benchmark analysis has not been applied to Serbian clubs, nor have modern tools been used when it comes to European football clubs.

Porter's Competency Matrix, as a sophisticated analysis of micro surroundings based on conducting structural performances of an individual company within the economy of industrial organization, could not be applied in the analysis of leading football clubs (Porter, 1980). His matrix is actually a qualitative model of estimating the position of an individual company on the market or in its surroundings. If one is to consider the dominant, in other words monopolistic position of leading Serbian clubs, it is almost impossible to consider the results of a horizontal competition: the danger coming from products or services which could substitute existing ones, the danger of existing competition or new 'players' on the market.

Here we pose the key question: how can the leading Serbian football clubs choose one of three generic strategies: 'cost leadership' (having the lowest expenses on the market), differentiation (offering something different, extraordinary or special) or focus (dominating a specific market niche)?

The same answer may be attained by using Porter's value chain as well, since underdeveloped infrastructure, modest and underqualified human resources and inadequate use of technology are incomparable (Porter, 1985). The only thing left in the activity of the support domain is the procurement ('production' of new, young and talented players). The same goes for primary activities as well: internal logistics, operations, external logistics, marketing, selling, and servicing.

The results of the analysis cannot be provided either by the Canvas partner analysis model, activities, resources, values, relationships with buyers, sales channels, buyer

segmentation, structure of expenses and income sources (Osterwalder, 2004). The first problem is the quality of the data that are on disposal. They are most often sporadic, of no quality and usually unreliable. The best example of that is the case of F.C. Red Star (Belgrade) which has lost this possibility in the process of Euro license certification, since the data, information, and documents presented to the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) and FAS were incorrect, incomplete, and some of them even forged. This is why the club was penalized and forbidden to participate in European competitions even though it has managed to become the state's champion in the field of sports. Each new management, and this is the case in all three big national clubs i.e., Red Star (Belgrade), Partizan (Belgrade) and Vojvodina (Novi Sad), have started their terms in office with a debt auction and hiring an audit agency which is supposed to show the real state of the club's finances. The acquired and announced results were once again the focus of disapproval either by the old management or tax authorities (in the case of F.C. Partizan when the tax administration disclosed the club's debt which the club later denied).

Therefore, a comparative overview of European and Serbian football clubs has been conducted. It was not possible to determine the financial strength and position table as well as values (Serbian clubs are not on the reference lists of Deloitte (*Deloitte 'Football Money League'*), Brand Finance (*'Brand Finance Football 50'*), Forbes (*'The World's Most Valuable Soccer Team'*), KPMG (*'The European Elite – Football Club Valuation'*). The UEFA report data (*'UEFA, The European Football Landscape 2016'*) can partly be acquired and analyzed. One of the models may be a comparison with certain representative clubs of the strongest leagues. For methodological reasons, only one club has been considered from League Five. F.C. Barcelona (Barcelona) has been chosen as an example for Spain, so F.C. Real Madrid (Madrid) has not been taken into consideration. In Italy, A.C. Milan (Milan) has been analyzed rather than Juventus (Turin), while in France it was Olympique from Marseille and not PSG (Paris). This does not mean that, when it comes to the structure of football as a business, business results of the aforementioned clubs have not been taken into consideration. When leagues and competitions are concerned, all clubs which compete in national leagues or European competitions have been considered.

The income structure is inadequate and non-transparent. There is no point in discussing the defined philosophy or the value-system, or the profit maximization, i.e. the maximization of sports results. The clubs are still public organizations, i.e. citizens' associations, and there are serious indications that three of the biggest clubs should be privatized under specific conditions or excluded from the privatization process. Sponsorship contracts are either part of the public arrangement (Gazprom and F.C. Red Star) or separate commercial contracts which F.C. Partizan has, but without serious marketing effects.

Football club ownership structures primarily depend on government arrangements, i.e., the legislative norms of the state in which they exist.

According to Šurbatović (2014), there are three basic types of football club ownership in Europe:

1. Private owners' clubs

Classic examples, in a capitalist sense, are the clubs of the English Premier League and Italian Serie A. The way these football clubs are managed and organized is such that

club owners have complete influence, not only on financial decisions, but also on sales rights and all decision making. Some of the clubs are owned by individuals, some are part of a partnership among several owners, and some are part of a company or linked persons and companies. About 90% of England's Premier League owners are private investors, while 60% of the Premier League and 50% of the Championship league is in the hands of foreign investors (USA, south-east Asia or the Middle East) (Rohde & Breuer, 2016). The way in which they function is the same as in any other company in the industrial or economy sector. Owners most often 'chase' profit and in the sense that they try to organize clubs as business entities. The aggravating circumstance would be the sports success factor, which is most often beyond interest for achieving maximum profit. There is strong external pressure (fans, media, business environment, social and national interest) in which the sport result is above everything. The owner's dilemma about what is more important - profit or the result - disappears, since the owner submits to the demands of the sports result and is therefore obligated to cover being 'in the red' (e.g., when sheik Mansour covered £305 million of Manchester City's (Manchester) loss due to failing to win the title) (Rohde & Breuer, 2016).

## 2. Public - Private corporation clubs

Clubs organized according to this system do business on the stock exchange and the clubs are managed by a board of directors. The board of directors most often consists of families who placed their shares on the stock exchange: the Glazer family in the case of Manchester United from Manchester (the New York stock exchange) or the Agnelli family in the case of Juventus from Turin (the Milan stock exchange). The board of directors makes decisions about transfers, players' salaries, investments as well as about all other major issues. Significant influence of the owner on the board's decisions through the positions within the board is present (e.g. the Agnelli family owns 63,8% of the club's shares, while 10% is owned by Lindsell Train Ltd., and 26,2% fluctuates freely on the stock exchange). The club's management is directed towards satisfying the needs of shareholders, which makes maximizing profit the club's goal.

## 3. The Members Club

Club members are connected through legal entities, including private companies in which fan clubs and associations of individuals are dominant. The best examples of clubs organized according to this system are Real from Madrid and Barcelona (Barcelona), the German model by the name of 'Directive 50+1', and even clubs which are entirely owned by corporations (Bayer Leverkusen, Wolfsburg - Volkswagen cannot sell more than 49% to other investors). In Spain it is the Socios, in Germany Verein (translation - member). Clubs are non-profit organizations with the transfer of rights to the chosen board, i.e. management at the elections for the President and club management, as club members are primarily interested in the maximization of sports success.

The owners have complete influence on the way of management, organization, financial decisions, capital increase or loan, selling or buying players. The model is the same as in any other company of the industrial and commercial sector.

The club is managed by a board of directors (BOD) and it makes decisions on transfers, players' salaries, investments as well as all other important issues. The club's management does business with the goal of satisfying the needs of shareholders and that is why the goal is profit maximization.

Furthermore, there are Fan Clubs and associations of individuals, and the club is managed by the BOD chosen at the Council meeting. The club is a non-profit organization which, based on the transfer of the members' rights, provides the president and the BOD with the right to manage the club. As members, fans are interested in the maximization of sports success.

Sports clubs function as civic organizations. There are political initiatives and a social climate to, in accordance with the new Sports Law, conduct privatization and to better define ownership relations, and the management, financing and functioning of the clubs at the same time. On the other hand, there is both a formal and an informal resistance towards privatization and demands that the biggest clubs in Serbia be excluded from the process of privatization and acquire a special status.

The specificity of F.C. Red Star, as well as of its city rival, F.C. Partizan, is reflected in the fact that it belongs to the sports society family. In any case, the influence of the sports society on the work and functioning of a football club is minimal. It can be said with certainty that the football club is the center, and that other sports collectives which are part of the sports society revolve around it.

The only football club which has been privatized in Serbia is F.C. Čukarički (Belgrade).

The financing structure of a professional sports club is realized through income from different sources of transactions. The income is divided into several groups: TV rights, the stadium and commercial rights, while the expenses are analyzed through the salaries of footballers and employees, competition and infrastructure maintenance. The complexity of football as a sports branch and its further development in the direction of business requires 'deeper' analysis of income and expenses. The first income group consists of income from competition organization (domestic championships or European club competitions, summer tournaments) which guarantee the clubs a certain source of income based on the position acquired at a competition. Clubs realize the second income group from commercial rights, whether technical sponsors are concerned (equipment), or commercial sponsors, donors, advertisements or other forms of commercial trade related to media rights (TV rights of the club, the league or Euro competitions) and marketing rights (merchandizing, publishing, licensing) of the club and players (the first was David Beckham who shared the income from his image with the club, while Cristiano Ronaldo 'perfected' it with the commercial rights he shared with Real Madrid), i.e. the stadium (the so called 'naming rights' - selling of rights to the stadium's name). The third group consists of the income from the sales of tickets and memberships. The fourth group of income consists of the selling of players, whether the so-called buying up clauses are concerned (first the Spanish and now the Italian model as well) and loans. At one point, the TPO (Third Party Ownership) 'inserted' itself into this income group, but was promptly forbidden by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association-FIFA and UEFA (yet it still exists today in modified forms). In the end, a separate income group consists of different commercial arrangements such as leasing office space, common building of infrastructure and residential and commercial facilities (the example of F.C. Arsenal (London) that transformed its old stadium into a commercial/residential space with a group of private investors) or starting a business (Arsenal has its own company which deals in congress organization, assemblies, hospitality and events at the Emirates Stadium) or renting the stadium for concerts (the Ajax Arena), music or media events. In certain cases, there is also indirect income from the state or the local community.

Expenses can be divided into several groups as well. The first group consists of competition expenses (this includes the engagement of suitable companies for security services for example, logistics, travel, accommodation, etc.), infrastructure maintenance (club buildings, pitches and training centers for player preparation) in the most part maintenance of the stadiums (modern stadiums are technologically improved in the way that they represent a significant group of expenses - maintenance software, IT security, lighting, commercial space, expenses related to TV and media structures, as well as special demands of spectators concerning comfort and entertainment at the stadium itself, etc.) and pitches. The second group consists of salary related expenses, primarily of the players, coaches and the technical team, and then of the administration and technical services of the club. The expenses of financing football academies i.e. youth football schools could also be added. A separate expense group consists of financial obligations regarding realized transfers (sales, purchases or loans), followed by expenses from investments or credits which clubs take from the banks, owners or financial funds. Apart from the aforementioned, there are expenses related to tax and other financial obligations towards the state and local community.

If the clubs do not have a clear picture about the organization of business, i.e. the balance of income and expenses, then they cannot be realized on the market and it is clear they will not be able to cover expenses and operate like successful companies. Certain research also confirms that football has become a business, i.e. a model in which the company (football) does business in its surroundings (Relvas, Littlewood, Nesti, Gilbourne, & Richardson, 2009; Espitia & Garcia-Cebrian, 2010).

In the 1970s, football clubs have transferred their business from the SSSL model (Spectators, Subsidies, Sponsors, Local), to the new MCMMG (Media, Corporation, Merchandising and Markets) model (Andreff & Staudohar, 2000).

The UEFA report states that only 10 clubs in Europe had an income of 100 million Euros in the year 2000; however, this number grew to 48 in 2016. The number of clubs which had an income higher than 50 million Euros in 2000 was 25, and in 2016, 95 clubs realized an income higher than 50 million Euros (UEFA, 2016). The mentioned report shows that the top 30 of the greatest European clubs acquired 9.1 billion Euros in income, with an average of 305 million Euros per year and an average annual growth of 34 million Euros or 12% per year. The overall income of all the European clubs is estimated at 18.5 billion Euros. For a 20-year period and an average annual growth of 9.8% the income of European clubs rose from 2.8 billion Euros in 1996 to 18.5 billion Euros (6.5 times more). Domestic TV rights make up 6.3 billion Euros or 34% of income, 1.9 billion Euros or 10% comes from UEFA competitions, 3.4 billion Euros or 24% from sponsorship, 1.7 billion Euros or 9% are commercial rights, 2.8 billion Euros or 15% represent the income from sold tickets and 1.4 billion Euros, i.e. 8% is the remaining income. The same source states that in 2016, 2.4 billion Euros were made from transfers, which is about 23% of the overall income. In comparison with the year 2014, it is a growth of 48%.

The average income in countries and clubs divides 54 European countries into four groups. The first group consists of 5 major leagues (England, Germany, Spain, France, Italy) which have a common income of 13.5 billion Euros (UEFA, 2016) with an average of 74 million Euros per club (France) up to 244 million Euros per club (England). The second group consists of 16 countries with an average of 5 million Euros per club annually (Hungary) up to 43 million Euros (Russia). Serbia is in the third group (14 countries) as a low-ranked member (the annual income is at the level of 1.3 million Euros). In this group, the highest incomes are realized by Croatia (4.7 million Euros), the Check Republic (4.4 million Euros), Romania (4.2 million Euros) and Azerbaijan (4.0 million Euros). 16 countries have an income lower than a million Euros per club, starting with Macedonia (0.9 million Euros) to San Marino with 150.000 Euros per club.

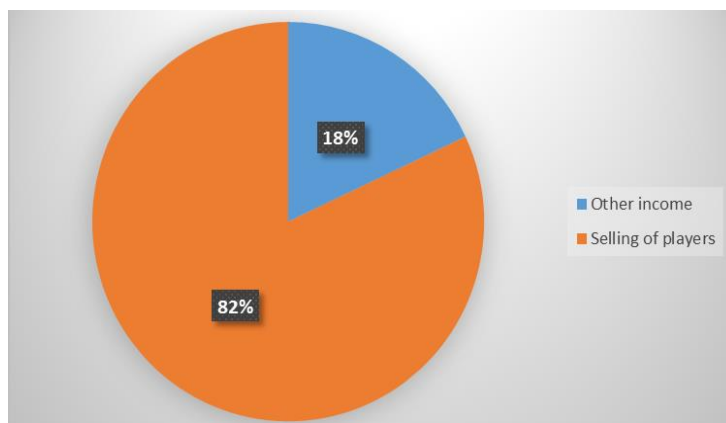
In Serbia, the clubs are obligated to provide financial bodies with annual business reports (abbreviated reports can be found at the Serbians Business Registers Agency), i.e. that members of the Super League hand over reports to the FAS (obligations of the Financial Fair Play of the UEFA) and do not wish or intend to disclose their business in the form of public reports. The reports are not disclosed by the Super League either, and this is the practice of the best European leagues. The best European clubs publicly disclose their annual reports, not only because of the ownership structure, legal obligations, but to introduce their financial results to their sympathizers and fans, and to attract potential commercial partners and sponsors in order for them to engage in new, profitable arrangements.

In sports practice so far, there have been two ways of securing financial means for the operating of sports organizations. The first one is common in communist-socialist countries and their social system. The country has directly invested financial means in sports organizations. On the other hand, in capitalist countries, marketing is introduced as a function in sports organization management, where the country indirectly subsidizes sports clubs.

Today, European football clubs are mostly organized as joint-stock companies, and less frequently as associations with heterogeneous property. The clubs' formal legal status depends primarily on the social arrangement and legislation of the country they originate from. They conduct business as business entities, keep business records like any other company, and their finances are available for revision.

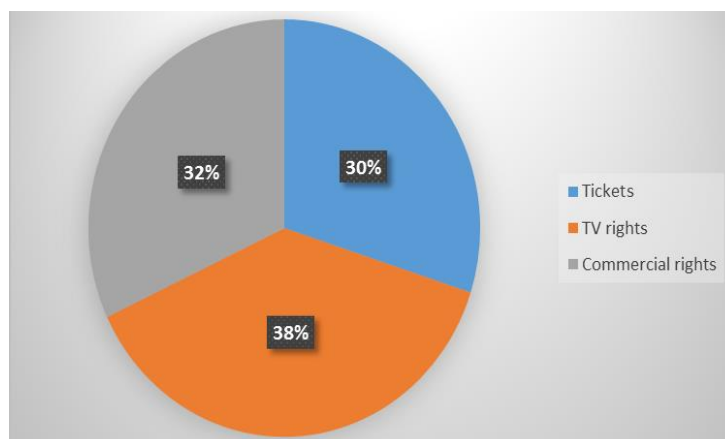
Sports organizations are non-company organizations that have their goals. The core motives of the ones investing in those clubs are primarily related to profit, exemption from taxes on investing the free capital into sports activities, followed by image, advertising, status and the like.

Based on Graph 1, it can be seen that the income structure of European clubs is represented by the income from ticket sales, TV rights and sales of commercial rights, represented by income in equal percentage. Since every club tends to increase its income, the only way is to raise the income of commercial rights sales, which requires more engagement of the clubs' management.



**Graph 1** European clubs - income structure (Radaković, 2015)

When it comes to Serbian clubs, we have a completely different picture in which the basic income comes from the selling of players who seek a place in European clubs right at the beginning of their senior career. The existence of Serbian clubs is directly dependent on the selling of young players, which prevents Serbian clubs from playing several seasons with the same player cadre, and that would most certainly enable them to be more successful on the European scene. A lot of attention is directed towards youth schools of football in order to provide as many young players as possible who would then play in European clubs and thus make a certain profit for their own clubs (Graph 2).



**Graph 2** Serbian clubs - income structure

The percentage of the club's income from ticket sales is insignificant, since, apart from derby matches, the frequency of spectators at football stadiums is very low.

The sales of commercial rights are also very low, since, apart from Red Star and Partizan, few serious companies invest in sponsorship contracts.



Although companies such as Gazprom and Audi sponsor Red Star and Partizan, those contracts are much smaller compared to European clubs sponsored by those same companies. Surely those contracts would be much more suitable financially if Serbian clubs had better results on the European scene.

A comparative analysis of European and Serbian football clubs has been conducted by using the generally accepted Polonsky model of sports organizations. It is easily applicable to football as well, and it includes 12 factors that influence one sports, in this case football, organization (Table 1).

**Table 1** Comparative analysis of European and Serbian football clubs

Factors	European models (Radaković, 2015)	Serbian models
General public	Football is one of the fastest growing sports industries. It is estimated to be worth \$35.3 billion with an annual growth of 9%. Over 3 billion people watched the World Cup in Brazil, while that number grew to 3.4 billion spectators in Russia. Deloitte estimates that European football is worth 25.5 billion Euros in the 2016 – 17 season. The general public is positively oriented toward sports, especially football as the most popular European sport.	Sport in Serbia, especially football, has a special emotional value. It is not easy to estimate the overall value of sport in Serbia. Football is certainly the most popular sport in Serbia, with the largest number of transactions and expenses. There are no reliable data related to the total transactions and income in Serbian football. According to the Transfermarkt, it is estimated that Serbian football is worth about 334 million Euros.
State	All European countries recognize the significance and function of football clubs in sport, business and the economy of their own country as well as the EU. Relations in football are predominantly regulated within legal and institutional frameworks, via support for football clubs and improvements to state-controlled and regulated environments. In economically developed countries, the state does not interfere with sport and there is a plainly demarcation between sport, football and the state. France would be the exception, since its Tax Administration body has a direct insight into and influence on the clubs' operations (it may financially penalize the club and transfer it to lower competition ranks).	Serbia passed the Sports Law, Sports Development Strategy (2014-2018), Action Plan, by-laws and regulations concerning all sports, including football. There is a strong influence of state and its authorities, public and local administration through institutional, legal and practical forms of participation and managing sports and football.
Interest groups	“Financiers, investors, owners and fans have a strong interest in achieving sports and business results. Communities and regions to which sport is the best form of promotion and communication are also interested in the success of clubs (either as a form of promotion or as shareholders), just as certain corporations find football an excellent channel of communication and sales, in terms of influencing the public and target markets”.	Football club owners and investors do not exist as a separate interest group. In the form of participation in the BOD, the council and authoritative bodies of the club, the following are present – politicians, certain local businessmen and special interest groups – partly fans wishing to have a special influence on the club and its strategy.

The media	The media is among three most significant sources of income for clubs. In the best leagues, the income from TV rights is about 46% in England to 51% in Italy. The annual growth of TV rights is 9.5%. "This is best seen in selling TV rights, social networks and media as a channel of communication with the general public, interested target groups-fans and certain segments of consumers and society".	A minor source of income for Serbian clubs. The media are primarily communication channels and a form to shape public opinion towards football clubs. The income of Serbian clubs from TV rights is 7% and is one of the lowest in Europe.
Scientific community	"There is a large number of scientific papers and research studies regarding the advancement in sport and football that focus on the physical fitness of players, sports medicine, the application of new technologies, study of economic, sociological and cultural phenomena of football".	A modest contribution, basic research directed towards medical aspects of physical fitness, methodology of the training process, preparation and tactics of the team. There is serious interest of the scientific community to study sports and football in all their aspects: economic, social, cultural etc.
Owners	"The prevailing model is individual private ownership. There are also models of shareholding and corporate ownership".	The prevailing ownership model is a civic organization. The state is trying to support private ownership and other successful norms, but without much success.
Suppliers	"Business partners, commercial partners, and investors have all recognized the importance and impact of football. This is seen in the large investments in infrastructure and significant financial contribution of investments in the field of media and television rights. Sports equipment manufacturers play an important role in business performance and income streams of football clubs. There are also a number of close and intertwined commercial business relationships with corporations, national and local companies".	There is a lack of serious business interest. Suppliers are more supporters and sponsors, i.e., 'obligatory' aid to football clubs. There are also significant debts and unfulfilled obligations towards suppliers on the part of football clubs. Universalization of the so-called systematic debt making.
Financial Institutions	"The role of financial institutions, especially banks is to provide financial assistance and enable improvements in the infrastructure or clubs' investments. Certain clubs have special corporate relationships with banks and insurance companies. Some of them are listed on the national or global leading stock exchanges. The role of tax authorities is to control the clubs but also grant them special benefits through renegotiation and reduction of tax obligations. Financial transparency is achieved with the help and advice of financial experts. Regular and accurate disclosure of information about the clubs, leagues or associations is the norm". The institute of the UEFA Financial Fair Play is the obligation of all football clubs.	Banks are used to take credits from, primarily for selling the players or managing transfers, i.e. bringing in new players. A lot of debt is made within the banking system. The 'soft' relation between local administration and tax authorities when it comes to settling financial and tax obligations. Non-transparent club operations. No public data, apart from the ones mandated by law (annual statement of accounts). Disproportion between publicly disclosed and real financial results. Without help and advice from financial experts regarding the estimate and value of clubs' operations.

Employees	“Footballers represent the leading part of the work force or ‘producers’ of clubs that generate income. Apart from them, clubs employ coaches and sports professionals, administrators and support staff. Settlement of obligations toward employees is an important segment of the business, not only for those who receive salaries, but also for the state and the community through different forms of taxes and contributions. The share of the TPO is 5.5 - 7.8% on average”.	In Serbia as well, the producers – footballers have contracts as employees. Serbian football suffers from chronic debt towards footballers (most often the obligations are compensated for during future transfers through debt acquittance) and employees. Low-quality managerial structure of the employees. The appearance of TPO (Third Party Ownership); according to the estimate of the consulting company KPMG, in countries such as Serbia, the TPO reaches up to 70%.
Legal Framework	“There is a continuing process of harmonization and reorganization of the legal framework – the Bosman ruling on the free movement of workers within the EU, national laws on the promotion of sport and football, a special legal framework of UEFA and FIFA- Financial Fair Play UEFA. A harsh struggle against the TPO model. In some countries, it is prohibited (Britain, France and Poland)”. It is being neglected in more developed countries.	Disorganized legal framework. The new Sports Law. The lack of appropriate legislative regulations – for example, initiating and facilitating investment in sports.
Competition	Strong competition is present at both “the national and international level. Competitiveness is encouraged in all segments”.	Lack of competition in all spheres: sports, economic, social.
Consumers	“Expansion of the fan base has been recorded in all segments of society: in terms of gender, age, social categories and type of consumption”.	The focus is on the fan base – club fans, especially the ones of the two biggest clubs, are mostly male, and there is an insignificant number of expansions to other segments of society.

Many dilemmas await world and European football: how and in which direction will the world’s most popular game develop? What are the consequences? Are there unique solutions?

So far, research has shown that despite some differences, leading European football clubs have almost the same goals: to reach top sports results at national championships, to increase the number of winnings and to achieve appropriate level of income (Radaković, 2015).

Elite European clubs have a strong influence on the steady growth of the football industry (Soares, 2014, in Radaković, 2015), while having a record of the transformation from a national into an international brand through a continuity of victories and titles, contracts with elite football players, recognized sports brands, a large base of the supporters which grew from a national to a world wide one, growth and evolving of new lines of profit, and a quality manager organization (Kearney, 2003, in Radaković, 2015).

While European football is becoming one of the key elements of the economy and society, contributing to improvement and changing cities, regions or countries, Serbian football is primarily a burden and an expense for the economy and the society.

#### CONCLUSION

Can the big names in sports be what they desire? Are the models of European football clubs the right models for the success of Serbian football? Both theory and practice show that, even though there are similarities at first glance, our best clubs are far from the European greats. There are many reasons for that, either objective or subjective. The surroundings, the influence of the country, the expectations of fans and the public, the economy, infrastructure, the media, partners, the quality of football.

The clubs' organization, unresolved status and ownership relations are only the beginning of the bad state football clubs are in. The absence of transparency, the bad profile of club officials, enormous influence of politics and the country on giving a chronic patient inadequate treatment are just some of the factors of the poor state of Serbian football and its best representatives.

Football has been a worldwide phenomenon for ages. In the last ten years it has become a world business characterized by all factors of the business sector. Clubs are organized and conduct business as modern corporations, non-profit organizations or companies, regardless of whether their owners are wealthy individuals, associations or fan clubs. Invested and acquired capital requires serious organization of much quality which is subject to the laws of trade and society, as well as to usances of the modern society. There has been a major financial advance, but in that surge there are cracks which can seriously harm not only the football community, but sports, the economy and society as well.

Even the best clubs are prone to bad decisions, irrational actions, vanity and unprofessional conduct. In its best sense, football mirrors society. That is why both football organizations and associations have taken a number of steps to create a suitable ecosystem that will be sustainable and successful for society, the economy and the overall community.

As in many spheres, our best clubs are far below European standards. Sports success in qualifications for the European competitions and sporadic participation are more the result of sports performances and team strength than their organization and structure.

Real Madrid and Barcelona are a paradigm of one approach to the sport that is football. They are not the only ones, nor are they universal. There are different examples as well: the English approach or German organization. In the long-term, German club football shows the best signs of vitality and strength in the organizational and financial sense.

The Spanish model is more emotional, and in that sense, suitable for fans and the public that treats sports as an emotion and desire for self-confirmation.

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## UPOREDNA ANALIZA EVROPSKIH I SRPSKIH FUDBALSKIH KLUBOVA

*Cilj ovog rada je da predstavi smernice i perspektive ka objektivnim okolnostima i subjektivnim faktorima koji objašnjavaju zašto su evropski i dva srpska fudbalska kluba koji su osvojili najviše trofeja, tu gde su danas. Uzorak analize sačinjava šest vrhunskih evropskih fudbalskih klubova i dva najuspešnija fudbalska kluba iz Srbije. Vlasničke strukture fudbalskih klubova u prvom redu zavise od državnih uredbi, tj. Zakonodavnih normi države u kojoj postoje. Fudbalski klubovi u Srbiji funkcionišu kao građanske organizacije. Sprovedena je uporedna analiza evropskih i srpskih klubova, koristeći opšte prihvaćeni Polonsky model sportskih organizacija. Lako je primenljiv i na fudbal, a radi se o 12 faktora koji utiču na jednu sportsku, u ovom slučaju fudbalsku organizaciju. Kao i u mnogim drugim sferama, najbolji srpski klubovi daleko zaostaju za evropskim standardima. Sportski uspeh u kvalifikacijama za evropska takmičenja i sporadično učešće su više rezultat sportskih performansi i snage ekipe nego njihove organizacije i strukture. Dok evropski fudbal postaje jedan od najvažnijih elemenata ekonomije i društva, doprinosići poboljšanju i promeni gradova, regiona ili zemalja, srpski fudbal je pre svega teret i trošak za ekonomiju i društvo.*

Ključne reči: *Model fudbalskih klubova, vrhunski evropski fudbalski klubovi, vrhunski fudbalski klubovi Srbije*