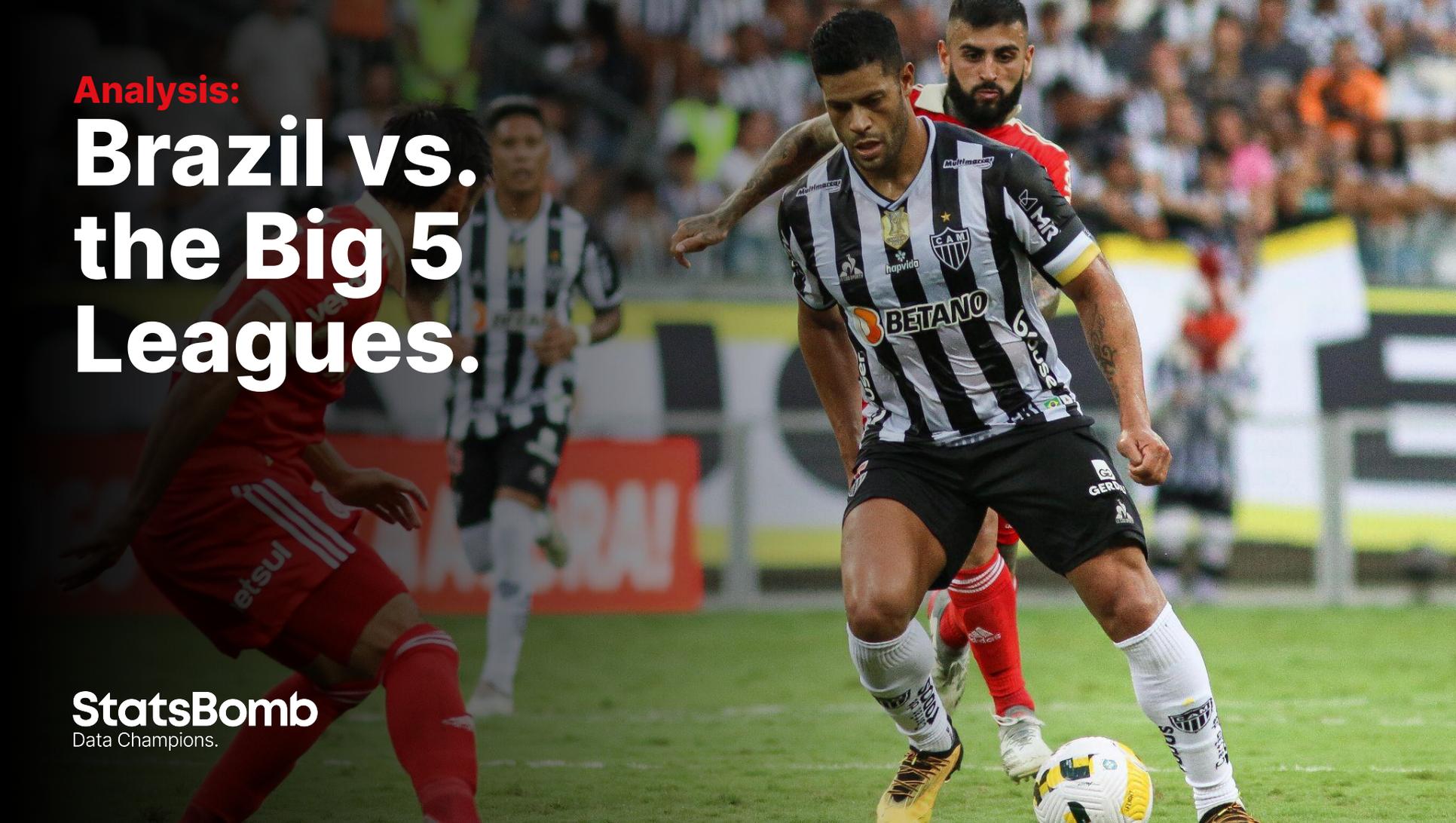


**Analysis:**

# Brazil vs. the Big 5 Leagues.

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## Brazil: A New Beginning

In recent years, the privileged financial position of Brazil's Serie A has seen it become the dominant league in South America. Five of the last six winners of the Copa Libertadores have come from the league, while the last three finals have been all-Brazilian contests.

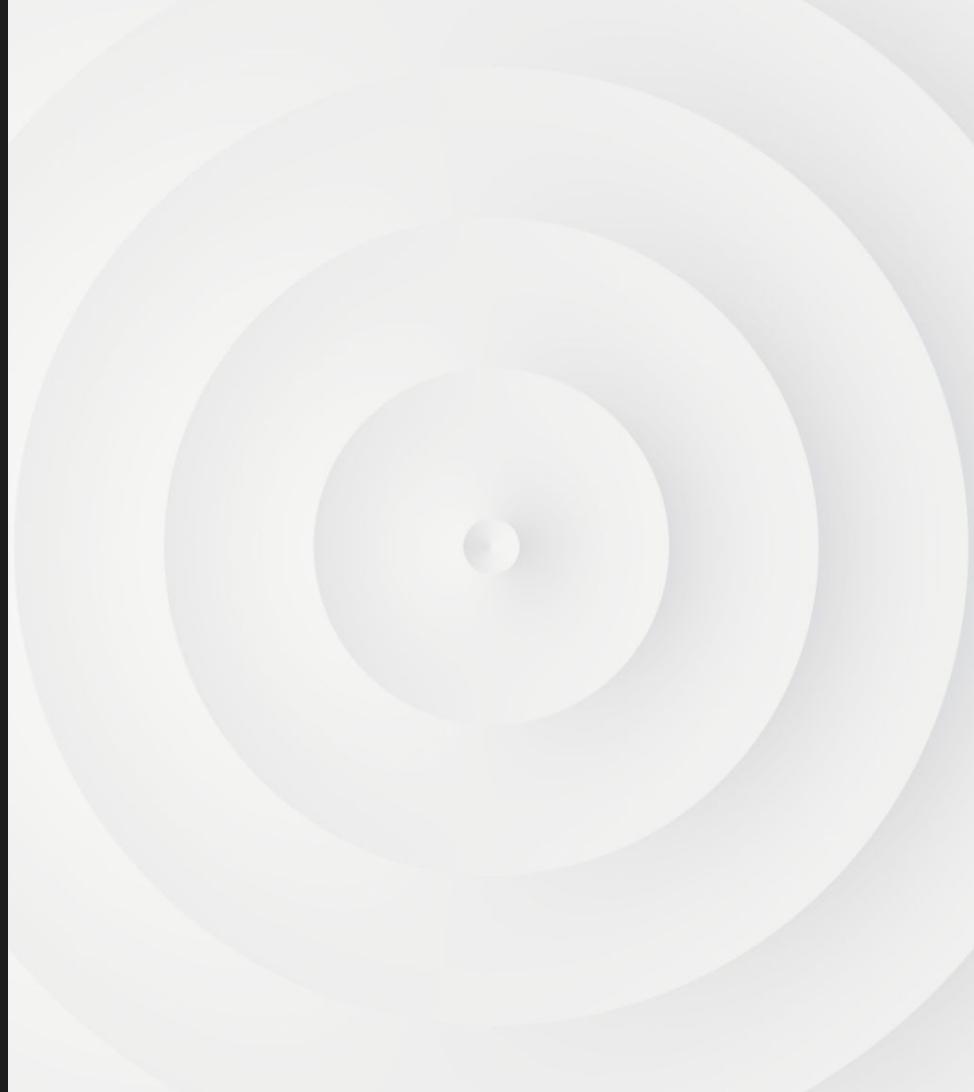
Now, an ambitious plan is afoot to create a new competition capable of challenging the major European leagues. Regulatory changes, including a 2021 ruling that allowed the country's clubs to register as corporations, have attracted investors from the United States and Middle East and paved the way for a breakaway league untethered from ageing structures.

It is off the pitch that the major gains need to be made. But how far away is the Brazilian league from those currently thought of as the world's best on the pitch? Taking the big five European leagues as the standard and Latin American leagues as a reference point we investigate how it compares.

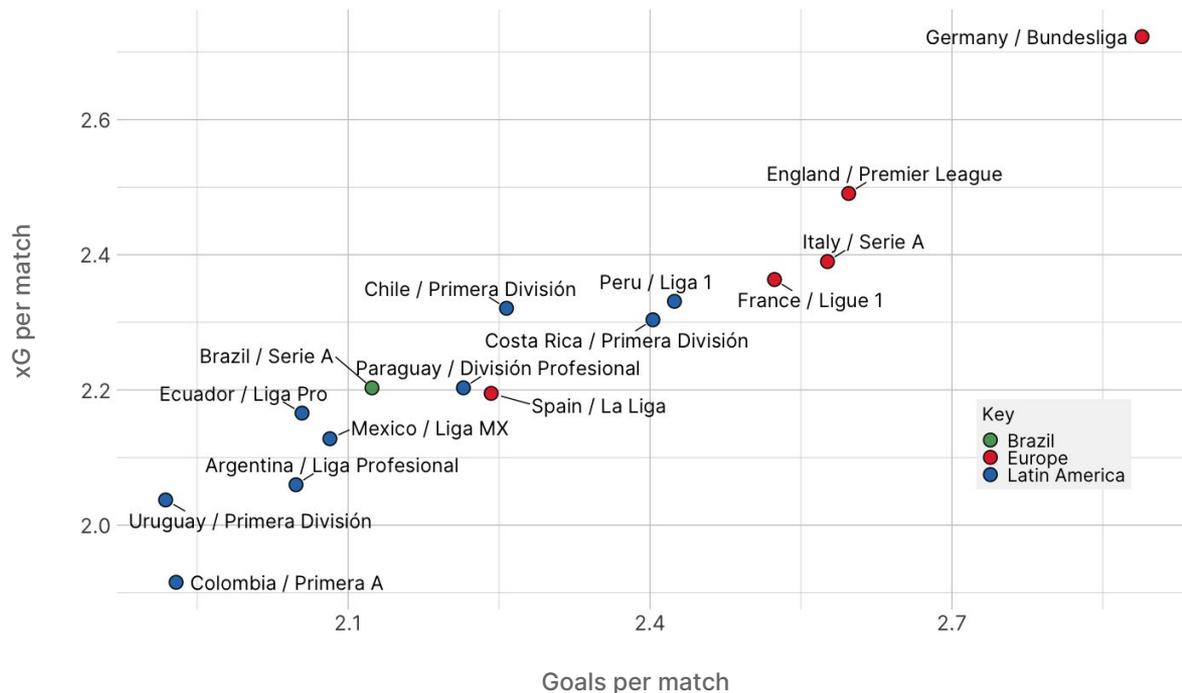
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# Goals and Expected Goals (xG).



## Goals and xG per Match



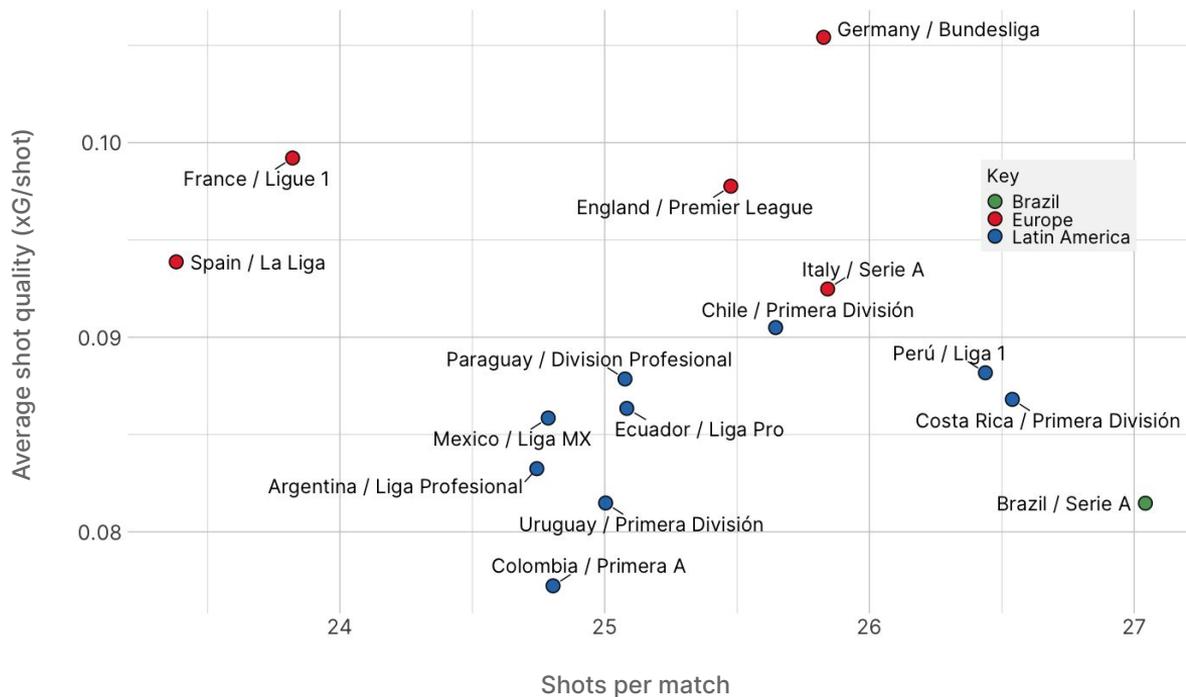
If we equate goals and a good quantity of chances with entertainment value then Brazil's Serie A currently falls somewhat short of most of the major European leagues.

The German Bundesliga is the clear standout here, but the top divisions in England, France and Italy also see far more goals than the Brazilian top flight.

Brazil's averages of 2.12 goals and 2.20 xG per match are much closer to the Latin American averages (2.15 goals; 2.16 xG) than those of the European big five (2.57 goals; 2.43 xG).

*\*Note that all comparisons use the last complete season for each league: 2021-22 in the case of the European leagues, Costa Rica and México; 2022 for Brazil and the remaining Latin American leagues.*

## Shots and Shot Quality

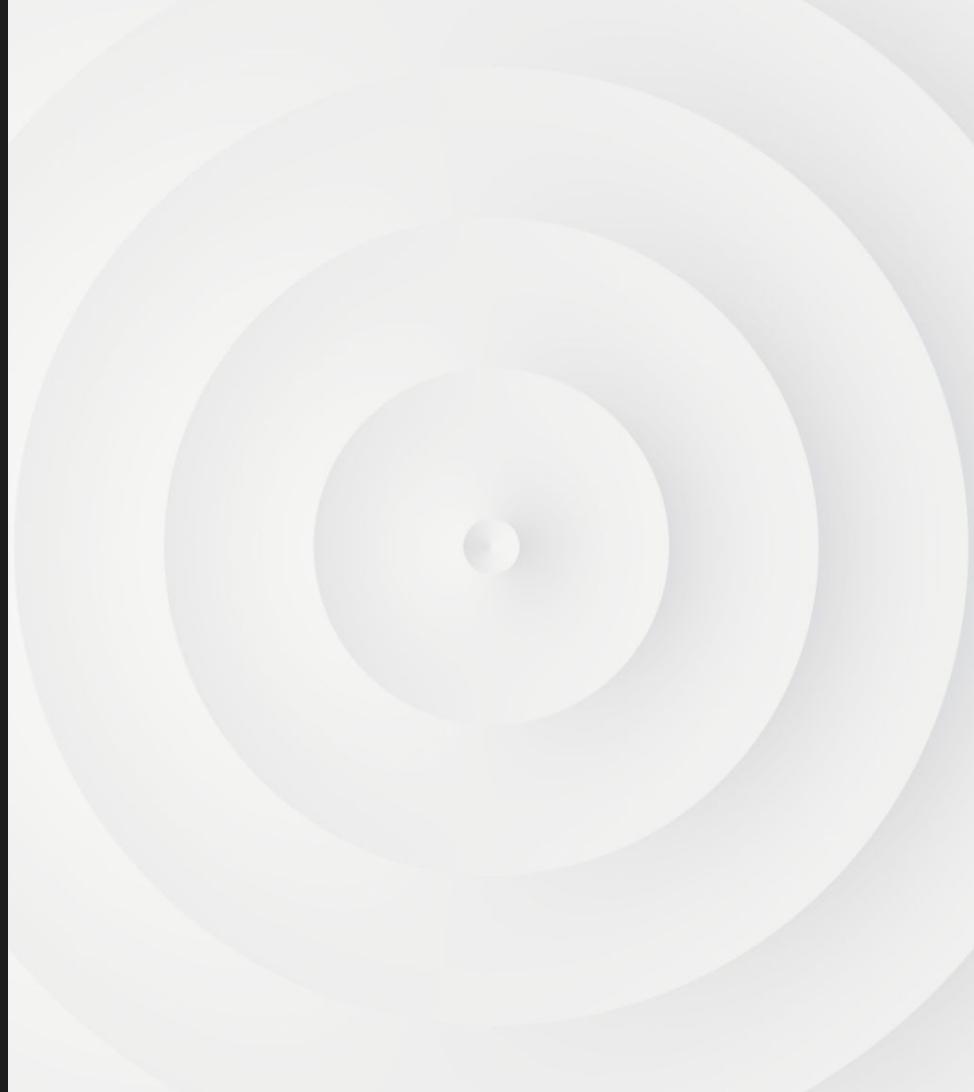


Here, again, we see a clear difference between Brazil and the big five European leagues.

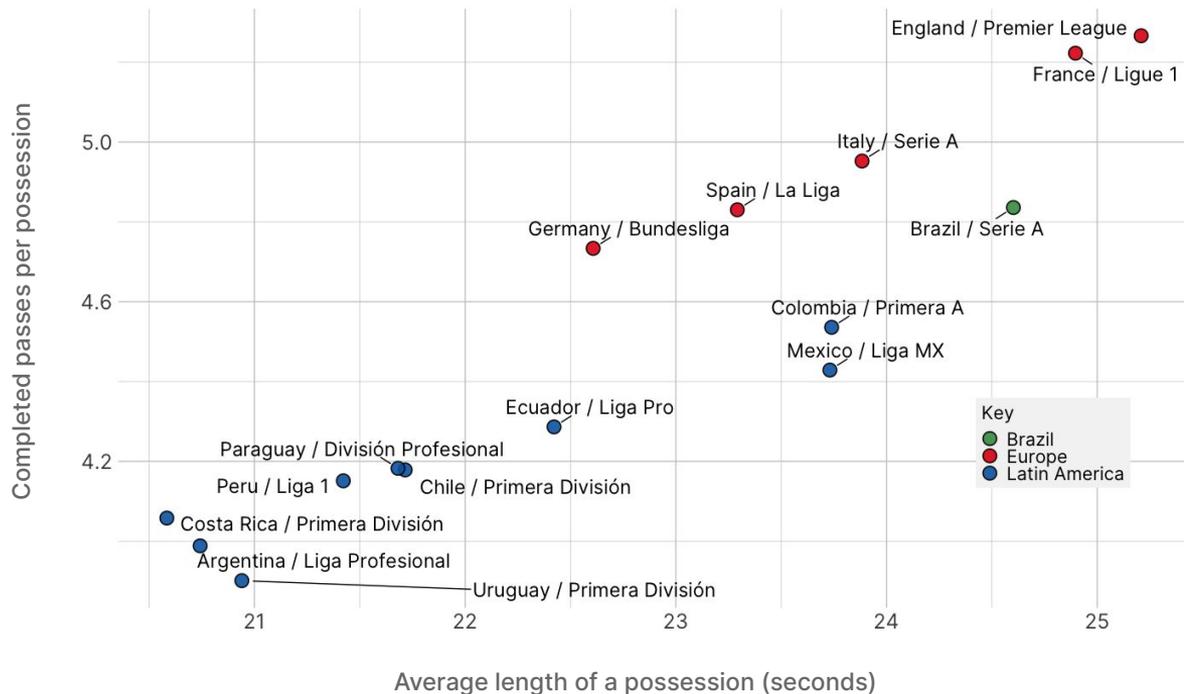
The average number of shots per match in Brazil is higher than in any other league in this comparison, but the average shot quality (xG/shot) is the second worst, behind only Colombia.

It is shot quality that is the major differentiator between the European and Latin American leagues; only Chile joins the European big five in having an average shot quality of over 0.09 xG/shot (in other words, an average chance of scoring of over 9% per shot).

# Possessions and Passes.



# Possession Length

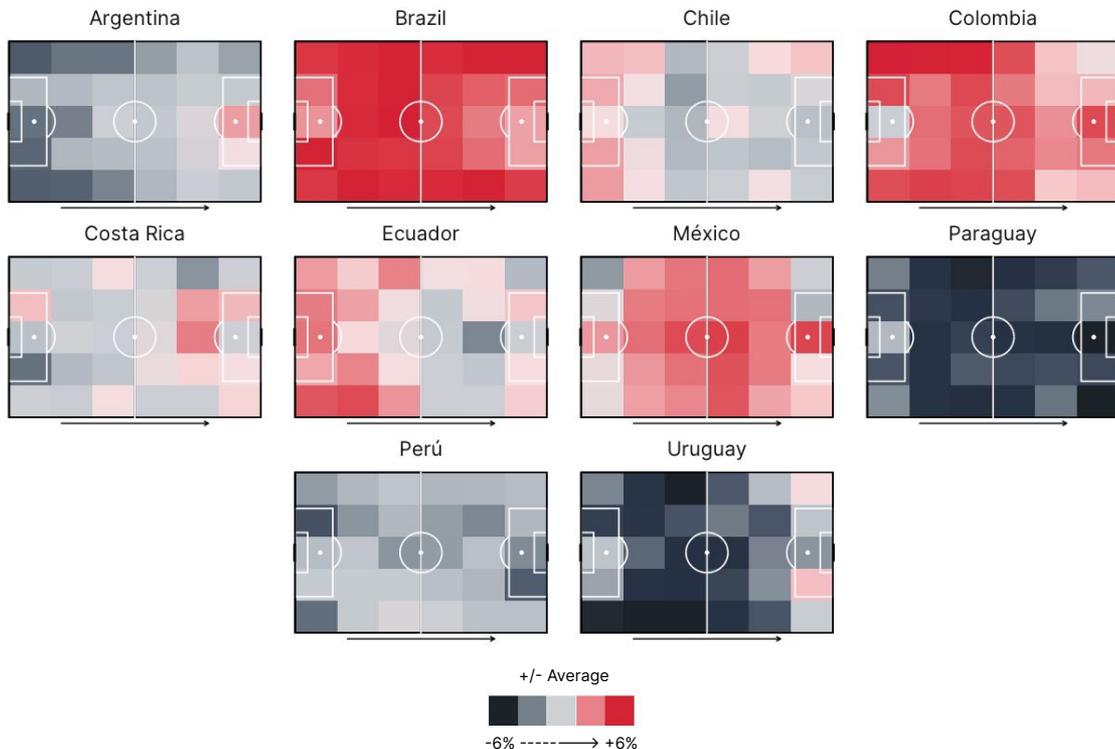


In the two displayed metrics – completed passes per possession and average possession length (seconds) – Brazil's Serie A is grouped with the big five European leagues.

It has the third longest average possession time, only behind the English Premier League and France's Ligue 1, while it places between Spain's La Liga and the German Bundesliga in terms of the average number of completed passes per possession.

The style of play is clearly distinct from the cluster of Latin American leagues in the bottom left of the graph, although Colombia and Mexico are also making a break for the European group.

## Percentage of Ground Passes



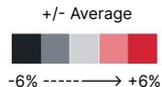
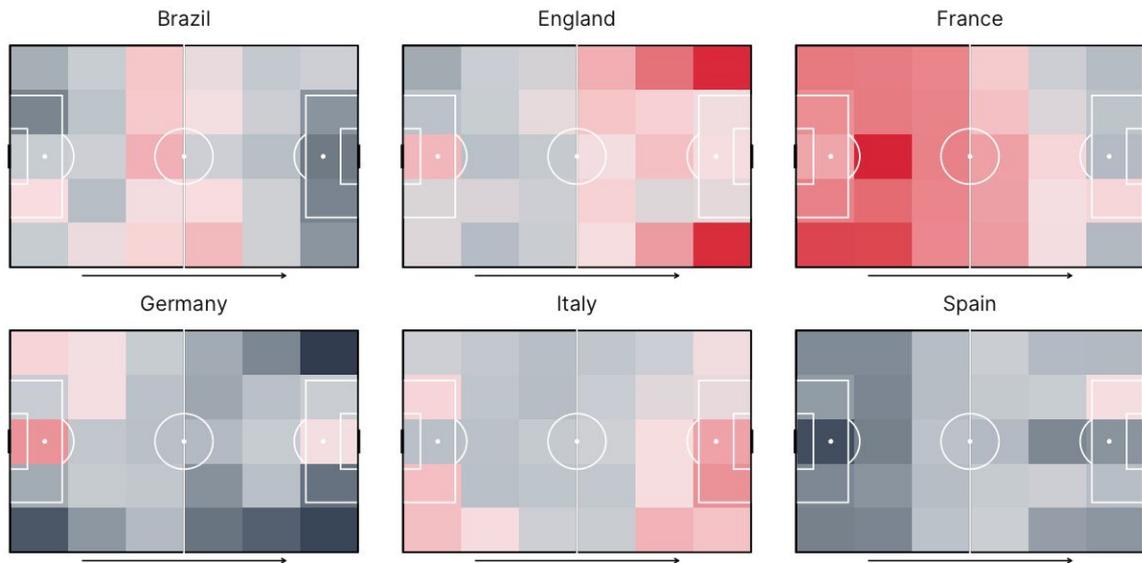
Another way of analysing the passing profile of a league is to look at the height of the passes played from each area of the pitch.

Using StatsBomb's exclusive pass height data and comparing the Brazilian league to the rest of Latin America, we can see that it is the league with the highest percentage of ground passes.

It particularly stands out in the defensive half and on the wings.

Within Brazil, Fernando Diniz's Fluminense are the standout team in terms of playing more ground passes than the league average, particularly in the defensive half.

## Percentage of Ground Passes

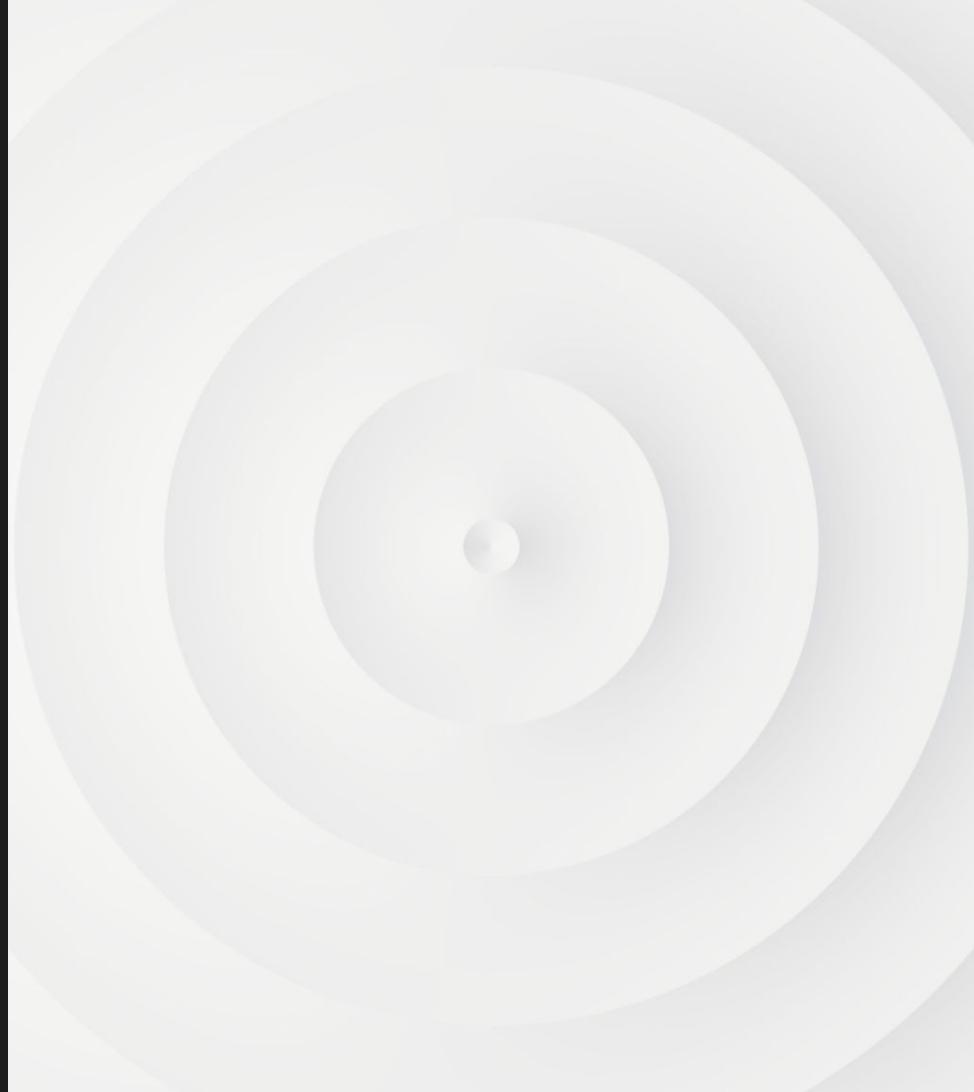


But how does Brazil's Serie A compare to the average of the big five European leagues?

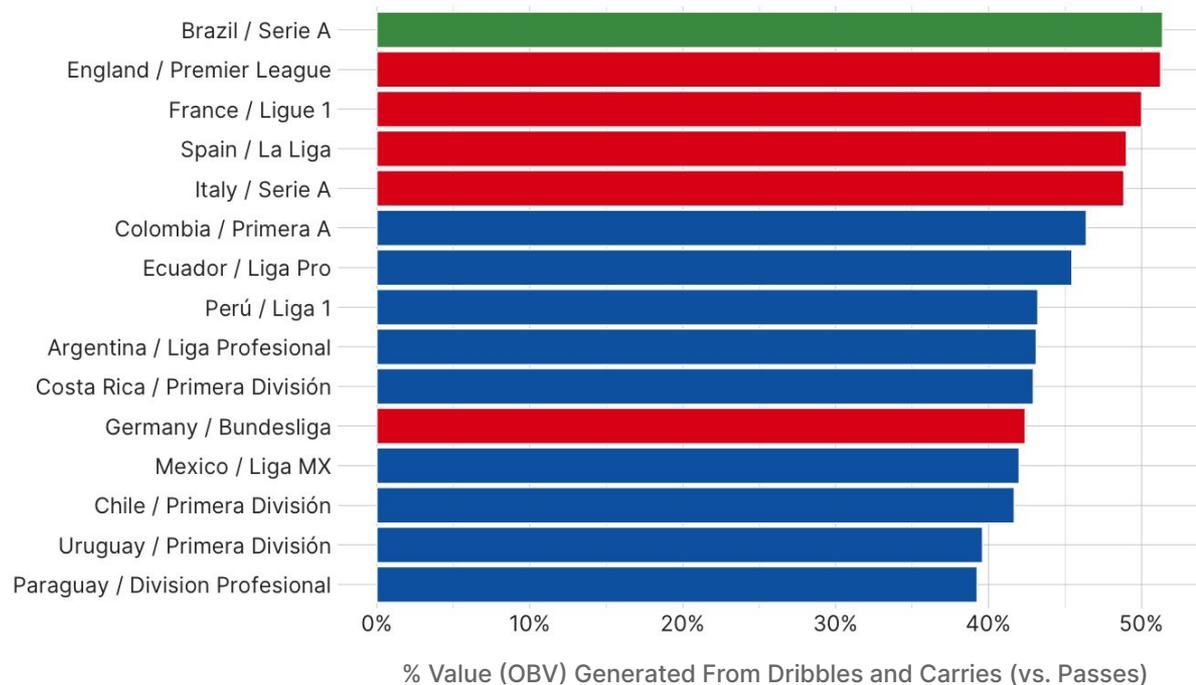
We've maintained the same +/- 6% scale, which highlights the relative lack of variation across the big five leagues in comparison to those of Latin America.

Whereas in Latin America, Brazil was the clear stand out across most of the pitch, its profile looks a lot more standard when compared to the big-five average, aside from a few pockets of slightly above average percentages in the centre of the pitch. It blends right in.

# Dribbling and Ball Carrying.



## % Value Generated From Dribbles and Carries



A simple look at the number of dribbles attempted and the success rate across the 15 leagues shows little pattern of note, but we can add more context with the help of our model On-Ball Value (OBV).

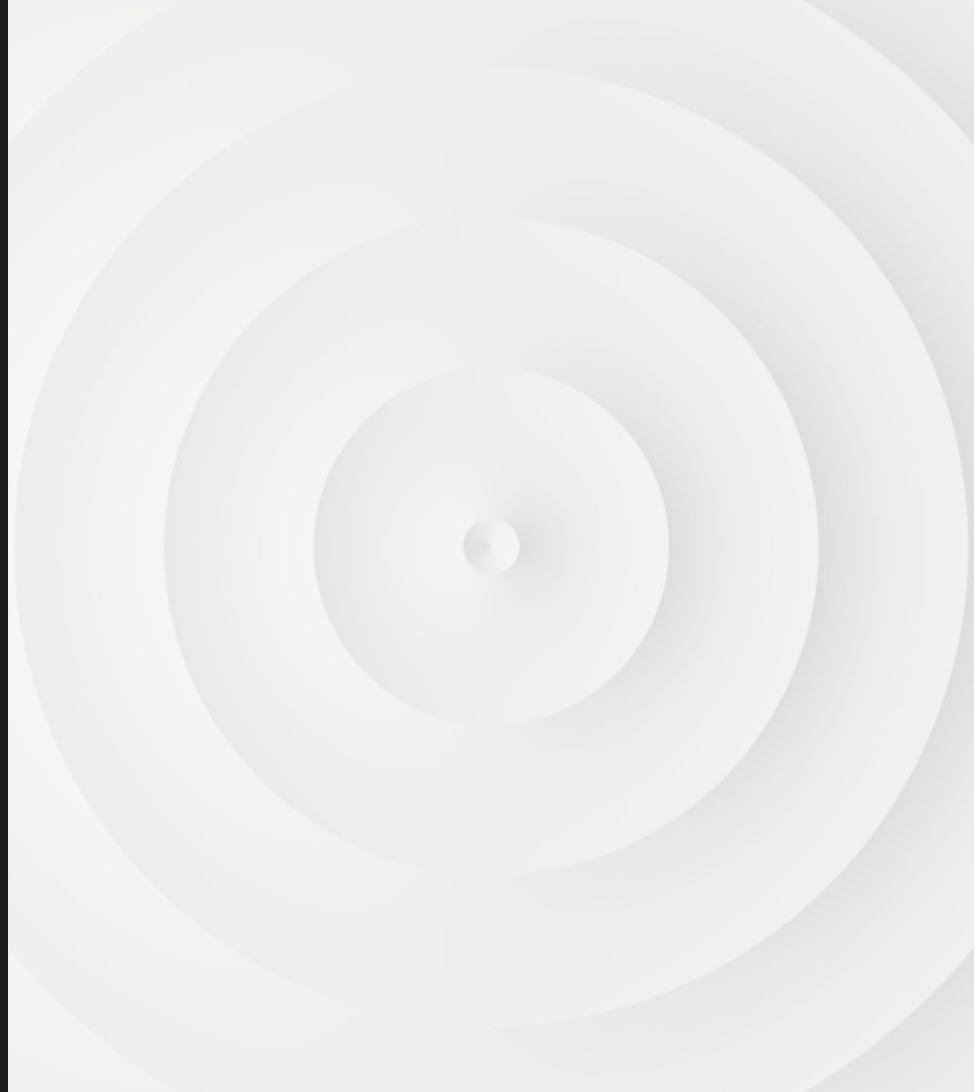
OBV values each action based on the positive or negative impact it has on the team's likelihood of scoring and conceding.

Using OBV, we can look at the percentage of value added via dribbles and ball carries (vs. passes) to get an idea of how teams progress the ball into dangerous areas in each league.

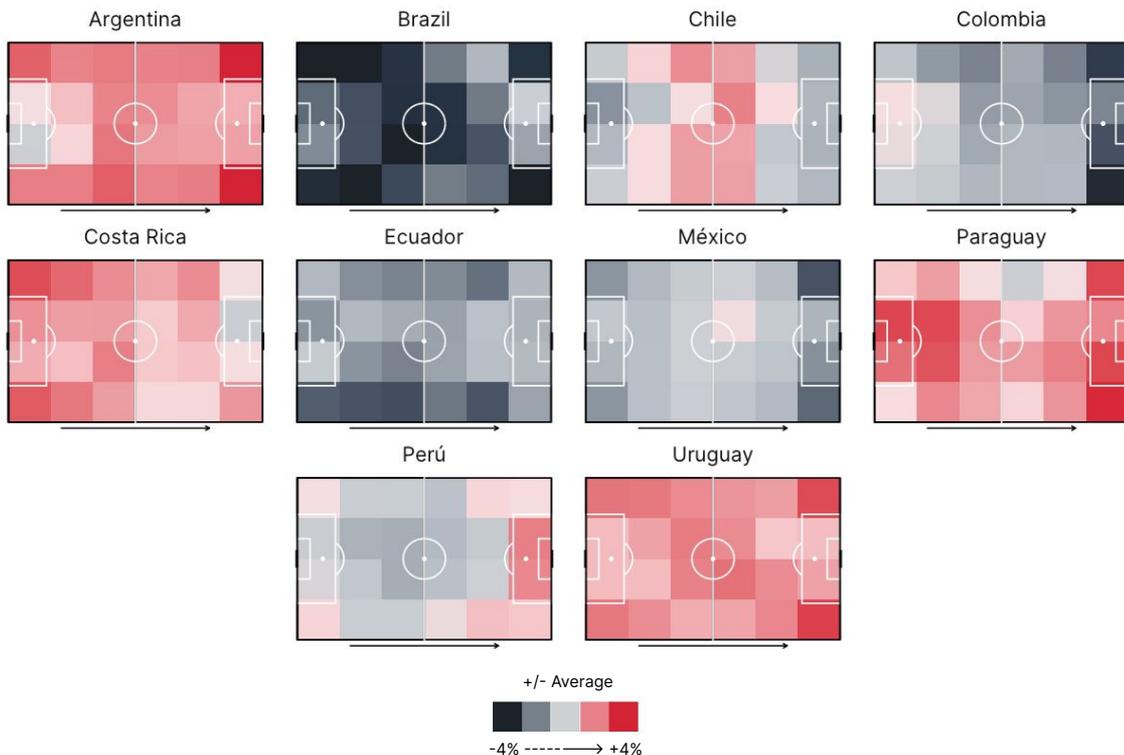
Brazil leads the way here, but again we can see that it is much closer to the major European leagues (Germany aside) than the rest of Latin America.

# Pressing.

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## % Opposition Actions Performed Under Pressure



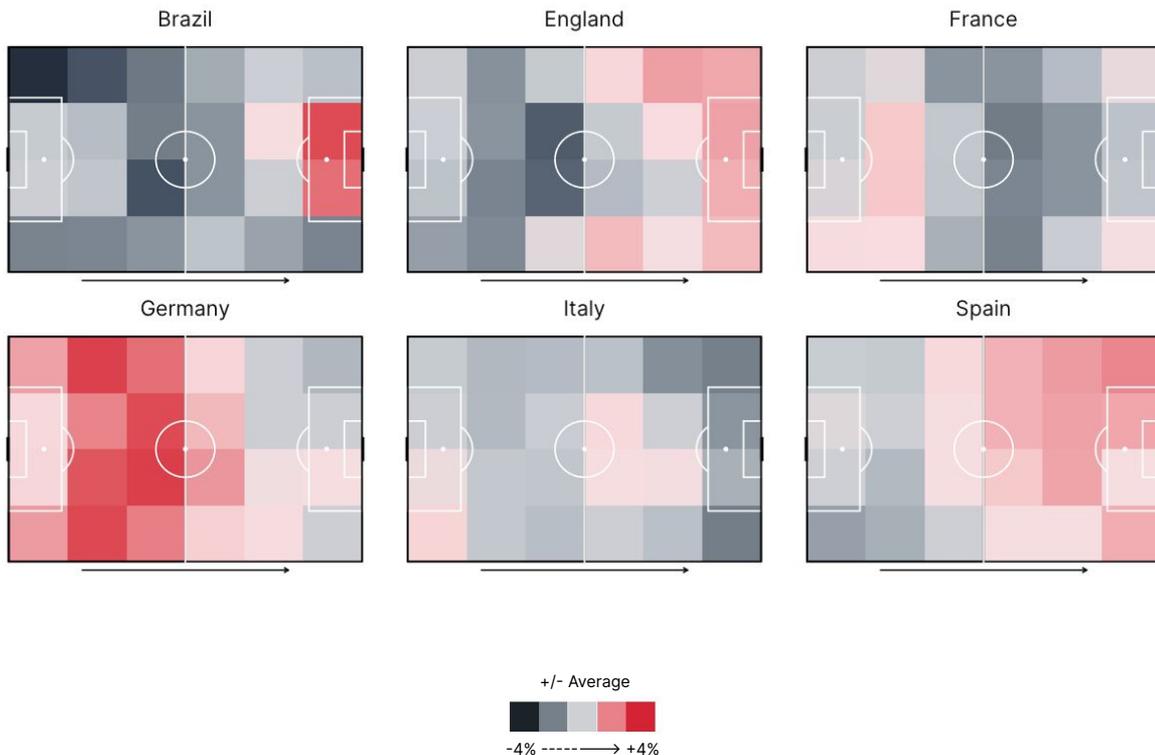
StatsBomb is the only provider to collect pressure data at an event level for both teams and players.

Using that information, we can look at the percentage of opposition actions that are performed under defensive pressure in each area of the pitch.

As we can see, in a Latin American context, Brazil is by far the most passive league, with an average or lower than average number of pressured opposition actions across the entire pitch.

Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay are the three standouts here, which fits the stylistic profile we've seen from them across the other metrics in his report.

## % Opposition Actions Performed Under Pressure

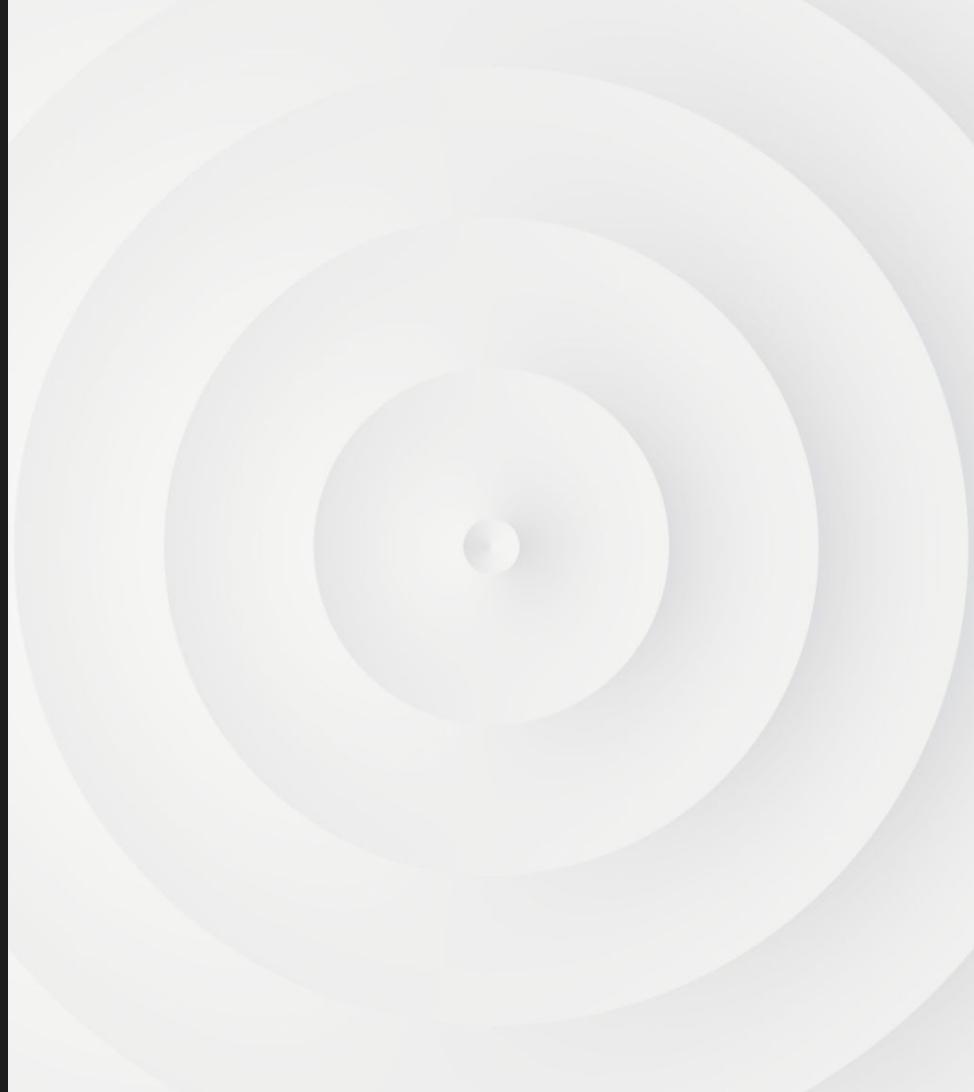


In the context of the average of the big five European leagues, we can see that Brazil is much less of a stand out.

The defensive style is still broadly more passive but the difference isn't as stark as it was in comparison with the rest of the Latin American leagues.

# Conclusion.

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## Brazil: More European Than Not

### In this comparison we've found that:

- The Brazilian league produces far fewer goals and expected goals (xG) than the big five European leagues. Its teams take more shots but of a much worse average quality.
- The passing profile of the Brazilian league is much closer to that of the big five European leagues than other Latin American countries.
- Brazil is the league that generates most value from dribbling and ball carrying (vs. passes) but is again clustered with most of the big five European leagues.
- The Brazilian league is clearly the most passive in Latin America in terms of the percent of opposition actions performed under pressure, but has a fairly normal profile in comparison to the big five European leagues

The overriding conclusion is that the style of play in the Brazilian league is much closer to the major European leagues than its Latin American counterparts.

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