

# GLOBAL PLAYER MIGRATION REPORT 2011

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## Professional Football Players Observatory

Set up in 2005, the Professional Football Players Observatory (PFPO) is a research group composed of academics from the International Centre for Sports Studies (CIES) of the University of Neuchâtel, the THÉMA Laboratory of the University of Franche-Comté, and the Institute of Sports Science of the University of Lausanne (ISSUL).

The PFPO generates perfectly comparable statistical indicators in the fields of demography, training, international recruitment, mobility and pitch performance of footballers. The data elaborated are an essential source of information and a key decision-making tool for a large spectrum of football stakeholders.

Our proven methodological approach is suitable for multiple research activities and allows for numerous concrete applications in the football industry and well beyond.

*Créé en 2005, l'Observatoire des footballeurs professionnels (PFPO) est un groupe de recherche qui réunit des chercheurs du Centre International d'Etude du Sport (CIES) de l'Université de Neuchâtel, le Laboratoire THÉMA de l'Université de Franche-Comté et l'Institut des Sciences du Sport de l'Université de Lausanne (ISSUL).*

*Le PFPO génère des indicateurs statistiques parfaitement comparables dans les domaines de la démographie, de la formation, du recrutement international, de la mobilité et des performances sur le terrain des footballeurs. Les données élaborées constituent une source d'information et un outil d'aide à la décision essentiels pour de nombreux acteurs de l'industrie du football.*

*Notre approche méthodologique se prête à de multiples activités de recherche et à de nombreuses applications concrètes dans le monde du football et bien au-delà.*

[www.eurofootplayers.org](http://www.eurofootplayers.org)



## SoccerAssociation.com

SoccerAssociation.com provides comprehensive world-wide football player data to football clubs, scouts, agents and media. The online database covers more than 150 leagues from over 70 countries with in-depth career records on over 130,000 players. Used throughout the football industry, the website is a reliable independently researched source of player information.

*SoccerAssociation.com met à disposition des clubs, des observateurs, des agents et des médias des données très complètes sur les joueurs de football à l'échelle mondiale. La base de données en ligne recense les trajectoires de carrière de plus de 130'000 joueurs actifs dans environ 150 ligues de 70 pays. Amplement utilisé par une multitude d'acteurs, le site est une source d'information d'une grande fiabilité et indépendance.*

[www.soccerassociation.com](http://www.soccerassociation.com)





## Foreword

### A first step on a global level

In this digital format report, the PFPO looks for the first time beyond European frontiers. The *Global Player Migration Report* analyses the international transfers occurred in 2010 to 101 leagues belonging to 69 national associations worldwide.

This positive development would not have been possible without the support of our partner SoccerAssociation.com, who accepted to share with us their exceptionally rich database. We are delighted with this collaboration, which we hope to be mutually beneficial.

More and more signs show that the culture of statistics has made its mark on the football world, far from the betting domain. Whether at the level of the people's game governance, or the optimizing of recruitment strategies and squad management, the necessity of taking decisions based on reliable data assembled with the utmost methodological care is increasingly recognized.

In six years of intensive work, PFPO has acquired considerable know-how when it comes to the collection, management and analysis of statistical data for the football industry. The new demand in this area bodes well for our future activities. We shall not forget to keep you up to date.

On behalf of our network of partners and the International Centre for Sports Studies, the real home of the PFPO, we wish you an enjoyable journey into the heart of the globalisation of the footballers' labour market. Let's hope this report will awaken your interest and be the first of a long series!

## Préface

### Une première escapade à l'échelle mondiale

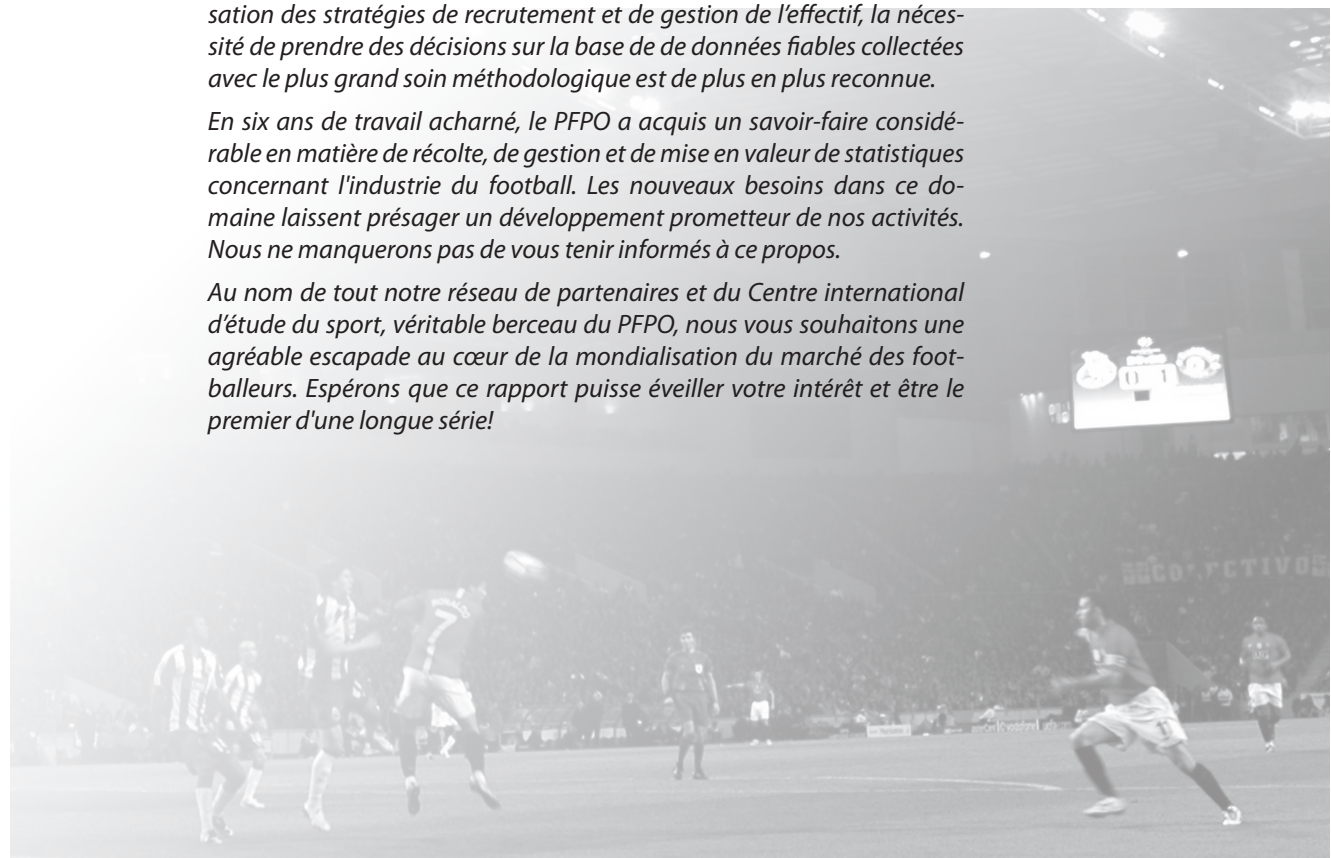
*Dans ce rapport en format numérique, le PFPO regarde pour la première fois hors des frontières européennes. Le Rapport sur les migrations globales des footballeurs analyse les transferts internationaux de joueurs intervenus en 2010 en direction de 101 ligues appartenant à 69 associations nationales situées dans le monde entier.*

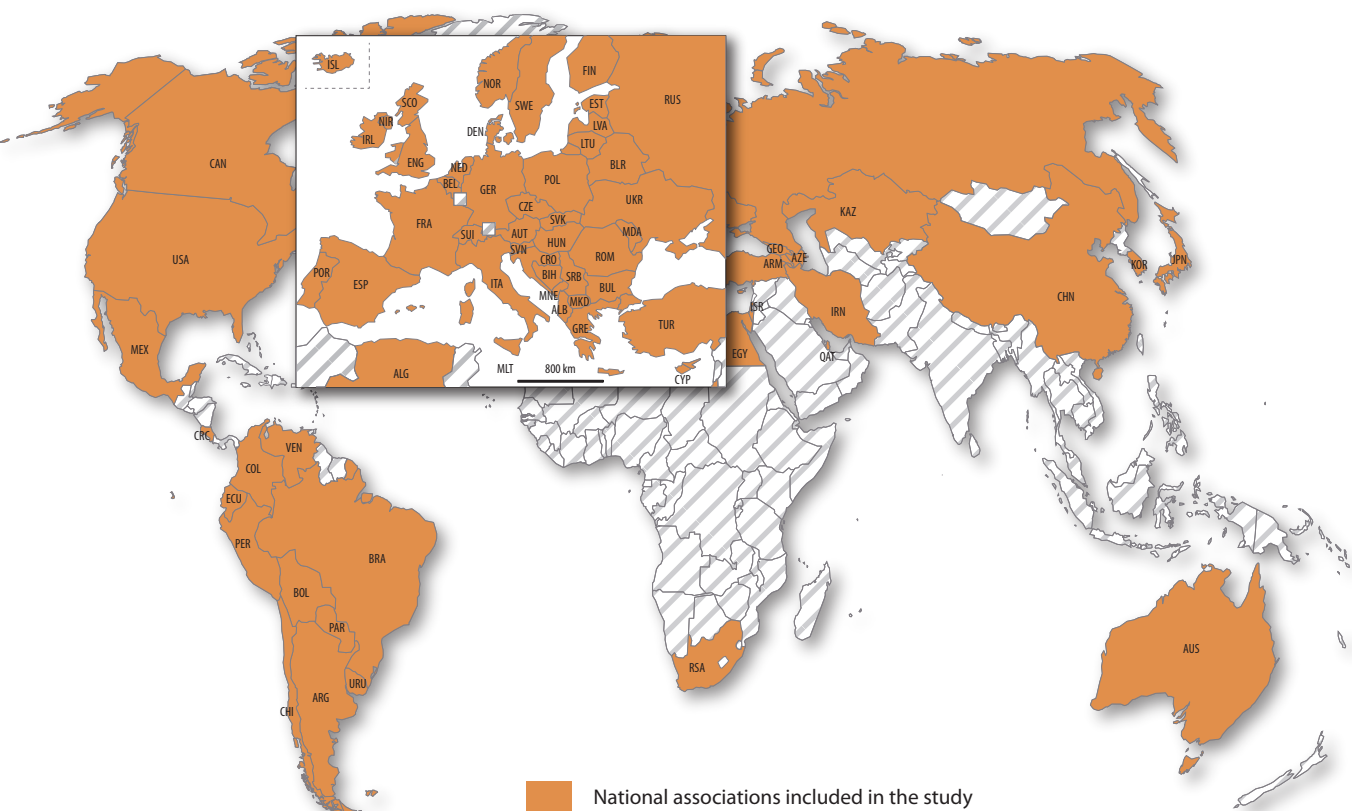
*Ce développement réjouissant n'aurait pas pu être réalisé sans le soutien de notre partenaire SoccerAssociation.com, qui a accepté de partager l'incroyable richesse de sa base de données. Nous sommes heureux de cette collaboration que nous espérons mutuellement bénéfique.*

*De plus en plus d'indices montrent que la culture statistique fait une entrée significative dans le monde du football, bien au-delà du domaine des paris. Que ce soit au niveau de la gouvernance du jeu ou de l'optimisation des stratégies de recrutement et de gestion de l'effectif, la nécessité de prendre des décisions sur la base de données fiables collectées avec le plus grand soin méthodologique est de plus en plus reconnue.*

*En six ans de travail acharné, le PFPO a acquis un savoir-faire considérable en matière de récolte, de gestion et de mise en valeur de statistiques concernant l'industrie du football. Les nouveaux besoins dans ce domaine laissent présager un développement prometteur de nos activités. Nous ne manquerons pas de vous tenir informés à ce propos.*

*Au nom de tout notre réseau de partenaires et du Centre international d'étude du sport, véritable berceau du PFPO, nous vous souhaitons une agréable escapade au cœur de la mondialisation du marché des footballeurs. Espérons que ce rapport puisse éveiller votre intérêt et être le premier d'une longue série!*





Association	Divisions	Clubs*	Association	Divisions	Clubs*
Albania (ALB).....	1	12	Israel (ISR) .....	2	32
Algeria (ALG).....	1	17	Italy (ITA) .....	2	42
Argentina (ARG).....	2	40	Japan (JPN) .....	2	37
Armenia (ARM).....	1	8	Kazakhstan (KAZ).....	1	12
Australia (AUS).....	1	10.5	Rep. of Korea (KOR).....	1	15
Austria (AUT).....	2	21	Lithuania (LTU).....	1	11
Azerbaijan (AZE).....	1	12	Latvia (LVA) .....	1	10
Belgium (BEL).....	2	33.5	Moldova (MDA).....	1	13
Bosnia Herzegovina (BIH).....	1	16	Mexico (MEX).....	2	35
Belarus (BLR).....	1	12	Macedonia (MKD).....	1	12
Bolivia (BOL).....	1	12	Malta (MLT) .....	1	10
Brazil (BRA).....	2	40	Montenegro (MNE).....	1	12
Bulgaria (BUL).....	1	16	The Netherlands (NED).....	2	37
Chile (CHI).....	2	32	Northern Ireland (NIR).....	1	12
China (CHN).....	1	16	Norway (NOR).....	2	32
Colombia (COL).....	1	18	Paraguay (PAR).....	1	12
Costa Rica (CRC).....	1	12	Peru (PER).....	1	16
Croatia (CRO).....	1	16	Poland (POL).....	2	34
Cyprus (CYP).....	2	28	Portugal (POR).....	2	32
Czech Republic (CZE).....	2	32	Qatar (QAT) .....	1	12
Denmark (DEN).....	2	28	Romania (ROM).....	1	18
Ecuador (ECU).....	1	12	South Africa (RSA).....	1	16
Egypt (EGY).....	1	16	Russia (RUS).....	2	36
England (ENG).....	2	44	Scotland (SCO).....	2	22
Spain (ESP).....	2	42	Serbia (SRB).....	2	34
Estonia (EST).....	1	10	Switzerland (SUI).....	2	26
Finland (FIN).....	2	28	Slovakia (SVK).....	1	12
France (FRA).....	2	40	Slovenia (SVN).....	1	10
Georgia (GEO).....	1	10	Sweden (SWE).....	2	32
Germany (GER).....	2	36	Turkey (TUR).....	2	36
Greece (GRE).....	2	34	Ukraine (UKR).....	2	34
Hungary (HUN).....	2	47	Uruguay (URU).....	1	16
Rep. of Ireland (IRL).....	2	22	USA/Canada (USA/CAN).....	2	28
Iran (IRN).....	1	18	Venezuela (VEN).....	1	18
Iceland (ISL).....	1	12	<b>Total.....</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>1'569</b>

\* Average number of clubs in the divisions taken into account for the seasons played in 2010

# Sample





# SECTION I

## IMPORTS & RE-IMPORTS

**Cyprus** is the most active national association for the import of players, both in absolute and relative terms. In 2010, clubs of the Mediterranean island have recruited 219 foreign players from abroad. This figure represents an average of 7.8 per team. The first non-European association in this ranking is the **United States of America**. This reflects the increasing appeal of the *Major League Soccer* (MLS) and its greater inclusion in the global transfer market for footballers.

When it comes to re-imports, **Brazil** is at the top of the table. On the whole, 135 players from this country came back home to play for first or second division clubs, of whom 10 just for *Flamengo*. The return migration of Brazilian and more generally South American footballers is a key feature of the contemporary global player circulation system.

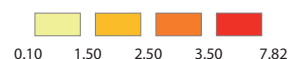
Clubs of the top division Brazilian league have imported the oldest foreign players (on average 29 years of age), while teams of the **Italian** second division championship have recruited the youngest ones (22.8).

## Cyprus biggest importer country of footballers

*Chypre, le plus grand importateur de footballeurs*



Number of imports per club



National association not in the sample

Av. number of foreign players imported, by national association

### Number of imports

1. Cyprus .....	219
2. Greece .....	205
3. Portugal .....	182
4. England .....	143
5. Turkey .....	135
6. Russia .....	125
7. Hungary .....	123
8. Romania .....	117
9. Spain .....	117
10. USA/Canada .....	116
11. Germany .....	113
12. Italy .....	112
13. Belgium .....	108
14. Chile .....	106
15. Israel .....	93
16. Azerbaijan .....	88
17. Scotland .....	87
18. Poland .....	84
19. The Netherlands .....	84
20. Switzerland .....	80

## Imports

Only foreign players (not including national players back in their home country)



## Up to 18 foreign players imported by a single club

### *Jusqu'à 18 joueurs importés par un seul club*

#### Non UEFA

Number of imports

1.	Chivas USA (USA)	9
.	Kansas City Wizards (USA)	9
.	Vancouver Whitecaps (CAN)	9
4.	D.C. United (USA)	8
.	Monagas (VEN)	8
.	Portland Timbers (USA)	8
7	Chicago Fire (USA)	7
.	Lekhwiya (QAT)	7
.	New York Red Bull (USA)	7
.	Ñublense (CHI)	7
.	Olmedo (ECU)	7
.	Oriente Petrolero (BOL)	7
.	Shandong Luneng (CHN)	7
.	Sporting Cristal (PER)	7
15.	Atlético-PR (BRA)	6
.	Deportes Concepción (CHI)	6
.	Deportivo Táchira (VEN)	6
.	Estudiantes (VEN)	6
.	FBC Melgar (PER)	6
.	New England Revolution (USA)	6
.	Qingdao Jonoon (CHN)	6
.	San Luis (CHI)	6
.	Suwon Bluewings (KOR)	6
.	Tianjin Teda (CHN)	6
.	Universidad Católica (CHI)	6
.	Universidad de Chile (CHI)	6
53.	Peñarol (URU)	4
.	USMP (PER)	4
95.	MC Alger (ALG)	3

#### UEFA

Number of imports

1.	AEP Paphos (CYP)	18
2.	Celtic (SCO)	16
.	Iraklis (GRE)	16
.	Olympiakos (CYP)	16
5.	Anorthosis (CYP)	15
.	Estoril (POR)	15
7.	AEK (CYP)	14
.	APOP Kinyras (CYP)	14
.	Astra Ploiesti (ROM)	14
.	CFR Cluj (ROM)	14
.	Doxa (CYP)	14
.	Olympiakos (GRE)	14
13.	Aris (GRE)	13
.	Dacia (MDA)	13
.	Xanthi (GRE)	13
16.	Baki (AZE)	12
.	CSKA (BUL)	12
.	FC Schalke 04 (GER)	12
.	Ferencváros (HUN)	12
.	Genoa (ITA)	12
.	Nacional (POR)	12
.	Skënderbeu (ALB)	12
.	Vitória Guimarães (POR)	12
.	Xazar-Lankaran (AZE)	12
.	Zaragoza (ESP)	12
95.	Manchester City (ENG)	7
128.	Valencia (ESP)	6
185.	Milan (ITA)	5
260.	Real Madrid (ESP)	4

Clubs located in UEFA member national associations tend to import more players than those located in other confederations. In 2010, 25 European clubs have recruited more than 11 foreign players from abroad. Most of these teams are not part of the top leagues, which indicates that signing players overseas has become a common strategy in Europe.

At the opposite end of the table, outside Europe no single club has imported more than 9 foreign players. The relatively high level of imports by *Major League Soccer* (MLS) teams shows the increasing appeal of this league and its greater inclusion in the world football economy.

## Imports

Only foreign players (not including national players back in their home country)

## European leagues have a penchant for young players

### *Les ligues européennes s'intéressent aux jeunes*

#### Oldest

Rk	Association - level	Av. Age <sup>1</sup>	Number <sup>2</sup>
1.	Brazil - level 1	29.04	(20)
2.	Mexico - level 2	28.52	(29)
3.	China - level 1	28.50	(63)
4.	Colombia - level 1	28.49	(37)
5.	Chile - level 2	28.19	(26)
6.	Peru - level 1	28.01	(56)
7.	Belarus - level 1	27.94	(25)
8.	Qatar - level 1	27.87	(28)
9.	Azerbaijan - level 1	27.85	(88)
10.	Bolivia - level 1	27.73	(36)
11.	Iran - level 1	27.66	(30)
12.	Australia - level 1	27.58	(30)
13.	Greece - level 1	27.57	(146)
14.	Russia - level 2	27.49	(46)
15.	USA/Canada - level 1	27.44	(75)
16.	Cyprus - level 1	27.32	(156)
17.	Ecuador - level 1	27.30	(36)
18.	Kazakhstan - level 1	27.21	(55)
19.	Paraguay - level 1	27.15	(20)
20.	Sweden - level 2	27.09	(25)
21.	Chile - level 1	27.01	(80)
22.	Argentina - level 2	27.00	(25)
23.	Greece - level 2	26.96	(59)
24.	Armenia - level 1	26.82	(16)
25.	Venezuela - level 1	26.81	(47)
26.	Bulgaria - level 1	26.77	(49)
27.	Israel - level 2	26.76	(20)
28.	Turkey - level 1	26.75	(96)
29.	Mexico - level 1	26.73	(43)
30.	Malta - level 1	26.47	(39)

#### Youngest

Rk	Association - level	Av. Age <sup>1</sup>	Number <sup>2</sup>
1.	Italy - level 2	22.79	(16)
2.	Turkey - level 2	22.96	(39)
3.	Scotland - level 2	23.24	(16)
4.	The Netherlands - level 2	23.49	(21)
5.	Italy - level 1	23.56	(96)
6.	Belgium - level 1	23.63	(75)
7.	Hungary - level 2	23.80	(31)
8.	Serbia - level 1	23.92	(36)
9.	The Netherlands - level 1	24.11	(63)
10.	Moldova - level 1	24.29	(48)
11.	Spain - level 2	24.40	(42)
.	Switzerland - level 2	24.40	(37)
13.	Czech Republic - level 1	24.44	(25)
14.	France - level 2	24.53	(25)
15.	France - level 1	24.63	(44)
16.	South Africa - level 1	24.77	(27)
.	Germany - level 1	24.77	(71)
.	Portugal - level 1	24.77	(124)
19.	Scotland - level 1	24.84	(71)
20.	Czech Republic - level 2	24.95	(19)
21.	Lithuania - level 1	24.96	(24)
22.	Portugal - level 2	24.99	(58)
.	England - level 1	24.99	(94)
24.	Denmark - level 1	25.01	(20)
25.	Slovenia - level 1	25.02	(26)
26.	Latvia - level 1	25.07	(19)
.	Croatia - level 1	25.07	(34)
.	USA/Canada - level 2	25.07	(40)
29.	Switzerland - level 1	25.10	(43)
30.	Bosnia Herzegovina - level 1	25.22	(46)

The 15 leagues having imported the youngest players are all located in Europe. On the contrary, 12 out of the 15 leagues whose clubs have recruited the oldest foreign players from abroad do not belong to UEFA member national associations. This reflects a clear distinction in the logics underlying international recruitment.

In Europe, clubs in the majority of leagues import players who are supposed to be consequently re-transferred for profit, while those located outside this continent tend to sign players overseas primarily to strengthen their squads. In Brazil, local clubs compensate the departures of young national players by recruiting more seasoned foreign ones.

<sup>1</sup> Average age on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2010

<sup>2</sup> Only leagues having imported at least 15 players

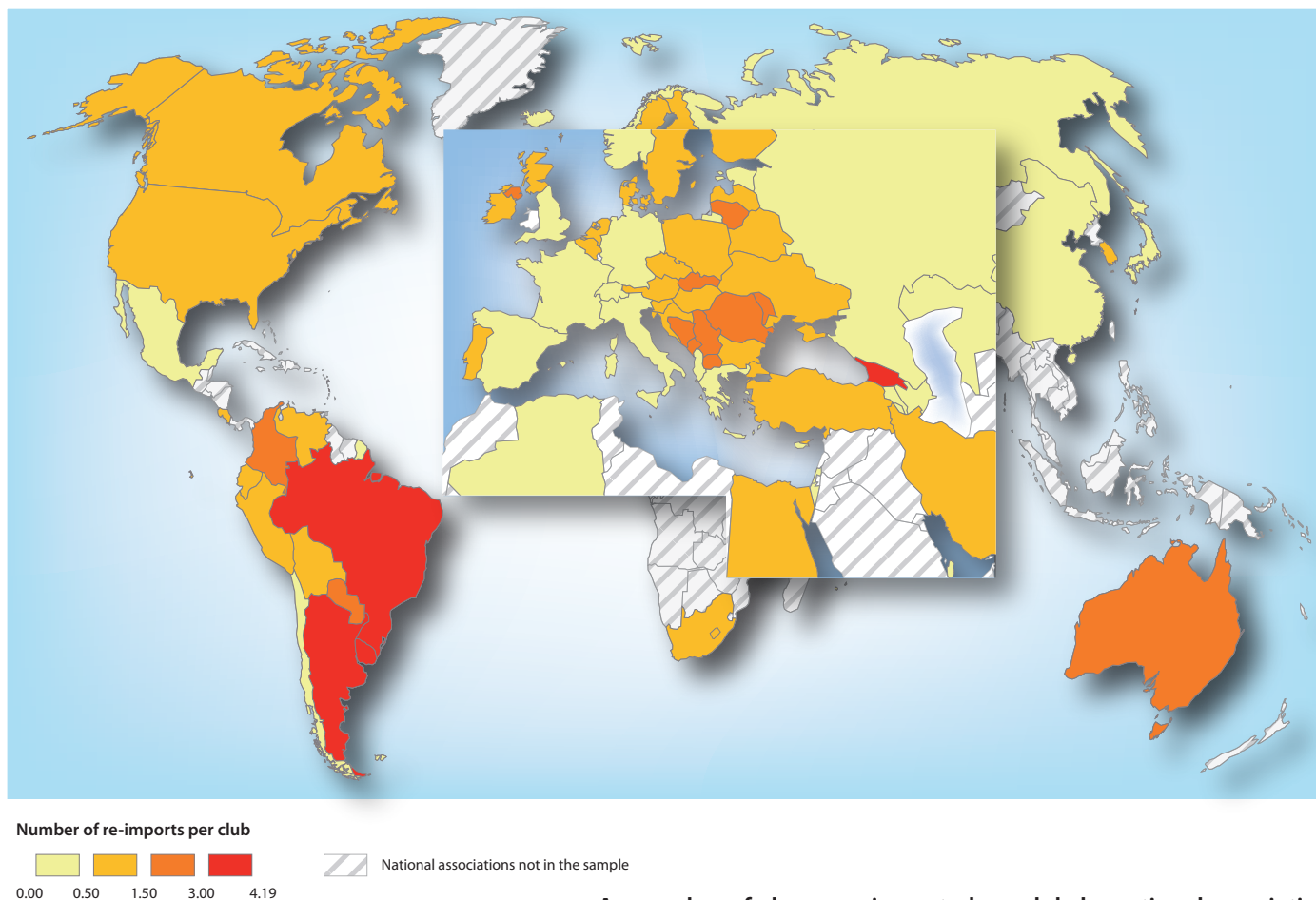
## Imports

Only foreign players (not including national players back in their home country)



## High level of return migration in South America

*De nombreuses migrations de retour en Amérique du Sud*



**Av. number of players re-imported per club, by national association**

### Number of re-imports

1. Brazil .....	135
2. Argentina .....	131
3. Serbia .....	112
4. Uruguay .....	67
5. Bosnia Herzegovina .....	48
6. Czech Republic .....	42
7. Ukraine .....	41
8. Paraguay .....	36
9. Portugal .....	35
10. Georgia .....	34
11. Belgium .....	32
12. Colombia .....	31
13. Slovakia .....	31
14. Sweden .....	29
15. Romania .....	28
16. Turkey .....	28
17. Hungary .....	24
18. Moldova .....	24
19. Poland .....	24
20. Croatia .....	23
21. Denmark .....	23
22. Northern Ireland .....	23

## Re-imports

Only players back in their home country (not including imports of foreign players)

## Flamengo has re-imported a team of players

### *Flamengo a rapatrié une équipe complète*

#### Non UEFA

1.	Flamengo (BRA)	10
.	Peñarol (URU)	10
3.	Cortuluá (COL)	8
.	Internacional (BRA)	8
.	Racing (URU)	8
6.	Gimnasia (LP) (ARG)	7
.	Guarani (BRA)	7
.	River Plate (ARG)	7
.	Vasco da Gama (BRA)	7
10.	Argentinos Juniors (ARG)	6
.	Cerro (URU)	6
.	Colón (ARG)	6
.	Olimpia (PAR)	6
.	Sport Recife (BRA)	6
.	Sportivo Luqueño (PAR)	6
.	Tigre (ARG)	6
.	Trinidense (PAR)	6
.	Vila Nova (BRA)	6
54.	Fluminense (BRA)	3
77.	Al Ahly (EGY)	2
.	Caracas (VEN)	2
.	Oriente Petrolero (BOL)	2
.	Sepahan (IRN)	2
.	Supersport United (RSA)	2
.	Universidad Católica (CHI)	2
136.	Colorado Rapids (USA)	1
.	Monterrey (MEX)	1
.	Saprissa (CRC)	1
.	Shandong Luneng (CHN)	1

#### UEFA

1	Napredak Krusevac (SRB)	9
.	Olimpi Rustavi (GEO)	9
3	Senica (SVK)	8
4	Brommapojkarna (SWE)	7
.	Cukaricki (SRB)	7
.	Partizan (SRB)	7
7	Dunajská Streda (SVK)	6
.	Javor (SRB)	6
.	Metalurg (MKD)	6
.	Sloboda PS (SRB)	6
.	Tatran Presov (SVK)	6
.	Viitorul (MDA)	6
.	Zemun (SRB)	6
14	Borac Cacak (SRB)	5
.	Celik (BIH)	5
.	Finn Harps (IRL)	5
.	Jelgava (LVA)	5
.	Kayserispor (TUR)	5
.	Lisburn Distillery (NIR)	5
.	Sioni Bolnisi (GEO)	5
.	Sloboda Tuzla (BIH)	5
103	FC København (DEN)	2
233	FC Schalke 04 (GER)	1
.	Roma (ITA)	1
.	Shakhtar (UKR)	1
544	Other CL 1/8 finalist	0

Many Brazilian, Argentinean, Uruguayan and Serbian clubs take advantage of the return migration of national footballers having failed to settle down abroad to make up their squads. Many top-flight South American clubs such as, among other teams, *Flamengo*, *Peñarol* and *River Plate*, follow this strategy.

From the point of view of former migrants, coming back to the home country is a strategy that allows them to re-launch their career or, if they are already well seasoned, to extend it for a few more years. Only four teams having reached the last 16 of the current Champions League edition have re-imported national players in 2010.

## Re-imports

Only players back in their home country (not including imports of foreign players)





# SECTION II

## EXPORTS & RE-EXPORTS

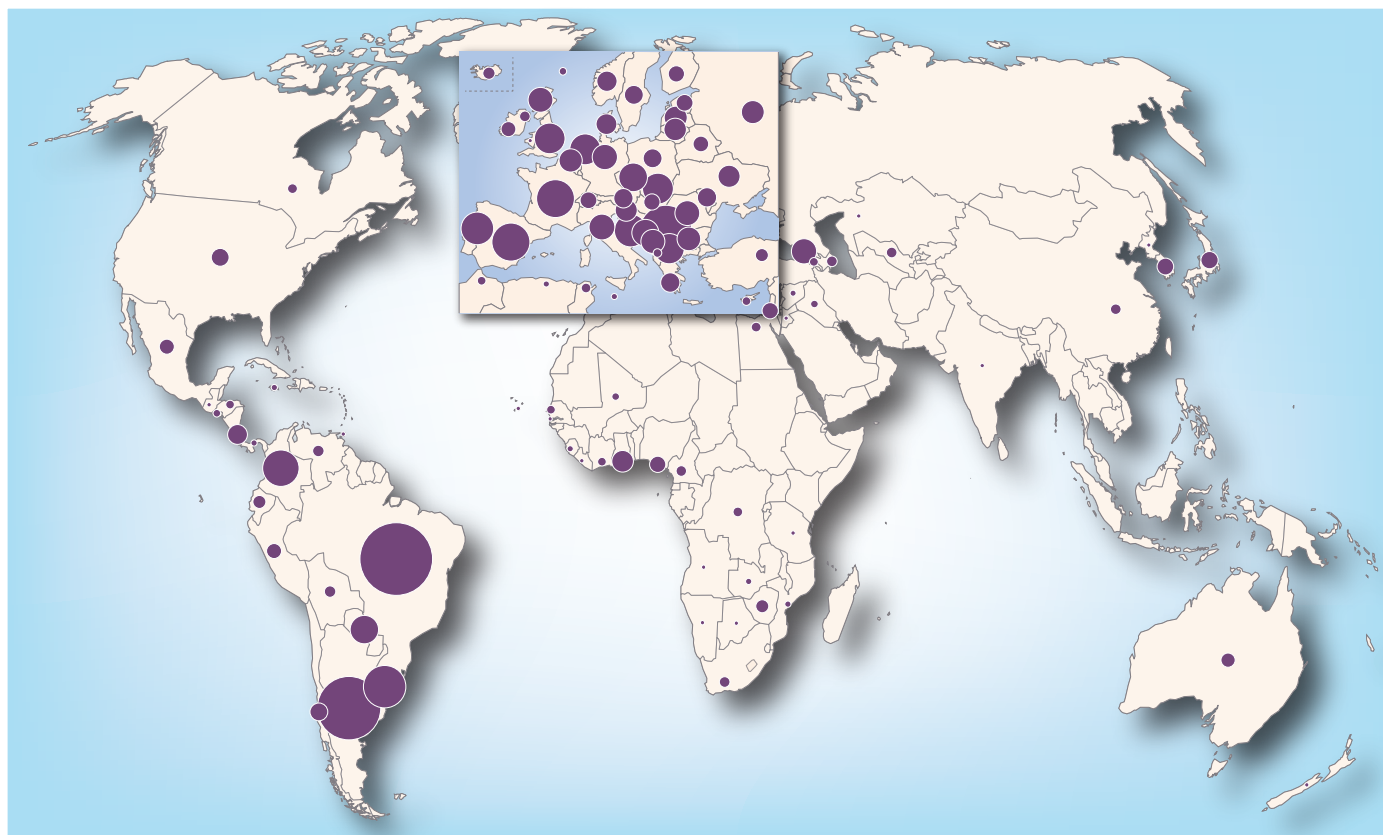
The three national associations having exported the most local players are **Brazil** (280), **Argentina** (215) and **Serbia** (150). While 103 associations have exported at least one national player to the leagues surveyed, 27% of these flows originate from one of these three countries. This figure is 50% if we take into account the 10 associations exporting the most local footballers.

Almost 80% of **Ghanaians** who migrated in 2010 are midfielders or forwards. Generally speaking, a greater part of international flows concern players in these positions (63.5%). This figure is higher for Africans (81%) and South Americans (69.2%), than for Central or North Americans (63.2%), Asians or Oceanians (58.7%), and Europeans (59.3%). When it comes to recruiting African or South American footballers, importing clubs seldom seek defensive ones.

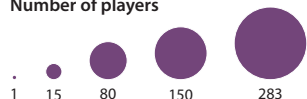
**England** is by far the most re-exporting national association. In 2010, 241 foreign footballers moved away from this country to clubs in the other championships analysed, of which 111 from the *Premier League* (5.5 per club on average). This shows the challenge that many players face to settle down at the heart of the world football economy.

## Brazil, exporting factory of national footballers

*Le Brésil, une fabrique à exporter des joueurs*



Number of players



Number of national players exported, by national association

### Number of exports

1. Brazil .....	283
2. Argentina .....	215
3. Serbia.....	150
4. Uruguay.....	96
5. France.....	77
6. Spain.....	77
7. Colombia.....	71
8. Portugal.....	57
9. Croatia.....	57
10. The Netherlands.....	51
11. Slovakia.....	51
12. England.....	50
13. Macedonia Fyr.....	49
14. Czech Republic.....	44
15. Paraguay.....	43
16. Bosnia Herzegovina .....	39
17. Italy.....	36
18. Germany.....	34
19. Georgia .....	34
20. Romania.....	33
21. Scotland.....	33

## Exports

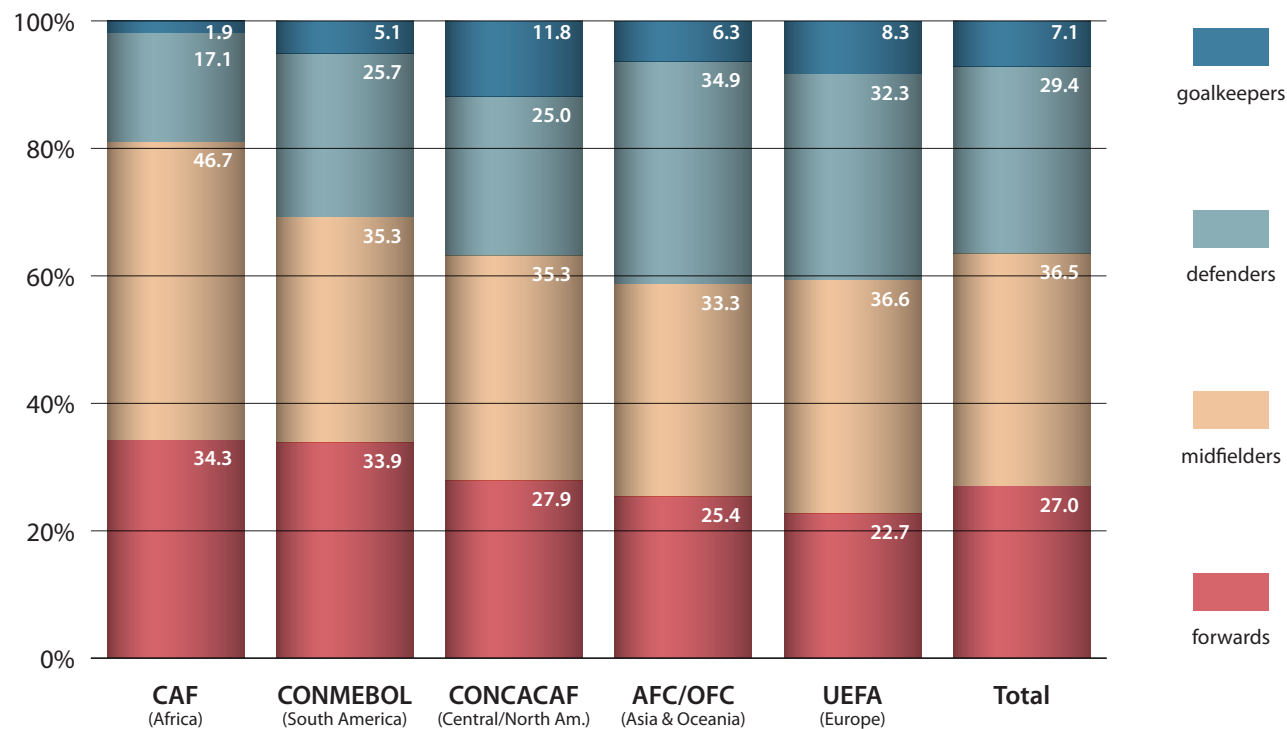
Only national players (not including foreign players migrating abroad)



## Borders are harder to cross for African defenders

### *Les défenseurs africains s'exportent difficilement*

% of exports by player position and confederation of origin



% of offensive<sup>1</sup> players among exports, by association of origin<sup>2</sup>

(+)	
1. Ghana .....	79.2
2. Austria .....	75.0
3. Ukraine.....	73.1
4. Argentina .....	72.6
5. Georgia .....	70.6
6. Colombia.....	70.4
7. Romania.....	69.7
8. Bosnia Herzegovina .....	69.2
9. Uruguay .....	68.8
10. Brazil .....	68.6
(-)	
1. Denmark.....	30.4
2. Italy.....	47.2
3. Belgium.....	48.3
4. Greece .....	50.0
5. Lithuania .....	51.9
6. England.....	52.0
7. Spain.....	53.2
8. Russia.....	53.6
9. Croatia.....	54.4
10. Moldova.....	55.0

<sup>1</sup> Midfielders and forwards

<sup>2</sup> Only national associations from where originate at least 20 exported players

## Exports

All international flows, irrespective of the national association from where they occurred

## Romanians are slow to leave their country

### *Les Roumains tardent à quitter leur patrie*

Av. age of migration of national players exported from top division leagues

#### Oldest

Rk	Association of the league	Av. Age <sup>1</sup>	Number <sup>2</sup>
1.	Romania	28.18	(26)
2.	Chile	27.65	(16)
3.	Rep. of Korea	27.62	(15)
4.	Spain	27.54	(31)
5.	Bulgaria	27.25	(26)
6.	Paraguay	27.23	(42)
7.	The Netherlands	27.14	(35)
8.	Poland	26.79	(10)
9.	Ukraine	26.73	(13)
10.	Lithuania	26.58	(27)
11.	France	26.57	(30)
12.	Sweden	26.49	(12)
13.	Uruguay	26.46	(93)
14.	Japan	26.36	(14)
15.	Germany	26.35	(10)
16.	Peru	26.32	(12)
17.	Belarus	26.25	(13)
18.	Slovakia	26.18	(45)
19.	Bosnia Herzegovina	26.11	(39)
20.	Scotland	26.03	(21)

<sup>1</sup> Average age on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2010

<sup>2</sup> Only top division leagues whose clubs have exported at least 10 national players

#### Youngest

Rk	Association of the league	Av. Age <sup>1</sup>	Number <sup>2</sup>
1.	England	21.81	(14)
2.	Montenegro	23.48	(29)
3.	Switzerland	23.54	(11)
4.	Macedonia Fyr	23.81	(48)
5.	Israel	23.82	(11)
6.	Hungary	24.02	(12)
7.	Mexico	24.03	(11)
8.	Belgium	24.07	(17)
9.	Brazil	24.48	(119)
10.	Denmark	24.64	(15)
11.	Australia	24.69	(11)
12.	Greece	24.88	(14)
13.	Moldova	24.90	(20)
14.	Portugal	24.98	(31)
15.	Italy	25.01	(15)
16.	Latvia	25.11	(28)
17.	Croatia	25.12	(41)
18.	Argentina	25.36	(129)
19.	Georgia	25.37	(32)
20.	Costa Rica	25.38	(21)

While the few English footballers moving abroad from the *Premier League* do so on average at a very young age, top division Romanian players tend to take their chances abroad late in their career. International migration of national players occurred in 2010 from first division Chilean, Korean, Spanish and Bulgarian clubs has also concerned relatively seasoned footballers.

At the opposite end of the table, together with English players, one finds Montenegrin, Swiss, Macedonian and Israeli footballers. While migration for English footballers often reflects a decline in sporting ambitions, the opposite holds true for players of other origins.

## Exports

Only national players (not including foreign players migrating abroad)

## River Plate and Udinese are greatest international launching pads

### *River Plate et Udinese, plus grandes rampes de lancement internationales*

#### Only national players

Number of exports

1.	River Plate (ARG)	14
2.	Boca Juniors (ARG)	13
.	Nacional (URU)	13
4.	Argentinos Juniors (ARG)	10
.	Atlético-MG (BRA)	10
6.	Cukaricki (SRB)	9
.	Jagodina (SRB)	9
8.	América (COL)	8
.	Atlético-PR (BRA)	8
.	Botafogo (BRA)	8
.	Central Español (URU)	8
.	Cerro (URU)	8
.	Defensor (URU)	8
.	Independiente (ARG)	8
.	Internacional (BRA)	8
.	Metalurg (MKD)	8
.	OFK Beograd (SRB)	8
.	Peñarol (URU)	8
.	Vila Nova (BRA)	8
.	Vojvodina (SRB)	8
38.	Fluminense (BRA)	6
66.	Saprissa (CRC)	5
162.	Lyon (FRA)	3
.	Oriente Petrolero (BOL)	3
.	Real Madrid (ESP)	3
.	Tolima (COL)	3
273.	Arsenal (ENG)	2
.	Inter (ITA)	2
.	Marseille (FRA)	2

#### All players

Number of exports/re-exports

1.	Udinese (ITA)	23
2.	Benfica (POR)	22
3.	Celtic (SCO)	17
4.	Dunajská Streda (SVK)	16
.	FC Porto (POR)	16
6.	Boca Juniors (ARG)	15
.	Nacional (URU)	15
8.	CSKA (BUL)	14
.	Manchester City (ENG)	14
.	Monaco (FRA)	14
.	River Plate (ARG)	14
12.	Crvena Zvezda (SRB)	13
.	Liverpool (ENG)	13
14.	CSKA (RUS)	12
.	Genoa (ITA)	12
.	Olimpia (PAR)	12
.	Panathinaikos (GRE)	12
.	Partizan (SRB)	12
.	Simurq (AZE)	12
.	Sporting (POR)	12
.	Vojvodina (SRB)	12
22.	Argentinos Juniors (ARG)	11
35.	Chelsea (ENG)	10
53.	Arsenal (ENG)	9
.	Inter (ITA)	9
89.	Barcelona (ESP)	8
.	Oriente Petrolero (BOL)	8
.	Peñarol (URU)	8
138.	Fluminense (BRA)	7

The vast majority of clubs exporting the most national players are to be found in South America. In 2010, three clubs of the estuary of the Río de la Plata (*River Plate, Boca Juniors, Nacional*) have transferred more than 11 local footballers abroad.

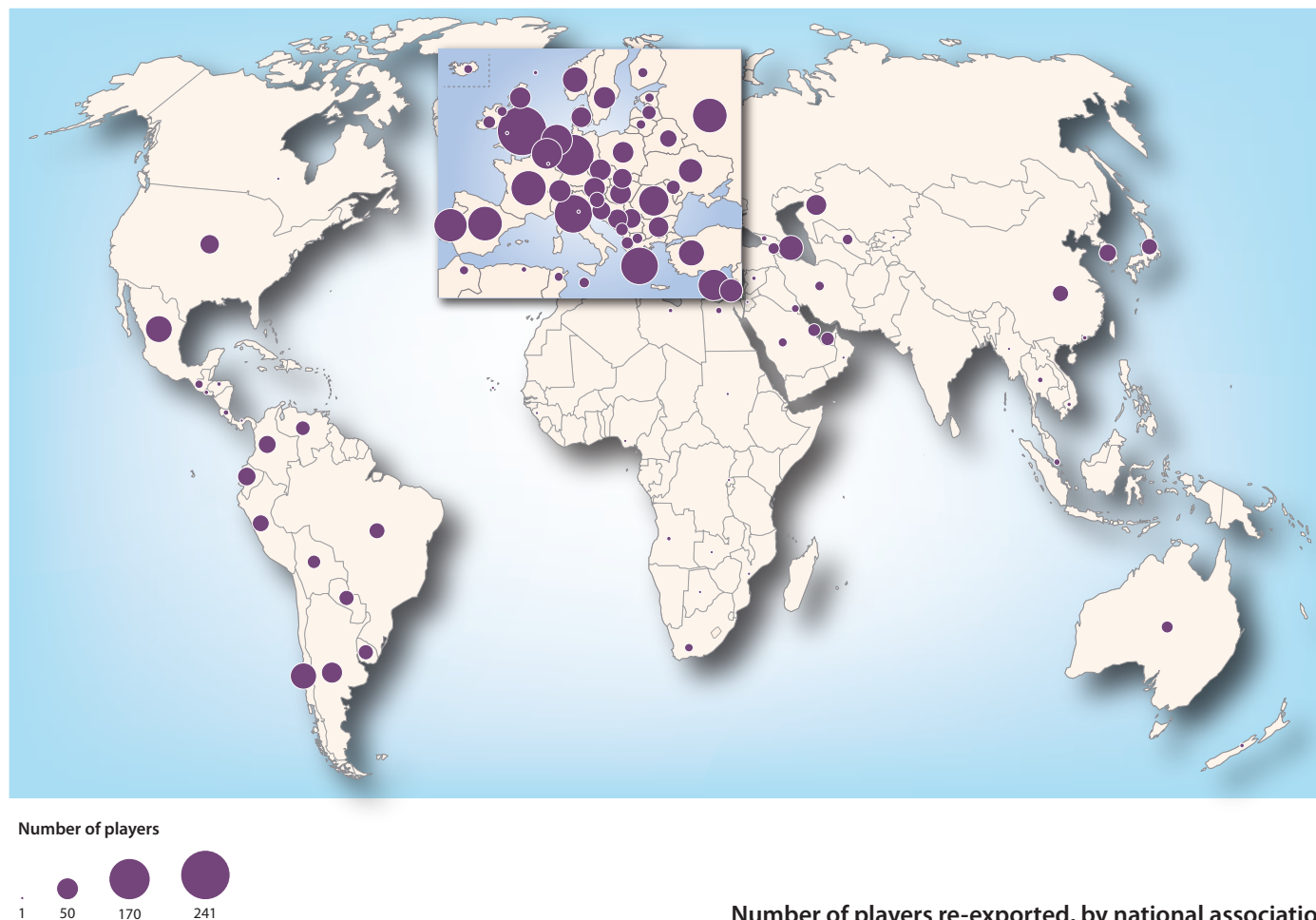
If we also take into account the re-exports of foreign players, European clubs are at the top of the table. *Udinese* holds the top place in this special ranking. The family owning this club also controls a Spanish team, where they loan out numerous talented players who they first recruit in South America. The Italian club has probably developed the most consistent global value chain strategy.

## Exports



## European associations are the champions of re-exportation

*Les associations européennes reines de la réexportation*



Number of players re-exported, by national association

### Number of players re-exported

1. England.....	241
2. Germany.....	168
3. Italy.....	145
4. Greece.....	139
5. France.....	122
6. Spain.....	119
7. Russia.....	118
8. Portugal.....	109
9. Cyprus.....	97
10. The Netherlands.....	97
11. Belgium.....	93
12. Romania.....	91
13. Mexico.....	71
14. Chile.....	68
15. Turkey.....	67
16. Norway.....	65
17. Azerbaijan.....	61
18. Ukraine.....	58
19. Israel.....	53
20. Switzerland.....	49

## Re-exports

Only players leaving a national association from which they do not originate



# SECTION III

## NETWORKS

The most used pathways for international migration are those having led players from **Brazil to Portugal** (95, and 21 the other way around), from **England to Scotland** (67, and 24) and from **Argentina to Chile** (56, and 29). The latter country plays a stepping stone role for Argentinean players who then move up to **Mexico**.

**Brazilians** can be considered as the authentic global football workforce. In 2010, they have moved across borders to clubs located in 58 distinct national associations out of 69. This figure is much higher than for any other player origin: **Argentina** (44), **Serbia** (40), **Croatia** (36) and **Nigeria** (35).

After Portuguese clubs, those having imported the most footballers from Brazil are in Asia: **Korea** (15), **Japan** (14) and **Iran** (12). While South-North networks are historically well established, South-South ones are rapidly developing. From this perspective, South America can be considered as the real hub of the globalisation of the football players' transfer market.

## South America is the real hub of globalisation

*L'Amérique du Sud, véritable plate-forme de la mondialisation*



Number of flows between two associations



Number of flows between national associations<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At least 20 flows in 2010

If the heart of the football economy is undoubtedly in Europe, the real hub of the globalisation of the football players' transfer market is South America. In 2010, Brazilian and Argentinean teams have been implicated in a significant number of transfers with clubs located in national associations of three other confederations. However, UEFA member national associations have exchanged at least 20 footballers with only CONMEBOL ones.

The three most used pathways for international migration are Brazil-Portugal, England-Scotland and Argentina-Chile. International flows within Europe and South America are also quite numerous, especially between neighbouring national associations.

## Networks

All international flows, irrespective of the association of origin of players

## Many migration flows within Confederations

*De nombreux flux internationaux infra-confédérations*

From \ To	AFC	CAF	CONCACAF	CONMEBOL	UEFA
AFC	0.53	0.18	0.15	0.22	0.11
CAF	0.02	0.71	0.05	0.01	0.09
CONCACAF	0.10	0.00	0.49	0.35	0.06
CONMEBOL	0.59	0.06	1.16	2.54	0.33
UEFA	1.16	0.84	1.36	1.14	3.17

Number of imports and re-imports per club,  
by confederation of origin

Number of imports per club,  
by confederation of origin

From \ To	AFC	CAF	CONCACAF	CONMEBOL	UEFA
AFC	0.41	0.14	0.15	0.02	0.08
CAF	0.02	0.65	0.05	0.00	0.09
CONCACAF	0.10	0.00	0.32	0.14	0.06
CONMEBOL	0.59	0.06	1.16	1.76	0.33
UEFA	0.83	0.47	1.04	0.19	2.34

International flows within a confederation always outnumber those occurring between distinct ones. Intra-confederation transfers frequently take place in Europe and South America. In 2010, a CONMEBOL club has on average recruited 2.54 players from other teams of the confederation. This figure is 3.17 for clubs of UEFA member national associations.

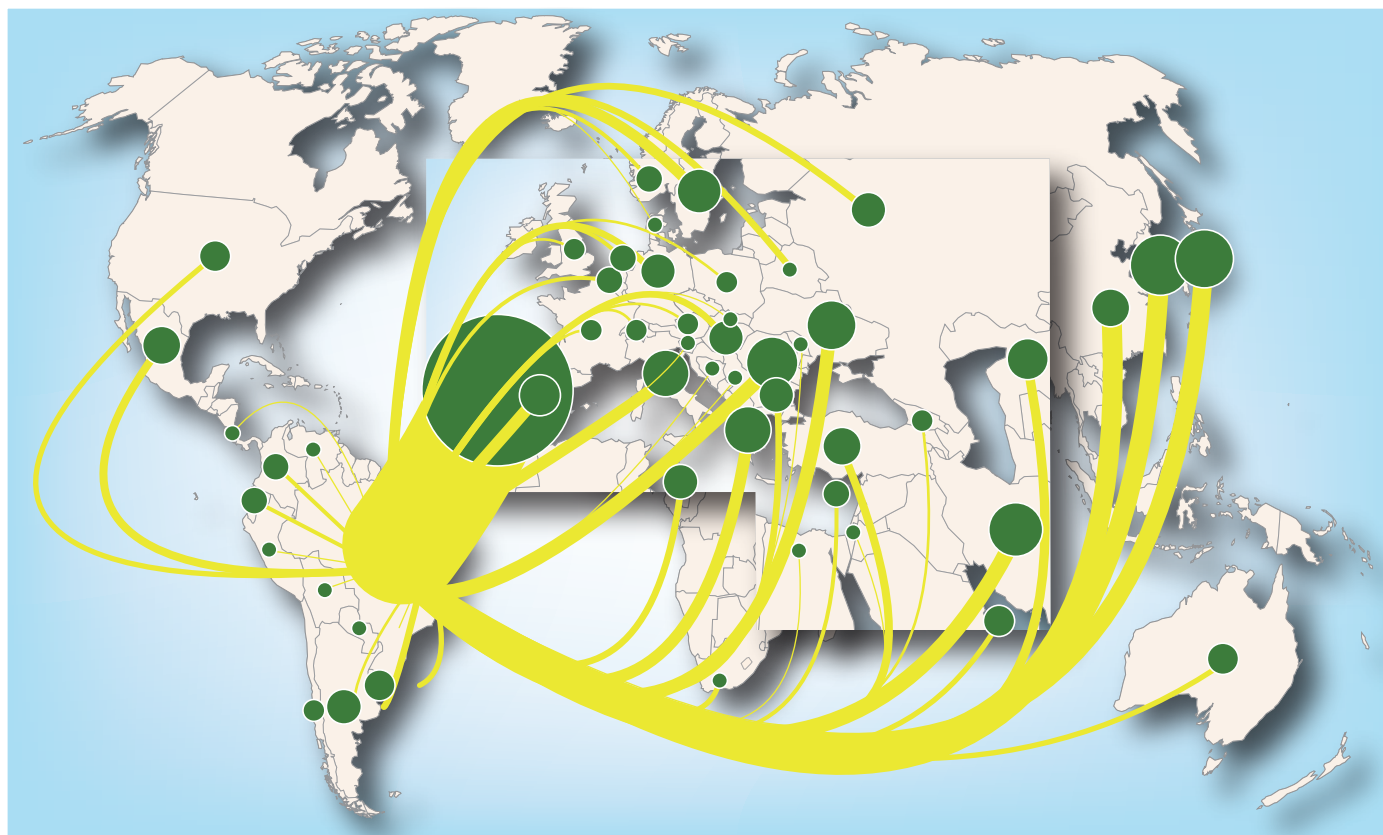
Global values decrease if we exclude re-imports from the analysis. The highest negative gap is for flows taking place from UEFA to CONMEBOL. This result confirms the high level of return migration of South American players coming back to their home country after a professional experience in Europe.

## Networks



## Brazilian players have the world at their feet

*Les joueurs brésiliens ont le monde à leurs pieds*



Number of players



Association of destination of Brazilian players exported from home country

### Number of Brazilians exported

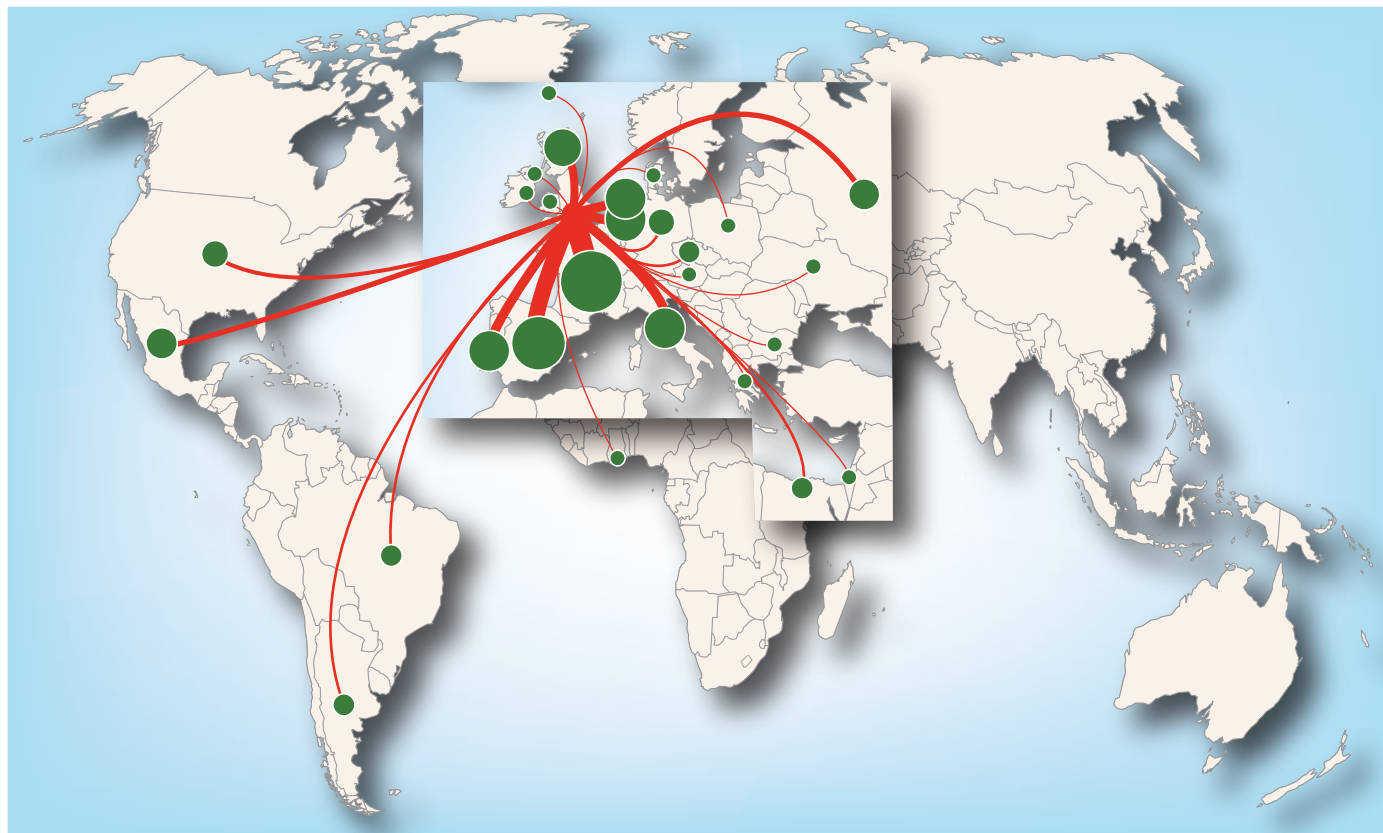
1. Portugal .....	95
2. Rep. of Korea .....	15
3. Japan .....	14
4. Iran .....	12
5. Romania .....	11
6. Ukraine .....	10
7. Greece .....	9
8. Italy .....	9
9. Sweden .....	8
10. Azerbaijan .....	7
Spain .....	7
12. China .....	6
Mexico .....	6
Turkey .....	6
15. Argentina .....	5
Bulgaria .....	5
Germany .....	5
Hungary .....	5
Malta .....	5
Russia .....	5
21. Australia .....	4
Qatar .....	4
Uruguay .....	4
USA .....	4

## Networks

Only exports of national players

## English clubs focus on Europe

*Les clubs anglais se focalisent sur l'Europe*



Number of players



Association of recruitment of *Premier League* international signings

In 2010, *Premier League* clubs have imported players from 27 national associations. The geography of these imports shows the importance of spatial proximity. The majority of international signings have been carried out from national associations of EU's member states, for the most part neighbouring ones.

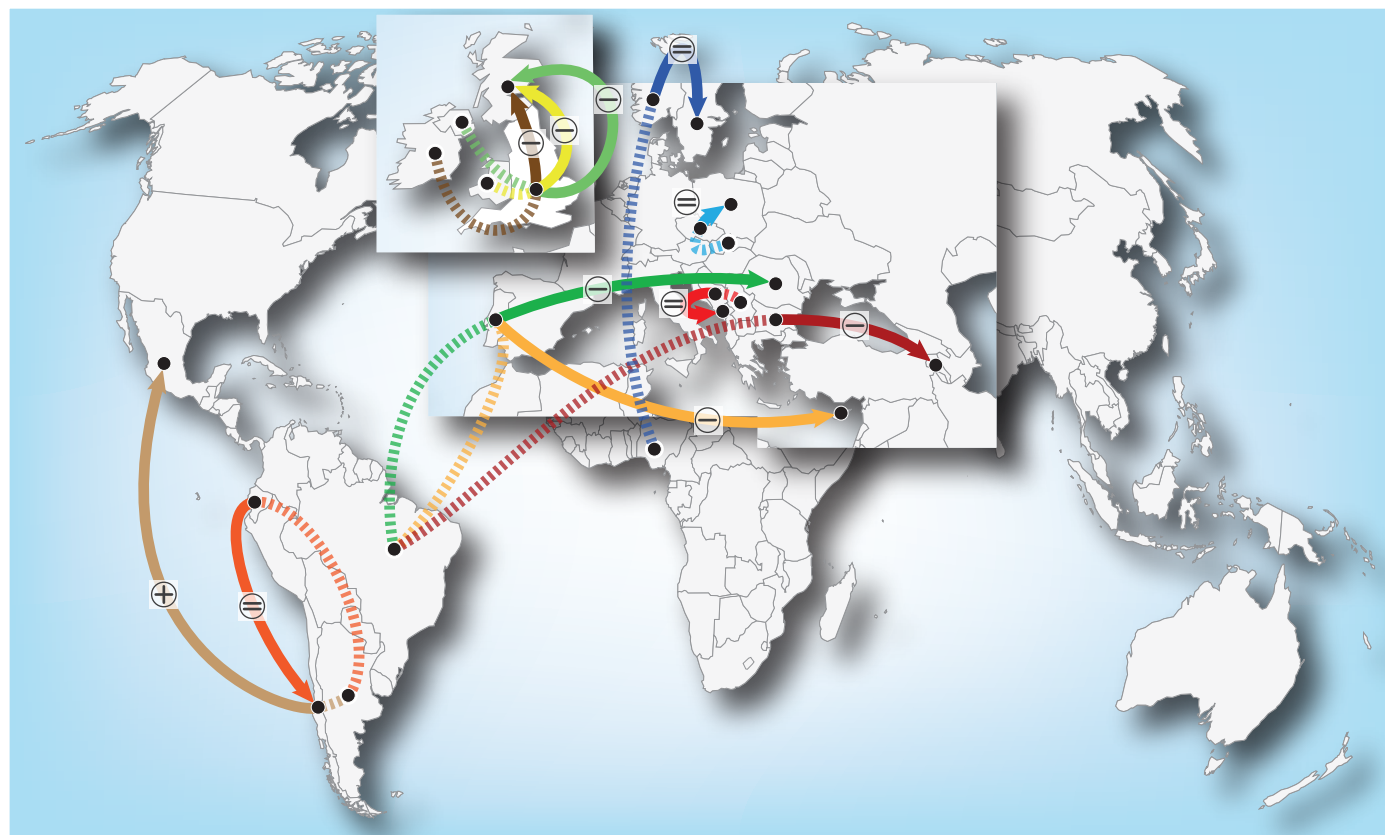
This situation is partially due to the ruling obliging non-EU footballers to have played 3/4 of the matches of their national A-team during the two years preceding the transfer to be eligible for a work permit. Insofar as footballers playing for local clubs have almost no chance of being selected in many of the most competitive non-European national teams, direct imports from there are often impossible.

## Networks

All international signings, irrespective of the association of origin of players

## Transnational career paths are often downward

*Des trajectoires transnationales souvent descendantes*



### Trajectories with an intermediate national association

ARG - CHI - MEX	BRA - POR - ROM	NGA - NOR - SWE	SVK - CZE - POL
ARG - ECU - CHI	BRA - BUL - ARM	NIR - ENG - SCO	WAL - ENG - SCO
BRA - POR - CYP	IRL - ENG - SCO	SRB - BIH - MNE	

### Type of flow

⊕	Upward
⊖	Neutral
⊙	Downward

Players transferred from a national association from where they do not originate to a third one<sup>1</sup>

The career paths of footballers are increasingly fragmented in many national associations. Contrary to the expectations of clubs, agents and the players themselves, transnational trajectories are more often downward than upward.

For example, many Brazilians who first migrate to Portugal are unable to move up to better leagues and end up playing for Cypriot, Romanian or Armenian clubs. Similarly, many Irish and Welsh footballers who move to England fail to settle in this country and are subsequently re-transferred to Scotland. The only significant transnational circuit in which the intermediate association is a stepping stone is that leading players from Argentina to Mexico through Chile.

<sup>1</sup> At least 4 flows in 2010

## Networks

## French clubs give more than they receive

*Les clubs français donnent plus qu'ils ne reçoivent*

### Migratory balance between national associations

#### All transfers

Rk		out	in	balance
1.	France	149	79	-70
2.	England	206	137	-69
3.	The Netherlands	144	88	-56
4.	Italy	155	108	-47
5.	Serbia	177	133	-44
6.	Argentina	227	184	-43
7.	Brazil	193	152	-41
8.	Uruguay	114	78	-36
9.	Colombia	91	60	-31
10.	Croatia	77	49	-28
.	Macedonia Fyr	57	29	-28
12.	Norway	78	52	-26
13.	Denmark	62	43	-19
57.	Sweden	57	75	+18
58.	Israel	67	87	+20
59.	Chile	85	109	+24
.	Peru	36	60	+24
61.	China Pr	30	55	+25
62.	Romania	100	127	+27
63.	Poland	62	95	+33
64.	Albania	19	58	+39
65.	Greece	146	186	+40
66.	Hungary	60	108	+48
67.	USA	45	99	+54
68.	Turkey	72	137	+65
69.	Cyprus	100	181	+81

#### Not including re-imports or re-exports<sup>1</sup>

Rk		out	in	balance
1.	Brazil	172	26	-146
2.	Argentina	187	62	-125
3.	Serbia	139	37	-102
4.	Uruguay	92	21	-71
5.	Macedonia Fyr	46	11	-35
6.	Georgia	32	1	-31
7.	Colombia	63	34	-29
8.	Paraguay	35	18	-17
9.	Costa Rica	21	7	-14
.	Croatia	43	29	-14
11.	Latvia	25	14	-11
12.	Czech Republic	43	36	-7
33.	France	49	63	+14
58.	Italy	26	98	+72
59.	USA	13	88	+75
60.	Chile	17	94	+77
.	Hungary	14	91	+77
.	Romania	24	101	+77
63.	Portugal	42	121	+79
64.	Germany	16	108	+92
65.	Russia	16	120	+104
66.	England	27	133	+106
67.	Turkey	7	119	+112
68.	Greece	16	175	+159
69.	Cyprus	4	178	+174

If we take into account all international flows having taken place between the 101 leagues of our sample, the most negative migratory balance is for France. Clubs in this national association have transferred 70 more players to other leagues than those that they have hosted from them. The balance is also particularly negative for England, while it is very positive for Cyprus and Turkey.

If we exclude from the analysis re-imports and re-exports, Brazil is by far the association with the most negative migratory balance, followed by two other great exporters of national players: Argentina and Serbia. In this case, the balance for England is very positive, while that of France is quite neutral.

<sup>1</sup> Not including players back in their home country or footballers leaving a national association from where they do not originate

## Networks

Not including international flows involving leagues which are not part of the sample



The Global Player Migration Report analyses the international transfers that occurred in 2010 to 101 leagues belonging to 69 national associations from around the world. The first chapter analyses player importation, the second studies their export, and the third deals with the question of networks linking the departure and arrival countries. Throughout the report, data on international flows are interpreted taking into account the criteria of age, position and origin of players involved.

*Le Rapport sur les migrations globales des footballeurs analyse les transferts internationaux intervenus en 2010 en direction de 101 ligues dans 69 associations nationales du monde entier. Le premier chapitre analyse l'importation de joueurs, le deuxième étudie leur exportation, et le troisième traite de la question des réseaux reliant pays de départ et d'arrivée. Tout au long de l'étude, les données sont interprétées en tenant compte des critères de l'âge, du poste et de l'origine des joueurs impliqués.*



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