



# **PLAYERS' STATUS DEPARTMENT REPORT 2019/2020**

**FIFA**



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# Foreword

Dear readers,

We are delighted to present the first issue of the FIFA Players' Status Department Report, which covers the 2019/2020 football season. This document provides a comprehensive overview of the department's activities for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

The FIFA Players' Status Department has two distinct, but overlapping core competencies:

- (i) managing the FIFA dispute resolution system by acting as secretariat to the Players' Status Committee (PSC) and Dispute Resolution Chamber (DRC); and
- (ii) managing all regulatory applications made to the PSC.

## Disputes

Since its implementation in 2001, FIFA has set an example with its industry-leading, independent international dispute resolution system, through which decisions are rendered that are then enforced by means of an internal disciplinary process.

In recent years, the number of claims submitted has increased exponentially due to several factors. The introduction of an electronic application process via the Transfer Matching System for claims relating to training compensation and the solidarity mechanism has had the biggest impact.

As a result, despite the best efforts of the FIFA administration, the popularity of the system led to a significant backlog of cases and a delay in the rendering of decisions. This backlog reached its peak in January 2019, when the number of pending claims that had been delayed by at least a year stood at approximately 1,500.

Following the election of FIFA President Gianni Infantino, a root-and-branch review of the football transfer system was initiated in late 2017, one of the objectives of which was to optimise the FIFA dispute resolution system. This review involved assessing internal processes, implementing digital mechanisms and amending the Rules Governing the Procedures of the Players' Status Committee and the Dispute Resolution Chamber.

Thanks to such improvements, but most importantly, to the dedication and hard work of department staff and members of the DRC and PSC, the Players Status Department has now completely cleared the backlog of cases.

Moreover, one of the core strategic objectives of the Football Regulatory Subdivision is to increase transparency in the football transfer system. To that end, we now publish the grounds of decisions rendered by the DRC and PSC on [legal.fifa.com](https://legal.fifa.com).

## Regulatory applications

This report also highlights the regulatory registration and eligibility matters handled by the Players' Status Department, and particularly the ever-increasing number of applications concerning the international transfer of minors. The most recent season saw a significant reduction in the average time taken to process cases.

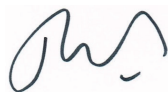
In addition to the challenge of managing regulatory applications, the Players' Status Department has been actively involved in FIFA's regulatory response to COVID-19. Among other matters, the department has assisted associations in particular with the realignment of their football seasons and registration periods.



*We hope this report gives you a better insight into our processes and achievements, as we continually strive to provide stakeholders with a more efficient dispute resolution system and a better quality of service in relation to regulatory applications.*

*The FIFA President made modernising the football regulatory framework the first goal of FIFA's blueprint for the coming years with "The Vision 2020-2023".*

Yours faithfully,



**James Kitching**  
Director of Football Regulatory

*We will continue to work hard to make the FIFA dispute resolution system the global leader in international sport. Clearing the backlog of dispute claims has allowed the Players' Status Department to continue reviewing its procedures and to focus on new projects in line with this objective. Watch this space in 2021 for some exciting announcements!*



**Erika Montemor Ferreira**  
Head of Players' Status







# Overview

The work of the Players' Status Department (PSD) covers a variety of issues that touch upon many different aspects of the Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players (RSTP), which can essentially be divided into two areas: a) dispute resolution, reflecting the activity of the PSC and DRC, and b) registration and eligibility matters, including disputes over the release of international transfer certificates (ITCs), applications to change association, eligibility matters concerning playing for national teams and applications to register minors. Each section of this report presents the results of the relevant activity in the same structure.

Depending on the particular area, the department will open cases or work on matters that are received through different channels, such as claims within or outside the Transfer Matching System (TMS), external or internal communications or direct enquiries from stakeholders. These matters will then be either handled directly or decided upon by a specific body, always in application of the respective FIFA regulations and internal processes.

The 2019/2020 season was a very busy one for the PSD. The number of cases and issues to be resolved was 9,534, an all-time high that was thrown into relief by the fact that half of the season had been impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic. The figure is broken down as follows:

Figure 1: Cases and applications received by the Players' Status Department, 2019/2020

	Cases/ applications
Disputes resolution	3,253
Players' Status Committee	501
Dispute Resolution Chamber	2,752
Registration and eligibility	6,281
ITC rejection disputes	64
Eligibility	42
Changes of association	72
Applications for minors	5,487
Validation exceptions	616
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,534</b>



# Working against the backlog

On 5 March 2001, in the context of a reform of the transfer system undertaken by FIFA and the European Commission, both international institutions agreed on the “creation of an effective, quick and objective arbitration body with members chosen in equal numbers by players and clubs and with an independent chairman”.

Subsequent to this agreement, FIFA established the DRC for the purpose of resolving disputes. Over the last 20 years, the activity of the DRC has set a global example for other sectors.

It is a chamber composed of representatives of both clubs (employers) and players (employees), rendering international decisions which are enforceable through a simple, private (i.e. non-state) disciplinary mechanism.

The first proceedings in 2002 and early 2003 were efficiently managed by FIFA, with motivated decisions notified to the parties within four months of the date that the complaint was filed. Since then, the DRC has developed into a high-volume dispute resolution body, handling an ever-increasing caseload of contractual and transfer disputes. This led to a significant backlog of decisions, resulting in the parties waiting for the notification of decisions for periods of more than a year, if not more.

In 2017, under the leadership of the new FIFA President, Gianni Infantino, the first global reform of the transfer system since 2001 was launched. This led to the creation of the FIFA Stakeholders Committee, which implemented its first reform packages and measures in late 2018. Thanks to their reform decisions, the DRC and the PSC are once again an effective and efficient forum through which to resolve disputes between football stakeholders.

FIFA Stakeholders Committee meeting





The backlog of cases that had mounted over many months was already at a relatively high level of 913 in 2017. Two years later, in January 2019, it had almost doubled once again, jumping to 1,560 cases awaiting decisions for months or sometimes even more than a year.

Just over 12 months later, after the implementation of the FIFA Legal and Compliance Division's new strategy, the number had been reduced to a very impressive zero in June 2020 from the high number of the previous seasons.

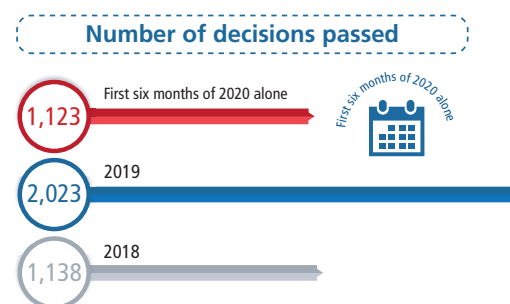
Chart 1: Eliminating the backlog



The PSD targeted the issue of the backlog back in 2017, but it only became possible to achieve this goal from late 2018 onwards. Given the growing number of decisions, this would require a significant increase in the number of sessions of the PSC and the DRC, streamlining the process of every case, ensuring that the parties strictly observed the timelines, eliminating the unneces-

sary back and forth of documentation and of course introducing automated processes and more efficient handling by the PSD's legal staff. This caused a twofold increase in decisions in the 2019 calendar year compared to 2018 (chart 2), a trend that is continuing: indeed, from the first half of 2020, there is a clear indication that even that number will be surpassed.

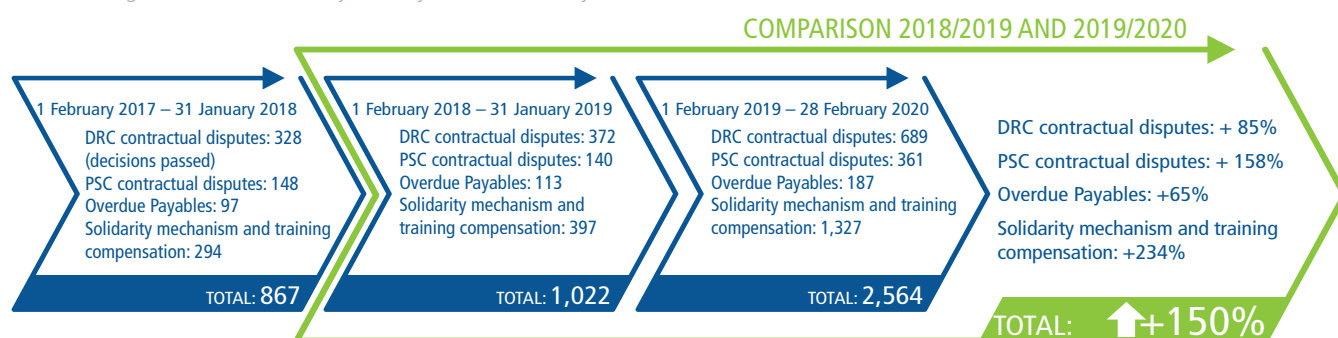
Chart 2: Number of decisions passed





As shown in chart 3, the number of decisions has increased across all categories (DRC, PSC, overdue payables, solidarity mechanism and training compensation) over the past three years, confirming the constant trend towards a more efficient and expeditious processing of cases as demanded by FIFA's stakeholders.

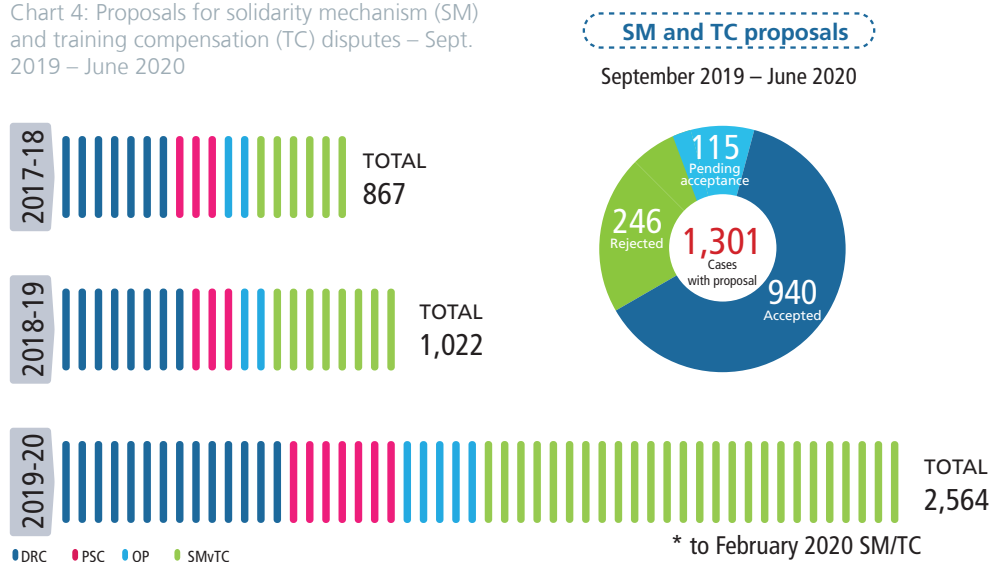
Chart 3: Progression of PSD activity January 2017 – February 2020



A significant boost for expediting the resolution of many cases was the introduction of the proposal system (chart 4), through which FIFA administration can present a proposal for settlement to the parties in solidarity contribution and training compensation disputes without having to go through an adjudicated procedure.

Naturally, the submitted documentation and legal positions of the parties are thoroughly reviewed and the regulations and existing jurisprudence are carefully applied before the proposal is presented. When the system was introduced, the impact was immediate and very impressive.

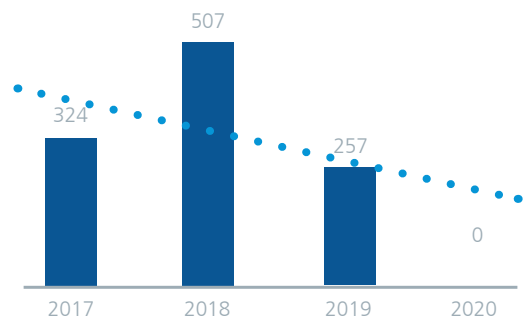
Chart 4: Proposals for solidarity mechanism (SM) and training compensation (TC) disputes – Sept. 2019 – June 2020





In addition to expediting the decision processes of the PSC and the DRC, FIFA's Legal and Compliance Division has also taken measures to ensure the implementation of those decisions – another important aspect for all football stakeholders. In that endeavour, the FIFA Disciplinary Department has managed to eliminate the number of cases (see chart 5) awaiting disciplinary measures in the event of failure to implement FIFA DRC and PSC decisions within the prescribed time limits to practically zero cases waiting for more than four months – a waiting time that had almost become the norm before 2019.

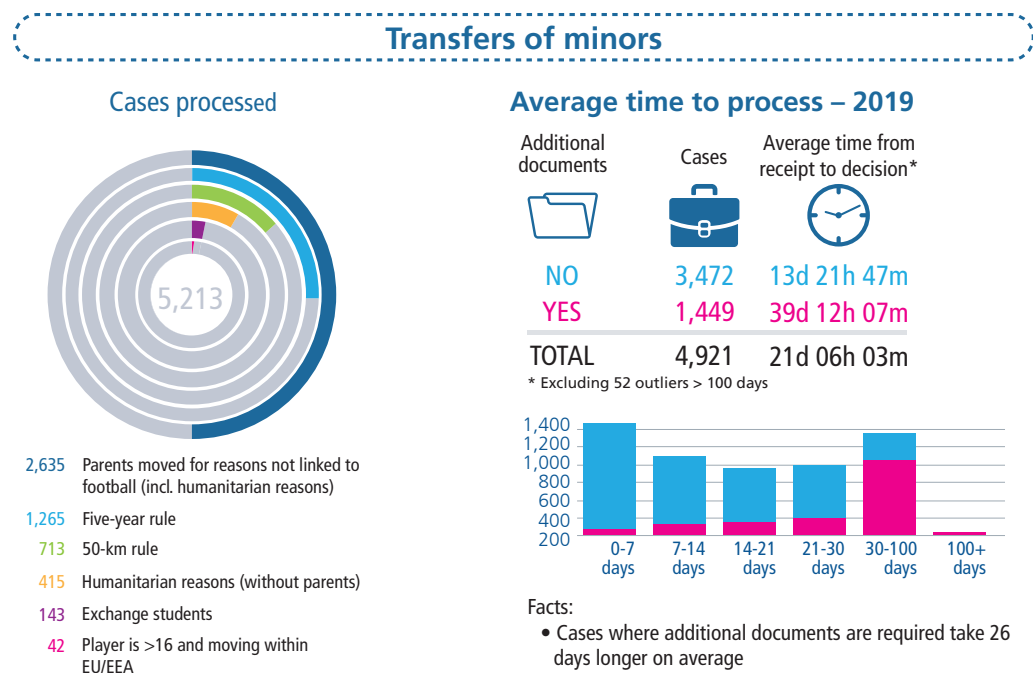
Chart 5: Number of cases decided by the Disciplinary Committee within more than four months after submission



Finally, decision-making time was also drastically reduced for the thousands of applications in respect of the transfer of minor players. In this regard, not only did the PSD handle the increased

influx of new applications, they also brought down the average response time to a little over 20 days (chart 6).

Chart 6: Number of applications and response times for transfers of minors



#### Facts:

- Cases where additional documents are required take 26 days longer on average
- Average time from request to receipt of additional documents: 18 days
- 56.7% of cases where no additional documents were required were closed within 14 days
- 75.6% of all cases were closed within 30 days; it was 27.7% in 2015



# Dispute resolution

The PSC and the DRC are FIFA's two decision-making bodies that are competent to adjudicate on various contractual and regulatory disputes between member associations, clubs, officials, players, coaches and licensed match agents, in accordance with art. 6 of the Rules Governing the Procedures of the Players' Status Committee and the Dispute Resolution Chamber arts 22, 23 and 24 of the RSTP.

## 1. PSC Contractual Disputes

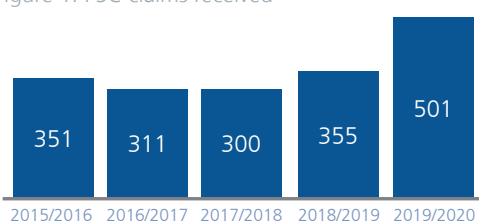
The PSC monitors compliance with the RSTP and determines the status of players for various FIFA competitions. The PSC is currently composed of one chairperson, one deputy chairperson and 21 members.

According to art. 22 c) and f) and art. 23 of the RSTP, the PSC is competent to hear matters between a club or an association and a coach of an international dimension, as well as for disputes between clubs belonging to different associations.

The PSC may also pronounce the sanctions described in the FIFA Statutes and the RSTP on member associations, clubs, officials, players, intermediaries and licensed match agents.

The number of cases received by the PSC has been steadily increasing over the years (see figure 1), but it grew exponentially in the 2019/2020 season, when a new high of 501 cases was reached, 41% more than in the previous season.

Figure 1: PSC claims received



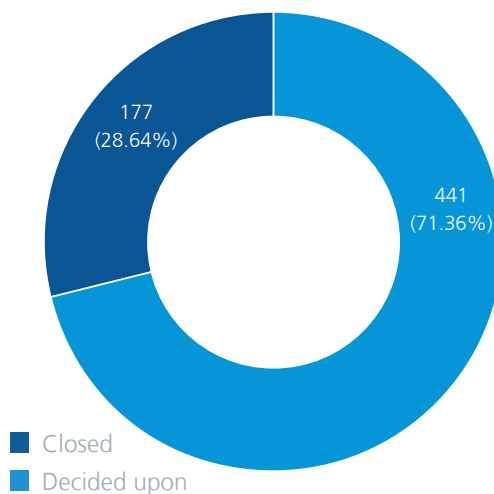
With 618 claims decided or closed in season 2019/2020, the PSC has more than doubled the number of claims resolved compared to the previous year (see figure 2).

Figure 2: PSC claims solved (decided upon or closed for other reasons)



More than 70% of these cases have been decided upon by the Bureau of the PSC or a single judge of the PSC (see figure 3), while the remaining claims were closed for other reasons, e.g. the documentation for a claim was incomplete by the deadline provided, the parties reached an amicable settlement, the claim was time-barred or a situation of res judicata was found to exist.

Figure 3: PSC claims decided upon or closed in 2019/20





## 2. DRC disputes

The DRC is FIFA's decision-making body that provides dispute resolution on the basis of equal representation in the chamber of players and club representatives, along with the participation of an independent chairperson. It adjudicates on a regular basis in the presence of a varying number of members while adhering to the above principle. The DRC is currently composed of one chairperson, two deputy chairpersons and 26 members.

According to art. 22 pars a), b), d) and e) and art. 24 of the RSTP, the DRC is competent to adjudicate on:

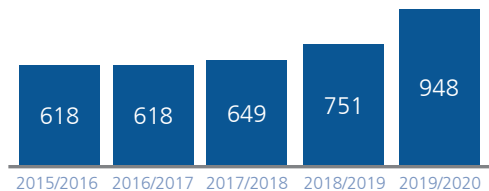
- a. disputes between clubs and players in relation to the maintenance of contractual stability (articles 13-18) where there has been an ITC request;
- b. employment-related disputes between a club and a player of an international dimension;
- c. disputes relating to training compensation (article 20) and the solidarity mechanism (article 21) between clubs belonging to different associations;
- d. disputes relating to training compensation (article 20) and the solidarity mechanism (article 21) between clubs belonging to the same association provided that the transfer of a player at the basis of the dispute occurs between clubs belonging to different associations.

While disputes under a. and b. above must be processed by email, those of c. and d. are processed exclusively via TMS. In this way, the PSD divides disputes between those received outside TMS and those received via TMS.

### i. Claims outside TMS

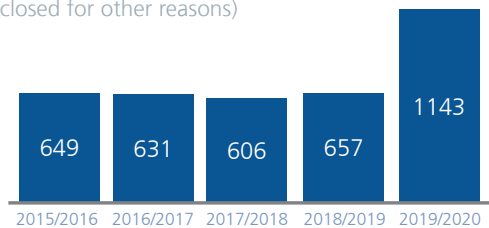
In the 2019/2020 season, the DRC received a record number of 948 claims outside TMS (see figure 4), an increase of more than 25% compared to the previous season.

Figure 4: DRC claims received outside TMS



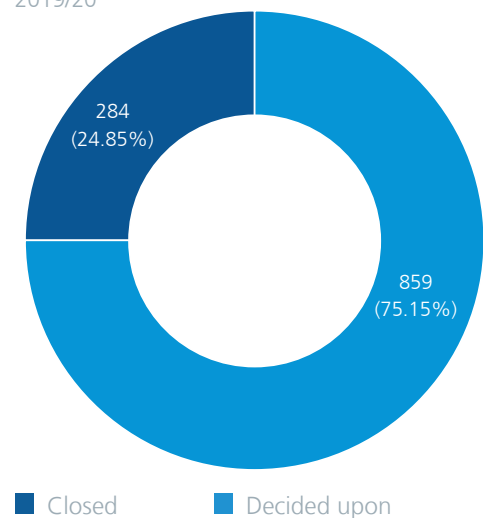
In the same period (see figure 5), 1,143 cases were resolved, which represents an even higher increase of almost 75% compared to 2018/2019.

Figure 5: DRC claims solved (decided upon or closed for other reasons)



Of those 1,143 claims, some 75% (859) were decided upon by the DRC or by a DRC single judge, with the remaining 25% (284) having been closed for other reasons (see figure 6).

Figure 6: DRC claims decided upon or closed in 2019/20





While labour-related disputes (between clubs and players) constitute by far the largest part (93.7%) there are still 54 claims which are related to overdue payables (see figure 7).

Figure 7: Main subject of DRC claims decided upon by a judge in 2019/2020



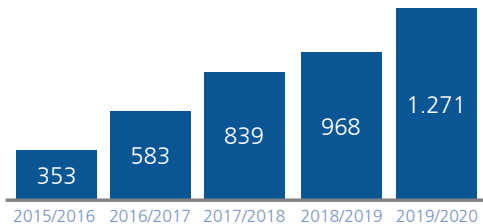
ii. Claims via TMS

Claims received and processed/adjudicated through TMS are divided into separate and quite distinctive categories: a) those related to the solidarity contribution mechanism (SCM) and b) those related to training compensation (TC).

a. SCM disputes

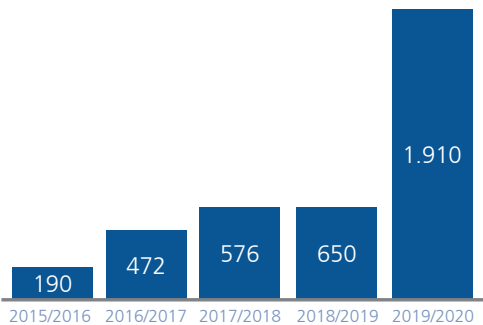
The number of claims for solidarity contribution filed in TMS has been growing constantly over the past five seasons, reaching 1,271 claims in 2019/2020 (see figure 8).

Figure 8: SCM claims received



In response to this growth, the DRC has virtually tripled the number of SCM claims resolved compared to the previous year (see figure 9).

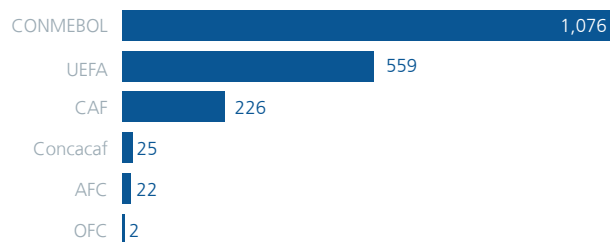
Figure 9: SCM claims solved (decided upon or closed for other reasons)





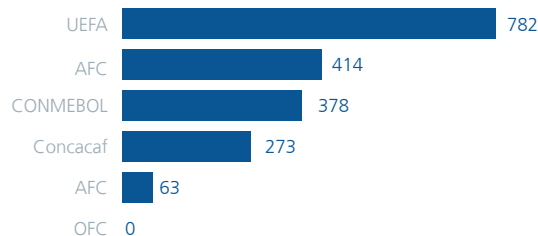
With respect to the geographical distribution of the claims, an extremely high number of claims resolved in 2019/2020 by FIFA were initiated by claimant clubs in member associations based in CONMEBOL (see figure 10).

Figure 10: Confederation of claimant club for claims resolved in 2019/2020



On the other hand, it would appear that the respondent clubs are predominantly from UEFA and the AFC and, to a lesser but still significant extent, CONMEBOL (see figure 11).

Figure 11: Confederation of respondent club for claims resolved in 2019/2020



Clubs based in CONMEBOL also head the list when we examine the affiliation of clubs (both claimant and respondent) in a single dispute. Although it is worth noting that disputes between clubs in the UEFA region are also almost as frequent as those between clubs in the CONMEBOL region, not far behind in third place are disputes between CONMEBOL claimants and UEFA respondents (see figure 12).

Figure 12: Confederation of claimant and respondent in the same dispute for SCM claims resolved in 2019/2020

Confederation claimant	Confederation respondent	Claims
CONMEBOL	CONMEBOL	361
UEFA	UEFA	315
CONMEBOL	UEFA	304
CONMEBOL	Concacaf	213
CONMEBOL	AFC	182
UEFA	AFC	174
CAF	UEFA	144
UEFA	Concacaf	45
CAF	AFC	43
CAF	CAF	35



It is also worth pointing out that almost all claims initiated by clubs of associations in CONMEBOL are based in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Colombia, while those European clubs that are in the top ten are mainly based in Portugal, France, Serbia and Spain (see figure 13).

Figure 13: Association of claimant for SCM claims resolved in 2019/2020

Association claimant	Claims
Brazil	367
Argentina	249
Uruguay	192
Colombia	114
Portugal	95
France	77
Serbia	65
Spain	60
Chile	47
Ghana	43

Although Concacaf and AFC associations are not represented by a large number of respondent clubs, Mexico and Saudi Arabia are right at the top of the list of top ten associations with regard to solidarity claim respondents (see figure 14).

Figure 14: Association of respondent for SCM claims resolved in 2019/2020

Association respondent	Claims
Mexico	166
Saudi Arabia	155
Turkey	144
Brazil	126
China PR	124
Spain	120
Argentina	103
USA	97
Portugal	83
Italy	71



#### b. Training compensation claims in TMS

The DRC received a total of 533 claims (see figure 15) for training compensation through TMS in 2019/2020, which was 68.7% more than those received in the previous season and almost five times more than in 2015/2016.

As was the case with SCM claims, the amount of TC claims resolved by the DRC in the same period reached a record high of 719 (see figure 16), i.e. triple the number of claims resolved during the previous season.

Figure 15: Training compensation claims received

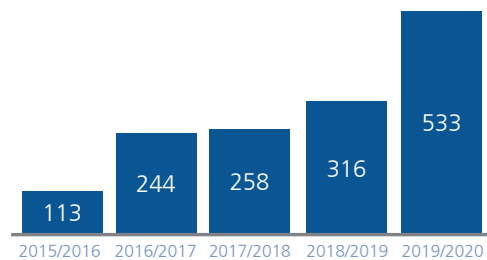
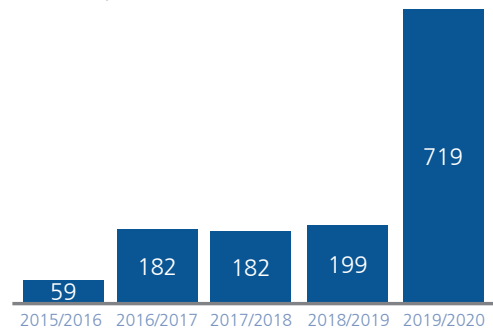


Figure 16: Training compensation claims resolved (decided upon or closed for other reasons)



Clubs affiliated to associations in the UEFA and CONMEBOL regions also represented over 80% of the parties in the TC claims (82% of claimants and

86% of respondents), the difference in this case being that clubs affiliated to UEFA associations head the respective lists (see figures 17 and 18).

Figure 17: Confederation of claimant for TC claims resolved in 2019/2020

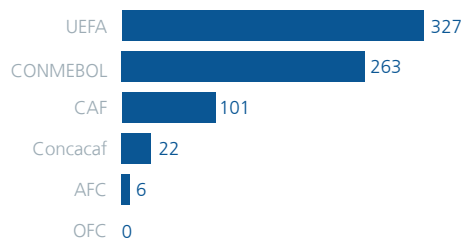
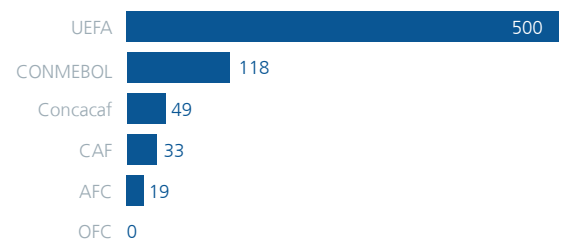


Figure 18: Confederation of respondent for TC claims resolved in 2019/2020





TC claims between clubs whose association is affiliated to UEFA are therefore much more numerous than all other combinations, the relationship in second place being between clubs located in the CONMEBOL region and those in an association affiliated to UEFA (see figure 19).

Figure 19: Confederation of claimant and respondent in the same dispute for TC claims resolved in 2019/2020

Confederation claimant	Confederation respondent	Claims
UEFA	UEFA	281
CONMEBOL	UEFA	131
CONMEBOL	CONMEBOL	84
CAF	UEFA	70
CONMEBOL	Concacaf	37
UEFA	CONMEBOL	29
CAF	CAF	27
Concacaf	UEFA	13
CONMEBOL	AFC	11
UEFA	AFC	6

More than 50% of the claims resolved (291) in the 2019/2020 season were initiated by claimants affiliated with only five associations (Brazil, Argentina, Spain, Uruguay and Colombia (see figure 20).

When we look at the respondents' affiliation, it is apparent that it is more evenly spread across the members, but ten associations nevertheless represent a little over 50% of the respondents in TC claims resolved in the 2019/2020 season, and what is interesting to note is that eight out of ten are based in UEFA (see figure 21).

Figure 20: Affiliation of claimants for claims resolved in 2019/2020 per association

Association claimant	Claims
Brazil	105
Argentina	63
Spain	49
Uruguay	40
Colombia	34
Croatia	31
Portugal	30
Cameroon	29
Italy	26
Germany	22

Figure 21: Association of respondent for claims resolved in 2019/2020

Association of respondent	Claims
Portugal	62
Spain	44
Mexico	32
Italy	31
Argentina	29
Greece	26
France	23
England	21
Turkey	20
Ukraine	20



# Registration and eligibility matters

## 1. ITC disputes

The release of the ITC from the member association at which the player is registered to the association to which the club requesting the transfer is affiliated is an important component of the player transfer and is integrated in TMS.

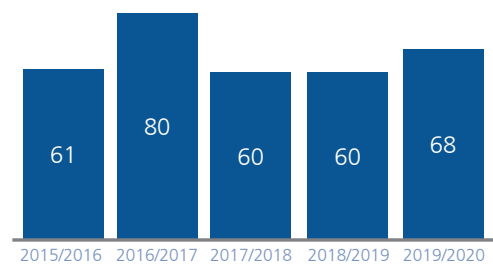
Following a request in TMS of a player's ITC by a member association at which an affiliated football club wishes to register the player in line with art. 8.2 par. 4 of Annexe 3 to the RSTP, the former association must, within seven days of the date of the ITC request, either (i) deliver the ITC in favour of the requesting association, or (ii) reject the ITC request and indicate the reason for the rejection.

If the ITC request is rejected by the former association, the requesting association may either accept or dispute the rejection (cf. art. 8.2 par. 7 of Annexe 3 to the RSTP). If the requesting association wishes to proceed with the registration of the player despite the opposition of the former association, it should apply to FIFA for a provisional registration of the player.

The competent body to grant the provisional registration of the player with the acquiring club is the PSC. Obviously, such a decision is rendered without prejudice to the merits of any contractual dispute between the parties (cf. art. 8.2 par. 7 of Annexe 3 to the RSTP).

In the 2019/2020 season, there were 82 refusals to release an ITC, but in only 68 of those did the requesting association actually file a request for the provisional registration of a player by the PSC. The number of provisional registrations granted by the PSC after an ITC rejection dispute has been relatively stable over the past years, with 68 provisional registrations granted in the 2019/2020 season (see figure 22). Note that ITCs can also, of course, be rejected in international transfers of amateurs, and indeed, three of the 68 provisional registrations granted after an ITC rejection dispute did in fact involve amateur players.

Figure 22: Provisional registrations granted the PSC





## 2. Validation exceptions for ITCs

Every international transfer must take place within the prescribed time frame ("transfer window") that is set by the member association, confirmed by FIFA and entered in TMS. Requests by a member association for the release of a player's ITC outside the transfer window or when the club registering the player is serving a transfer ban imposed by a FIFA decision will be automatically blocked by TMS.

A validation exception occurs: i) when the electronic ITC of a player is requested by the association of the engaging club outside the registration period as defined in TMS, and in circumstances where the exception set out in art.6 par.1 of the RSTP is not applicable, and ii) whenever a club serving a transfer ban and/or a registration ban enters a transfer instruction related to the engagement of a player.

In the 2019/2020 season, a total of 965 requests for an ITC triggered the automated TMS mechanism, involving 951 transfers. Of those, only in 616 instances was a validation exception actually requested to be overridden by the PSD, and of those 616, more than 40% (251) related to professional players out of contract, while another 35% (213) were in respect of amateur players moving across borders outside a transfer window (see figure 23).

In the 2019/2020 season, there was also a sharp increase not only in the number of cases that triggered the automated mechanism in TMS but also in validation exceptions granted (see figure 24). Validation exceptions were granted in 514 cases, of which 105 related to the temporary transfer window adjustments made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as per FIFA's amendments to the RSTP (FIFA circular nos 1714 and 1720).

Figure 23: Intervention requests received by the PSD in 2019/2020 by type of validation exception

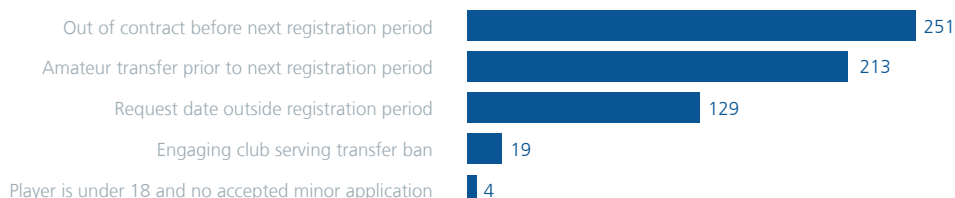


Figure 24: Authorisations of transfers with validation exceptions by the PSD





### 3. Applications for the registration of minors

In addition to its exclusive role in the transfer of professional players, TMS also plays a major part in monitoring and authorising the cross-border transfer of amateur minor players (art. 1 of Annexe 2 to the FIFA RSTP). The term "minor" is defined any player who has not yet reached the age of 18 (cf. definition 11 of the RSTP), while an "application" refers to the submission of a request by the engaging member association to the PSC sub-committee through TMS in one of the following two instances (art. 19 par. 4 a) of the RSTP):

1. International transfer: a minor of any nationality who has previously been registered with a club affiliated to one association and now wishes to be registered with a club affiliated to another association.
2. First registration: a minor who has never previously been registered with a club and is not a national of the country in which he/she wishes to be registered for the first time.

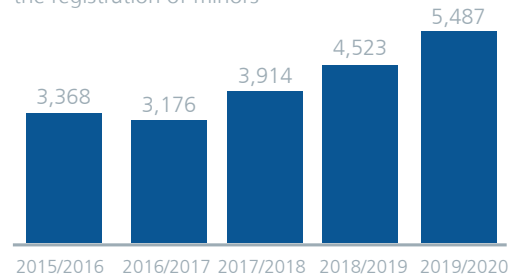
As a general rule, international transfers and first registrations of players whose nationality is other than the one where the football association operates are only permitted if the player is over the age of 18 (art. 19 par. 1 in conjunction with art. 19 par. 3 of the RSTP). However, there are exceptions to this rule, which are considered to be exhaustive:

- a) the player's parents moved to the country where the player wants to register for reasons not linked to football (art. 19 par. 2 a) of the RSTP);
- b) the player is aged between 16 and 18 and is moving within the territory of the EU/EEA (art. 19 par. 2 b) of the RSTP);
- c) both the player's domicile and the new club are within 50km of their common borders and the distance between the two is under 100km (art. 19 par. 2 c) of the RSTP);
- d) the player has lived continuously for at least the last five years prior to the request in the country in which he intends to be registered (art. 19 pars 3 and 4 of the RSTP);
- e) the player is moving due to humanitarian reasons without his/her parents and could not be expected to return to his/her country of origin (art. 19 par. 2 d) of the RSTP);
- f) the player's education was clearly the primary reason for the move without his/her parents and the duration of the education did not exceed one year (art. 19 par. 2 e) of the RSTP).

Due to the high numbers of first registrations and international transfers of minors at amateur level, the PSC sub-committee may grant member associations the possibility of a "limited exemption" from the obligation to request authorisation via TMS (art. 19 par. 4 c) of the RSTP as well as FIFA circular nos 1209 and 1576). By enabling associations to register amateur minor players who are to be registered with purely amateur clubs – under specific terms and conditions – without a formal application having to be submitted to the PSC sub-committee, the limited exemption facilitates the participation of minors in amateur football while maintaining transparency. However, movements of underage players within the context of limited exemptions granted to associations are not accounted for in this section.

A total of 5,487 applications for minors were submitted in the 2019/2020 season. For virtually all of them (93.9%), there was a decision, while a small percentage (5.2%) were cancelled and an even smaller amount (0.9%) were still ongoing at the end of the reporting period, basically due to submission close to the end of the reporting period.

Figure 25: number of applications submitted for the registration of minors



The number of applications to register minors decided upon by the PSC sub-committee has been growing substantially in recent years (see figure 25).



Decisions issued also reached record levels, with 5,245 decisions in 2019/2020 (see figure 26), a rise of 22.5% compared to the previous season. 91.3% of these minor applications were accepted, while 8.5% were rejected and the remaining 11 were declared inadmissible.

It should be noted that the percentage of applications for the first registration of a minor (54.5%) and that relating to transfers (moves) of minors between two different associations (45.5%) indicates a rather balanced trend.

Although there are only six reasons on which to base the granting of an exception, one more category has been created, that relating to a minor moving with his parents for humanitarian reasons, which formally should fall within the first reason mentioned above, i.e. a minor moving due to parents emigrating to the respective country for reasons other than football (see figure 27). Parents moving to the country of the member association applying for the registration of a minor for reasons unrelated to football makes up almost 50% of the applications granted.

Figure 26: Number of decisions by the PSC sub-committee on applications to register minors

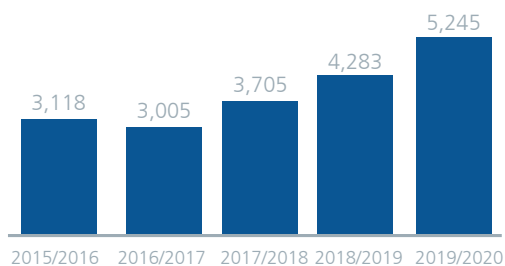


Figure 27: Decisions on applications for minor's registration per reason requested, 2019/2020

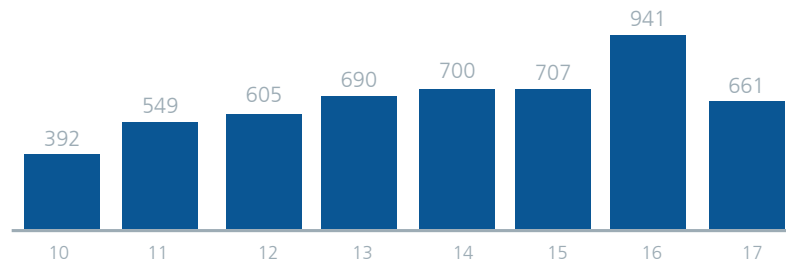




When we look at the distribution of the applications according to the age of the player at the time of submission of the application, the age of 16 has the highest number by far (see figure 28). This can be attributed to two factors: firstly, the fact that a considerable number of applications (414 – see figure 27 above) are related exclusively to those

minors who have reached that age limit as set by the respective provision, and secondly, at 16 years of age a minor player is eligible to sign his or her first professional contract. In fact, 256 of the applications decided upon (4.9%) concerned players to be registered as professionals and 68% of these indeed related to players aged 16.

Figure 28: Decisions on applications for minor's registration per age, 2019/2020



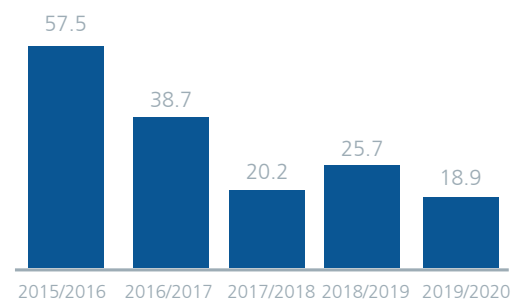
Applications are received from a very large number of member associations. The top ten (see figure 29) is headed by Portugal with a total of 573 applications, 90% of which were approved, followed by Spain with 491 applications, of which 87% were granted, and the USA third, with 382

applications and 99% of them approved. In the 2019/2020 season, the period taken to deliver the respective decision on an application for a minor registration was reduced even further to fewer than 19 days, down from a high of 57 days in 2015/2016 and almost 26 days in 2018/2019 (see figure 30).

Figure 29: Top ten member associations by number of applications submitted, 2019/2020

Association	Minor applications	% approved
Portugal	573	90.4%
Spain	491	87.0%
USA	382	99.0%
Qatar	372	98.1%
United Arab Emirates	333	98.8%
England	246	93.9%
Italy	205	72.7%
Netherlands	198	93.9%
Germany	160	93.1%
Hungary	158	86.7%

Figure 30: Average duration in days for the delivery of a decision on an application for a minor's registration





#### 4. Eligibility decisions

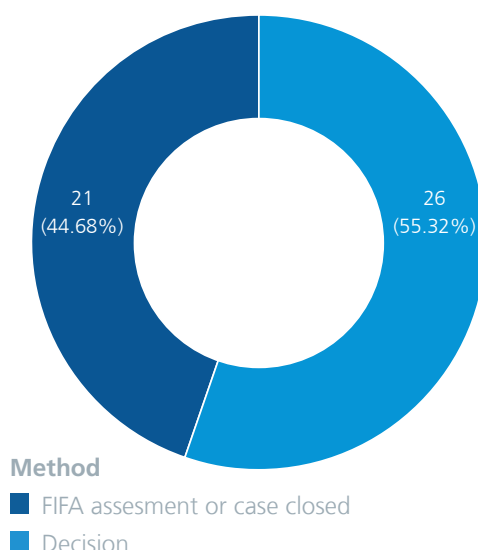
As a general principle, a player who holds a permanent nationality that is not dependent on residence in a certain country is eligible to play for the representative teams of that country. However, specific provisions are contained in the 2019 edition of FIFA's Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes (RGAS) on the eligibility of (i) players holding a nationality entitling them to represent more than one association (art. 6 of the RGAS) and (ii) players obtaining a new nationality at some stage, i.e. they did not hold that nationality at birth (art. 7 of the RGAS).

In this context, the PSD provides guidance to all member associations with regard to the interpretation and correct implementation of the RGAS. In particular, it replies to general questions in connection with the eligibility rules, but also to specific enquiries (mostly from member associations) related to the eligibility of a particular player to play for the representative teams of a specific member association.

Besides, some specific cases may need a formal decision of the PSC in order for the player to become eligible to represent another association in the future.

The PSD opened 42 eligibility cases during the 2019/2020 season and, as at 30 June 2020, all of them had been resolved. In total, 47 cases were resolved during this period, including five additional cases that had been opened before July 2019. Twenty-one cases were closed (see figure 31) without the need for a formal decision from the PSC (i.e. the cases were closed after the assessment of the FIFA administration had been communicated to the requesting association or after the request from the FIFA administration for additional information/documentation remained unanswered). A decision was taken in the remaining 26 cases, and in all of them the players were declared eligible to play for the representative teams of the requesting association.

Figure 31: Number of eligibility cases by assessment method, 2019/2020



#### Method

- FIFA assesment or case closed
- Decision

The highest number of decisions (see figure 32) involved Australia (8), followed by Luxembourg and Switzerland (both with 4).

Figure 32: Associations by number of eligibility decisions, 2019/2020

Enquiring MA	Decisions
Australia	8
Luxembourg	4
Switzerland	4
England	3
New Zealand	2
Qatar	2
Netherlands	1
Spain	1
USA	1



## 5. Changes of association

In principle, a player who has already played in a match (either in full or in part) in an official competition of any category or any type of football for one association may not play an international match for a representative team of another association (cf. art. 5 par. 2 of the RGAS).

Art. 8 of the RGAS includes an exception to that principle and establishes that:

- i. a player who has more than one nationality, or
- ii. a player who acquires a new nationality, or
- iii. a player who is eligible to play for more than one representative team due to their nationality (cf. art. 6 of the RGAS)

may, only once, request to change the association for which he/she is eligible to play international matches to the association of another country of which he/she holds nationality. This, provided that:

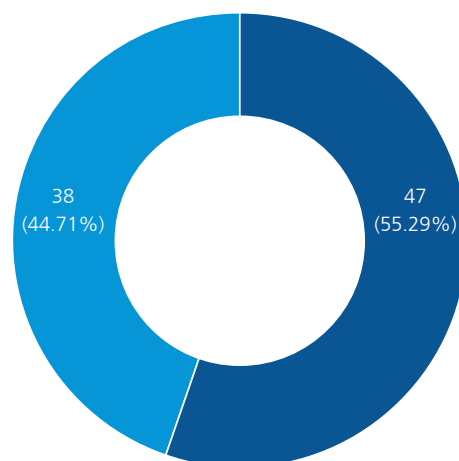
- i. he/she has not played a match (either in full or in part) in an official competition at "A" international level for his/her current association, and
- ii. at the time of his/her first full or partial appearance in an international match in an official competition for his current association, he/she already held the nationality of the representative team for which he/she wishes to play in the future.

Requests for change of association are submitted through the PSD to the PSC for a decision.

In total, 95 requests for a change of association were handled by PSD during the 2019/2020 season, of which 72 were received after 1 July 2019 and 23 just prior to the beginning of the reporting period. Eighty-five requests were resolved by 30 June 2020 and ten were still ongoing at 30 June 2020.

Forty-seven of the 85 resolved requests were closed (see figure 33) without the need for a formal decision by the PSC. A request can be closed by a PSC decision after the FIFA administration's assessment has been communicated to and accepted by the requesting association or if the FIFA administration's request for additional information/documentation has remained unanswered.

Figure 33: Number of change-of-association cases by assessment method in 2019/2020



### Method

- FIFA assesment or case closed
- Decision

Decisions were necessary in the remaining 38 requests, which, with the exception of one, were accepted and authorisation was granted by the PSC for the change of association to take place. In the 2019/2020 season, the top ten decisions granting a change of association (see figure 34) contains eight associations with two authorisations each, and one member association (Kosovo) with six. In total, there were 15 associations with one decision authorising a change of association.

Figure 34: Top ten associations by number of change-of-association decisions in 2019/2020

Enquiring MA	Decisions
Kosovo	6
Cameroon	2
Germany	2
Guatemala	2
Iraq	2
Ireland	2
Russia	2
Tunisia	2
Turkey	2
Albania	1



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