



Program: Bachelor of International Management
Specialization: Sports Management

Case Study

As a part of your Geneva Business School application, we require you to submit a 500-word written response to this case study assignment. Please kindly read the text below and answer the questions that you'll find at the bottom of this document. Please know that you will be asked to discuss your responses during the interview session.

UEFA Euro 2020 Final 'Euro Sunday' at Wembley

OVERVIEW

Baroness Casey's team investigated the events of the UEFA EURO 2020 final, which happened on July 11, 2021, between England and Italy, known as Euro Sunday. During the final, thousands of ticketless supporters attempted to force entry into Wembley Stadium, causing significant disorder. The actions of ticketless fans posed a threat to the safety and security of fans, staff, and police officers. In response, the Football Association (FA) commissioned Baroness Casey to conduct an independent review of the UEFA Euro 2020 final events. Despite the short review period of under four months, the team represented a comprehensive research effort. The review involved interviewing FA and Wembley staff, stakeholders, and key delivery partners, including police and emergency services, council staff, and government officials. It also included an analysis of substantial documentary evidence, over four thousand hours of CCTV footage, a survey of more than 7,700 ticket holders at the final, and independent reports from experts on crowd safety, football-related disorder, legislation, and social media.



The information presented the findings and conclusions of the investigation and came up with a series of recommendations to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future.

THE CASE

On the day of the Euro Cup Final, 2021 (Euro Sunday), around 100,000 people descended on Wembley Stadium, with approximately 2,000 ticketless individuals gaining entry, often through disabled pass gates. Seventeen mass breaches occurred from 90 minutes before kick-off until the penalty shootout, with eight repelled by stewards and police. The primary approach to the stadium, Olympic Way, transformed into an unregulated fan zone with rampant drug use and an unprecedented amount of trash left behind. Also, almost none of those arrested had previous football-related convictions, according to investigation reports.

Eric Stuart, the crowd safety expert, reports the potential for even worse outcomes on Euro Sunday. In his report, he mentioned the instances where ticketless fans' behavior risked crowd collapse, trampling, barrier collapse, and entrapment, particularly when surging through fire doors opened from the inside. Stuart concludes that the events were a series of 'near misses' that could have resulted in significant injuries or fatalities.

Baroness Casey examined planning and organization leading up to the final, focusing on the roles of different agencies and the constraints they faced, notably the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic created tension between controlling the virus and managing crowd safety. Consequences included reduced stadium capacity, leading to visible empty seats, the need for additional screening tests, and the lack of fan or dispersal zones due to capacity restrictions. The final's timing, coinciding with England's first men's final in 55 years and the imminent lifting of social distancing restrictions, created a 'perfect storm scenario.'



The review found that the arrival of large numbers of ticketless fans was predictable and that intelligence was available to the FA, Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police, and Brent Council before Euro Sunday, but the ferocity and scale of their efforts were unexpected. Warning signs from earlier matches were overlooked due to assumptions that trouble would likely occur post-game and across London. Brent Council, however, had raised concerns. Despite increased action for the final, there was a lack of risk assessment for Euro Sunday, representing a collective failure by the involved partners.

The quality of stewardship is an issue that has received significant media attention. The review confirms that concerns about the experience, age, and training of stewards were known to Wembley and its partners before the final. The pandemic had significantly impacted the security industry, leading to personnel losses. Consequently, Wembley faced challenges in securing quality stewards for the biggest football match in 55 years, which was attended by an exceptionally aggressive and intoxicated crowd. Despite these challenges, many stewards and Brent Council staff demonstrated courage and professionalism in managing the unprecedented violence.

A 12-hour deployment was planned, with officers in place five hours before kick-off. The total number of officers was significantly higher than usual for a game in the same risk category. However, the 3 p.m. deployment was too late to manage fans who began gathering in large numbers in the morning. By the time officers were on the ground, disorder, fueled by alcohol and drug consumption, had taken hold around Olympic Way.

The review's key findings include the reckless endangerment of lives by a large minority of England supporters, a series of 'near misses' that could have led to significant injuries or death,



and a collective failure to plan for the worst-case scenario. The review also found that the stewarding operation was vulnerable due to a loss of experienced stewards during the pandemic, and the absence of a fan zone was a significant factor. The policing of the final was insufficient, and there is a lack of enforcement mechanisms to deter such behavior.

The review makes eight recommendations:

1. The government should consider a new category for football matches of national significance.
2. The government should task the SGSA to work with the FA and the event industry to review stewarding.
3. The SGSA, the events industry, the police, and the local government should agree on accountability for Zone Ex.
4. The FA should lead a national campaign to change attitudes towards supporter behavior.
5. The government should consider strengthening penalties for football-related disorders.
6. The FA and Wembley should strengthen plans for safety ahead of significant-risk matches or events.
7. Wembley and the MPS need a more joined-up approach to managing public safety on match days.
8. The key partners represented on the Wembley SAG need to make a concerted effort to proactively solicit and listen to each other's concerns.



QUESTIONS

After reading the material, please answer the following questions:

1. How could the FA and Wembley have better anticipated the potential for disorder on Euro Sunday? What strategic planning measures could they have put in place?
2. Given the unique conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, what alternative crowd-management strategies could have been implemented to ensure public safety?
3. Discuss the decision-making process that led to the absence of a fan zone. What alternatives could have been considered, and how might they have mitigated the disorder?
4. What enforcement mechanisms would you propose to deter football-related disorder? How would you ensure these are effectively communicated and enforced?
5. How would you handle a similar crisis in the future? What steps would you take in the immediate aftermath of the event, and how would you manage the longer-term implications?
6. Reflecting on the 'perfect storm' conditions that led to the disorder on Euro Sunday, how would you balance the need to manage a public health crisis (Covid-19) with the need to ensure crowd safety at a major sporting event? What leadership qualities would be necessary to navigate such a complex situation?