

SPORTS DIPLOMACY AND GOVERNANCE: FOOTBALL AGENTS & FIFA'S REGULATIONS

COCOU MARIUS MENSAH

University of Maribor, Faculty of Law, Maribor, Slovenia

email: cocou.mensah@um.si

Over the past few decades, the regulation of football agents has undergone a significant transformation. From a flexible “intermediary” regime to regulatory responsibility under national associations, the decentralised model has generated legal uncertainty, uneven standards, and concerns regarding transparency and accountability. To address this issue, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) adopted the FIFA Football Agent Regulations (FFAR), reintroducing a mandatory global licensing framework that includes a standardised examination, eligibility requirements, and compliance mechanisms. This chapter examines the legal and regulatory evolution from deregulation to re-regulation and analyses the ongoing legal challenges raised by FIFA’s rules. It argues that the new examination and licensing system, particularly under the 2025 FFAR framework, structures the profession, enhances integrity, and strengthens governance. While contested, the reform represents a necessary step toward professionalisation, regulatory coherence, and the protection of players and market stability in international football.

DOI
[https://doi.org/
10.18690/um.pf.1.2026.13](https://doi.org/10.18690/um.pf.1.2026.13)

ISBN
978-961-299-176-0

Keywords:

EU competition law,
player representation,
transfer market,
licensing examination,
regulatory reform



University of Maribor Press

1 Introduction

Football has evolved from a locally codified nineteenth-century sport into a global socio-economic system that generates billions of euros annually and shapes cultural identities across continents.¹ This transformation has intensified the need for regulatory coherence, particularly in areas directly connected to the international transfer market. Among the most influential actors in this ecosystem are football agents, who structure players' and coaches' mobility, negotiate contracts, and facilitate international and cross-border transactions.² As financial stakes have increased, so too have concerns regarding transparency, conflicts of interest, protection of minors, and market stability.³

The central problem addressed in this chapter is whether the Fédération Internationale de Football Association's (FIFA) reintroduction of a mandatory licensing and examination system under the FIFA Football Agent Regulations (FFAR)⁴ constitutes a disproportionate restriction on economic freedom, particularly under EU competition law and the freedom to provide services, or whether it represents a legitimate and necessary regulatory response to structural deficiencies created by the previous intermediary regime. The debate is situated within a broader legal context, shaped by the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union, notably *Bosman*,⁵ the *Lassana Diarra case*,⁶ and more recent challenges to FIFA's regulatory authority.

The chapter is structured in five main sections. The first situates football within its historical, socio-cultural, and economic context, demonstrating how its global expansion created a need for robust governance mechanisms. The second traces the regulatory evolution from the pre-2015 licensed-agent system to the intermediary model, highlighting the fragmentation, inconsistencies, and accountability gaps that emerged. The third examines the consequences of market liberalisation and the return to regulation under the FFAR, focusing on licensing requirements, the examination process, supervisory structures, and safeguards for minor players. The

¹ Deloitte, 2026.

² Ioannidis, 2019, pp. 154–170.

³ Iskander, 2026.

⁴ FIFA, 2025.

⁵ *Union Royale Belge des Sociétés de Football Association ASBL v. Bosman*, Case C-415/93, Judgment of 15 December 1995, Court of Justice of the European Union.

⁶ *FIFA v BZ*, 2024.

fourth analyses the interaction between these regulatory measures and EU law, assessing their proportionality considering freedom of movement, competition principles, and relevant CJEU jurisprudence, including *Bosman*, *Meca-Medina*, and the *Lassana Diarra case*. Finally, the chapter concludes by reflecting on the extent to which the FFAR restores structural coherence and legal legitimacy to the international football agent market.

Methodologically, the chapter adopts a doctrinal legal analysis grounded in competition principles and sports governance frameworks, complemented by an institutional assessment of FIFA's regulatory evolution.

The chapter argues that, although the FFAR imposes entry conditions and regulatory constraints, these measures are proportionate to legitimate objectives, namely integrity, transparency, player protection and market stability. The findings suggest that the newly imposed licensing examination and centralised supervision do not constitute protectionist barriers but rather serve as instruments of professionalisation in a highly monetised global industry. The proposed solution is therefore not deregulation, but legally calibrated governance: a structured system in which agents are trained, examined, vetted, and subject to effective oversight, ensuring that the commercial success of football remains aligned with ethics, principles of accountability and fairness.

2 The Origins of Football

Football was not invented and played by the aristocracy to entertain crowds at the weekend or to stage World Cups to crown the strongest nation. Quite the contrary, the game now loved by billions across the globe was originally rooted in popular milieus and served as a diversion for people from modest, often rural backgrounds, as Stéphane Beaud underlines in his chapter, “Le football est le sport des classes populaires”.⁷ It emerged in the mid-nineteenth century in Great Britain, but its historical roots extend much further back. Various ball games played in antiquity and the medieval period, such as the French soule, British folk football, and the Italian calcio Fiorentino, shared characteristics that would later define association football, including collective participation, physical confrontation, and limited

⁷ Beaud, 2019, p. 169.

codification.⁸ Though these early practices were often festive and locally organised, they demonstrated a popular attachment to ball games across Europe.

During the nineteenth century, football in Britain evolved from diverse popular traditions into a progressively codified sport. Contrary to earlier historiography that attributed the sport's survival and structure primarily to English public schools, recent scholarship suggests that football culture remained widespread among the general population, independent of elite educational institutions.⁹ These challenges the conventional narrative that presents football as an upper-class invention later appropriated by the working classes.

Debates concerning the social origins of football have become increasingly complex. Traditional accounts portray the game as initially shaped by Victorian "gentlemen" before later becoming professionalised and popularised, whereas revisionist perspectives emphasise football as fundamentally a "people's game" that experienced a period of elite institutionalisation. However, these contrasting interpretations risk oversimplifying a multifaceted historical process shaped by limited archival evidence and differing ideological perspectives.¹⁰

The formal institutionalisation of football accelerated in the late nineteenth century. Professionalism was officially recognised in England in 1885, facilitating the rapid creation of clubs across Europe and South America. The international dimension of sport was consolidated when the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) was established in Paris in 1904. The success of football tournaments at the Olympic Games further strengthened its global appeal, culminating in the organisation of the first FIFA World Cup in 1930. Over the twentieth century, football evolved into the world's most popular sport, combining mass participation, commercial expansion, and strong cultural identification.¹¹

Beyond its institutional development, football has consistently reflected broader social, political, and economic transformations. As highlighted by Correia (2020), the sport cannot be reduced to contemporary "football business"; it also embodies popular culture, collective identity, and social struggle. Its origins, therefore, must be

⁸ Dietschy, 2014, pp. 16-32.

⁹ Swain, 2015.

¹⁰ Kitching, 2015.

¹¹ Correia, 2020; Dietschy, 2014, p. 81.

understood not merely as a sporting evolution, but as part of a wider process of cultural continuity and historical love of ball games across different continents, such as Europe and Asia.

3 Socio-Economic and Cultural Significance of Football

Presently, as described in the previous paragraphs, football, as a practice originating in the rural population, has fully transcended into a highly sophisticated, codified sport with profound cultural resonance across the global socio-economic system. In the contemporary era, football functions as a complex global industry shaped by financial, sporty, sportive, organisational, social, and cultural stakeholders operating within an interconnected ecosystem. Yiapanas et al. (2024) emphasise that modern football reflects both international governance norms and distinctive structural features that generate diverse forms of value, economic, sporting, cultural and social, while simultaneously producing tensions within stakeholder relationships. Football, therefore, and sports in general, operate within a multidimensional framework in which financial performance, institutional regulation and social legitimacy are deeply intertwined.¹² This dynamic is evident, based on the sports sector's role as a productive pillar of the knowledge economy, where education, employment, and innovation converge to promote sustainable economic growth and social inclusion.¹³

The commercialisation of modern football is clearly reflected in recent financial data. The 29th edition of the Deloitte Football Money League reports that the 2024/25 season marked a historic milestone, with the top 20 clubs collectively surpassing €12 billion in annual revenue for the first time. Within this financial landscape, commercial income has become the dominant revenue stream, averaging €265 million per club and reflecting intensified sponsorship agreements, global retail expansion, and the strategic diversification of stadium infrastructure. Clubs increasingly exploit their stadiums beyond matchdays by incorporating hotels, restaurants, retail outlets and entertainment facilities, transforming these venues into multifunctional commercial spaces. The financial scale of leading clubs illustrates this transformation. Real Madrid became the first football club to exceed €1 billion in revenue in the 2023/24 season and increased this figure to approximately €1.2

¹² Yiapanas et al., 2024, pp. 552–585.

¹³ Karaiskos et al., 2025, p. 1772.

billion in 2024/25, including €594 million from commercial activities alone. Other European giants reported similarly substantial revenues, including FC Barcelona (€975 million), Bayern Munich (€861 million), Paris Saint-Germain (€837 million), and Liverpool (€836 million). These figures highlight the growing concentration of financial power among a small group of elite clubs and confirm that contemporary football organisations operate as major corporate actors within the global entertainment and media economy.¹⁴ Beyond club-level finances, professional football contributes significantly to national economies. A recent German study highlighted that professional football generated a net fiscal contribution of €4.6 billion to public budgets, exceeding expenditure in certain public policy areas.¹⁵ Moreover, 41% of German citizens identify professional football as an important part of their lives, underlining its integrative and identity-forming role across social divisions. Football thus produces both tangible economic income, employment, taxation, infrastructure development, and intangible social capital through collective experiences and regional affiliation.

In this sense, football cannot be reduced to a commercial spectacle because it embodies popular culture and collective identity, even within an increasingly commercialised environment.¹⁶ The contemporary football industry represents a hybrid sphere where market logic, regulatory governance and socio-cultural attachment converge. While football operates within highly commercialised global markets, it simultaneously retains strong cultural and community significance, creating a complex institutional environment in which economic interests and social identities interact.¹⁷ Its economic weight, global reach, and societal embeddedness explain why regulatory frameworks and the roles of governing bodies carry international diplomatic implications, particularly as global sport organisations increasingly operate within complex political, economic, and regulatory environments. Football's transformation into a "cash cow" of the global economy further underscores the need for structured governance capable of balancing commercial expansion with integrity, accountability and social responsibility, reflecting the growing complexity of managing global sport institutions and their stakeholders.¹⁸

¹⁴ Deloitte, 2026.

¹⁵ DFL, 2024.

¹⁶ Correia, 2020.

¹⁷ Morrow, 2023, pp. 3–8.

¹⁸ Renzi & Taragoni, 2024, pp. 117–118; Bayle, 2025, pp. 7–9.

4 The Role of FIFA

The unprecedented economic magnitude and societal reach of contemporary football inevitably raise questions of governance and regulation, particularly as sport has evolved into a complex global industry attracting growing scrutiny from regulators, policymakers and international institutions.¹⁹ When a sector generates billions of euros annually, shapes national identity, influences public finances, and mobilises millions of supporters across continents, it cannot operate without structured oversight. The commercialisation of elite competitions, the internationalisation of transfers, and the growing complexity of contractual relations have transformed football into a global regulatory space requiring coherent and enforceable rules. As such, football in the twenty-first century and the environment in which it operates have evolved beyond the traditional ways in which the sport has historically been understood and governed.²⁰ The greater the financial stakes, the greater the risks – conflicts of interest, exploitation of young players, opaque financial flows, and competitive imbalances – thereby necessitating institutional supervision. At the same time, technological advancements and digital platforms have expanded the reach of sport organisations, enabling them to engage global audiences and generate additional forms of value through activities such as sponsorship, commercial partnerships and sports betting markets.²¹

The establishment of FIFA in 1904 marked the first step toward global coordination of the sport. Initially created to harmonise rules and facilitate international competition, FIFA progressively evolved into the central regulatory authority of world football. Its competencies expanded throughout the twentieth century, particularly with the creation of the FIFA World Cup in 1930 and the subsequent development of international transfer systems. Over time, FIFA adopted comprehensive regulatory instruments governing player status, transfers, disciplinary matters, ethics, safeguarding and financial transparency.

As football transitioned from a primarily sporting activity into a transnational industry, FIFA's regulatory function correspondingly intensified. The organisation's evolution reflects a broader shift from rule-making for competition to governance

¹⁹ Meier et al., 2023, pp. 692–695; Flanagan, 2025, pp. 1–8.

²⁰ Chadwick, Widdop & Goldman, 2025, pp. 20–22.

²¹ Westerbeek & Karg, 2022, p. 30.

of an economic ecosystem. The regulation of intermediaries, now football agents, must be understood within this trajectory. Agents operate at the heart of the transfer market, negotiating contracts that involve substantial financial resources and cross-border legal implications. In a context where clubs generate many billions annually, and player transfers are at record highs, the absence of structured oversight risks undermining both sporting integrity and economic stability. This concern has long been recognised in European sport governance debates, as illustrated by the Council of Europe's attempt to provide 'an institutional framework for the development of sport at European level', representing an early effort to regulate the governance and economic dynamics of sport markets.²²

As the financial scale and organisational complexity of football have expanded, the need for regulatory mechanisms to supervise key actors within the football ecosystem has become increasingly evident. Thus, the reintroduction of a centralised licensing system under the FFAR represents not merely administrative reform but an institutional response to the economic and social weight of sport. When football functions simultaneously as cultural heritage, an entertainment industry, and a fiscal contributor to national economies, regulatory coherence becomes indispensable. The governance of agents is therefore part of a broader effort to align the commercial expansion of football with principles of transparency, accountability and professional standardisation, ensuring that the global game remains both economically sustainable and socially legitimate.

4.1 Historical Evolution of Football Agent Regulation

A football agent is generally understood as an intermediary who represents players and/or clubs in negotiations over employment contracts or transfer agreements, often providing additional services such as career management, scouting, and assistance with off-field matters.²³ FIFA first introduced regulations governing football agents in 1991, with several revisions over time, including major reforms in 2000/2001 that established national licensing systems, mandatory examinations, and liability insurance requirements. According to Paolo Lombardi, the need for reform at that time was significant due to the growing influence of agents and the lack of regulation in the transfer market.²⁴ The regulations remained in force, with further

²² Sugden, Sheps & Sugden, 2023, p. 476; Siekmann & Soek, 2010, p. 93.

²³ Parrish et al., 2019, p. 3.

²⁴ Lombardi, 2015, p. 22.

amendments in 2008, until their repeal in 2015. Increasing financial flows in the transfer market and rising agent commissions prompted FIFA to reassess the regulatory framework. FIFA identified several key problems within the existing system, including the widespread involvement of unlicensed individuals in transfer negotiations, a lack of transparency in transfer transactions, inconsistencies between FIFA regulations and national laws, and unclear roles for agents who often represented multiple parties. In response, the FIFA Congress initiated reforms in 2009 and, following several years of consultation, adopted the Regulations on Working with Intermediaries (RWI) in 2014, which came into force on 1 April 2015 and replaced the previous agent regulations.²⁵

4.2. The 2015 Reform: From “Licensed Agents” to “Intermediaries”

In 2015, FIFA replaced the licensed agent regime with the “intermediary” system. Rather than requiring a FIFA licence and exam, individuals merely had to register with their respective national association before participating in a transaction.²⁶

Importantly, this was not presented as full deregulation but rather as a decentralisation of oversight. FIFA shifted responsibility to national associations, which were required to:

- a) implement basic registration procedures;
- b) publish lists of intermediaries involved in transactions;
- c) ensure minimal disclosure of remuneration.²⁷

However, no global examination was required, no harmonised professional qualification existed. Regulatory standards varied widely across jurisdictions. The consequences were significant:

- fragmentation of regulatory standards across member associations;
- lower barriers to entry, increasing the number of market participants;
- reduced global supervision, limiting FIFA’s direct control;
- inconsistent enforcement mechanisms, depending on national capacity.²⁸

²⁵ Auberg, n.d.

²⁶ Colucci, 2015, p. 17.

²⁷ Lombardi, 2015, pp. 28–30.

²⁸ Lombardi, 2015, pp. 32–37.

While the reform aimed to simplify governance, it inadvertently produced regulatory asymmetry. Some associations implemented robust systems; others adopted minimal compliance frameworks. This uneven application weakened global coherence.

4.3 Structural Consequences of the Intermediary Model

The absence of a FIFA uniform qualification mechanism resulted in:

- variability in legal knowledge among intermediaries;
- increased disputes concerning representation contracts;
- concerns over conflicts of interest;
- allegations of excessive commissions;
- reduced predictability in international transactions.²⁹

From a governance perspective, the intermediary framework exposed tensions between liberalisation and integrity. The market became more accessible, but the professional structure diminished. In cross-border transfers, where legal, financial, and regulatory complexity is high, the absence of harmonised standards created systemic vulnerabilities. Moreover, FIFA's limited supervisory role restricted its capacity to impose consistent disciplinary measures. Enforcement remained largely national, creating procedural divergence and jurisdictional uncertainty.

By 2017, FIFA initiated consultations with member associations, stakeholders, and agent organisations to reassess the regulatory landscape. The outcome was a recognition that the intermediary experiment had produced instability rather than efficiency. The move toward reintroducing licensing, eventually codified in the FFAR, was therefore not merely a policy reversal, but a structural recalibration. It sought to:

- restore global uniformity;
- reinstate professional qualification standards;
- strengthen transparency and financial accountability;
- centralise dispute resolution mechanisms;

²⁹ Foulkes, 2021, p. 5.

- enhance protection of players and contractual integrity.³⁰

This historical evolution demonstrates a pendulum movement: from strict central licensing, to decentralised registration, and back toward structured global oversight.

4.4 The Return to Regulation: FFAR 2023–2025

The adoption of the FIFA Football Agent Regulations (FFAR), which entered into force on 9 January 2023, marked a decisive return to centralised governance of football agents. This reform followed extensive consultations with member associations and key international football stakeholders, initiated in 2017 and formally approved by the FIFA Council in December 2022 after a comprehensive consultation process led by FIFA since 2018.³¹ Subsequently, the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) confirmed the legality, validity, and proportionality of the FFAR, recognising FIFA's authority to regulate football agents and upholding key provisions, including the service fee cap, the prohibition on multiple representation, and the requirement that only licensed agents may provide agent services. These measures aim to strengthen contractual stability, enhance professional standards, and improve transparency within the international transfer system.³²

The FFAR reintroduced several key regulatory elements:

- a mandatory FIFA licence;
- harmonised eligibility criteria (Article 5 of the FFAR);
- a compulsory examination (Article 6 of the FFAR);
- an annual licence fee (Article 7 of the FFAR);
- centralised oversight by the FIFA General Secretariat (Article 23 of the FFAR).

FIFA's football agent licensing framework is now a centralised system administered via the FIFA Agents Platform (agents.fifa.com). Applicants must comply with the eligibility requirements in Article 5 FFAR, submit a complete application, pass the FIFA Football Agent Exam as required by Article 6 FFAR, and pay the annual

³⁰ Foulkes, 2021, pp. 1-5.

³¹ FIFA, 2023a.

³² FIFA, 2023b.

licence fee under Article 7 FFAR.³³ The FIFA General Secretariat oversees compliance with Article 23 FFAR and may request supporting documentation; failure to cooperate may result in licence rejection or disciplinary action.³⁴ This centralised approach represents a clear shift from prior decentralised national intermediary systems to a globally coordinated licensing model.

The examination consists of 20 multiple-choice questions, completed online within 60 minutes, with a minimum pass mark of 75%.³⁵ It is open book, restricted to official study materials, and conducted under remote invigilation with identity verification to ensure exam integrity.³⁶ Each candidate receives a unique set of questions to maintain fairness and prevent standardised answer sharing.

Exam content draws from multiple core regulatory texts, including the FIFA Football Agent Regulations, FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players (RSTP), FIFA Clearing House Regulations, FIFA Statutes, FIFA Code of Ethics, FIFA Disciplinary Code, and the FIFA Guardians Child Safeguarding Toolkit.³⁷ This ensures that licensed agents possess a comprehensive understanding of transfer governance, ethical standards, disciplinary procedures, financial clearing mechanisms, and safeguarding responsibilities within international football.

Overall, the centralisation of licensing, examination, and compliance oversight under the FIFA General Secretariat formalises agents as licensed global market participants. This structure consolidates interpretative and supervisory authority at the international level and promotes consistent professional standards across the football industry).³⁸

4.5 From Market Liberalisation to Structured Governance

The evolution from a liberalised intermediary market to the structured governance put in place by FIFA has enhanced predictability and transparency in national and cross-border football transactions, while ensuring all agents operate with shared regulatory literacy. It is important to note, however, that these new regulations must

³³ FIFA, 2025a.

³⁴ FIFA, 2025a.

³⁵ FIFA, 2025b.

³⁶ FIFA, 2025a; FIFA, 2025b.

³⁷ FIFA, n.d.

³⁸ FIFA, 2025a.

align with and operate within the broader EU legal framework, which guarantees freedom of movement and player mobility under Articles 45 and 56 TFEU, as illustrated by the landmark *Bosman* ruling.³⁹ Recent proceedings in the *Diarra* case⁴⁰ reaffirm that even players under contract retain mobility rights, requiring FIFA regulations to remain proportionate and compatible with EU competition and internal market principles.⁴¹ Within this judicial and regulatory landscape, agents play a central role by negotiating contracts, facilitating international transfers, and managing commercial arrangements, thereby directly influencing the economic dynamics of football. By combining mandatory licensing, examinations, and centralised compliance, the FFAR represents a calibrated response: it does not reinstate unchecked regulatory monopoly but instead seeks to structure a highly monetised intermediary sector within legally defensible parameters, balancing FIFA's governance authority with players' EU-protected freedoms.

5 Conclusion

The reintroduction of mandatory licensing and examination under the FFAR represents a significant step toward restoring regulatory coherence and professionalising the football intermediary market. By establishing uniform global qualifications, harmonised eligibility criteria, compulsory examinations, centralised oversight, and safeguards for minors, FIFA has strengthened transparency, contractual stability, and ethical standards across jurisdictions. The licensing framework, coupled with supervisory mechanisms, ensures that agents operate with baseline regulatory literacy, while compliance with EU principles, particularly freedom of movement and competition law, has been carefully balanced through proportionality considerations, as reflected in *Bosman* and the *Lassana Diarra* case.

FIFA's influence extends beyond sport into international relations, leveraging its economic power, global reach, and governance structure, which includes federations, confederations, and state participation in major events. Although a private law entity, national teams operate as symbols of state identity, legitimised by the support of heads of state.⁴² The growing economic and professional significance of agents is evident in the first fully online FIFA football agent exam in 2025, which

³⁹ *Union Royale Belge des Sociétés de Football Association ASBL v. Bosman*, C-415/93, 1995.

⁴⁰ *Lassana Diarra v. Union Royale Belge des Sociétés de Football Association*, C-650/22, 2024.

⁴¹ *Meca-Medina & Majcen v. Commission*, C-519/04 P, 2006.

⁴² Cazotto, Fronzaglia & Racy, 2022, p. 824.

attracted 16,117 applications, the highest in the exam's history, with Great Britain, France, the USA, Spain, and Brazil leading. By December 2025, 10,525 agents were licensed, reflecting both the increasing demand for professionalised representation and the importance of a robust regulatory framework.⁴³

Despite these achievements, practical and structural challenges remain. Contingency measures for technical disruptions during the exam, such as internet failures, are not clearly defined, and the requirement that all multiple-choice options must be correct to earn a point may not accurately reflect candidates' understanding. Preparatory training is largely provided by private agencies, often at high cost, and no free or accessible programs are currently available through FIFA, national associations, or regional football bodies. Additionally, with only a single exam held in 2025, the frequency and timing may limit access for prospective agents, while newly licensed agents often lack structured support to initiate their careers, including introductions to clubs and networking opportunities.

Addressing these gaps, through accessible training, clarified exam contingencies, reconsideration of scoring methodologies, and structured induction programs, would reinforce the FFAR's effectiveness and enhance both legal legitimacy and practical support. In this sense, while the FFAR has successfully restructured football agent governance, its full potential will depend on complementary measures that support agents' professional development and integration into the global football market.

Legal Acts, Case-Law

Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). v. *BZ* (2024). Case C-650/22. Court of Justice of the European Union (Second Chamber). Retrieved from: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:62022CJ0650> (accessed: March 3, 2026).

FIFA. (2015). *Regulations on working with intermediaries*. Fédération Internationale de Football Association.

FIFA. (2019). FIFA guardians child safeguarding toolkit. *Lassana Diarra v. Union Royale Belge des Sociétés de Football Association*, C-650/22 (CJEU 2024).

FIFA. (2023). *FIFA code of ethics*. Retrieved from: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/4f048486c1f7293c/original/FIFA-Code-of-Ethics-2023.pdf> (accessed: May 22, 2026).

⁴³ FIFA, 2025.

- FIFA. (2024). *FIFA statutes: Regulations governing the application of the statutes; standing orders of the congress*. Retrieved from: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/16d1f7349fa19ade/original/FIFA-Statutes-2024.pdf> (accessed: May 22, 2026).
- FIFA. (2025). *FIFA disciplinary code*. Retrieved from: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/6094262690de769/original/FIFA-Disciplinary-Code-2025.pdf> (accessed: May 22, 2026).
- FIFA. (2025). *FIFA football agent regulations*. Retrieved from: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/1e7b741fa0fae779/original/FIFA-Football-Agent-Regulations.pdf> (accessed: May 22, 2026).
- FIFA. (2025). *Regulations on the status and transfer of players incl. interim regulatory framework*. Retrieved from: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/696d877ea35ca761/original/Regulations-on-the-Status-and-Transfer-of-Players-January-2025-edition.pdf> (accessed: May 22, 2026).
- FIFA. (2026). *FIFA clearing house regulations*. Retrieved from: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/7c9e9c5185db9eb6/original/FIFA-Clearing-House-Regulations-October-2022-edition.pdf> (accessed: May 22, 2026).
- Meca-Medina and Majcen v. Commission (2006). Case C-519/04 P. Court of Justice of the European Union. Retrieved from: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A62004CJ0519> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. (2008). *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 115, 47–199.
- Union Royale Belge des Sociétés de Football Association ASBL v. Bosman (1995). Case C-415/93. Court of Justice of the European Union. Retrieved from: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:61993CJ0415> (accessed: March 3, 2026).

References

- Auberg, E. (n.d.). *From football agents to intermediaries*. Retrieved from: <https://www.easportslaw.com/news/from-football-agents-to-intermediaries> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Bayle, E. (2025). *Governance, regulation and management of global sport organisations*. London: Routledge.
- Beaud, S. (2019). Le football est le sport des classes populaires. In Masclet, O., Misset, S. & Poullaouec, T. (eds.), *La France d'en bas? Idées reçues sur les classes populaires*. Le Cavalier Bleu, 169–176.
- Cazotto, G. N., Fronzaglia, M. & Racy, J. (2022). Institutional aspects of FIFA governance and its impact on international relations. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, 12, 824–839. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.4236/ajibm.2022.125043> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Chadwick, S., Widdop, P. & Goldman, M. M. (2025). *The geopolitical economy of football: Where power meets politics and business*. London: Routledge. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003473671-1> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Colucci, M. (ed.) (2015). *The FIFA regulations on working with intermediaries: Implementation at national level*. Sports Law and Policy Centre.
- Correia, M. (2020). *Une histoire populaire du football*. La Découverte.
- Deloitte (2026). *Deloitte football money league 2026*. Retrieved from: <https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/services/consulting-financial/analysis/deloitte-football-money-league.html> (accessed: February 26, 2026).
- DFL (2024). New study: *Professional football remains an important economic and social staple in Germany*. Retrieved from: <https://www.dfl.de/en/news/new-study-professional-football-remains-an-important-economic-and-social-staple-in-germany/> (accessed: February 26, 2026).
- Dietschy, P. (2014). *Histoire du football*. Tempus Perrin.
- European Commission (2018). *An update on change drivers and economic and legal implications of transfers of players: Final report to the DG Education, Youth, Culture and Sport of the European Commission*. Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture.

- FIFA. (n.d.). *Legal documents archive*. Retrieved from: <https://inside.fifa.com/en/legal/documents/archive> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- FIFA. (2023a). *New FIFA football agent regulations set to come into force*. Retrieved from: <https://inside.fifa.com/transfer-system/agents/news/new-fifa-football-agent-regulations-set-to-come-into-force> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- FIFA. (2023b). *FIFA welcomes CAS decision on FIFA football agent regulations*. Retrieved from: <https://inside.fifa.com/transfer-system/agents/media-releases/fifa-welcomes-cas-decision-on-fifa-football-agent-regulations> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- FIFA. (2025a). *Club agent service fees reach new heights in 2025*. Retrieved from: <https://inside.fifa.com/transfer-system/agents/news/club-agent-service-fees-reach-new-heights-2025> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- FIFA. (2025b). *FIFA football agent regulations*. Retrieved from: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/1e7b741fa0fac779/original/FIFA-Football-Agent-Regulations.pdf> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Flanagan, C. A. (2025). The football governance act, the independent football regulator, and the regulation of football finance in England: Legal, regulatory, and policy considerations. *International Sports Law Journal*, 1-2. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40318-025-00326-8> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Foulkes, G. (2021). *Reform of the transfer system (including rules on agency)*. In *Football governance: business and values* (AS/Cult/Inf (2021) 09 rev2). Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Retrieved from: <https://assembly.coe.int/LifeRay/CULT/Pdf/DocsAndDecs/2021/AS-CULT-INF-2021-09-EN.pdf> (accessed: May 22, 2026).
- Ioannidis, G. (2019). Football intermediaries and self-regulation: The need for greater transparency through disciplinary law, sanctioning and qualifying criteria. *The International Sports Law Journal*, 19(3), 154–170.
- Iskander, J. (2026). *Protecting Minors: FIFA's Football Regulations*. Andersen Egypt. Retrieved from: <https://eg.andersen.com/fifas-football-regulations/> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Karaiskos, L., Dimopoulou, I., Manasis, V. & Drikos, S. (2025). Economic development and education: Exploring the dynamic relationship between education and employability in the sports sector. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, 25(8), 1764–1777.
- Kitching, G. (2015). The origins of football: History, ideology and the making of "the people's game." *History Workshop Journal*, 79(1), 127–153. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1093/hwj/dbu023> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Lombardi, P. (2015). The FIFA regulations on working with intermediaries. In: Colucci, M. (Ed.), *The FIFA regulations on working with intermediaries*. Implementation at national level. Sports Law and Policy Centre.
- Meier, H. E., García, B., Yilmaz, S. & Chakawata, W. (2023). The capture of EU football regulation by the football governing bodies. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 61(3), 692–711.
- Morrow, S. (2023). Football's Ever-Changing Economics. In *The People's Game? Football, Finance and Society* (pp. 1–51). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Ortiz, J. (2021). *FIFA agent returns*. Winter – Dávila & Associés. Retrieved from: <https://wdassocies.com/en/fifa-agent-returns> (accessed: March 2, 2026).
- Parrish, R., Cattaneo, A., Lindholm, J., Mittag, J., Perez-Gonzales, C. & Smokvina, V. (2019). *Promoting and supporting good governance in the European football agents industry*. European Commission.
- Renzi, A. & Taragoni, P. (2024). *The football industry: A literature review and future research avenues in the risk management perspective*. *Corporate Governance and Research & Development Studies*, 2, 115–152. Retrieved from: https://iris.uniroma1.it/retrieve/496af05c-51df-4e79-8500-f49c450cfce/Renzi_The-football-industry_2024.pdf (accessed: May 22, 2026).
- Siekmann, R. & Soek, J. (2010). Models of sport governance in the European Union: The relationship between state and sport authorities. *The International Sports Law Journal*, (3–4), 93–101.
- Sugden, J. T. Sheps, S. & Sugden, J. (2023). Assessing governance without government: A proposal for the International Council of Sport Governance. *International Journal of Sport Policy and*

- Politics*, 15(3), 473–491. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19406940.2023.2215809> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Swain, P. (2015). The origins of football debate: Football and cultural continuity, 1857–1859. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32(5), 631–649. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2014.991318> (accessed: March 3, 2026).
- Westerbeek, H. & Karg, A. (2022). *International sport business: Current issues, future directions*. London: Routledge.
- Yiapanas, G., Thrassou, A. & Vrontis, D. (2024). The contemporary football industry: A value-based analysis of social, business structural and organisational stakeholders. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 37(2), 552–585. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1108/AAAJ-06-2022-5855> (accessed: March 3, 2026).

