

REPORT ON YOUTH ACADEMIES IN EUROPE

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
CENTRAL FOR THE
FUTURE OF
CLUB FOOTBALL



ECA
EUROPEAN CLUB ASSOCIATION

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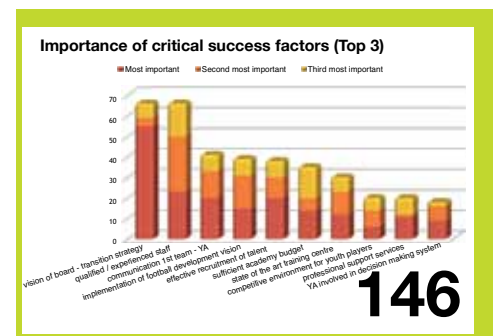
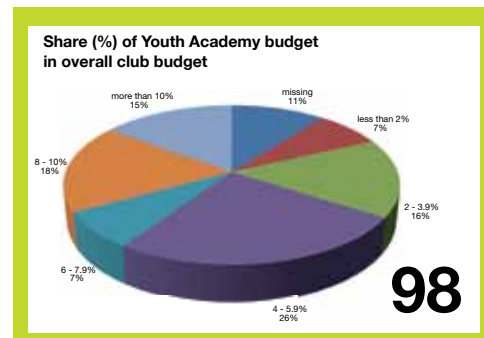
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“As ECA, we would like to strongly promote grassroots football and point out the benefits of an established youth policy for a football club and its supporters. It is for this reason that I am particularly convinced that this Report on Youth Academies in Europe is necessary, not only as a source of information, but also as a tool to improve our academies.”

*Karl-Heinz Rummenigge
ECA Chairman*



FOREWORD FROM THE ECA CHAIRMAN

It is a cliché to say that the future belongs to the youth, but few clichés ring as true as this one. Youth development is a key issue and will always remain so. Each football club has developed its own initiatives when it comes to youth development and there is a lot to learn from each other on this front.

The youth sector would certainly benefit from a more co-ordinated approach, in particular in the area of coaching. Following the work done by the ECA Youth Working Group, the need to issue a best-practices blueprint led to the birth of this Report on Youth Academies in Europe.

Competition among clubs has always existed to unearth the best youth players and the new talent, but two key changes in football have intensified this situation. The first of these changes has to do with the implementation of UEFA's Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules, which force all European clubs to live within their means. An efficient and productive youth academy will become a necessity, if it is not already the case, and clubs will have to pay even more attention to youth development. The second change, which is being implemented, is the squad-size limit. Already in place in European club competitions, more and more leagues throughout Europe have introduced or are considering

implementing the limit of 25 players, with unlimited players under the age of 21.

In the current economic climate and with FFP becoming increasingly important, clubs are right to think about how they can improve their own academies, no matter their size. Having a good youth academy will have an increased impact on a club's ability to compete in the league. I can tell you that at my own club, FC Bayern München, we recently restructured our youth academy in order to adopt the right vision for the future of our club.

As ECA, we would like to strongly promote grassroots football and point out the benefits of an established youth policy for a football club and its supporters. It is for this reason that I am particularly convinced that this Report on Youth Academies in Europe is necessary, not only as a source of information, but also as a tool to improve our academies.

I would like to thank the members of the Youth Task Force which includes Maarten Fontein (AZ Alkmaar), Bodo Menze (FC Schalke 04), Liam Brady (Arsenal FC), Konstantin Kornakov (Heart of Midlothian FC), Jan Skýpala (FK Teplice) and Olivier Jarosz (ECA) for their dedication and work to produce this Report. I trust you will find this Report on Youth Academies in Europe both useful and informative.

Karl-Heinz Rummenigge
ECA Chairman



WHY AN ECA REPORT ON YOUTH ACADEMIES?

In 2008, ECA was founded with the core mission of representing clubs as credible stakeholders in the football family. This has been the case so far and ECA has achieved a lot for clubs despite its relatively short history. During this time, we have also understood that ECA can do much more, including becoming a platform for expertise.

I am very pleased with this development and the ECA Report on Youth Academies in Europe is the best example: a guide designed and focused on youth development aiming to provide advice to the clubs and to offer a medium to share experiences on youth academies. Nowadays, developing professional football players is a clear priority and focus for all clubs, irrespective of their philosophy, country or size. Such urgency has partly been dictated by Financial Fair Play that is demanding more attention for youth investment policies and more significantly by successful stories of clubs who have achieved their sporting success out of their youth development philosophy.

In many countries, associations or leagues carry out detailed assessments of their national youth academies; we do not aim to replace these through this Report. The added value of an ECA Report on Youth Academies in Europe, the way we see it, is to

provide a comparable European perspective that currently does not exist. While such benchmark exercises usually include rankings, in this Report we chose to underline the different approaches and the systems of work of Youth Academies throughout Europe with no aim at classifications. Indeed, we believe that comprehensive research is important to guide the thinking that shapes future trends.

I have to say that at ECA we are extremely satisfied with the outcome; in particular, with the great interest and support shown by our members in the ECA Survey. I am convinced that this Report will become a reference for our members and a source of inspiration where they can find ideas to improve their own youth academies which will be of benefit to all ECA members.

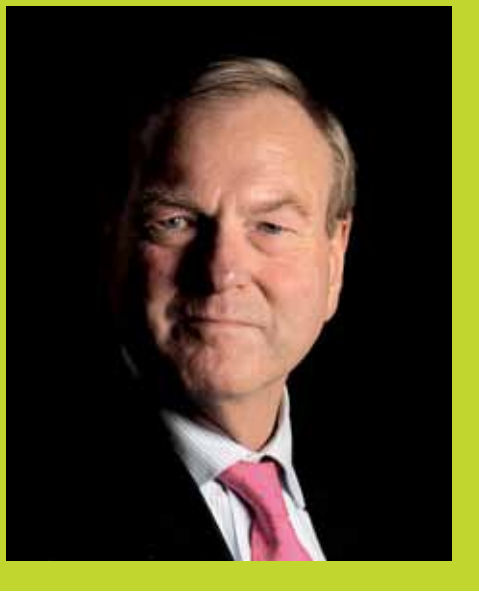
While there is no unique solution for success in this field, it is fair to say that as competitive friends we can all learn from each other resulting in more vibrant football.

My warm congratulations to the ECA Task Force for their work and a thank you to all ECA members who participated in this project, in particular the 96 clubs which shared their experience with us for the benefit of all.

Michele Centenaro
ECA General Secretary







INTRODUCTION

By better understanding the reality of youth development from across Europe, we can see which are the models and trends that operate best and better understand how clubs altogether through shared experiences can enhance the collective quality of youth development.

Past attempts to look at youth development have essentially focused on statistical evidence and data. This Report has widened the picture by adding new aspects to investigate such as the philosophies, visions, strategies and technical content, each club has in relation to their respective academies. Our analysis has focused on a dual approach, which includes a qualitative and quantitative angle. Details of this are outlined in the Background, Scope and Methodology section of the Report.

There is a certain nostalgic element to seeing a young talent develop through an academy and make it to the top of professional football. Most fans will tell you that they feel great pride and pleasure from seeing their team perform well based around a nucleus of home-grown talent. However, beside this emotional element lies some very informative and interesting information about how clubs can best approach the development of these future stars. As football tries to move away from an era of huge transfer fees and inflated player wages, youth development is seen as a key element to the development of the game. But how much do we really know about youth development and would not a better understanding of its current reality be beneficial to enhancing the overall game?

If we acknowledge that youth development is central to efforts to reduce financial risks in football it is fair to say that at present we lack a real detailed and coordinated mapping and understanding of the different models of youth development that exist from across Europe. The development of players via a youth system has always existed and is part of the DNA of a club, but a detailed understanding of the different models and their impact on the game remain largely unknown. What this Report aims to do is to gain a more detailed insight to the different approaches that exist in this field from across Europe by examining models from all four corners of the continent, but also from clubs which differ in culture, history, level of development, wealth and size.

It is important to note that ECA members are all natural opponents on the field of play, but all understand that they have a collective duty to work together and share best practice for the greater good of the game. Short-term attitudes are the norm in our industry. Clubs are under pressure to produce results on the field every three or four days. However, if we want to ensure that matches continue to be of relevance and of the highest quality we must also think of the long-term and sustainable well-being of club football. We have a responsibility to leave future generations with a game which is on a sound and sustainable footing. To achieve this, youth development is key and therefore, via this Report, we aim to better understand the current situation of youth football with the aim of optimising its quality in all its aspects and securing the future of our great game.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maarten Fonteijn', written over a horizontal line.

Maarten Fonteijn
ECA Youth Working Group Chairman
on behalf of the ECA Task Force

BACKGROUND, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The manner in which this Report has been produced is based around three core pillars with the aim of gathering the required information and using this information to develop a comprehensive mapping exercise able to offer a true picture of the reality of youth development across the whole of Europe. These pillars include:

1. The composition and structural set up of the team undertaking the work
2. Qualitative Analysis
3. Quantitative Analysis

PILLAR 1: CREATION OF TASK FORCE

On the 7th of February 2011, the Youth Working Group (YWG) set up a Task Force, tasked with “developing a Report aimed at highlighting the reality of youth development across Europe”. Members of the Working Group appointed to the Task Force included:

- Maarten Fontein, AZ Alkmaar (NED), ECA Executive Board member and Youth Working Group Chairman
- Bodo Menze, FC Schalke 04 (GER), Head of Youth Academy (Administration)
- Liam Brady, Arsenal FC (ENG), Head of Youth Development
- Konstantin Kornakov, Heart of Midlothian FC (SCO), Head of Football Administration
- Jan Skýpala, FK Teplice (CZE), General Secretary, former Youth Coach
- Olivier Jarosz, ECA Administration

Having decided on the team to undertake the project, it was agreed that there was a need for a twin-track approach to undertake the research. The Task Force agreed to undertake both qualitative and quantitative research as a complementary approach to obtain the required information.

PILLAR 2: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Qualitative research is a form of research focusing on the experience of meaning through close field observation. In this Report, this qualitative analysis was based around site visits and case studies of ECA members’ Youth Academies, which included detailed presentations made at meetings of the YWG. A selection of Youth Academies was made based on a number of criteria, which included:

- clubs’ training centres and infrastructure
- the number of players making the transition from academy to professional players
- the history, specific culture and prestige of a club’s academy
- recent sporting results in youth football
- the categorisation of a club within FIFA’s Training and Compensation schemes
- a club’s youth development budget

Site visits and case studies were limited to ECA members given that these represent some of the most successful clubs from across Europe. The selections also took into account club size and location so as to ensure a truly representative sample.

In terms of the areas on which the qualitative research would focus, the Task Force agreed to limit the scope to the following areas of each youth academy that was observed:

- 1) Vision & Philosophy
- 2) Infrastructure
- 3) Technical Approach
- 4) Education

PILLAR 3: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The quantitative analysis focused on obtaining data and statistical evidence of various components that

make up a youth academy. An external partner called Double PASS¹ was selected to develop a questionnaire in the form of a user-friendly software package which also included a helpdesk toolkit which allowed clubs to undertake a self-analysis of their own academies. Double PASS was on hand to provide assistance and share its experience in youth development with ECA members. They also set up an explanatory study detailing the critical success factors of Youth Academies. The questionnaire included sections previously neglected in past studies on youth development such as a club's vision and philosophy in relation to youth development. The survey was wide ranging and covered areas including: identification, management, football development, academy & staff, support,

relations, infrastructure, productivity, football in your country and success & constraint factors.

Given that the Task Force was working within tight time constraints, this twin-track approach used as methodology for the study was seen as the best one available to obtain the most wide-ranging and comprehensive information required to meet the aims of developing a true mapping of the reality of youth development across Europe.

96 clubs from 41 countries participated in the ECA Youth Survey. ECA members can download the full Report of the quantitative part on the ECA Website 'Private part' www.ecaeurope.com

¹ Double PASS is a spin-off of the University of Brussels. It has more than 10 years of experience in auditing and consultancy of Youth Academies in football and other sports. Double PASS is a neutral and independent body, guaranteeing objectivity, reliability and discretion.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Executive Summary provides an overview and snapshot of the main trends and realities both from a quantitative and qualitative perspective that arise from the different areas of each youth academy that have been examined. They can be detected in the case studies and the Youth Survey which make up the rest of the Report.

VISION & OBJECTIVES

- Over 75% of the academies have a well-defined youth development vision, mostly based on the football vision of the club
- 50% of the clubs define as an objective for the youth academy, “to create economic added value” and 60% of the clubs consider their youth academy as a source of income, rather than a cost
- The goal for most clubs regarding their youth academy is to develop players for professional football, in particular for their own first team
- 50% of the clubs work with satellite clubs (mostly amateur clubs)

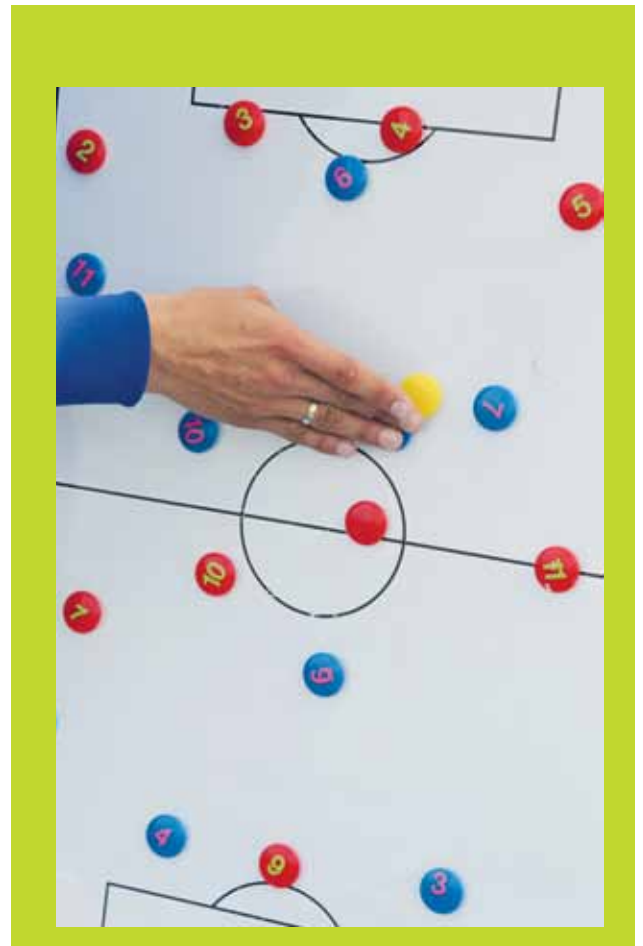
The clubs’ philosophy, vision and mission are key for successful solutions.

Nurturing talent and future players should be the main role of a club. If each club has its own traditions and if there is no single recipe for success, the case studies clearly show that the most effective Youth Academies are those which pursue their vision and their objective with perseverance. It is not only a question of size; it is a question of spirit and belief.

ORGANISATION

- 50% of the clubs have the youth academy represented in the executive board
- 66% of the clubs have the youth academy represented in the technical heart/board by the youth director
- 40% of the clubs have the first team coach represented in the technical heart/board

- The transition of academy players is decided by the technical heart/board (66% of the clubs)
- 80% of the clubs consider the club manager/first team coach and the youth academy director as the most important members of the technical heart and responsible for the transition of players



The key challenge and ultimate success for the academy is how to organise the optimal transition of youth players to the first team. This is amongst others determined by the organisational linkage between the youth academy and the first team and the role of the reserve teams.

Regarding the linkage to the first team, clubs that were visited have different philosophies in this respect. Some have totally standalone Youth Academies, but most have a linkage to the first team management through a technical heart. Only 50% of the clubs have the academy director represented in the board of the club.

Many clubs struggle with the role of the 2nd team, the balance of players who are not (yet) good enough for the 1st team, excessive contracted players from the 1st teams or players coming from the youth academy. This is why, for the “transition potentials” (too good for the youth academy but not ready for the first team selection), there is a need for international competition (for example an European Youth Club Competition), which will contribute to a more successful transition of players (experience).

EDUCATION & SCOUTING

- The majority of clubs have around 220 players in the youth academy
- The majority of clubs work with 3–4 age groups
- 75% of the academy players come from the region (less than a 1-hour drive)
- 60% of the clubs have academy players from abroad (in the oldest age groups 3% of the players are from another country)
- 75% of the youth academies have relations with schools, whereas 50% have relations with a university. 50% of the clubs have study opportunities at the club
- 66% of the academies have a clearly defined recruitment policy
- 75% of the clubs allow parents at training sessions

A successful youth academy starts with the recruitment of talent, for which you need a well-equipped youth scouting department. There is high pressure on a club's scouting system to select talent early enough, before other clubs get hold of them. The scouting department

needs to be closely linked to the technical heart of the club to set the right parameters for selection, but also closely linked to the supporting functions of the youth academy (education, social and psychological). Competing with other clubs to highlight talent is always the biggest challenge but the ultimate focus is always on quality and not quantity of players.

Furthermore, it is important that if a young, talented player wishes to play for another club in a foreign country, the transition happens at the right moment. History demonstrates that the majority of successful players moved to a foreign country when they were ready for it: after they have developed their football talents in combination with their social, educational, psychological and personality development towards adolescence.

The principles of education are to combine football with school in building the character of a player. His personality and mental strength are decisive on the pitch. The focus on education, school results and the disciplinary behaviour of players is the core philosophy in most clubs nowadays.

INFRASTRUCTURE (FACILITIES, MEDICAL, SOCIAL)

- 75% of the clubs have a combined facility for the youth academy and first team
- On average, there are 4 pitches per youth academy
- 66% of the clubs have transportation for their academy players to training sessions
- 75% of the clubs carry out anthropometric assessment
- More than 50% of the youth academies work with a psychologist, mostly for mental screening and about 60% of the clubs provide social support

One of the key fundamental requirements of a youth academy is the availability of an infrastructure, based on the following pillars:

- Quality of the assets, such as natural grass fields of the highest quality which allows maximum development of the individual technical skills and ball circulation at maximum speed. Many clubs use a mix of natural grass fields and artificial turf.

- Most clubs have a vision of hosting the 1st team selection and the youth academy in the same area, it is aspirational for the youth to feel and see the first team in the proximity of their daily development. However, there must be sufficient separation between the two groups to allow a maximum tailor-made private utilization for the different entities and for the groups' processes.
- A remote, quiet area is preferred to enable the coaches to teach and nurture the talent in a peaceful environment with no external distractions. It is very important to have restrictions regarding admission of agents and parents at the training grounds.
- The science and medical facilities on offer differ per club particularly as far as effective usage of these facilities is concerned, which depends on the vision and implementation of the club by the coaches vis-à-vis the medical staff.
- Game time: U12, 22–26 matches of 50–60 minutes, 13–15 age group, 30 matches of 70 minutes and above 16, 30 official matches 90 minutes
- Number of tournaments decrease over the years (from 10 to 6 per year), whilst international tournaments increase (1 to 2 per year)
- 75% of clubs work with video analysis and coaching syllabus physical fitness training starts at most clubs from age 14 years.

Most of the academies nowadays have a top-quality infrastructure. This is certainly true for those visited for this Report.

In order to avoid failure, the optimal youth academy cannot be sustainable without an infrastructure of excellence and in this respect there is no difference between clubs from different countries, culture or size.

TECHNICAL CONTENT & COACHING

- The majority of clubs have a consistent system of play, the 4-3-3 being frequently mentioned (52%), followed by 4-4-2 (28%)
- 66% of the clubs focus on individual progression rather than team development; however, most training sessions are organised with the team
- All clubs have defined learning objectives and most work with 3 age groups: under 12, 13–15 age, 16 and above age group
- Team sessions: U12 41–42 weeks, 3x per week, 4–5 hrs per week, 13–15; 44 weeks, 5x per week, 7 hrs per week; 16 and above 5x per week, 7–9 hrs per week
- Individual sessions: U12 once per week 30–60 minutes and >12 at least 2x per week, 90 minutes to 2 hrs per week

The vision with respect to the technical content differs per club. In one club the strength of the youth academy is best symbolized by the vision that the first team has to play similarly to the youth teams, whereas in 99% of the clubs the youth teams have to follow the example of the first team. The balance between individual training sessions and team training differs per club, some have no individual training, while others focus on increasing individual training sessions.

The major challenge is finding the right balance between technical and tactical development of the players within the different age groups. With the increasing speed of the game, it is even more important to focus on technical development in all age groups (in the youngest age group, all the individual creativity unwinds through fun and play without coaching interference, the middle age groups sees introduction of more specific technical development for defence, midfield and forward positions and, in older age groups there is more focus on tactical playing systems).

The profile and quality of the academy director and the coaching staff is a critical success factor and differs among clubs. It is important to find the right balance between coaches who have a background as football players and coaches educated through academies/universities.

A critical success factor is the importance of communication between the academy director and the coaching staff, and within the coaching staff. For the continuity of talent development at all levels it is important to understand and harmonize the content of the coaching programs and the implementation across all youth teams, for which continuous communication,

learning and application is an evolving process. It is fundamental that the academy director's main task is on the field, "coach the coaches", and not the administrative management.

FINANCE & PRODUCTIVITY

- 50% of the clubs spend less than 6% of their budget on youth academy
- 30% of the clubs spend up to € 0.5 m on youth academy
- 30% of the clubs spend between € 0.5 and 1.5 m on youth academy
- 30% of the clubs spend above € 3 m on youth academy
- In general, there are around 6 academy players that are regularly playing for the first team
- On average 8.6% of academy players signed a 1st professional contract at the club in the last 3 years
- 50% of the clubs have a minimum of 2 first players who were registered at the youth academy for at least 5 years
- In almost 50% of the youth academies, the budget increased significantly over the last 5 years
- Staff (26%), facilities (15%) and players' contracts (15%) are the most important costs of the youth academy

- The visited clubs on average produce between 30 and 50 players per year playing in the national championships

It makes sense to invest in youth because with an efficient youth academy the clubs save money by not paying transfers and inflated salaries. This policy will bring sanity back to the game and improve its connection with their fans. Indeed, we found that the average spending on youth academies across Europe is only 6% of the total club's budget, but 60% of the clubs consider that their youth academy is a source of income, rather than a cost. Half of the youth academies have the objective to create economic added value.

Investments in a youth academy offer a good return, also in terms of identification of players with the club and supporters.

With financial fair play coming into operation, the costs of the academy excluded from the breakeven requirements, make it essential for each club to increase investment in youth academies and to make it a crucial pillar of sustainable growth in club football.



CASE STUDIES



Arsenal FC, England



AFC Ajax, Netherlands

RC Lens, France



R. Standard de Liège, Belgium

FC Bayern München, Germany



NK Dinamo Zagreb, Croatia



FC Internazionale Milano, Italy



FC Barcelona, Spain



Sporting Clube de Portugal, Portugal





FC Levadia Tallinn, Estonia

“The message that comes across to me is that the clubs that take the development of young players seriously can be the clubs to benefit most.”

- Liam Brady, Arsenal FC, England, Youth Academy Director -

“Even if there is no blueprint for 100% success in this field, a youth academy is central to building a club programme.”

- Bodo Menze, FC Schalke 04, Germany, Youth Academy Director -



www.ajax.nl

“You need both quality and results. Results without quality is boring; quality without results is meaningless.”

- Johan Crujff -

A wide-angle photograph of the Ajax training ground, showing a large, modern building with a glass facade and a green football pitch in the foreground. The building has several levels and is surrounded by a fence with various advertisements. The sky is overcast.

**MAIN GOAL: TO HAVE THREE PLAYERS
MAKE IT TO THE FIRST TEAM
EVERY TWO SEASONS**

Club Name	AFC Ajax	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	De Toekomst (140'000 m2), Amsterdam
	Club Foundation	18 March 1900
	Number of Training Pitches	8 (4 natural pitches, 4 artificial turf)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	Yes, boys can submit an application form. They are then tested during "talentdagen".
	Number of Scouts	50 in the Netherlands, 5 in the rest of the world
	Zone of recruitment	50km around Amsterdam
	Desired skills	Ball control, position play, movement habits, mindset + (T.I.P.S) Technique, Intelligence, Rapidity and Personality
Team	Number of teams	12 plus the first team
	Number of players	+/- 200
	Origin of players	95% have Dutch nationality (of which 50% have non Dutch origin)
Coaches	Required characteristics	The ideal coach is an ex-player with lots of experience at high levels (exception: coaches of the Under 10 teams)
	Number of Coaches	13
	Responsibilities of Coaches	Coaches have substantial influence on talent development. Nevertheless AFC Ajax has a personal style of playing which has to be adopted by coaches
Training	Formation	4-3-3
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	12
	Work with weights	non mandatory 1/2 hour max per day
	Number of training sessions	3 per week until 12, 4 per week after 13 2 hours training
	Type of matches	8:8 as from 7, 9:9 between 8-9, 11:11 as from 10
	Exercices	The same for every team, always with the ball and at high tempo. E.g. ball possession, 6:6, 3:3
Particularity	In house facilities	With selected families in Amsterdam
	Prohibitions	No caps before matches
Costs/Year	€ 6 m	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- Situated in the shade of the famous Amsterdam Arena stadium
- AFC Ajax is listed on the stock exchange in Amsterdam but 73% of shares stay in private hands and are not publicly traded.
- AFC Ajax play the 4-3-3 system; the so-called 'Total Football' approach invented by Rinus Michels
- AFC Ajax became a 'talent factory' at which a lot of famous Dutch football players started their careers. In the last few years the club from Amsterdam has trained great football players and sold them for large amounts of money. Many great ideas on youth development originate from AFC Ajax.

KEY FACTS

- A total of 220 players at the academy
- Of all first team players in the top division in Holland, 30% will have, at some point in their development, attended the AFC Ajax Academy
- Annual costs of the Academy = € 6 m
- The real success of the youth academy is measured by the number of players who really add value to the first team

AFC AJAX'S YOUTH TEAM HONOURS

- **Beloften Eredivisie:**
1994, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2009
- **KNVB Reserve Cup:**
2003, 2004

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

Everyone involved in football has heard of the 'De Toekomst'. Any place must be truly special to produce talent of the calibre of Johan Crujff, Marco Van Basten or Dennis Bergkamp. However, it is not the infrastructure that makes it stand out – it is the club's ideology. Immediately noticeable is that everyone involved with AFC Ajax uses the word 'we' to describe the club. This highlights the significant collegiality within the organisation. Another pillar of the ideology is that of offensive football. According to the AFC Ajax way of thinking, results without beauty are boring, and beauty without results is senseless. A third important element of the AFC Ajax ideology is that the academy is regarded as the source of players for the first team. The club does not buy players (unless there are no suitable candidates in its ranks) and it promotes on average three new graduates to the first team every two seasons. The basic premise of the system is that there is the complete average transition from the child player to the star player under the guidance of the AFC Ajax academy. The most talented youths are virtually guaranteed first-team status even at the age of 16 or 17, if they show enough promise. Modern football economics, however, has taken its toll and nowadays the club also sees itself as a player factory; it produces its own graduates, retains them for several years to further enhance their quality and then moves them on at top-level status to clubs that prefer to buy their own players rather than to develop them.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Generally, the facilities are extremely functional and centred on the main office building. There are 14 hectares of various grass and artificial grass pitches, a stadium for reserve and youth games, and a full-sized, covered artificial grass pitch. The indoor dome, built in 2011, is the latest addition to the complex and houses not only the pitch itself, but also a full array of measurement instruments which are designed to take the AFC Ajax method to the cutting-edge of scientific development. Here, 13 teams use the eight playing fields and 14 dressing rooms.

With land in Amsterdam being at a premium, there is no wastage of space whatsoever. Even though AFC Ajax is naturally a very big club, there is no great formality inside the academy – access to the grounds is not

restricted and spectators are allowed to watch the training sessions of youth teams. The only areas that can be off-limits are the indoor pitch and the first team training area but, overall, the atmosphere is quite relaxed inside.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

Age group's focus, goals and role of coach

AFC Ajax adopted an innovative organizational structure in which there is no traditional Head of Academy, nor a departmental structure based on teams (age groups), where traditionally team trainers are managers of a specific cohort of players. Instead, the organizational structure follows the biological process of human development and consists of 5 departments (called "wheels"):

- wheel "Onderbouw" (age group 7–12), with Technical Manager
- wheel "Middenbouw" (age group 13–16) with Technical Manager
- wheel "Bovenbouw" (age group 17–20) with Technical Manager
- wheel "Operations" which takes care of all the administration at the academy
- wheel Technical Management which consists of the three technical managers plus a liaison between the First Team and the academy which protects AFC Ajax's culture

The wheel Technical Management is the control organ of the academy. This control structure resembles more a modern organizational principle of design (like business process redesign and Mintzberg's organic structures) rather than a traditional Fordian/Tayloristic hierarchical bureaucracy.

The focus of age groups, goals and the role of the coach

The AFC Ajax academy includes all age groups; there are teams with five-year-old children up to the U19 and Reserve team level. They are taken through the various stages of player development, encompassing individual athletic, technical, tactical and social development. There is no big emphasis on promoting academic education for players; the training process is incorporated into the daily schedule of the children who are picked up from school and bussed to the academy

with homework clubs and teaching assistance being provided by the club.

To summarise, traditional academies have a trainer who trains a group of players, whilst AFC Ajax promotes the idea that a group of trainers trains an individual player.



Dennis Bergkamp

Coaching and training sessions

When boys start their training in the academy, they become exposed to AFC Ajax's ideals – the seniors in the academy and the more than 50,000 spectators attending matches are all still present in this magical world of football due to the academy's innovative type of play. It was developed in the 1960s and became known as 'Total Football' (Very strong tactical organisation and a very rigid system of ball circulation which has always underlined the AFC Ajax discipline).

One of the elements of training in 'De Toekomst' which is very beneficial for young players is the lack of overtraining; 12-year-old boys only train three times a



Innovative football equipment at AFC Ajax

week and on weekends they play a match. AFC Ajax coaches believe that even this is a lot for such young players. The coaches believe that children have their own lives and families and they should not be taken away from their daily lives, families and social environment for too long. When they are not training, young academy prospects should play on the street with their friends; this can be crucial to a player's development both as a person and a football player. Under these conditions, they can play with no one is telling them what to do and they can be totally free. It is this very freedom that enhances and encourages their creativity. Since AFC Ajax's very specific system of play needs time to be understood and integrated by the players, foreign recruits stay at the club for at least two years. This allows them to better understand the system of play, the language, and the Dutch culture.

EDUCATION

AFC Ajax academy is not a boarding school. The players live approximately 35 km from Amsterdam and the longest journey to training would take around 1.5 hours. Some players have moved to the area to

Age Category: Under 8

4-3-3

- 4:4 30 x 20 m field 3 x 1 m goal
- Focus on passing, movement and finesse, with confidence on the ball always the priority

Age Category: 8 to 12 years

Team spirit building

4-3-3

12-year-old boys train three times a week.

- U 9: 6 v 6 (5 + goalkeeper), 40 X 30 m, 4 X 2 m
- U 10: 8 v 8, 50 x 40m, 5 x 2 m
- U 11: 9 v 9, 60 x 50m, 6 x 2 m
- U 12: 11 v 11, full-sized field
- Focus on passing, receiving, technical training, positional play, heading, finishing on goal.

Age Category: 13 to 16 years

4-3-3

- 15-year-old boys train five times a week.
- The training largely consists of short games and running exercises or training in passing the ball over short distances. In the AFC Ajax academy, most important is training with the ball. It is a Dutch style. Accurate and aggressive.
- Focus on positional game play (functional training), and games with many variations.
- Player Evaluation starts.

Age Category: 17 to 20 years

4-3-3

- During training, 16-year-old boys are required to do 30 m sprints with sensors which register the players' times over five metres. In real games, this is the distance over which acceleration occurs most often.
- Focus on skills vs. habits and ball control

Age Category 18 and above: A YOUTH (U18 - U19)

4-3-3

T.I.P.S.:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Coordination training | 5. Finishing |
| 2. Kicking, passing and throw-in | 6. Position play |
| 3. Moves to beat an opponent | 7. Position game play |
| 4. Heading Coaching and training sessions | 8. Small sided games |

“I never look at the results. I mean, which player scored the most goals, and even which one runs the fastest. These factors can only have meaning according to the relevant stage of progress of the young player. I mostly watch how the players run; for example, whether he runs lightly. Creativity with the ball is also important and, of course, the willingness to play as well as the love of the game. I think that those factors are crucial in forecasting how a player will present himself in the future.”.

- Wim Jonk – AFC Ajax’s Head of Youth Academy -

attend the academy. AFC Ajax has 20 buses for the transportation of players. Parents don’t have to pay anything except for the insurance fee which amounts to € 12 per annum. The other costs are covered by the club: salaries for 25 coaches, travel to tournaments, equipment for the players and all other costs associated with running such a big facility.

Transition: factor of success

AFC Ajax keeps records of every player from the time he is admitted to the academy. Coaches aim to develop players through a specific culture and philosophy. It shows them, in general terms, how AFC Ajax wants to play football. Players who have already played in the same system for many years are at an advantage in their progress towards the first team. If a player gets accepted to the academy, it means that he has passed only the first of various difficult stages. AFC Ajax puts the new players in the ‘encirclement’, in which they have to compete and develop themselves. It certainly is not an easy environment for a child to be in but it helps to differentiate those who have what it takes to play at the international level in the future from the ones who are merely just talented.

At the beginning of each year, the players of the AFC Ajax academy receive the preliminary announcement of their status. Some players are told that they are safe and will continue to progress in the club; others are told that they are at risk at being ‘sent home’ the following spring. Come spring, the youth players are very anxious as to whether they will be retained at the academy. Over time, the boys toughen up both mentally and psychically. The intention of AFC Ajax is to train young football players and help them to adjust to their first squad as soon as possible. The idea is then to transfer them for a big fee. Indeed, AFC Ajax is forced to sell its players simply because it needs the

money for the salaries for first team players. This is understandable and it is realistic to declare that the youth academy is a business which generates crucial revenue.



AFC Ajax indoor training centre

Adidas MiCoach

The academy has a very strong partnership with its technical sponsor, Adidas. The sponsorship is primarily directed towards scientific research and development of products for the sport science market such as the new Micoach system. This is achieved with the help of a third partner, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Amsterdam Free University), which acts as the main research partner. There are academic staff embedded within the club at the sports science level.



www.arsenal.com

“The focus is only on quality.”

- Arsène Wenger - Arsenal FC's Head Coach -

A wide-angle photograph of a modern, long building with a glass facade and a flat roof, likely an Arsenal FC training ground. The building is situated behind a large, well-maintained green football pitch. A tall, silver clock tower stands in the middle ground between the pitch and the building. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

**MAIN GOAL: TO PRODUCE
FIRST TEAM PLAYERS**

Club Name	Arsenal FC	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	Arsenal FC Academy, London (100'000m2)
	Club Foundation	1886
	Number of Training Pitches	Hale End (5 natural pitches, 1 artificial turf) Bell Lane (11 pitches)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	Not admitted - selection done through observers and clubs selected by Arsenal FC
	Number of Scouts	2 in London, few worldwide
	Zone of recruitment	50km around London and worldwide
	Desired skills	Talent, Intelligence, Motivation
Team	Number of teams	9 + the first and the second team (U21)
	Number of players	+/- 180
	Origin of players	95 % from London or UK 5% from abroad
Coaches	Required characteristics	The ideal coach is an ex-player with significant experience at high level
	Number of Coaches	18
	Responsibilities of Coaches	responsible for the training content
Training	Formation	4-3-3
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	14
	Work with weights	U15 and all age groups upwards 2 x per week
	Number of training sessions	every day as from 17
	Type of matches	5:5, 6:6, 7:7 until 10, 11:11 as from 11
	Exercices	The same for every team, always with the ball and at high tempo. Intercepting and passing drills
Particularity	Youth Academy Staff	72 included coaches
	In house facilities	Live at home
	Prohibitions	Stick to Arsenal's Code of Conduct
Costs/Year	€ 3 m	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- High identification with the club is established by having former Arsenal players working as coaches or in other positions at the academy
- The English youth-player market and the high number of high-profile clubs based in London make the competition extremely tough. Across London and its suburbs, there are 14 professional clubs.

KEY FACTS

- Approx. 180 players in the youth academy per year
- London Hale End training centre with seven fields and Bell Lane with 11 fields
- Five players in first team selection in the 2010/2011 season graduating from the Academy
- Approx. ten players who occasionally play in the first team (season 2010/2011)
- Arsenal FC focuses its approach on 'efficient scouting'.

FC ARSENAL YOUTH TEAM HONOURS

- FA Youth Cup Winners (7)
2009 2001 2000 1994 1988 1971 1966
- FA Premier Youth League Champions 1998
- FA U17 National Academy Play-off Final
2000
- FA U18 National Academy Play-off Final
2010, 2009
- FA U19 National Academy Play-off Final
2002
- South East Counties League Champions
1991
- Southern Junior Cup
1998, 1991, 1984, 1971, 1956

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

Arsenal FC academy's key aims are:

- 1) To produce first team players
- 2) To ensure a professional and ethical way of operating as an example of best practice
- 3) To be self-sufficient and generate profits

For Arsenal FC, the key factors required for a player to become a star are his talent, his intelligence, and his motivation; these are the key requirements for selection. A project of affiliated clubs with the youth academy began in 1996.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Arsenal FC has two training centres: London Hale End training centre (age group 8 -16 years) with seven fields and London Colney (all players above 16 years and first team selection). Both centres have top quality fields. This quality is a requirement for the development of technical skills which is at the heart of Arsenal FC's philosophy.

London Colney is divided into three areas. One is reserved for the senior A team, the second for the reserve team and third for (U17) U18 teams. There are three pitches which are reserved for the sole use of Arsène Wenger. These are equipped with under-soil heating. The equipment in the changing rooms is rather simple with the focus on tidiness and order. The main building has a swimming pool, a number of dressing rooms, a fitness room, a very spacious restaurant and several conference rooms. The quality of the fields at Arsenal FC is very high. The artificial grass pitch is in a big indoor hall and used in cases of bad weather conditions. Arsenal FC has 176 players and in the senior two age groups, about 25% come from abroad which counts for more or less ten players.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

The focus of age groups, goals and the role of the coach

There is a pyramid of young players which reaches the top at U18. Each age category consists of about 20–25 players. Three age categories from U19–U21 have only 20 players. This means that at London Colney, Arsenal FC works with only top-quality and carefully selected players who can receive the full professional services

including coaching, physiotherapy, reconditioning and education. As mentioned previously, the academy is divided into two main sections which are based at two different training centres.

U9 – U16 in Hale End

Included are mainly players from London. The training centre is located near London city centre which makes it easily accessible for players and parents via public transportation.

U9 - U11: Young children are introduced to organised football training. They only play weekend tournaments in teams of 6:6, 5:5, 7:7 (depending on the arrangements).

U12 - U14: Matches are played with 11 players a side (only friendly matches and tournaments).

Training is focused on developing individual ball technique, dexterity, speed and agility.

U15 - U16: Matches are still only friendlies without an organised competition. Players begin to focus on tactics.

U17 – U21 at London Colney

The 'Big Arsenal family' starts here. Three teams, U18, U21 (reserve team) and the seniors train here and prepare for professional careers. According to training programmes, age categories are divided into five training periods:

U18: The Football Association organises the first ranking competition for this category. Players in senior training centres attend a mixture of professional training sessions according to league games.

U21: This group is organised as the reserve team and includes young players who are waiting and fighting for their first appearances for the senior A team.

Reserve team players usually play in the Carling Cup, a high-profile play-off competition which Arsenal FC uses to provide first team experience for its young players.

Coaching and training sessions

The coach of each training category is responsible for the training content. Liam Brady is responsible for supervising training sessions and team displays in matches. He regularly consults with coaches about possible adjustments. Liam Brady often travels with teams to tournaments or matches and speaks with players about possible training developments.

Training process of the above 17 starts every day after breakfast (at around 09:00). There is a morning training session followed by lunch and educational lessons. Twice a week, players have two training sessions. The morning session is more focused on the individual while in the afternoon, the focus is on team cooperation.

Every Saturday, youth teams below the 18-year-group play against other Premier League clubs with no points



Jack Wilshere

awarded (no competition). These players also perform in various national/international tournaments in the spring and summer.

EDUCATION

In the youth categories, all the players live in London and surrounding areas. Hale End is close enough to the centre of London to allow the players to get there easily. Up to 16 years old, there is a normal school curriculum; children live at home and parents bring the children to the training centre. For the older age groups, a special programme has been designed together with the Government (equivalent of two A levels).

The focus of Arsenal FC's education for youth players is on language (English), life skills (finance, media, social media, social behaviour/attitude to training), subjects related to sports science and coaching qualifications (level 2 + 3 = basics). The aim is for players to gain a proper education which will allow them to pursue alternative careers if they do not make it to the elite level of football.



Changing room at Arsenal FC

**“Key success factor:
focus on the individual, not the team.”**

- Liam Brady – Arsenal FC's Head of Youth Academy -



Age category: 8 to 10 years**Play and Fun**

- Development should be fun for the children
- Receiving passes, dribbling, shooting
- Games between 5:5, 6:6, 7:7

Age category: 11 to 15 years**Technical skills development**

- Development of individual capacity within competitive games
- Ball mastery, receiving and passing, moves 1:1, speed, finishing and group attack
- Drill work. Time spent with the ball is the key

Age category: 15 and above**Tactical skills development**

- Development of collective performances which have to be more important than individual performance
- Positional and tactical coaching
- Emphasis in training should be on passing (quality of the pass, first touch, ball manipulation)



Arsène Wenger with the Task Force

Arsène Wenger views on Youth Development:

- *There are three key pillars:*
 - 1) Youth
 - 2) Development (technical, educational)
 - 3) The aim is to put the best players together
- *Many youngsters in clubs fail because they do not play enough to have a chance to gain a position in the first squad. A manager must be brave enough to field young players.*
- *Emphasis only on quality not quantity.*
- *The Premier League is very challenging and to succeed a player must be both mentally and physically strong. Players who leave the Premier League tend to miss the high demands of this competition.*
- *Successful players must have three aspects to their sporting personality*
 - 1) Talent
 - 2) Intelligence
 - 3) Motivation

Arsène Wenger watches all home games of the two most senior youth groups and takes charge of training the youth groups during the international breaks.





www.fcbarcelona.com

“Nature has given to us a gift such as evolution through learning. As humans we develop ourselves by learning from our mistakes and it is important that when we stumble, it should happen when we are still learning. For us FC Barcelona is not a business, it is a feeling.”

- Sandro Rosell, President FC Barcelona -

**MAIN GOAL: MAIN SQUAD
WITH PLAYERS
FROM THE ACADEMY**

Club Name	FC Barcelona	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	Ciutat Esportiva Joan Gamper (137'000 m2)
	Club Foundation	La Masia (1979)
	Number of Training Pitches	8 (5 natural pitches, 3 artificial turf)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	Not admitted - selection done through observers and clubs selected by FC Barcelona
	Number of Scouts	25 overall
	Zone of recruitment	Catalonia, Andalusia
	Desired skills	Technique, Speed, Vision of the game
Team	Number of teams	15 plus the first and the second team
	Number of players	+/- 250
	Origin of players	70% Catalan, 20% Spanish, 10% foreign
Coaches	Required characteristics	Coaches are usually very young and do not necessarily have past experience at high levels
	Number of Coaches	36
	Responsibilities of Coaches	They must field a team with a 4-3-3 formation imposed by the club
Training	Formation	4-3-3
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	8
	Work with weights	Not before the age of 17
	Number of training sessions	3 per weeks until 13, 4 per week after 14 1h30 training
	Type of matches	7:7 from 8 to 12, 11:11 as from 13
	Exercices	The same for every team, always with the ball and at high rythm. Intercepting and passing drills
Particularity	In house facilities	Centro Oriol Tort - La Masia
	Prohibitions	no tattoos, colored hair, earrings, shirt out of short
Costs/Year	€ 10 m (this does not take account of the cost of formation of the U19 and FC Barcelona B)	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- The success of FC Barcelona is due, without any doubt, to its academy. The youth academy has seen the development of world-class players who form part of one of the top teams in world football. More than in most other clubs, the success of FC Barcelona comes mainly from its youth academy.
- The success of the FC Barcelona model was highlighted in 2010 when the Catalan club, which won 12 out of 15 possible competitions and the podium for the FIFA Ballon D'Or, had Lionel Messi, Andrés Iniesta and Xavi Hernández as part of the team, all three being prominent graduates of 'La Masia'.
- For a long time the club looked for players for their squad. In today's football world, FC Barcelona has achieved its self-defined model where players are made for the system. FC Barcelona's academy 'alumni' boasts a long list which includes Ramon Caldere, Albert Ferrer, Josep Guardiola, Victor Valdés, Carles Puyol, Gerard Piqué, Xavi, Andrés Iniesta and Lionel Messi.

KEY FACTS

- 220 players in the youth academy and 45 players divided over the U19 FC Barcelona B
- Annual costs of the Academy = € 20 m including the cost of formation of the U19 and FC Barcelona B
- Seven players from the youth academy fielded during the 2010/11 UCL Final in London
- No talks with players' agents before the age of 15
- Senior and youth teams play according to the same system

FC BARCELONA YOUTH ACADEMY HONOURS

- Pre Benjamin (U8) Campeon Liga 2012
- Benjamin C-D (U9) Campeon Liga 2012
- Benjamin A-B (U10) Campeon Liga, Campeon Copa Catalunya 2012
- Alevin C-D (U11) Subcampeon Liga - Campeon Liga
- Alevin A-B (U12) Subcampeon Liga - Campeon Copa Catalunya
- Infantil A-B (U14) Subcampeon Liga Campeon Liga.
- Cadete A-B (U16) Campeon Liga 2012
- Juvenil (B) Campeon Liga 2012

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

FC Barcelona has a very strong ideology related to the progression of players from its youth development programme to the first team. The model that the club works on is essentially about producing players for its first team. Given the fact that FC Barcelona consistently challenges for top honours at both domestic and international level, it goes without saying that the players produced by the Academy have to be world class.

Unlike many other football clubs, FC Barcelona's first team is not the reference for the youth academy in terms of a model for the style of play. In fact, it is the opposite – the first team follows the style of play of the youth teams of the club, which means that all the players who have come through the development system have been educated and trained to perform at senior level and the transition becomes as seamless as possible.

There is also a very strong Catalan element to the club, with local players forming about 80% of all youth squads. The motto of FC Barcelona is *més que un club* - more than a club – and this creates a strong identity and spirit within the group. However, there is also a very strong regional Spanish and international flavour to FC Barcelona (Andrés Iniesta, Lionel Messi, the arrangement with the Samuel Eto Foundation, which allows the club to attract young African players. Ultimately, the language of football transcends all other considerations and, in identifying a particular style of play as being the most important element of its identity,

the club has secured its position as a truly recognisable structure, not only in its core region but also globally. In addition to its ability to recruit pretty much any player for the youth system, an unexpected result of the success of FC Barcelona has been its ability to recruit first team players who have not grown up as part of the club's youth development system but who identify themselves with the values and the style of play of the team, often to the detriment of their own financial benefit. In this way, the Barcelona Academy is clearly having a major impact not only on maintaining the ideology of the club itself, but also on the operation and squad management even at first team level.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The origins of the training complex date back to 1989 when the club purchased land in the St Joan Despi area in the west of Barcelona for future development. The project was launched in 2000 with the placing of the first stone which saw the beginning of various stages of development. The youth development part of the club moved to the facility in 2006 and the first team followed in 2009. The latest stage of development was the opening of the 'new Masia' building in 2011. It can house up to 120 children from all the sports sections of FC Barcelona, but primarily the football section. The complex is conveniently located just off a main road in a suburban residential area, a few kilometres away from the main club buildings at the Camp Nou.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

Focus of age groups, goals and the role of the coach

The football structure at FC Barcelona operates two parallel sections: professional football and formation football. The professional side incorporates the first team, B team and the oldest youth category (U19 level), whilst the formation side includes the earliest organised age groups to the U18 level. The sides are a mirror image of each other with a sport director and coordinator in each programme, plus a full complement of coaches.

Intake starts at U8-U9 level. A limited number of children are accepted into this group which includes both ages and has only one team. From then on there are individual year age groups, each team being

directed by two coaches. Currently, a total of 43 coaches work on the development side of the club; those who work with the older youth groups come in on a full-time basis, even though the children mostly train in the early evening. Competition starts early for the children at the FC Barcelona Academy; all age groups up to U12 take part in 7:7 matches in local leagues, whilst from U13 they begin playing a full 11:11 at regional and national levels.

One of the interesting aspects of being located in Catalonia is that, per capita, there is an extremely high number of registered young players, which means the youth football here is vibrant and competitive. With



Lionel Messi



Youth Residence at FC Barcelona

FC Barcelona being the reference club, competitiveness sets in early, as all other clubs want to do well against FC Barcelona teams at any level.

The transition process into the professional teams starts early for players who stay in residence, with some coming in at 11 or 12 years of age. At the start of the 2011/12 season there were 73 children staying in the La Masia residence, of which 52 were involved in the football section and the rest in other sports such as basketball, hockey, etc. Of the 52 boys in the football programme, 16 are from Catalonia, 16 from the rest of Spain and 20 from abroad. FC Barcelona has an interesting and fruitful relationship with the Samuel Eto'o foundation in Cameroon, which means that ten youth players in the system come from that country, with some having already been at La Masia in the development programme for five years or more. All the players at the academy go to the same public school and further education is strongly encouraged: 11 players in the Barcelona B team are actually studying at undergraduate university level!

An important element of the FC Barcelona academy is the philosophy of treating all players with the same care and attention given to first team players. The concept behind this is quite simple: club management believes that even someone joining the system at U8 could be a future first team regular and deserves this level of attention. At the same time, that does not mean that the younger children do everything the first team players do; specialised physical training for players does not really start until the children are in the U16 age group. More importantly, though, a lot of attention is given to teaching young players to both win and lose and to deal with challenging situations such as loss of form, confidence, and injury. The ultimate aim of the

“The first mission of coaches is to help boys with their behaviour; the second is to show them how to be good players.”

- Albert Puig, Head of FC Barcelona Youth Academy -

7 to 11 years (U8 to U12): 'Pre-Benjamin, Benjamin, Alevin'**Teams' training**

- Individual tasks: dribbling, blocking the ball, trap control but all during the match.
- games 5 versus 5, 12 players per game
- half pitch size
- 3 weekly sessions
- General exercises for stimulating the individual technic combined with exercises for development in overall football concepts
- One part of training is dedicated to individual technical exercises. This includes dribbling and driving the ball.
- Possession and possession, showing a steadfast belief in the old mantra that when you have the ball, your opponents can't score.

12 to 18 (U13 to U19): 'Infantil, Cadete, Juvenil'**Technical skills development**

- games 7 versus 7, 18+2 players per game
- half pitch size or one full pitch for the oldest
- 4-5 weekly sessions
- To familiarise and develop skills by field position games and small-sided games
- Special technical exercises for ball control and passing
- Offensive and defensive tactical concepts.
- Strong emphasis on possession, on passing accuracy, on fluid movement between the orthodox delineations of midfield and attack.

club's development system, a long side developing a technically skilful player, is to combine sport, personal development and academic education and to instil in players the firm knowledge that to become an elite sportsman is extremely challenging and to help children fulfil their true potential. The bottom line for the club however, is that if children do not enjoy their work, they will not improve.

Coaching and training sessions

The task of a coach is to create a team with individuality, taking into consideration the nature and particular characteristics of each player. The coach should always keep an eye on the group ambition, which must be stronger than the sum of individualism. Player and coaches are individualists, the difference is that the selfishness of the coach benefits the team. The coaches prepare the exercises for each age group that will shape children's skills and habits. When the session is focused on dribbling for example, the exerci-

ses are different from the ones during the shooting exercise. Practice without the ball is of minor importance. Generally, coaches do not conduct any lessons which are uninteresting, burdensome or unpleasant for children. They do not treat a child as a miniature adult. A nine-year-old child must have fun and understand what he is doing when practicing with the coach.

FC Barcelona's academy is different from other academies because physical preparation is considered to be a matter of secondary importance. Definitely, the most important is the necessity of technique and development of the imagination of the young player. This shows the difference in training fundamentals. The player should be trained in such a way that he can imagine the best solution during the action and have the technique that allows him to implement it.

EDUCATION

Players staying at the youth academy follow a specific school programme. The other players attend classes at public schools. They organise themselves to join the academy for evening trainings. At FC Barcelona, there is a strong belief that players will only succeed if sports training, education and a strong family unit are part of the players' lives. This will help them become well-balanced elite players. Since classes finish at 5.00 p.m., the earliest training sessions begin at 7.00 p.m. and go on until 8.30 p.m.

'La Masia's' Medal Collection

Graduates from La Masia with medals in the last Champions League finals:

2005 *Luis García (winner, Liverpool FC)*

2006 *Victor Valdés, Carles Puyol, Xavi, Andrés Iniesta, Lionel Messi (winners, FC Barcelona), Cesc Fàbregas (finalist, Arsenal FC)*

2007 *Pepe Reina (finalist, Liverpool FC)*

2008 *Gerard Piqué (winner, Manchester United FC)*

2009 *Gerard Piqué, Victor Valdés, Carles Puyol, Xavi, Andrés Iniesta, Lionel Messi, Sergio Busquets, Pedro (winners, FC Barcelona)*

2010 *Thiago Motta (winner, FC Internazionale Milano)*

2011 *Gerard Piqué, Victor Valdés, Carles Puyol, Xavi, Andrés Iniesta, Lionel Messi, Sergio Busquets, Pedro, Bojan Krkić, Thiago Alcántara (winners, FC Barcelona)*



www.fcbayern.de

“With our Youth Academy we have built the future of our club. We are sharing our passion and tradition for football and our youth players. Bayern will always bring ‘stars’ from other clubs, but we also want players coming from our Youth Academy, because they fully identify with our club.”

- Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, FC Bayern München Chairman of the Board -

**MAIN GOAL: TOP-QUALITY
REGULAR PLAYERS AND
HOME-GROWN PLAYERS
HAVE TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES
FULLY WITH THE CLUB**

Club Name	FC Bayern München	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	Säbener Strasse (70'000 m2), Munich
	Number of Training Pitches	5 (4 grass pitches, 1 artificial turf)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	no players admitted - players are selected during "talentsday".
	Number of Scouts	10 in Germany (outside Bavaria), 15 in Bavaria
	Zone of recruitment	until U15 regional (2/3 hours driving radius of the club)
	Desired skills	technique + significant affinity for the club and its identity
Team	Number of teams	11 plus the first and second team
	Number of players	+/- 185
	Origin of players	90% Bavarian players, 5% other parts of Germany, 5% foreign players
Coaches	Required characteristics	In the younger age groups (U8-U12) mostly sport students and adults with paedagogic background and at least UEFA-B-Licence; from U13 mostly ex-players or coaches with significant Youth experience and all UEFA-Pro-Level license
	Number of Coaches	26
	Responsibilities of Coaches	Average responsibilities: they have to train the parameters set by the Board and field the team usually with a 4-4-2 formation imposed by the club; the coach can decide the specific exercises.
Training	Formation	4-4-2
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	11
	Work with weights	Not before the age of 16, just with own body weight
	Number of training sessions	4 per week from 11, up to 6 per week from 1
	Type of matches	7:7 until 10, 11:11 as from 11
	Exercices	bottom-up depends on age: basically in the basic age (7-11) groups mainly ball work and co-ordination, in the middle age groups (12-15) add on speed and focus on individual skills and the oldest age group (16-19) add on team and group tactics and fitness
Particularity	Youth Academy Staff (excl. Coaches)	40
	In house facilities	boarding facility for 13 players / from 19 y.o. external accommodation
	Prohibitions	a player who doesn't keep up in the classroom, is not permitted to train or play
Costs/Year	€ 3 m	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- The home of FC Bayern München's youth academy, the 'FC Bayern Junior Team' was founded in 1902 and restructured in 1995. FC Bayern München's academy and training ground is located in a leafy suburb of Munich, within an affluent residential area on Säbener Straße. It feels like the real nerve centre of the club, as one single site hosts the fan centre, club offices, professional training quarters and the youth academy, making this the focal centre for all supporters and the commercial and football work done by FC Bayern München in the city.
- FC Bayern München was a pioneer in developing grassroots players but with the primary reason to train players in the FC Bayern München style and philosophy. Since then FC Bayern München focuses on sharing its traditional values with the player so that all players feel that they are part of one family.

KEY FACTS

- 185 players in the youth academy
- 29 youth coaches and sports staff
- Annual costs of the Academy
= € 3 m
- FC Bayern München only scouts for players regionally (within a two to three hour driving radius of the club)

FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN YOUTH TEAM HONOURS

- Deutscher A-Junioren-Meister:
2001, 2002, 2004
- Deutscher A-Junioren-Vizemeister:
1998, 2006, 2007
- Deutscher B-Junioren-Meister:
1989, 1997, 2001, 2007

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

The cornerstone of the FC Bayern München philosophy is to integrate mental and physical strength in players. Although its attitude may seem to be somewhat 'aggressive', FC Bayern München aims to be the best youth academy not only in Germany but also beyond its immediate borders.

FC Bayern München believes in the separation of the academy professionals and, thus, the head coach of the senior team has no influence on youth development. The academy, therefore, acts as a sort of laboratory for the club where players have to be produced to meet the demanding specifications for playing at the highest level possible (Champions League) while maintaining a significant and demonstrable affinity with the club, its identity and way of working.

Some key aspects of this policy:

- The belief that home-grown players will associate more fully with the club than other outside players
- The club acts as a developer of personalities
- Education is paramount
- A player who is not good enough must leave to free up his place
- Football people + experts + continuity = results

INFRASTRUCTURE

The training ground has been reconstructed in the last few years and has become a modern and cutting edge facility. As is the case with football training facilities, the central point is the grass and artificial football training area used by the professional and youth teams of the club. It is an enclosed facility and has a very cosy feel to it despite covering 70 000 m². The facility includes five training fields; four of natural grass (including one with under-soil heating) and one artificial turf. There are also team rooms (for visiting teams too), physio/medical facilities and an indoor sports hall.

The academy has boarding facilities for 13 players aged between 15 and 18 who stay in residence at the club. When they are older, young players may be moved to club-provided external accommodation. As well as living quarters, young players have recreational and study areas available to them. The daily routine is strictly regulated between training and education.

Although it was rebuilt a few years ago, the academy has a history that goes back many decades. When it originally opened it was a top-level facility but many German clubs have since caught up and improved their standard in the meantime. The facility forms an enclave in a residential area with high land and property costs, meaning that no expansion is possible. The club has purchased land in another area of the city where a state of the art training facility could be built, but this may affect the bond and closeness that currently exists between all the departments located within the current hub. Despite the restricted space, which may appear to be a disadvantage, FC Bayern München has managed to turn this into an advantage by creating a togetherness and homely feel for players.



Thomas Müller

TECHNICAL APPROACH

Focus of age groups, goals and the role of coach

From the start of the 2011/12 season, in addition to the second team, eleven youth teams have been playing in the south regional district. The youth teams are supervised by 26 trainers from the FC Bayern Junior Team. All the teams, from the D juniors, which play for the FC Bayern Junior Team, follow a single system that can be simplified as a 4-4-2 formation. The oldest players and the strongest squad (A-and B-juniors) train up to six times a week.

The academy structure comprises age groups ranging from U8 to U23. The players in the youth teams are separated by their year of birth but it is possible for a child to play in a higher age group if he has the required ability. Six of the 11 youth teams regularly play against opponents who are two years older. This makes even greater demands on them, both physically and psychologically. The teams and their opponents are as follows:

A1 Team:	South Regional League (ages 17-19)
B1 Team:	South Bavarian League (ages 15-16)
B2 Team (ages 15-16):	County League A Teams (ages 17-18)
C1 Team (age 14):	County League B Teams (ages 15-16)
C2 Team (age 13):	District League C1 Teams (age 14)
D1 Team (age 12):	County League C Teams (ages 13-14)
D2 Team (age 11):	County League D Teams (ages 12-13)
E1 Team (age 10):	E1 Teams (age 10)
E2 Team (age 9):	E1 Teams (age 10)
F1 & F2 Teams:	F1 & F2 Teams (ages 7-8)

Players must be able to commute to training easily. This is seen as a test of strength and desire. If a player has to do a 100 km round trip every day to come to training it will highlight his level of commitment and bodes well for his future development. For example, Thomas Müller, a FC Bayern academy graduate and current first team regular, is an example of this dedication; he went through all the age groups at the club from the age of

7 to 10 years (basic sector)

- play 7:7 on smaller fields (smaller goals)
- 3 training sessions per week
- main focus on ball training and co-ordination
- “Copy the street game” – fun, win/defeat, 1:1
- learning the basic football skills
- mainly method: games
- learning the identity, rules and strong emphasis on personality
- Education and learning/development is the most important, no emphasize on results

11 to 15 years (build up - sector)

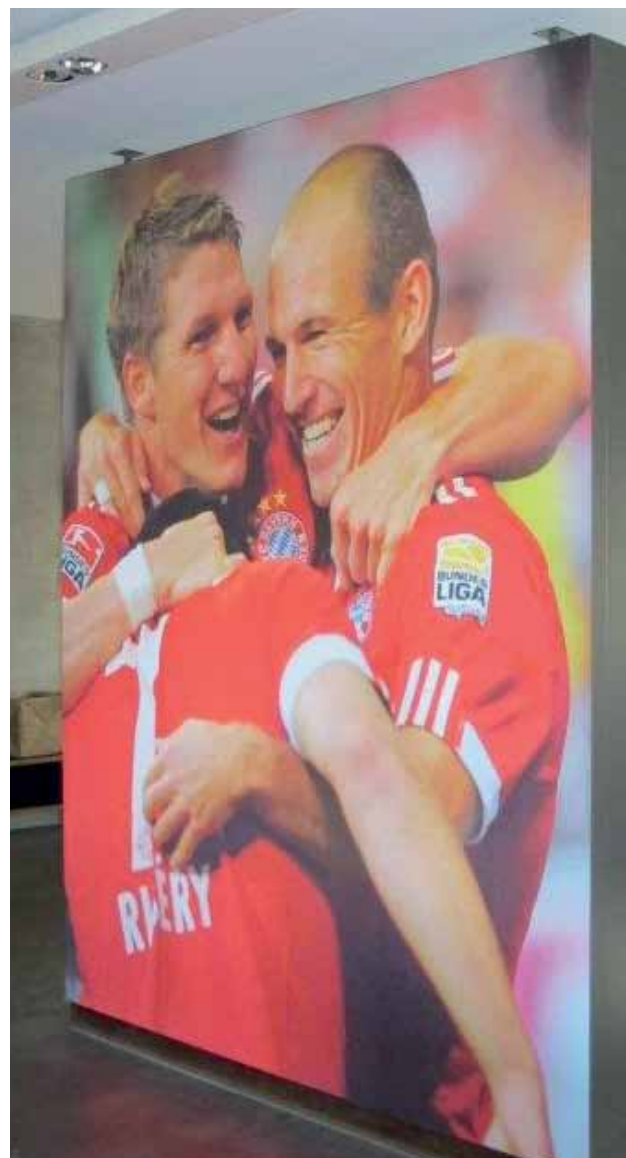
- play 9:9 between boxes (smaller goals) U12/U13
- play 11:11 (normal size pitch, normal goals) U14/U15
- 3 training sessions U12/U13 (plus 2 training sessions at school)
- 4 training sessions U14/U15 (plus 2 training sessions at school)
- main focus on detailed technique skills, individual and group tactics, speed
- small sized games (2:2, 3:3, 4:4 and majority/minority games)
- main focus (method) on individual strength and weaknesses
- improving team building and learning focusing on football AND school
- Education and learning/development is still the main aim but players should also learn the experience of winning and losing

16 to 19 years (performance sector)

- play 11:11
- 6 training sessions
- after the age of 15 each player is trained exclusively for one or two positions
- main focus on position training, group and team tactic, perfecting technique skills and power
- method: larger sized games (7:7, 8:8, 11:11) and individual improvement
- learning to handle with the physical stress and time pressure
- Education and learning/development is still important but results come also come into focus

U23 (transition sector)

- last preparation for the professionals in a professional surrounding
- play in the 4th division of the German league



Bastian Schweinsteiger (on the left) joined FC Bayern München in 1998

ten. The club also runs a grassroots programme jointly with the Bavarian football association and local rivals, TSV Munich 1860.

Coaching and training sessions

FC Bayern München plays an efficient style that is characterized by discipline whereas in defence forceful predictable attacks are in place. Coaches from FC Bayern München Youth teams teach players to play with short passes and keep the ball away from the opponent whenever possible. Players have very specific roles within the team and rarely improvise.

“At FC Bayern München we focus on the human and social capacity of the staff and the players. The famous Latin quote that says, ‘a healthy mind in a healthy body’ might here be interpreted as a healthy mind in youth talent is a future healthy great player.”

- Werner Kern - FC Bayern München Head of Youth Academy (2011) -

For coaches it is essential to develop the FC Bayern spirit based on an unfailing and unconditional commitment towards the team; not only in their glory moments, but also in the more difficult moments.

EDUCATION

Talented junior players from abroad can be housed at the club but a limit of 13 players can be accommodated and it is unusual for the club to take a player into residency before the age of 14; most players are at least 16. When a player is considered for residency, the club understands that it is a big step for the player and his family. The club accepts full responsibility for the care of the young player.

FC Bayern München employs six teachers who, on a daily basis, are responsible for monitoring the school-work of the youth players in all the major subjects. They even offer German language lessons for players from abroad. A player who does not keep up in the classroom is not permitted to train or play. ‘We can’t promise their parents that one day they’ll play professionally for FC Bayern’ says Mr Kern, ‘but we can promise that they won’t neglect their studies’.

The older players have a busy week. As well as having their academic classes and the usual homework, they train six times a week. For some of them, there is additional formation training.

FC Bayern München II team – the link between senior and youth teams

The vehicle of contact between the first team and the youth department is the ‘reserve’ FC Bayern München II team. It plays in the 3rd division of German football and allows players in the U23 age groups to gain competitive experience. Interestingly, there is an unwritten law that the head coach of the club will have no direct influence on youth development. The academy is left to produce players and acts as a stand-alone unit that is shielded from the changes that are expected to occur with reasonable frequency at the top level and which inevitably have an effect on the senior team of such a high profile club.



Mia San Mia - The FC Bayern München way



www.giovanili.inter.it

“For us, football signifies respect and passion. Our goal is to first make men of boys and then turn them into champions.”

- Ernesto Paolillo - FC Internazionale Milano's Managing Director (2011) -

**MAIN GOAL: TWO PLAYERS
PER YEAR FROM
THE YOUTH ACADEMY
TO FIRST TEAM SELECTION**

Club Name	FC Internazionale Milano	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	Centro Sportivo G. Facchetti (30'000 m2), Milan
	Number of Training Pitches	8 (3 natural pitches, 5 artificial turf pitches including a 7x7)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	Not admitted - selection done through observers and affiliated clubs. Only the 6-8 years old children can enter in the Inter Soccer School only in the area of Milan
	Number of Scouts	37
	Zone of recruitment	8-10 Milan, 10-14 Lombardia region, over 14 around Italy, as from 16 in Europe
	Desired skills	Technique, rapidity, vision of the game
Team	Number of teams	11
	Number of players	230
	Origin of players	95% Italian
Coaches	Required characteristics	quality + receive specific information from the top and have to respect it.
	Number of Coaches	11 + 11 assistants + 4 goalkeeper coaches
	Responsibilities of Coaches	Limited power: could have their own coaching methods but have to follow the main path.
Training	Formation	4 defenders, then 4-4-2/4-5-1 or 4-3/3
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	From 8 individual tactics, from 13/14 team tactics
	Work with weights	After 16
	Number of training sessions	4 per week until 13, 5 per week until 17 1h30 training
	Type of matches	7:7 until 10, 9:9 until 12
	Exercices	different exercises for the 6-13 yo and the 14-19 yo. Always with the ball and at high rhythm
Particularity	Youth Academy Staff (excl. Coaches)	30
	In house facilities	With their families in Lombardia
	Prohibitions	Sanctions administered in case of misbehaving or bad school results
Costs/Year	€ 6 m	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- The training centre is named after Giacinto Facchetti, an Internazionale legend who placed great value on grassroots development.
- The objective of the Inter school instructors is to introduce children to the practice of sports through spontaneous play while at the same time respecting their various physiological, psychological and pedagogic needs.
- Last six years costs of the academy was € 36 m and the return in selling of players was € 78 m net (Profit € 42 m).

KEY FACTS

- 230 players in the youth academy
- Liaison with 50 amateur clubs (29 affiliated in Lombardy and 21 in the rest of Italy)
- Annual costs of the Academy = € 6 m
- 5 players from Inter youth academy in series A/ B in the 2010/2011 season
- First professional contract at the age of 16
- A player is selected for at least three seasons, then he is evaluated.

FC INTERNAZIONALE YOUTH TEAM HONOURS

- Primavera U20
Campionato: 1964, 1966, 1969, 1989, 2002, 2007
Coppa Italia: 1973, 1976, 1977, 1977, 1978, 2006
- Torneo di Viareggio U16
1962, 1971, 1986, 2002, 2008, 2011
- Berretti U17
Campionato: 1980, 1984, 1991
- Allievi Nazionali U16
Campionato: 1985, 1987, 1998, 2008
- Gianissimi Nazionali U15
Campionato: 1988, 1997, 1998, 2008
- NextGen 2012

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

The CEO and first team coach have preached the youth academy values since José Mourinho introduced a new philosophy to the club: a squad consisting of 18 top players and five of these emerging from the youth academy. This philosophy has three advantages:

- 1) Stars are less disillusioned by a lack of match play;
- 2) It increases and speeds up the development of youth talent;
- 3) Financially, it is a good investment as, in the long term, there is less dependence on, expensive foreign players.

Every training session and match and every moment of the youth academy's activities should be characterised by serenity, enthusiasm and fun - all aspects which help create the ideal climate and environment in which the boys can develop properly. In all age groups, individual and technical skills development are the key words and focus.

INFRASTRUCTURE

FC Internazionale Milano has six development centres (two in Milan, Bergamo, Como, Novara, Piacenza) called 'Centro di Formazione' where young players train during the week. This ensures that young players have shorter distances to travel to the training centres and the club can cover its catchment area which includes Milan's surroundings.

At a technical and didactic level, these development centres are duplicates of the main centre. One of the purposes is to standardise the 'Centro di Formazione' method of training and that of the Centro Sportivo G. Facchetti in Milan.

In the Centro Sportivo G. Facchetti training centre there are about 20 players per age group. Usually they have four training sessions per week. The time allocated to physical education in Italian schools remains limited to only 1.5 hours per week. Therefore players have to train in a manner allowing them to catch up with this deficiency. Sports education is not well-supported in the state education system and the infrastructure in Italy remains in poor condition.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

Focus of age groups, goals and the role of the coach

The basic philosophy is that each player should spend as much time as possible with the club in order to be fully developed over the years.

Pulcini (U11), Esordienti (U12) Giovanissimi Regionali A e B (U14)

For children in the 8 to 14 age group, the focus is primarily on strengthening a player's individual ability. It is only after this that the technical and tactical aspects are fully introduced.

The making of a young player is achieved through a combination of the technical ability of the coach in developing the player's talents, and the individual's capability in following instructions. Too often, pressure from families undermines the psychological equilibrium of the players. In this regard, Inter's Youth Academy employs a mediator; a professional who is capable of educating the youth players about sport, fair play and the psychology of playing as team.

A physical coach is always present when technical skills are developed, in order to teach youth players on how to avoid injuries.



Future stars in action

Giovanissimi Nazionali (U15) Allievi Regionali (U16) Allievi Nazionali (U17)

At the age of 14, the tactical elements of the game come to the forefront of the programme. It is difficult to decide the exact position a child should play in until he reaches the age of 12-13. At this time, although it is still possible for a player to play in other positions, players start being taught specific skills. (Forwards will practice shooting, central midfielders will start to play in the 360 degrees space). At the age of 15, coaches focus on developing technique required for the specific position of each player. Squad sizes per age group number between 18 and 21.

Primavera (U20)

Those players who enter Primavera A or Primavera B will most likely sign a professional contract either with FC Internazionale Milano or with another Italian club. FC Internazionale tends to sell, loan or exchange youth players for another top Italian player from a senior A team.

Players from the academy are developed with the main aim of making it to Inter's A team or to be transferred to another club. In the Primavera team, players from the academy work to get a chance to make it to the senior A team (about five of them played in the senior A team official games during the 2010/11 season).



Mario Balotelli

Primavera players can be accommodated at the Facchetti Academy; about 14 out of approximately 20 players live there. The Primavera team trains with the senior A team at the A team Training Centre (Centro Sportivo Angelo Moratti).

Coaching and training sessions

FC Internazionale Milano has different coaches for each age group. Key, according to Roberto Samaden, is the quality of the coaches. Each coach receives specific information from the top which he has to respect. In Italy each region retains its own vision of training and, of course, each coach might have his own particular coaching methods. However, FC Internazionale Milano marks out the main parameters and within these, each coach finds his own way of instructing the players. Players remain the property of the club and not the coach.

The coaching staff is composed of two coaches (head coach and assistant), one goalkeeper coach, one

“Coaches are making the difference’ ”.

- Roberto Samaden, FC Internazionale Milano's Head of Technical Department -

fitness coach and one physiotherapist. Basically, there are two coaches for each team. The four goalkeeper and four fitness coaches share training programme with more teams.

Inter U13 children have training sessions four times a week and Inter U17 has training sessions five times a week. Primavera has a different programme depending on the season's schedule and the senior A team's programme.

Training times are as follows:

15:30 – 17:00 training of U17 categories

17:00 – 18:30 training of younger U13 categories

José Mourinho's team 19+4 won the Treble

The work José Mourinho undertook at Internazionale Milano FC is highly appreciated – especially his vision of football. Mourinho supervised the work of Inter's youth academy via regular visits, meetings and open discussion with youth coaches in order to develop new Inter players. Mourinho launched the so-called 19+4 format in the Senior A team squad. He wanted to have 19 experienced, world-class players plus four promising youngsters from the club academy. The academy is therefore responsible for developing at least four players capable of joining the Inter A team every season.



FC Internazionale Milano trophy room

7/8 to 10 years: 'Pulcini'**Fun, enjoyment and play**

- Technical coordination for football. 'Copy the street game'
- It is important to give experience of the game; it is important that players play as much as possible.
- No interference by coaches, no saying 'listen to me'
- The role of the coach is to organise the game. Coaches observe players, but more importantly, listen to players.

11 to 14 years: 'Esordienti & Giovanissimi Regional'**Technical skills development**

- At the age of 11, sees the gradual introduction of training for technique, physical development and coordination. The focus is on individual aspects and organising specific physical support.
- Results of the team are not important;
 - games 9:9, 1:1, 2:2, 3:3;
 - small-sized games;
 - every minute is spent in training with the ball.
- The role of the coach is to be the instructor. Players need to understand what the coach expects from them. It is the start of the prevention of injuries.

14 and above: 'Giovanissimi Nazionale & Allievi'**Tactical skills development**

- Increase special technical skills as training for certain positions (defence, midfielder, striker); multi-position training; continuing individual technical skills training
- The role of the coach is to be a real coach. Tactics start to become the core of the training sessions

The children enrolled with Inter Schools are provided with a kit consisting of an Inter Shirt, a training top, shorts, socks, a tracksuit, a raincoat, a jacket, a cap and a bag

In order to provide flexibility to both players and parents, some training sessions are held on Saturdays or Sundays.

EDUCATION

In principle, players who do not come from Milan, before the age of 13 do not have to attend the Centro Sportivo G. Facchetti to train. Only the most talented U14 players are invited to the Centro Sportivo G. Facchetti to attend a professional and a more demanding training programme. The U14 squad is wider and training sessions are more professional. The long-term objective is for these players to integrate the Primavera team (U20). Talented international players are invited to the U17-U19 programme to increase its level, competitiveness and quality.

Players who train at the Centro Sportivo G. Facchetti usually study in schools around Milan. In the Primavera team, for example, players are in private schools in Milan. But this is the decision of each individual family.

In terms of behaviour, FC Internazionale Milano is very strict. Whenever players misbehave they get bad marks and some form of sanction is administered. For example, a player may not be allowed to attend youth national games unless the situation at school improves.

All training sessions last 90 minutes but the entire training process is extended further in the afternoons:

- before training (30 minutes) fitness, body-strengthening exercises, coordination (with the fitness coach)
- training session (90 minutes)

The former manager, José Mourinho, taught the 25 + 25 + 25 concept training programme, where the warm-up is not included (sometimes the warm-up is covered by the fitness coach in the previous activity)
- compensation and body-relaxing exercises with the physiotherapist (15-25 minutes)
- collective dinner or snack and home departure.

The project of affiliating clubs with the youth academy began in 1996. Today 29 clubs in Lombardy and 21 in the rest of Italy are represented. Each affiliated club has a contract with FC Internazionale Milano's youth department. Each club is invited to take part in the various initiatives of the programmes and all affiliated clubs have the right to use the wording 'Inter School' and its logo, which can be used alongside the name and logo of the respective club.



www.fclevadia.ee

“The school is open to all children, to whom we pass on football values in the hope that they become professionals”.

- Andres Leht - FC Levadia Tallinn's Board Member -

MAIN GOAL: A MINIMUM OF FIVE TO SIX PLAYERS FROM EACH AGE GROUP WILL FINISH THEIR YOUTH CAREERS AT FC LEVADIA II, WITH TWO TO THREE PLAYERS MAKING IT TO FC LEVADIA'S FIRST TEAM

Club Name	FC Levadia Tallinn	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	Jalgpallikool (50'000 m2), Tallinn
	Club Foundation	22 october 1998
	Number of Training Pitches	2 (1 + 1/2 natural pitches, 1 artificial turf)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	Boys can apply for the testing. Normally they train a couple of weeks with the team suitable for their age before the decision is made.
	Number of Scouts	scouting under 17 does not really exist
	Zone of recruitment	Estonia
	Desired skills	Technique, skills, speed, personality
Team	Number of teams	19 including 2 reserve teams
	Number of players	more than 300 including girls
	Origin of players	All local (75% Estonians, 25% Russians)
Coaches	Required characteristics	Mainly ex-players, also young coaches
	Number of Coaches	11
	Responsibilities of Coaches	head coach decides players position
Training	Formation	Mainly 4-4-2
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	16
	Work with weights	Not before the age of 16
	Number of training sessions	up to 3 per week under 7, 3-4 per week until 13, 4-5 per week as from 14
	Type of matches	7:7 and 8:8 until 13, 11:11 as from 14
	Exercices	Basic exercises are the same for every team, always with the ball and at high tempo. E.g. ball possession, 6:6, 3:3 Basic. The rest can be chosen by each coach.
Particularity	Youth Academy Staff (excl. Coaches)	3 working for Academy. 5 clubs staff also have responsibilities in the Academy
	In house facilities	All players have their own housing
	Prohibitions	No special prohibitions
Costs/Year	€ 120.000	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- The home of FC Levadia Tallinn's youth academy, the 'Jalpallikool' is located in the eastern part of the Estonian capital.
- The FC Levadia Academy was founded in 2006 following the merger between FCL and JK Kotkas Junior. It has 19 teams (including FC Levadia II and FC Levadia III) with training sessions held all over the city (mainly on artificial turf and in indoor sports halls).
- It is vital for smaller clubs to focus on the grassroots level because this creates the possibility of developing future professional players and acts as the main source of income for the club (except for the generosity of the owner).
- Despite the fact that FC Levadia Tallinn faces a number of logistical problems and is relatively small, the club is convinced that it has the talent to optimise its possibilities.

KEY FACTS

- First junior teams started in 2001
- More than 300 players in the youth academy including girls' section
- Annual costs of the Academy = € 120.000
- First professional contract at the age of 16

FC LEVADIA TALLINN'S YOUTH TEAM HONOURS

- In the past years, several youth teams have won Estonian youth league competitions and trophies from well-known tournaments such as the Helsinki Cup.

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

Both the club and its youth sections are non-profit organisations. A partnership agreement co-ordinates the relations between the two entities which is characterised by close ties between the bodies. Due to the limited opportunities, the same people control both organisations and the club staff fulfils functions in both (doctor, physiotherapy, IT, media, etc). Above all else, the strong relationship between the youth academy and the main club is vital for the sustainability of the club. Despite the fact that the senior team and the youth team are separate; the strength of the link between them is understandable as the Marketing Manager is responsible for both the senior team and the youth department.

FC Levadia Academy is open for all children aged from 6 to 13. Children between 6 and 9 can enter the academy without pre-selection. Children between 10 and 13 can enter the academy after pre-selection. It mostly depends on the need of each team (increasing the number of players, adjusting the general level of the team). Players older than 13 are scouted for the academy.

For all age groups, 18 players is the limit. In case the academy has more than 18 players available in a particular age group, two youth teams will be formed. Players are divided into the teams based on their capabilities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Businessman Viktor Levada created FC Levadia Tallinn by merging two clubs. In 2007, FC Levadia Tallinn signed a 35-year agreement with the city to rent the training ground. This maid Levadia Tallinn, the first club in Estonia to have a privately owned training ground. € 2 m was invested for reconstruction and, currently, the club rents the premises from the city of Tallinn for € 40k per year. In Estonia, FC Levadia Tallinn and FC Flora are the only clubs which own their training facilities.

The infrastructure of FC Levadia Tallinn remains modest with one full-sized turf pitch, one full-sized grass pitch and one half-sized grass pitch. Because of the poor weather, professional players usually start



U14 training

to play on the grass pitch in April. Despite the need to play on grass pitches, the youth teams are forced to play on artificial ones; only one team in the Estonian Meistriliiga plays on a artificial pitch all year round. Of the others, nine out of ten play on grass, but the quality remains poor.

Generally, FC Levadia Tallinn's income remains constant year on year and is secure since 70% of its income is provided by Mr Viktor Levada, the club's owner. The remainder is made up of 10% from European competitions, 10% through the sale of players and 10% from other sponsors.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

Age group's focus, goals and role of coach

The youth academy has teams from group 'A' youth to group 'F' as well as adult teams I, II, III and the Elite League. From 2012, the U19 league will be the top youth league, combined with the A youth championship. The U17 league will have nine to twelve teams in 2012, which will play each other twice. The best players in the A team play in the reserve team, Levadia II, most of the time. The head coach decides who plays in which team.

- U-8 learning the game through fun and small games. Coach is providing joy and fun for all
- U-10 building interest in football, developing basic techniques and skills through the game
- U-12 developing the technique through special trainings, developing the tactical side
- U-14 focus on tactics and formation, all players need to know their role

- U-16 players understand the demands of the coach and can fulfil these demands, better understanding about the positional game. Players use their best skills to bring the success for the team, improvement in teamwork
- U- 17 each player needs to prove himself, focus on physical preparation
- U-19 the best players should be ready to join the first team. Technical, tactical and mental skills must meet the requirements of the Premier Division. Physical development continues, working on stamina and speed. Communication on the field in focus.

*Konstantin Vassiljev*

“Small clubs from small countries can only rely on the development of their own Youth Academy players.”

- Sergei Hohlov-Simson - FC Levadia Tallinn's Managing Director -

Age Category: Under 7

- Improving basic skills through playing games and having fun
- Controlling, receiving, passing, shooting
- Different ball games and short exercises
- Meeting with the senior team
- Training sessions: 1–3 times a week
- Tournaments and matches

**Feeling the passion and loving the game!
Everybody closely involved!**

Age Category: 8 to 13 years (D YOUTH)

- Easily understandable exercises and basic technique
- Coordination, speed, match situations, passing and controlling the ball
- Learning to always consider the overall level of the team
- Starting from the very basics and moving on
- Training sessions: 3–4 times a week + league match
- International tournaments: 2–3 every year
- Playing 7:7 or 8:8
- Tests twice a year

**Repetition is the mother of knowledge!
Everybody closely involved!**

Age Category: 14 to 15 years (C YOUTH)

- Set pieces, collective training and team effort
- Improvement of individual skills
- Learning to attack (receive the ball, moving to attack, etc.)
- Defensive play and neutralising the opponent, securing, pressing
- Cooperation between the lines
- Training sessions: 4–5 times a week + league match
- International tournaments: 2–3 every year
- Playing 11:11

Introductory; not going into the details in any great depth

Age Category: 16 to 17 years (B YOUTH)

- Launching the attack, creating the game, finalising the attack
- Defensive play
- Cooperation between the lines (GK, DF, MF, FW)
- Creating and finalising power play (3:2, 2:1) situations
- Every player has his own position
- Training sessions: 4–5 times a week + league match
- International tournaments: 2–3 every year
- Playing 11:11

**Players ready for individual and team challenges with the passion to win.
The aim is to win the games.**

Age Category: 18 and above (A YOUTH: U18– U19)

- Improving the team effort and technical skills
- Turning individual weaknesses into strengths
- Focus on 1:1 situations – the team who wins 75% of 1:1 duels normally wins the game
- Analysing the opponent's game
- Improving technique according to the demands of the position
- Players learning to become professionals
- Training sessions: 4–5 times a week + league match
- International tournaments: 2–3 every year
- Playing 11:11

More motivation than instructions!

Coaching and training sessions

Coaches provide the education required for each age group. All coaches have the licence required for their age group.

- U-8 60–90 minutes fun and full of games
- U-10 30–40 minutes focused on technique and skills / 50–60 min focused on game
- U-11 40–50 minutes focused on technique and skills / 50–40 min focused on game and tactics
- U-12 50–60 minutes focused on technique and skills, some tactics / 40–30 mins focused on game and tactics. C2 starts 11 a side
- U-14 50–60 minutes focused on technique and skills, some tactics, light physics / 30–40 min focused on game and tactics
- U-17 60 minutes focused on technique, skills, tactics, physics / 40 minutes focused on game and tactics

- U-19 50–60 minutes focused on technique, skills, tactics, physics / 40 minutes focused on game and tactics

Youth players are allowed to play a maximum of two games a week (as soon as the player is fielded he is deemed to have played a game)

EDUCATION

All students attend normal schools in the city; some even come from the outskirts of the city. However, the Estonian government has granted the 'Jalgpallikool' Academy a licence for a 'Private Hobby School'. The school has working principles and education programmes approved by the state authorities. Furthermore parents are granted income tax advantages due to the licence.



Warm up session



www.gnkdinamo.hr

“Repetition is key as the players are focused on creating the right reactions in ball handling and in combining and cooperating.”

- Damir Vrbanović – NK Dinamo’s CEO (2011) -

A photograph of a soccer field. In the foreground, a goal is visible on the left. Two young players are on the field; one is in a dark blue kit crouching, and the other is in an orange kit walking. The background shows trees and a fence.

**MAIN GOAL: A MINIMUM OF
TWO PLAYERS FROM
EACH AGE GROUP WILL
FINISH THEIR YOUTH CAREERS
IN THE NK DINAMO ZAGREB
FIRST TEAM**

Club Name	NK Dinamo Zagreb	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	Nogometna škola Dinamo (36'000 m2), Zagreb
	Number of Training Pitches	6 (4 natural grass , 2 artificial turf)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	Yes, boys can submit an application form. They are then tested during "summercamp."
	Number of Scouts	5 in the Croatia, 4 in the rest of the world
	Zone of recruitment	Zagreb and suburbs + Northern Croatia, BIH, Australia, Canada and USA
	Desired skills	Ability (specially agility), positioning personality, technique
	Team	Number of teams
	Number of players	+/- 200
	Origin of players	97% Croatian
Coaches	Required characteristics	High level of intelligence, stable personality, ability to transfer knowledge, feeling for the game, not necessarily a former top player
	Number of Coaches	21
	Responsibilities of Coaches	Limited power: Prepare their own programs based on club philosophy and helped by club's database, everything based on 4-4-2 or 4-2-3-1 formation
Training	Formation	4-4-2 or 4-2-3-1
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	13
	Work with weights	Not before the age of 16
	Number of training sessions	3-4 per week until 11, 4-5 per week until 13, 5-6 per week until 15, 6-7 per week after 15
	Type of matches	9:9 between 7-10, 11:11 as from 11
	Exercices	Always with the ball and at high level, similar for every age group, possession, passing, interception.
	Particularity	Youth Academy Staff (excl. Coaches)
	In house facilities	NK Dinamo Academy houses
	Prohibitions	Obligatory school, no jewelery, no smoking, no bad behaviour
Costs/Year	€ 1,3 m	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- The Youth Academy is situated next to the Maksimir Stadium, home of the club which opened on 5 May, 1912.
- NK Dinamo Zagreb has always paid special attention to the training and development of young players. The first junior team was founded in 1991. Today, about 50% of the first team squad comes directly from the youth academy.
- The strategy of development for the football school is continuously improving and the well-established philosophy of the game is rigorously and continuously implemented in every day exercises.
- The general objectives of the school can be summarised as follows: development of healthy lifestyle habits, training youngsters to be good people, helping children to be happy in sport, responsibility in daily school activities and development of players for the first team.
- In the last five years the cost of the academy was € 6.5 m. The return from selling players was € 50 m. (Net profit = € 43.5 m)

KEY FACTS

- Approximately 200 players in the youth academy
- Seven full pitches (two artificial grass)
- Liaison with NK Lokomotiva Zagreb as a 'farm' club
- Annual costs of the Academy = € 1.3 m (8% club budget)
- Of first team selections in the 2010/2011 season, 50% came from the youth academy

NK DINAMO ZAGREB YOUTH TEAM HONOURS

- Croatian Championship (U19)
2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010, 2011
- Croatian Championship (U17)
1992, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

NK Dinamo Zagreb is an established organisation which is constantly looking to improve. Football is developed by connecting various fields such as scientific programmes, software applications, coaching workshops and marketing activities.

Over the last five years, NK Dinamo Zagreb has sold 23 players to nine European top divisions. More than 50% of players in the senior A team have been promoted from the home youth academy. NK Dinamo's B team, considered to be a 'farm team' competes regularly in the Croatian first division, which gives the youth players a great platform before joining the 1st team.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The NK Dinamo Zagreb youth academy is based at Maksimir Stadion. The base is owned by the city but the club has been granted long-term use of the facilities. The infrastructure consists of seven full sized pitches, two artificial pitches plus the main stadium, Maksimir. The academy also has a fitness room and wellness centre. A swimming pool is currently being constructed next to the artificial pitches.

For NK Dinamo Zagreb, the quality of pitches is crucial for the technical development of players. There are two natural grass fields with excellent surfaces with top quality grass. Next to them there are two third-generation turf fields. Two additional grass pitches are used in bad weather conditions or when the other pitches are under repair.

In the Nogometna škola Dinamo there are up to 200 players training in different categories: U8, U9, U10 and U11 players train three to four times a week; U12 and U13 players, four to five times a week; U14 and U15 players, five to six times a week and U17 and U19 players train six to seven times a week. The youth department also runs successful summer schools in the USA, Canada, Australia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

The focus of age groups, goals and the role of the coach

The academy looks after children from U8 up to U19 which equals a total of 11 teams. There is no U18 team.

The success of the academy is apparent in the excellent organisation and prominent grassroots coaching which often results in high profile international transfers. The age-group structure has two tiers. The first runs from U8 to U13 during which children are preferably learning basic technical skills. The second tier is the U14 to U19 group and it is here that young players are confronted more with tactical demands and are under greater pressure to achieve winning results in competition matches.

Every age group has a specified number of training sessions per week, per month and per year as well as number of competitions, tournaments and friendly matches. Attention to detail is such that in some cases the number of ball contacts in concrete technical drills during one year is calculated.



Luka Modrić

Age category U8 – U11

Teams up to U11 play 8+1 and work hard on individual technique and handling the ball. Repetition is the key as the players focus on creating correct automatisms in ball handling, combinations and cooperating with team-mates.

The teams for age categories U8 to U11 have 12 players in each squad. Others are recruited as promising talent from various Zagreb clubs with the hope that they will become national and international players. In this category, NK Dinamo focuses mainly on Zagreb and its suburbs.

Age category U12 – U16

In this age group, a start is made on establishing dynamic techniques in terms of speed with the ball, combination, flow and precise combinations. Players start to play 11-a-side matches with basic formations of 4-4-2 or 4-2-3-1 or 4-1-4-1. Squads are composed of 20 players. At the U14 level, tactical content begins to prevail. At the age of 14, players must be completely educated in the areas of ball control and they are expected to achieve positive results in matches. Preference for identical line-ups of preferred players is impossible due to the significant number of matches in one season. Competition matches are organised to include a number of international matches with Croatian youth teams, a number of international

NK Lokomotiva, the reserve squad

NK Dinamo Zagreb has no affiliated team but NK Lokomotiv Zagreb is considered as the B team and organised in a manner which sees it come under the command of its 'mother', NK Dinamo Zagreb. Most players who require playing time play with NK Lokomotiv Zagreb, which regularly plays in the Croatian first division. The Sports Director and Academy Director decide which players will go on a minimum half-year loan to NK Lokomotiv Zagreb. Then they decide which players will stay for direct participation in the first team programme and which youngsters will be sold to another Croatian club.

“Sense of play, consistency, quickness, aggressiveness and mental capacity are demanded during our training.”

- Romeo Jozak - NK Dinamo Zagreb Head of Youth Academy -

tournaments, friendly matches and so-called marketing matches. During matches, teams learn the tactical principles of zonal defence, pressing and fast transitions.

The flow of the game is speeded up as much as possible and players are encouraged to play with minimal touchés of the ball. From the U15 level, players have a rather strict day regime imposed on them; they have only two free days per month. Players living in the NK Dinamo academy houses are visited by their parents in order to maintain family relations.

Age category U17 and U19

At this stage, before the final transition into professional football, players are mainly transferred to older categories. This means that U17 or U19 teams may have many younger players in their squads. The number of players in the squad is once more increased (up to 26) in order to cover more than 60 matches a year. Cooperation with the senior A team takes place on a day-to-day basis and players from U17 are regularly invited to join a mid-week A team training session. This is another advantage to having larger squads. Players are learning to become professionals and have individual fitness, physiotherapy and specialised individual programmes (forwards, midfielders, defenders, or wingers together). The U17 and U19 teams play in nationwide competitions and usually dominate even when they play against older opposition.

Coaching and training sessions

NK Dinamo Zagreb provides materials and drill systems which help the coaches to prepare daily programmes. These tools are based on a written philosophy and are completed by a database, as mentioned above.

The results are impressive: 13% of players recruited into U8 survive until U19 and 34% of players from U11

survive until U19. A minimum of two players from each age group will finish their youth career in the Dinamo A team.

Age category: U8 – U9

- **consists mainly of the elements of technique and application of these elements in free play - for the remaining time; concentration on physical preparation, tactical preparation and theory**

- system of play: 3-2-3
- taking up positions and maintaining the basic formation
- free play
- learning the basic principles of a football game
- basic movement paths
- basic passing routes

Age category: U10 – U11

- system of play: 3-2-3
- individual tactics - defence, attack
- encouraging the one-on-one game
- mini games (4:1, 3:1, 3:2, 4:2)
- possession games (5:5+2, 4:4+2)

Age category: U12 – U16

- introducing and learning the demands and characteristics of the flat-four game system
- developing knowledge and the skills of dynamic movement techniques and basic stereotypes of cooperation
- developing physical and functional abilities in the sensitive phases
- individual approach in resolving the TE-TA and physical deficiencies

Age category: U17 and U19

- **perfecting the demands of the flat-four system**
- automation of team defence demands
- automation of team offence demands and game logic requirements
- improvement of individual specialties
- tracking and evaluation of training effects – creating a database

The training demands can be summarised as follows:

- learning basic principles of football
- achieving high levels of physical preparedness
- mastering technical elements of the game
- mastering tactical elements of the game
- learning and perfecting different game systems
- individual training with young talent
- satisfaction in training and competition

The five key points of the in-game goals are

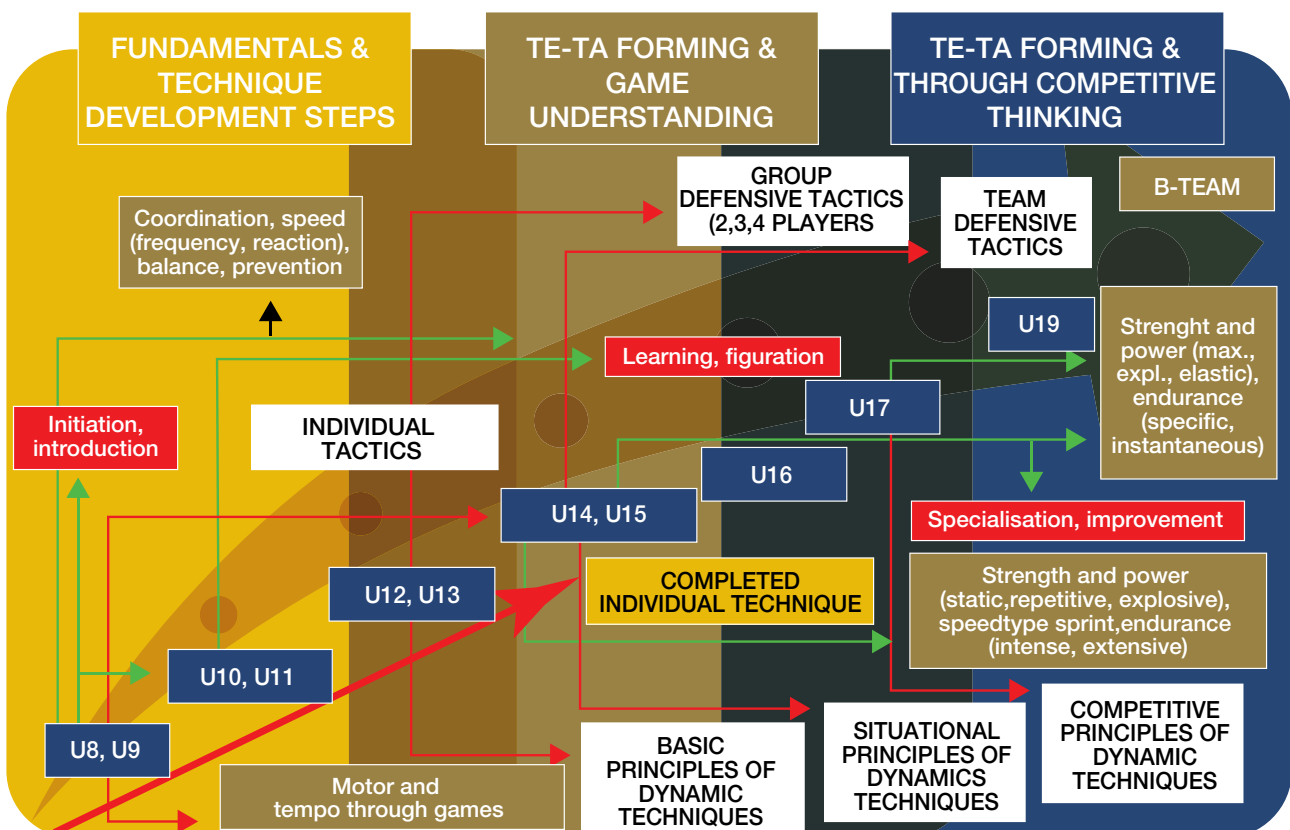
- meeting technical and tactical demands

- ensuring the continuity of stable performance of the individual and team
- adaptation to pressure
- meeting the players' and the club's ambitions
- encouraging fair play during games

EDUCATION

Due to the location of NK Dinamo Zagreb in the centre of Zagreb and the fact that Zagreb is a relatively small city with a very good public transport system, all players go to public or private schools outside the academy.

Guidelines of demands through age groups





www.rclens.fr

“The aim of the academy is to offer an academy that develops football players and men”

- Gervais Martel, RC Lens Chairman (2012) -

**MAIN GOAL: EIGHT PLAYERS
FROM YOUTH ACADEMY
TO FIRST TEAM SELECTION
PER YEAR**

Club Name	RC Lens	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	La Gaillette (22 hectares), Avion-Lens
	Number of Training Pitches	12 (9 natural grass, 3 artificial turf)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	Yes, boys can be recruited after being observed and noticed in their club of origin
	Number of Scouts	20
	Zone of recruitment	100km around Lens
	Desired skills	Intelligence, Technique, Offensive game
Team	Number of teams	14 + professional team
	Number of players	182
	Origin of players	85% from North of France, 10% France, 5% foreign
Coaches	Required characteristics	An former Lens player with a minimum coaching experience
	Number of Coaches	21
	Responsibilities of Coaches	Limited power, but no scheme imposed by the Board until U19 and second team
Training	Formation	4-4-2 and 4-3-3
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	12
	Work with weights	Not before the age of 16 and little work
	Number of training sessions	3 per week until 13, 4 per week after 14, except for players of FFF preformation Centre
	Type of matches	7:7 from U8, 9:9 from U11, 11:11 from U13
	Exercices	The same for every team, always with the ball, at high tempo for mobility and ball control.
Particularity	In house facilities	La Gaillette (60 boarders in the Academy)
	Prohibitions	No caps and earrings inside Academy, official club dress for games and representation
Costs/Year	€ 6 m	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- RC Lens is located in a working-class region and maintains a very significant working-class identity, amongst its followers in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais. It also perceives the values of its supporters to be core to its identity. The club has a reputation for a policy of offensive football and this is, therefore, an important criterion for the recruitment of young players.
- Despite the recent financial turbulence that has meant the club's previous position as a regular in the French first division has been jeopardised, club ownership over the last two decades has remained consistent. RC Lens is strongly committed to investing in youth football despite the negative results of the first team.

RC LENS YOUTH TEAM HONOURS

- Coupe Gambardella: 1957, 1958, 1992
- Championnat de France U19: 2009
- Championnat national des Cadets: 1978, 1981, 1985, 1986
- Tournoi des centres de formation: 2003, 2006, 2011
- Regional Competitions :
 - Tournoi international de Rezé (U19): 1992, 1996, 2008
 - Eurofoot de Dourges (U19): 2011

KEY FACTS

- About 200 players in the youth academy with 65 boarders
- Annual costs of the Academy = € 6 m
- Costs of the construction of the Youth Academy (1998–2001) = € 13 m
- During the past six years, RC Lens received € 30 m from transfer fees.
- In 2011/2012, 18 players from RC Lens youth academy are playing for their national teams
- Scouting: mainly local, then national and at least in Belgium

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

The stated aim of the academy is not merely train professional players for the future but to develop 'Lens Players' who are able to uphold the club's and the region's proud heritage and provide supporters with a direct and tangible link to this identity through their football. One of the main vehicles of transmitting these values to young players is the prevalence of professional players, who actually played at RC Lens, in the coaching structure of the academy.

The RC Lens Academy operates as an integral part of the club and is an extremely important part of the whole organisation. This is highlighted by the fact that the club currently dedicates 20–25% of its overall budget to the running of the Academy. There are a total of 12 age groups starting with U9 and finishing with the B team that plays in the top amateur division of French football (CFA Group A). Competitions are regional in the lower age groups and become national for older age groups. Many of the coaches working with the youngsters (from U15 upwards) are full-time, former professionals and, most importantly, former RC Lens players (six from a total of 18 coaches).

Players are mainly recruited locally, with the majority of all Academy players coming from the surrounding region (60%). A smaller number are recruited from the Paris area (30%), and the remaining 10% come from other parts of France and Belgium which lies within the 50km limit specified by FIFA in its transfer regulations. These percentages are also reflected in the scouting structure of the club, with the bulk of the scouts operating in Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Paris and Belgium.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The academy complex of La Gaillette houses both the training centre for the elite professional squad of RC Lens and the youth teams. The idea of the academy was first conceived in 1998 and the complex was inaugurated in 2001, following a € 13 m investment from the club. There are a total of 12 grass and artificial pitches for use by the professionals and the youth teams and a reduced 8.500m² indoor artificial pitch (72x58 meters), and a 16 meter-high wall which comes in extremely handy during the winter period, when outside training on grass is reserved for the professional elite squad.

There are offices and reception areas for the academy, a canteen for players and staff, and educational and media areas. Living quarters for young players who stay in residence and senior professional players who need accommodation before games are also provided. There is also space for parents visiting the young players who stay at the academy. The total area of the complex is 22 hectares and is of a very high standard. A new artificial pitch was installed in September 2011.

The non-sporting and hotel facilities include a 250-seat amphitheatre and accommodation for 160 people (55 players are currently living in La Gaillette and 54 live at the Jean Mace school).

TECHNICAL APPROACH

The focus of age groups, goals and the role of the coach

The club places specific demands on the production line: three players per year from the Academy have to graduate into the senior side, and the ultimate objective is to operate with a first-team squad consisting of at least 40% of club-trained players.

CFA team (Championnat de France Amateur) is the second team of RC Lens. In this team, youth players can make their first step to climb in to the first team. As there is no single specific scheme for youth players, all schemes are implemented during training so that the players are able to adapt to any conditions when they play professionally.

Football Academy: U8–U11

In this age group, ball control and basic techniques requiring coordination form the main focus of training. However, the children's personal development is also supported. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions, to have self-confidence and to learn to play as part of a team. The concept of fair play is instilled from this young age.

Préformation: U13 to U15

These three years are very important. Youth players play in Lens but they do not live at La Gaillette. Four times a week, they finish school at 15h00, arriving at La Gaillette at 15h30 for their training which is from 16h00 to 17h30.



Raphaël Varane

7 to 11 years: (U8-U11)**Football Academy**

- Three training sessions per week
- School and family are the most important
- Matches on Saturdays
- Tournaments, training periods

12 to 14 years: (U13-U15)**Preformation**

- Preformation centre (FFF) / Elite section (RCL)
- Four training sessions per week
- Training is in the afternoons (flexible hours)
- Secondary school (College)
- Living in the academy (studies)
- Matches over weekends

15 to 17 years: (U16-U18)**Formation and post formation**

- Seven training sessions per week
- Secondary school (Lycée)
- Living in the academy (studies)
- Matches over weekends

Coaching and training sessions

The club is committed to bringing former players back as youth trainers. This allows a better transmission of values and experience to young players. Despite the level of the league, the youth academy remains focused on training and developing top class players. Coaches place emphasis on team tactics where intelligence in the game, movement and speed are key. The aim is to develop offensive actions via collective construction based on short passes.

EDUCATION

The education programme at RC Lens is multi-faceted, with several options available to different players. Those deemed to have the greatest footballing potential are housed in the residence at the Academy, which has room for more than 100 boys and is currently home to about 60. These players may come from only 20km away from Lens but the club feels that housing them in the residence aids their football development and allows them to focus on their



Gaillettes d'or: Racing club de Lens Youth hall of fame

“A young person will perform on the field and in school if he is feeling good about his everyday life. There must be a balance. Here in La Gaillette, using whatever means we can, we do everything possible to develop each child’s potential.”

- Georges Tournay - Head of RC Lens’s Youth Academy (2012) -

progress. The most talented players will be educated at the RC Lens private Technical School which operates on site, using tutors in various subjects, such as English and IT studies. The club also collaborates with three local secondary schools, one of which is a boarding school.

RC Lens has also set up a private technical school (ETP) approved by the French ‘Education Nationale’. The ETP has a specific programme for football players with an adapted schedule and one-on-one tutoring. The programme includes training sessions in businesses together with some specific studies in foreign languages and computing. Provision is made for post-school study to help players prepare for their school diplomas. As well as the private technical school, the club also cooperates with some local schools which are located less than 20 km from Lens.

As part of the child’s education, he is taught to respect the balance between football and academic studies. Academic results are monitored and physical, medical



Team tactics board at La Gaillette

and educational achievements are considered to be of key importance. Each youth player must have graduated or qualified after his sporting formation with parents expected to be fully involved in the progress and evolution of their child.

Pôle Espoir de la Fédération Française de Football (FFF)

The French regulatory system for football at youth level is well-developed. One of the main constraints encountered by RC Lens is the system of ‘Pôle Espoir’, where the French Football Federation runs ten regional development centres for boys aged 12–15 years and gives them a football education. Players for these centres are picked for trials organised by the FFF. Clubs have to provide players for these trials if they have

signed a convention with the FFF. This convention grants these clubs special status, allowing them to offer an enhanced education package with a flexible school programme. However, after the three years spent at the federation development centres, clubs have to ‘buy back’ the registration of the players. RC Lens currently spends about € 100,000 per annum on such ‘buy backs’!



www.standard.be

“Since the creation of the club, its roots can be found in its youth development.”

- Pierre François – R. Standard de Liège General Director (2011) -



**MAIN GOAL: EIGHT TO NINE
PLAYERS FROM THE YOUTH
ACADEMY TO FIRST TEAM
SELECTION IN THE NEXT DECADE**

Club Name	R. Standard de Liège	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	Centre de Formation Robert. Louis Dreyfus, Liège
	Number of Training Pitches	7 (5 natural pitches, 2 artificial turf)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	Organisation of 1 recruitment day for all players and selection of the best player for a training test in group before final decision concerning his integration in the club.
	Number of Scouts	36 (7 for top youth in Belgium, France and Holland; 24 for Belgium; 5 for football academies)
	Zone of recruitment	Under 18 only in Belgium. Over 18 open to all.
	Desired skills	Technique, intelligence, personality.
Team	Number of teams	14 + the first professional team
	Number of players	+/- 250
	Origin of players	98% have Belgian nationality with a widespread of cultures.
Coaches	Required characteristics	The ideal coach is an ex football player with a lot of experience at a high level but he must be qualified and he must be the holder of a diploma.
	Number of Coaches	30 excluding first team coaches.
	Responsibilities of Coaches	Limited power because followed by an educational program set up by the sports direction of the club. No tactical plan imposed but always a defense of 4.
Training	Formation	4-3-3 or 4-4-2
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	14 years
	Work with weights	U18 once a week
	Number of training sessions	U8 : 2 U11 - U12 - U9 - U10 : 3 U13 - U14 : 4 U15 - U19 : 6
	Type of matches	U8 - U9 : 5:5 U10 - U11 : 8:8 From U12 : 11:11
	Exercices	The same for each team. Always with the ball at a high tempo but following the educational program. No imposed exercises because coaches are required to be creative.
	Particularity	Youth Academy Staff (excl. Coaches)
In house facilities		Collaboration with private and independant boarding schools. Club responsible towards the family of the players.
Prohibitions		Earrings, piercings, tattoos, caps. Mandatory to have correct clothes and a correct hair cut. Mandatory to wear black football shoes.
Costs/Year	€ 1,5 m	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- Leading Belgian club, R. Standard de Liège, has been Belgian champion ten times. The club is particularly aware that a strong club is based on a strong policy of youth development.
- Overall, the club's aim is to play in the UEFA Champions League again, preferably with players who have been developed through the club's own youth system. A secondary aim (and one which the club is very proud of) is to develop and supply players to the Belgian national team.
- Sharing everyday football values with young players and ensuring the sustainability of the club remains the most important task of the club.

KEY FACTS

- Around 250 players in the youth academy
- Annual costs of the Academy = € 1.5 m
- About ten players from the Standard youth academy in Belgium first and second Leagues in the 2011/2012 season
- First professional contract at the age of 16
- 35 R. Standard de Liège players have been called up to participate in various age groups of the Belgian National team (2011/2012)

R. STANDARD DE LIÈGE YOUTH TEAM HONOURS

- The Youth Academies main aim is not to win titles. The philosophy above all, is to train in the best way possible future players.

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

There is a scientific basis to the development of players at R. Standard. This can primarily be attributed to the work of the former director in charge of the academy, Michel Bruyninckx who has been developing and honing his methods of coaching for over ten years. This has led to the development of a scientific and analytical approach to youth development at the club, with training sessions and the overall programme being organised to work within this method:

R. Standard de Liège focuses on long term player/athlete development principles:

- Active start (0 – 6 years)
- FUNdamental
- Learning to train
- Training to train
- Training to compete
- Training to win
- Retirement (a lifetime in sport)

Football is combined with general cognitive development (school performance). Those in the youth department try to apply current insights involving brain research to guarantee that the youth academy can deliver high-standard football players or highly qualified young people. The Youth Academy slogan is 'disco ergo sum' (I learn, therefore I am).

Furthermore, there is on-going collaboration between the head coach and the academy director. The Academy director is present at the head coach's training sessions to guarantee that there is a clear, logical, conduit within the club. There are two weekly meetings to follow up on the collaboration between the academy and the first team. This goal of effective collaboration will be achieved by standardising part of the training sessions of all youth categories. The standardised aspects will be based on research to do with how children learn.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The R. Standard de Liège academy is divided in two zones. One zone is set apart for the first team and contains two grass pitches for the regular training sessions, a pro block and a recovery block (with 30 rooms). Part of this zone is a quality area that is set

apart for youth elite players and the first team. This contains one grass pitch for training sessions and friendly matches for the pro players and the U21 youth elite players, a tribune (800 seats), a fitness room (+/-300 m³) and a reception area.

There is a zone for the youth players which contains dressing rooms, a bar and restaurant, two grass pitches used for competition matches only, one grass training pitch (140 m x 145 m), one hall with an artificial grass pitch (70 m x 40 m), another artificial grass pitch (28 m x 20 m) and one regular artificial grass pitch for

pro and youth training sessions with a athletics track around the academy.

The facilities of the academy are first class: they have clearly been developed with the aim of producing the best that money can buy. The total spending on infrastructure alone will be over € 20 m over the next 20–25 years (paying off the mortgage on buildings, without taking into account the running costs). The facilities are well thought out for both the youth and senior sides; there is a clear progression in terms of the quality of facilities starting those available for the younger age groups and improving for the professional development sides and, ultimately, for the first team. The training academy of R. Standard Liège has been perceived to be at the forefront of facilities of this kind in Europe. It outperforms the relative position of Belgium in the European football ranking at both club and national levels and represents the foundation for the future success of the club.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

Focus of age groups, goals and the role of the coach

At R. Standard de Liège, there is a very clear separation between grassroots youth development (mostly 12 years and under) and professional youth development. Youth players from the U13-age group onwards are seen as apprentices on route to becoming professional footballers, which is quite an early start. Statistically, R. Standard de Liège shows a reasonably high retention rate from age group to age group, but there is still a significant number of players who, ultimately, are not good enough to become professional players at any level. It would be interesting to determine what 'out programmes' are provided by the club to make sure that boys who do not make the grade are helped to engage in other professions. However, the fact that the club does operate an in-depth school programme will be a very important tool to assist with this. Moreover, the whole ethos of the academy seems to be about constant and universal learning, which will, ultimately, be useful for boys beyond the football pitch.

Overall, the academy works as a single unit in which all the constituent parts move in the same direction. This is helped a great deal by the fact that there is an



Axel Witsel

“You have to present new activities that players are not used to doing. If you repeat exercises too often, the brain thinks it knows the answers. By constantly challenging the brain and making use of its plasticity, you discover a world that you thought was never available. Once the brain picks up the challenge, it creates new connections and enables remarkable results”

- Michel Bruyninckx - R.Standard de Liège's Youth Technical Director (2011) -

Playing stage: U6 – U9

Features of the playing stage

- Development of general moving and ball skills in a playful way and in accordance with the proper environment of perception and the child's level.
- Versatile moving with and without the ball and playing as a medium

Coordination stage: U10 – U13

Goal-oriented learning

- Goal-oriented development of general and specific movement and ball skills, fundamental for functional techniques and/or basics
- Learning better all-round movement as a mean and as a goal

Puberty stage: U14 – U15

Team-oriented acting

- Goal-oriented development and automation of general and specific movements and ball skills fundamental to functional and positional techniques involving the proper 11:11 playing style (basic team tactics)
- Stabilising physical capacity

Game stage: U16 – U18

Team-oriented playing

- Further goal-oriented development and automation of specific movements and ball skills fundamental to functional and positional techniques (aimed at the individual positions in the team) within the proper playing style 11: 11 (basic team tactics) and bound to the CFESS (Coordination-Flexibility-Endurance-Speed-Strength) features
- Typical for the game-win stage: performing and individualising

Post-formation stage: U18 – U23

Team-oriented performances

- Further individualisation; preparing and perfecting professional performances at the highest level
- Career planning

inherent sense of cooperation between the academy and the first team, due to the fact that both men effectively ‘come as a single package’.

Coaching and training sessions

The aim is to gather in-depth information regarding the skill acquisition of these age groups. The support is based on a multi-sport approach in combination with specific football drills to guarantee a child's general development. The specific football drills contain a lot of neurological advice. Using these drills, ‘brain-centred learning’ in soccer can be achieved and school performance can be improved. The result is:

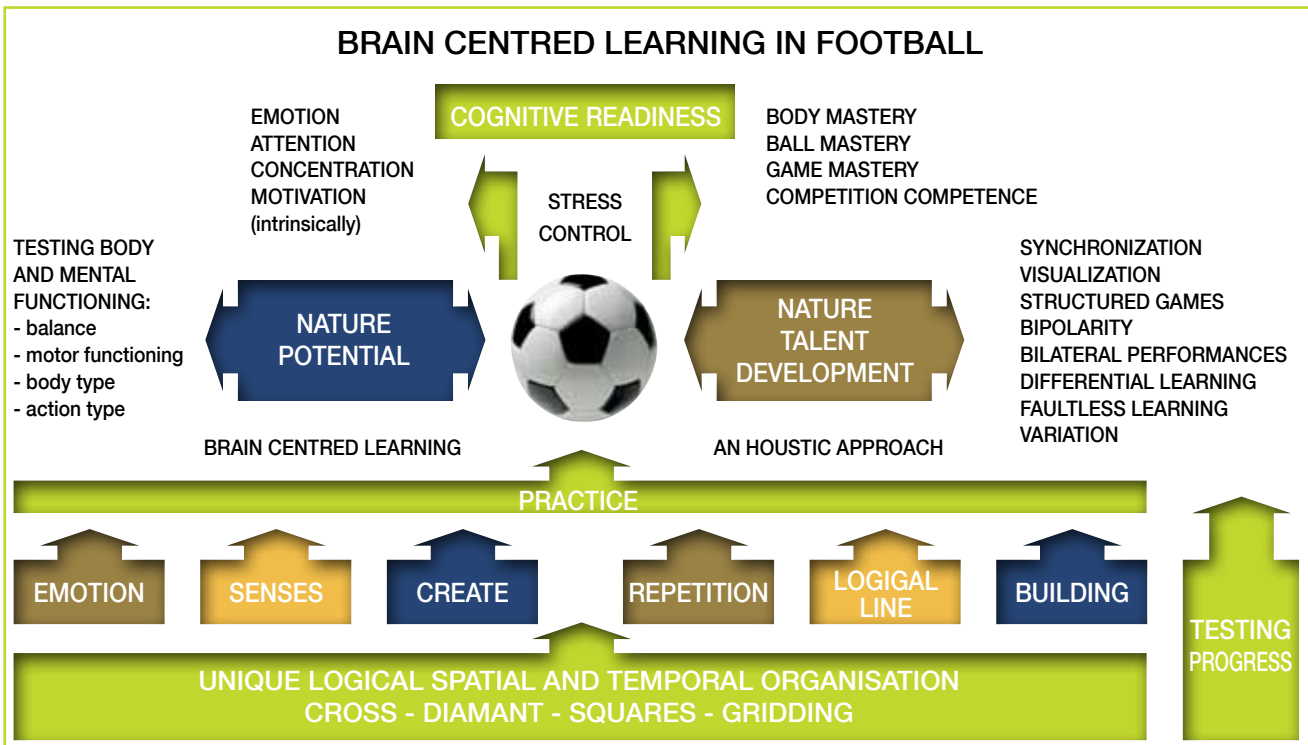
- optimising motor functioning
- stimulating cognitive performances
- guiding the emotional impact of football on young players in a professional club

EDUCATION

The school programme is extremely important to R. Standard Liège, and the Local Council seems to cooperate, both in terms of releasing players within the school curriculum time and also by providing assistance with transport to the academy.



Fitness facilities at the youth academy



Brain-centred learning in football

Creating a training environment applying the principle: **‘The players are coaching!’** This requires strongly visualising the training contents in such a way that the players will understand the logical progression in all of our programmes (= brain-centred learning). Regularly, the older players need to make notes regarding a training session they had and, the day after, they need to present the same drills again. In this way, they coach their team-mates. R. Standard de Liège programmes always refer to one principle: **‘Knowing what to do before you receive the ball!’**

KNOWING

All the coaches need to determine what knowledge a player needs about his body, ball mastery, coordination, running skills, mental skills, tactical skills, and physical and health requirements (including lifestyle and nutrition).

During training sessions, players must be able to explain what the requirements are and, if the skills

are not applied correctly, they have to explain what was going wrong (using back foot, concentration through synchronisation, opening the kicking angle, using the front part of feet, respecting the vertical axis while turning, emphasising the kicks etc).

Through the brain-centred learning, there will always be an innovative, didactic strategy. This also means that smaller games will always be structured and refer to a number of determined team actions, guaranteeing a team learning process.

DOING

The question that players must ask is, ‘How can I communicate with my team-mates using the structured actions we learnt during our training sessions?’ This allows the players to use those actions to find their own solutions during the on-going matches. In this way they can bring creativity to their games and improve the spectator value of the game. Ultimately, football is an art.



www.sporting.pt

“Sporting Portugal is the only club in the world that has developed and trained two FIFA world players of the year, Luis Figo and Cristiano Ronaldo.”

- Diogo Matos - Head of Youth Academy Sporting Clube de Portugal (2012) -

A photograph of the Sporting Club de Portugal building, a modern structure with large glass windows. The windows feature the club's logo. In front of the building is a green grassy field. The text "MAIN GOAL: HIGHEST NUMBER OF PLAYERS TO REACH THE FIRST TEAM OF SPORTING CLUBE DE PORTUGAL" is overlaid on the bottom half of the image in white and yellow text.

**MAIN GOAL: HIGHEST NUMBER
OF PLAYERS TO REACH
THE FIRST TEAM OF
SPORTING CLUBE DE PORTUGAL**

Club Name	Sporting Clube de Portugal	
Infrastructure	Training Centre	Alcochete, Lisboa
	Club Foundation	2002
	Number of Training Pitches	7 (4 natural pitches, 3 artificial turf)
Recruitment Policy	Admittance of spontaneous candidacy	Not admitted - selection done through observers and clubs selected by Sporting
	Number of Scouts	150
	Zone of recruitment	Portugal
	Desired skills	Natural abilities, the tactical sense, speed, competitiveness, predicted height
Team	Number of teams	17
	Number of players	340
	Origin of players	90% Portuguese, 10% Brazil, Cape Verde, Angola
Coaches	Required characteristics	Ex-players at several levels with academic background
	Number of Coaches	34
	Responsibilities of Coaches	Limited power over the game model, game principles and our "guide" exercises. Coaches have autonomy to create their training sessions.
Training	Formation	4-3-3
	Start of the Tactical work (as from y.o.)	12
	Work with weights	Starting at U15 (only technique) increases after this age
	Number of training sessions	3 per week until 13; 4 per week after 14; 1h30 training
	Type of matches	7:7 until U12; 11:11 after that
	Exercices	The same for all age groups always with the ball. Only intensity and complexity (e.g. space and number of players) changes
Particularity	Placement of children	50 Residents (Academy); Rest are from 1h away
	Youth Academy Staff (excl. Coaches)	Facilities (5); Comercial (5); Recruitment (8); Administrative/Services (7); Educational (6)
	In house facilities	45 Double rooms
	Prohibitions	No jewellery (Rings, earrings, piercings)
Costs/Year	€ 5 m	

BACKGROUND & MILESTONES

- The academy is located in Alcochete, in the suburbs of Lisbon in a quiet, rural area. It was chosen for its excellent position and boasts state-of-the-art facilities which are considered to be among the best in Portugal.
- The academy trains athletes from the age of seven and the Puma Centro de Futebol has certainly one of the best-developed training systems. The academy is renowned for contributing many youngsters to the senior line up of Sporting Clube de Portugal's senior team.

KEY FACTS

- 340 youth players as part of their club teams, 50 youths living onsite
- Annual costs of the Academy = € 5 m
- Since 2002, Academia Sporting has developed more than 100 players who are currently playing professional football in Portugal and around Europe
- Since 2002, Sporting has obtained more than € 95 million with the transfers of players developed in
- Academia Sporting (+/-€ 5 million resulting from FIFA Solidarity Mechanism)
- Academia Sporting Centro de Futebol do Sporting Clube de Portugal was the first sporting organisation to obtain the ISO9001:2008 certificate
- The player's first professional contract starts at the age of 16 years
- The Sporting Clube de Portugal youth academy holds naming rights

SPORTING CLUBE DE PORTUGAL YOUTH TEAM HONOURS

- 39 titles in the category of Juniors and Schools

VISION & PHILOSOPHY

The aim of Sporting Clube de Portugal is to be recognised as a world leader in youth football. The mission of the club is to produce football players who can compete at the highest level. It also aims to integrate the Sporting professional team with the promotion of a solid education based on sporting, personal and social values.

There are 340 players from U9 to U19 who are currently playing in the youth teams (for the 2011-2012 season). There is an average of seven players in each of the Portuguese National teams, from U16 to U19 (for example, ten of the 18 players from the U17 National Team that played the European Championship in 2010 were Sporting CP players). Since the inauguration of the academy in 2002, 30 players from the youth teams have been integrated into the Sporting professional team and Academia Sporting has developed more than 100 players who are currently playing professional football in Portugal and around Europe (75 of them are in the Portuguese First and Second Division).

INFRASTRUCTURE

The academy has six normal-sized fields (110 m x 70 m) and one with artificial turf, (90 m x 70 m). The main pitch has a 1000-seater grand stand and space for the guests. The complex also has a hotel constructed in the traditional Portuguese style. In total, the hotel has 91 rooms.

The academy has six natural fields and one of artificial turf. The facilities include a hotel with 18 double rooms and a restaurant. There is a fully-equipped gym and an area where the game can be analysed. This has modern multimedia equipment for 70 people. There is a 120-square-metre conference room.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

Focus of age groups, goals and the role of the coach

In the model of the recruitment process, the natural ability (skills), the tactical sense (decisions), speed, competitiveness and predicted height are all taken into account. At the early ages, a player must be evaluated more for his potential, than for his present performance. Sporting Clube de Portugal focuses on the player, not the team. The players have to keep in mind that they always play to win. Every day, they try to do better in an environment of constant demands. In the fast-moving

football world, the academy always faces challenges and has to look to the future in an open-mind way.

At an early age, a player must be evaluated, more for his potential than for his present performance. For all age categories, coaches are requested to demand:

- A strong competitive attitude
- Maximum Concentration (Focus)
- The ability to change the intensity of the game
- Able to force the opponent to commit mistakes
- Strong team spirit
- Team movement in block



Luís Figo



The PUMA Sporting Clube de Portugal Agreement – Naming Rights

The PUMA Academia Sporting naming right had two main goals: for Sporting Clube de Portugal, the possibility of making extra revenue of around half a million euros/year and, for PUMA, the association with one of the strongest brands in the world, concerning youth football development.

In order for this association to be profitable for both parties it requires a strong effort from the Partner (in this case, PUMA), in order to activate its brand. This considers marketing & communication, events, public relations, media relations and a lot of other “tools” that establish an emotional bond between the brand (PUMA), the “asset” (Academia Sporting) and the customers (Sporting fans / PUMA consumers).

Sporting believes that a more pro-active partner would allow us to leverage “Academia Sporting” brand awareness worldwide (with all other commercial benefits that could come with it), and that is why we are developing contacts and negotiations with other potential partners that could take the Academia Sporting naming right.

Player development as a production process

The Player Development is seen as a production process: Raw material selection (Player Recruitment), the Transformation (Player Development) and the Distribution (Player Management).

Coaching and Training sessions

Coaches have at their disposal a document giving guidelines for youth development. This includes planning (annual plan / weekly plan / training units) with the definition of goals (collective goals – sport, social and disciplinary and individual goals – improvement areas).

During the training, coaches create a competitive attitude with a focus on maximum concentration (focus). They encourage an ability to change the game's intensity and to force the opponent to make mistakes. They also foster a strong team spirit and team movement in blocks.

EDUCATION

The academy works to “produce” players able to compete for the First Team; therefore, their goal it is to present final “product” in the best way possible, hoping that the First Team considers the players who are eligible to play and will be successful in the squad.

The Portuguese National team that qualified for the Euro 2012 Poland/Ukraine Championship includes no fewer than eight players developed in the Sporting CP Academy.

PLAYER RECRUITMENT

Raw material

Player Recruitment: to have the best players in the end of the process (end product), you must be able to recruit the best young players (raw material), the ones with more potential to be developed and reach the defined player profile.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Transformation Process

Player Development: this is about taking the raw material (young player characteristics, capabilities) and transforming it into the desired end product (high level player profile). In this phase, the focus must be completely on the development of the player, more than on any other short-term result. Winning games is desirable, but not the most important goal during this process.

PLAYER MANAGEMENT

Distribution

Player Management: along the process you will have different results, different outputs, players that will reach the desired profile, others that will exceed expectations and also the ones that will not meet the desired goals. So, a food transformation factory, for example, may have a range of final products for different targets (gourmet, standard restaurant or fast food), the player development process will generate players that will reach the first team (and from there can go to the top European clubs), others that must be loaned (in order to return later for the first team or, if not, to be sold) and others that must be dropped.



U7 to U13:

Initiation Period

- Game principles, Technique and Physical attributes
- Focus on the Technique
- Pass from an anarchic game, to an organized game
- Select the best player for the pre-specialisation stage
- U7 : Love
- U9: Enjoy
- U11: Learn
- U13: Strengthen

U15 to U17:

Pre-Specialisation

- Technique, Tactics, Physical and Psychological aspects
- Focus on the Physical aspect and Player profile
- Select only the best for the specialisation stage
- U15: Develop
- U17: Consolidate

U19 to U21:

Specialisation and Consolidation

- Technique, Tactics, Physical
- Focus on the Tactics , Physical and Psychological aspects
- Give one or more players to the first team
- U15: Specialise
- U17: Performance

Commitment to Quality (ISO 9001) as set Sporting Clube de Portugal

Academia Sporting – Centro de Futebol do Sporting Clube de Portugal is the first sporting organisation to have the ISO9001:2008 Certificate conferred by EIC (Empresa Internacional de Certificação) and the Committed to Excellence Award of the Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) conferred in Portugal by the Portuguese Association for Quality. The ISO9001:2008 certification was awarded within the ambit of the activities of the Sporting Academy, notably in regard to the procedures regarding the recruitment of players, youth football training, medical follow-ups, personal and social education and leisure and sport programmes.

The award for the first level of excellence – Committed to Excellence – of the Excellence Model, started with an internal process of self-assessment, which detailed the main strengths and the areas requiring improvement in the Sporting Academy. The team dealing with the self-assessment has chosen three areas for improvement to be implemented during the course of 2009. The first one had to do with the definition and communication of the Mission, Vision and Values of the Academy; the second had to do with the certification of the academy within the Quality Management System ISO9001:2008 and the third had to do with obtaining the view of the main clients (the professional team, families and athletes) and collaborators with the work performed by the academy.

Commitment to Quality is the sentence chosen to classify and identify this initiative. It means that Sporting Clube de Portugal shall continue to be externally assessed and that it shall continue to work to deserve the renewal of these same certificates. Nationally, Sporting expects that this initiative may be a stimulus for other Clubs to adopt similar practices. Further, it anticipates that the regulation bodies of Football and of Portuguese Sport at large will encourage the adoption of similar practices by other Clubs.

MORE CLUB CASES

In addition to the ten Case Studies which are based on the site visits undertaken by the Task Force members, several other youth academies were analysed based on dedicated presentations made by the respective clubs.

These club cases allow for a wider representation of clubs from different geographical regions and are structured in the same way as the ten case studies outlined in this publication.

Glentoran FC, Northern Ireland



Heart of Midlothian FC, Scotland



Helsingborgs IF, Sweden

FC Schalke 04, Germany



FK Teplice, Czech Republic



FC Basel 1893, Switzerland



“Those clubs which are able to address both the human resources and the infrastructure side of things, and also plan the pathway for young players to progress into the senior team, will ultimately benefit at all levels of the game.”

- Konstantin Kornakov, Heart of Midlothian, Scotland
Head of Football Administration, Youth department coordinator -



FC Honka, Finland

“Successful youth policies are not solely achieved through financial investment, but also require the adoption of the correct attitude towards developing youngsters.”

- Jan Skýpala, FK Teplice, Czech Republic,
General Secretary Former Youth Coach -

FC Shakhtar Donetsk, Ukraine



Beşiktaş JK, Turkey



Panathinaikos FC, Greece

The additional club cases are available for download on the ECA website
www.ecaeurope.com



www.bjk.com.tr

Success in football only is not enough for Beşiktaş JK. The key for sustained achievement is the overall development and education of young players.



Club Name	Beşiktaş JK	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1902 (Youth Academy: 1995)
	Number of Training Pitches	2 natural pitches; 1 artificial turf
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	4
	Zone of recruitment	Mainly Istanbul
Team	Number of players	+/- 200 players
	Origin of players	Mainly Turkish
Coaches	Number of Coaches	16
Training	Formation	4-4-2
	Number of training sessions	4x per week as from U13, 5x per week as from U16 + 1x individual session per week
Annual costs	> € 750.000	

Necip Uysal



www.fcb.ch

At FC Basel 1893, the youth player's personal development throughout the season and improvement of his potential for the future are the key success factors to raise a complete player.

Club Name	FC Basel 1893	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1893
	Number of Training Pitches	6 natural pitches, 2 artificial turf
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	2 regional ; 3 national ; 3 international
	Zone of recruitment	Basel and region + worldwide
Team	Number of players	220 players
	Origin of players	91% from the region
Coaches	Number of Coaches	26
Training	Formation	4-3-3 or 4-4-1-1 or 4-2-3-1
	Number of training sessions	4x per week as from U13 + 2x individual sessions per week
Annual costs	> € 3 m	

Yann Sommer



www.fchonka.fi

The idea is to have the same playing style, coaching style, training sessions and management style throughout the entire structure of the club so that it fits with FC Honka's overall vision.

Club Name	FC Honka Espoo	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1957
	Number of Training Pitches	2 natural pitches; 2 artificial turf
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	+/- 5
	Zone of recruitment	Greater Helsinki
Team	Number of players	250 players (184 in the elite academy squad)
	Origin of players	Uusimaa Region (90%)
Coaches	Number of Coaches	24
Training	Formation	4-4-2
	Number of training sessions	3x per week for U12 + 4x per week for U16
Annual costs	> € 500.000	

Tim Väyrynen



www.schalke04.de

At the core of FC Schalke 04 philosophy are qualities such as modesty, fair play, team spirit, respect, passion, and individuality. It refers to the long tradition of the union in the Ruhr as 'a club of pals and hard work' and is connected with a specific humility.

Club Name	FC Gelsenkirchen Schalke 04	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1904
	Number of Training Pitches	3 natural pitches; 1 artificial turf
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	4
	Zone of recruitment	Ruhr Gebiet
Team	Number of players	190 players
	Origin of players	Gelsenkirchen and region (83%)
Coaches	Number of Coaches	34
Training	Formation	4-3-3
	Number of training sessions	4x per week as from U13 + 2x individual sessions per week
Annual costs	> € 3 m	

Julian Draxler





www.academy.shakhtar.com

FC Shakhtar Donetsk must win back its previous reputation of a club known for raising local talent.

Club Name	FC Shakhtar Donetsk	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1936
	Number of Training Pitches	5 natural pitches; 1 artificial turf
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	20
	Zone of recruitment	Eastern Ukraine
Team	Number of players	180 players
	Origin of players	Donetsk Oblast (50%), rest of Ukraine (50%)
Coaches	Number of Coaches	23
Training	Formation	4-3-3
	Number of training sessions	4x per week as from U14
Annual costs	> € 2.5 m	

Dmytro Chigrynski





www.fkteplice.cz

Clubs are fighting to attract larger audiences at stadiums and FK Teplice believes that only innovative programmes focusing on the youth can change the perception of sponsors trying to systematically reduce investment in Czech football.

Club Name	FK Teplice	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1945
	Number of Training Pitches	2 natural pitches, 1 artificial turf
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	1
	Zone of recruitment	Bohemia
Team	Number of players	284 players
	Origin of players	Mainly Teplice (87%)
Coaches	Number of Coaches	26
Training	Formation	4-3-3
	Number of training sessions	4x per week as from U12, 5x per week as from U16
Annual costs	< € 500.000	

Edin Džeko



www.glentoran.com

Glentoran FC believes that the welfare of the child is an important factor in the development of the player as he starts out on his football career.

Club Name	Glentoran FC	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1882
	Number of Training Pitches	4 natural pitches; 2 artificial pitches
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	2 regional; 1 national
	Zone of recruitment	Northern Ireland
Team	Number of players	140 players
	Origin of players	Belfast and region (93%)
Coaches	Number of Coaches	10-20 volunteers
Training	Formation	4-3-3 or 4-4-1-1 or 4-2-3-1
	Number of training sessions	2x per week for each category
Annual costs	< € 250.000	



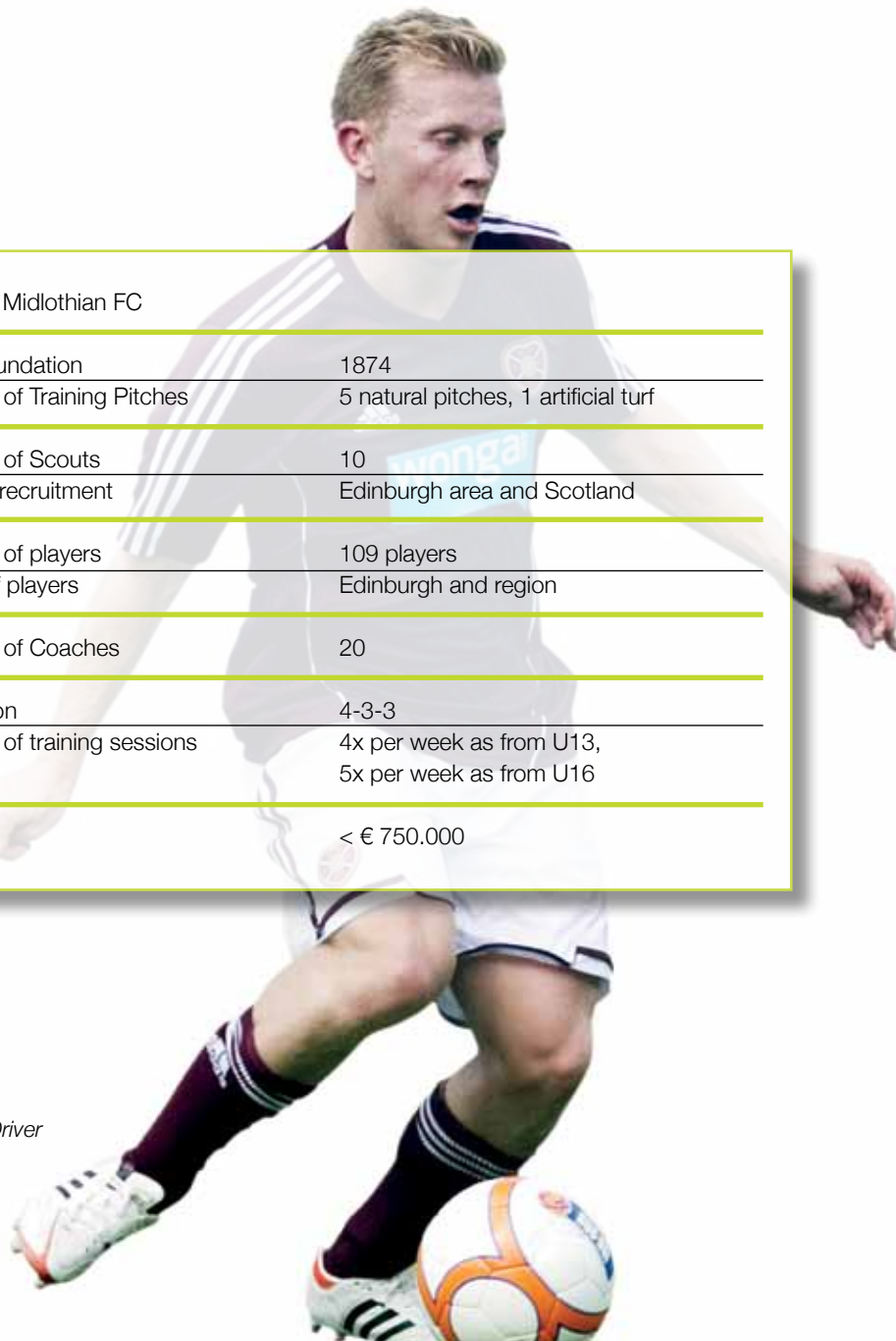


www.heartsfc.co.uk

Heart of Midlothian academy is focused on producing players who merge the traditional traits of Scottish football – physical prowess, fitness, aggression, desire, work-rate and discipline – with a high degree of technical and tactical proficiency, and ultimately able to apply the principles of playing a possession game of football at the highest level possible.

Club Name	Heart of Midlothian FC	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1874
	Number of Training Pitches	5 natural pitches, 1 artificial turf
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	10
	Zone of recruitment	Edinburgh area and Scotland
Team	Number of players	109 players
	Origin of players	Edinburgh and region
Coaches	Number of Coaches	20
Training	Formation	4-3-3
	Number of training sessions	4x per week as from U13, 5x per week as from U16
Annual costs	< € 750.000	

Andrew Driver





www.hif.se

It is the Helsingborgs IF's policy that when a former HIF player is finishing his career in Europe, it does its utmost to bring him back to the club.



Club Name	Helsingborgs IF	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1907
	Number of Training Pitches	4 natural pitches, 2 artificial turf
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	3 regional, 1 national, 1 international
	Zone of recruitment	Sweden
Team	Number of players	334 players
	Origin of players	Southern Sweden (99%)
Coaches	Number of Coaches	4 full-time, 2 half-time, 10 part-time.
Training	Formation	4-3-3 or 4-4-1-1 or 4-2-3-1
	Number of training sessions	5x per week as from U12, 6x per week as from U17
Annual costs	< € 750.000	

Erik Edman

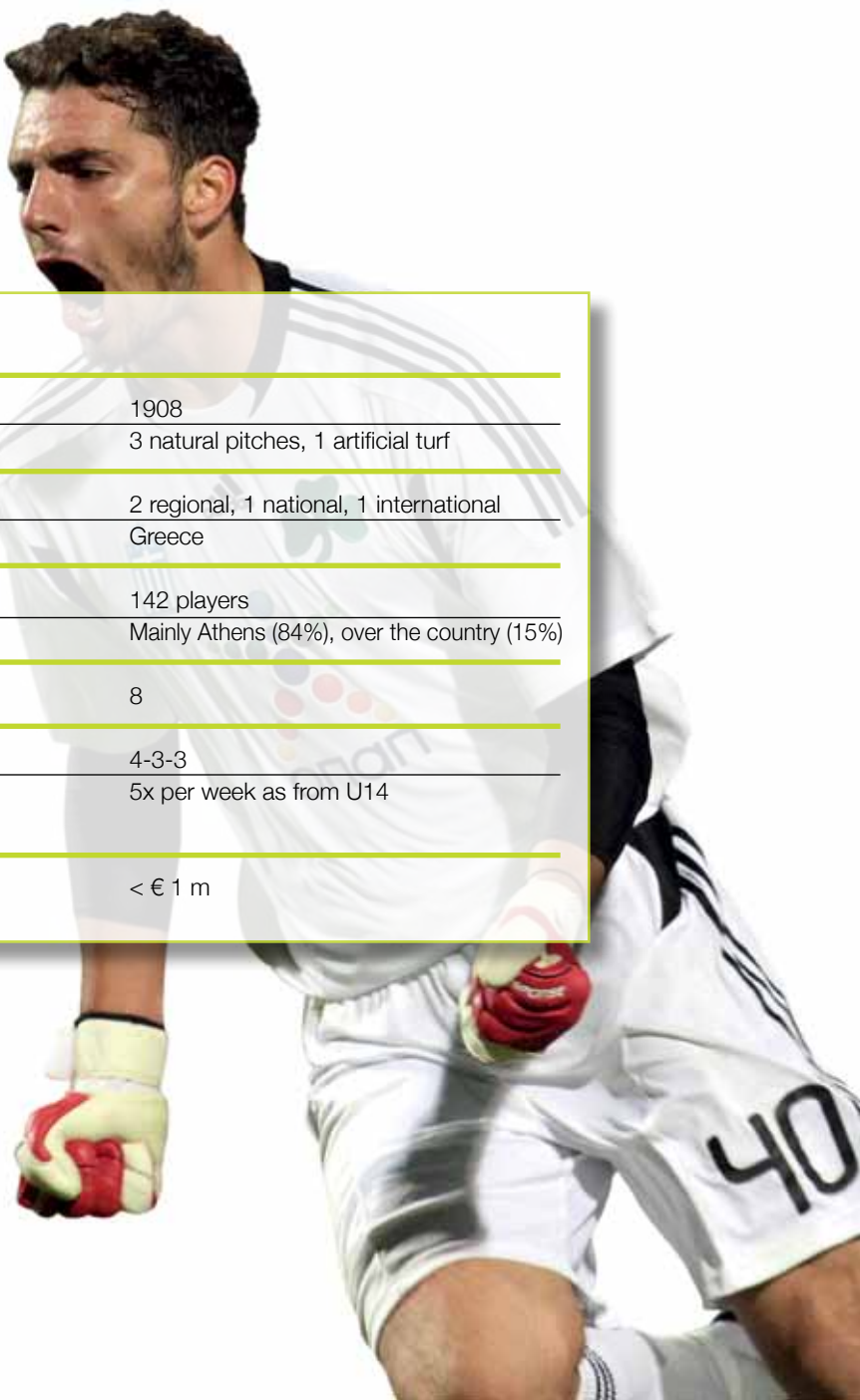


www.pao.gr

There are certain skills, abilities and tactical knowledge that are important for the way the Panathinaikos FC senior A team plays. Indeed, well prepared academy players are more likely to be useful to the senior team.

Club Name	Panathinaikos FC	
Infrastructure	Club Foundation	1908
	Number of Training Pitches	3 natural pitches, 1 artificial turf
Recruitment Policy	Number of Scouts	2 regional, 1 national, 1 international
	Zone of recruitment	Greece
Team	Number of players	142 players
	Origin of players	Mainly Athens (84%), over the country (15%)
Coaches	Number of Coaches	8
Training	Formation	4-3-3
	Number of training sessions	5x per week as from U14
Annual costs	< € 1 m	

Stefan Kapinos





ECA YOUTH SURVEY

In deciding the methodology and scope of the Report, it was agreed that in order to obtain a broad and comprehensive set of results allowing for a detailed mapping exercise reflecting the reality of Youth Development across Europe, it was crucial to support the qualitative analysis with a quantitative dimension. The results of this survey, which was undertaken with the support of external partners Double PASS, are outlined in this section and form the quantitative part of the ECA Youth Report. The survey adds some important elements to the overall analysis including:

- Introducing more data and statistical evidence providing a more empirical flavor to the overall Report
- Allowing for self-diagnosis by clubs in relation to their approach to youth development
- Allowing for an expansion of the clubs involved in the Report over and beyond those visited and reported in the case studies
- Involving an outside body with experience and expertise of youth development

ECA alongside external partner Double PASS defined a series of questions aimed at gaining further information in key areas. These were not limited to better understanding the logistical and operational aspects of youth academies but also aimed at gaining deeper knowledge of the vision and definition of working methods. Several key elements which are fundamental to the daily reality of Youth Academies were examined which allowed for the collection of important data and statistical evidence including:

- academy players
- finance and budgetary items
- managerial aspects
- football development
- support services
- relations with third parties

- infrastructure
- productivity
- organisation of youth competitions and selections
- support from the national association
- critical success factors
- critical constraint factors
- protection measures

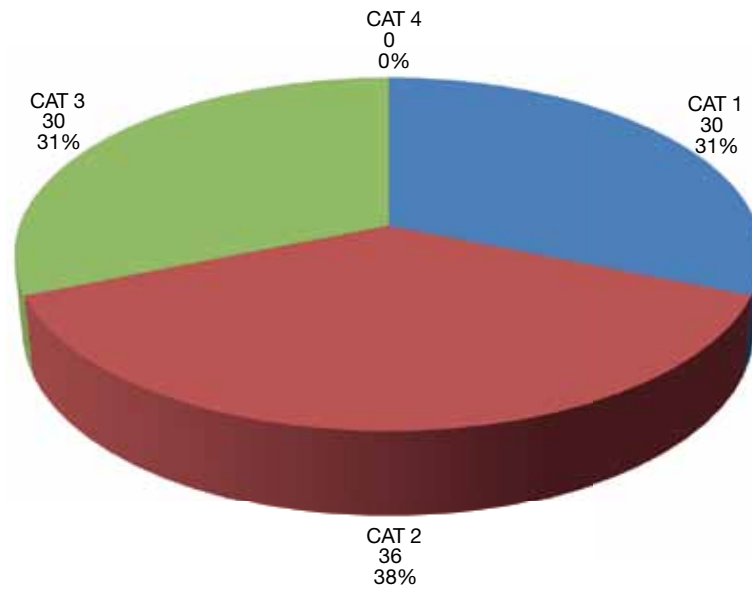
Based on the data collected, trends were observed relating to some of the most important aspects of Youth Academies. The scale of this survey and the results obtained make this Report the most comprehensive analysis ever attempted of youth development from across Europe. Overall, 96 ECA clubs of all sizes from 41 different National Associations took part in the survey. Most clubs who responded included at least 3 club personnel in the answers.

Technically, clustering of Academies was based on FIFA Training Costs and Categorisation of clubs for the year 2012. Indeed the categorisation made by FIFA reflects the current situation on how academies are seen at both a European and Global level. Furthermore the 'median'² was often used as measure of central tendency because values extracted were more informative. Figures are given as a percentage of total unless otherwise stated. Not all of the respondents answered every question in the survey.

² A median is a middle value of a set of values; it is better suited for skewed distributions and more representative than the average score. Furthermore, the median is less affected by the outliers (minimum and maximum values).

Response of participating clubs

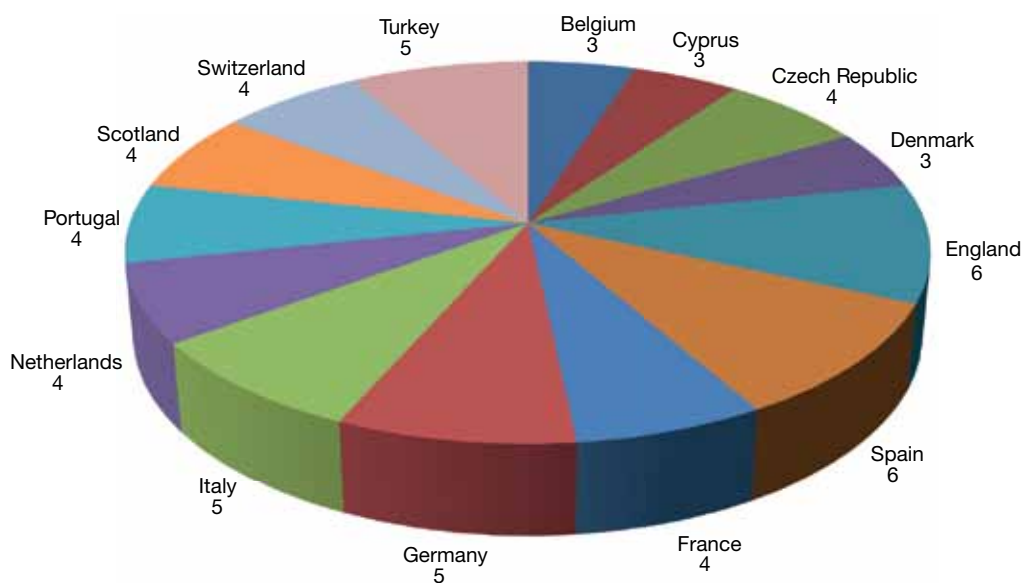
Clubs per category
(based on FIFA categorisation*)



* FIFA circular no.1299

Response participating countries

Countries with more than 3 clubs (n=14)



Response participation (number of clubs) per National Association and Category*

Category 1 (N=30)		
England	ENG	6
France	FRA	4
Germany	GER	5
Italy	ITA	5
Netherlands	NED	4
Spain	ESP	6

Category 2 (N=36)		
Austria	AUT	1
Belgium	BEL	3
Denmark	DEN	3
Greece	GRE	2
Hungary	HUN	1
Montenegro	MNE	1
Norway	NOR	2
Portugal	POR	4
Russia	RUS	2
Scotland	SCO	4
Serbia	SRB	1
Switzerland	SUI	4
Sweden	SWE	2
Turkey	TUR	5
Ukraine	UKR	1

Category 3 (N=30)		
Bosnia & Herzegovina	BIH	2
Belarus	BLR	1
Bulgaria	BUL	2
Croatia	CRO	2
Cyprus	CYP	3
Czech Republic	CZE	4
Estonia	EST	1
Finland	FIN	1
Georgia	GEO	1
Iceland	ICE	1
Northern Ireland	IRL	2
Israel	ISR	1
Lithuania	LTU	1
Luxembourg	LUX	1
Moldova	MDA	1
FYR Macedonia	MKD	1
Poland	POL	2
Romania	ROM	1
Slovakia	SLK	1
Slovenia	SLO	1

* based on FIFA Categorisation



*Paolo Maldini,
AC Milan Youth Academy*



*Ryan Giggs,
Manchester United FC Youth Academy*

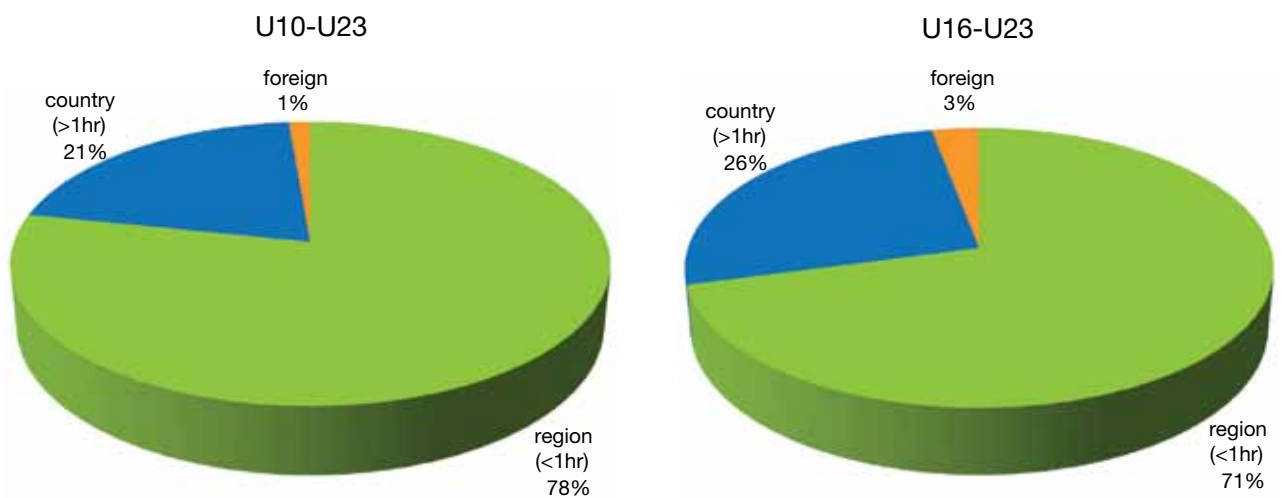
ACADEMY PLAYERS

Number of players in the Academy

Academy players	Median
<=U9 (n=67)	45
U10-U12 (n=84)	55,5
U13-U15 (n=88)	56
U16-U19 (n=90)	59
U20-U23 (n=46)	20
U9-U23 (n=90)	219
U10-U19 (n=90)	174,5

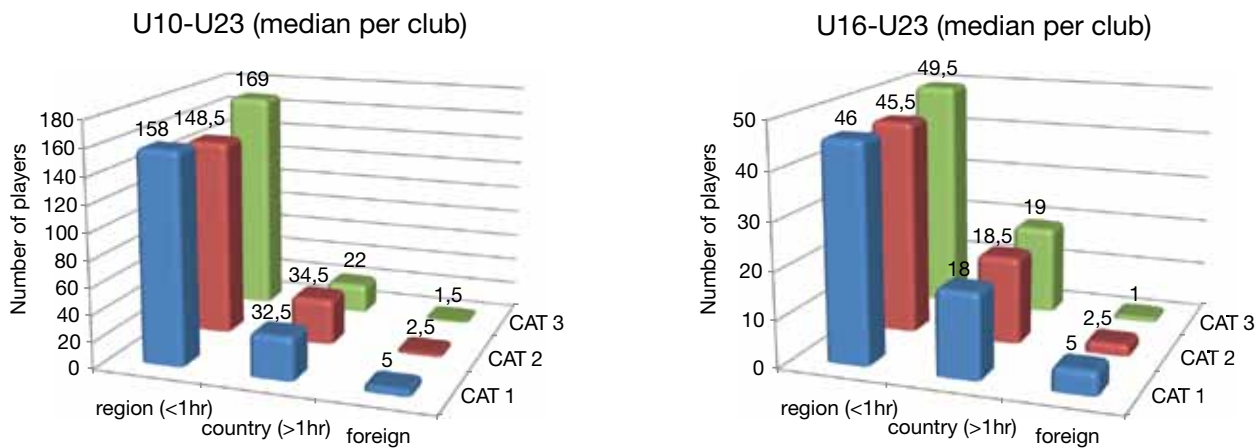
Profile of the players

- local: less than 1 hour drive
- national: more than 1 hour drive
- foreign: international



Origin of Academy Players per category*

- local: less than 1 hour drive
- national: more than 1 hour drive
- foreign: international



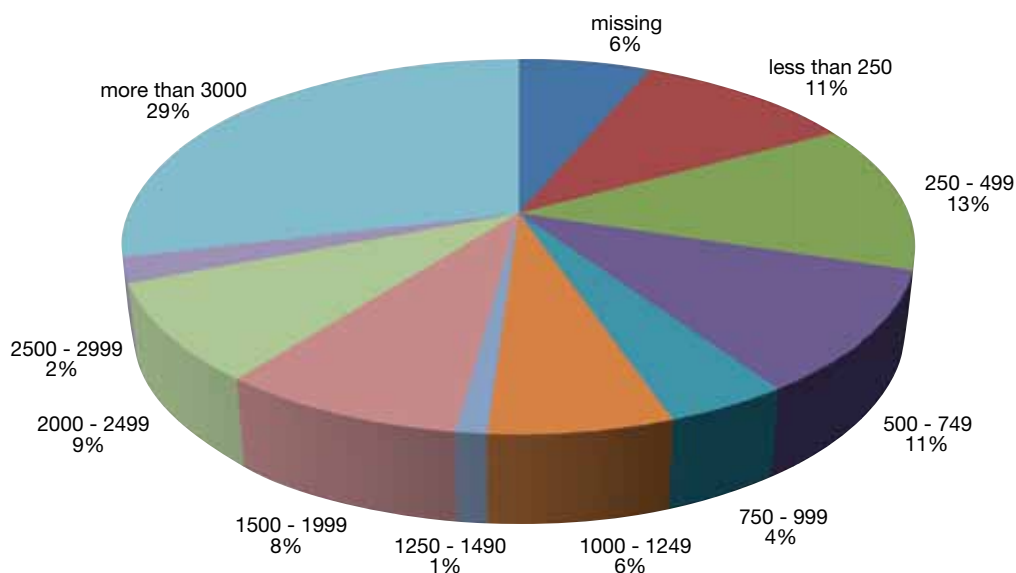
* FIFA categorisation of clubs (based on circular no.1299)

Academy players

- based on the data from the clubs the average academy counts 258 players; the median is 219
- considering the age groups U10 till U19, which are part of most of the clubs, the median is 175 academy players (average of 188)
- almost half of the clubs work with phases (clusters of age groups); most of them work with 3 or 4 phases
- in general, 3/4 of the academy players come from the region of the club (less than 1 hour drive); 1/5 have to drive more than 1 hour
- 60% of the clubs have players from abroad; in the oldest age groups (>U16) 3% of the players in the clubs originate from another country
- based on the categorisation of FIFA, category 1 clubs seem to have more players from abroad
- category 3 clubs seem to have more players from the region of the club than clubs from other countries

FINANCE AND BUDGETARY ITEMS

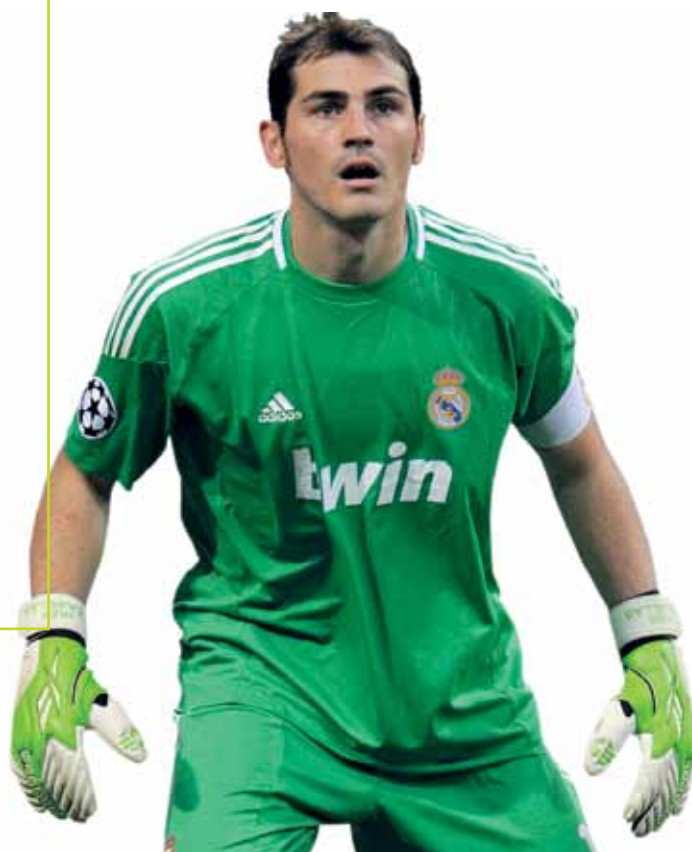
Budget of the Youth Academies (in k€)



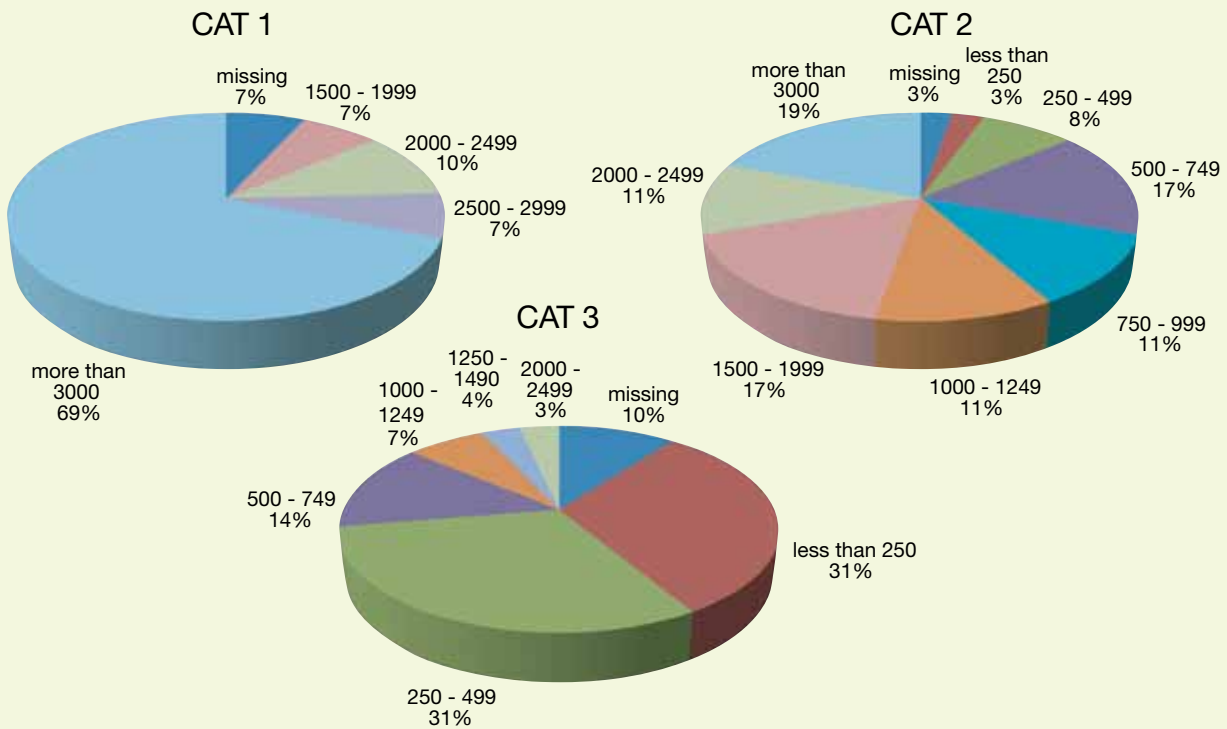
DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Over the last five years 'Internazionale FC' has sold players from the academy (from Primavera) for € 70 m (including Mario Balotelli to Manchester City FC for approximately € 24 m). The average annual budget is about € 6 m.

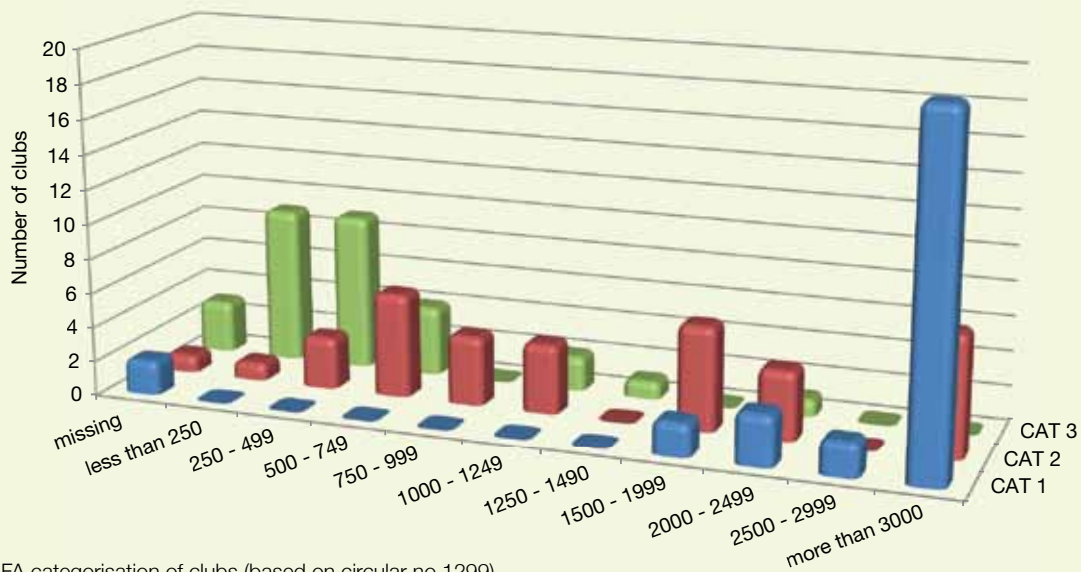
Iker Casillas,
Real Madrid CF Youth Academy



Budget of the Youth Academies (in k€) per category

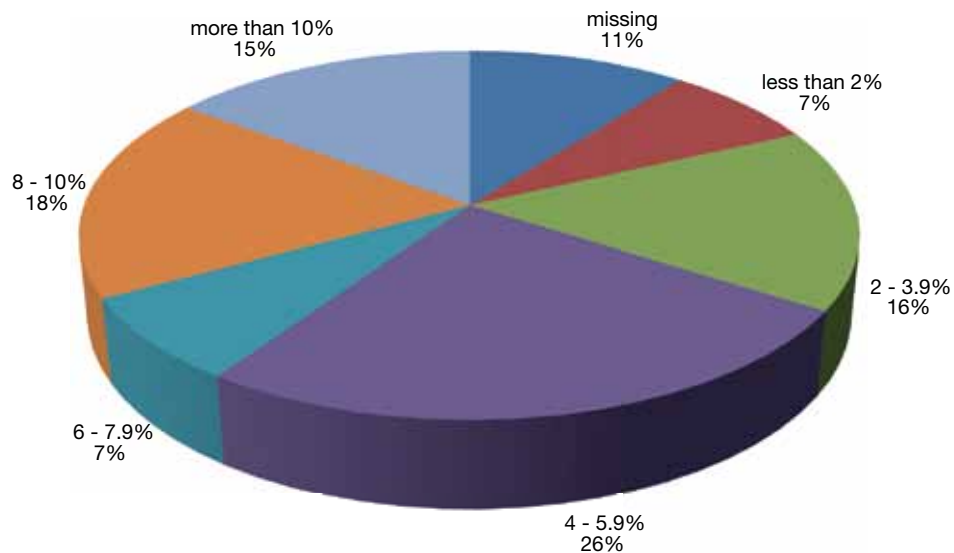


Youth Academy Budget per category* (in k€)

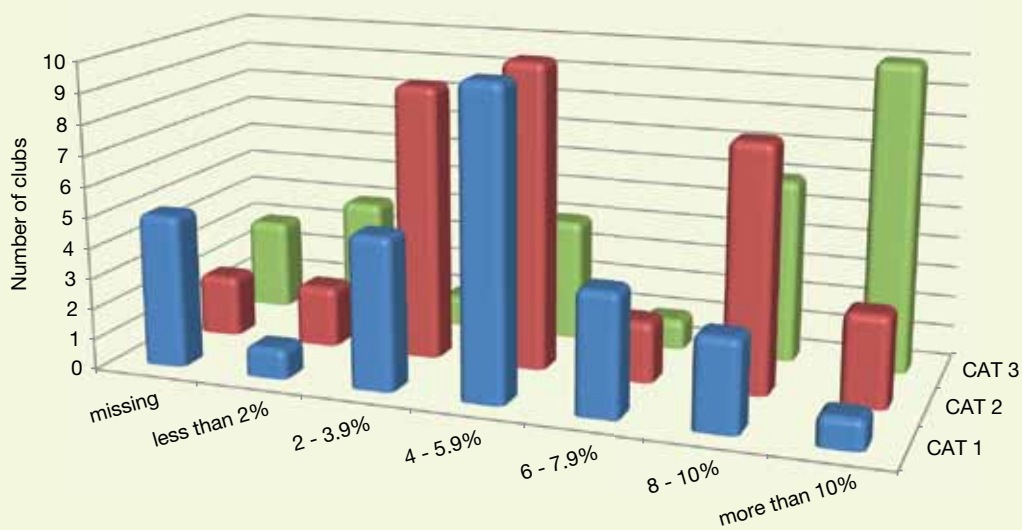


* FIFA categorisation of clubs (based on circular no.1299)

Share (%) of Youth Academy budget in overall club budget



Share (%) of Youth Academy budget in overall club budget per category



* FIFA categorisation of clubs (based on circular no.1299)

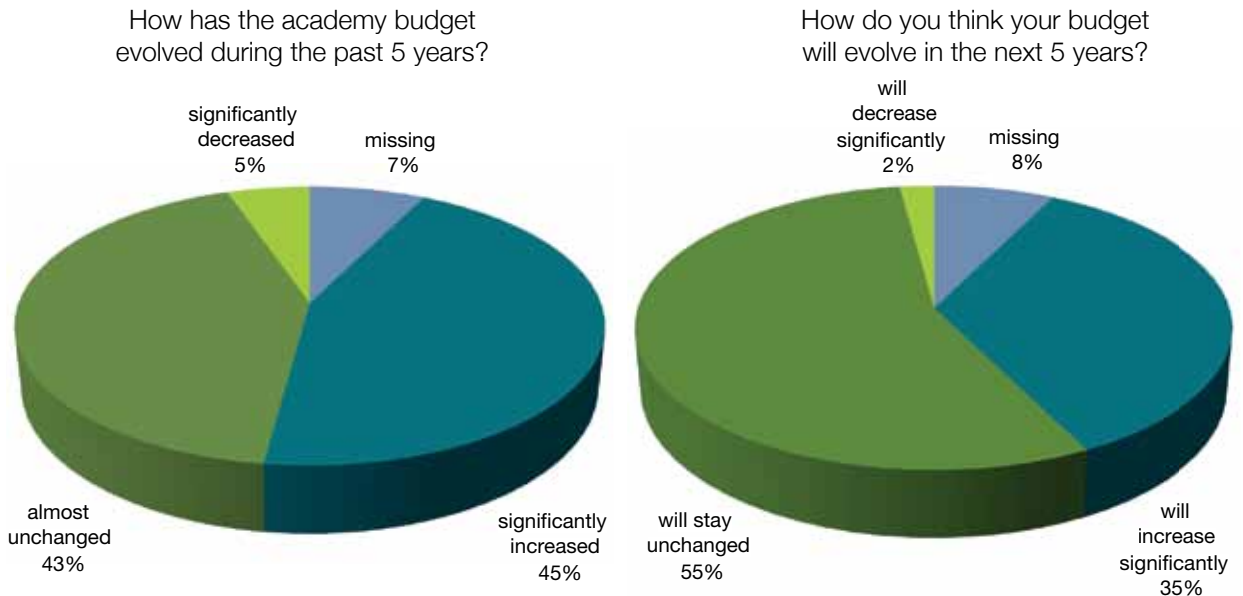
Finance and budgetary items

- half of the clubs spend max. 6% of their budget on youth development
- half of the Youth Academies' have a budget of at least € 1,25 m
- almost 1/3 have a budget of more than € 2,5 m
- a quarter of the Youth Academies' have a budget of less than € 0,5 m
- almost 1/3 spend more than 8% of their budget on youth development
- based on the categorisation of FIFA, category 1 clubs seem to spend larger amounts on their youth development; more that 2/3 of these academies have a budget of more than € 3 m
- for category 2 clubs there is a large variance in Youth Academy budget
- in terms of percentage of the club budget, category 3 clubs invest the most in their academies (highest share of Youth Academy budget in the club budget); more than half of these clubs spend at least 8% of their budget on youth development

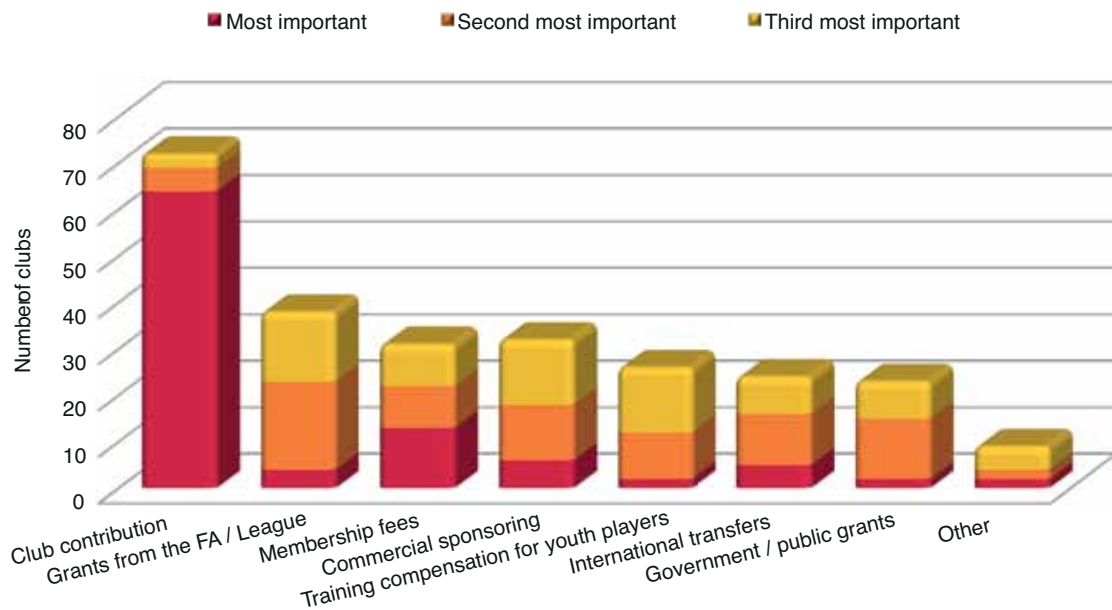


Ivan Kvesić and Stipo Marković (U19) - NK Široki Brijeg -

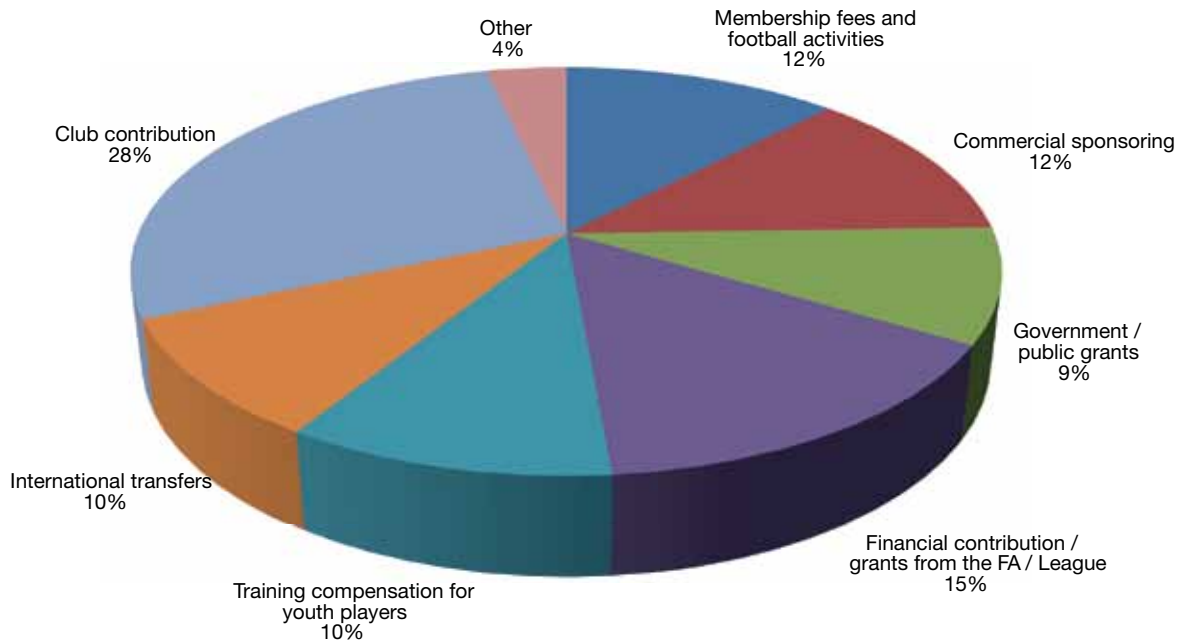
Evolution of the Academy budget



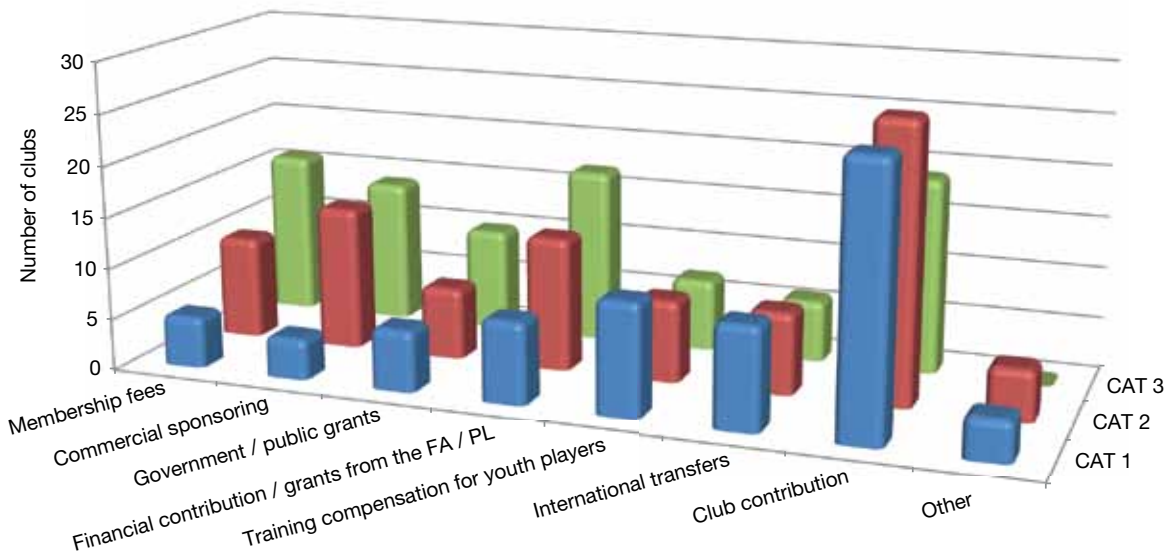
Significant incomes of Youth Academies (Top 3)



Significant incomes of Youth Academies (Sum of Top 3)

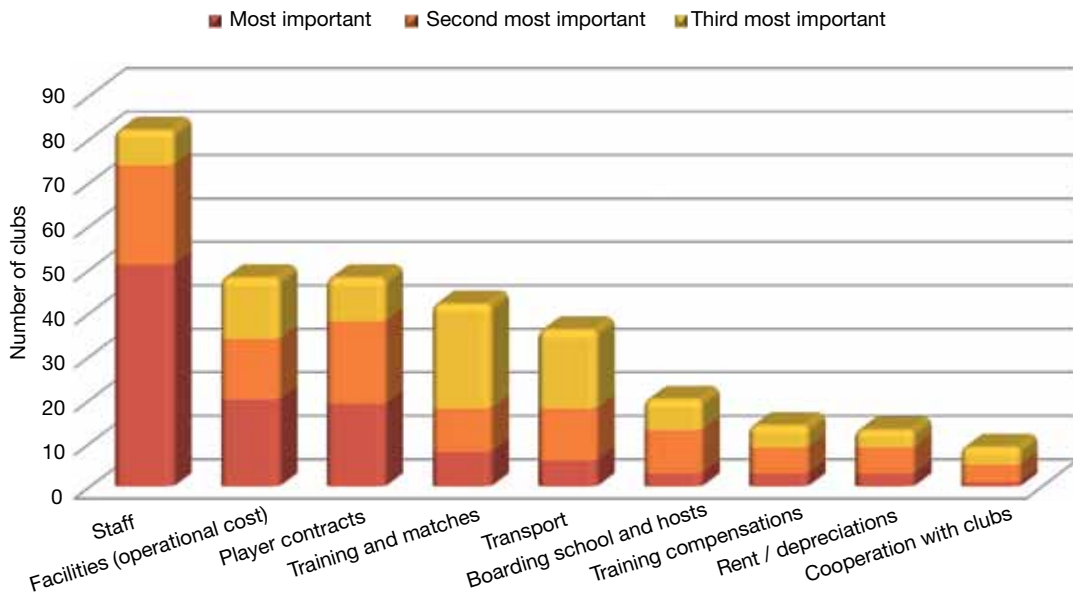


Incomes of Youth Academies (sum of top 3) per category*

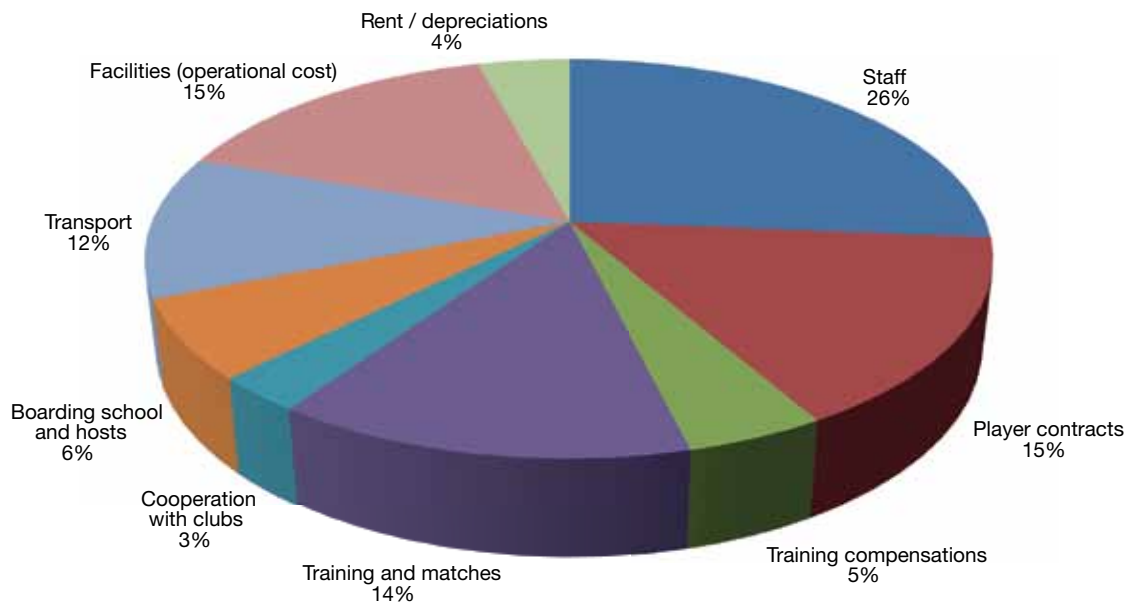


* FIFA categorisation of clubs (based on circular no.1299)

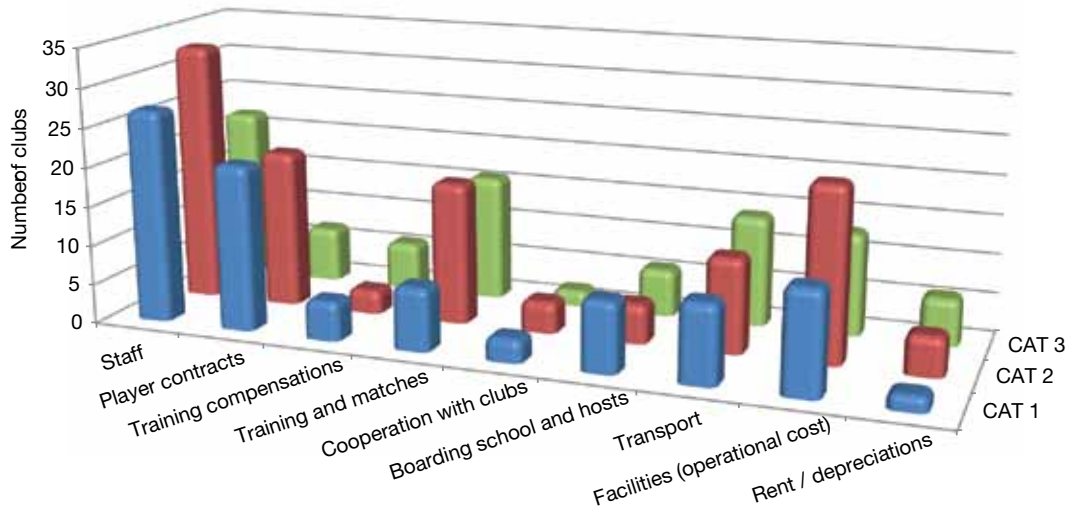
Significant costs of Youth Academies (Top 3)



Significant costs of Youth Academies (Sum of Top 3)



Significant costs of Youth Academies (Sum of Top 3) per category*



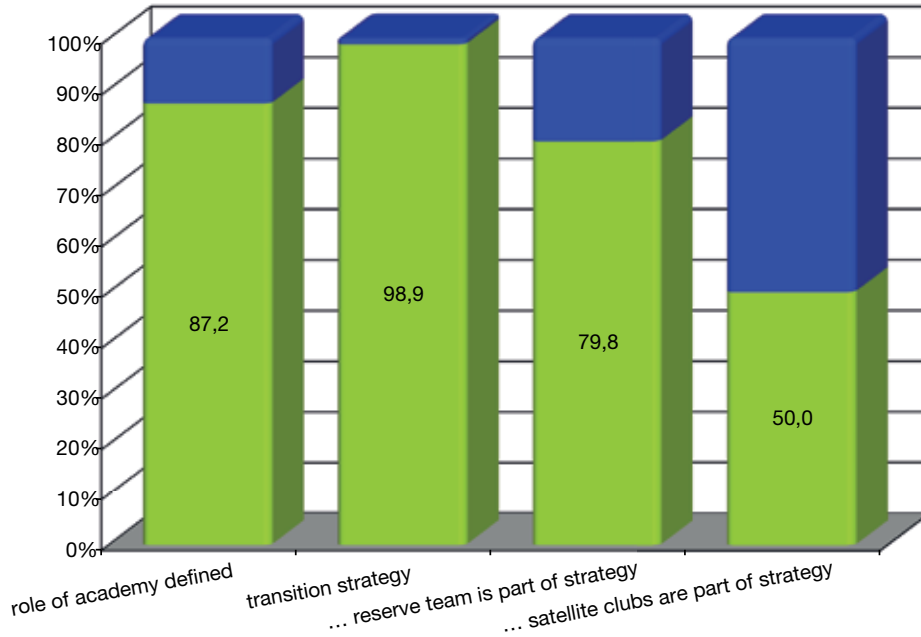
* FIFA categorisation of clubs (based on circular no.1299)

Finance and budgetary items (Income and Costs)

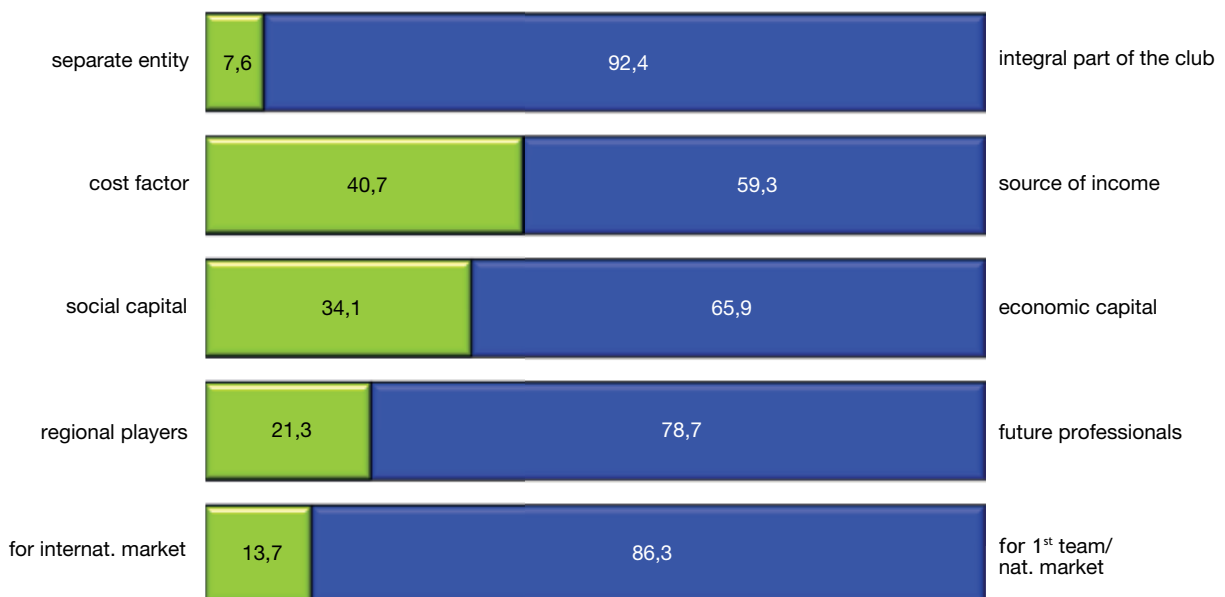
- in almost half of the Youth Academies, the budget increased significantly over the last 5 years
- in almost 1/3 of the clubs, the Youth Academy budget will continue to increase in the upcoming years
- in most of the academies, top-down investment from the club is the most important income
- Staff (26%), facilities (15%) and players contracts (15%) are the most important costs of a Youth Academy
- player contracts seem to be more relevant costs for category 1 and 2 clubs than for category 3 clubs

MANAGERIAL ASPECTS

Strategy regarding transition of youth players to the first team

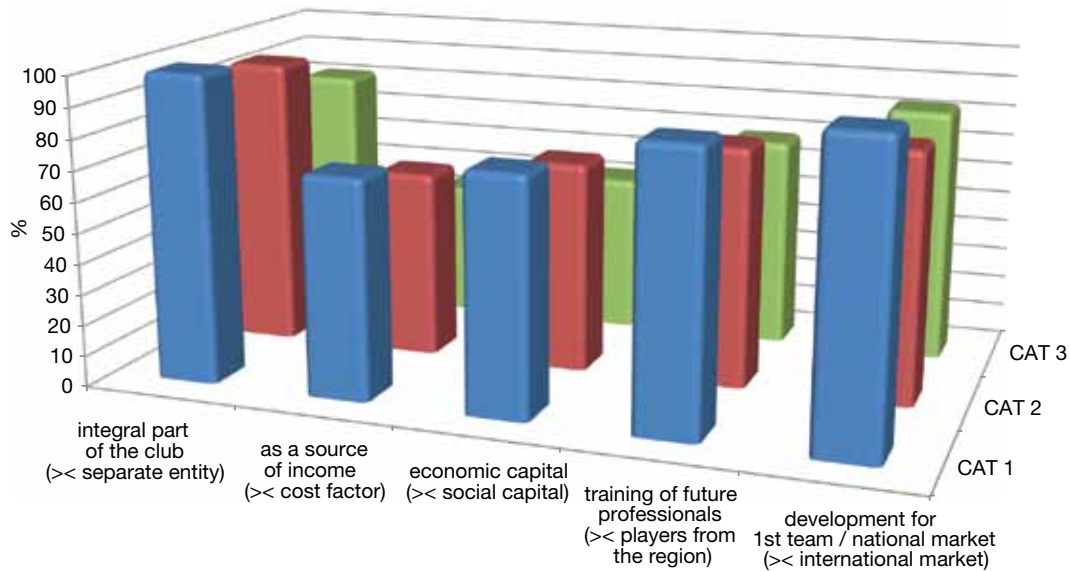


How is the academy seen at club level? Where does the focus lie?



How is the academy seen at club level? Where does the focus lie?

Academy profile per category *



* FIFA categorisation of clubs (based on circular no.1299)

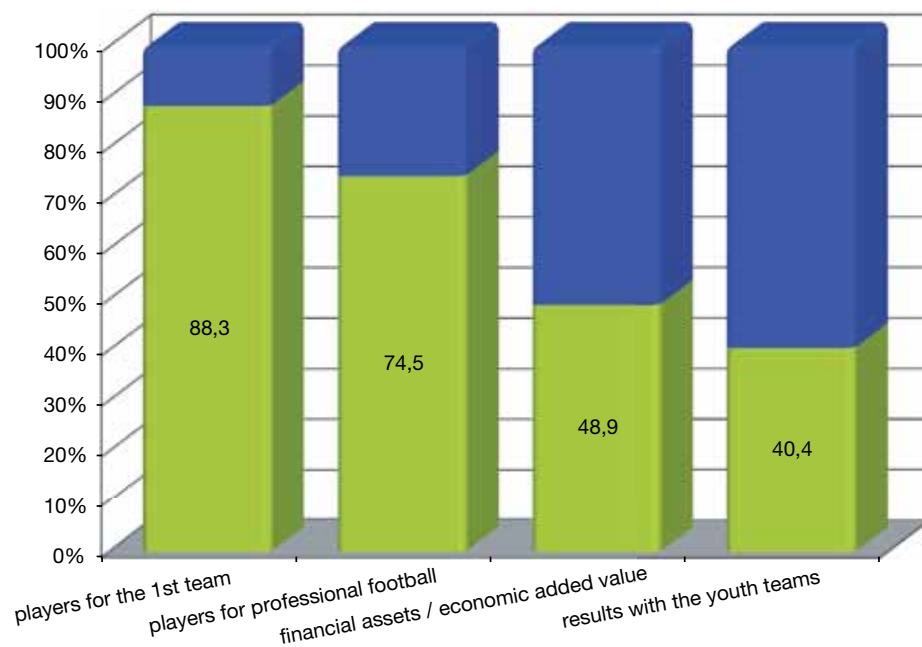
DID YOU KNOW THAT...

NK Dinamo Zagreb is well known for its 'development of great stars'. The club has developed many talented footballers who have represented Croatia at international level during the 2000s. The most notable are Luka Modrić, Eduardo, Vedran Ćorluka, Niko Kranjčar and Tomislav Butina.

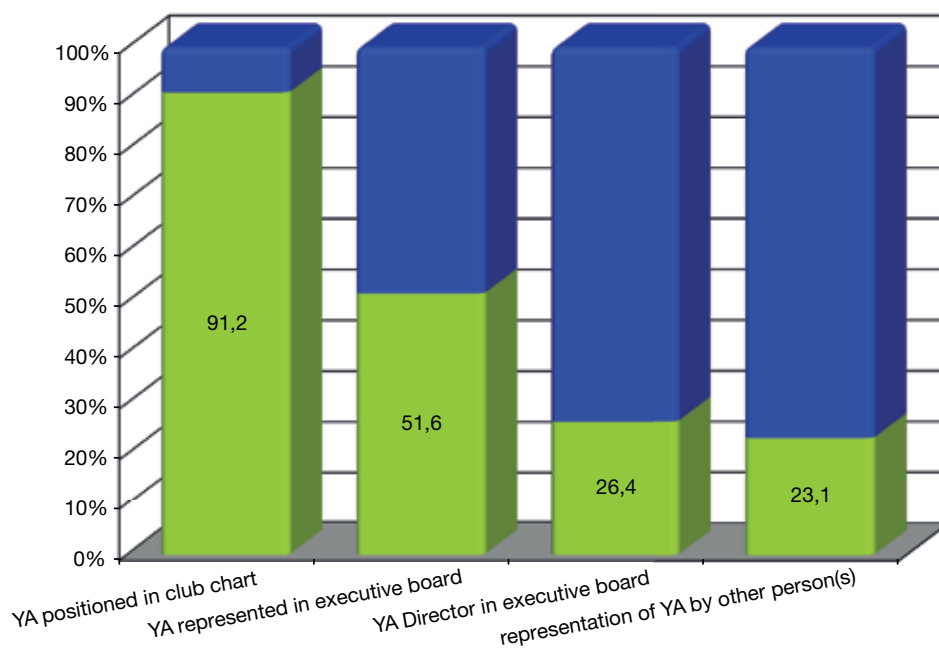


Ondrej Petrak,
SK Slavia Praha Youth Academy

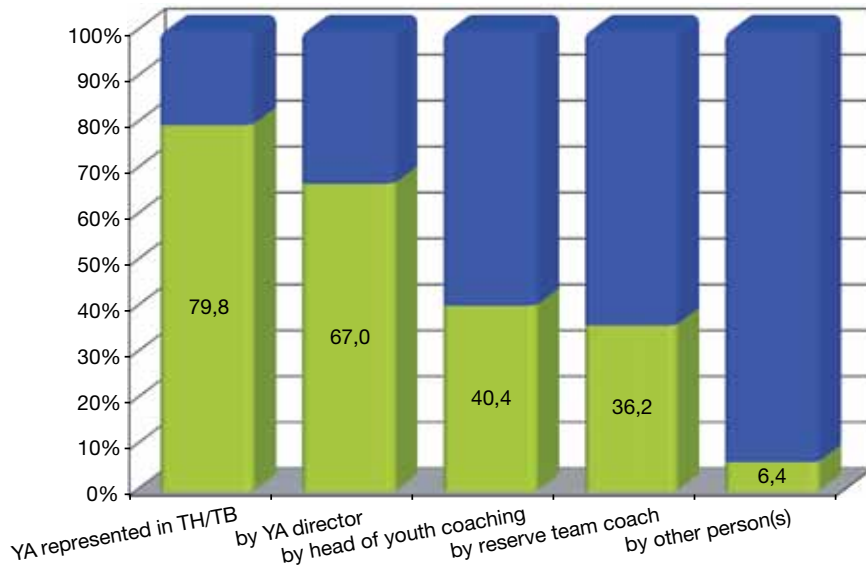
Objectives of the academy: performance targets in terms of...



Position / involvement of the academy in the club

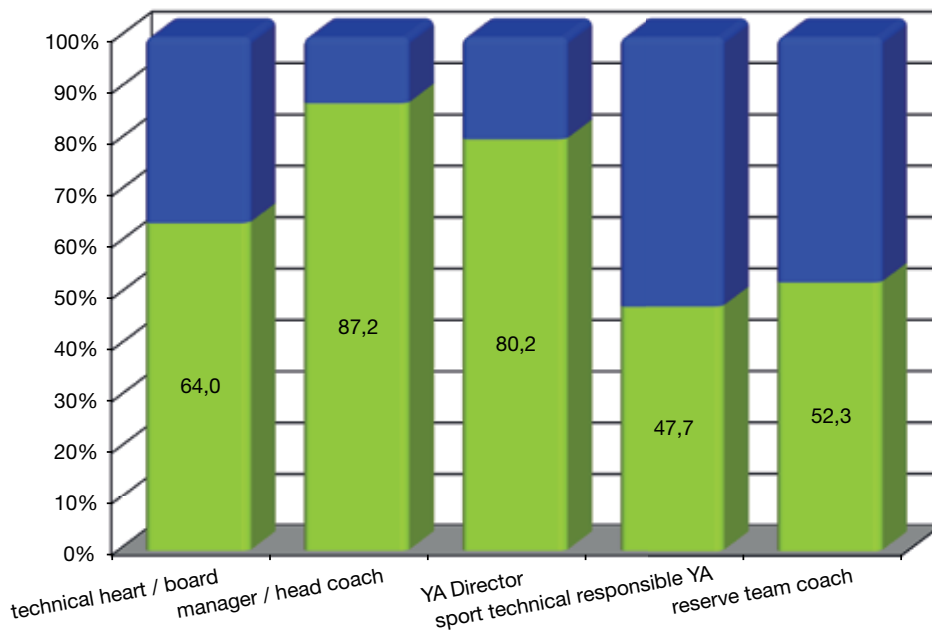


Involvement of the academy in the technical heart (TH)/ board (TB)* of the club

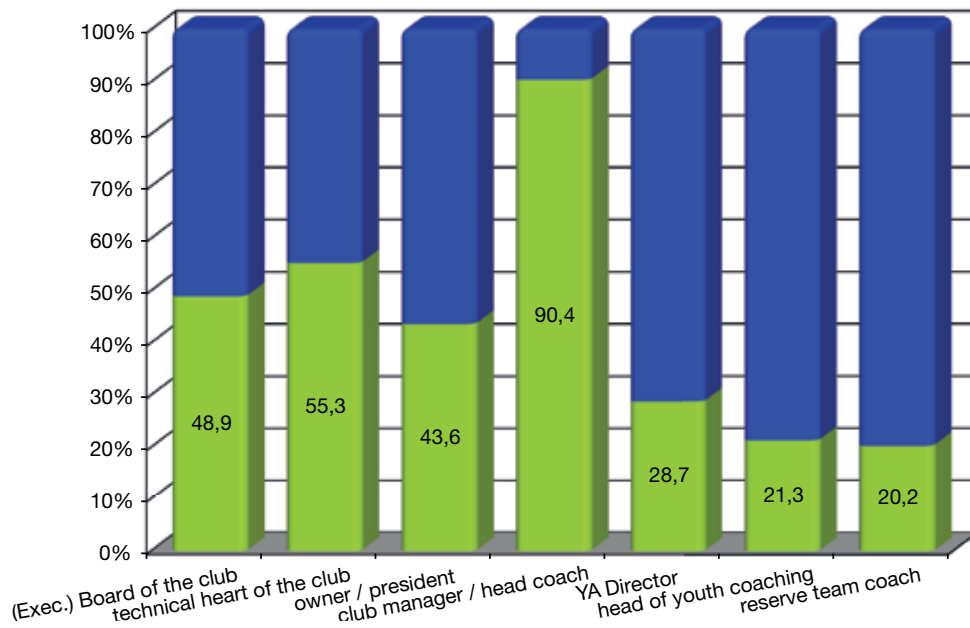


* The technical heart/board is the department responsible for giving technical advice and support to the club board in developing football philosophy and providing technical guidance to the Academy Manager for the development of the Academy Performance Plan.

Who is involved in the transition of academy players to the first team?



Who is involved in the composition of the 1st team squad?



Managerial aspects

- in half of the clubs, the Youth Academy is represented in the Executive Board
- 80% of the Youth Academies is involved in the Technical Heart / Board of the club, mostly represented by the Youth Academies director
- in 2/3 of the clubs, the Youth Academy is represented in the Technical Heart / Board by the Youth Academies director; in 40% of the cases, the Head Coach is present
- in more than half of the clubs, the Technical Heart / Board is responsible for the composition of the 1st team
- in 2/3 of the clubs, the Technical Heart / Board plays an important role regarding the transition of academy players
- the club manager / head coach and the Youth Academies director play the most important role in this transition (at least in 80% of the clubs)

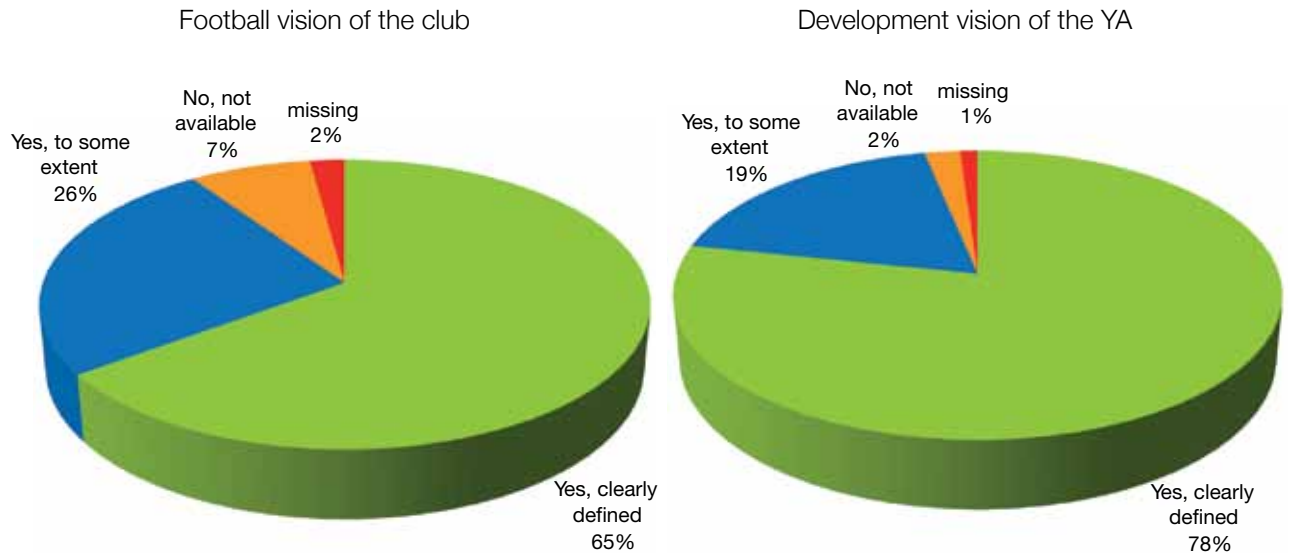
DID YOU KNOW THAT...

AFC Ajax's famous Players from the academy include Johan Crujff, Marco van Basten, Dennis Bergkamp, Edwin van der Sar, Danny Blind, Frank de Boer, Ronald de Boer, Edgar Davids, Clarence Seedorf, Patrick Kluivert, Marc Overmars, Wesley Sneijder, Rafael van der Vaart, Maarten Stekelenburg, or Nigel de Jong.



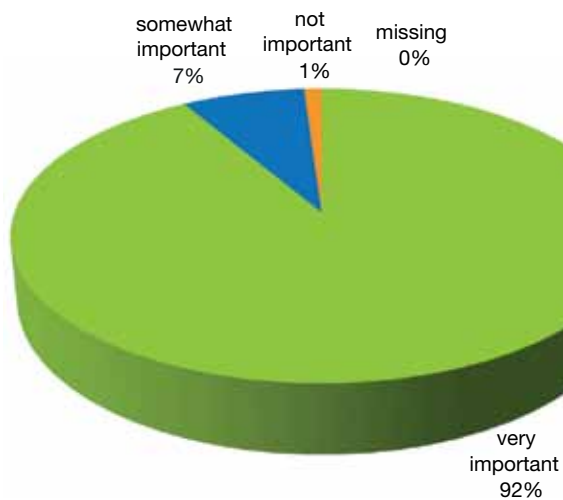
FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT

Is there is a football vision of the club and development vision of the Youth Academy?

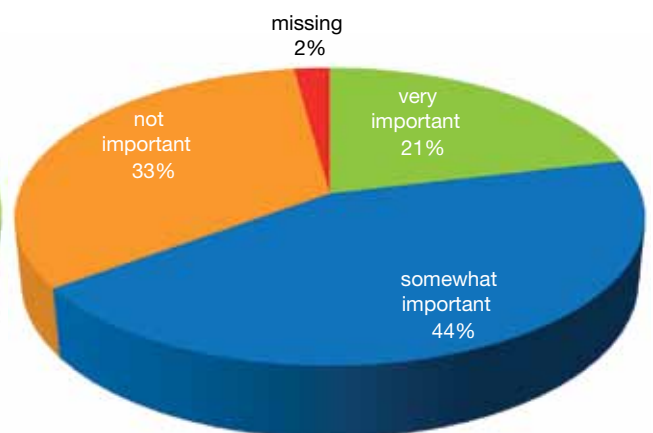


How important is it for the Development vision of the academy to be...

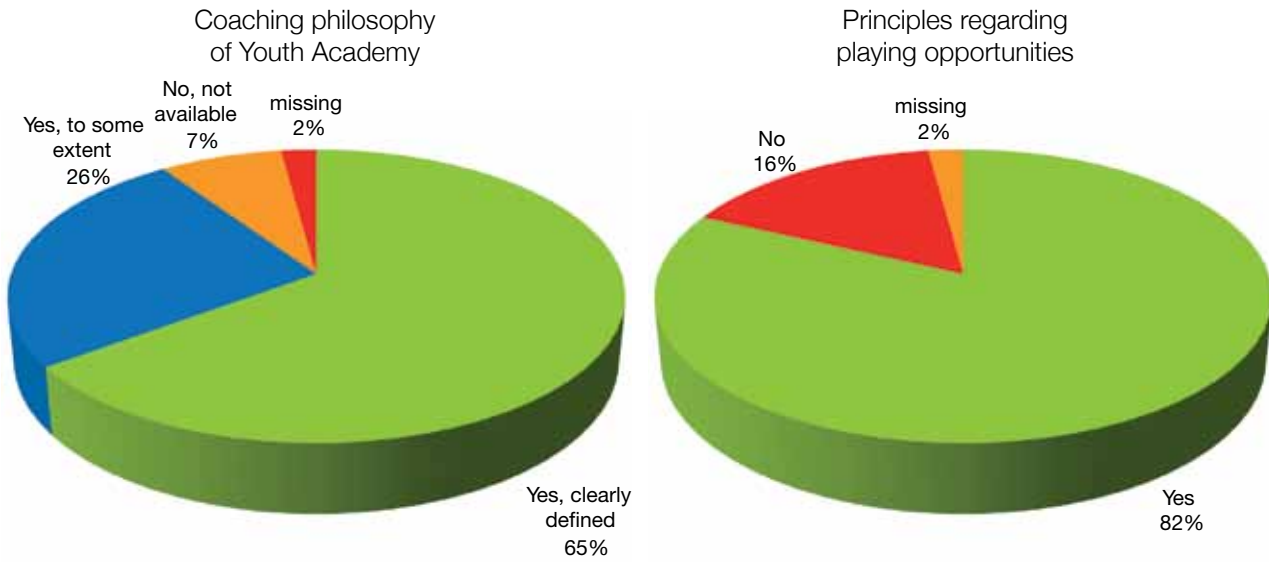
...based on the club's football vision?



...based on the vision of the National Association?

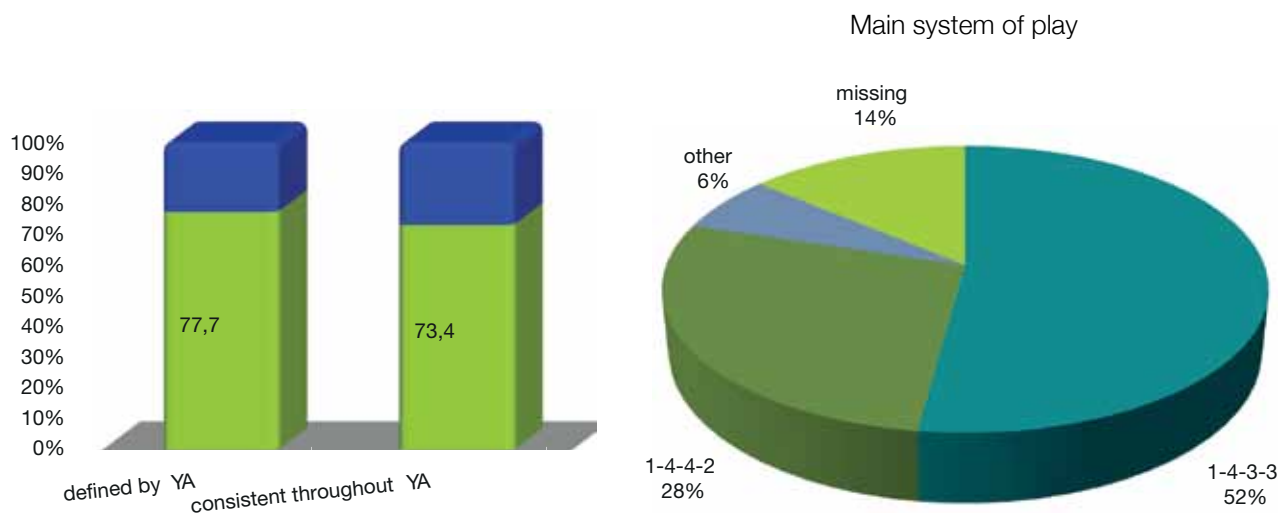


Is there a Coaching philosophy?

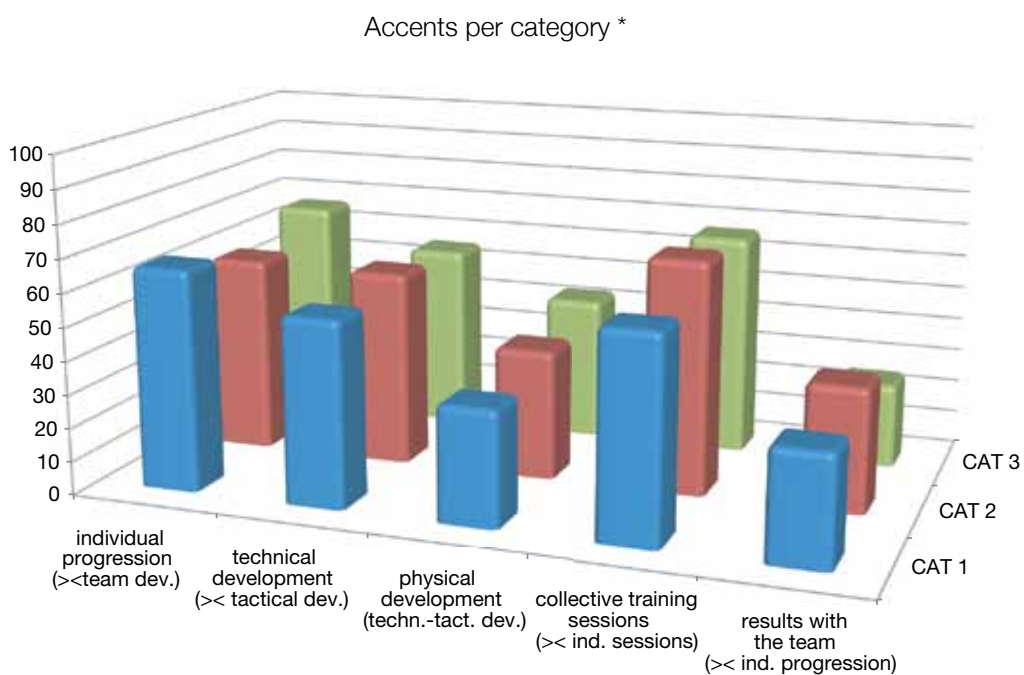


Team tactics at FC Zenit St. Petersburg

Is there a system(s) of play in the academy?



Youth Development vision: where does the focus lie?



* FIFA categorisation of clubs (based on circular no.1299)

Football and development vision

- 2/3 of the clubs have a clearly defined football vision
- more than 3/4 of the academies have a well defined development vision, mostly based on the football vision of the club
- 2/3 have a coaching philosophy, mostly with principles regarding playing opportunities
- majority of clubs have a consistent system of play, the 4-3-3 being frequently mentioned (52%), followed by 4-4-2 (28%)
- 2/3 focus on individual progression rather than team development. However, most training sessions are organized with the team
- 60% focus on the technical-tactical development, rather than physical development

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

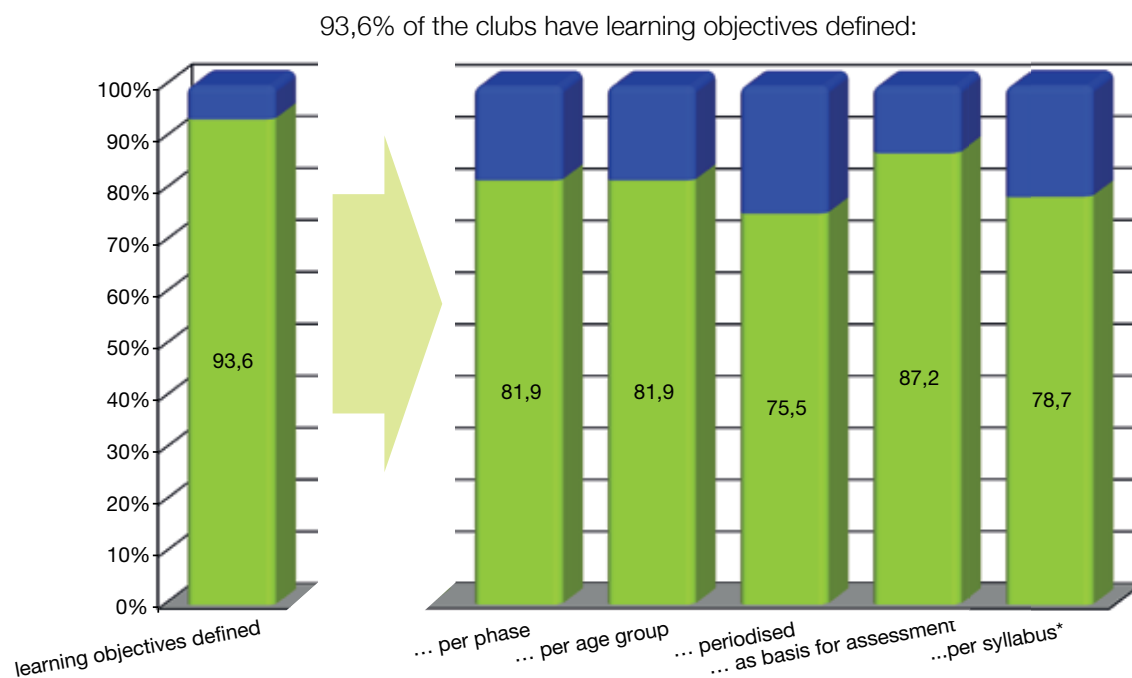
Arsenal FC's key success factors for the staff are:

- 1) *Excellence in youth scouting.*
- 2) *Focus on quality and not quantity in selection.*
- 3) *Giving young players a chance in the first squad.*
- 4) *Task for the Manager: to integrate the youngsters in first squad or at the first squad level*

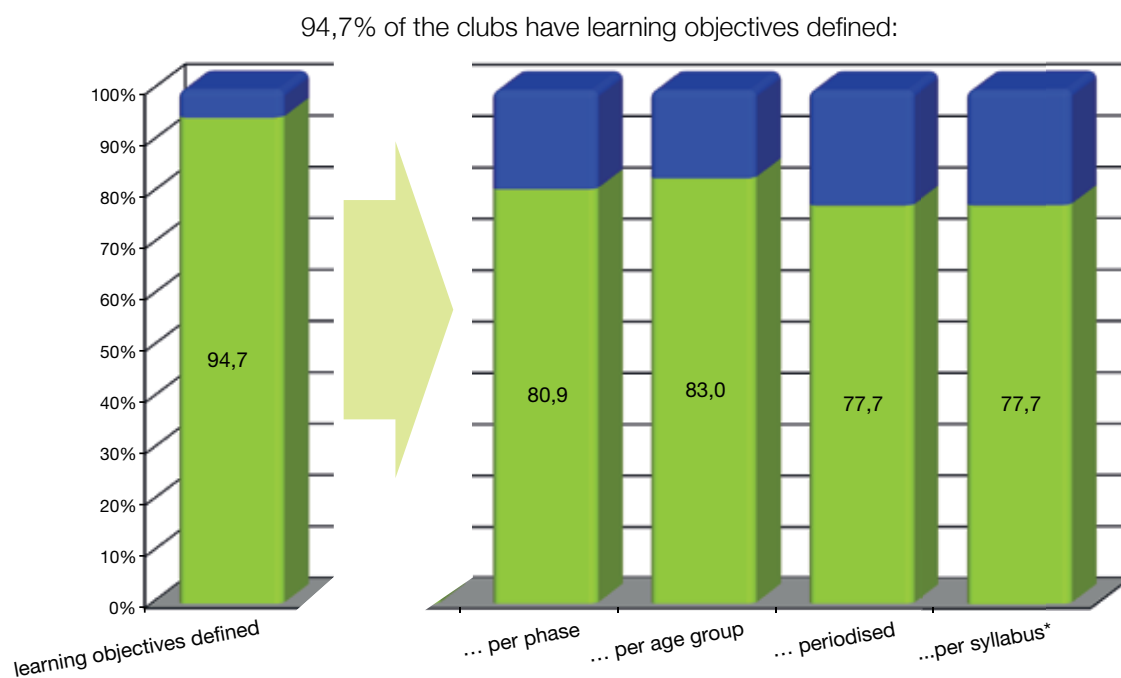


*Aivaras Meskinis,
FK Ekranas Youth Academy*

How are the major elements of the Coaching programme / curriculum for outfield players structured?



What are the major elements of the Coaching programme / curriculum for goalkeepers?



* Syllabus: set of tools available at the club to support learning objectives. A tool could be: a bundle with examples of training sessions based on the coaching programme, example of videos of training sessions based on the coaching programme

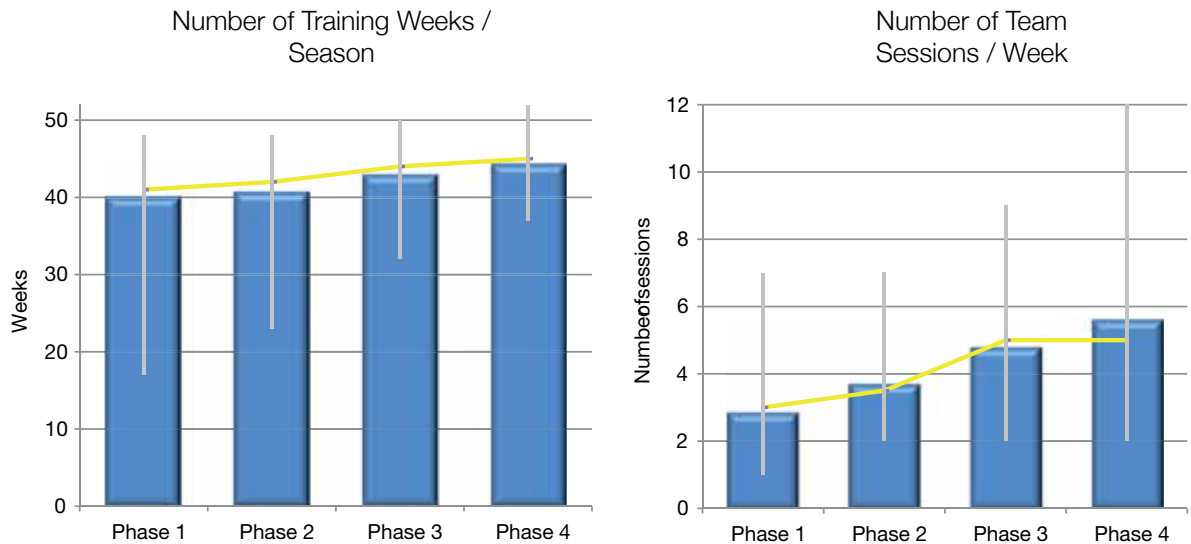
Coaching programme / curriculum

- almost all clubs have defined learning objectives, 3/4 periodised
- learning objectives are used by most clubs (87%) as basis for player assessment
- more than 3/4 of the Youth Academies is using video analysis for player assessment
- more than 3/4 of the Youth Academies are working with a coaching syllabus



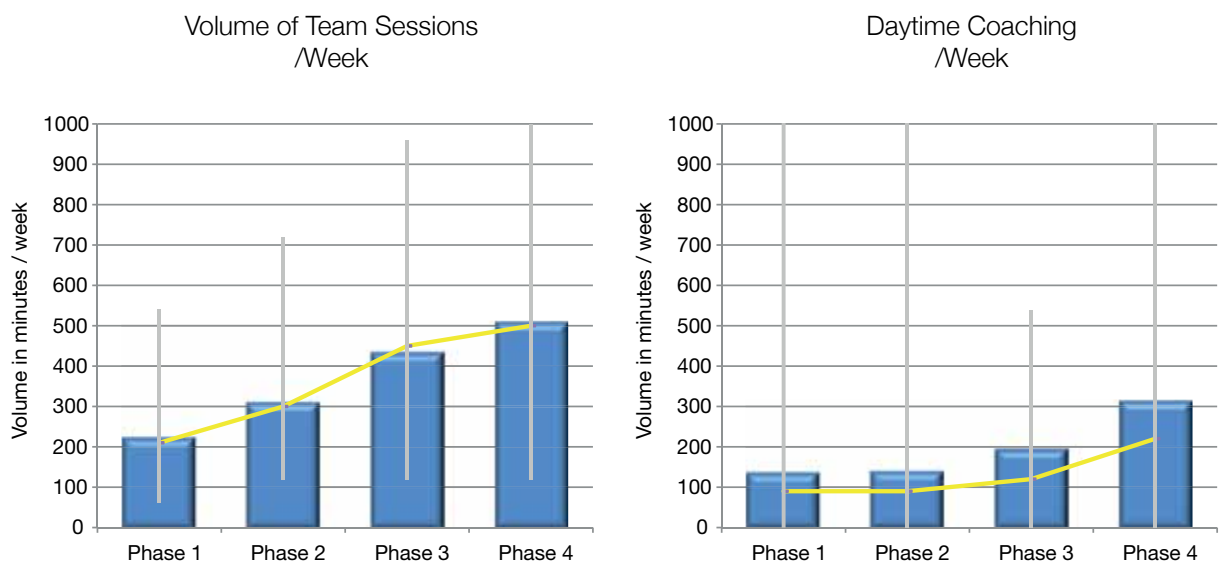
Daniel Agger, Brøndby IF Youth Academy

Coaching sessions



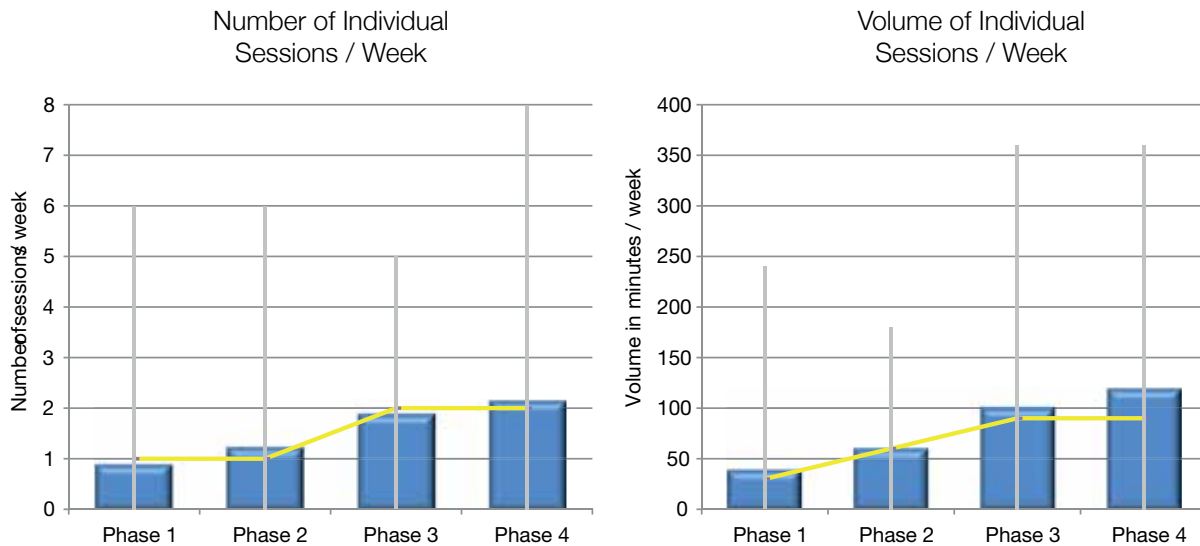
Phase 1: <=U9 Phase 2: U10-U12 Phase 3: U13-U15 Phase 4 >=U16
Vertical lines show the range (min - max)

Coaching sessions



Phase 1: <=U9 Phase 2: U10-U12 Phase 3: U13-U15 Phase 4 >=U16
Vertical lines show the range (min - max)

Coaching sessions



Phase 1: \leq U9 Phase 2: U10-U12 Phase 3: U13-U15 Phase 4 \geq U16
Vertical lines show the range (min - max)

Coaching sessions

Coaching sessions

- the volume of training sessions evolves over the phases
- team sessions: average volume
 - \leq U12: 41-42 weeks, 3 times per week, 4 to 5 hours/week
 - U13-U15: 44 weeks, 5 times per week, more than 7 hours/week
 - \geq U16: 45 weeks, 5 times per week, about 9 hours/week
- individual sessions: average volume
 - \leq U12: once per week, 30 to 60 minutes
 - U13-U15: twice per week, 90 minutes
 - \geq U16: at least twice per week, about 2 hours/week

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

*Famous players who have come from Sporting Clube de Portugal include Paulo Futre (10), Simao (12), Ricardo Quaresma (10), Nani, Miguel, Luis Boa Morte, Joao Moutinho, Hugo Viana, Luis Figo (13), and Cristiano Ronaldo (12)**

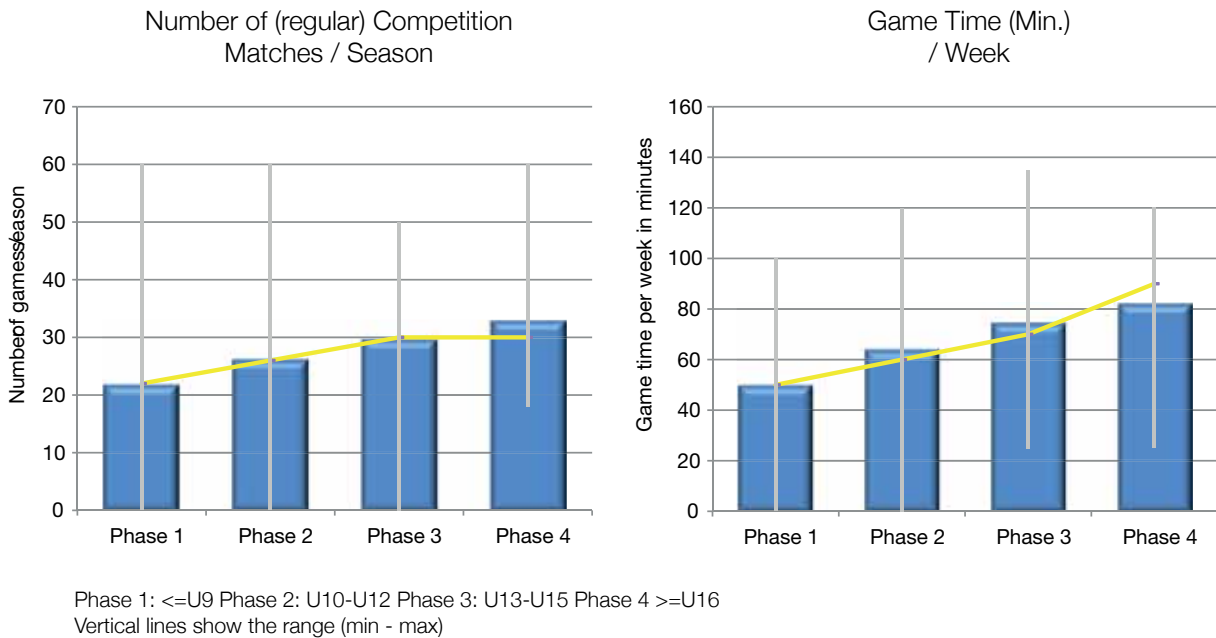
* Given in brackets is their age when they were detected.

*André Ayew,
Olympique de Marseille Youth Academy*

*Beykan Şimşek,
Fenerbahçe SK Youth Academy*



Game time



Game time

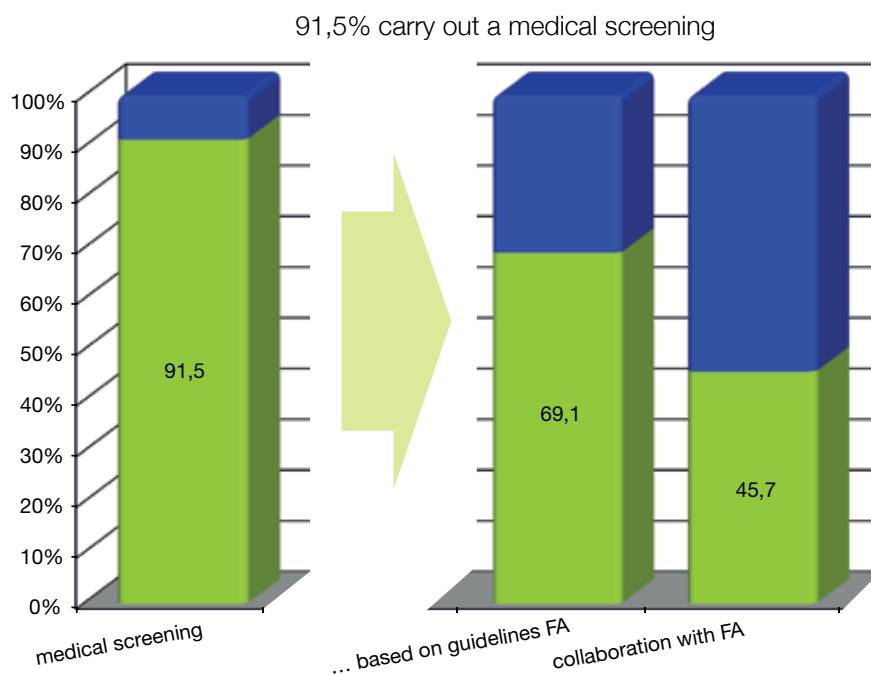
Game time

- game sessions: average volume
 - <=U12: 22 - 26 competition matches of 50 to 60 minutes
 - U13-U15: 30 competition matches of 70 minutes
 - >=U16: 30 official competition matches (90')
- number of tournament matches per season decreases over the years; from 10 in the youngest age groups to 6 in the oldest
- On the other hand, participation at international tournaments increases from 1 to 2 times per year



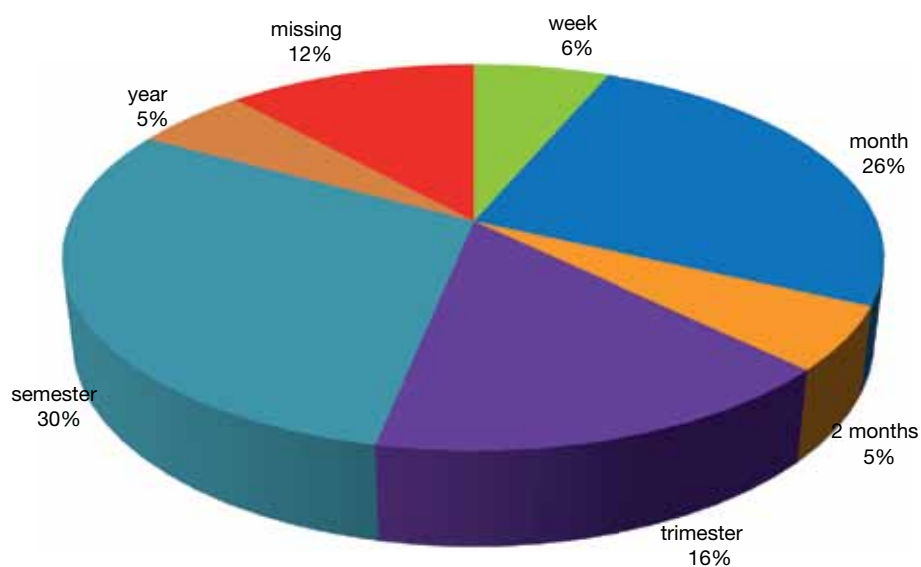
SUPPORT SERVICES

How is the medical screening of academy players organised?



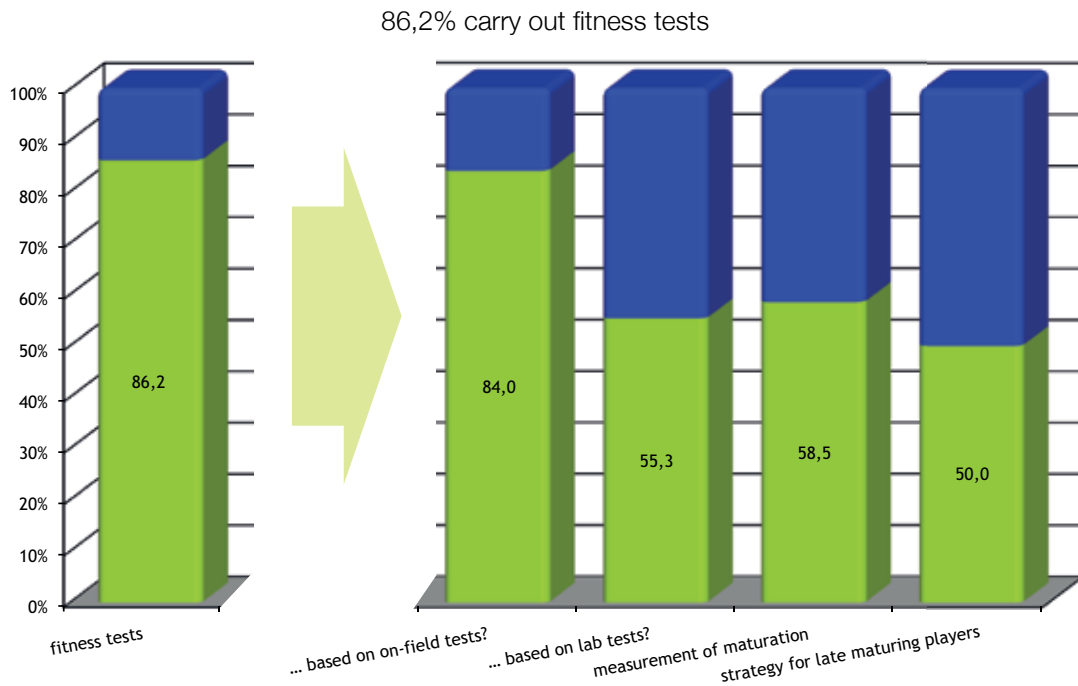
How often are height and weight assessed?

77,7% of Youth Academies carry out an anthropometric assessment*



* Anthropometric assessment: Figures dealing with measurement of the size, weight, and proportions of the human body

How is the medical screening of academy players organised?

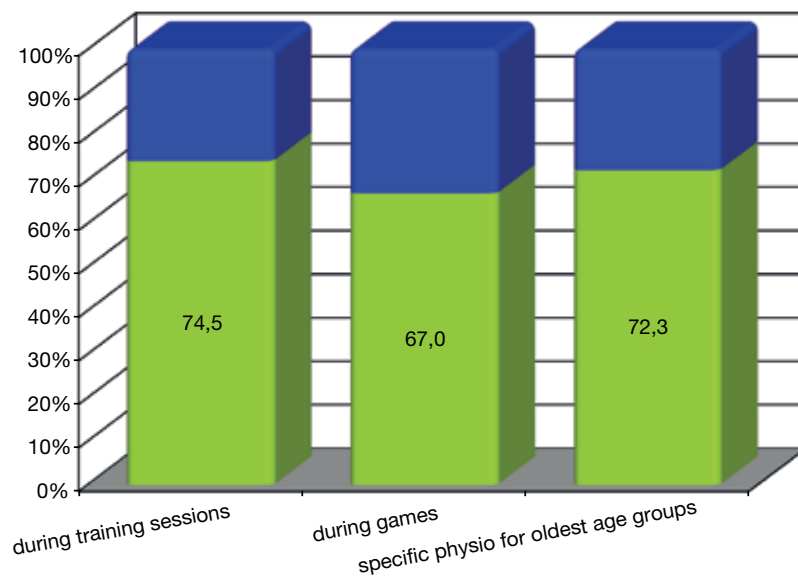


DID YOU KNOW THAT...

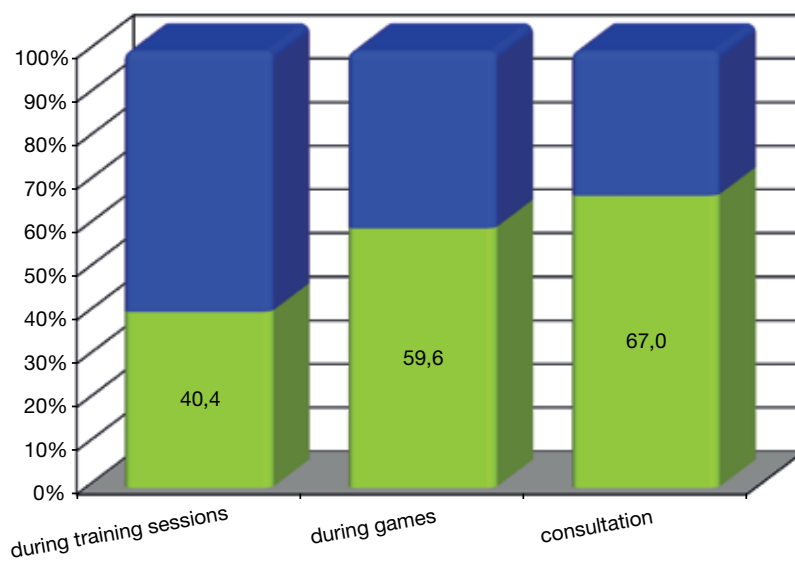
FC Barcelona has two U21 teams playing in the third and fourth divisions of the Spanish League. This allows players to gain vital experience throughout the competition before joining the 1st team.

In the 2006 and 2009 Champions League finals, six players fielded were from the academy and in the 2011 final, seven players came through Centro Formació and set a record by making 777 passes during the game.

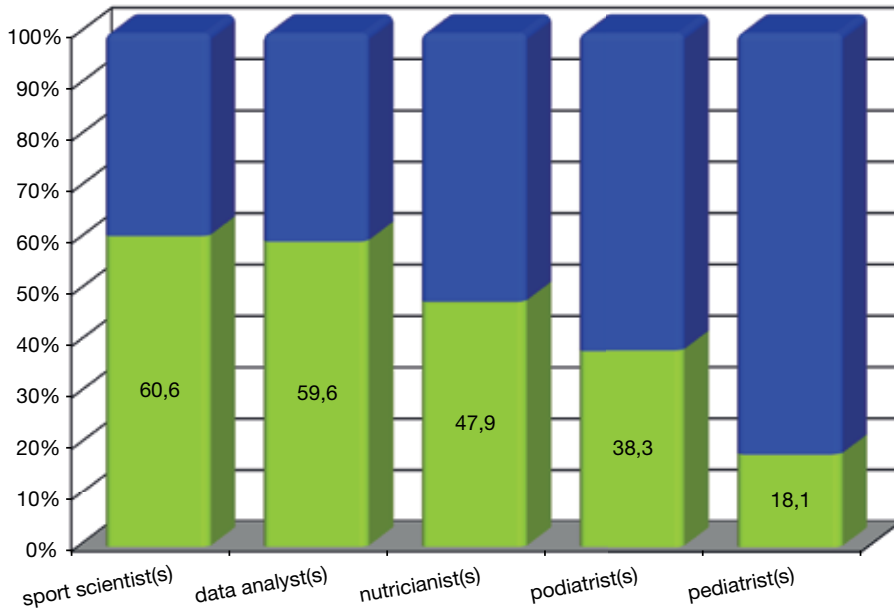
Medical staff: availability of physiotherapists



Medical staff: availability of medical doctor(s)



Medical staff: availability of other staff



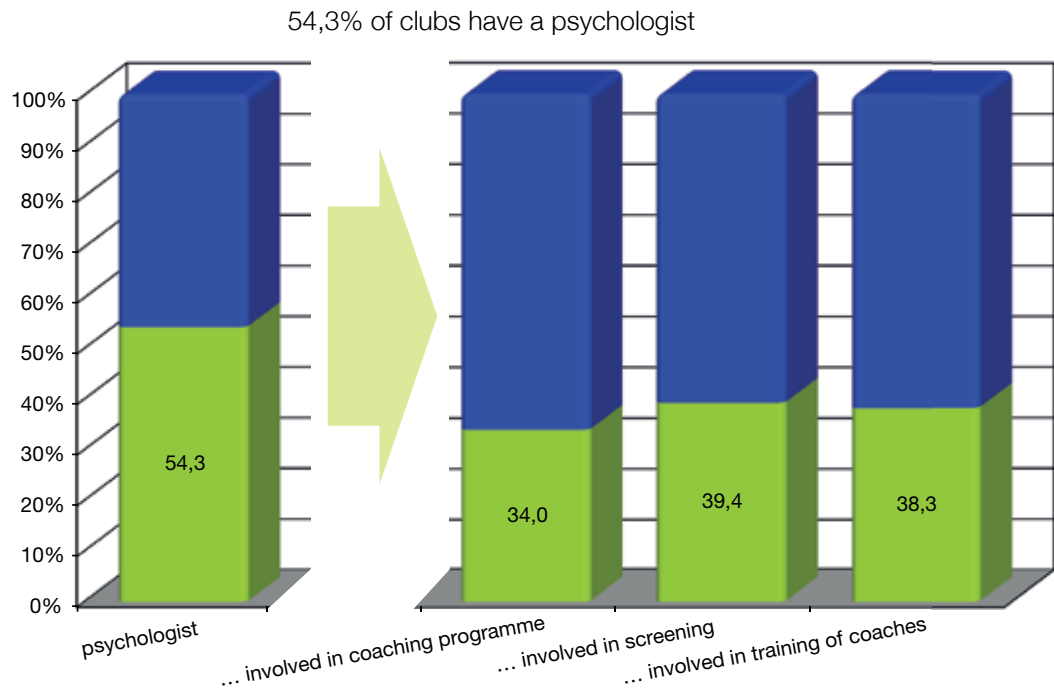
DID YOU KNOW THAT...

In Estonia there are four leagues and, in order to obtain the licence to play in the first league, a team has to have a senior women's team as well as a youth one.

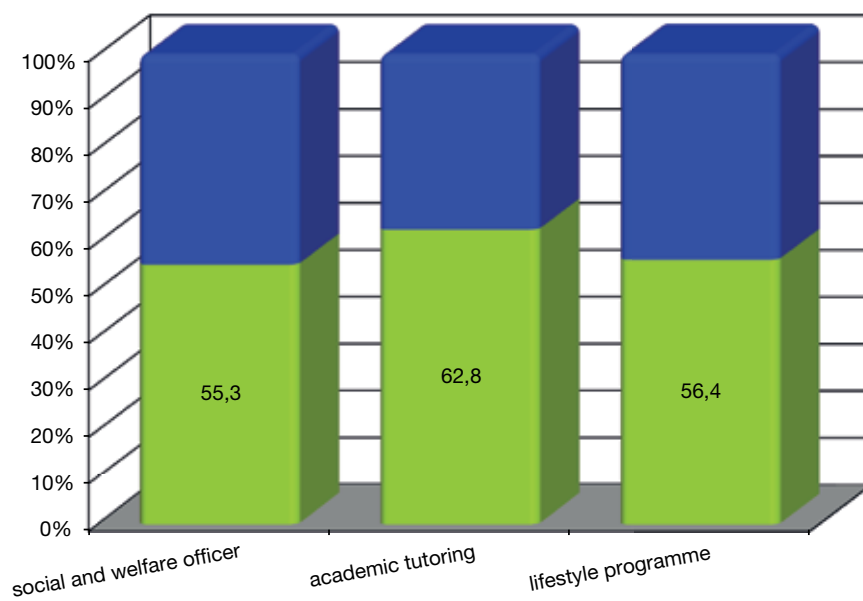


Wendie Renard,
Olympique Lyonnais Féminin Youth Academy

Psychological support

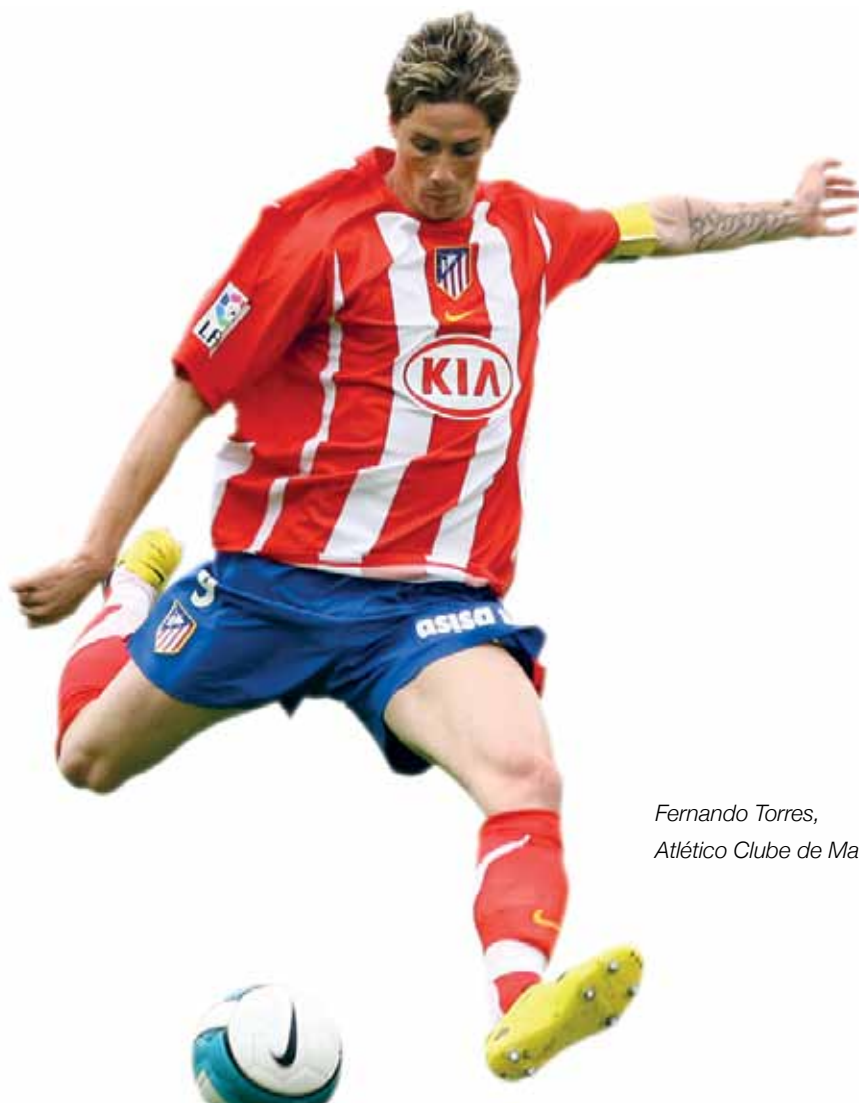


Do clubs organise a social, academic and lifestyle support?



Support services:

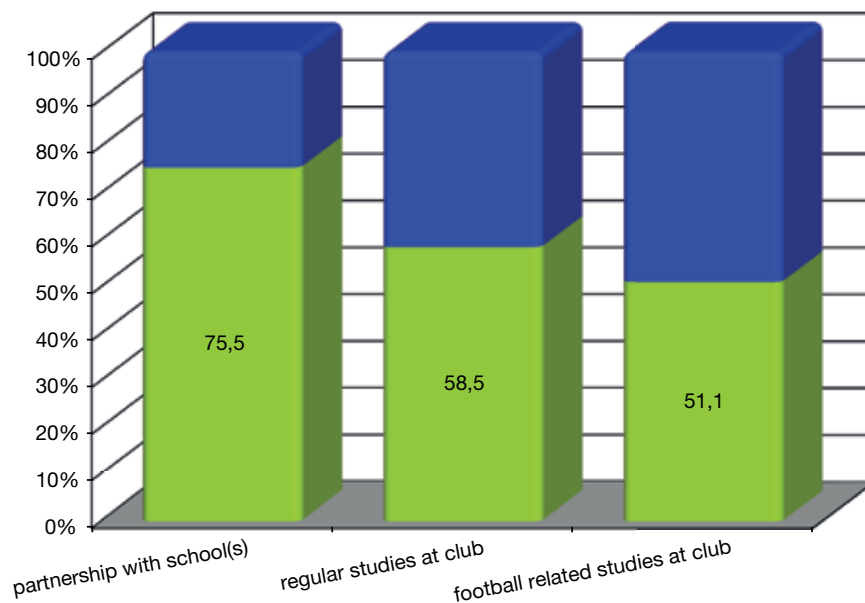
- almost all the clubs organise a medical screening, about half of them in collaboration with the FA
- 3/4 of the clubs have anthropometric assessment, 1/4 once per month, in most cases at least once per semester
- fitness tests are mostly organised on field, 1/2 of the clubs also have labo tests
- half of the clubs have a strategy for late maturing players
- in most clubs fitness / condition work starts at an age of 14 years old
- 3/4 have physio available during training sessions
- 2/3 have consultations with a medical doctor, at least
- more than half of the YA's work with a psychologist, mostly for mental screening
- about 60% provide social support



*Fernando Torres,
Atlético Clube de Madrid Youth Academy*

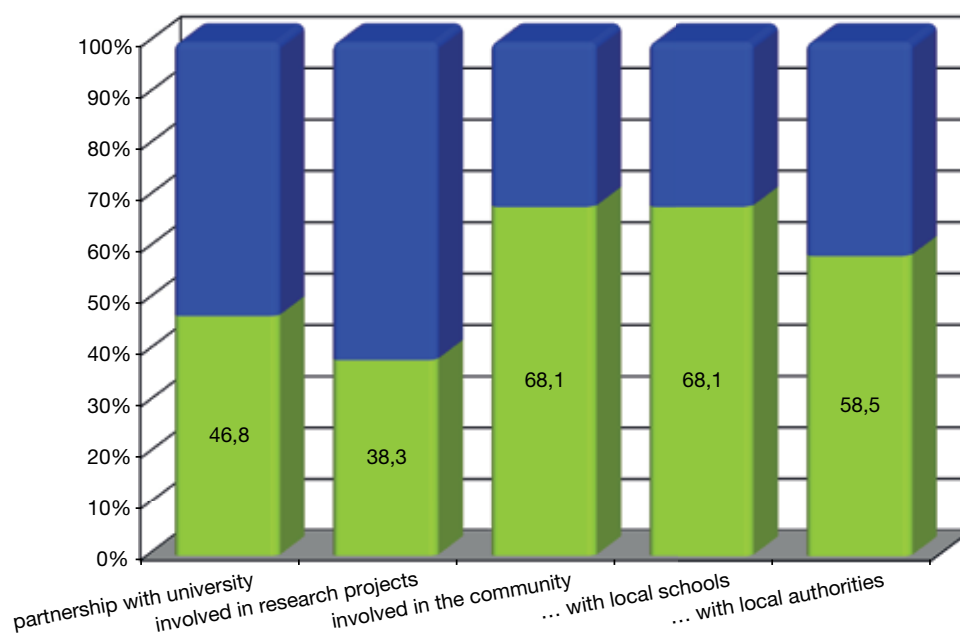
RELATIONS WITH THIRD PARTIES

Partnership with schools / education programme*

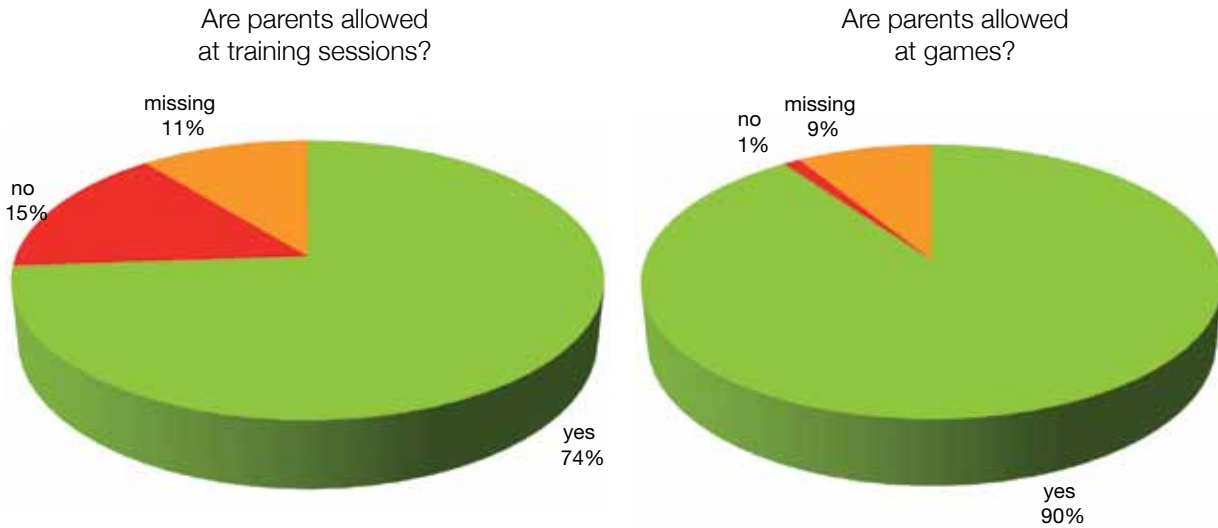


* Football specific school program in which normal studies are combined with a football intensive education

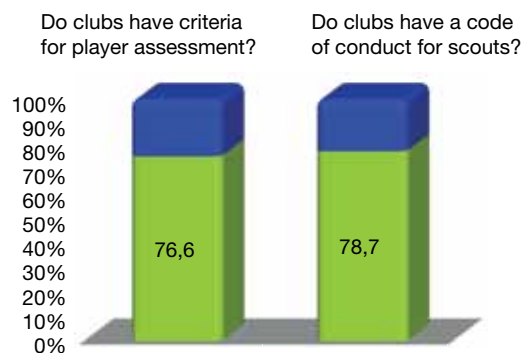
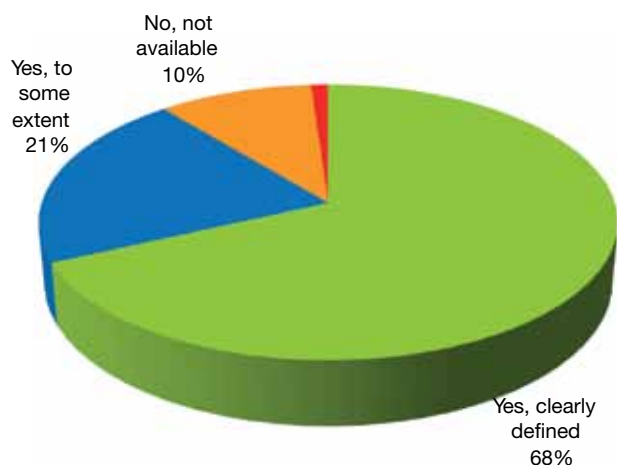
Local partnership



Parents in the club



Is there an Academy recruitment strategy?

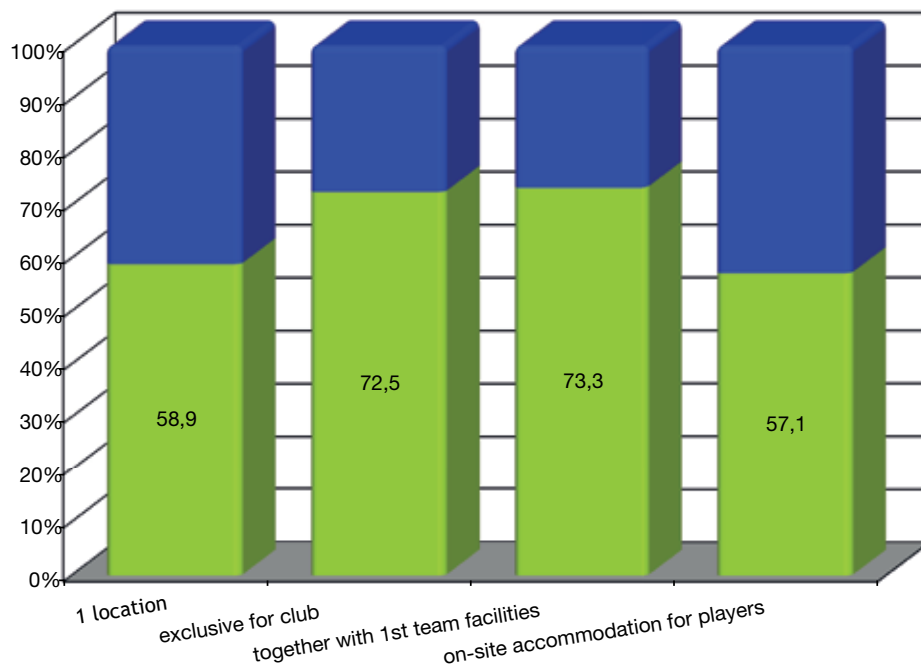


Relations

- 3/4 of clubs collaborate with schools
- in half of the Youth Academies, players can study at the club
- 2/3 of the academies are involved in the community, most of them have activities with local schools and local authorities
- about half of the clubs have a relationship with a university
- in 3/4 of the Youth Academies, parents are allowed to attend training sessions
- 2/3 of the Youth Academies have a clearly defined recruitment strategy

INFRASTRUCTURE

Academy training centre

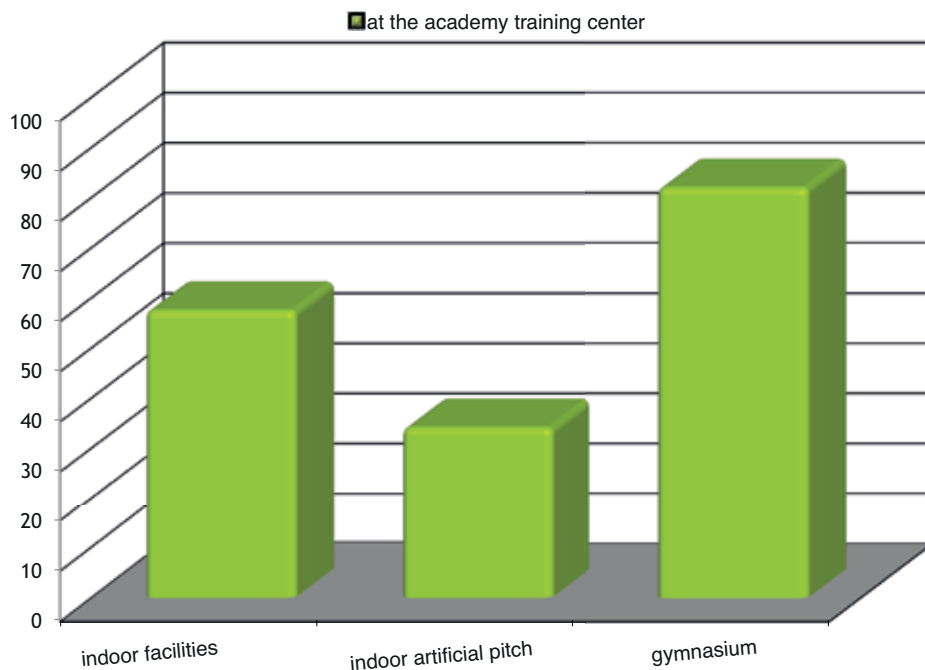


Pitches at the (academy) training centre

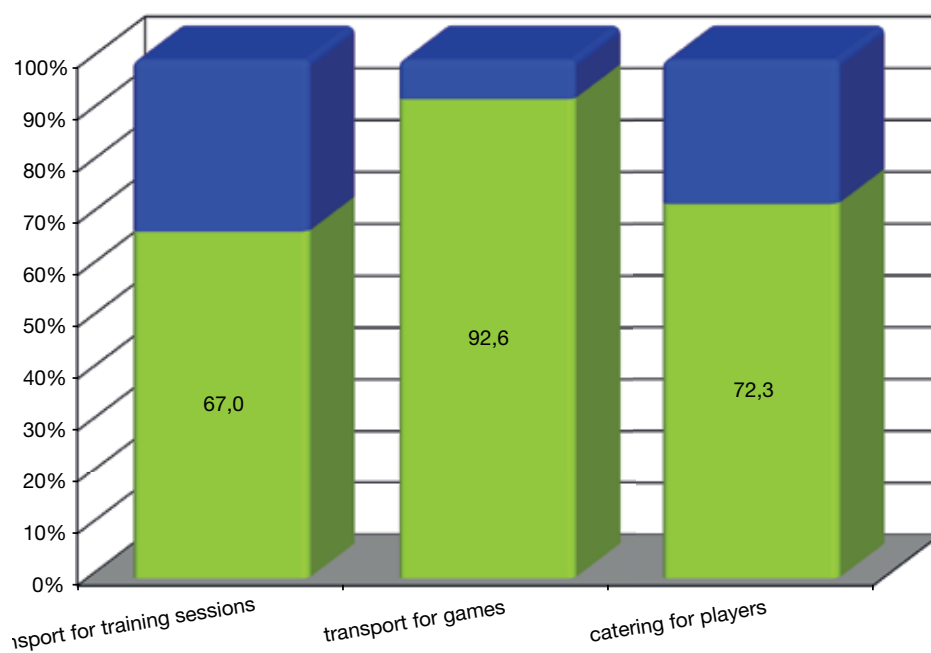
number of grass pitches	Average	Max
grass pitches (n=91)	4,3	16
... reserved for YA (n=91)	2,9	12
... with floodlight (n=90)	2,3	9
... with heating system (n=87)	0,2	5

number of artificial pitches	Average	Max
artificial grass pitches (n=93)	2,2	9
... reserved for YA (n=91)	1,8	9
... with floodlight (n=91)	1,9	9
... with heating system (n=85)	0,2	4

Availability of indoor facilities inside and outside the academy training centre



Do clubs organise transport and catering services?



Infrastructure

- almost 3/4 of the Youth Academies have joined training facilities with the 1st team (depending on the age category)
- 40% have youth facilities in different locations
- more than half of the clubs have on-site accommodation (rooms for players)
- most clubs have 4 pitches at their training centre, 2 with floodlights and 2 reserved for the Youth Academy
- of the 390 grass pitches, there are only 20 with a heating system
- of the 206 artificial grass pitches, there are only 17 with a heating system
- 1/3 of the clubs have 5 or more playing surfaces at the training centre
- 1/5 of the Youth Academies have 5 or more playing surfaces



Villarreal CF facilities

PRODUCTIVITY

Transition of academy players to the 1st team of the club

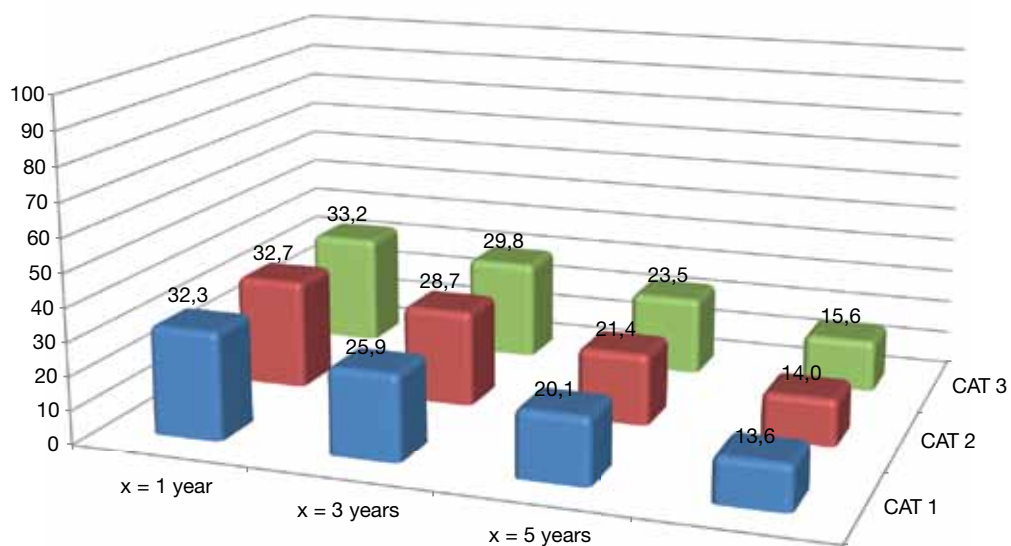
Academy players in 1st team	Median
min. 1 full year in YA (n=93)	8
at least 3 years before 22 (n=89)	6
at least 5 years before 22 (n=87)	5
min. 3 matches as starter (n=92)	4
min. 3 matches as starter/substitute (n=86)	6
size of 1st team squad (n=93)	25

Academy players in 1st team: share*	Median
min. 1 full year in YA (n=93)	30,0%
at least 3 years before 22 (n=89)	24,0%
at least 5 years before 22 (n=87)	20,0%
min. 3 matches as starter (n=91)	16,0%
min. 3 matches as starter/substitute (n=85)	20,0%

* share in % with regard to total number of players of 1st team squad

Transition of academy players to the 1st team of the club per category*

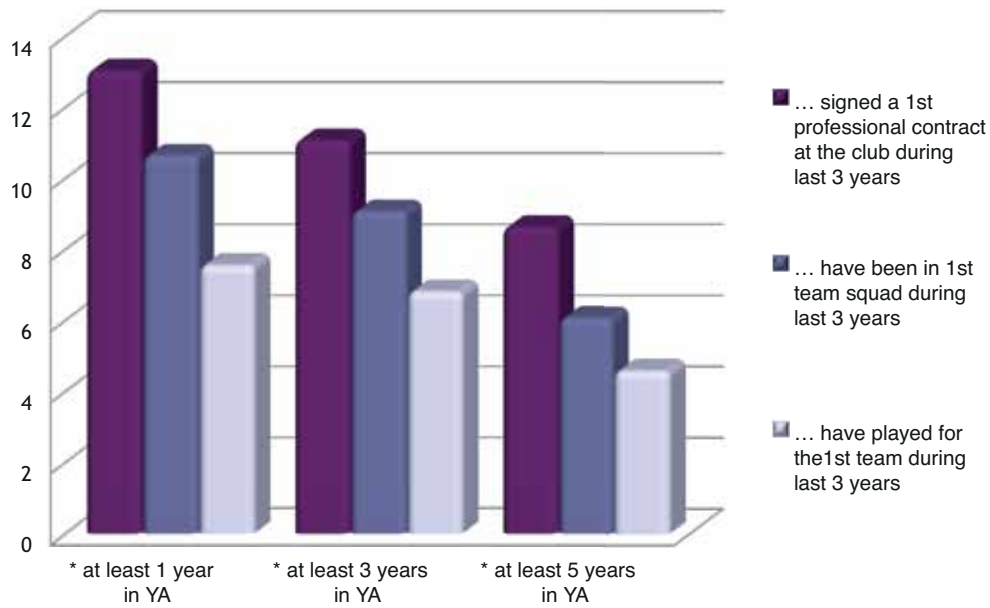
Percentage of 1st team players that spent x years in the Youth Academy



* FIFA categorisation of clubs (based on circular no.1299)

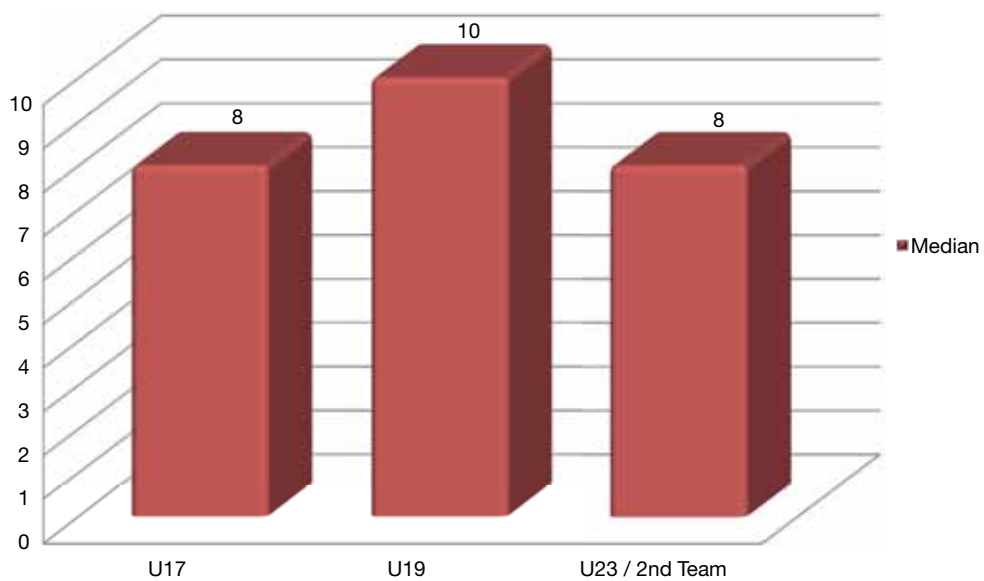
Transition of academy players to the first team

Average number of academy players* that ...

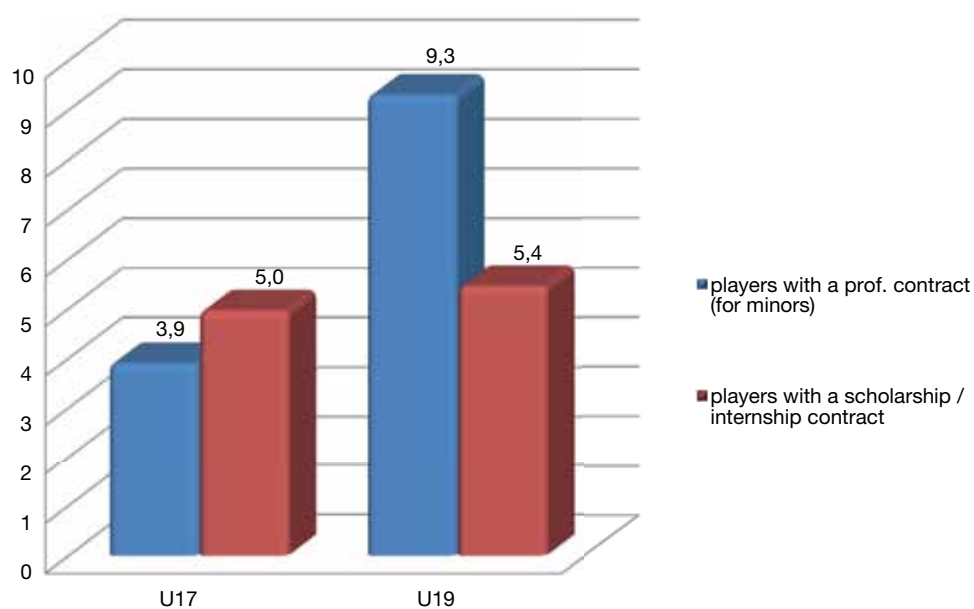


Flow of players in the Academy

Academy players in the different age groups registered at the club for at least 5 years



Contracts for youth players in U17 and U19 squads

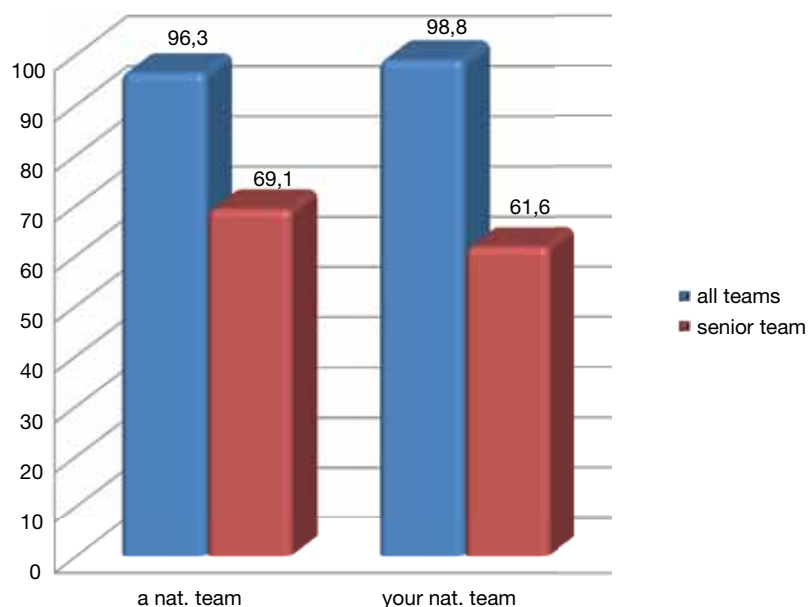


Academy players in national teams

Academy players (min. 5 years at the club)	Median
... now playing for a national team (n=81)	12
... now playing for your national team (n=86)	9,5
... playing for your national team in the last 3 years (n=81)	12

Academy players (min. 5 years at the club)	Median
... now playing for a nat. senior team (n=65)	2
... now playing for your nat. senior team (n=64)	2
... playing for your nat. senior team in the last 3 years (n=61)	3

Academy players playing for ...

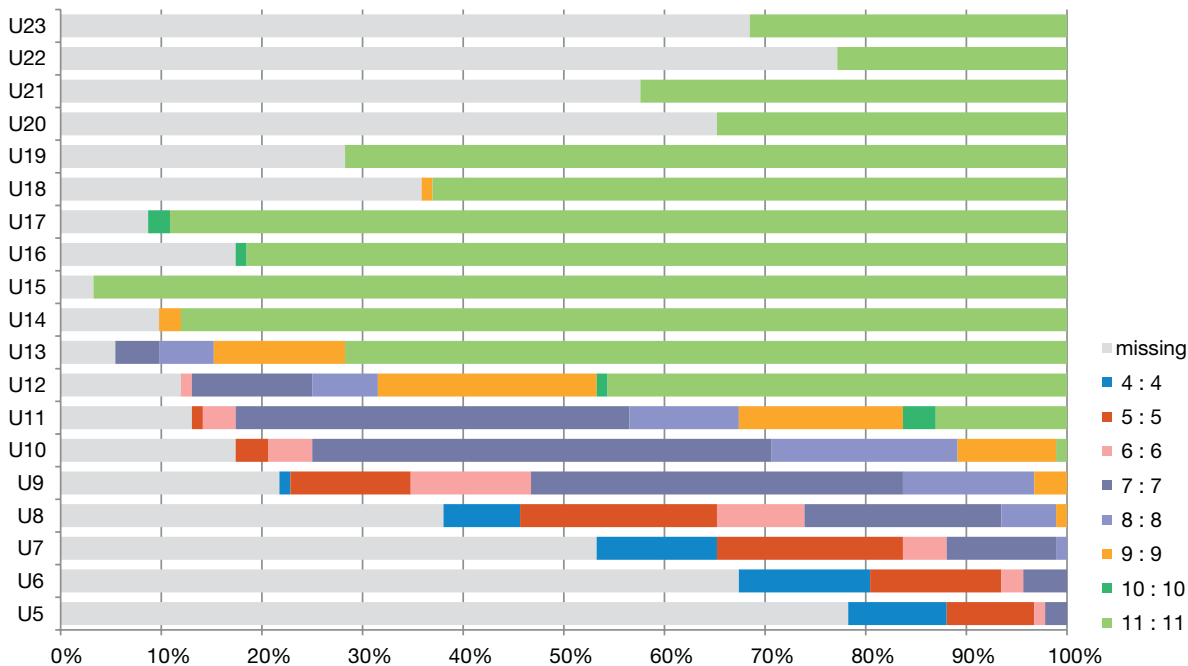


Productivity

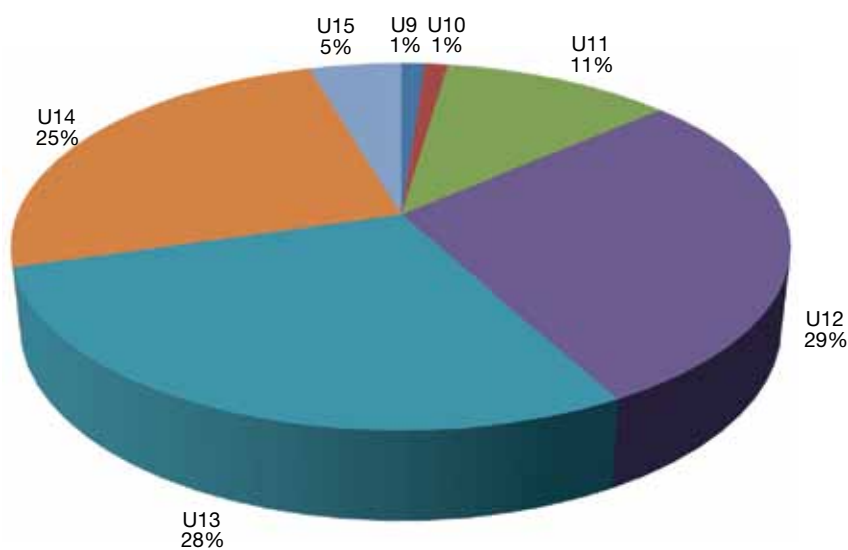
- on average 7,4 players of the 1st team spend at least 3 years at the academy, this is 28,2% of a 1st team squad
- at least half of the clubs have 1/5 senior players that spend 5 years at the academy; there is a club with 2/3 of the senior team developed for at least 5 years at the Youth Academy
- in general there are about 6 academy players that are effectively playing for the 1st team (almost a quarter of the senior team)
- 8 academy players signed a 1st prof. contract at the club during the last 3 years (median figure)
- on average 12 players of the 2nd team / U23 are registered at the club for at least 5 years
- at least half of the clubs have a minimum of 2 players, that were registered at the Youth Academy for at least 5 years, that play for their senior national team

ORGANISATION OF YOUTH COMPETITIONS

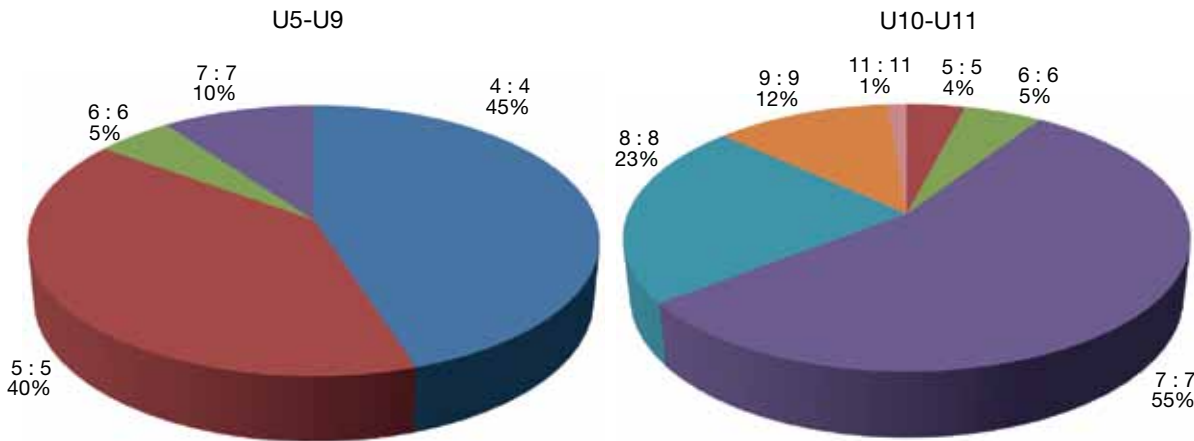
Team / game size per age group



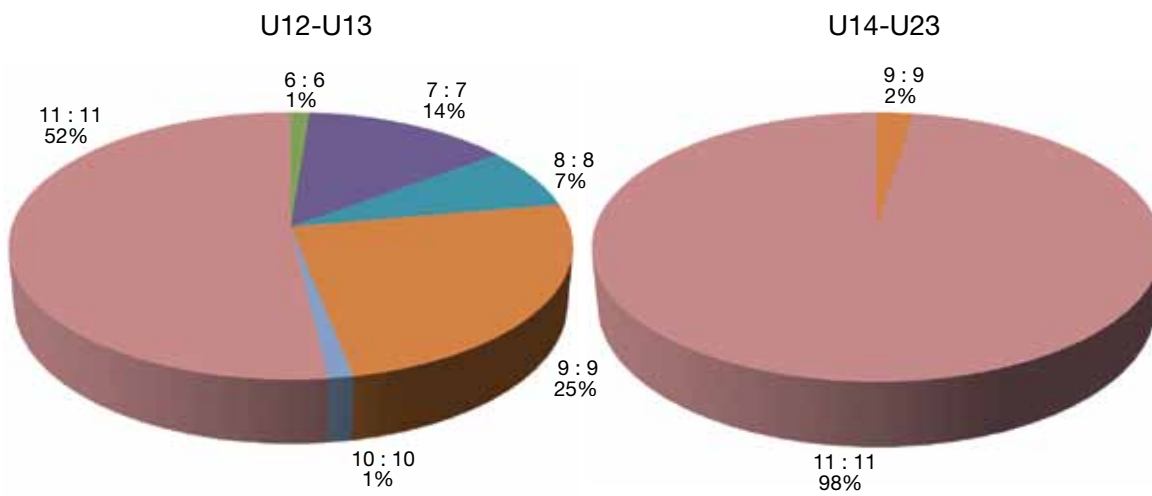
Age group when teams start on full size pitch



Number of players and game format per age group (U5 up to U11)

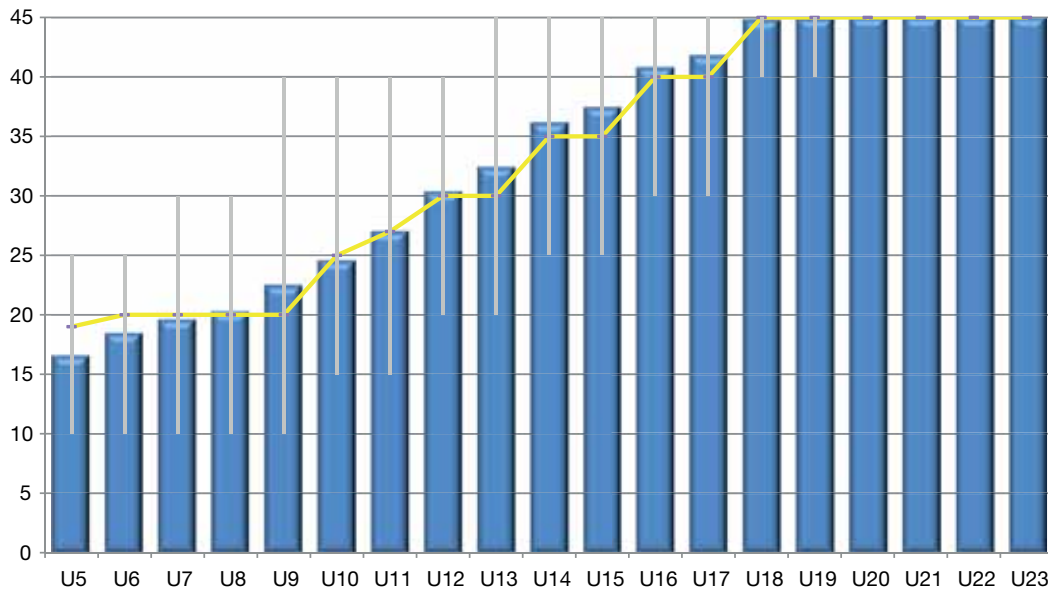


Number of players and game format per age group (U12 up to U23)



Organisation of youth competitions

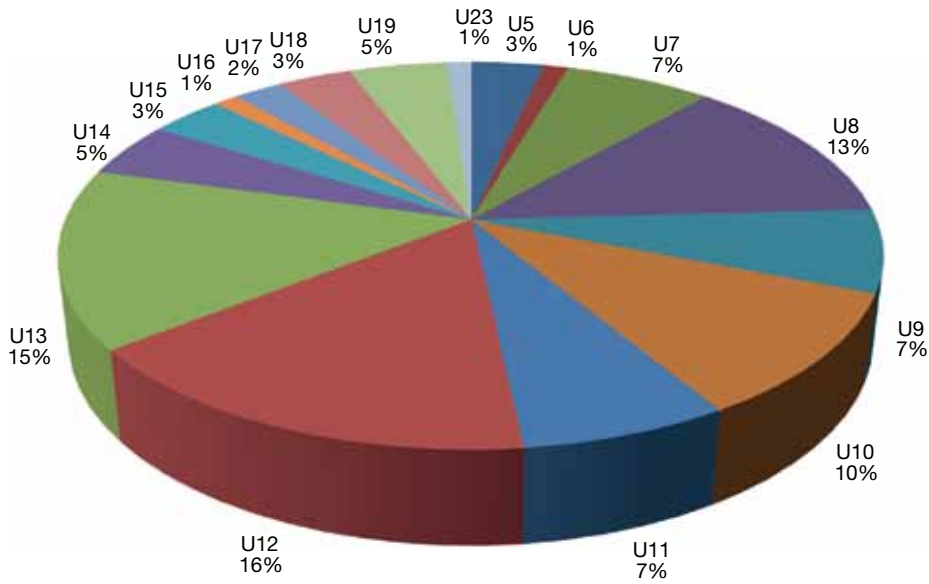
Minutes per half time per age group



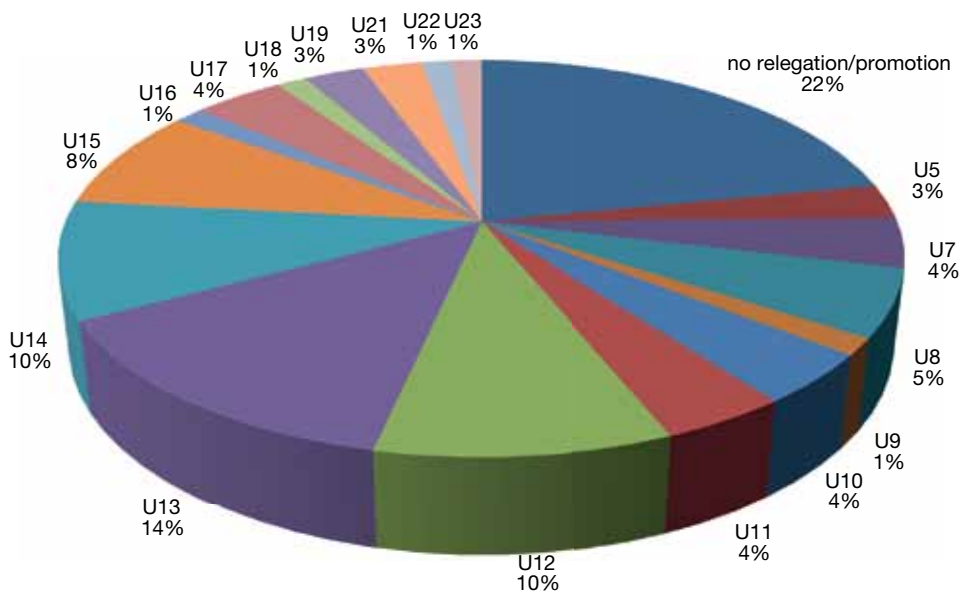
Organisation of youth competitions:

- Until U11, most competitions are played with a reduced number of players on smaller pitches
- from U5 to U9, most games are played with 4 or 5 players and a game time between 30 and 50 minutes
- in U10 and U11, more than half of the games are played 7:7 and 1/4 is playing 8:8, mostly about 50 to 60 minutes
- half of the clubs are already playing 11:11 with U12 and U13, mostly in games of one hour
- from U14, almost all competitions are with normal squads (11:11). From that age on we also see the first games with a normal duration of 90'
- most competitions start on a full sized pitch from U12 to U14, 1/10 even before that age
- until U17 we see games with a reduced duration and from U14 most games are longer than 1 hour

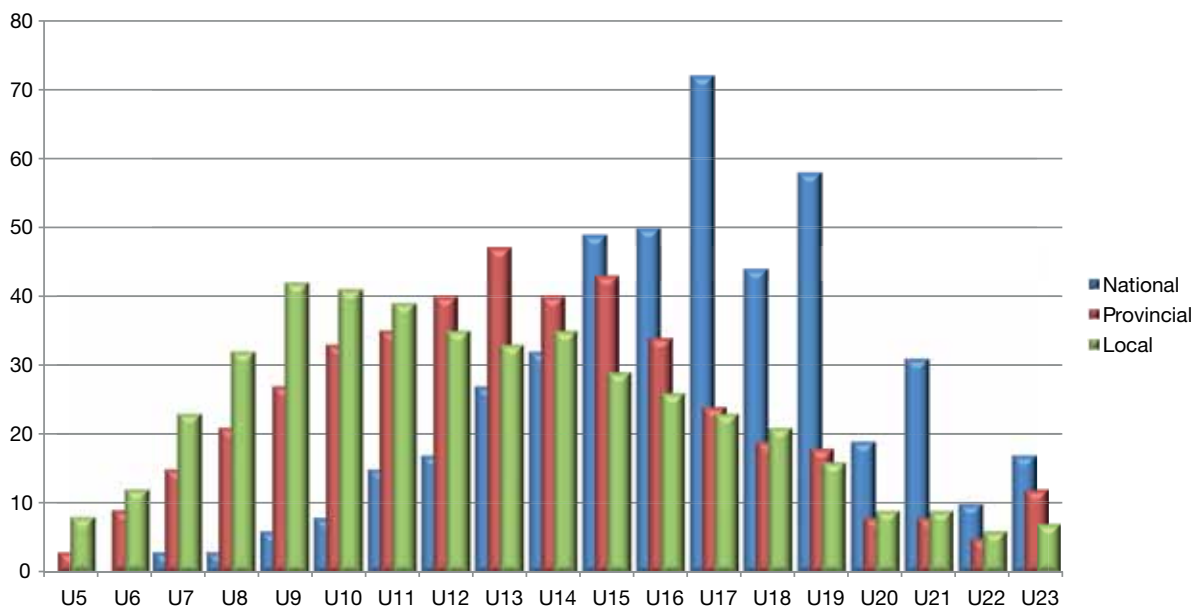
Age group when teams start with table / ranking



Age group when teams start with relegation / promotion

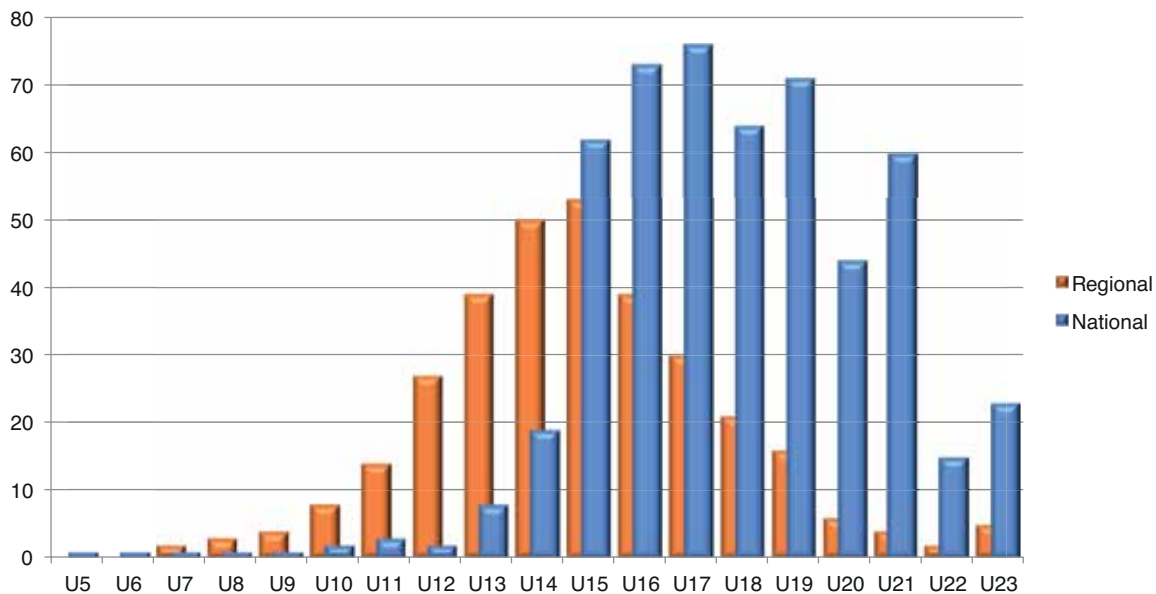


Type of competition per age group



Talent identification system of the NA

Regional and national selections



Organisation of youth competition

- In most regions an official table (ranking of youth teams) is introduced at the ages of U12 and U13
- 1/5 of the youth competitions are without relegation / promotion, otherwise relegation / promotion is mostly introduced from U12
- most competitions switch from regional/provincial to national at U15
- till U12, most competitions are at regional level
- from U12 to U14, provincial competitions are the norm
- from U15, most FA's start also with national selections, half of the clubs indicate that they also have regional selections for players from U14 and U15
- elite schools are mostly organised for players from U14 to U18

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

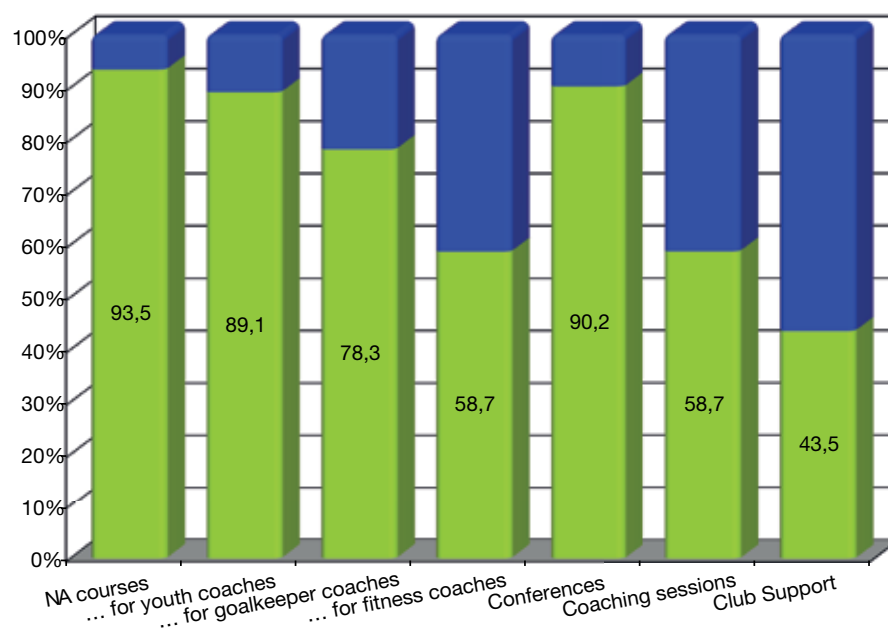
Axel Witsel, Steven Defour, Eliaquim Mangala, Carcela Mehdi, Jonathan Legear, and Kevin Mirallas are amongst notable former academy players of R. Standard de Liège.



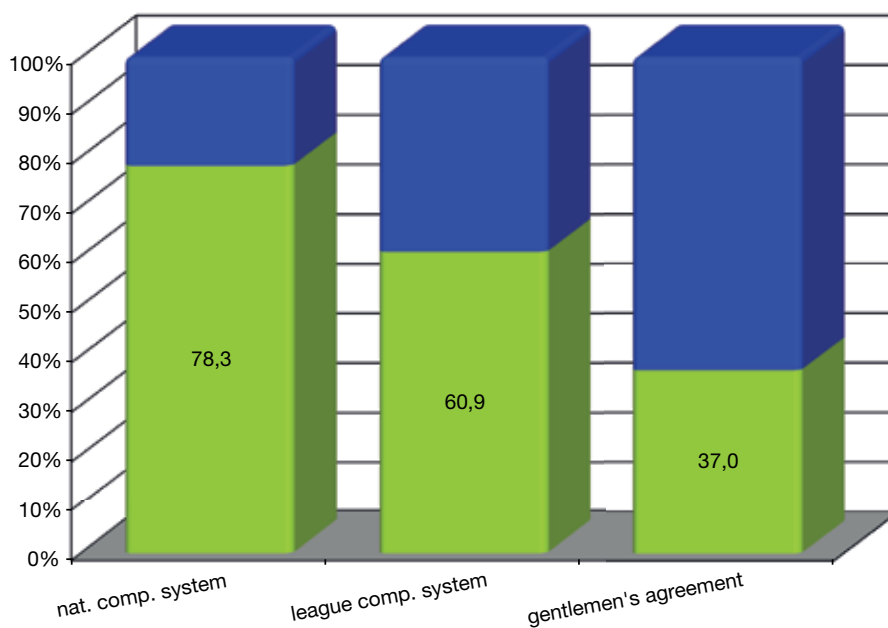
*Eden Hazard,
LOSC Lille Métropole Youth Academy*

SUPPORT FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

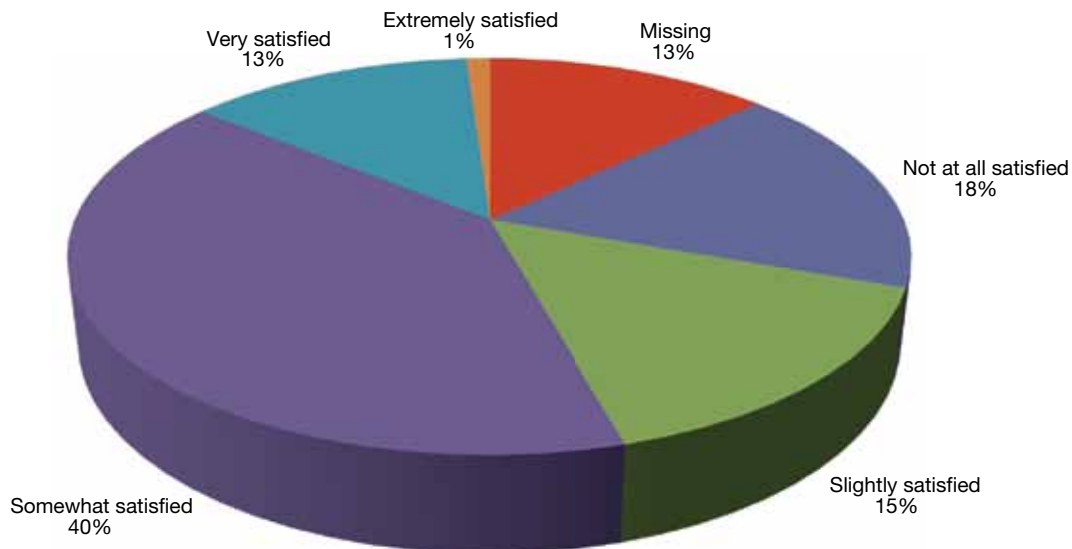
How does the National Association support the Academies?



What training compensation systems are in place?



Are clubs satisfied with the compensation on a national level?

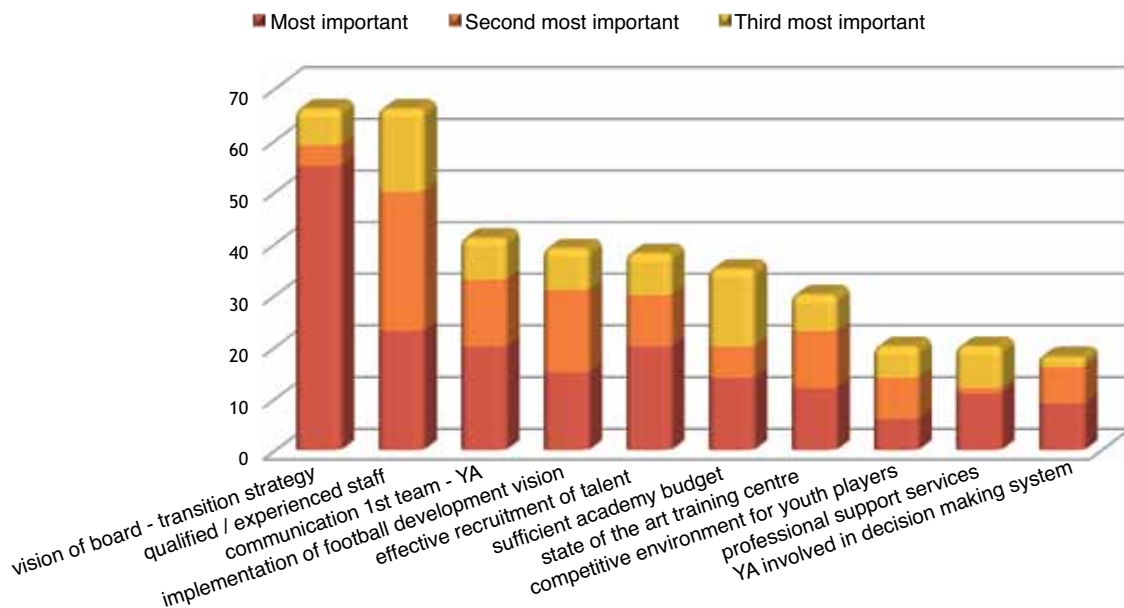


Support from the National Association

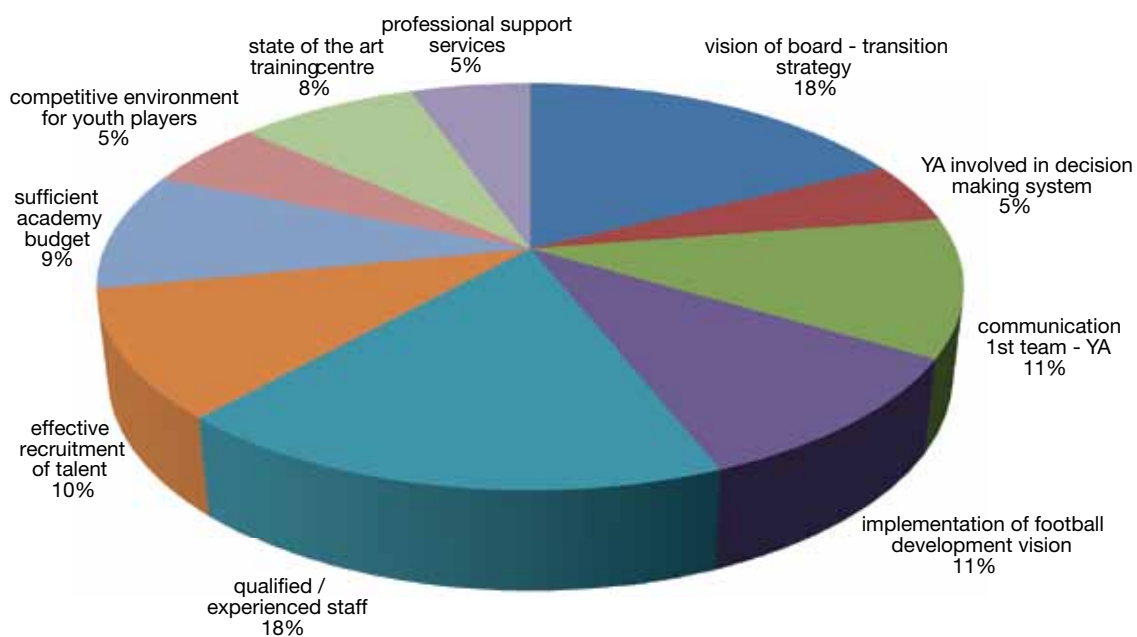
- more than half of the clubs still do not have support for football and / or management from the NA
- more than 2/3 of the clubs confirm that their NA has defined an overall football and development vision
- most of these NA's have also developed a coaching programme
- this goes hand in hand with the organisation of courses for coaches
- almost all NA's organise courses and conferences
- about half of them also organise coaching sessions
- half of the clubs receive support from their NA for medical screening
- in some cases there is also a national monitoring
- 3/4 of the clubs benefit from a national compensation system, 1/3 of the clubs have signed a gentlemen's agreement
- 69% of the Youth Academies are at least somewhat satisfied with the compensation system at national level

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Importance of Critical Success Factors (Top 3)



Most important Critical Success Factors



Critical Success Factors (CSF)

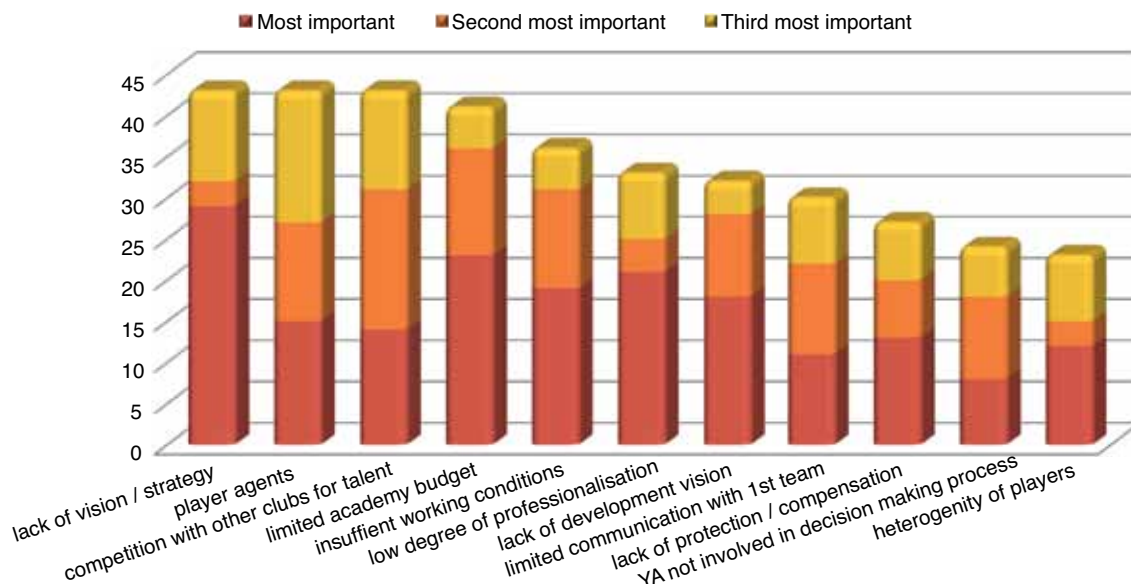
- Top 5 of most important CSFs:
 - vision of the board regarding the transition of academy players
 - qualified / experienced staff
 - communication between Youth Academy and 1st team
 - Implementation of the football development vision
 - Effective recruitment of talents
- A clear strategy regarding transition of Youth Academy players defined by the board is the number 1 CSF



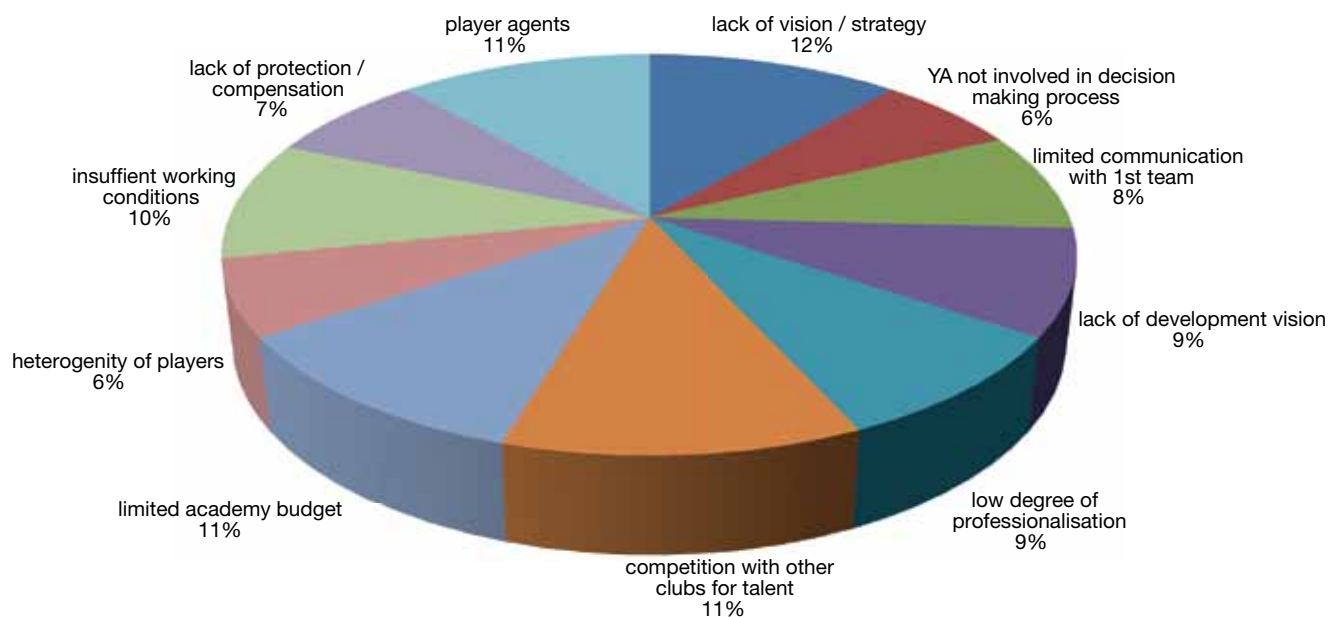
FC Porto Youth Academy facilities

CRITICAL CONSTRAINT FACTORS

Importance of Constraint Factors (Top 3)



Most important Constraint Factors



Critical Constraint Factors (CCF)

- Top 5 most important CCFs:
 - lack of vision / strategy
 - competition with other clubs for talent
 - player agents
 - limited academy budget
 - insufficient working conditions
- Competition for talent and player agents are in most top 3, lack of vision is selected the most as number 1 CCF

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

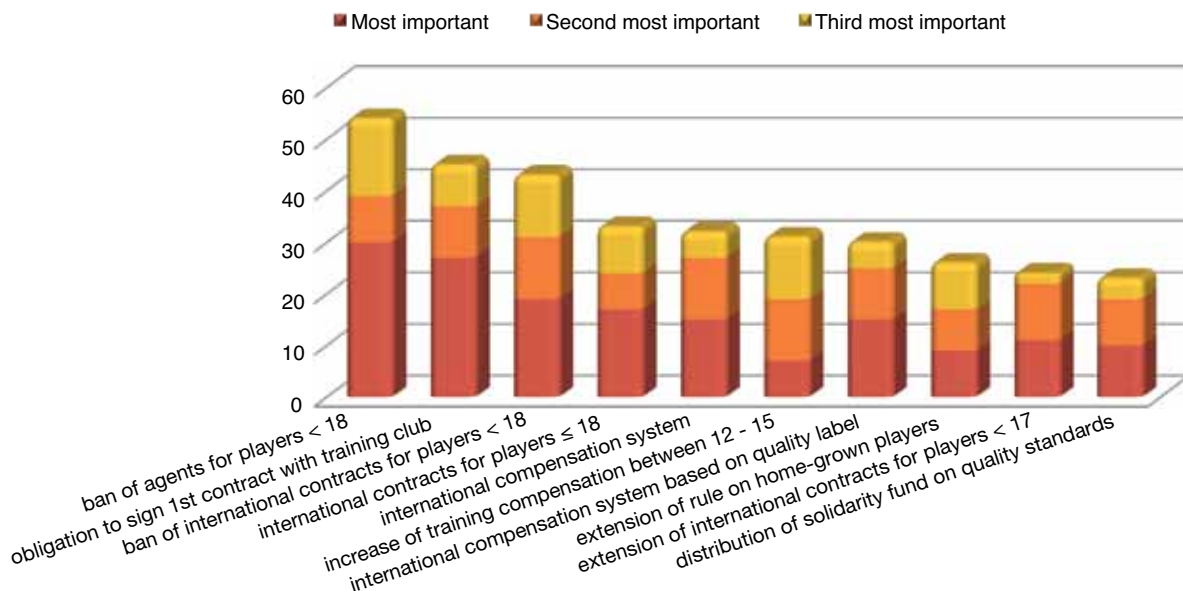
Gaël Kakuta, Adel Taarabt, Nolan Roux, Adil Hermach, Raphaël Varane, Serge Aurier, Kévin Monnet-Paquet, Samba Sow, David Pollet, and Steven-Joseph Monroe are former Academy players of RC Lens.



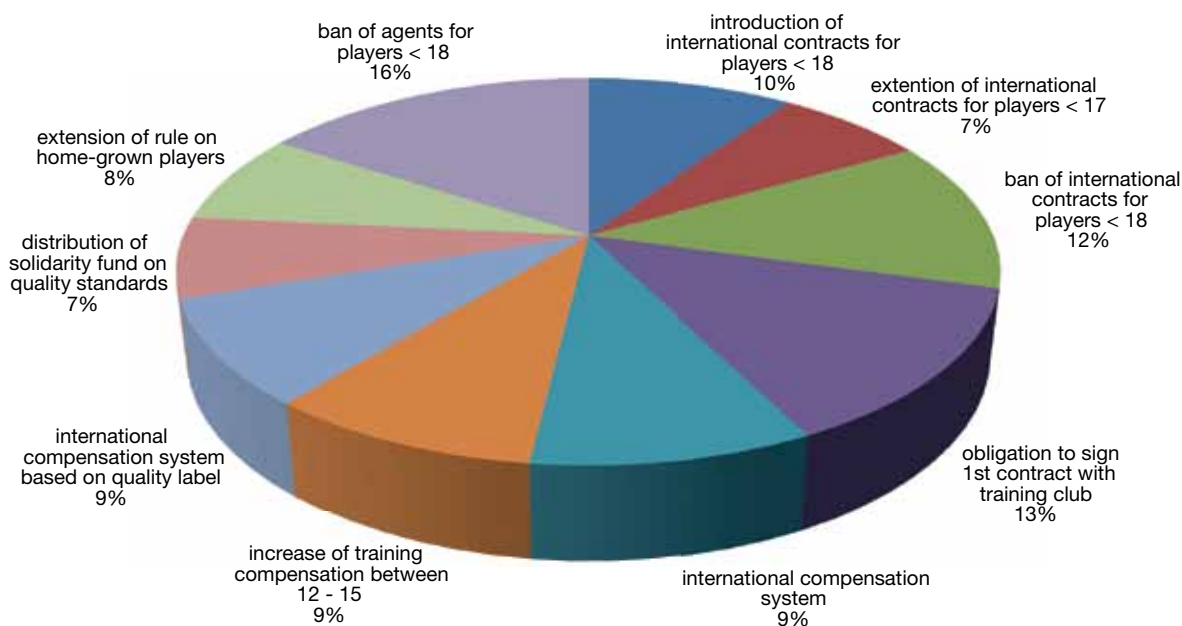
Georgi Schennikov,
PFC CSKA Moskva Youth Academy

PROTECTION MEASURES

Importance of protection measures (Top 3)



Most important protection measures



Protection measures

- Top 4 most important measures to protect minors and training clubs:
 - ban of agents for players < 18
 - obligation to sign 1st contract with training club
 - ban of international transfers for players < 18
 - introduction of international contracts for < 18
- Ban of agents for players younger than 18 has been pushed forward most frequently as protection measure number 1

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

All FC Bayern München junior teams are equipped with the same equipment as that of the professional teams. All youth teams wear the same Adidas uniforms as the professional team with the only difference being a 'Junior Team' logo, designed by Karl-Heinz Rummenigge himself, on the sleeve where the first team bares the 'Bundesliga' logo.



Gylfi Thor Sigurðsson,
FH Hafnarfjörður Youth Academy

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As is clear from this Report, ECA members all have interesting and at times contrasting approaches to youth development. Depending on a club's history, culture, location, size and financial situation the approach can be varied. Despite the differences that exist, all it seems, attach real importance to the role of youth development in ensuring their future success both on and off the pitch. Through this Report, we have created a detailed mapping exercise revealing the true extent of the approaches that exist from all four corners of Europe. By highlighting the different models, clubs can learn from each other and take on board the aspects from one another, which they believe will best suit and enhance their own particular model. This Report is a perfect example of what ECA stands for; namely for clubs to work together and share their experiences and know-how to help the game progress. Through this Report, we believe we have contributed in a small but important way in better understanding youth development and its centrality in meeting the challenges that the game faces in ensuring its future prosperity.

Outlined below are a set of key factors and recommendations that clubs would be advised to consider and integrate into their Youth Academy Programs based on a detailed examination of each of the case studies included in the Report along with the club cases that can be downloaded and the responses received via the Youth Survey.

1 A CLEAR VISION FOR THE YOUTH ACADEMY IS PARAMOUNT

Nurturing young talent, developing future stars requires long-term vision, constant work and patience. The club's vision and mission and the perseverance in pursuing the ultimate goal are the key to successful solutions. It is not only a question of size and budget; it is a question of spirit and belief.

2 INVOLVE THE HEAD OF THE YOUTH ACADEMY IN THE TECHNICAL HEART/BOARD OF THE CLUB

In half of the clubs who participated in the ECA Youth Survey, the youth academy is represented on the Executive Board. This percentage should be higher. The presence of the head of the youth academy on the club's Executive Board underlines the importance of youth development and guarantees communication and adequate linkage between youth academy and first team management.

3 INVESTING IN THE YOUTH ACADEMY BRINGS FINANCIAL BENEFITS

It makes sense to invest in youth development because with an efficient youth academy the clubs save money on transfers and inflated salaries. A greater top-down investment from the club to the youth academy is to be encouraged, since the costs of investment will offer a return, not only financially, but also in terms of players' loyalty, identification with the club and its supporters' base.

4 BALANCE BETWEEN WINNING GAMES AND PLAYERS' DEVELOPMENT

Today's football has become more brain-focused, requiring more awareness from the players. Players are the tacticians for the 90 minutes of a game and managers request from them a particular ability to create the space, evaluate the dangers, and anticipate the development of the game. This is where the

work of youth academies is vital. Most managers consider that even though results will always remain a critical factor of success, the development of the individuals is the most valuable one at Youth Level.

5 FOCUS ON THE TRANSITION OF PLAYERS

The transition of players from youth to senior level is critical in terms of where the value is for clubs: if the actual facilities or coaching offer prestige, it is the players' transition which guarantees results. The ultimate success for the academy is to see its graduates play for the club's senior team. Indeed, the number of players who progress to the senior level is the real indicator of a successful programme.

6 FOSTER COACHES' TECHNICAL AND MOTIVATIONAL SKILLS

There is more to success than the number of pitches, top-quality fitness or changing rooms, accommodation blocks or full-sized indoor halls that are at disposal of the players and coaches. The competence of the academy director, the quality of the coaching staff and coaching program are keys to success and offer young players every opportunity to evolve. And what is of even more importance is the intangible fabric of the academy – its people, its environment and its spirit.

7 FOCUS ON QUALITY RATHER THAN QUANTITY

It is not be all and end all to only look at the number of players 'produced' – it is equally important to look at the quality. More does not necessarily mean better; we do not obtain better quality by having more players.

8 INCREASE SCOUTING EFFICIENCY

A successful recruitment policy and its implementation through a well-equipped scouting department, which is connected to the technical heart, is a

fundamental starting point. Investing in an efficient scouting system yields effective results in identifying future talent and ultimately limits future costs of buying a player who has already reached a high competitive level.

9 ENCOURAGE YOUNG PLAYERS TO DEVELOP, THROUGH FOOTBALL, IMPORTANT VALUES SUCH AS LOYALTY, PERSEVERANCE, FRIENDSHIP AND RESPECT

There is increasing pressure at every level for players to upgrade their performance. However, education through football brings important values such as loyalty, perseverance, friendship, sharing and respect which ultimately benefits all. These values are very important and cannot be ignored when training children to become professional players.

10 'THE FIRST TEAM PLAYS AS THE YOUTH TEAM'

Most would think the other way around but this is the recipe of the most successful European teams which base their philosophy on a close connection between their youth and senior sectors. More competitive European games at youth level are needed to build a bridge from youth to 1st team level.



APPENDIX 1: CASE STUDIES

AGE CATEGORIES OVERVIEW

AFC AJAX, NETHERLANDS	220 PLAYERS IN DE TOEKOMST ACADEMY	
	U9 (F)	10 players, 1 keeper
	U10 (E3)	10 players
	U10/11 (E2)	8 players
	U10 - U12	57 players (E1 - D2 - D1)
	U13 - U15	52 players (C2 - C1)
	U11 (E1)	15 players
	U12 (D2)	17 players
	U13 (D1)	17 players
	U16 (B2)	19 players
	U17 (B1)	21 players
	U18 (A2)	21 players
	U19 (A1)	18 players
	U20	14 players
	U21	24 players
ARSENAL FC, ENGLAND	176 PLAYERS IN ARSENAL FC ACADEMY	
	9 - 16 years	131 players
	17 - 18 year	25 players
	19 - 21 years	20 players
	U9	18 players (8 years old)
	U10	15 players (9 years old)
	U11	17 players (10 years old)
	U12	17 players (11 years old)
	U13	11 players (12 years old)
	U14	20 players (13 years old)
	U15	15 players (14 years old)
	U16	13 players (15 years old)
	U17	24 players (15-16 years old)
	U20	24 players (17-20 years old)
FC BARCELONA, SPAIN	250 PLAYERS IN FC BARCELONA ACADEMY	
	U9	60 players Pre-Benjamin (U8) / Benjamin C-D
	U10 - U12	48 players Benjamin A-B
	U13 - U 15	60 players Alevin A-B / Alevin C-D / Infantil A-B
	U16	20 players Cadete A-B
	U17	22 players
	U18	22 players
FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN, GERMANY	185 PLAYERS IN FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN'S JUNIOR TEAM	
	A1 Team	South Regional League (ages 17-18)
	B1 Team	South Bavarian League (ages 15-16)
	B2 Team (ages 15-16)	County League A Teams (ages 17-18)
	C1 Team (age 14)	County League B Teams (ages 15-16)
	C2 Team (age 13)	District League C1 Teams (age 14)
	D1 Team (age 12)	County League C Teams (ages 13-14)
	D2 Team (age 11)	County League D Teams (ages 12-13)
	E1 Team (age 10)	E1 Teams (age 10)
	E2 Team (age 9)	E1 Teams (age 10)
	F1 & F2 Teams	F1 & F2 Teams (ages 7-8)

FC INTERNAZIONALE MILANO, ITALY	440 PLAYERS IN SCUOLE CALCIO INTER
	U11 61 players Pulcini
	U12 26 players Esordienti
	U14 46 players Giovanissimi Regional A e B
	U15 25 players Giovanissimi Nazionali
	U16 22 players Allievi Regionali
	U17 23 players Allievi Nazionali
	U20 22 players in Primavera
FC LEVADIA TALLINN, ESTONIA	300 PLAYERS IN JALGPALLIKOOL
	F Youth (2004-2005) – 1 team, not playing in the youth league
	E2 Youth (2003) – 1 team
	E1 Youth (2002) – 1 team
	D2 Youth (2001) – 1 team
	D1 Youth (2000) – 1 team
	C2 Youth (1999) – 1 team
	C1 Youth (1998) – 2 teams
	B2 Youth (1997) – 1 team
	U17 Elite League – 1 team
	U19 Elite League – 1 team
	Reserve teams FC Levadia II and FC Levadia III
	Girls' A youth (1993-1995) – 1 team
	Girls' C youth (1998-1999) – 1 team
NK DINAMO ZAGREB, CROATIA	205 PLAYERS IN NK DINAMO ZAGREB
	U8 12 players (7 years old)
	U9 15 players (8 years old)
	U10 15 players (9 years old)
	U11 15 players (10 years old)
	U12 18 players (11 years old)
	U13 18 players (12 years old)
	U14 20 players (13 years old)
	U15 20 players (14 years old)
	U16 20 players (15 years old)
	U17 26 players (15-16 years old)
	U19 26 players (17-18 years old)
RC LENS, FRANCE	200 PLAYERS IN RC LENS ACADEMY
	U9 18 players (8 years old)
	U10 19 players (9 years old)
	U11 21 players (10 years old)
	U12 23 players (11 years old)
	U13 21 players (12 years old)
	U14 20 players (13 years old)
	U15 21 players (14 years old)
	U16 20 players (15 years old)
	U17 18 players (15-16 years old)
	U19 19 players (17-18 years old)
R. STANDARD DE LIÈGE, BELGIUM	227 PLAYERS IN R. STANDARD DE LIÈGE
	U7 12 players (5-6 years old)
	U8 22 players (7 years old)
	U9 24 players (8 years old)
	U10 23 players (9 years old)
	U11 17 players (10 years old)
	U12 17 players (11 years old)
	U13 18 players (12 years old)
	U14 17 players (13 years old)
	U15 18 players (14 years old)
	U16 17 players (15 years old)
	U17 17 players (15-16 years old)
	U19 25 players (17-18 years old)
SPORTING CLUBE DE PORTUGAL, PORTUGAL	340 PLAYERS IN SPORTING CLUBE DE PORTUGAL
	U7/U13 200 players (11 teams)
	U14/U15 65 players (3 teams)
	U16/17 50 players (2 teams)
	U18/U19 25 players (1 team)

APPENDIX 2: CASE STUDIES

YOUTH DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

AFC AJAX, NETHERLANDS	<p>Employees – 40 including coaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wheel “Onderbouw” (age group 7–12), with a Technical Manager • wheel “Middenbouw” (age group 13–16) with a Technical Manager • wheel “Bovenbouw” (age group 17–20) with a Technical Manager • wheel “Operations” which takes care of all the administration at the academy • wheel Technical Management which consists of the three technical managers plus a liaison between the First Team and the academy which protects Ajax’s culture (Dennis Bergkamp) <p>Coaches – 13 There are special coaches for each age category doing specific training (dribbling, individual, gymnastics); A doctor, dietician, six masseurs and physiotherapists, three medical assistants. Teachers – 12. The school takes children from the ages of 12-13.</p>
ARSENAL FC, ENGLAND	<p>Employees – 22 (Full-time including six former Arsenal FC players) and 50 (Part-time)</p> <p>Coaches – 18</p>
FC BARCELONA, SPAIN	<p>Employees – 110 including coaches</p> <p>Coaches – 26</p>
FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN, GERMANY	<p>Employees – 100; some of them are only involved with the Youth Department.</p> <p>Youth General Director runs the academy on a day-to-day basis. Youth Sport Director. Youth Match Management. Head of Scouting.</p> <p>Coaches – 22 TBC</p>
FC INTERNAZIONALE MILANO, ITALY	<p>Employees – 80 (Full-time) including coaches</p> <p>General Manager. Works as a supervisor and is the link between daily operations and the Board of Directors. Head of Technical department (Chief-trainer). Runs the academy on a day-to-day basis</p> <p>Coaches – 11</p> <p>Assistants – 11 in 11 age categories (from U9); Team managers – 17, working on the administration of each age category; Doctors – 5; Physiotherapists – 11, one in each age category; Five doctors and 11 physiotherapists.</p>
FC LEVADIA TALLINN, ESTONIA	<p>Employees – 17 including coaches</p> <p>coaches – 13</p>
NK DINAMO ZAGREB, CROATIA	<p>Employees – 33 including coaches</p> <p>Coaches – 21</p>
RC LENS, FRANCE	<p>Employees – 20 including coaches</p> <p>Director Administrators – 3 Education officer – 1, Supervisors –10, Technical staff –10 (cooking, laundry, pitches), 4 physiotherapists and doctors. 21 coaches and educators (¼ of the professional staff are former players of the Youth Academy)</p>
R. STANDARD DE LIÈGE, BELGIUM	<p>Employees – 42 including coaches</p> <p>Technical Director Youth Academy Administrative Director</p> <p>Coaches – 14</p>
SPORTING CP, PORTUGAL	<p>Employees – 31 including coaches</p> <p>Coaches – 34</p>



APPENDIX 3: CASE STUDIES

PLAYER RECRUITMENT AND SCOUTING OVERVIEW

AFC AJAX

Players are scouted from all over the Netherlands with the help of about 70 scouts (four are professional scouts and the rest are volunteers). The scouts attend games on weekends and observe young football players in amateur clubs. The scouts watch potential players for several months and even years. Recommended players are also observed by professional scouts from the club, coaches and, sometimes, even by the Director of the Academy.

Given the fact that the Netherlands is a relatively small country, the club can afford to bring young players from anywhere in the country without the need to house them in a club residence. The club also targets several key international markets such as Scandinavia, Belgium and Brazil. The African continent is covered with the help of a feeder club in South Africa called Ajax Cape Town, to which the best players from the continent gravitate. From there, they then potentially make the leap to Amsterdam. This process is naturally limited by national legislation in the Netherlands, whereby any non-EU player must have a minimum salary of € 520k to be able to sign-up professionally.

Contracts

Once players reach an age when they can sign contracts, they sign up to the club's fixed youth contract system with a basic starting salary of € 20 k in the first year. However, it is expected that the best players will progress very quickly and it is quite usual for an U17 or U18 player to reach the first team very quickly, if enough promise is shown. AFC Ajax, generally, is not too particular about players: if there is a problem or a player wants to leave it will not raise any objections, because there is the feeling that there is enough talent to develop. There is, on average, a 30% drop-out rate per year, per age group. However, one key statistic suggests that, in total, training across all age groups is highly regularised, with sessions always following a similar pattern and focus on technical development. The content is left to coaches and is not dictated by the club. The fact that the vast majority of coaches have themselves been top-level players with AFC Ajax and been through the system ensures a high degree of continuity. Currently AFC Ajax has some 60 players on professional contracts.

ARSENAL FC

The scouting system is very important for Arsenal FC's youth development. The scouting programme is under the command of Liam Brady. Since there is intense competition amongst clubs from the greater London area, the aim of

the club is to select the best young players before they are recruited by other clubs. In several cases, the senior scout has recruited promising young players. Bob Arber (boys 13-16) and Mark Ridgway (boys 9-12 + Development Centres) are responsible for the youth scouting. Negotiations between two English clubs regarding young players are often very tough and transfer fees can be inflated. English football lacks systematic rules for the transfer of youngsters and often clubs are unable to come to an agreement, although such agreements are common in other European countries. The London area is covered by 14 professional clubs and with the added problem of tough rules on transfers, it is very difficult to purchase English-based players. For these reasons, Arsenal FC is very active in purchasing players from overseas.

Arsenal FC has an extensive scouting network and a number of senior team scouts live in the countries where they are active. Arsenal FC has no strict criteria for selecting players. Selection is based on the choices of the highly-experienced scouts.

FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN

For players under the age of 15, FC Bayern München only scouts for players regionally (within a two- to three-hour driving radius of the club). However, given the great appeal of the Club, players from a young age come in for training from not only Munich, but from all around Bavaria.

Before FC Bayern München started the Talent Days, most of the young players were recruited from the closest area, that of Säbener Straße. The recruitment system lacked real structure and many players were accepted on recommendations. During a site visit to AFC Ajax, scouts of FC Bayern München were inspired by the concept of trial days at which players are selected by a club during one or two days of competition. Since then, players are selected for FC Bayern München teams according to criteria which are applied to specific age groups.

During Talent Days, about 500 children from eight to ten years are observed by scouts from Bayern. However, Talent Days are not a competition or tournament as such. Young players play with or without a goalkeeper and without a dead-ball line in order to reproduce, as far as possible, conditions of a random game. The main objective is to see players playing for pleasure rather than for a trophy.

So far, about 7000 young players have taken part in Bayern Talent Days. On average, the Bayern staff offers a place at the

academy for six to eight players per Talent Day. Currently, out of 185 players in the FC Bayern junior team, there are about 20 who were discovered on Talent Days.

FC BARCELONA

The scouting department is centralised and operates between the professional and youth sides, with many of the coaches also doubling up as scouts. Unlike many other clubs, the scouting department at FC Barcelona is only responsible for evaluating the player. The decision to sign them up is taken by coaches, with negotiations being conducted by those responsible for the business side of football. There is also a methodology department that works with all coaches at the club on their technical development, so that the ideology and the style of play is maintained, giving consistency throughout the structure.

FC Barcelona starts recruiting players at the age of six or seven years. The club has agreements with 15 local clubs in Catalonia who help in scouting for players. In return, FC Barcelona provides these satellite clubs with investment and advice. FC Barcelona also runs tournaments with teams that support FC Barcelona, known as the *peñas*. This helps to build excellent relations with supporting clubs and also can act as a scouting system.

FC INTERNAZIONALE MILANO

The Head of scouting is Pierluigi Casiraghi who is a very talented scout and has already achieved promising results. If he has a tip on a player for the A team, he cooperates with the A-team coach and if he has a tip on a player for the academy, he cooperates with the Head of the Technical department (academy chief trainer).

FC Internazionale Milano's scouting is focused more on countries where Inter is particularly attractive, such as Central Europe, the Balkans and Romania.

FC LEVADIA TALLINN

In Estonia there is a rule which is like the pre-Bosman situation in Europe. At the end of the player's contract, if another club which wants to offer the player a contract, the new club has to pay the equivalent of at least 12-months' salary to the former club. This naturally reduces the movement of players within the country. Nevertheless, the minimum compensation is € 300 and the maximum remains € 3500. Therefore, scouting for players under the age of 17 does not really exist; the initial scouting takes place after the age of 17 but occurs mainly among players who are under 19.

Currently, the Club has several young players in its first team who have been with it from the very beginning. Igor Morozov, Artjom Artjunin, Igor Subbotin, Aleksandr Kulinitš, Martin Ustaal, Trevor Elhi, Andreas Raudsepp have all come through Club's ranks.

Transfer revenue is one of the main sources of income for the club (excluding the owner's funding) and scouting is very important. There are some youth players who have made a promising debut: Nikita Andreev, Sander Puri, Dmitri Kruglov (FK Lokomotiv Moskva, FK Rostov) or Tarmo Kink (PFC Spartak Moskva, Middlesbrough FC).

NK DINAMO ZAGREB

This youth academy is one of the best in the country and most probably in the entire Balkans. In Croatia this is partially due to the fact that the country lacks solid competitors and only HNK Hajduk Split is likely to attract players from the coast and southern part of Croatia. NK Dinamo Zagreb is particularly active in Northern Croatia and in Bosnia.

Scouting is supported by a database created by NK Dinamo Zagreb. This software compiles various data such as the ID of the player and the player's pitch statistics such as the number of passes, his speed over 100m, etc. Due in part to the summer camps, the club has managed to find promising players and bring them to Zagreb.

RC LENS

The scouting system is based on a long-term information network. A team of scouts observes matches all over France and Belgium. A match report is prepared within 48 hours of each match being observed. In general, five reports per year are made about the players of particular interest who are being observed before the players are tested in the academy. RC Lens also works in collaboration with three clubs in the region.

R. STANDARD DE LIÈGE

R. Standard de Liège has a team of qualified and experienced scouts to observe and assess talented young players. The organisation of its scouting is divided into regional, national and international observation areas.

There are seven scouts responsible for professional players and the top youth players in mainly Belgium, Holland and France but also covering parts of Africa and South America. There are 15 scouts who cover specific individuals in Belgium and another nine are scouts at provincial selections. There are five others who scout football academies.

SPORTING CLUBE DE PORTUGAL

Sporting Clube de Portugal's strategy is based upon having a wide range of recruitment, both in terms of quantity and quality, which will allow it to have a higher probability of developing players capable of being integrated into the main team and playing for the greatest European clubs. SCP has nearly 30 schools that are already operating in Portugal at which there are over 5000 children wearing the green and white stripes and learning to play the sport.

With academy programmes in Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the USA and Canada, the club is expanding the reach of its youth development programme. The programme includes coaching coaches, training players and inviting elite players to Portugal to continue the process. The concept is to develop and recruit talent from beyond its boundaries and give it the chance to develop the players within its academies. As is the general European trend, there is an internationalisation of the SCP youth academies with some training camps scheduled in the USA, China, India and Poland.

“A big thank you to all ECA members who participated in the ECA Report on Youth Academies in Europe.”



ECA Club cases

- AFC Ajax, Netherlands
- Arsenal FC, England
- FC Barcelona, Spain
- FC Bayern München, Germany
- FC Internazionale Milano, Italy
- FC Levadia Tallinn, Estonia
- NK Dinamo Zagreb, Croatia
- RC Lens, France
- R. Standard de Liège, Belgium
- Sporting Clube de Portugal, Portugal
- Beşiktaş JK, Turkey
- FC Basel 1893, Switzerland
- FC Honka, Finland
- FC Schalke 04, Germany
- FC Shakhtar Donetsk, Ukraine
- FK Teplice, Czech Republic
- Glentoran FC, Northern Ireland
- Heart of Midlothian, Scotland
- Helsingborgs IF, Sweden
- Panathinaikos FC, Greece

ECA Youth Survey

- SK Rapid Wien (AUT)
- Club Brugge KV (BEL)
- R. Standard de Liège (BEL)
- RSC Anderlecht (BEL)
- NK Široki Brijeg (BIH)
- FK Sarajevo (BIH)
- FC BATE Borisov (BLR)
- PFC Litex Lovech (BUL)
- PFC Levski Sofia (BUL)
- NK Dinamo Zagreb (CRO)
- HNK Hajduk Split (CRO)
- Omonia Nicosia (CYP)
- Anorthosis Famagusta FC (CYP)
- APOEL FC (CYP)
- SK Slavia Praha (CZE)
- FK Teplice (CZE)
- FC Viktoria Plzeň (CZE)

- FC Slovan Liberec (CZE)
- Brøndby IF (DEN)
- FC København (DEN)
- Aalborg BK (DEN)
- Manchester United FC (ENG)
- Manchester City FC (ENG)
- Arsenal FC (ENG)
- Tottenham Hotspur FC (ENG)
- Liverpool FC (ENG)
- Fulham FC (ENG)
- FC Levadia Tallinn (EST)
- FC Honka (FIN)
- Olympique Lyonnais (FRA)
- Olympique de Marseille (FRA)
- RC Lens (FRA)
- LOSC Lille Métropole (FRA)
- FC Dinamo Tbilisi (GEO)
- FC Schalke 04 (GER)
- BV Borussia Dortmund (GER)
- Hamburger SV (GER)
- Eintracht Frankfurt (GER)
- FC Bayern München (GER)
- Panathinaikos FC (GRE)
- Olympiacos FC (GRE)
- Debreceni VSC (HUN)
- FH Hafnarfjörður (ICE)
- Maccabi Haifa FC (ISR)
- SSC Napoli (ITA)
- UC Sampdoria (ITA)
- FC Internazionale Milano (ITA)
- ACF Fiorentina (ITA)
- AC Milan (ITA)
- FK Ekranas (LTU)
- F91 Dudelange (LUX)
- FC Sheriff (MDA)
- FC Rabotnički (MKD)
- FK Budućnost Podgorica (MNE)
- AZ Alkmaar (NED)
- SC Heerenveen (NED)
- AFC Ajax (NED)
- PSV Eindhoven (NED)
- Linfield FC (NIR)
- Glentoran FC (NIR)
- Viking FK (NOR)
- Rosenborg BK (NOR)
- KKS Lech Poznań (POL)
- Wisła Kraków SA (POL)
- FC Porto (POR)
- Club Sport Marítimo (POR)
- Sporting Clube de Portugal (POR)
- Sport Lisboa e Benfica (POR)
- CFR 1907 Cluj (ROM)
- FC Zenit St Petersburg (RUS)
- PFC CSKA Moskva (RUS)
- Heart of Midlothian FC (SCO)
- Rangers FC (SCO)
- Celtic FC (SCO)
- Aberdeen FC (SCO)
- NK Maribor (SVN)
- Real Madrid CF (SPA)
- FC Barcelona (SPA)
- Sevilla FC (SPA)
- Club Atlético de Madrid (SPA)
- Valencia CF (SPA)
- Villarreal CF (SPA)
- FK Partizan (SRB)
- MŠK Žilina (SVK)
- IFK Göteborg (SWE)
- Helsingborgs IF (SWE)
- FC Zürich (SWI)
- FC Basel 1893 (SWI)
- BSC Young Boys (SWI)
- FC Thun (SWI)
- Galatasaray SK (TUR)
- Fenerbahçe SK (TUR)
- Beşiktaş JK (TUR)
- Trabzonspor AS (TUR)
- Bursaspor Kulübü (TUR)
- FC Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR)

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