

# Module 3. Tournaments and Football Leagues

## 3.1 The organisation of the main international competitions

When referring to professional competitions around the world, it is necessary to bear in mind, on the one hand, the scope of the competition, which can be global, within the confederation, international (among several countries), national or regional; and, on the other hand, the type of participants involved, namely whether they are national teams or clubs.

Below, the differences and characteristics of the main competitions are described in detail.

### 3.1.1 National team level competitions

#### 3.1.1.1 Global competitions

At the global level, the main national team level competitions are the (FIFA) World Cup and the Olympic Games (IOC), which are organised as follows:

#### **Football World Cup**

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) organises the **Football World Cup**. It potentially involves all members (national teams) of all confederations in the qualifiers where the teams that will participate in the event are determined. The classified teams enter a second phase, which is considered to be the competition itself. Only 32 teams qualify for the single-venue finals, following a system of quotas per confederation, and a slot is added for the host team.

At present, the number of participants to be effective for the 2026 and subsequent editions is being reviewed, rising to 48 and including 2 play-off places for non-qualified teams. This will increase the quota of direct places per confederation.

For more detailed information, please refer to the following article:

**Source:** FIFA, (2017). The Council Bureau recommends on the allocation of quotas for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Retrieved from <https://www.fifa.com/es/about-fifa/organisation/media-releases/el-bureau-del-consejo-recomienda-la-asignacion-de-plazas-para-la-copa--2878255>

**Table 1: Participating confederations and respective World Cup quotas**

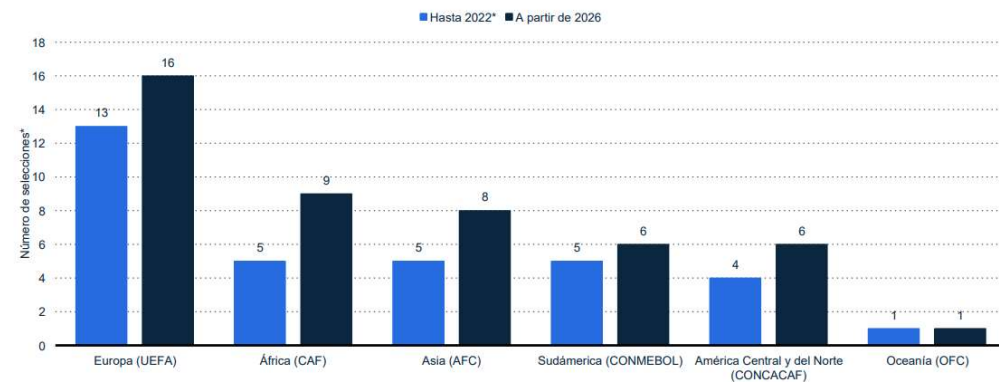
<b>Confederation</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Current quotas (31 + 1 host)</b>	<b>Quotas as from 2026 (46 + 2 play-offs)</b>
<b>UEFA (Union of European Football Associations)</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Conmebol (South American Football Confederation)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>CONCACAF (North and Central America and the Caribbean)</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>AFC (Asia)</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CAF (África)</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>OFC (Oceanía)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: author's own production

**Figure 1: No. of teams participating in the Football World Cup from 2026 onwards per confederation**

## Número de selecciones participantes en la Copa Mundial de Fútbol de la FIFA a partir de 2026, por confederación

Mundial de Fútbol de la FIFA: cupos de selecciones por confederación 2026



22 Notas: Mundial: 2017  
Hay disponibles más datos y comentarios sobre esta estadística en la [página 24](#).  
Fuente(s): Marca; ID: 656633

Copa Mundial de Fútbol de la FIFA **statista**

Source: Marca.com, 2018, www.es.statista.com

Original	Traducción
Número de selecciones participantes en la Copa Mundial de Fútbol de la FIFA a partir del 2026, por confederación	No. of teams participating in the FIFA Football World Cup from 2026 onwards per confederation
Mundial de Fútbol de la FIFA: cupo de selecciones por confederación 2026.	FIFA World Cup 2026: quota of teams per confederation.
Hasta 2022	Until 2022
A partir de 2026	From 2026 onwards

Once the teams have qualified, they enter the final round, which is also divided into two phases: a first group phase and a second knock-out phase. The entire final round takes place in the same host country. The history of hosts and champions is as follows:

**Table 2: The history of hosts and champions of the Football World Cup**



<b>YEAR</b>	<b>HOST</b>	<b>CHAMPION</b>
<b>2022</b>	<b>QATAR</b>	<b>(21 NOV – 18 DEC 2022)</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>RUSSIA</b>	<b>FRANCE</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>BRAZIL</b>	<b>GERMANY</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>SOUTH AFRICA</b>	<b>SPAIN</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>GERMANY</b>	<b>ITALY</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>KOREA/JAPAN</b>	<b>BRAZIL</b>
<b>1998</b>	<b>FRANCE</b>	<b>FRANCE</b>
<b>1994</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>BRAZIL</b>
<b>1990</b>	<b>ITALY</b>	<b>FR GERMANY</b>
<b>1986</b>	<b>MEXICO</b>	<b>ARGENTINA</b>
<b>1982</b>	<b>SPAIN</b>	<b>ITALY</b>
<b>1978</b>	<b>ARGENTINA</b>	<b>ARGENTINA</b>
<b>1974</b>	<b>GERMANY</b>	<b>FR GERMANY</b>
<b>1970</b>	<b>MEXICO</b>	<b>BRAZIL</b>
<b>1966</b>	<b>ENGLAND</b>	<b>ENGLAND</b>
<b>1962</b>	<b>CHILE</b>	<b>BRAZIL</b>
<b>1958</b>	<b>SWEDEN</b>	<b>BRAZIL</b>
<b>1954</b>	<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	<b>FR GERMANY</b>
<b>1950</b>	<b>BRAZIL</b>	<b>URUGUAY</b>
<b>1938</b>	<b>FRANCE</b>	<b>ITALY</b>
<b>1934</b>	<b>ITALY</b>	<b>ITALY</b>
<b>1930</b>	<b>URUGUAY</b>	<b>URUGUAY</b>

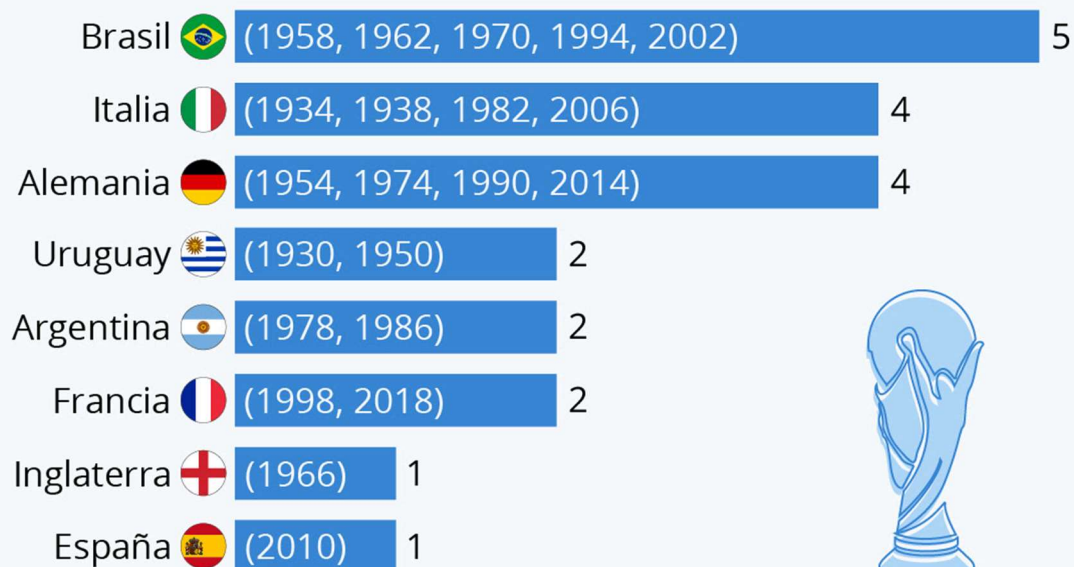
Source: author's own production based on FIFA, n.d., <https://fifa.fans/3nfJJJK>

**Figure 2: FIFA World Cup champions from 1930 to 2018**



# Las selecciones con más Mundiales de fútbol

Selecciones de fútbol campeonas de la Copa Mundial de la FIFA desde 1930 hasta 2018



Fuente: losmundialesdefutbol.com



statista

Source: Statista, 2020, [www.es.statista.com](http://www.es.statista.com)

Original	Traducción
Las selecciones con más Mundiales de fútbol	The teams with the most World Cup titles
Selecciones de fútbol campeonas de la Copa Mundial de la FIFA desde 1930 hasta 2018	FIFA World Cup champions from 1930 to 2018

Figure 3: Evolution of World Cup emblems



Source: Footy Headlines, 2019, <https://bit.ly/3BXdmUf>



**Figure 4: FIFA World Cup - Uruguay 1930**



Source: FIFA, 2018, <https://bit.ly/3zV4rSI>

**Figure 5: FIFA World Cup - Mexico 1986**



Source: FIFA, n.d., <https://bit.ly/3hdBc6i>

**Figure 6: FIFA World Cup - Russia 2018**



Source: As Argentina, 2021, URL: [https://argentina.as.com/resultados/futbol/mundial\\_femenino/calendario/](https://argentina.as.com/resultados/futbol/mundial_femenino/calendario/)

Original	Traducción
Octavos de final	Round of 16
Cuartos de final	Quarter-finals
Semifinales	Semi-finals
Partido por tercer puesto	Third-place match

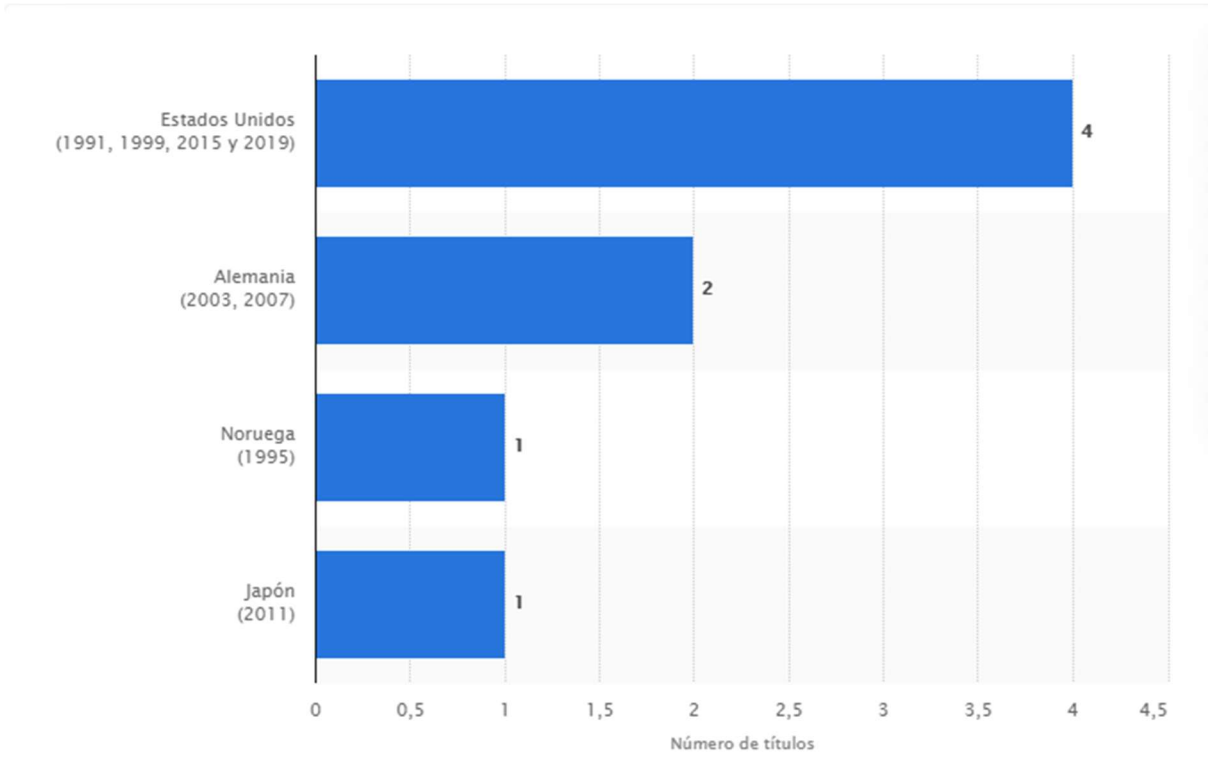
The Cup has had four champions throughout its history: USA, Germany, Japan and Norway.

**Table 3: The history of hosts and champions of the FIFA Women's World Cup**

YEAR	HOST	CHAMPION
2023	AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND	- (20 JUL – 20 AUG 2023)
2019	FRANCE	USA
2015	CANADA	USA
2011	GERMANY	JAPAN
2007	CHINA	GERMANY
2003	USA	GERMANY
1999	USA	USA
1995	SWEDEN	NORWAY
1991	CHINA	USA

Source: author's own production

**Figure 8: FIFA Women's World Cup trophy list until 2019**



Source: Statista, 2020, [www.es.statista.com](http://www.es.statista.com)

Original	Traducción
Número de títulos	No. of titles

Figure 9: FIFA Women's World Cup - France 2019



Source: Portland Thorns Community, 2019, <https://bit.ly/318yjoe>

For more detailed information, please refer to the following website:  
<https://www.fifa.com/es/tournaments/womens/womensworldcup>

## Olympic Games

In 1896 the Olympic Games were re-established to commemorate the Games of antiquity. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) was established and the first modern Games were held in Athens, to be repeated every four years. Recently, the 27th edition has been held in Japan. In this great multi-sport competition, with more than 30 sports, football is also featured. **A total of 16 teams qualify and participate in the men's competition and 12, 12 in the women's competition.** Since 1992, only three players from each country can be over 23 years old.

Like in the World Cup, there is a qualifying phase, and each confederation is allocated a quota as follows:

**Table 4: Participating confederations and their respective Olympic quotas**

Confederation	Members	Current men's quotas (15 + 1 host)	Current women's quotas (11 + 1 host)
UEFA (Union of European Football Associations)	55	4	3
Conmebol (South American Football Confederation)	10	2	1,5*
CONCACAF (North and Central America and the Caribbean)	41	2	2
AFC (Asia)	47	3	2
CAF (África)	54	3	1,5*
OFC (Oceanía)	11	1	1

Source: author's own production

*\*The 2nd qualifiers from Conmebol and CAF face each other for Olympic qualification.*

The final round takes place in the Olympic host country and is structured in a group stage (e.g. 4 groups of 4 teams for the men's category) and a knockout stage with quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals. The first finalist is awarded the gold medal; the semi-finalist, the silver medal; the two knocked-out semi-finalists play a match for 3rd place, and the champion is awarded the bronze medal.

**Figure 10: Men's football winners' history at the Olympic Games**

Men's Olympic football winners

Year	Gold Medal	Silver Medal	Bronze Medal
2020	Brazil	Spain	Mexico
2016	Brazil	Germany	Nigeria
2012	Mexico	Brazil	South Korea
2008	Argentina	Nigeria	Brazil
2004	Argentina	Paraguay	Italy
2000	Cameroon	Spain	Chile
1996	Nigeria	Argentina	Brazil
1992	Spain	Poland	Ghana
1988	Soviet Union	Brazil	West Germany
1984	France	Brazil	Yugoslavia
1980	Czechoslovakia	East Germany	Soviet Union
1976	East Germany	Poland	Soviet Union
1972	Poland	Hungary	Soviet Union East Germany
1968	Hungary	Bulgaria	Japan
1964	Hungary	Czechoslovakia	Germany
1960	Yugoslavia	Denmark	Hungary
1956	Soviet Union	Yugoslavia	Bulgaria
1952	Hungary	Yugoslavia	Sweden
1948	Sweden	Yugoslavia	Denmark
1936	Italy	Austria	Norway
1928	Uruguay	Argentina	Italy
1924	Uruguay	Switzerland	Sweden
1920	Belgium	Spain	Netherlands
1912	Great Britain	Denmark	Netherlands
1908	Great Britain	Denmark	Netherlands
1904	Canada	Christian Brothers College (USA)	St. Rose Parish (USA)
1900	Great Britain	France	Belgium

Source: Olympics, 2021, <https://bit.ly/2X2p5S0>

For more detailed information, please refer to the following website:  
<https://www.fifa.com/tournaments/mens/mensolympic/tokyo2020>

**Figure 11: Brazil has won the most Olympic medals in the men's football category.**



Source: Olympics, 2021, <https://bit.ly/2X2p5S0>

### 3.1.1.2 International competitions (within confederations)

The main competitions are organised as follows:

#### UEFA

At national team level, the UEFA European Championship organises the competition known as the UEFA Euro or EuroCup.

The format of the competition is very similar to the World Cup, but restricted to members of the confederation. There is a preliminary qualifying round to determine the 24 participants for the final round, which involves all 55 members, including the hosts, and is organised into 10 groups of 5 or 6 teams, which play against each other. The top 2 teams from each group qualify for the final round, the rest participate in play-offs, with 4 more spots available. The 16 teams competing in the UEFA Nations League, a competition created a few years ago, take part in this play-off; if the winners are teams that have already qualified, the place is awarded to the next teams in the UEFA ranking.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

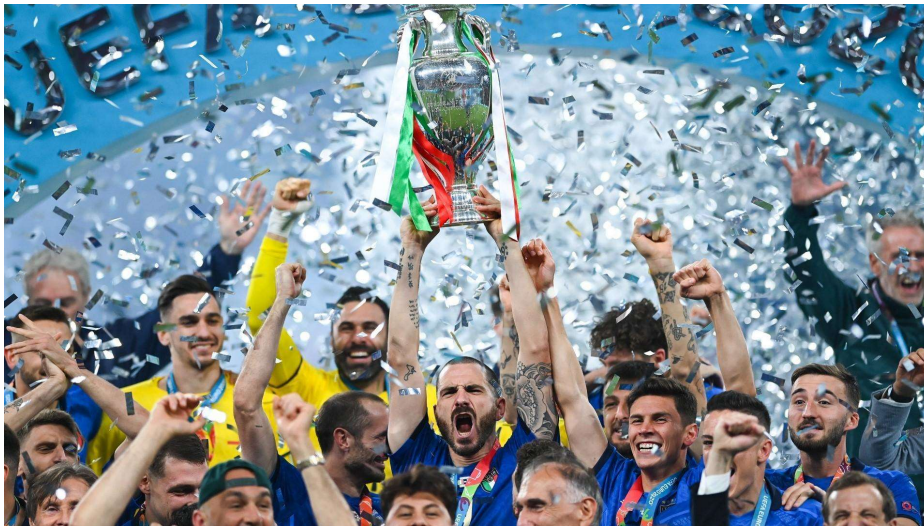
**Source:** UEFA, (2020). How the EURO 2020 Qualifiers work. Retrieved from <https://es.uefa.com/uefaeuro-2020/news/0253-0d81f0a66aee-983768909339-1000--como-funcionan-los-clasificatorios-europeos-de-la-euro-2020/>

Once the qualified teams have been determined, the championship is conducted in two phases, group and knock-out, in the host country.

For more detailed information, please refer to the UEFA's website:

- <https://es.uefa.com/uefaeuro-2020/>
- [www.uefa.com](http://www.uefa.com)

**Figure 12: Italy, Euro 2020 champion (postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic)**



Source: UEFA, n.d. a., <https://bit.ly/2Yt4abx>

More information: <https://www.uefa.tv/video/vod/239430/>

### Conmebol

The main tournament of this confederation's competitions is the Copa America, one of the major international competitions along with the World Cup and the Euro Cup.

In this case, there is no qualifying stage, and teams enter directly into the final stage, which involves a draw to define each group, and the best teams from each group enter the knockout stage from the quarter-finals to the final. Since 1993, some teams from outside the confederation have also been invited, most frequently two teams from CONCACAF or from the AFC. On the first occasion, the USA and Mexico were invited. In 2016, at the Copa America Centenario held in the United States, 6 teams were invited: USA, Jamaica, Haiti, Mexico, Costa Rica and Panama. However, no team from outside CONMEBOL has ever won the Copa América title.

More information:

**Source:** Conmebol, (n.d. a.). *Organization.* Retrieved from <https://copaamerica.com/es/organizacion/>

**Figure 13: Conmebol member federations**

**Equipos**



Source: Conmebol, n.d. b., <https://bit.ly/3yTzZqz>

**Figure 14: Example of Copa America 2021 edition**



Source: Conmebol, n.d. c., <https://bit.ly/3hetj0g>

For more detailed information, please refer to the following website: [www.conmebol.com](http://www.conmebol.com)

**Figure 15: Argentina, champion of Copa America 2021**





Source: Abad, 2021, <https://bit.ly/38RXYvO>

**Figure 16: ACF logo**



Source: AFC website screenshot (<https://www.the-afc.com/>)

## AFC

The main national teams' tournament organised by the AFC is the AFC Asian Cup, which is held every 4 years. The first edition was held in Hong Kong, because it still belonged to the British Empire at that time, so it was extended to that area. The last edition, in 2019, was held in the United Arab Emirates and saw the Qatar national team crowned champions. The following edition is scheduled for 2023 in China.

For more detailed information, we recommend visiting the official AFC website:

<https://www.the-afc.com/competitions/afc-asian-cup/>

[www.the-afc.com](http://www.the-afc.com)

**Figure 17: Example of Asian Cup 2019 edition**



Source: AFC, 2019, <https://bit.ly/319bBwa>

Figure 18: CAF logo



Source: CAF website screenshot (<https://www.cafonline.com/>)

## CAF

The CAF's main international tournament is the biannual Africa Cup of Nations, in which 24 teams take part. Here, too, there is a preliminary qualifying stage to determine the participating teams. The next edition will be held in 2022 in Cameroon, after the 2021 edition was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article and visiting the official CAF website ([www.cafonline.com](http://www.cafonline.com)):

**Source:** France 24, (2020). *The Africa Cup of Nations is postponed to 2022 because of Covid-19*. Retrieved from <https://www.france24.com/es/20200701-copa-africana-aplazada-2022-covid-19>

Figure 19: Africa Cup of Nations group draw





Source: CAF, 2019, <https://bit.ly/3yUOKtg>

For further details on the group draw, see the following article:

**Source:** CAF, (2019). *2021 Africa Cup of Nations draw released*. Retrieved from <https://www.cafonline.com/total-africa-cup-of-nations/2019/news/octet-kick-off-journey-to-cameroon-2021>

**Figure 20: CONCACAF logo**



**Concacaf**

Source: CONCACAF website screenshot (<https://www.concacaf.com/es/>)

## CONCACAF

The main international tournament of this confederation is the CONCACAF Gold Cup, organised every two years. The most common venue is the USA and, with the exception of Canada's victory in 2000, the usual champions are Mexico and the US.

Initially contested by just eight teams, it has become a 12-nation competition, with each of CONCACAF's three sub-regions entering: North America (three automatic slots), Central America (Central American Cup) and the Caribbean (Caribbean Cup).

**Figure 21: Example of CONCACAF Gold Cup 2021 edition**



Source: UNCAF, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3ts7qQ8>

For more detailed information, please refer to the CONCACAF's official website: [www.concacaf.com](http://www.concacaf.com)

Figure 22: OFC logo



Source: OFC website screenshot (<https://www.oceaniafootball.com/>)

OFC

The main international tournament organised by the OFC is the Nations Cup, which in turn serves as the OFC's qualifier for the FIFA World Cup.

For more detailed information, please refer to the OFC's official website: [www.concacaf.com/](http://www.concacaf.com/)

Figure 23: New Zealand claim the 2016 Nations Cup





Source: OFC, 2016, <https://bit.ly/3BV9mU0>

For more information on New Zealand's victory, please see the following article:

**Source:** OFC, (2016). *New Zealand triumphant*. Retrieved from <https://www.oceaniafootball.com/archives-4145/>

### 3.1.2 Club level competitions

#### 3.1.2.1 Global competitions

At the global level, there is the FIFA Club World Cup, which brings together the winning clubs of the major confederations.

It is the evolution of the old Intercontinental Cup, which featured the winners of the major club competitions from CONMEBOL and UEFA. In this new format, all confederations take part. CONMEBOL and UEFA enter directly into the semi-finals and do not meet. The other two semi-finalists are drawn from the winners of the quarter-finals between the other confederations and a preliminary play-off with a representative of the host country. The winners of the semi-finals play in the final, and the runner-ups play for third place.

**Figure 24: Format of the last edition in Qatar, which saw Bayern Munich as the winner.**



Source: FIFA, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3niRoH0>

Figure 25: Club World Cup history

	SEDE	CAMPEÓN	SUBCAMPEÓN	TERCERO
2019	Qatar	Liverpool	Flamengo	Monterrey
2018	UAE	Real Madrid	Al Ain	River Plate
2017	UAE	Real Madrid	Gremio	Pachuca
2016	Japón	Real Madrid	Kashima Antlers	Atlético Nacional
2015	Japón	Barcelona	River Plate	Sanfrecce Hiroshima
2014	Marruecos	Real Madrid	San Lorenzo	Auckland City
2013	Marruecos	Bayern Múnich	Raja Casablanca	Atlético Mineiro
2012	Japón	Corinthians	Chelsea	Monterrey
2011	Japón	Barcelona	Santos	Al Sadd
2010	UAE	Inter de Milán	Mazembe	Sport Club Internacional
2009	UAE	Barcelona	Estudiantes de La Plata	Pohang Steelers
2008	Japón	Manchester United	Liga de Quito	Gamba Osaka
2007	Japón	Milan	Boca Juniors	Urawa Red Diamonds
2006	Japón	Sport Club Internacional	Barcelona	Al Ahly
2005	Japón	Sao Paulo	Liverpool	Deportivo Saprissa

Source: Marca, n.d., <https://bit.ly/3z09HTTr>

For more detailed information, please refer to the following website:  
<https://www.fifa.com/es/tournaments/mens/clubworldcup>

### The future FIFA Club World Cup

FIFA is proposing a new format for the Club World Cup, with many more participants (24) and with a quota system by confederation, similar to that of the national teams' version.

**Table 5: Confederations and respective quotas for the new Club World Cup format**

Confederation	New quota
UEFA (Union of European Football Associations)	8
Conmebol (South American Football Confederation)	6
CONCACAF (North and Central America and the Caribbean)	3
AFC (Asia)	3
CAF (Africa)	3
OFC (Oceanía)	1

Source: author's own production

In 2021, a pilot edition of this format of the competition was planned to take place during the period when the FIFA Confederations Cup would take place in the international calendar; however, they have decided to postpone it. In this pilot edition, the 24 clubs would be divided into eight groups of three teams each, which would play each other in eight different venues in the host country. The winner would qualify for the quarter-finals, which would be played in a knock-out fashion.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

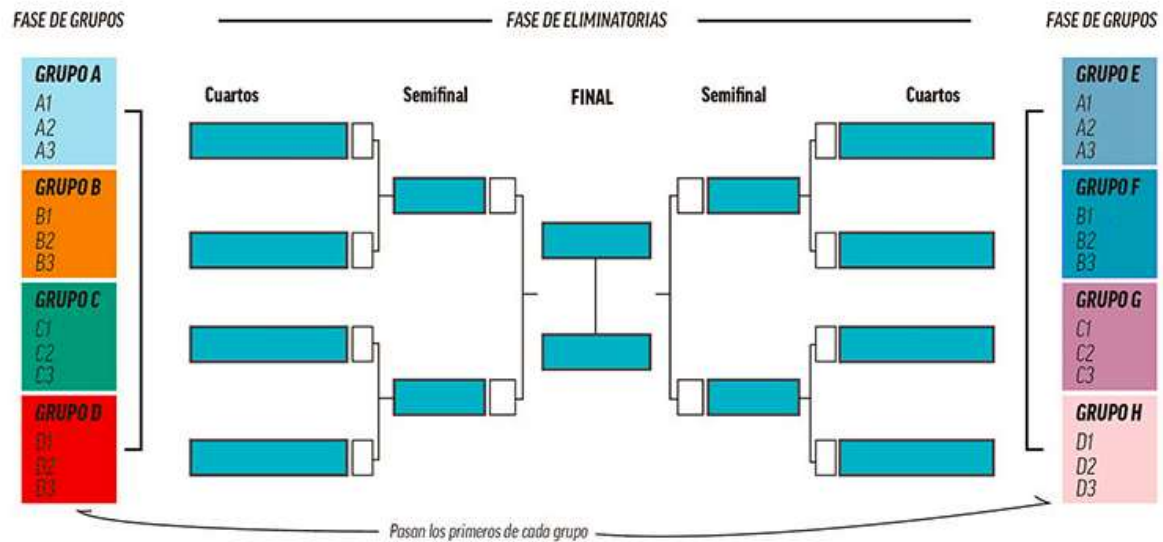
**Source:** FIFA, (2019). The FIFA Council is in favour of the introduction of a revamped Club World Cup. Retrieved from <https://www.fifa.com/es/about-fifa/organisation/media-releases/el-consejo-de-la-fifa-se-pronuncia-a-favor-de-la-introduccion-de-una-copa-mundial>

The host country should not be the same as the host country of the World Cup, unlike the way the Confederations Cup was organised. The event is now held every 4 years, instead of every 2 years, as originally.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

Source: Marca, (2019). This is what the new Club World Cup would be like. Retrieved from <https://www.marca.com/futbol/futbol-internacional/2019/03/15/5c8bfac5268e3ec9798b4601.html>

Figure 26: Non-final proposal of classifications for the new Club World Cup format



**CALENDARIO**

La FIFA ha querido organizar el torneo en menos de tres semanas, concretamente 18 días, en los que se jugarán 31 partidos. Un Mundial concentrado para que el calendario no se resienta. Los finalistas disputarían cinco partidos.

**FASE DE GRUPOS**

**FASE DE ELIMINATORIAS**

FASE DE GRUPOS									FASE DE ELIMINATORIAS								
Miércoles			Sábado			Domingo			Sábado			Domingo			Sábado		
Día 1	Día 2	Día 3	Día 4	Día 5	Día 6	Día 7	Día 8	Día 9	Día 10	Día 11	Día 12	Día 13	Día 14	Día 15	Día 16	Día 17	Día 18
A1vA2	D1vD2	G1vG2	A1vA3	D1vD3	G1vG3	A2vA3	D2vD3	G2vG3		A v B	E v F		1 v 2	3 v 4			FINAL
B1vB2	E1vE2	H1vH2	B1vB3	E1vE3	H1vH3	B2vB3	E2vE3	H2vH3		C v D	G v H						
C1vC2	F1vF2		C1vC3	F1vF3		C2vC3	F2vF3										

Source: Cerezo, 2018, <https://bit.ly/3BUw132>

Original	Traducción
Fase de grupos	Groups stage
Fase de eliminatorias	Knock-out stage
Cuartos	Quarter-finals
Semifinal	Semi-finals
Final	Final
Pasan los primeros de cara grupo	The top teams of each group go through
Grupo	Group
Calendario	Calendar



La FIFA ha querido organizar el torneo en manos de tres semanas, concretamente 18 días, en los que se jugarán 31 partidos. Un Mundial concentrado para que el calendario no se resienta. Los finalistas disputarán cinco partidos.	FIFA wanted to organise the competition in three weeks, exactly 18 days, in which 31 matches would be played. A concentrated World Cup so that the calendar does not suffer. The finalists would play five matches.
Miércoles Sábado Domingo	Wednesday Saturday Sunday

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source: Cerezo, H. (2018).** This is how the Club World Cup will revolutionise football. In *Marca*. Retrieved from <https://co.marca.com/claro/futbol/2018/05/15/5afab986e2704e227d8b45b2.html>

### 3.1.2.2 International competitions (within confederations)

At confederation level, the champions of the main competitions represent their confederation at the FIFA Club World Cup. Its structure and organisation vary according to each confederation, which are organised as follows:

#### Conmebol

CONMEBOL's main club competition is the Copa Libertadores. The Copa Sudamericana also stands out.

**Figure 27: CONMEBOL's competitions**



Source: Conmebol website screenshot (<https://www.oceaniafootball.com/>)

Each member country contests its national leagues (e.g. the Argentinian First Division) and cup knockout competitions (e.g. the Argentinian Cup), and there is usually a play-off between the two winners or their finalists (e.g. the Argentinian Super Cup).

Each year, the federation members qualify their club champions and determine which other teams are entitled to participate in the tournament. There is also a quota distribution of places.

**Table 6: Participating Federations and number of slots in the Copa Libertadores**

Federation	Quota
Brazil	7
Argentina	6
Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Perú, Uruguay and Venezuela	4

Source: author's own production

In addition to the slots listed in the table, there are reserved slots for the champions of the last edition of Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana.

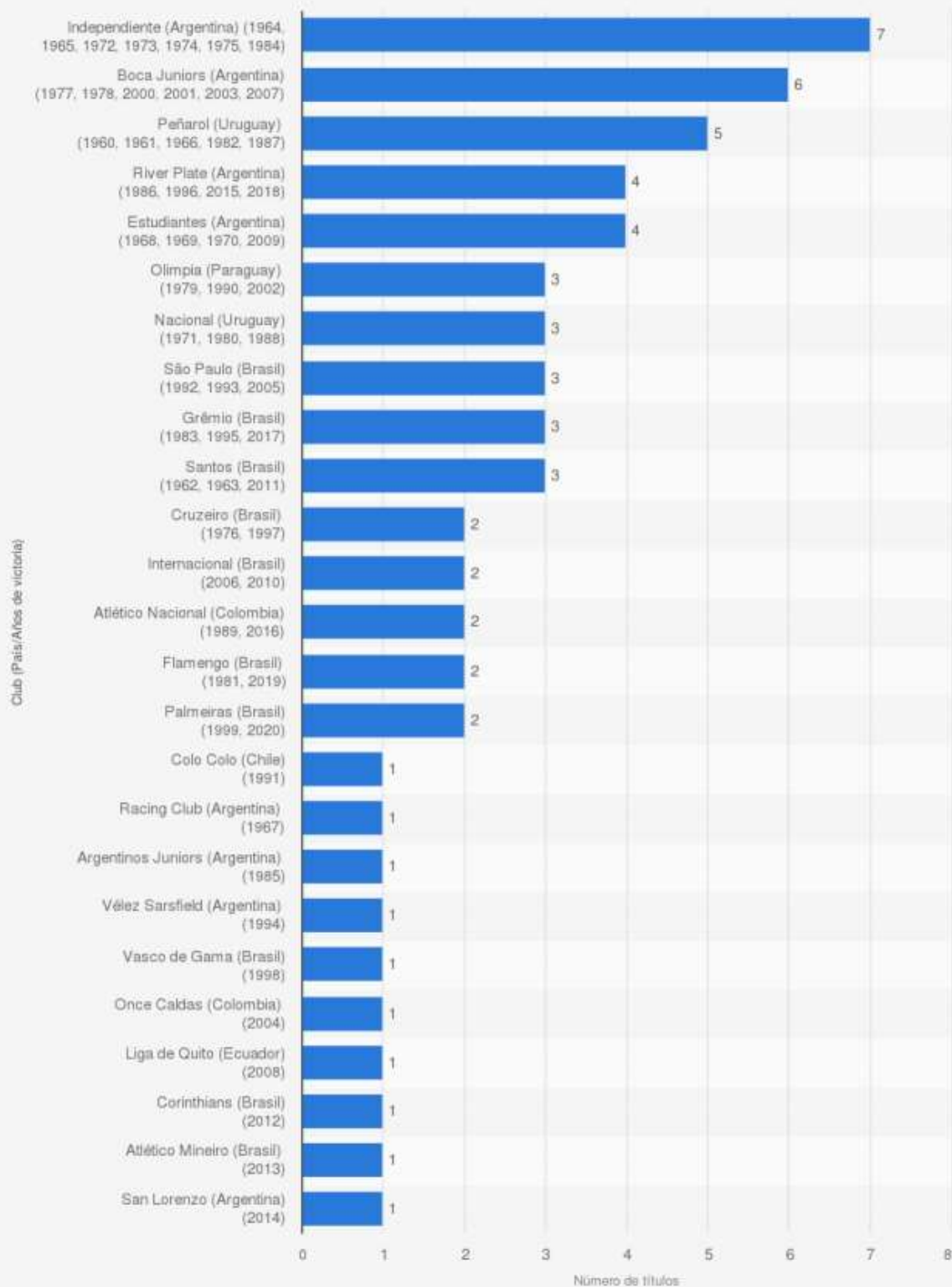
In this way, the two best teams from each group in the group stage advance to the knockout stage, which, in this case, consists of the round of 16, quarter-finals, semi-finals and the final. These are always home-and-away matches, except for the final, which is a single match to determine the Copa Libertadores champion. It is also important to note that, in the group stage, those teams that finish in third place are transferred to the Copa Sudamericana.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source: Conmebol Libertadores, (2019).** CONMEBOL Libertadores 2019 Regulations. Retrieved from <https://www.conmebol.com/sites/default/files/reglamento-conmebol-libertadores-2019-esp.pdf>

**Figure 28: Ranking of football clubs that have won the Copa Libertadores from 1960 to 2020**

## Ranking de los clubes de fútbol que han ganado la Copa Libertadores de 1960 a 2020



Fuente:  
Marca  
© Statista 2021

Información adicional:  
América Central y del Sur, 1960 - 2020

statista

Source: Statista, 2021, www.es.statista.com



## AFC

The AFC's major competitions include the AFC Champions League and the AFC Cup.

Figure 29: AFC Competitions



Source: AFC website screenshot (<https://www.the-afc.com>)

### AFC Champions League

It is contested by the top 46 clubs from the AFC's Asian leagues in a knockout format. The Korean K-League and the Japanese J1 League hold the most titles in this competition.

Figure 30: AFC Champions League



Source: AFC, URL: [https://www.the-afc.com/en/club/afc\\_champions\\_league.html](https://www.the-afc.com/en/club/afc_champions_league.html)

For more detailed information, we recommend the following website:

<https://www.the-afc.com/competitions/afc-champions-league/>

### AFC Cup

It is a knockout format competition involving all Asian leagues, whose champion gains direct access to the AFC Champions League.

Figure 31: AFC Cup



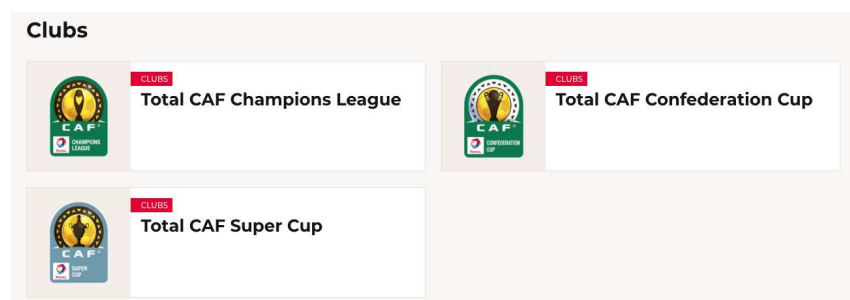
Source: Inside World Football, 4 August 2021, URL: <http://www.insideworldfootball.com/2021/08/04/afc-cup-draw-plots-route-covid-challenges->



## CAF

The main club competition organised by CAF is the CAF Champions League, followed by the CAF Confederation Cup and the SuperCup.

Figure 32: CAF Competitions



Source: CAF website screenshot (<https://www.cafonline.com/competitions/>)

The CAF Champions League brings together the champion and runner-up teams of the national leagues, following a coefficient system, which involves a preliminary phase for the minor leagues. There are 32 teams in the first phase, which are then reduced to 16 teams, which compete in a 4 group stage and the knock-out phase. This competition takes place on an annual basis.

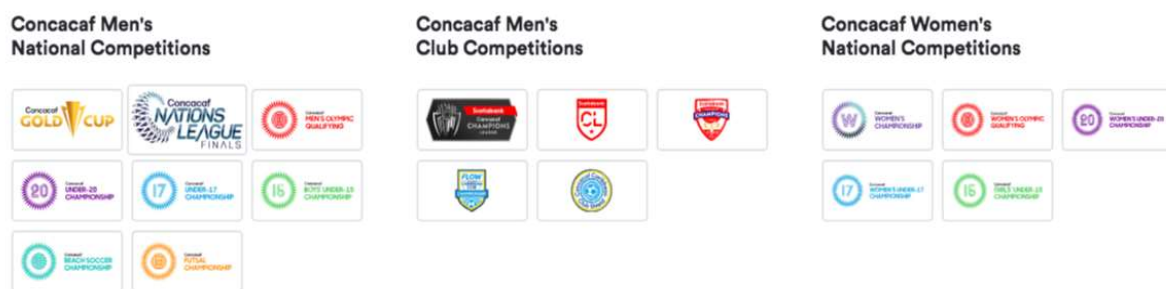
For more detailed information, we recommend visiting the following website: [www.cafonline.com](http://www.cafonline.com)

## CONCACAF

The most important CONCACAF club competitions are the CONCACAF Champions League and the CONCACAF League. The CONCACAF League is played in the first half of each season among clubs from Central America and the Caribbean. The champion qualifies for the Champions League.

The participants of the CONCACAF Champions League are the 6 best teams of the CONCACAF League, the champion of an annual championship organised by the CFU (Caribbean Football Union), the champion of Canada, and four teams from Mexico and the United States.

Figure 33: CONCACAF Competitions



Source: CONCACAF website screenshot (<https://www.concacaf.com/es/>)

CONCACAF is proposing a new format from the 2023-24 season to promote the confederation's clubs, with more participants (50), a one-off final and the winner qualifying for the FIFA Club World Cup.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following articles:

**Source: ESPN Sports (2021).** The CONCACAF Champions League will have a new format from 2023-24. Retrieved from [https://espndeportes.espn.com/futbol/norte-centro-america/nota/\\_/id/8135157/liga-campeones-concacaf-formato-nuevo-2023-2024](https://espndeportes.espn.com/futbol/norte-centro-america/nota/_/id/8135157/liga-campeones-concacaf-formato-nuevo-2023-2024)

**Source: Cortés Luna, C. (2021).** The CONCACAF Champions League announces its new format. In *Argentina AS*. Retrieved from [https://us.as.com/us/2021/02/04/futbol/1612473516\\_445908.html](https://us.as.com/us/2021/02/04/futbol/1612473516_445908.html)



**Source:** CONCACAF (2021). The CONCACAF Champions League to expand with an innovative new format from 2023/24. Retrieved from <https://www.concacaf.com/champions-league/news/concacaf-champions-league-to-expand-with-innovative-new-format-starting-2023-24/>

**Source:** CONCACAF (CONCACAF). (4 February 2021). *Concacaf Champions League to expand with innovative new format starting 2023/24* [YouTube]. Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dg3hJTCLSeE&feature=emb\\_imp\\_woyt](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dg3hJTCLSeE&feature=emb_imp_woyt)

## OFC

The most important club competition in Oceania is the OFC Champions League.

After a preliminary stage for the lower-ranked countries, the tournament is structured in a four-group stage with four teams playing at different venues. The top two qualify for the knock-out round from the quarter-finals to the final, all on a home-and-away basis. Since the OFC Champions League format was established in 2013 - formerly called the O-League (2007) - the competition is clearly dominated by New Zealand teams, especially Auckland City.

**Figure 34: OFC Champions League**



**Source:** OFC website screenshot (<https://www.oceaniafootball.com/>)

## UEFA

The most important club competition organised by UEFA is the UEFA Champions League, although there are other important competitions such as the UEFA League and the European Super Cup, which brings together the winners of the two previous competitions. A new competition, called the Conference Europa League, will be introduced from the 2021-22 season, in which clubs from the lower-ranked associations will play more matches and have a higher profile.

**Figure 35: UEFA Competitions**



Source: Jiménez, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3DVoWB7>

### UEFA Champions League

To find out more about UEFA's country coefficients, we recommend the following article:

**Source:** UEFA, (2021a). Country coefficients. Retrieved from <https://es.uefa.com/memberassociations/uefarankings/country/#/yr/2021>

A total of 32 teams take part in this competition. The competition is organised in the form of a group stage. In this case, it consists of 8 groups of 4 teams each. No two teams from the same country may participate in each group. The teams in the groups play each other in home-and-away matches, with the top teams moving on to the next stage. The knock-out phase also consists of the round of 16, the quarter-finals, the semi-finals and the final itself. The final is played as a one-off match, and the date and venue are fixed at the start of the competition.

For more detailed information, we recommend visiting the following website: <https://es.uefa.com/uefachampionsleague/>

### Figure 36: UEFA Champions League draw 2021-2022 edition

Grupo A	Grupo B	Grupo C	Grupo D
Man. City	Atlético	Sporting CP	Internazionale
Paris	Liverpool	Dortmund	Real Madrid
Leipzig	Porto	Ajax	Shakhtar Donetsk
Club Brugge	Milan	Beşiktaş	Sheriff
Grupo E	Grupo F	Grupo G	Grupo H
Bayern	Villarreal	LOSC	Chelsea
Barcelona	Man. United	Sevilla	Juventus
Benfica	Atalanta	Salzburg	Zenit
Dynamo Kyiv	Young Boys	Wolfsburg	Malmö

Source: UEFA, 2021b, <https://bit.ly/3nevg0t>

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source:** UEFA, (2021c). All you need to know about the UEFA Champions League group stage draw. Retrieved from <https://es.uefa.com/uefachampionsleague/news/026c-12eb47bb2197-93d12f5f93bd-1000--sorteo-de-la-fase-de-grupos/>

### UEFA Women's Champions League

UEFA is boosting the women's edition of the competition. In addition to an increased media presence, interest and prizes have risen. UEFA is proposing a distinctive identity, which means that from the 2021-22 season onwards, the competition will have a new anthem and an updated logo and brand identity. A more competitive format is also planned, increasing the number of participating teams and the visibility of the competition.

**Figure 37: UWCL 2020-21 Champions**



Source: UEFA, 2021d, <https://bit.ly/3jT5ZH2>

For more detailed information, we recommend visiting the following website: <https://es.uefa.com/womenschampionsleague/>

The future format of the UEFA Champions League (subject to further discussions and agreements)

UEFA recently announced the implementation of a new format for club competitions starting from the 2024-25 season, affecting the UEFA Champions League, Europa League and Europa Conference League.

In the specific case of the CHL, the biggest change is the number of teams, from 32 to 36, and the transition from a group stage to a single league stage among all participating teams. Each club will be guaranteed a minimum of 10 matches against 10 opponents (5 home and 5 away), instead of the 6 matches in the existing format. The top 8 will qualify directly into the knock-out phase, and those between 9th and 24th place will compete in a play-off for a slot. There will be similar format changes to the UEFA Europa League and the UEFA Conference League.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source:** UEFA, (2021e). *UEFA announces a new format for club competitions from 2024/25 season onwards*. Retrieved from <https://es.uefa.com/insideuefa/news/0268-1213fa337ed2-bde4225f4620-1000--la-uefa-anuncia-un-nuevo-formato-para-las-competiciones-de-club/>

3.1.2.3 Main national competitions (European leagues and an example of the Spanish League)

### Main leagues

To define the best leagues in sport, we must turn to the International Federation of Football Statistics and History (IFFHS), which publishes an annual ranking of the best leagues.

**Figure 38: IFFHS 2020 Ranking**

RANKING IFFHS 2020

Top 80 (1st January 2020 – 31st December 2020)

Place	2019		Points
1	(4)	ITALY	UEFA 1026
2	(1)	ENGLAND	UEFA 1003
3	(2)	BRAZIL	CONMEBOL 964
4	(3)	SPAIN	UEFA 954
5	(10)	GERMANY	UEFA 864
6	(6)	PORTUGAL	UEFA 721
7	(7)	FRANCE	UEFA 661
8	(11)	PARAGUAY	CONMEBOL 610,5
9	(9)	ARGENTINA	CONMEBOL 603
10	(14)	ECUADOR	CONMEBOL 579,5
11	(12)	SCOTLAND	UEFA 575
12	(19)	GREECE	UEFA 574,5
13	(29)	ISRAEL	UEFA 554
14	(5)	COLOMBIA	CONMEBOL 552
15	(30)	EGYPT	CAF 534
16	(20)	SERBIA	UEFA 529,5
17	(24)	AUSTRIA	UEFA 526
18	(8)	NETHERLANDS	UEFA 499

Source: IFFHS, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3BWGNFF>

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source:** IFFHS, (2020). IFFHS world's best national league. Retrieved from <https://www.iffhs.com/posts/911>

**European leagues**

At club level, the top national competitions per federation with the 5 strongest leagues in Europe are as follows:

- England: English Premier League, English League Cup and FA Cup.
- Spain: LaLiga and Copa del Rey
- Italy: Serie A and Italian Cup
- Germany: Bundesliga and German Cup (DFB-Pokal).
- France: Ligue 1





There are strong teams that have gone on to win editions of the UEFA Champions League. These include:








- Netherlands: Eredivisie
- Portugal: Primeira Liga

Recently, according to the UEFA ranking, which takes into account the last five seasons, the Portuguese Primeira Liga has overtaken the French Ligue 1.

**Figure 39: Country coefficients**

Coeficientes por países  

< 2017/18 2018/19 2019/20 2020/21 **2021/22** >

Pos ^	Pais	17/18 v	18/19 v	19/20 v	20/21 v	21/22 v	Pts v	Equipos
1 =	 Inglaterra	20,071	22,642	18,571	24,357	2,285	87,926	7/7
2 =	 España	19,714	19,571	18,928	19,500	2,857	80,570	7/7
3 =	 Italia	17,333	12,642	14,928	16,285	2,428	63,616	7/7
4 =	 Alemania	9,857	15,214	18,714	15,214	2,428	61,427	7/7
5 =	 Portugal	9,666	10,900	10,300	9,600	3,750	44,216	6/6
6 =	 Francia	11,500	10,583	11,666	7,916	1,916	43,581	6/6
7 =	 Holanda	2,900	8,600	9,400	9,200	3,000	33,100	5/5

Source: UEFA, 2021a, <https://bit.ly/3tp2ETc>

For more detailed information, please refer to the following article:

**Source:** UEFA, (2021a). Country coefficients. Retrieved from <https://es.uefa.com/memberassociations/uefarankings/country/#/yr/2021>

In addition, more information on the criteria for points calculation can be found in the following article:

**Source:** UEFA, (n.d. b.). *How are the club coefficients calculated per federation?* Retrieved from <https://es.uefa.com/memberassociations/uefarankings/country/about/>

### Leagues outside of Europe

CONMEBOL's top leagues:

For both the IFFHS and CONMEBOL club rankings, the Brazilian league and the Argentinian league are the most prominent.

**Figure 40: 2021 CONMEBOL team rankings**



# Ranking 2021

Hide fields Filter Group Sort

Ranking	País	Puntos totales	Puntos Libertadores	Puntos Sudamericana
1 ▶ River Plate	Argentina	10652	9704	948
2 ▶ Boca Juniors	Argentina	8731.1	8298.5	432.6
3 ▶ Grêmio	Brasil	6950.8	6886	64.8
4 ▶ Palmeiras	Brasil	6629.9	6560	69.9
5 ▶ Nacional	Uruguay	5444.5	5198.5	246
6 ▶ Flamengo	Brasil	5140.6	4423	717.6
7 ▶ Atlético Nacional	Colombia	4833.3	3768	1065.3
8 ▶ Peñarol	Uruguay	4632.3	4485	147.3
9 ▶ Santos	Brasil	4443.9	4416	27.9
10 ▶ Independiente	Argentina	4210	2434	1776
11 ▶ Cerro Porteño	Paraguay	3865.1	3275	590.1
12 ▶ Olimpia	Paraguay	3674.4	3610.5	63.9
13 ▶ São Paulo	Brasil	3622.4	2910.5	711.9
14 ▶ Libertad	Paraguay	3584.5	2927.5	657

Source: Conmebol, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3jUr5Vt>

Original	Traducción
País	Country
Puntos totales	Total scores
Puntos Libertadores	Libertadores scores
Puntos Sudamericana	Sudamericana scores

These are some examples of leagues that invest heavily to position minor leagues as major leagues:

## Major League Soccer (MLS)

There are some very clear examples of leagues, such as the MLS in the US, which exhibit a high investment volume. MLS clubs have doubled their value in recent years following a country strategy. This is why they are organising the future 2026 World Cup, together with Canada and Mexico, and also the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

For more detailed information, we recommend visiting the official MLS website:

<https://www.mlssoccer.com>

## 2026 World Cup

For information about the cities in which the 2026 World Cup will be played, we suggest consulting the following article:

**Source: Los Angeles Times, (2020).** *In which cities will the World Cup be played in the US, Mexico and Canada in 2026?* Retrieved from <https://www.latimes.com/espanol/deportes/articulo/2020-08-31/en-que-ciudades-se-jugara-el-mundial-de-estados-unidos-mexico-y-canada-en-2026>

**LA 2028:** <https://olympics.com/ioc/la-2028>

## Chinese Super League

The Chinese Super League's 2016-2050 strategic plan to become a world power by 2050 involved large domestic investments as well as Chinese investment in Europe at the outset of the plan. However, the strategy to bring in top players from the main European leagues in the final years of their careers and with high salaries ended when it became clear that it did not result in a significant improvement, and led to a large debt for the clubs, which has even led to the disappearance of some of the most important clubs; therefore, the strategy has re-focused on boosting the talent and football culture in the country.

For more detailed information, please refer to the CSL's official website: <https://www.chinesesuperleaguefootball.com/>

In addition, we suggest reading the following articles for further details:

**Source: BBC, (2016).** China aims to become a football superpower 'by 2050'. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-36015657>

**Source: France24, (2021).** *Football power by 2050? China's dream is on shaky foundations.* Retrieved from <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210302-football-power-by-2050-china-dream-totters-on-shaky-foundations>

**Source: Vidal Lij, M. (2021).** *China's huge football bubble bursts.* In *El País*. Retrieved from <https://elpais.com/deportes/2021-03-04/explota-la-enorme-burbuja-del-futbol-chino.html>

**Source: DW – Made for minds, (2021).** China fails to meet its football targets for 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.dw.com/en/china-fails-to-meet-its-football-goals-for-2020/a-55409056>

## Qatar

In Qatar, football has become an economic-sports project, involving large investments in Europe with owners of big teams such as Manchester City or Paris Saint-Germain, or sponsorship of teams such as FC Barcelona (Qatar Airways / Qatar Foundation), Roma or Bayer Munich. This is why, at present, Qatar has a great influence in the industry, with huge sums of money invested in players who have revolutionised the market in recent years.

On a national level, they are also committed to giving more economic influence to football. To this end, it has hosted the FIFA Club World Cup and will host the next World Cup in 2022, with great influence, modifying the usual calendar of the competition and affecting all the club competitions of the participating countries. Furthermore, in order to promote the sport, they created an organisation to attract talent that also works as a great football laboratory: the Aspire Academy.

On the sports front, the strategy has begun to bear fruit, as Qatar won the Asian Cup and has even been invited to participate in the Copa America.

**For more information on the Qatar World Cup, we recommend visiting the following websites:**

- <https://www.fifa.com/es/tournaments/mens/worldcup/qatar2022>
- <https://www.aspire.qa>

Moreover, we recommend the following articles:

**Source: Aspire Academy**, (n.d.). Qatar's approach to sport consists of four main pillars Retrieved from <https://www.aspire.qa/about/sport-in-qatar>

**Source: Torres, D.** (2018). Qatar rocks world football. In *El País*. Retrieved from [https://elpais.com/deportes/2018/01/07/actualidad/1515364850\\_693823.html](https://elpais.com/deportes/2018/01/07/actualidad/1515364850_693823.html)

**Source: Rabona's notes**, (2019). Qatar and its obsession with football. Retrieved from <https://apuntesderabona.com/qatar-y-su-obsesion-llamada-futbol/>

**Source: Calonge, L.** (2021). Football looks at Qatar. In *El País*. Retrieved from <https://elpais.com/deportes/2021-08-31/el-futbol-mira-a-qatar.html>

**Examples of national competitions: Spain's LaLiga and the Copa del Rey.** LaLiga and Copa del Rey

**Figure 41: Royal Spanish Football Federation**



Source: screenshot from the Royal Spanish Football Federation ([www.rfef.es/](http://www.rfef.es/))

## LaLiga

In the case of LaLiga, the competition is organised as usual, where all teams play against each other in a home-and-away format. The team with the highest score reaches the championship final, and thus becomes the champion.

### Qualification for European competitions

This winner automatically earns the right to participate in the group stage of the next edition of the UEFA Champions League along with the runner-up, the third-placed team and the fourth-placed team, as Spain's current participation quota is four teams. The fifth winner will be entitled to participate in the play-off round for the next UEFA league, and the sixth winner could reach a knock-out stage to participate in the same round.

Meanwhile, if the Copa del Rey winner is among the top six in LaLiga, the seventh-placed team will earn a slot. This means that the seventh-placed team would be entitled to play in the next edition of the Europe League.

Figure 42: LaLiga 2021-2022 edition



Source: LaLiga, 2021, <https://bit.ly/2Vtumlm>

At national level, the Liga Nacional de Fútbol Profesional (LaLiga) manages both the 1st and 2nd divisions in Spain. All other divisions in Spain are managed by the Federation (RFEF), which has recently created a new category below the 2nd division, called Primera RFEF, and the current 2a B will be renamed Segunda RFEF. The Primera RFEF is made up of 40 clubs, which are divided into two groups.

For more information, we recommend visiting the following website: <https://www.rfef.es/noticias/competiciones/primera-rfef>

In addition, we suggest reading the following article:

**Source:** Arés, R. (2021). This is what the format of the new Primera División (1st division) RFEF will be like. In *Argentina AS*. Retrieved from [https://as.com/futbol/2021/04/15/mas\\_futbol/1618483534\\_728171.html](https://as.com/futbol/2021/04/15/mas_futbol/1618483534_728171.html)

### Copa del Rey

The Copa del Rey is managed by the Spanish Federation. Participation is wide ranging. Teams from many divisions take part: those from the 1st division and the 2nd division, and the top teams from the four groups that form part of the 2nd B division. Subsequently, the 3rd division is made up of the champions of the 18 groups, for a total of 80 teams.

The play-offs are paired by drawing lots, and from the fourth round onwards, the first division teams join the competition to ensure that there are always top teams in place, thereby guaranteeing the prestige and ratings of the competition. At this stage, the round of 16, quarter-finals, semi-finals and final are played. This last final stage was traditionally played at a neutral venue, but for some time now the venue has been fixed in advanced.

### Spanish Super Cup

The Spanish Super Cup is managed by the RFEF and used to be played only by the winner of the Copa del Rey and the winner of the Spanish LaLiga. Recently, an expanded format was

introduced in which the runner-ups are also included and, due to commercial reasons, an out-of-country venue was also proposed.

### Player participation

In addition, in the Spanish LaLiga and the Copa del Rey, clubs can field players who have been previously registered with the Federation, with a maximum of five federation players. Of these, only three may be non-EU players who do not have a European passport. During matches, these three non-EU players can be fielded at the same time.

There are two formalised periods open for player acquisitions. The first takes place before the start of the competition, in July and August, and the second, in the middle of the season, in January.

Apart from the professional football teams that are already registered, it is possible to field players from the youth teams without any restrictions. These players have to be under a certain age, especially for licensing purposes, in order for the youth teams to be able to field them. If they are over 23 years of age, the regulations state that, once they have joined the first team, they cannot play in a lower division.

### Promotions and relegations

While there are many divisions in the Spanish LaLiga, however difficult it may be, the idea is that there should be some way for teams in lower divisions to have equal opportunities to work their way up to higher divisions.

To this end, there are direct promotions and playoffs, whose regulations vary by country and division and are adapted to the number of teams and the geographical structure of each of them.

## 3.2 Football leagues and business models

### 3.2.1 Major football leagues (Europe)

#### 3.2.1.1 Major football leagues

Top-3 National leagues per confederation:

Figure 43: IFFHS UEFA 2020 Major leagues



Source: IFFHS, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3yV6PHE>

Figure 44: IFFHS CONMEBOL 2020 Major leagues



Source: IFFHS, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3yV6PHE>

Figure 45: IFFHS CAF 2020 Major leagues



Source: IFFHS, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3yV6PHE>

Figure 46: IFFHS AFC 2020 Major leagues



AFC TOP 3: KOREA REPUBLIC – SAUDI ARABIA – JAPAN

Source: IFFHS, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3yV6PHE>

**Figure 47: IFFHS CONCACAF 2020 Major leagues**



CONCACAF TOP 3: MEXICO – NICARAGUA – COSTA RICA

Source: IFFHS, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3yV6PHE>

**Figure 48: IFFHS OFC 2020 Major leagues**



OFC TOP 3: NEW ZEALAND – PAPUA NEW GUINEA – TAHITI

Source: IFFHS, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3yV6PHE>

### 3.2.1.2 European leagues

At club level, the 5 leading leagues in Europe and the other major national competitions are the following:

- England: English Premier League, English League Cup and FA Cup.

- Spain: LaLiga and Copa del Rey
- Italy: Serie A and Italian Cup
- Germany: Bundesliga and German Cup (DFB-Pokal).
- France: Ligue 1

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source:** UEFA, (2021a). Country coefficients. Retrieved from <https://es.uefa.com/memberassociations/uefarankings/country/#/yr/2021>

In addition, more information on the criteria for points calculation can be found in the following article:

**Source:** UEFA, (n.d. b.). *How are the club coefficients calculated per federation?* Retrieved from <https://es.uefa.com/memberassociations/uefarankings/country/about/>

Recently, the Portuguese Primeira Liga has overtaken the French Ligue 1 according to the UEFA ranking, which takes into account the last five seasons, although these analyses are based on the ranking up to the start of the pandemic: Deloitte 2018/19 season report in the pre-COVID-19 scenario:

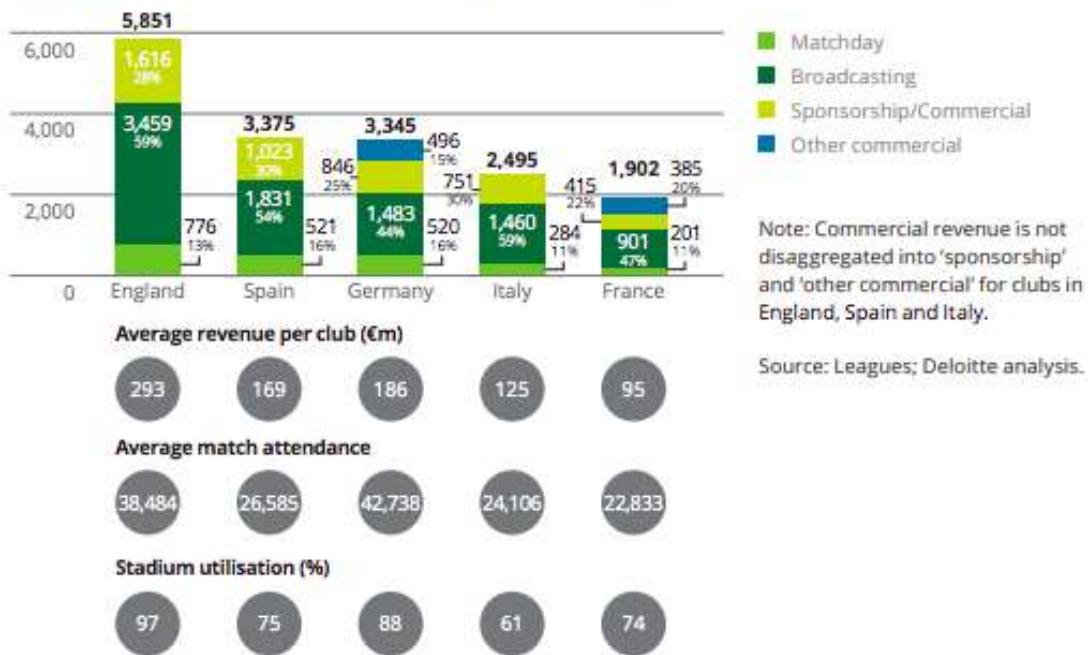
**Figure 49: European football 2017/18 - 2018/19 market (in billions of euros)**



Source: Deloitte, 2021a, <https://bit.ly/3ngylgI>

**Figure 50: Top five European leagues' 2018/19 revenues**

**Chart 2: 'Big five' European league clubs' revenue - 2018/19 (€m)**



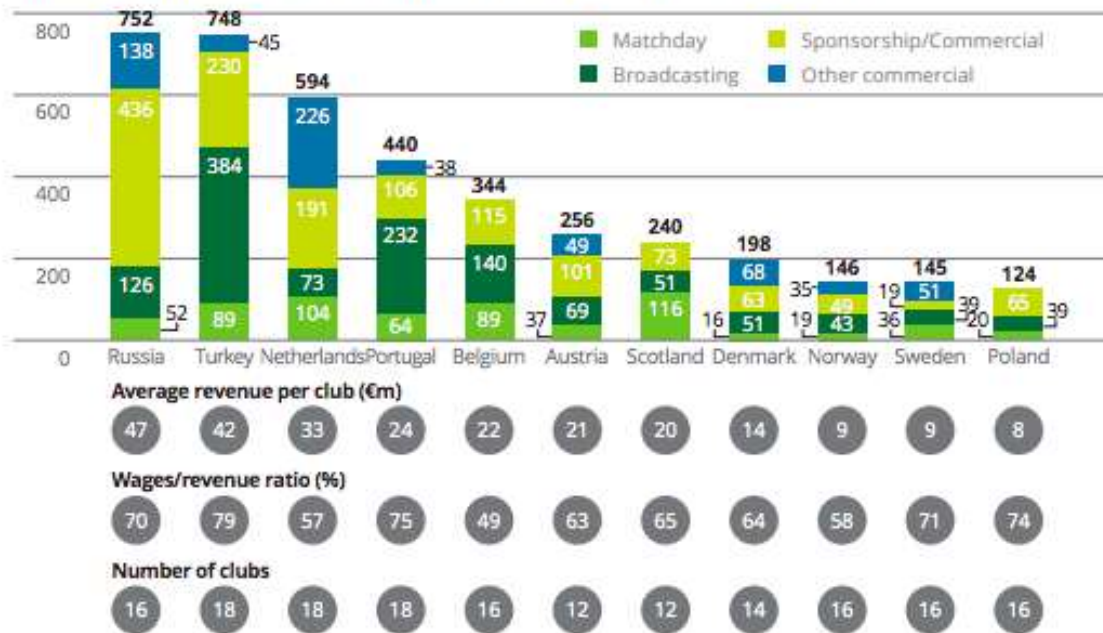
Source: Deloitte, 2021a, <https://bit.ly/3ngylgI>

Apart from the top five, there are other leagues in UEFA with notable, although much smaller, revenues, such as Russia and Turkey:

**Figure 51: Other European leagues' 2018/19 revenues**



**Chart 6: Selected other European league clubs' revenue – 2018/19 (€m)**



Source: Deloitte, 2021a, <https://bit.ly/3ngylgI>

The full Deloitte report is available below:

**Source: Deloitte, (2021).** *Riding the challenge. Annual Review of Football.* Retrieved from <https://www2.deloitte.com/es/es/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/ligas-futbol-ingresos.html>

### 3.2.2 Competitions business models

The main revenue streams for clubs and competitions come from matchday stadium operations, including ticket sales and especially broadcasting rights, commercial exploitation of the brand in the form of sponsorship, merchandising or licensing, as well as player sales.

#### 3.2.2.1 Broadcasting rights

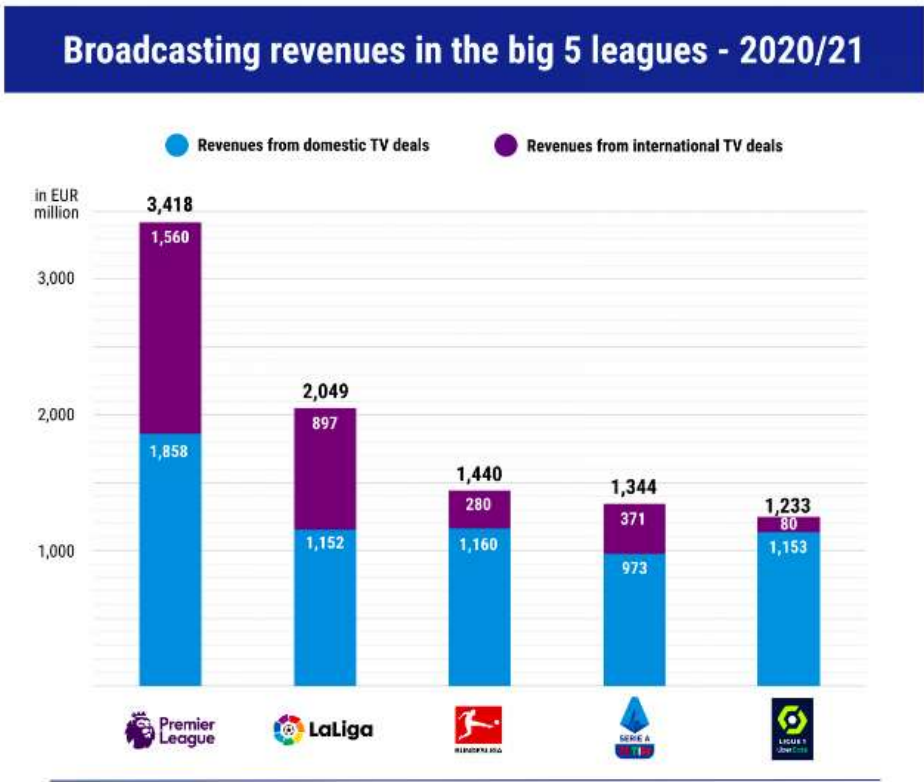
The television broadcasting rights of the competitions' matches (and sponsorships) are marketed and managed by the competitions themselves. For example, both the Champions League and the other European competitions are centrally managed by UEFA.

In turn, for national competitions, such as the Spanish LaLiga, they also centralise the TV rights of all national clubs' competitions.

To secure the best possible deals, both UEFA and LaLiga develop their own brand value and their own fan community to promote football, and take action to sell the rights.



Figure 52: Broadcasting revenues in the 5 major leagues in 2020/21



Source: KPMG Football Benchmark research

Source: KPMG, 2020a, <https://bit.ly/38TGpLH>

Figure 53: TV revenue secured by the major competitions

## ¿Cuánto dinero tienen asegurado por televisión los grandes torneos?

En millones de euros. El importe es el asegurado por cada ciclo de tres años, con los últimos contratos firmados.

	Ciclo	Importe
Premier League	2019-2022	10.658
La Liga	2019-2022	6.146
Ligue-1	2020-2023	5.088
Bundesliga	2018-2021	4.320
Serie A	2018-2021	3.939
Champions League	2018-2021	2.744

Fuente: Uefa

Fuente: Palco23.com • Creado con Datawrapper

Source: Menchén, 2020, <https://bit.ly/31510Ke>

Original	Traducción
¿Cuánto dinero tienen asegurado por televisión los grandes torneos?	How much do the big competitions get in terms of TV revenue?
En millones de euros. El importe es el asegurado por cada ciclo de tres años, con los últimos contratos firmados	In millions of euros. The amount is secured for each three-year cycle, according to the latest contracts signed.
Ciclo	Cycle
Importe	Amount

For more detailed information, please refer to the following article:

**Source: Menchén, M. (2020).** The audiovisual battle of European football: 7.9 billion euros at stake in 2021-2022. In *Palco 23*. Retrieved from <https://www.palco23.com/competiciones/la-batalla-audiovisual-de-2021-2022-el-futbol-europeo-se-juega-un-negocio-de-7900-millones.html>

### Distribution

The distribution of the rights is handled by the federations of each country, which in turn is handled by the clubs. In this aspect, it is important to consider the quotas and each club's position when establishing them, especially the major clubs, which generate the greatest demand and income from television rights, and therefore tend to demand a higher quota. In the case of UEFA's allocation negotiations, the European Club Association (ECA) was set up to defend the interests of the major clubs.

Figure 54: UEFA member associations' rights distribution

LaLiga Santander		TEMPORADA 2019/20		LaLiga SmartBank			
	Ingresos	Obligaciones	Ingresos	Compensación por Descenso	Ingresos por compensación	Obligaciones	
ATHLETIC CLUB	72,8	-5,1	REAL SPORTING DE GIJON, S.A.D.	7,6		7,6	-0,5
FUTBOL CLUB BARCELONA	165,0	-11,6	REAL CLUB DEPORTIVO DE LA CORUÑA, S.A.D.	8,4		8,4	-0,6
R.C.D. ESPANYOL DE BARCELONA, S.A.D.	59,2	-4,1	CADIZ CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	7,4		7,4	-0,5
REAL MADRID CLUB DE FUTBOL	156,2	-10,9	REAL RACING CLUB DE SANTANDER, S.A.D.	6,1		6,1	-0,4
CLUB ATLETICO DE MADRID, S.A.D.	124,2	-8,7	SOCIEDAD DEPORTIVA PONFERRADINA, S.A.D.	5,7		5,7	-0,4
SEVILLA FUTBOL CLUB, S.A.D.	78,9	-5,5	CLUB DEPORTIVO TENERIFE, S.A.D.	6,6		6,6	-0,5
REAL BETIS BALOMPIE, S.A.D.	59,8	-4,2	ELCHE CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	6,7		6,7	-0,5
REAL SOCIEDAD DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	58,2	-4,1	RAYO VALLECANO DE MADRID, S.A.D.	8,8	11,1*	20,0	-0,6
LEVANTE UNION DEPORTIVA, S.A.D.	48,1	-3,4	REAL OVIEDO, S.A.D.	7,3		7,3	-0,5
REAL CLUB DEPORTIVO MALLORCA, S.A.D.	43,6	-3,0	CLUB DEPORTIVO MIRANDES, S.A.D.	5,8		5,8	-0,4
VALENCIA CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	82,2	-5,8	GIRONA FUTBOL CLUB, S.A.D.	9,8	10,9*	20,6	-0,7
CLUB ATLETICO OSASUNA	47,1	-3,3	REAL ZARAGOZA, S.A.D.	7,3		7,3	-0,5
DEPORTIVO ALAVES, S.A.D.	49,6	-3,5	ALBACETE BALOMPIE, S.A.D.	7,6		7,6	-0,5
VILLARREAL CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	67,8	-4,7	CLUB DEPORTIVO NUMANCIA DE SORIA, S.A.D.	6,0		6,0	-0,4
REAL CLUB CELTA DE VIGO, S.A.D.	53,3	-3,7	UNION DEPORTIVA LAS PALMAS, S.A.D.	7,6		7,6	-0,5
REAL VALLADOLID CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	47,1	-3,3	CLUB DEPORTIVO LUGO, S.A.D.	5,9		5,9	-0,4
CLUB DEPORTIVO LEGANES, S.A.D.	47,7	-3,3	SOCIEDAD DEPORTIVA HUESCA, S.A.D.	9,0	9,9*	18,9	-0,6
GRANADA CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	47,1	-3,3	AGRUPACION DEPORTIVA ALCORCON, S.A.D.	6,0		6,0	-0,4
SOCIEDAD DEPORTIVA EIBAR, S.A.D.	50,9	-3,6	CLUB DE FUTBOL FUENLABRADA	5,8		5,8	-0,4
GETAFE CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	58,8	-4,1	UNION DEPORTIVA ALMERIA, S.A.D.	6,7		6,7	-0,5
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1.417,7</b>	<b>-99,2</b>	MALAGA CLUB DE FUTBOL, S.A.D.	9,3		9,3	-0,7
			EXTREMADURA UNION DEPORTIVA	6,1		6,1	-0,4
			<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>157,5</b>	<b>31,9</b>	<b>189,4</b>	<b>-11,0</b>

Datos en millones de euros

Source: LaLiga, n.d., <https://bit.ly/3BUFQxW>

NOTE: "The distribution is supplemented by a 3.5% deduction to a compensation fund for relegated sports clubs, marked in the list with '\*' (LaLiga, n.d., <https://bit.ly/3BUFQxW>).

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

Source: LaLiga, (n.d.). *Distribution of broadcasting revenues from the 2019/2020 season in compliance with the reporting obligations set out in Royal Decree-Law 5/2015*. Retrieved from <https://www.laliga.com/transparencia/gestion-economica/derechos-audiovisuales>

### Audiences and competitiveness

In the organisation of the competition itself, competitiveness and audiences have an impact on the value of rights. For example, since the UEFA Champions League group stage draw, teams are grouped by levels of competitiveness according to recent results, ensuring attractive

matches on every matchday. It is also considered that two teams from the same country do not both play at home or away or play on the same matchday. In turn, in the event that a country has three or four teams competing, so that two teams from the same country do not both play home and away matches on the same day, it is ensured that each matchday is played between Tuesday and Wednesday of the same week, at 18:55 and 21:00 hours, always European time.

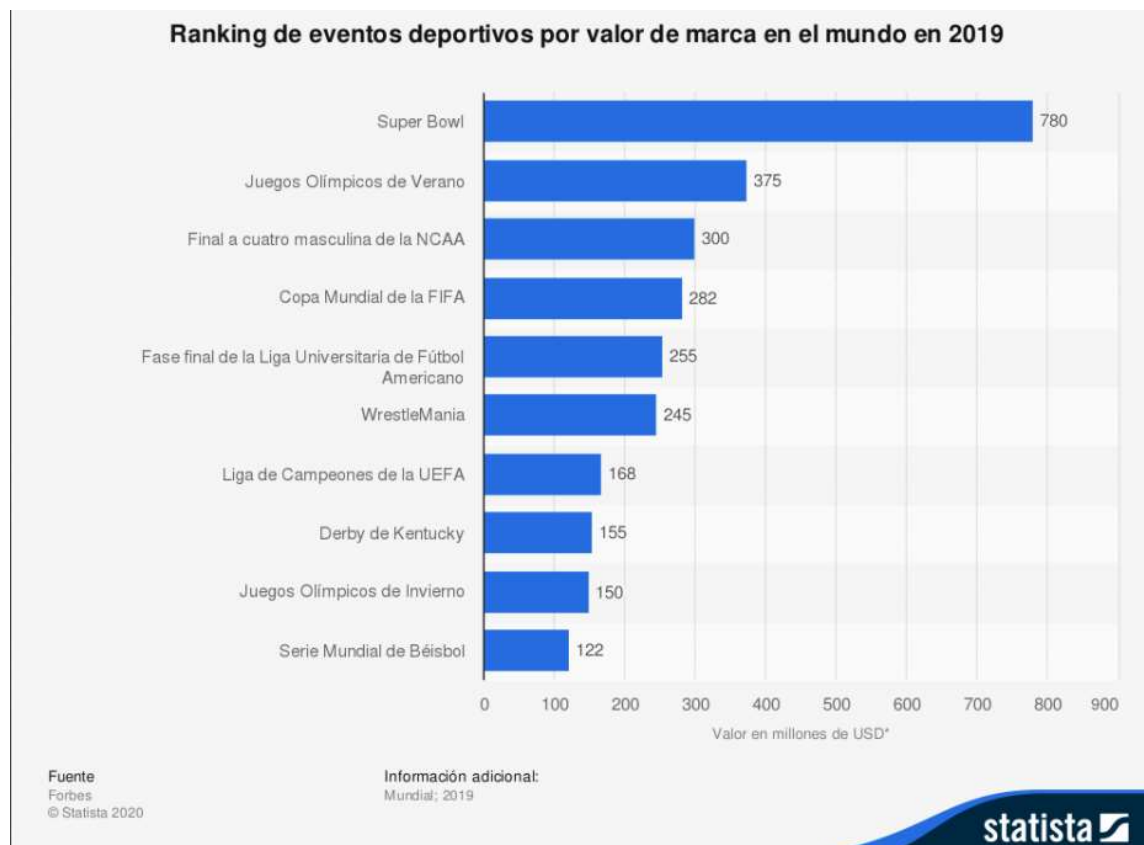
For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source: Muñoz, R. (2018).** Who pays for the astronomical football TV bill? In *El País*. Retrieved from [https://elpais.com/economia/2018/08/17/actualidad/1534528912\\_551740.html](https://elpais.com/economia/2018/08/17/actualidad/1534528912_551740.html)

### 3.2.2.2 Sponsorship and business

The major football championships are among the top sporting events in terms of brand values.

**Figure 55: Ranking of sporting events by brand value in the world in 2019**

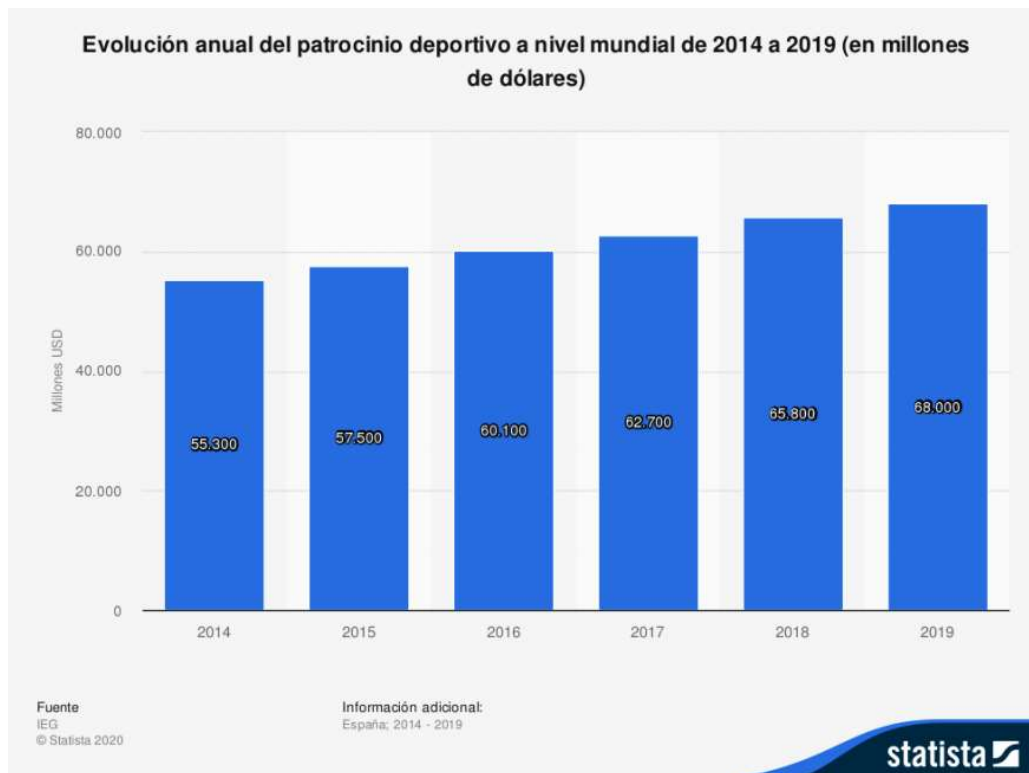


Source: Statista, 2020, [www.es.statista.com](http://www.es.statista.com)

In this sense, sports sponsorship is one of the most relevant and essential aspects for a competition. Sponsors may choose either to sponsor an entire competition or tournament, or to sponsor some of the participating clubs.

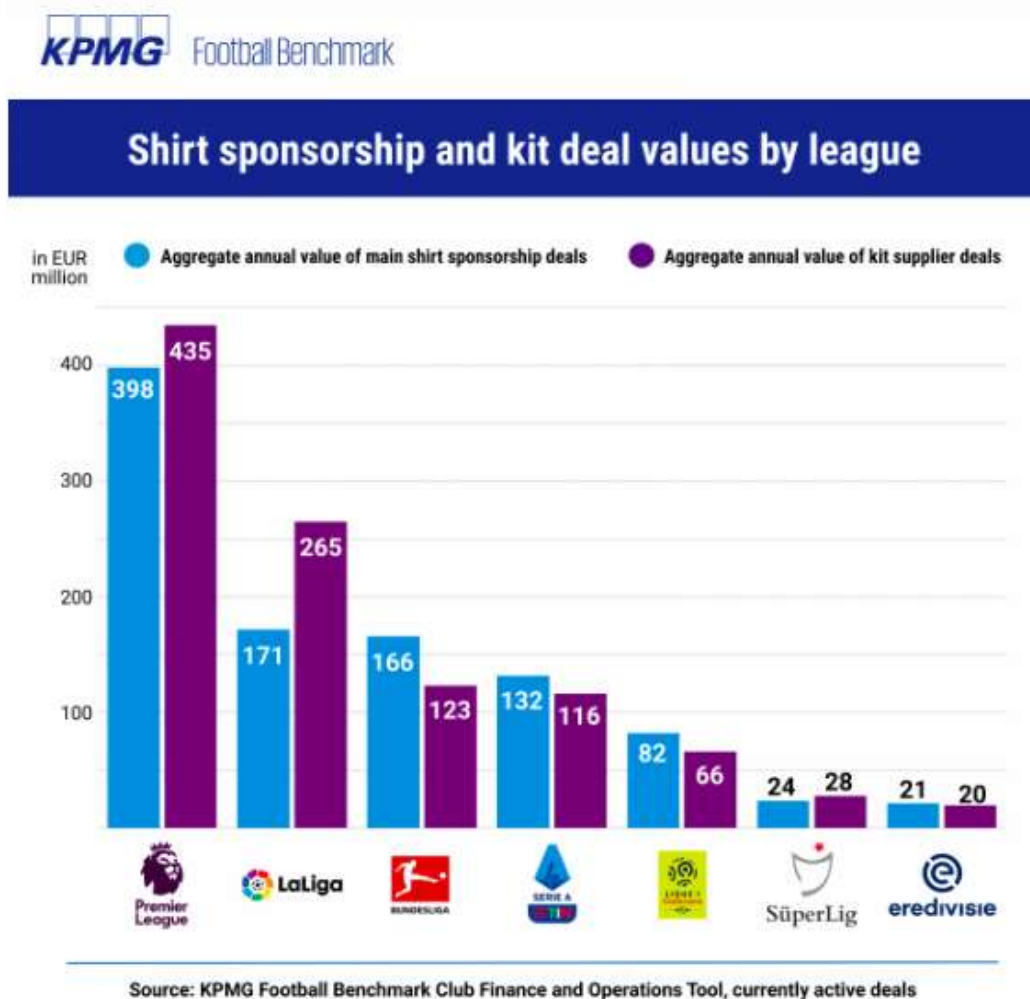


Figure 56: Annual development of global sports sponsorship from 2014 to 2019 (in millions of dollars)



Source: IEG, December 2019, Palco.com

Figure 57: T-shirt and app sponsorship in each of Europe's major leagues



Source: KPMG, 2020b, <https://bit.ly/3E2Vnxe>

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source:** KPMG, (2020b). The changing face of football sponsorship: key trends. Retrieved from [https://www.footballbenchmark.com/library/the\\_changing\\_face\\_of\\_football\\_sponsorship\\_key\\_trends](https://www.footballbenchmark.com/library/the_changing_face_of_football_sponsorship_key_trends)

### 3.2.2.3 Participation in competitions (example: UEFA Champions League)

Participation in competitions also means significant revenues for the clubs.

In the case of UEFA, the Champions League is the highest-rated club championship, generating revenue from TV rights and sponsorship, which is shared with the participating clubs. The amounts distributed by UEFA increase regularly (cycles 2015-18, 2018-21, 2021-24), with a fixed amount for participation in the group stage and a variable amount depending on the results in the group stage and the subsequent stages.

Figure 58: Comparison of Champions League prize money

<b>Comparativa de premios económicos en la Champions</b>				
	<b>2015-2018</b>	<b>2018-2021</b>	<b>Dif.</b>	
<b>Fijo fase de grupos</b>	12,7	15,25	+2,55	+20,1%
<b>Victoria fase de grupos</b>	1,5	2,7	+1,2	+80,0%
<b>Empate fase de grupos</b>	0,5	0,9	+0,4	+80,0%
<b>Octavos de final</b>	6,0	9,5	+3,5	+58,3%
<b>Cuartos de final</b>	6,5	10,5	+4,0	+61,5%
<b>Semifinales</b>	7,5	12,0	+4,5	+60,0%
<b>Subcampeón</b>	11,0	15,0	+4,0	+36,4%
<b>Campeón</b>	15,5	19,0	+3,5	+22,6%
<b>Subcampeón Supercopa</b>	3,0	3,5	+0,5	+16,7%
<b>Campeón Supercopa</b>	4,0	4,5	+0,5	+12,5%

*Fuente:* UEFA.  
Cifras en millones de euros.

Source: EUFA cited in Canibe, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3tpnvWB>

Original	Traducción
Fijo fase de grupos	Fixed group stage
Victoria fase de grupos	Group stage win
Empate fase de grupos	Group stage tie
Octavos de final	Round of 16
Cuartos de final	Quarter-finals
Semifinales	Semi-finals
Subcampeón	Runner-up
Campeón	Champion
Subcampeon supercopa	Super Cup runner-up
Campeón supercopa	Super Cup champion
Cifras en millones de euros	Figures in millions of euros

In the case of the European Super Cup, there is a share for participation and for winning. The distribution is similar, but with smaller amounts in the case of the UEFA League.

On the other hand, being left out of the next edition of a competition can be a very negative scenario for teams. The most extreme case would be relegation from a national league, which, coupled with other factors (such as loss of sponsors, players and lower TV rights payments), can leave the club in a delicate situation. The English Premier League created a concept called a "parachute", which refers to the case in which relegated teams are given support over the next three years to alleviate the loss of players and competitiveness. It is designed to mitigate the consequences of relegation. This concept has been spreading to other European leagues in recent years.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following articles:

**Source: Izquierdo, J.** (2021). LaLiga breaks records in relegation aid: 60 million euros in 2020-2021. Retrieved from [https://www.2playbook.com/competiciones/laliga-bate-records-con-ayudas-descenso-60-millones-euros-en-2020-2021\\_1693\\_102.html](https://www.2playbook.com/competiciones/laliga-bate-records-con-ayudas-descenso-60-millones-euros-en-2020-2021_1693_102.html)

**Source: Argentina AS,** (2021). Premier League clubs find themselves with almost 100 million. Retrieved from [https://as.com/futbol/2021/04/27/internacional/1619507990\\_478385.html](https://as.com/futbol/2021/04/27/internacional/1619507990_478385.html)

**Source: Fernández, S.** (2020). *This is how relegation aid works: the rich get paid more if they are relegated.* Retrieved from <https://www.marca.com/futbol/primera-division/2020/07/15/5f0da454ca474155298b45c7.html>

### 3.2.2 Control in competitions (examples: UEFA and LaLiga)

#### 3.2.2.1 Compliance and audit programme

First and second division football clubs must prove that they have an effective and up-to-date crime prevention programme (or compliance programme) in order to register with La Liga. La Liga also requires an internal compliance audit for all clubs in order to verify assurances of good performance.

#### 3.2.2.2 Financial control

UEFA competitions monitor the eligibility requirements for participation, as well as the strength and stability of the competition through the status of the participating clubs, with the aim of securing business and mitigating risks.

Financial control is carried out to ensure that certain salary and debt limits are not exceeded. For example, in the case of La Liga, clubs are obliged to report their budgets each season.

#### Control of player sales and purchases

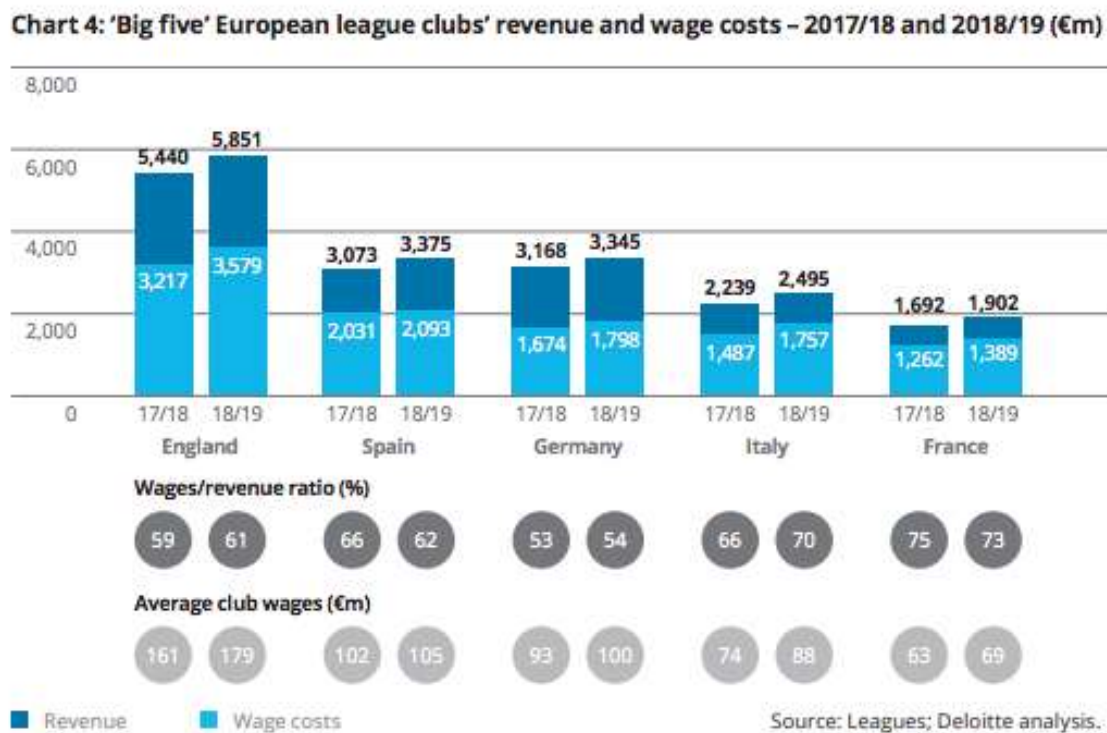
As far as the management of the competition is concerned, it is very relevant to contrast the

clubs' income and their main expenditure, sports salaries, which include fixed and variable salaries, social security, collective bonuses, acquisition costs, (including agents' commissions and amortisations, the amount charged to the accounts of each year according to the number of years of the contract). To ensure their financial health, clubs are obliged to report this data to federations and UEFA, which has established financial fair play (FFP) since 2011 with a rule that prohibits spending more than what is earned and which has a dedicated financial control committee.

It is estimated that by exceeding 70%, this financial control ratio may already pose a risk to the sustainability of the clubs' finances due to their high indebtedness.

The aggregate of the 5 major leagues is as follows:

**Figure 59: 2017/18 and 2018/19 income and wage costs of the top five clubs in the Europa League**



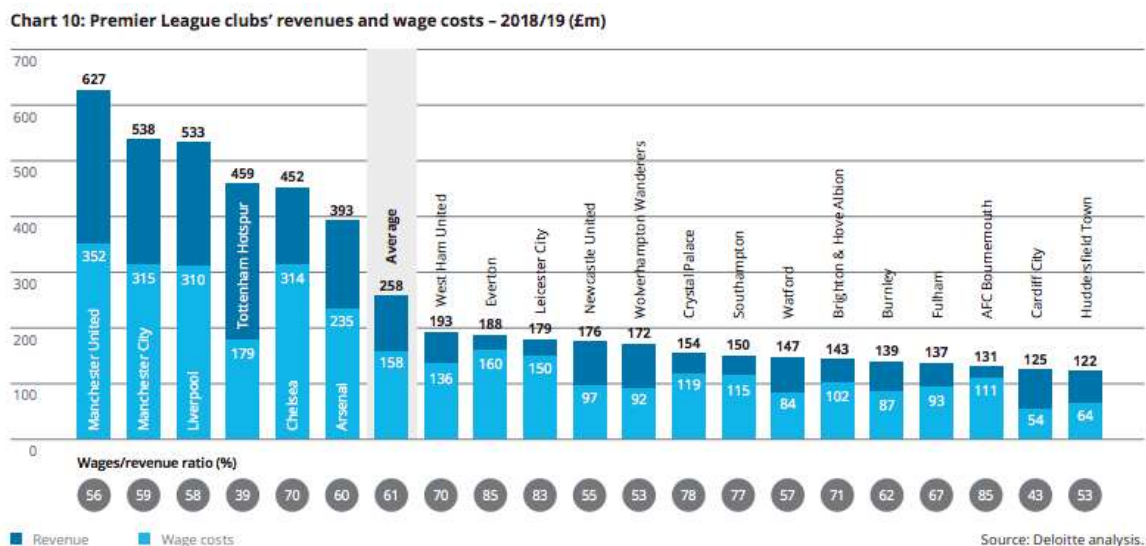
Source: Deloitte, 2021b, <https://bit.ly/38O8vYZ>

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source: Deloitte, (2021b).** *Testing times. Football Money League.* Retrieved from <https://www2.deloitte.com/es/es/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/ligas-futbol-ingresos.html>

Considering the clear lead of the English Premier League, let us look at its teams in the 2018/19 (pre-pandemic) season in detail:

Figure 60: 2018/19 income and wage costs of the Premier League



Source: Deloitte, 2021b, <https://bit.ly/38O8vYZ>

Let us now consider the position of the top 6 English clubs in the UEFA club rankings:

Figure 61: UEFA club coefficients

Coeficiente por clubes f t Filter por Inglaterra

			2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22		
Pos	Club	Pais	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	Pts	Fed			
6 =	Manchester City FC	ENG	15,000	26,000	18,000	22,000	25,000	106,000	17,092			
9 =	Arsenal FC	ENG	20,000	15,000	19,000	21,000	26,000	101,000	17,092			
11 =	Liverpool FC	ENG	10,000	22,000	-	30,000	29,000	91,000	17,092			
12 =	Chelsea FC	ENG	21,000	18,000	-	18,000	30,000	87,000	17,092			
17 =	Tottenham Hotspur	ENG	9,000	12,000	10,000	21,000	26,000	78,000	17,092			
18 =	Manchester United	ENG	-	13,000	26,000	20,000	19,000	78,000	17,092			

Source: UEFA, 2019, <https://bit.ly/3hfMIhb>



There is a clear correlation between the 6 clubs above the average of the Premier League in terms of income and investment in wages, and their sports results. Therefore, the market trend is to increase this ratio, which makes it necessary to establish control mechanisms.

### 3.2.2.3 Infrastructure regulations

Likewise, in order to compete in both UEFA and LaLiga, it is necessary to comply with certain regulations regarding the stadium, which guarantee match broadcasting at a marketable quality level, so that everything can be managed as planned.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following article:

**Source:** UEFA, (2018). *UEFA Stadium Infrastructure Regulations*. Retrieved from <https://documents.uefa.com/viewer/book-attachment/qA7fJuXrAU7K42UpVsoDGQ/pgiN9lx9FHF0pL4NgaTMFQ>

### 3.2.2.4 The impact of COVID-19 on European competitions and leagues

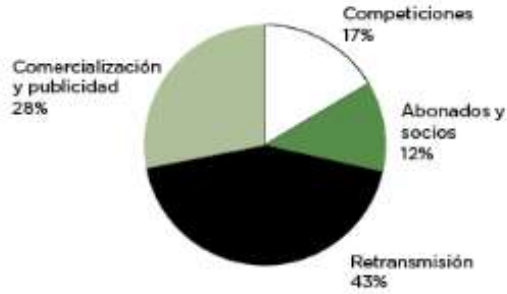
In the case of UEFA competitions, which have been growing significantly in recent years, the global COVID-19 pandemic has been a major blow, affecting all leagues.

For example, in the case of Spain's LaLiga, the impact of COVID-19 led to the closure of the 2019-2020 season with a drop of almost 7% of the total turnover, mainly due to the drop in clubs' revenues as a result of stadium closures and the partial impact on TV rights contracts and commercial sponsorships. From 2021 onwards, the fact that there are matches again, even without the public attending, has extended the declining revenue impact for all leagues, which has greatly affected those with the highest revenues, such as Spain's LaLiga or the Premier League and, most notably, the French league, the first to stop the season's competition.

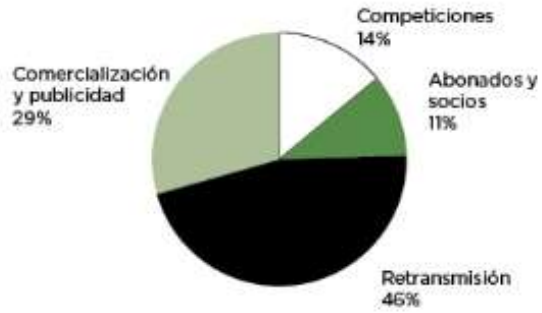
### **Figure 62: Turnover by revenue source before and after COVID-19**

La facturación, por fuentes de ingresos, antes y después del Covid-19

Temporada 2018-2019



Temporada 2019-2020



Fuente: Cuentas anuales y elaboración propia. En porcentaje sobre la facturación total de los clubes en Primera División en la temporada 2020-2021.

6

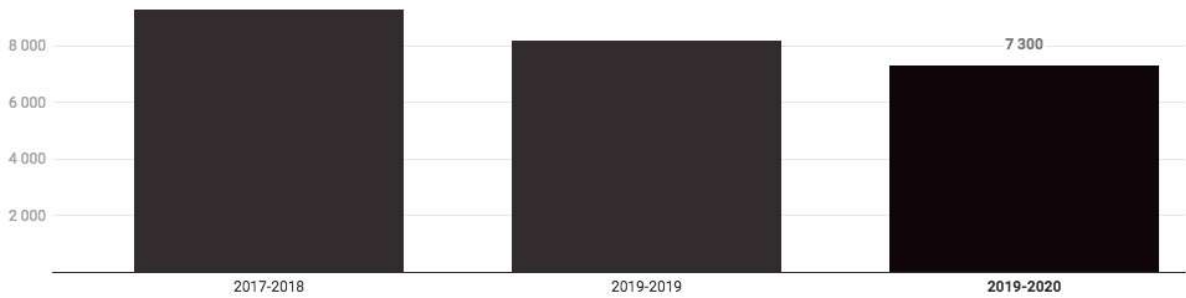
Source: Deloitte, 2021a, <https://bit.ly/3ngylgI>

Original	Traducción
Temporada	Season
Comercialización y publicación	Marketing and publishing
Competiciones	Competitions
Abonados y socios	Subscribers and members
Retransmisión	Broadcasting

Figure 63: Revenue development of Europe's 20 major clubs per year

## Evolución de los ingresos de los 20 mayores clubes de Europa

En millones de euros



Palco23

Fuente: Deloitte • Descargar los datos • Creado con Datawrapper

Source: De Ángeles, 2021, <https://bit.ly/2Xb1L7z>

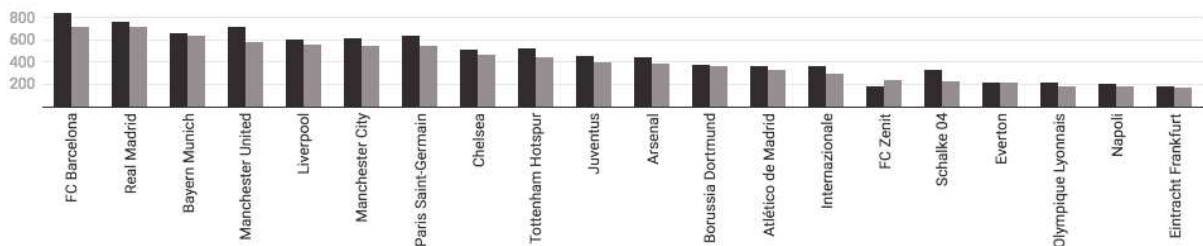
Original	Traducción
En millones de euros	In millions of euros

Figure 64: Revenue development of Europe's 20 major clubs per club

## Evolución de los ingresos de los 20 mayores clubes de Europa

En millones de euros

■ 2018-2019 ■ 2019-2020



Palco23

Fuente: Deloitte • Descargar los datos • Creado con Datawrapper

Source: De Ángeles, 2021, <https://bit.ly/2Xb1L7z>

Figure 65: COVID-19: predictions for a different season

### COVID-19. Previsiones para una temporada diferente

El informe de Deloitte prevé que la interrupción de la temporada 2019/20 reducirá los ingresos de los clubes de la Premier League, aproximadamente, 1.100 millones de euros. De esta cifra, casi el 50% se pierde permanentemente debido, principalmente, a la pérdida de ingresos de las jornadas y a los descuentos en los contratos de transmisión y comerciales por los partidos que se retrasan y se juegan a puerta cerrada. El resto se aplazará hasta el ejercicio del 2020/21, debido al retraso de casi un cuarto de la temporada más allá del 30 de junio.

“ La vuelta del fútbol de manera segura es muy relevante para limitar el impacto económico que está teniendo la crisis derivada de la COVID-19. El éxito de la vuelta de cada liga y el tipo de relación que mantengan con los socios comerciales y las cadenas de retransmisión tendrán un impacto significativo y a largo plazo tanto en la solidez de los clubs como de las ligas en general. Es una industria sólida y nos mantenemos optimistas: existe la visión de que sea posible una recuperación en forma de V y un retorno a la relativa normalidad financiera para la temporada 2021/22.

Concha Iglesias, socia responsable de la industria de Sports de Deloitte

Source: Deloitte, 2021a, <https://bit.ly/3ngylgI>

Original	Traducción
El informe de Deloitte prevé que la interrupción de la temporada 2019/20 reducirá los ingresos de los clubes de la Premier League, aproximadamente, 1100 millones de euros. De esta cifra, casi el 50% se pierde permanentemente debido, principalmente, a la pérdida de ingresos de las jornadas y a los descuentos en los contratos de transmisión y comerciales por los partidos que se retrasan y se juegan a puerta cerrada. El resto de aplazará hasta el ejercicio del 2020/21, debido al retraso de casi un cuarto de la temporada más allá del 30 de Junio.	The Deloitte report predicts that the disruption of the 2019/20 season will reduce Premier League clubs' revenues by approximately €1.1 billion. Of this figure, almost 50% is permanently lost mainly due to the loss of matchday revenue and discounts on broadcast and commercial contracts for matches that are delayed and played behind closed doors. The remainder will be postponed until the 2020/21 financial year, due to the delay of almost a quarter of the season beyond 30 June.
La vuelta del fútbol de manera segura es muy relevante para limitar el impacto económico que está teniendo la crisis	The safe return of football is very relevant to limit the economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis. The success of each league's return

<p>derivada de la COVID-19. El éxito de la vuelta de cada liga y el tipo de relación que mantengan con los socios comerciales y las cadenas de retransmisión tendrán un impacto significativo y a largo plazo tanto en la solidez de los clubs como de las ligas en general. Es una industria sólida y nos mantenemos optimistas: existe la visión de que sea posible una recuperación en forma de V y un retorno a la relativa normalidad financiera para la temporada 2021/22.</p>	<p>and the type of relationship they have with commercial partners and broadcasters will have a significant and long-term impact on both the clubs' and the leagues' overall soundness. It is a strong industry and we remain optimistic that a V-shaped recovery and a return to relative financial normality is possible by the 2021/22 season.</p>
<p>Concha Iglesias, socia responsable de la industria de Sports de Deloitte.</p>	<p>Concha Iglesias, partner in charge of Deloitte's Sports industry.</p>

However, it is possible that the full impact of COVID-19 could be fully reversed in the coming years, if the situation evolves favourably and the uncertainty that currently forces commercial partners (both existing and potential) to consider the amount of funds they are willing to invest in sport in light of the impact of the pandemic on their own sectors, as well as the impact on the end consumers' own economy, is overcome.

For more detailed information, we recommend the following articles:

**Source: Palco 23**, (2020). UEFA gives clubs one year to comply with financial fair play. Retrieved from <https://www.palco23.com/clubes/la-uefa-da-un-ano-de-margen-a-los-clubes-para-cumplir-con-el-fair-play-financiero.html>

**Source: Trullols, J.** (2021). Football revenues faltering, headed for a new business model? In *Palco 23*. Retrieved from <https://www.palco23.com/competiciones/los-ingresos-del-futbol-se-tambalean-hacia-un-nuevo-modelo-de-negocio.html>

## Conclusions

Most of the major competitions are either restructuring or proposing new formats, and are tending to unify formats and increase the number of teams among other improvements to increase the number of matches, at the highest possible level in order to increase profitability and competitiveness.

On the other hand, the calendar, the prime time frames and the number of matches that teams and players can take on in a single season is limited; this is why competitions will always be redesigned to work out operationally and to respond to the demand of a market whose consumers have an ever-increasing content and entertainment offer.

The need to increase profitability is not new, so these movements were already underway in recent years, but the digitisation of the sector, the effects of the pandemic and the emergence of new technology and investors have significantly accelerated this process.

Although it seems that in the next 5 years all the major competitions will have optimised their format and marketing, it remains to be seen how well they will be assimilated by consumers, especially fans who come from a certain tradition. It will probably take some time for a new competition to get established.

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