

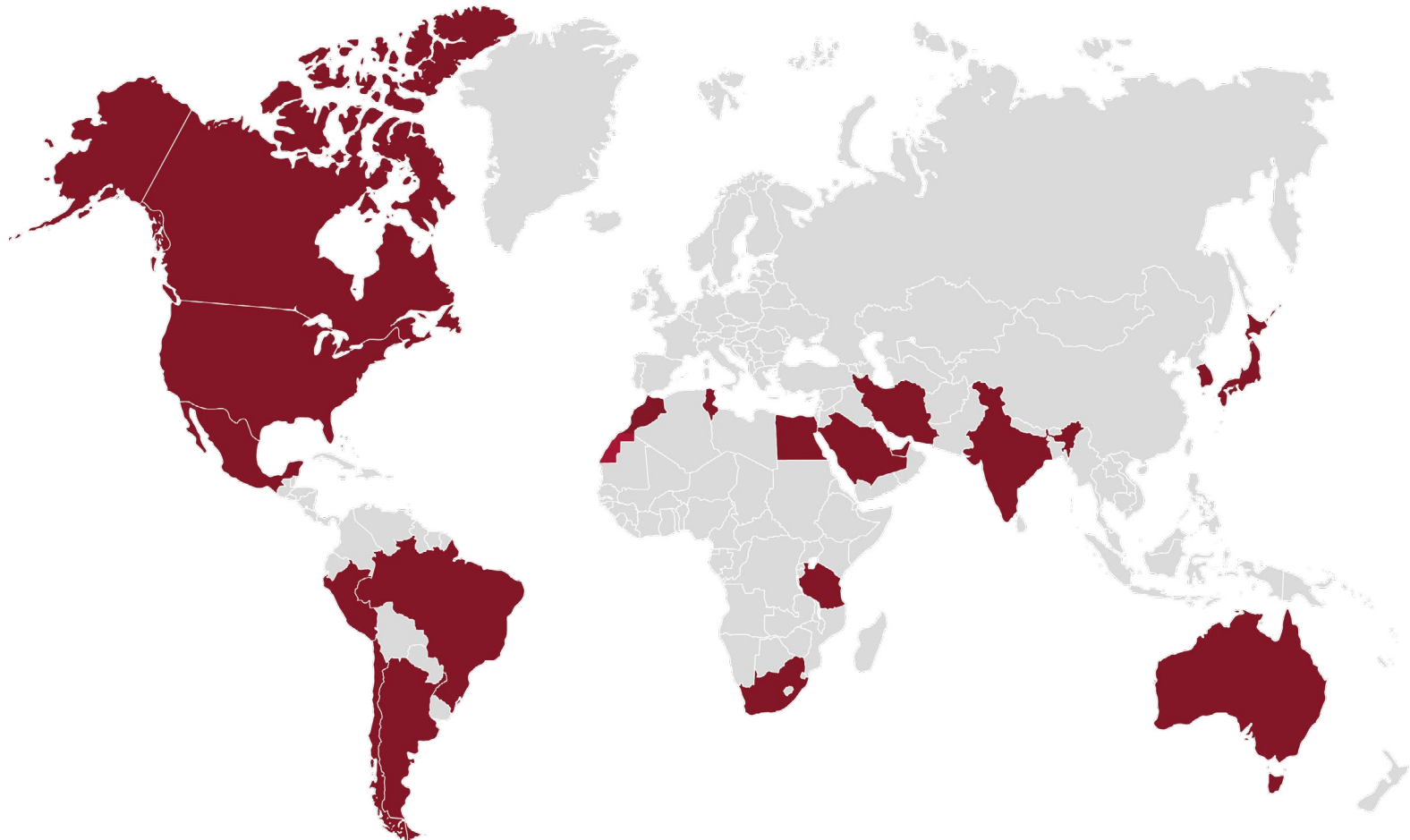
Global Football Report

Discovering Football's
Emerging Frontiers



Edition 2024

Nations covered through deep-dive exchanges



LTT Sports is a specialized advisory firm dedicated to facilitating the alignment of football strategy and operations for discerning executives seeking to enhance their organisational frameworks. Our approach is deeply rooted in comprehensive knowledge, extensive experience, rigorous analysis, and a robust network, aimed at delivering refined solutions and strategies for optimal performance.



World Football Summit serves as a platform for visionary leaders committed to shaping the future of football in alignment with principles of excellence, integrity, and innovation. WFS's mission is to facilitate connections among individuals and organisations who are dedicated to fostering the football industry we desire and require.

Kick-Off Note from the LTT Sports

Football transcends Europe's premier leagues and the allure of multi million dollar deals with international superstars. Beyond the well-established traditional hubs, a diverse and dynamic panorama of football emerges, characterised by a multitude of leagues in motion. This panorama encompasses countless matches, impassioned fans, and rich cultural tapestries, where every on-field move represents an indelible mark of identity. „*Global Football Report: Discovering Football's Emerging Frontiers*” spotlights these burgeoning yet equally vibrant spheres of football.

From the lively pitches of Africa to the icy fields of North America, and from the charged atmospheres in South America to the burgeoning arenas in Asia and the growing interest in the GCC countries, this publication delves deep into communities where football is not merely a sport but a way of life. Engaging with over 60 football representatives worldwide, we've selected the most insightful quotes for our comprehensive report. Through our exchanges, we've probed executives from every corner of the globe, seeking insights on where they envision their clubs, leagues, or federations in the next five years. We've explored the most pressing challenges they face today and the unique attributes that distinguish their leagues, captivating both players and viewers with fervor.

As experts in Club Management and League dynamics, we offer guidance for your development. As you navigate this report, we meticulously record emerging trends for your consideration.

Join us at the World Football Summit, the pivotal hub of football's evolution. To remain abreast of the most compelling updates from football's expansive universe, sync with our LTT Sports [#PitchsideMonitor](#) newsletter. Tune into the global pulse of the ever-expanding game and revel in this journey of discovery.



Olivier Jarosz
LTT Sports | Geneva
Board Member



Fathi Abou El Gadaiel
LTT Sports | Jeddah
Associate

Forward Pass from the WFS

The football industry is going through a period of transformational change. Technology is changing the way the game is played and consumed, modern governance and ownership models are welcoming new stakeholders to the ecosystem, as emerging leagues challenge the status quo in popularity and overall growth. On this latter point, some would argue these efforts will not be enough to catch up with the traditional “big leagues.” But is this true?

It cannot be denied that the demographic and economic environment of a country can have a profound impact on football. The reverse is also true. Football can influence the development of a country. Given its global nature, it seems relevant to analyse which are the markets with the highest potential when combining the dynamics mentioned above, and the economic and demographic forces at play.

The objective of this report is to provide the reader with a comprehensive and detailed view of how a set of markets across different continents are expected to grow and as a result, define a different future for football.

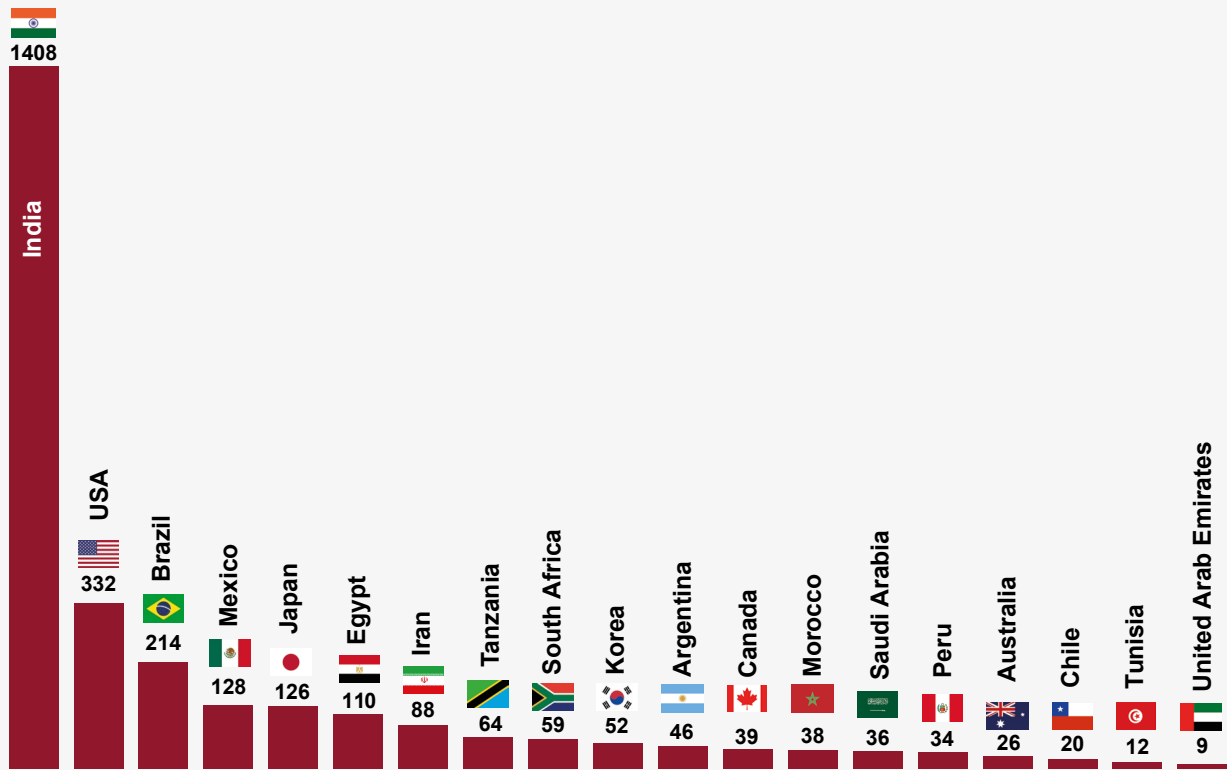


Jan Alessie

World Football Summit
Co-Founder & Director

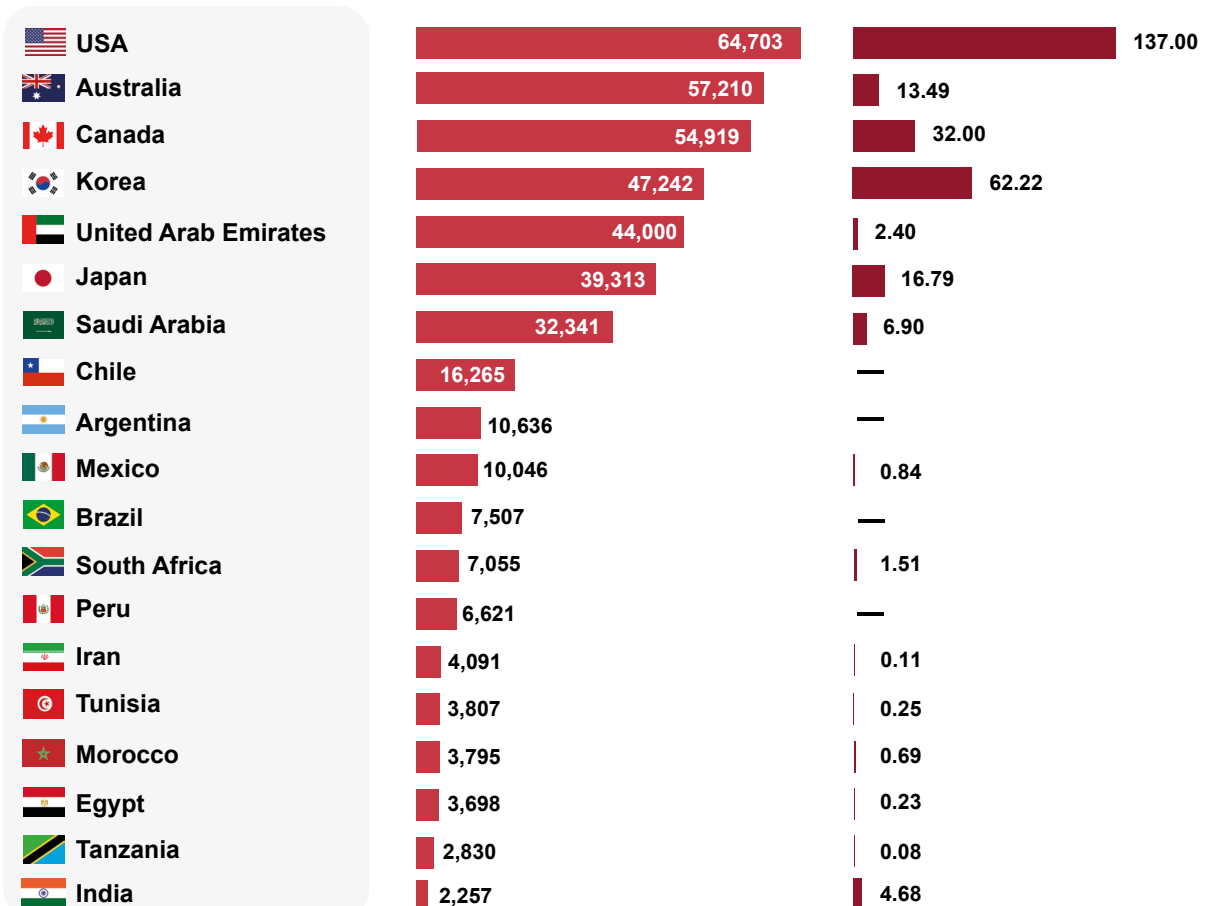
POPULATION

(in million)



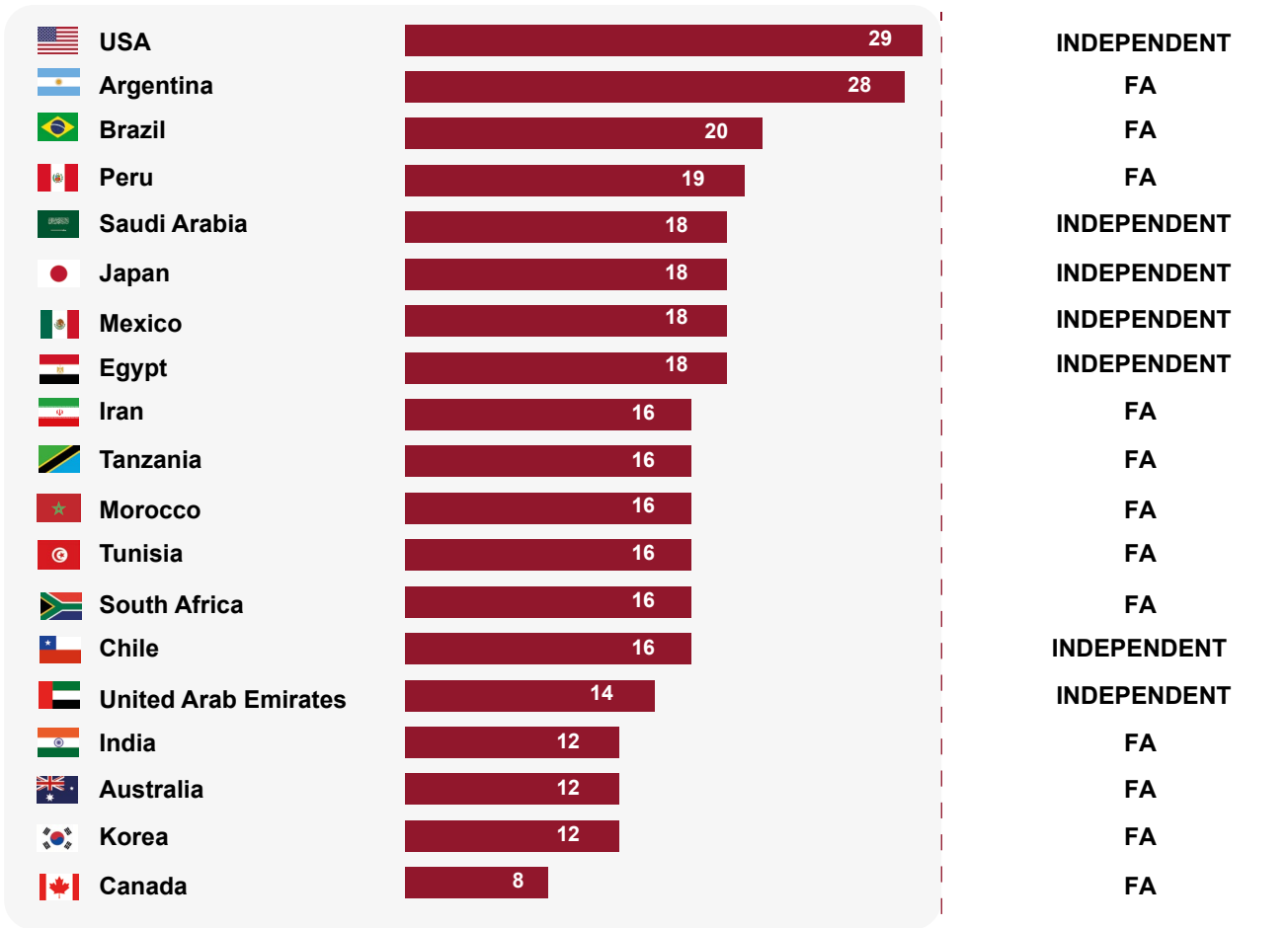
GDP PPP PER CAPITA (USD)

VALUE OF DOMESTIC SPORT INDUSTRY (BILLION USD)

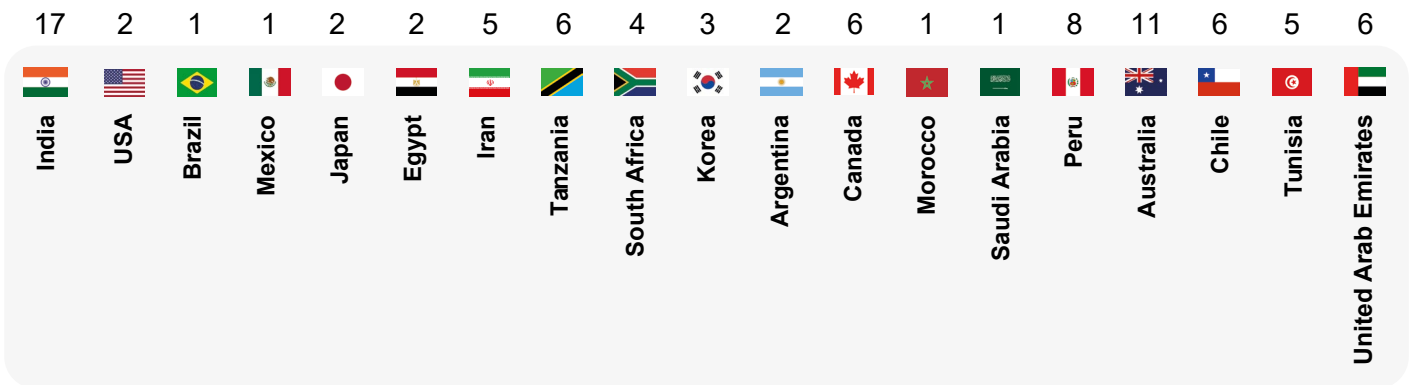


NUMBER OF TEAMS IN TOP DIVISION (CURRENT)

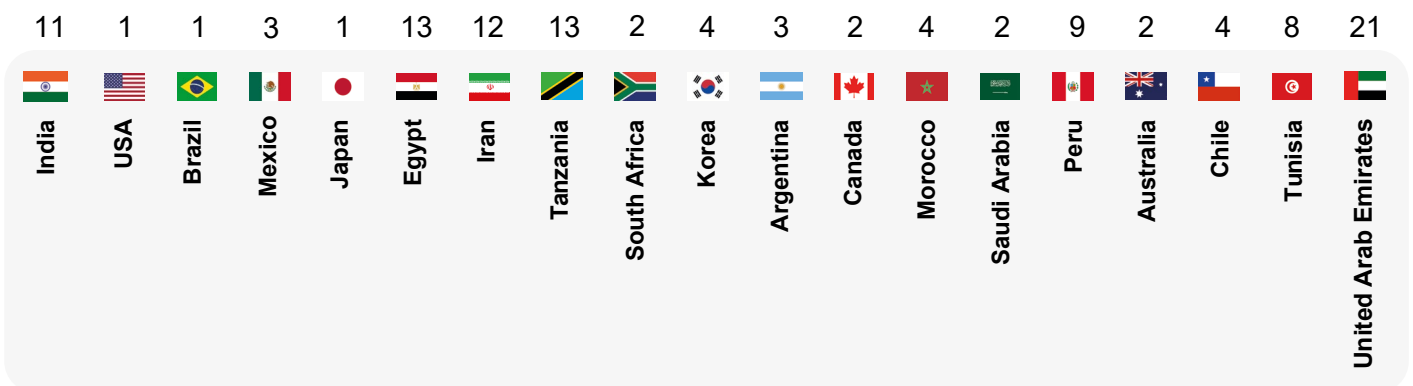
Top division structure
(Independent league or under FA)



League/country ranking in confederation (For mens club competitions)



League/country ranking in confederation (For womens club competitions)*






*To note: There is an absence of official club-related women's rankings in most confederations outside of UEFA.

Methodology

In this study, we selected countries in order to achieve a geographically representative sample from various continents, excluding Europe. The selection of countries was made in collaboration with our geostrategic Swiss division, Club Affairs. This process constituted purposive sampling. Factors influencing the selection of countries included the availability of data, accessibility and responsiveness of contacts, prior research outcomes, as well as our subjective assessment of potential. It was not possible to cover all the countries in this first edition and we suggest to anyone who is from a country that was not covered to reach out to LTT Sports/WFS and we will gladly interview them and add them into future editions. The interviews were conducted using partially structured protocols and lasted between 30 to 75 minutes. All interviews were carried out using online communication tools. All participants provided informed consent for their involvement in the interviews and for the utilization of the acquired information in the final report. The countries presented in the report have been divided into groups based on population and GDP.

Three groups were distinguished and easily recognised by their specific icons.

-  1. Countries with large population and large GDP;
-  2. Countries with medium population and large GDP;
-  3. Countries with medium or small population and medium or small GDP.



Dr Adam Metelski
LTT Sports | Poznań

From Endurance to Empowerment: A Closer Look at the future of Women's Football

The landscape of challenges facing women's football is intricate and multifaceted, reflective of the intricate environment within which the sport operates. Our prior publication, focusing on the 'COVID-19 Crisis in Football,' shed light on the glaring disparities confronted by women's football amidst the global health crisis. This investigation revealed a notable developmental gap in comparison to men's football, an escalating polarisation, and an economically uncertain terrain. Despite the increasing visibility of women's football, particularly in elite spheres, a pronounced resource imbalance persists between genders, with a palpable absence of immediate initiatives to bridge this chasm.

To achieve commercial and economic parity with men's football, three potential scenarios emerge: 1) redistribution of existing resources, 2) doubling revenue from the current fanbase, or 3) harnessing new fanbases to double revenues. Each option presents its unique array of challenges and opportunities, underscoring the imperative for strategic planning and decisive action in the forthcoming years.



Anne-Marie Itoua
LTT Sports | Geneva



Gina Lewandowski
LTT Sports | Philadelphia

INDIA



First group (large population + large economy)

Population (in million)	1408
Capital	New Delhi
GDP/hab	\$2,257
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	12
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	33
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	-
National FIFA ranking	102
National FIFA womens ranking	61
Largest stadium used for football Salt Lake Stadium	85,000 Capacity



I think that in 15 years kids will be choosing football much. They will be the ones changing football. I think that we need to build a stronger culture of football in India. So we are starting now.



Fabio Ferreira - Sreenidi Deccan FC



Football Culture

- India boasts one of the oldest football clubs globally, including Mohun Bagan, and hosts the third oldest surviving football competition, the Durand Cup, after the FA Cup and the Scottish Cup. The IFA Shield, founded in 1893, stands as the fourth oldest trophy in the world, reflecting the rich football heritage of the country.
- In recent years, football's popularity in India has experienced a resurgence. Additionally, there has been a notable increase in the number of active professional and amateur football players.
- India's football culture is evolving, marked by a blend of historical legacy and contemporary trends.



Football Infrastructure

- The creation of the National Football League in 1996 marked a significant milestone as India's first national domestic football league. Subsequently, the National Football League evolved into the I-League in 2007, and in 2013, the Indian Super League (ISL) was introduced.
- India has also made investments in football facilities, with the construction of the National Center of Excellence in Kolkata, which serves as a key training ground for both the India national football team and India women's national football team.
- Additionally, India hosted the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup and the 2022 FIFA U17 Women's World Cup, showcasing the growth of football infrastructure and international recognition.



Football Performance

- India's use „golden age” of football performance, spanning from 1951 to 1962, was marked by significant achievements, including winning the gold medal in the first Asian Games and reaching the semi-finals in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, where they ranked fourth in the tournament.
- Despite a long hiatus from top-tier international competitions, India made a comeback in January 2011 when they participated in the 2011 Asian Cup, marking their return after 24 years.
- India's recent performance in international youth competitions, such as the FIFA U-17 World Cup in 2017, demonstrated some progress as Jeakson Singh became the first Indian goal scorer in the finals of a FIFA-organised tournament. Additionally, the national team qualified for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup and is set to compete in the 2024 edition.

In 5 years' time we will be...

Over the next five years, Indian football aspires to experience a significant overhaul. The goal is to fortify the Indian Super League and enhance the overall structure of the domestic leagues. This transformation is being initiated through the establishment of strong infrastructure, thriving youth academies, and comprehensive policies. The aim extends beyond mere participation in AFC Competitions; it is to thrive and establish a reputation for football excellence in Asia, integrating football into the Indian cultural fabric and cultivating a fervent passion akin to that for cricket.

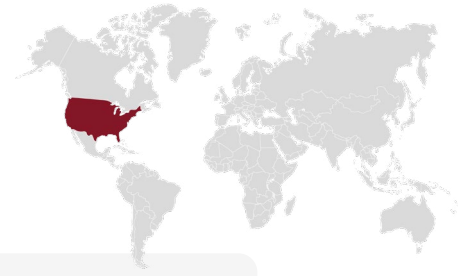
Our challenges

The journey towards this transformation is not without its challenges. Political interference, an unstable federation, and weak state federations pose significant hurdles. These issues are compounded by the contradictions among stakeholders, where misaligned interests and fragmented efforts threaten to impede progress. An example of such a challenge is the refusal of clubs to release players for national team duties, highlighting the need for a unified approach to overcome these obstacles and reinforce the foundation of Indian football from the grassroots level.

Why are we unique?

The distinctiveness of Indian football resides in its ambitious pursuit to cultivate a unique football culture within a nation historically dominated by cricket. This approach stands out due to its comprehensiveness, striving to seamlessly embed football into the Indian ethos and nurture a robust, long-lasting culture from its grassroots. Despite the obstacles, the dedication to establishing a strong foundation and the unified determination to achieve excellence at the AFC level differentiates Indian football in its approach and aspirations.

USA



First group (large population + large economy)

Population (in million)	331,9
Capital	Washington D.C.
GDP/hab	\$64,703
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	29
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	68
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	1833
National FIFA men's ranking	11
National FIFA women's ranking	3
Largest stadium used for football Michigan Stadium	107,601 Capacity



Our focus is on internal growth and fulfilling the aspirations of our community, players, and partners. Our primary concern is to make a lasting, meaningful impact within our sport and society at large.



Julie Uhrman - Angel City



Football Culture

- While not the most popular sport in the USA, soccer has deep historical roots. The country made an early mark with medals in the 1904 Summer Olympics and a bronze medal in the inaugural FIFA World Cup in 1930.
- USA gained global attention with the New York Cosmos attracting soccer legends Pelé and Franz Beckenbauer in the late 1970s.
- Soccer's popularity in the USA surged from the late 1990s, amplified by hosting the 1994 FIFA World Cup. The inception of Major League Soccer (MLS) in 1996 further solidified the sport's presence.
- The USMNT has been a regular participant in FIFA World Cup tournaments since 1990, except for the 2018 edition.
- The USWNT has been dominant in the CONCACAF Women's Footballer of the Year award, with Alex Morgan winning five times since its introduction in 2013.



Football Infrastructure

- Due to traditional sports like Baseball and American Football being played in similar infrastructures, the USA has a well-established soccer infrastructure. This made it an attractive host for events, such as the 1994 FIFA World Cup, which boasts the highest average attendance at 68,991 per game.
- Uniquely, the USA has hosted all CONCACAF Cup editions since 1991, the Copa America Centenario in 2016, and two FIFA Women's World Cups (1999 and 2003). The country is also set to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup.
- Significant investments are being made in youth development and academies. The country's commitment to women's soccer is evident through the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL).



Football Performance

- American soccer teams have garnered international recognition. The men's national team boasts a FIFA World Cup bronze medal and five CONCACAF Gold Cups.
- The US Women's National Team (USWNT) stands out globally, with a record four FIFA World Cup titles, four Olympic gold medals, and nine CONCACAF W Championship titles.
- Club soccer in the USA is advancing, with MLS teams showing competitiveness in the CONCACAF Champions League, highlighted by Seattle Sounders' 2022 victory and Los Angeles' two-time runner-up status. D.C. United (1998) and LA Galaxy (2000) have each won the CONCACAF Champions Cup once.

In 5 years' time we will be...

MLS has charted a path of steady growth, with new franchises like Atlanta United FC or Charlotte FC attracting impressive crowds and a landmark media rights deal with Apple TV set to enhance revenue streams. The league's focus now is on increasing sponsorship and match-day revenues to match global competitors.

With the upcoming FIFA World Cup, MLS has a unique opportunity to capitalize on heightened football interest to expand its fan base and viewership. This global event could serve as a catalyst for the league's commercial strategy, potentially accelerating its journey towards becoming a top-tier football league alongside Europe's elite. The US women's soccer industry is thriving, with the league set to reach a \$1 billion valuation, reflecting its community and commercial success.

Our challenges

US Soccer grapples with aligning its expanding league towards unified goals and securing partners that support its vision, especially for women's clubs.

With MLS's increasing investments, team valuations, and expansion fees, the league's focus is on boosting revenue, rivalling US sports in popularity, and challenging European football. The MLS benefits from football's global appeal and the US's innovative sports business environment. Its structure promotes shared best practices to elevate club performance. As a talent hub, MLS is transitioning from a stepping stone to a destination league.

Why are we unique?

The MLS league stands out due to its intense competitiveness and parity, where any team has the potential to triumph over another, creating an unpredictable and thrilling sporting experience. The innovative partnership with Apple elevates the league's uniqueness, as the MLS Season Pass is set to broaden global access and deepen fan engagement by leveraging Apple's extensive ecosystem to deliver tailored content, making the league's offerings more accessible and personalized than ever before. In women's football, Angel City FC's ability to draw nearly 20,000 fans from various demographics underscores the league's widespread allure.

BRAZIL



First group (large population + large economy)

Population(in million)	214,3
Capital	Brasília
GDP/hab	\$14,000
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	20
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	FA
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	130
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	9177
National FIFA men's ranking	3
National FIFA womens ranking	9
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	1
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	1
Largest stadium used for football Maracanã Stadium	78,838 Capacity



I believe that Brazil has great opportunities on a global level due to its timezone. Our games typically take place at times that don't coincide with peak hours in major markets like Europe or Asia, so we naturally find a unique space there.

Thiago Scuro - Red Bull Bragantino



Football Culture

- In Brazil, football is more than just a sport - it's a phenomenon. Brazil is the only national team to have played in every FIFA World Cup
- The country has a rich history of "producing" world-class players like Pelé, Ronaldo, Kaka, Ronaldinho or Neymar.
- Football is a part of the country's identity and culture, with stadiums often serving as a social and economic hub for the surrounding communities.
- The diverse geographical and cultural landscape of Brazil contributes to varying playing styles across the country.



Football Infrastructure

- Brazil has some of the most iconic football stadiums in the world, such as Estádio Maracanã in Rio de Janeiro, which has hosted two World Cup Finals and Arena Corinthians. These stadiums are not just sports venues but cultural landmarks.
- The country has a well-established domestic league system (Série A, B, C, and D)
- Brazil's youth football infrastructure is a multifaceted and integral system with futsal playing a significant role in the development of young players' abilities



Football Performance

- The Brazilian national team has won a record five FIFA World Cups and nine Copa America titles.
- The country has a highly competitive domestic football scene, with several clubs such as Flamengo, Sao Paulo FC, and Palmeiras commanding a huge following.
- Brazilian football is revered globally and regarded as a beacon of footballing excellence.
- The country is known for developing young talents such as Gabriel Jesus and Vinicius Jr.

In 5 years time we will be...

Brazil's individual TV broadcast contracts, established nearly a decade ago, are set to expire in December 2024. This presents an opportunity to launch a league with a new deal structure and a fairer revenue distribution. It's a significant chance for clubs to elevate the market value of Brazilian football and position ourselves as a global powerhouse.

Our challenges

One aspect is the business perspective, with investors such as Red Bull and 777 holding shares, infusing a professional mindset. This contrasts with those operating under the associative model, a legacy from a century ago. The second aspect is the fan-driven social management, where the focus is primarily on individual club interests, often overlooking the broader industry perspective. This approach sometimes results in owners being elected based on emotionally charged but unrealistic projects.

Why are we unique?

Brazilian football has garnered attention owing to the caliber of its players and the recent surge of foreign coaches. Presently, for the first time in history, 11 out of 20 clubs are under the guidance of foreign coaches. This transition has significantly impacted the game's quality, while the country's substantial economy presents promising opportunities for the clubs. With enhanced managerial strategies, the Brazilian League holds the potential to bolster its global competitiveness. The league already attracts players and coaches due to enticing contracts and investments. Furthermore, it serves as the starting point for many prospective stars, establishing itself as a global magnet. Undoubtedly, who wouldn't be intrigued by witnessing the emergence of the next young Neymar.

MEXICO



First group (large population + large economy)

Population (in million)	130.2
Capital	Mexico City
GDP/hab	\$8,669
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	0,84
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	18
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	Independent
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	266
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	9753
National FIFA men's ranking	12
National FIFA women's ranking	36
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	1
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	5
Largest stadium used for football Stadium Estadio Azteca	87,523 Capacity



The Liga MX is currently scheduled to remain locked until 2026, but the key issues for Mexican football at the moment generally are the multi-ownership of clubs, FFP and media rights centralisation.



Severiano Garcia Ruiz - Atletico San Luis



Football Culture

- Football in Mexico is more than just a sport; it's a vibrant part of the nation's cultural tradition that weaves through the socio-political and economic aspects of society. Since its inception in the late 19th century, Mexican football has thrived.
- The national consciousness deeply embeds the storied rivalry between illustrious clubs like Club America and Chivas.
- *El Tri*, the Mexican national team, stands as a symbol of national pride and unity.



Football Infrastructure

- Mexico demonstrates a commitment to enhancing its football infrastructure by harmoniously integrating historical venues with modern facilities. Iconic stadiums, such as Estadio Azteca, serve as a testament to the country's rich football heritage.
- These venues have hosted momentous global events like the FIFA World Cup in 1970 and 1986. The nation continuously works on enhancing and modernizing facilities to global standards, ensuring these venues nurture future Mexican talent and host major fixtures.



Football Performance

- Mexico consistently develops players who make significant impacts in leagues across the globe, with historical feats including memorable World Cup performances and 11 CONCACAF Gold Cup victories.
- The country's football resonates globally due to its impressive showings on the international stage and Liga MX, the domestic league, stands out as one of the premier leagues in the Americas. It plays a pivotal role in nurturing young talent and delivering thrilling football action for fans.
- Football legends like Hugo Sánchez and Rafael Márquez personify the nation's passionate football spirit.

In 5 years' time we will be...

Football is the top sport in Mexico, far surpassing other traditional sports. Despite some poor results due to various decisions, fan support remains strong. The focus now is on making the right choices to capitalise on this enthusiasm and with the FIFA World Cup a new kick is expected.

Our challenges

In the wake of the Covid pandemic, there is no more promotion or relegation in the Mexican league. The 18 teams in the top division have varied economic resources. Additionally, media rights are not centrally sold, and there are no financial fair play regulations. This creates financial inequality among the clubs. In the end, the FIFA World Cup could amplify Liga MX's market reach and visibility but also exacerbate existing financial inequalities and distract from domestic development, with the league's global ambitions and structural challenges setting the stage for its future in football's international arena.

Why are we unique?

Mexican football stands out due to its unique blend of tradition and contemporary developments. The post-pandemic Liga MX notably abolished promotion and relegation, leading to economic disparities among its 18 teams. An additional notable step was the establishment of a distinctive collaboration with the MLS through the Leagues Cup, aiming to engage the Mexican diaspora in the U.S. While the national team continues to hold paramount importance for fans, the league's evolution remains pivotal for Mexico's global competitiveness.

Mexican football is known for its passionate fan bases, deeply ingrained football culture, and a competitive league showcasing both emerging talents and seasoned veterans. This fusion of tradition and adaptation epitomises the distinctive nature of Mexican football.

JAPAN



First group (large population + large economy)

Population (in million)	125,7
Capital	Tokyo
GDP/hab	\$39,313
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	16,79
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	18
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	Independent
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	55
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	1670
National FIFA men's ranking	19
National FIFA women's ranking	8
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	2
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	1
Largest stadium used for football Yokohama International Stadium	72,327 Capacity



The ambition is to develop top clubs at both the national and global level. The league aspires to be Asia's number one in all aspects, aiming for increased spectator attendance and sold-out matches in the future.



Takeyuki Oya - J.LEAGUE



Football Culture

- Football is a popular sport in Japan and is embraced by all age groups. The country is also known for having dedicated and passionate supporters.
- The J-League merges clubs with local communities, boosting Japanese football's cultural influence through community engagement, mental health initiatives, and sporting culture. Named after hometowns, clubs emphasize sustainability and social integration, hosting events that solidify their community bonds.
- The Nadeshiko League plays a pivotal role and elevates Japanese women's football, offering a professional
- Football is widely played in schools and universities, with teams representing each prefecture.



Football Infrastructure

- Japan has several modern football stadiums, including Yokohama International Stadium that can seat over 72,000 spectators.
- The country also has a high number of registered football clubs and is known for its advanced football training methods.
- The J.League, since inception has a advanced healthy club management by disclosing financials and introducing a licensing system. Inspired by the ECA Club Management Guide, the JCMG fostered financial stability, prevented debt, and enhanced player development and stadium conditions. The approach attracted new fans and earned stakeholder trust, demonstrating effective management without consecutive losses or excessive debt.



Football Performance

- *Samurai Blue*, the men's national team has consistently performed well in recent years, winning four times the AFC Asian Cup last in 2011 and qualifying for the FIFA World Cup six times in a row.
- The women's team, known as the *Nadeshiko Japan*, has won multiple AFC Women's Asian Cups and the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup.
- Urawa Red Diamonds are AFC CL Champions League leaders with two titles, joined by Kashima Antlers and Gamba Osaka as J.League successes.
- Several international players such as Shinji Kagawa and Takumi Minamino play in the top leagues of Europe and Asia.

In 5 years' time we will be...

With new leadership the league is investing in new strategies, especially increasing local community engagement. Unique to overseas leagues, Japan has 60 clubs across three tiers, and the goal is to make each club prominent in its local community. They want to engage the new generation, also outside of Japan.

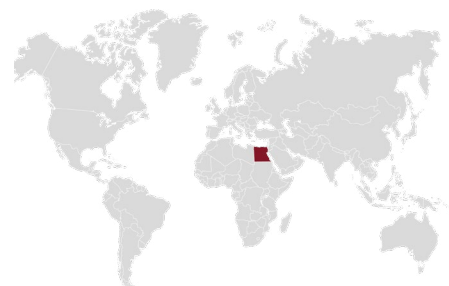
Our challenges

The league's primary challenge is increasing local exposure. Given its relative youth J.League is still integrating itself into Japanese culture. The aim is to be more than a football league, but an integral part of the daily life for all Japanese people. The J.League faces also challenges including market saturation and competition in global sports broadcasting, ensuring fan engagement and content accessibility, reliance on a single broadcasting partner, DAZN, which poses risks, and adapting to changing media consumption trends, particularly among younger audiences who favor streaming and on-demand content over traditional broadcasting methods.

Why are we unique?

The J.League has actively pursued partnerships with professional football leagues in Southeast Asia fostering relationships with leagues across several countries. The J.League is esteemed for its dependability, maintaining a reputation free from match-fixing and ensuring timely payments to its players. Approximately 40% of the spectators consist of families, while another 40% are women. Match days are not solely centered around football; they also incorporate non-football activities like local culinary experiences and amusement parks for children. This fusion creates a distinctive and appealing culture, enhancing the overall match day experience.

EGYPT



First group (large population + large economy)

Population (in million)	110
Capital	Cairo
GDP/hab	\$3,698
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	0,23
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	18
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	Independent
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	19
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	3280
National FIFA men's ranking	35
National FIFA women's ranking	88
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	2
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	13
Largest stadium used for football New administrative capital stadium	94,940 Capacity



Impressed by Ahly's high level of sustainability and consistent good results, the club aims to emulate this in the long term. However, the club takes pride in its unique position within Egypt, particularly its low turnover rate for coaches, which contrasts sharply with the league norm.



Hassan El Shamy - Arab Contractors



Football Culture

- Football is Egypt's beloved sport, deeply ingrained since the early 1900s.
- Port Fouad Club's 1902 establishment and Europe's first African player, Hussein Hegazy, symbolize this heritage. Hegazy, later an Egyptian FA founder, reflects football's significance in Egypt.
- The Egyptian FA, a CAF founder in 1956, has a pivotal role, with Egypt's national team first representing Africa in the 1934 FIFA World Cup.
- Egypt uniquely nurtures homegrown talent, producing exceptional players who excel both in European clubs and in winning individual and continental awards, enhancing the nation's football profile.



Football Infrastructure

- Egypt, a favored destination for major continental events, continuously develops infrastructure with government support, meeting the demands of each era.
- The country has successfully hosted AFCON five times and FIFA Youth World Cups twice (in 1997 and 2009), underlining its adequate facilities for mega events.
- This legacy has elevated Egypt's hosting capabilities, even organizing significant championships amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The focus on nurturing homegrown talent has led to significant achievements, supported by major investments and a ten-year government and FA plan aimed at bolstering youth sports through scouting and exchange programs.



Football Performance

- With stars like Mohamed Salah, the Egypt National team actively competes in AFCON, securing a record seven titles.
- Egyptian clubs, notably Al Ahly (named Club of the Century in Africa in 2001), have amassed 37 CAF titles.
- Despite qualifying for the World Cup only three times, Egypt maintains a strong international presence, reaching Olympic semi-finals twice and Al Ahly winning three FIFA Club World Cup Bronze Medals.
- Al Ahly also ranks second in interclub competitions with 21 trophies, showcasing the nation's substantial football achievements.

In 5 years' time we will be...

Considering the budget gaps between leading teams such as Ahly, Zamalek, and Pyramids, the objective for clubs is to consistently push their limits, ultimately benefiting the league. Active engagement in CAF or Arab cup competitions, along with vigorous pursuit of major trophies, represents the path forward for Egyptian football.

Our challenges

The challenge for Egyptian football involves maximizing its development potential while contending with rising regional competitors, notably the GCC sports project. Despite a rich football heritage, exemplified by stars like Mo Salah, and strategic positioning in the MENA region near the Suez Canal, Egypt must navigate the dual pressures of opportunity and competition. This is compounded by the need to maintain high-level competitiveness, as mid-table clubs significantly increase their spending, often outstripping mid-sized clubs' budgets by 5-6 times. Additionally, viewer engagement remains a concern, with most fans primarily interested in top-tier matches, presenting a nuanced challenge in fully realizing Egypt's potential in the global football arena.

Why are we unique?

Egypt enjoys a comparatively stable management system, and the club's sporting performance renders it an appealing destination for players. The board's steadfast stability and dedication to meeting financial obligations serve as additional incentives. Regarding the league's distinctiveness, a majority of fans are concentrated on top-tier matches, suggesting potential for increased viewer engagement in other games, thus signaling an opportunity for growth.

SOUTH KOREA



Second group (medium population + large economy)

Population (in million)	51,8
Capital	Seoul
GDP/hab	\$31,467
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	62,22
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	12
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	FA
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	22
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	798
National FIFA men's ranking	26
National FIFA women's ranking	20
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	3
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	4
Largest stadium used for football Seoul World Cup Stadium	66,704 Capacity



All teams in the K League are either owned by parent companies, typically conglomerates, or local governments. Seven of the 12 K League 1 teams are owned by parent companies, while the remaining 5 are publicly owned by local governments.



Gunyang Yoon - Samsung Bluewings



Football Culture

- Football is one of the most popular sports, with high participation and viewership rates.
- Baseball is number one sport in South Korea, commanding a massive following and dedicated fan base. Alongside it, football has gained significant traction, especially after the country's notable performance in their home World Cup, fostering a strong football culture. Taekwondo the traditional martial art, esports and golf are increasingly popular
- K League and WK League teams are community-focused with various fan engagement initiatives.



Football Infrastructure

- South Korea boasts several top-notch football stadiums like the Seoul World Cup Stadium.
- K League 1 (male competition) and WKLeague (female competition) feature 12 and 8 teams respectively.
- On average, over 10,000 fans watch a K League 1 match at the stadium.
- South Korea prioritizes football development with modern training centers, advanced technology integration, and government funding. These state-of-the-art facilities aid both professional teams and youth academies, fostering player growth and injury prevention.



Football Performance

- The men's national team, *Taeguk Warriors*, have been in every FIFA World Cup since 1986.
- The women's team, known as *Taegeuk Ladies*, have also been quite successful in Asian competitions.
- Players like Son Heung-min have gained international recognition.
- South Korea became the first (and so far only Asian team) to reach the semi-finals when they co-hosted the 2002 tournament with Japan. South Korea also won two AFC Asian Cup titles.

In 5 years' time we will be...

With the implementation of adjustments, the Korean league has the potential to become a foremost example of synergy between corporate leadership and athletic triumph, in complete alignment with our parent company's goals, offering unparalleled value both on and off the field.

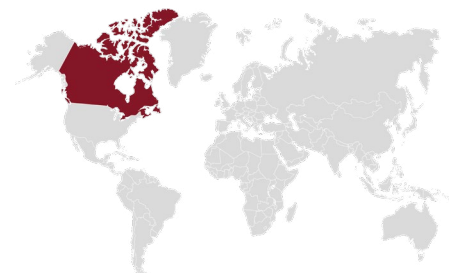
Our challenges

For decades, parent companies have been reducing budgets, resulting in a decline in on-field performance. This trend has led clubs to adopt a conservative approach towards sharing knowledge with other clubs, fearing potential exposure of internal company affairs. The absence of long-term objectives, coupled with the aforementioned issues, hampers the league's ability to further appeal to the digitally-inclined younger generation. The growing influence of social media influencers necessitates strategic and effective management within the league.

Why are we unique?

The K-League stands out for its distinctive features in comparison to European and other Asian football leagues. On the pitch, the K-League boasts a rich history that has contributed to the success of the South Korean National Team, making it one of the most decorated countries in the Asian Champions League with 12 titles across six different clubs. Off the pitch, the K-League sets itself apart by prioritizing global exposure. It has pioneered the expansion of its appeal beyond its immediate region through groundbreaking broadcasting deals and innovative solutions. The league's games are broadcast in 12 countries, with a strong presence on social media generating over 160 million content views worldwide. Moreover, the K-League is one of the few leagues to launch an official OTT platform, enhancing its global recognition. Additionally, the league leverages the growing popularity of K-culture on both the Asian and global stages and maintains strong connections with major Korean brands.

CANADA



Second group (medium population + large economy)

Population (in million)	38
Capital	Ottawa
GDP/hab	\$51,000
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	32
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	8
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	FA
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	12
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	280
National FIFA men's ranking	44
National FIFA women's ranking	10
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	6
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	2
Largest stadium used for football Commonwealth Stadium	56,302 Capacity



Our mission statement being *For Canadians, By Canadians*, it is our mandate to grow football in Canada for Canadians. It's not that we're necessarily looking to be the biggest league in the world. We have ten times less population than the United States, so there will naturally be a gap there. Where you have more eye-balls, you have more revenue. We will always be smaller than the MLS. It's like comparing Scottish football to English football.



Josh Simpson - Pacific FC



Football Culture

- The 1980s marked the official birth of the national team, which won the 1985 CONCACAF Cup, qualified for the 1984 Olympic Games, and participated in the 1986 FIFA World Cup.
- Recently, due to Major League Soccer's growth, soccer in Canada is also on the rise. Historically eclipsed by hockey, soccer has witnessed a growth spurt, with MLS clubs such as Toronto FC, Vancouver Whitecaps, and CF Montréal leading the charge.
- The Canadian men's and women's national teams consistently engage in international competitions, enhancing national pride and commitment to the sport.
- The Canada Women's National Team stands as the second most successful in CONCACAF, after the USA.



Football Infrastructure

- Canada boasts a robust soccer infrastructure, featuring modern stadiums and facilities. These hosted major events like the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup and will play a part in the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup. These venues support MLS clubs and offer the national teams a stage for major tournaments.
- There's a strong emphasis on youth development, with academies and grassroots programs dedicated to fostering young talent, promoting community-level growth, and carving pathways for aspiring players.



Football Performance

- The men's national team stands out in the CONCACAF Cup, being the sole champion outside of powerhouses Mexico and the USA, with titles in 1985 and 2002.
- The women's national team is a formidable rival to the USWNT, clinching the CONCACAF Cup in 1998 and 2010. Their global presence is undeniable, earning bronze in back-to-back Olympic Games (2012 and 2016) and consistently showcasing talent in FIFA Women's World Cups, with a standout performance reaching the 2003 edition's semi-final.
- The men's team, boosted by rising stars like Davies and David, is also in the limelight, as these players excel in top European leagues and steered Canada to World Cup qualification in the 2022 edition.

In 5 years' time we will be...

Canadian clubs are professionalising rapidly, and Pacific FC stands as a prime example, establishing itself as a cornerstone club in an expanding CPL, as evident in the [#PitchSideMonitor](#). While clubs anticipate the inclusion of more international players in Canadian „rosters”, Canadian dedication to nurturing Canadian talent will not waver. The league’s growth strategy will be rooted in organic development, informed by insights from other leagues, including the MLS.

Our challenges

The biggest challenge right now is building a self-sustainable model that bridges the gap between our youth academies and the first team. Canadian football is also contending with the perceptions around the league, particularly when compared to the MLS. However, as the public gets to see the quality and passion they offer, these perceptions will change.

Why are we unique?

What sets the CPL apart is their strong commitment to developing Canadian talent. Their slogan, *For Canadians, By Canadians* resonates with the public. Moreover, the concentration on younger players not only prepares them for a successful football career but also increases their market value, thereby attracting more eyes to the CPL league.

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA (KSA)



Second group (medium population + large economy)

Population (in million)	32,1
Capital	Riyadh
GDP/hab	\$50,023
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	18
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	16
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	738
National FIFA men's ranking	57
National FIFA women's ranking	172
Largest stadium used for football King Fahd International Stadium	68,752 Capacity



Becoming a top league involves more than just acquiring top players; it's a commitment to a broad, enduring vision. Yes, there is an international dimension to our desire to grow into a global-level league, but our inspiration, our essence and our core comes from within the Kingdom and serving the Saudi football fans first and foremost



Carlo Nohra - Saudi Premier League



Football Culture

- Football, immensely popular in Saudi Arabia since the 1920s, is integral to local culture, with Al Ittihad established in 1927.
- The General Sports Authority (GSA), founded in the 1970s, strategically developed all sports, including football. Through infrastructural and financial support, GSA facilitated clubs to sign renowned players and coaches, professionalizing the sport.
- The 1980s saw Saudi Arabia triumph with two Asian Cups and a U16 FIFA World Cup, establishing a legacy with iconic players like Majed Abdullah and Sami Al Jaber, contributing to the country winning the AFC Player of the Year award five times.



Football Infrastructure

- Infrastructure investment began in the 1980s with the construction of 14 stadiums, including the King Fahd International Stadium. This initiative allowed Saudi Arabia to host major events like the FIFA Youth World Cup and Confederation Cup.
- The mid-2010s saw further expansion and renovation of stadiums, with more planned openings soon for the upcoming World Cup 2034
- Besides hosting various significant tournaments, there's a robust football system with distinct organizations for the first and second divisions.
- The government and sports authorities have significantly invested in both men and women's leagues, with youth teams winning AFC Asian Cups at U19 and U23 levels, supported by substantial investment in youth development programs.



Football Performance

- Saudi Arabia actively competes in AFC and global tournaments, featuring players like Salem Al-Dawsari.
- With three AFC Asian Cup titles, it's the second-most successful nation, and its clubs have won a record 21 AFC titles.
- Saudi Arabia has a remarkable global presence with six FIFA World Cup qualifications and significant achievements like being the first Asian country to win a FIFA competition and advance to the FIFA World Cup's round of 16 in 1994.
- Additionally, clubs like Al Hilal and Al Ittihad have set records, with the former being the most titled Asian club and the latter winning consecutive ACL titles in 2004 and 2005.

In 5 years' time we will be...

For nearly a decade, football in the Kingdom has seen growth through a variety of short-term strategies, carving a distinctive place for itself within the MENA region. As it looks ahead, the Kingdom's aspiration for the league is to achieve global recognition, a journey that requires both a unique roadmap and sustained commitment. As a result, the focus is on fostering long-term growth without being restricted to precise 5-year targets. These objectives have been designed keeping the long haul in mind, underlining that triumphs are not simply about roping in star players. It's a comprehensive strategy that looks into various elements of the league. And while having the necessary resources is paramount, the Kingdom acknowledges that these by themselves will not fulfill their overarching vision.

Our challenges?

In building the league's strategy, KSA has identified multiple challenges. A significant issue pertains to the performance of clubs outside the playing field. Even with strict governance in place, any deviations could tarnish the league's reputation, potentially hindering future growth prospects. There's an active endeavor to work hand in hand with clubs to enhance regulatory standards and ensure they align with the league's broader objectives. Furthermore, there's a push to foster clarity in relationships with stakeholders and in the legal landscape, particularly in contracts with relevant bodies. Aspects like game management and commercial strategies also need fine-tuning.

Why are we unique?

The league's intrinsic ties to the Kingdom's culture and history lend it a unique charm. Historically speaking, the league has acted as an essential medium, showcasing the Kingdom's rich traditions to a worldwide audience since the 80s. This relationship with Saudi Arabian heritage persists, providing a window into its modern nuances. However, from an operational standpoint, the league aligns with many of its global counterparts.

AUSTRALIA



Second group (medium population + large economy)

Population (in million)	38
Capital	Canberra
GDP/hab	\$55,900
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	13,49
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	12
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	FA
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	76
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	1147
National FIFA men's ranking	41
National FIFA women's ranking	11
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	11
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs) Largest stadium used for football Stadium Melbourne Cricket Ground	2 100,024 Capacity



My perspective is that we should transition to an open market system. Many talented players opt to play in minor leagues in Asia purely for better salaries, even though they might prefer the Australian environment. If we could offer competitive salaries, we might retain more of this talent.



Greg Griffin - Adelaide FC



Football Culture

- The sport is growing in popularity, with participation and viewership rates on the rise.
- Multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion are core tenets of football culture in Australia.
- A-League and W-League teams are community-focused, with many initiatives to engage local fans.



Football Infrastructure

- Australia has several high-tech, state-of-the-art football facilities that meet international standards, such as Coopers Stadium and Marvel Stadium.
- The A-League (men's competition) and W-League (women's competition) feature 12 and 9 teams respectively.
- The country has hosted major FIFA events such as the 2015 AFC Asian Cup and 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup.



Football Performance

- The *Socceroos* have competed in every FIFA World Cup since 2006.
- The women's team, known as the *Matildas*, are currently ranked 8th in the world and have won the AFC Women's Asian Cup twice.
- Several international players, including Tiago Calvano and Roy O'Donovan, play in the Australian leagues.

In 5 years' time we will be...

Australia's league is at a transformative juncture. Despite high hopes after splitting from the National Federation, the league has faced declining attendance and viewership. The TV deal with Paramount was a setback. However, there is potential for growth, especially with increasing support for women's football and signs of more government backing.

Our challenges

The league is facing a critical financial crisis, with clubs struggling and some on the brink of bankruptcy. Issues include an unfruitful TV deal, declining viewership, and disparities in sponsorship. The governing body's loans to clubs have caused widespread cash flow problems, and the league faces an unprecedented situation of clubs owing money. Additionally, the impending awarding of two new licenses poses financial negotiation challenges. A lawsuit over concussions and brain injuries has further strained the league, leading to a decline in youth participation. These financial and legal challenges depict a league at a pivotal juncture, striving to navigate multiple obstacles..

Why are we unique?

The absence of promotion and relegation can be attractive to investors. The league has adopted the American system of salary caps to ensure fairness among teams, though this system has its own set of challenges. While transitioning to an open market could help retain talent, the current system brings unpredictability and competitiveness, which appeals to viewers.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)



Second group (medium population + large economy)

Population (in million)	9,3
Capital	Abu Dhabi
GDP/hab	\$44,000
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	2.4
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	14
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	Independent
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	14
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	633
National FIFA men's ranking	70
National FIFA women's ranking	112
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	6
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	21
Largest stadium used for football Zayed Sports City Stadium	43,000 Capacity



Since our crowning season in 2018/2019, the club has had a clear vision to be one of the best clubs in the UAE, a goal they believe they have achieved. Commercially, they aim to be the first revenue self-generating club in the UAE.

Ahmed Abdelkhalek - Sharjah FC



Football Culture

- Football is deeply cherished in the local communities, with clubs established in the 1970s by community councils and the state, each representing a city with unique traditions.
- Rapid government investments post-1977, including hiring elite coaches, bolstered both national and local football standards.
- The national team quickly became competitive, qualifying for the 1990 World Cup and reaching the 1996 AFC Asian Cup Final.
- Despite a modest population, the country has produced football heroes like Ismail Matar and Asian players of the Year Ahmed Khalil and Omar Abdulrahman.
- Women's football has also grown since the mid-2010s, with the national team winning regional championships and producing role models like Nora Al Mazroei.



Football Infrastructure

- Substantial investments have been made in world-class stadiums in major cities since the country's inception, with further developments occurring since 2000.
- These investments have resulted in state-of-the-art facilities like Zayed Sports City and Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium.
- The nation has hosted international tournaments since the mid-90s, starting with the 1996 AFC Asian Cup, boosting its profile and leading to more hosting opportunities for FIFA tournaments.
- Efforts to enhance youth football standards have been consistent, culminating in the successful 2008 generation under coach Mahdi Ali, winning the U20 AFC Asian Cup and achieving strong performances in other international competitions.



Football Performance

- The national team, featuring players like Ali Mabkhout and Omar Abdulrahman, competes diligently in AFC tournaments.
- Highlights include being runners-up in the 1996 AFC Asian Cup, qualifying for the 1990 World Cup, and winning the Gulf Cup twice.
- Club Al Ain not only triumphed in the inaugural 2003 AFC Champions League but also reached the 2018 FIFA Club World Cup Final, showcasing the sustained development and achievements in the nation's football landscape.
- Regionally, UAE clubs are the second most titled in the traditional GCC Club with eight titles Championship, and Al Shabab Club holds the record for most wins with three titles.

In 5 years' time we will be...

UAE envision the league to be as a dominant force in domestic competitions and a consistent contender in the AFC Champions League. Commercially, the clubs aim to set a new standard in financial sustainability by becoming the first revenue self-generating league in the UAE, thanks to the successful implementation of strategic investments.

Our challenges

The swift growth of UAE football since the 1970s has set high expectations, making it a challenge to maintain this momentum. With a modest population size, producing consistent world-class talent can be demanding. Even as women's football experiences growth, its sustained expansion and international recognition remain tasks to address. Infrastructure, despite receiving investments, needs to ensure consistent global standards. Moreover, with clubs like Al Ain achieving international acclaim, other clubs face the pressure of reaching similar milestones. Challenges in the UAE Pro-League remains the financial sustainability of clubs, the development of local talent, and adapting to rapidly changing media landscapes, among others.

Why are we unique?

UAE football clubs are distinct in their exclusive regional representation as the sole top-level teams in their cities, fostering close ties with local government sports authorities and domestic sponsors. Their impressive track record in continental competitions, highlighted by Al Ain's victory in the inaugural AFC Champions League and a finals appearance in the FIFA Club World Cup, showcases their prowess. Additionally, their success in the GCC Club Championship, particularly Al Shabab Club's record wins, underscores their regional dominance, elevating their status in the global football community.

* United Arab Emirates

IRAN



 Third group (medium or small population + medium or small economy)

Population (in million)	83
Capital	Tehran
GDP/hab	\$5,200
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	16
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	16
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	592
National FIFA men's ranking	21
National FIFA women's ranking	63
Largest stadium used for football Azadi Stadium	78,116 Capacity

“ We have many good talents, and players from Iran are well known all around the world, but the next objective should be improving club management. ”

Meysam Rasti - Sanat Naft Abadan FC



Football Culture

- Football was introduced to Iran more than 110 years ago through British workers who arrived with the oil discovery.
- The Iran Men's Premier League is named the „Persian Gulf League,“ while the Women's League is known as the „Kosar League.“
- The fan base of Iranian football primarily leans towards Red or Blue, supporting Persepolis and Esteghlal football clubs, making up about 80% of the entire fan community. Fans also tend to support teams based in their localities, such as Sepahan in Esfahan, Tractor in Tabriz, Sanat Naft in Abadan, and Malavan in Anzali.
- A notable point is that in all cities, except for Abadan, stadium seats are almost equally divided between blue or red fans and the host teams' fans. In contrast, Abadan's Takhti stadium is awash in yellow to support Sanat Naft.



Football Infrastructure

- Iran boasts several commendable stadiums, including Naghsh-e Jahan in Esfahan, Imam Reza in Mashhad, and Foolad Arena in Ahvaz.
- The renowned „Azadi Stadium,“ located in Tehran, serves as the home for „Team Meli“ and was constructed in 1972, hosting the Asian Games in 1974. With the Azadi Stadium showing signs of wear and tear, the Iranian government has planned significant renovations.
- New stadiums are being developed in other Iranian cities like Kerman and Shiraz. However, Iran's sports, especially football, still require numerous additional stadiums.
- Since 2019, Iranian stadiums have been fitted with electronic entrance gates for fans, enhancing both safety and club revenues.
- Sepahan Esfahan and Foolad Ahvaz boast the best facilities among Iranian football clubs.



Football Performance

- „Team Meli“ has qualified for the FIFA World Cup six times: 1978, 1998, 2006, 2014, 2018, and 2022.
- With the collaboration between FIFA, AFC, and the Iranian government, women fans have gained access to Iranian stadiums in recent years. The first step was for the ACL (AFC Champions League), and the second for Team Meli, starting from the 2023-24 season in the Persian Gulf League.
- As per the regulations of AFC's Club Licensing System, the organization of Iranian clubs has improved, although there remains a substantial gap to reach standardized positions.
- The previous decade was a period for Iranian football. Despite a lack of titles, the country began its legacy of exporting local talents to European leagues, with players like Ali Daei, Khodadad Azizi, and Mehdi Mahdavi setting a precedent that continues to this day.

In 5 years' time we will be...

In the next five years, the direction of Iranian football will largely be shaped by the issue of the ownership. Club owners recognise that ownership plays a pivotal role in setting the club's main strategy, from financial planning and infrastructure development to sports performance. As the matter of their ownership is resolved in a principled manner—compliant with the AFC Club Licensing System and regulations from Iran's government and Parliament—Iran's Premier League can only be strengthened.

Our challenges

The most pressing challenge Iran is facing is the government ownership of clubs in the IPL. Although countries in the Persian Gulf like Qatar, UAE, and Saudi Arabia have successfully managed football through government ownership, the same cannot be said for Iran. Football today is an industry requiring sharp business acumen, something lacking in Iran's governmental managers. Moreover, there is an urgent need to improve the football management knowledge among our executives to change outdated attitudes, such as the club spending on fans instead of being financially supported by them.

Why are we unique?

The league has untapped potential for attractiveness, but it currently falls short due to inadequate media activities and low-quality TV broadcasting. The key to enhancing its appeal lies in media engagement, rewarding individual performance, and creating an engaging environment for fans in the stadiums. Iranian executives believe that if these basic issues are addressed, the league could offer a unique and compelling football experience for both players and viewers alike. The last decades marked a distinctive era for Iranian football. Although it didn't bring many international titles, Iran started building its legacy of exporting local talents to European leagues, becoming a pioneer in this regard. The country expects to continue this trend despite the challenging geopolitical context.

TANZANIA



Third group (medium or small population + medium or small economy)

Population (in million)	63,59
Capital	Dodoma
GDP/hab	\$2,830
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	16
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	20
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	-
National FIFA men's ranking	122
National FIFA women's ranking	151
Largest stadium used for football National Stadium	60,000 Capacity



We stand on the brink of greatness, envisioning Tanzanian Football not just participating, but thriving and leading amongst Africa's Top 3 Leagues! With competitive matches that captivate, infrastructure that inspires Eastern Africa, and an organisation that sets benchmarks in excellence, we're not just playing the game; we're redefining it.



Jonathan M. Kassano - Singida Fountain Gate FC



Football Culture

- Football is deeply ingrained in Tanzanian society. It is not only a popular sport but also a crucial aspect of the country's culture, serving as a unifying element for people from diverse backgrounds.
- Tanzanian football fans are known for their passion, enthusiasm, and loyalty.



Football Infrastructure

- There is growing investment in youth development and grassroots programs to nurture young talents. These initiatives aim to provide children and teenagers with access to football training and education, helping to cultivate the next generation of players.
- Tanzania has seen significant improvement in its football infrastructure over the years. The country boasts several stadiums that meet international standards, providing adequate venues for both local and international matches.
- The AFCON 27 African Cup of Nations will be jointly hosted by Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, the first that will be organized in East Africa or more specifically CECAFA region and providing Tanzania with a unique opportunity to further upgrade its football infrastructure.



Football Performance

- The Tanzanian Premier League is the top professional football division, with teams like Young Africans or SC Simba SC being among the most successful and popular.
- The Tanzanian national football team is known as the *Taifa Stars*. While they may not be among the elite football teams globally, they have shown significant progress in CAF competitions.
- Players such as Mbwana Samatta, who has played in various European leagues, have elevated the profile of Tanzanian football on the global stage. Novatus Miroshi is amongst the new wave.

In 5 years' time we will be...

The Tanzanian Football is soaring into the top three leagues in Africa within five years, excelling in competitive matches, infrastructure, organization, and officiating. This vision is built on a foundation of long-term strategic planning, robust government support, and the undeniable loyalty among fans.

Our challenges

Tanzanian Football faces substantial challenges, including securing reliable sponsors essential for funding the sport from grassroots to professional levels. There's also a need to improve refereeing standards to ensure fair and just matches, which is key to maintaining the sport's integrity. This may involve investing in training and technology to help referees make better decisions during games. Also, it's important that clubs adhere to proper licensing, which guarantees they operate within legal and ethical standards, fostering professionalism and accountability. On the Infrastructure, especially the quality of football fields, also requires improvement for both player performance.

Why are we unique?

Tanzanian Football benefits from having a detailed plan for the future and enjoys unwavering support from its fanbase. Historic clubs in the country, such as Simba SC and Young Africans SC (Yanga), have a deep-rooted relationship with fans, contributing significantly to the rich history and tradition of football in Tanzania. Furthermore, the support from the government and other important stakeholders provides Tanzanian Football with the resources and backing it needs to navigate through its present challenges. This strong foundation of planning, support, and tradition sets the stage for a promising future for football in Tanzania, allowing the sport to grow and thrive in the coming years.

SOUTH AFRICA



Third group (medium or small population + medium or small economy)

Population (in million)	60
Capital	Pretoria
GDP/hab	\$6,600
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	1.51
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	16
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	FA
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	32
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	2200
National FIFA men's ranking	65
National FIFA women's ranking	54
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	4
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	2
Largest stadium used for football Stadium Soccer City	94,736 Capacity



I am optimistic that football in South Africa will continue to improve. Currently there is no doubt that it is one of the most stable leagues on the African continent with a stable financial model, good sponsors and huge viewership. However, with additional marketing efforts it can attract more fans to games. The revenue of gate takings is very small as crowd attendance is small. It is challenging as World Cup facilities are far too large and because they are prohibitive in pricing it makes it difficult for clubs to spend more money on marketing games to bring in bigger crowds.



Natalie Barlow - LALIGA South Africa



Football Culture

- Football is the most popular sport, with high participation and viewership rates.
- Other very popular sports in South Africa are rugby and cricket.
- Premier Soccer League and National Women's League have community focused initiatives.
- Sports have played a significant role in shaping South African culture, serving as a means of bringing people together and promoting social cohesion. In addition to providing entertainment and an outlet for physical activity, sports have also been used to address social issues such as racism, poverty, and inequality.



Football Infrastructure

- South Africa has high-quality football facilities, notably FNB Stadium with 94,730 seats.
- Overall, there are 8 stadiums in South Africa that can accommodate over 50,000 fans.
- The Premier Soccer League (men's competition) and National Women's League (women's competition) feature 16 and 14 teams respectively.



Football Performance

- *Bafana Bafana* (men's national team) and *Banyana Banyana* (women's national team) have had varying levels of success on the African continent.
- South Africa qualified for the 1998 and 2002 World Cups, but failed to progress past the group stage both times. They hosted and won the 1996 African Cup of Nations and hosted the 2010 World Cup, the first African nation to do so.
- Mamelodi Sundowns is the winner of the inaugural African Football League
- The country has developed several football stars who have brought pride and joy, such as Benny McCarthy and Steven Pienaar and several players, like Percy Tau, play abroad.

In 5 years' time we will be...

One hopes for continuous improvement in football within South Africa. With a stable league, secured broadcast sponsorship (a significant one in Africa), and a recently renewed seven-year contract, there's foundational revenue for the clubs. It's anticipated that South African football will gain further stability over the next five years. Growing interest from sponsors both locally and internationally could lead to an influx of commercial deals, enhancing the league's overall football standard. Funds for development are expected to increase, spotlighting South Africa due to the success of players internationally. Although the league has experienced substantial growth over the past five years, there's more to be achieved, especially in marketing, as current promotional activities around games are minimal compared to those in the USA or Europe.

Our challenges

A significant challenge is the infrastructure development of the clubs, with many lacking their own training facilities and relying on government support. The affordability of tickets for fans is another concern, with unemployment and inflation rates in South Africa rising. This economic climate makes it increasingly difficult to fill stadiums. The situation is exacerbated by the use of expansive and costly World Cup facilities and the fact that some clubs play home games several hours away from their training cities. Thus, infrastructure poses a significant challenge, especially as clubs neither own stadiums nor training facilities, and often play games with minimal attendance.

Why are we unique?

The league attracts players from across the continent due to its stable financial foundation, robust sponsorship, and substantial viewership, standing as one of Africa's top leagues. The unique feature of having every league game televised not only makes it distinctive within Africa but also globally. Moreover, the unique talent found within South Africa adds to its appeal.

ARGENTINA



Third group (medium or small population + medium or small economy)

Population (in million)	45
Capital	Buenos Aires
GDP/hab	\$12,000
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	28
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	FA
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	103
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	3920
National FIFA men's ranking	1
National FIFA women's ranking	31
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	2
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	3
Largest stadium used for football Stadium Estadio Monumental	70,074 Capacity



We aim to be protagonists both nationally and in international tournaments, such as the Copa Libertadores. We are committed to promoting players from our own youth system to the first team, echoing successful models in other top leagues.



Pablo Quatrocchi - Estudiantes de la Plata



Football Culture

- Football holds a special place in Argentina's heart, with its rich history dating back to the late 1800s.
- The nation is home to some of the world's most storied football clubs, like River Plate and Boca Juniors, whose historic rivalry encapsulates the country's fervent love for the sport.
- Argentina has produced football legends, such as Diego Maradona and Lionel Messi, who not only shaped the game but also brought immense pride to the nation.
- The Argentine national team, with its impressive record, including three FIFA World Cup titles, is a symbol of national pride and a source of unforgettable moments for its passionate fans.



Football Infrastructure

- Argentina boasts a well-developed football infrastructure, with numerous stadiums that are filled with history and significance, like La Bombonera and El Monumental.
- These venues have hosted countless monumental matches, both at the club and international levels.
- The country's commitment to football development is evident through its extensive network of football academies and youth programs, which consistently produce players who excel both in Argentina and abroad.



Football Performance

- Argentina's football prowess is displayed through its remarkable achievements on the global stage.
- Argentine clubs have also been successful, with multiple wins in prestigious tournaments like the Copa Libertadores.
- The nation's footballing philosophy and style of play, characterized by technical skill and creativity, have been celebrated and emulated worldwide, making Argentina one of the pillars of international football.

In 5 years' time we will be...

Following Argentina's recent World Cup win, the league is riding a wave of international attention. They should capitalise first by focusing on consistent performance and by setting ambitious goals, including international club titles... Brazil is getting stronger, so Argentina better watch out!

Our challenges

The biggest challenge is sustaining a high level of competition across divisions while ensuring that young players in our training teams are prepared to make the jump to the first team. This complete player development is essential for our long-term strategy. Another key challenge is to work on consolidating the long-term relationship with their key stakeholders, the fans, who are extremely invested emotionally in the game here, but this is related to wider socio-economic growth that we need in the country.

Why are we unique?

The Argentine league is known for its competitiveness and has a storied history of producing world-class talent. The atmosphere in the stadiums is electric, and the quality of play is often high, making it attractive for both viewers and aspiring players. Argentina has some of the oldest clubs, competitions and governing bodies outside of the original home of football, meaning that it took the game at a very early stage and had ample time to create their own brand of playing and feeling fútbol that is perfect for the modern stage that obviously brings results for their clubs, their national teams and their players who are highly in demand across the world.

MOROCCO



Third group (medium or small population + medium or small economy)

Population (in million)	38
Capital	Rabat
GDP/hab	\$3,795
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	0,7
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	16
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	FA
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	32
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	930
National FIFA men's ranking	13
National FIFA women's ranking	58
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	1
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	4
Largest stadium used for football Stadium Stade de Marrakech	45,240 Capacity



Committed to refining investment structures and expanding membership bases, we envision a vibrant, financially stable future for Moroccan football. With different clubs investing in nurturing young talent at the heart of our league, we're not just improving, but enhancing the quality and engagement of professional football in the region, building a bridge between Africa and Europe.



Youssef Debbagh - FUS de Rabat



Football Culture

- Football is deeply ingrained in Morocco, with clubs like Wydad AC and Raja AC drawing massive fanbases and high TV ratings.
- The sport has been part of Morocco's national identity since the 1920s, with the national team predating the FA and featuring only local talent.
- Post-independence in the 1950s, Morocco established its FA and joined FIFA, enabling international competition participation.
- The 1970s saw Morocco's rise as an African football leader, highlighted by a 1970 World Cup appearance and a 1976 AFCON win with homegrown talent.
- The 1980s and 1990s featured Moroccan clubs' continental success and the national team's historic 1986 World Cup knockout stage advancement.



Football Infrastructure

- Morocco boasts premier stadiums, hosting major events like FIFA Club WCs and AFCONs, and is set to host the 2025 AFCON and the 2030 FIFA World Cup.
- The country's youth development, especially the Mohammed VI academy, has produced top talents playing in Europe's elite leagues. Moroccan youth teams have achieved notable success, with the U20 team reaching the 2005 FIFA WC semis and the U23 team being current AFCON Champions.
- Botola Pro is the top-ranked CAF league with 16 teams, while the 12-team Women's Championship continues to develop under the FA's guidance.



Football Performance

- The *Lions of the Atlas* won the 1976 AFCON, have six FIFA WC appearances, and reached the 2022 semi-finals.
- Moroccan clubs hold 7 CAF CC titles and are the second-highest in CAF CL titles with another 7.
- Raja Casablanca was the first African club in the FIFA Club WC in 2000 and reached the 2013 final.
- The *Atlas Lionesses* reached the 2022 AFCON final and the 2023 FIFA WWC round of 16.
- ASFAR holds the Women's CAF Champions League title.
- Morocco has produced internationally recognized players like Hakim Ziyech and Youssef Ennysiri, alongside women's stars like Ghezlanne Chebbak.

In 5 years' time we will be...

In five years, Moroccan football continues to aim to position itself as a bridge between African and European leagues, providing a unique blend of talent, excitement, and cultural richness in the world of football. One limitation to growth is still identified as related to the foreign investment approach; currently, 33% of the club stake needs to be owned by the association part (loi 1-10-150), as per the association's structure. Potentially adjusting this regulation and discussing with the decision-makers within the Federation is a way to go forward. In any case, strategic moves in Morocco involve incrementally opening up to foreign investments to invigorate the Moroccan market, which hasn't seen substantial foreign investment due to shareholding limitations. This phased approach will also address financial challenges faced by big clubs, drawing inspiration from the Socio Membership model (e.g. Portuguese model), which allows for broader membership bases and creative financial solutions.

Our challenges

The biggest challenge for many clubs remains financial stability, primarily due to limitations on foreign investments and a small membership base for voting in major clubs. For instance, clubs like Raja Casablanca, with millions of supporters, have only around 400 voting members. In contrast, European clubs have wider membership bases, ensuring robust financial backing and greater democratic participation. By lowering membership fees, clubs could aim to expand the member base, securing more consistent financial support while also enabling wider fan engagement in club governance.

Why are we unique?

The league is distinct due to several factors: It serves as a bridge between African and European football, offering a special comparison to Brazilian football. Moroccan stadiums are prepared for the CAN 2025, and the technical quality of Moroccan players is very high. Fans play a crucial role, providing an electric atmosphere that makes games thrilling to watch. Every game is broadcasted at the highest level, showcasing the strong talent. The acclaimed Mohammed VI Academy is at the heart of our league, nurturing young talent on natural grass fields, further enhancing the quality of professional football in the region.

PERU



 Third group (medium or small population + medium or small economy)

Population (in million)	33,72
Capital	Lima
GDP/hab	\$6,621
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	19
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	FA
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	30
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	898
National FIFA men's ranking	22
National FIFA women's ranking	8
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	9
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	80,093 Capacity
Largest stadium used for football Stadium Estadio Monumental	

“ El futbol peruano, while lightly structured, boasts an abundance of quality players. Competing in a variety of atmospheric conditions, our players exhibit remarkable adaptability. ”

Carlos Benavides - Ex Sporting Cristal



Football Culture

- Football in Peru is deeply entrenched in the national psyche, serving as a unifying force among its diverse population.
- Since the sport's introduction in the early 1900s, it has blossomed, giving rise to prominent clubs like Universitario and Alianza Lima, whose rivalry captivates the nation.
- The Peruvian national team has also etched its mark in history, especially during the 1970s when it not only clinched the 1975 Copa America title but also qualified for three FIFA World Cup tournaments.
- Legends like Paolo Guerrero and Teofilo Cubillas have emerged from Peru, embodying the nation's footballing spirit and contributing to its rich heritage.



Football Infrastructure

- Peru has invested in creating a supportive infrastructure for football.
- While historical stadiums like Estadio Nacional provide a glimpse into the country's football legacy, there are continual efforts to renovate and upgrade facilities to meet international standards.
- With the Estadio Monumental "U" hosting the final of the Libertadores in 2019 as a highlight of this.
- These infrastructures support the domestic league and provide a foundation for youth development programs designed to nurture the next generation of Peruvian talent.



Football Performance

- Peruvian football has seen notable successes, with the national team often punching above its weight on the international stage.
- The 1975 Copa America victory remains a high point. In recent years the national team has performed well in the Copa America, achieving runner up in 2019 in Brazil, as well as qualifying to the 2018 World Cup.
- The domestic league also provides a vibrant football scene, with clubs not only developing local talent but also competing vigorously in continental tournaments.
- Players emerging from Peru often grace leagues around the world, underlining the nation's significant contribution to global football.

In 5 years' time we will be...

Football in Peru is currently navigating through a challenging phase, with economic concerns making the immediate outlook appear somewhat cautious. Some clubs are actively working to avoid approaching bankruptcy within the next five years. Initiatives are underway, with the federation establishing partnerships with companies like 1190, a media rights reselling entity, to stabilize and grow the league's economic ecosystem. While there may be revenue generation challenges with the new system initially, there's anticipation that with problem resolution, effective leadership, and constructive dialogue among stakeholders, a more solid and stable financial foundation can be laid for the future.

The focus is on building a resilient league, not just an economic bubble, which can weather through financial challenges while presenting a promising, revitalized image of football in Peru. With concerted efforts, the league aims to turn around the current financial constraints and create sustainable projects that will work in the short to medium term, fostering a more positive environment for football in the country.

Our challenges

The immediate challenge in Peruvian football is navigating through an anticipated period of financial instability and political disputes, all while trying to carve out a strategic path out of the looming crisis therefore engaging stakeholders in positive and constructive conversations will be crucial, amidst the effort to stabilize and rebuild the league's economic ecosystem while preserving its integrity and appeal.

Why are we unique?

Despite structural problems, Peruvian football is renowned for its talent pool, with a massified presence of quality players who are adaptable to various atmospheric conditions, making them polyfunctional. The league offers visually engaging and challenging football due to drastic variances in playing conditions, such as differences in temperature and altitude. Players in the league naturally develop resilience and versatility as they frequently play in high-altitude environments, contributing to the league's distinctive character and appeal.

CHILE



 Third group (medium or small population + medium or small economy)

Population (in million)	19
Capital	Santiago
GDP/hab	\$15,300
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	16
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	Independent
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	42
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	1300
National FIFA men's ranking	36
National FIFA women's ranking	41
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	6
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	4
Largest stadium used for football Stadium Estadio Nacional	48,665 Capacity

“ We observe various South American leagues and benchmark ourselves, especially those in Paraguay and Bolivia. However, we acknowledge that we are far from reaching the standards set by Argentine and Brazilian leagues. ”

Pablo Alvarez - Unión San Felipe



Football Culture

- Football in Chile, with roots traced back to the late 19th century followed with the establishment of clubs such as Colo-Colo in 1925 and Universidad de Chile in 1927.
- Following the establishment of the Chilean Football Federation in 1915, a new era started, marked by homegrown talents who would later become legends, making significant appearances in Copa América and securing a spot in the 1962 FIFA World Cup.
- The Chilean Primera División, which is the top tier of the football league system in Chile, was officially established in 1933. This makes it the oldest continuously running professional football league in South America



Football Infrastructure

- Chile boasts remarkable football infrastructure, with massive arenas such as the Estadio Nacional, capable of accommodating over 48,000 fans.
- The country has showcased its ability to host premier tournaments, most notably the 1962 FIFA World Cup and the 2015 Copa América, with both events receiving international praise.
- The youth structure in Chile is good allowing the U23 team clinched a bronze medal in the 2000 Summer Olympics. Meanwhile, the U20 team has had significant achievements, including reaching the FIFA U20 World Cup semi-finals in 2007, where they also secured a bronze medal.



Football Performance

- Chile clinched the Copa América in 2015 and 2016 and has participated in nine FIFA World Cups.
- Chilean clubs, especially Colo-Colo, Universidad de Chile, and Universidad Católica, have shown strong performances in CONMEBOL, with Colo-Colo winning the Copa Libertadores.
- Chile's U20 team reached the FIFA U20 World Cup finals in 2007, highlighting a strong youth structure.
- In the 2000s, players like Alexis Sánchez, Arturo Vidal and Claudio Bravo rose to prominence in top European clubs. The nation has produced prominent footballers such as Elias Figueroa, the record holder for South American Player of the Year, along with Marcelo Salas and Matias Fernández.

In 5 years' time we will be...

Chilean football is set to see a resurgence due to an emphasis on youth development. Plans to enhance youth training, coupled with the introduction of boarding facilities and a talent scouting department, aim to nurture emerging talents for the first team. Building on its rich footballing history and these new strategies, Chile aims to re-establish itself as a leading footballing nation in South America and beyond.

Our challenges

Despite Chile's rich football history and achievements, challenges persist. There's mounting pressure on clubs to match better results in Copa Libertadores. The legacy left by legends such as Alexis Sánchez and Arturo Vidal means upcoming players face expectations to perform at par on international stages. Furthermore, while Chile has commendable football infrastructure, continuously updating and expanding these facilities to accommodate growing demands and ensure world-class standards is crucial. Lastly, the overarching challenge is the comprehensive development of young players in sporting, social, educational, and cultural aspects to prepare them for professional play. In addition, my role involves recruiting and training staff across various departments to meet these goals.

Why are we unique?

Chilean football stands out for its fervent supporters who bring a vibrant atmosphere to every match. The nation's style of play is characterized by a deep-rooted emphasis on skill and technical prowess, reflecting a rich footballing heritage. This approach has been honed over generations and is a source of national pride, distinguishing Chilean football with its flair and creativity on the pitch. The combination of a dedicated fan base and a unique playing style contributes to the distinct identity of Chilean football on the global stage.

TUNISIA



 Third group (medium or small population + medium or small economy)

Population (in million)	12,3
Capital	Tunis
GDP/hab	\$3,807
Value of domestic sport industry (billion usd)	255
Number of Teams in top football division (current)	16
Top division structure (independent league or under FA)	FA
Total number of professional clubs (FIFA 2019)	38
Total number of professional players (FIFA 2019)	1495
National FIFA men's ranking	29
National FIFA women's ranking	76
League/country ranking in confederation (for men's clubs)	5
League/country ranking in confederation (for women's clubs)	8
Largest stadium used for football Stade Hammadi Al Aqrabi	60,000 Capacity

“ Tunisian football prioritizes the national team, while the league's standard drops each season. The federation's strategy leans towards recruiting bi-national players from major global leagues instead of fostering local talent.

Faiez Masmoudi - Club Sportif Sfaxien



Football Culture

- Football in Tunisia, dating back to the early 1900s, boasts a rich history and passionate fans.
- The formation of clubs like Esperance Sportive du Tunis in 1919 and Club Africain in 1920 marked the game's early establishment.
- Post the 1960 FA creation, a golden generation of homegrown players emerged, making significant AFCON appearances and securing a 1978 FIFA World Cup qualification.
- The 1990s ushered in a consistent success period for clubs and the national team, with noteworthy players like Tarek Dhiab and Hatem Trabelsi achieving continental recognition and thriving in European football.



Football Infrastructure

- Tunisia has standard, albeit outdated, football facilities with a capacity exceeding 50,000 in stadiums like Stade Hammadi Al Aqrabi.
- While it has a history of hosting significant events, including being the first African country to host a FIFA competition (U20 FIFA WC in 1977) and hosting AFCON three times, the infrastructure requires substantial renovations.
- Youth teams competently participate in regional and occasional continental tournaments, with U23 teams qualifying for the Summer Olympics in 1996 and 2004, and the U20 team reaching the 2023 AFCON SemiFinals and FIFA WC.



Football Performance

- The national team is a competitive force in AFCON and World Cups, generating talents like Wahbi Khazri and Hannibaal Mejbri.
- With significant achievements including winning AFCON in 2004 and participating in six FIFA World Cups, Tunisia has made its mark in football.
- Tunisian clubs, being the third most titled in CAF Competitions with 16 titles and Esperance Sportive du Tunis having four CAF Champions League titles, demonstrate the nation's strong football performance, with Etoile Sportive du Sahel even reaching the 2007 FIFA Club World Cup Semi-Finals.

In 5 years' time we will be...

The vision of Tunisian football executives is for the league to remain among the top 5 in African football, driven by increased club participation in the advanced stages of the CAF Champions League. They also aim for stronger collaboration with European clubs, fostering opportunities for player exchanges and training partnerships. Their objective is to amplify national talent, positioning it as a cornerstone of the National Team's achievements, echoing several iconic periods in their history.

What is the biggest challenge they are currently facing?

Their foremost challenge lies in modernizing their football infrastructure, which includes stadiums, training facilities, and youth academies. With limited funding, all clubs are compelled to play their continental matches at a single venue, Stade Hammadi ElAqrabi. This situation not only stifles the growth of local talent for the National Team but also affects potential revenue from matchday earnings and broadcasting rights. The result is an economic benefit for a select few clubs, leaving the majority under strain.

Is there a factor that makes their league especially unique/attractive to viewers or players?

The Tunisian Ligue Professionnelle 1 is distinguished by its fervent fan base, producing a matchday atmosphere rivaled by few. Their fixtures transcend mere games; they're cultural phenomena, given the plethora of clubs with vast and devoted followings.

Furthermore, their league has, over the years, played an instrumental role in the national team's successes—a distinctive trait in the region. It's also a breeding ground for top talents who've shined on global platforms, making it an optimal stage for budding players to demonstrate their prowess and draw the attention of international scouts. The combination of enthusiastic supporters, an illustrious football heritage, and vast developmental prospects makes their league uniquely compelling for both spectators and players.

Future Outlook

It is a cliché to talk about football as the world's favourite game, and yet there is no denying that there are few things in this world as uniquely positioned to move and excite people as the beautiful game. Of course, many places around the world claim to be the original inventors of the ball game, but since the initial codification of football as a modern sport in the mid-19th century, its epicentre has been in and around Europe, even though in those 150+ years it has travelled and grew roots all over the world. In fact, in some places it bedded in so well that the “beautiful game” morphed into the “jogo bonito” and gave birth to some of the world's most scintillating football teams and legendary players. But still, the economic and administrative power seemed to zone in on the Old Continent, even though the players or administrators may have come from all over the world.

Everything started to shift in recent decades, though. As the game of football grew into a full-scale industry deftly combining the European and North American structural models, new football ventures started to pop up in different parts of the globe: clubs and leagues here and there, some modelling themselves on the best practice examples from leading nations, and others trying to capture their own unique operational model. It is at this crucial moment in the evolutionary history of football that we produce this report, offering a current snapshot of the reality of football clubs and leagues in all four corners of the globe: from Africa to the Americas, Asia and Australia. We have aimed with this comprehensive and unique publication to make a record of their current situation, but also of their hopes and aspirations for the future.

In our conversations with many football executives from many key and up-and-coming football nations, we have striven to capture the uniqueness of each nation in terms of how it sees itself and its football, but also provide a structured comparative basis with figures and objective numbers that could enable a more profound analysis of the true potential of each of these countries to achieve their strategic development goals. In this, we believe that this publication is unprecedented.

There is always a danger in sport to concentrate too much on the winner, or the most successful performer, in detriment of all other competitors. But this is precisely the true nature of sport that in order to perform, you always need at least two participants. The football industry is privileged in that so many competitors are striving to reach the pinnacle of the sport simultaneously, which means the tip of the pyramid can grow higher and higher.

It is clear to us that the next frontier for football excellence will be traced in one of those countries that are covered in this report, and the continued success of football as a global game will be driven by the emergence of significant new epicentres of football power that can create in their midst complete ecosystems topped with elite competitions for top players: in the Middle East, North and South America, East Asia, North Africa, West Africa and others.

Some of the pioneers of this movement in the early 1990s were Japan and USA. Today, we also see Saudi Arabia as a major new strategic project builder that has both excited and startled the international football fraternity, but there are also countries from veritable football “royalty” stock such as Brazil wanting to reset their systems and turn their domestic football into global-level offerings to the global football market. Success of these growing projects will certainly redraw the power balance map of football and take it to new places. Here is to a top football competition in every time zone!



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OUR PROJECT TEAM GLOBAL STUDY

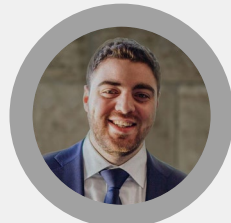
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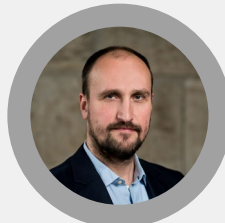
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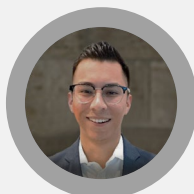


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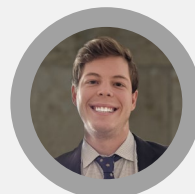
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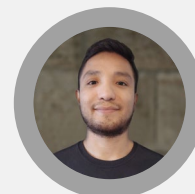
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