

# 2017 FIFPRO GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT REPORT

Working Conditions  
in Professional  
Women's Football



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“

IT'S IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE GIVING BACK TO THE SPORT AND PUSHING WOMEN'S FOOTBALL ALONG TO GIVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO THE NEXT GENERATION AFTER US.

Alex Morgan,  
USA



# 2017 FOOTBALL EMPLOYMENT REPORT

## INSIDE

### ABOUT FIFPRO

FIFPro is the worldwide representative organisation for all professional footballers; more than 60,000 players in total, male and female. The world players' union has 63 national players' associations as its members. Twelve other player associations are affiliated to FIFPro.

To guarantee that the collective voice of players will be heard, FIFPro has created a measure that allows female players to become direct members of FIFPro if they cannot join a player union in their country or if their national union is not a member of FIFPro.

### WHO GETS COUNTED?

FIFPro's remit is to represent professional football players. However, the elite women's game is not yet professionalised in many corners of the world, even if women often train and compete under professional regimens and expectations. This survey is aimed at all women competing at the top of the game in their respective countries, whether they are officially recognised as professionals or not.

Over 3,600 female footballers<sup>1</sup> responded to the survey. These included women playing in a country's highest national league<sup>2</sup> and women playing for their national team<sup>3</sup>.

Female players who earn very little income from their football but have written contracts and can still cover their footballing expenses are 'professionals' according to the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players<sup>4</sup>. However, in many places, female players are treated as amateurs despite making 'professional' commitments, meaning that they are not afforded the appropriate benefits and protections. Likewise, many elite female players are not given the appropriate benefits even when they are treated as professionals.

<sup>1</sup> A total of 3,295 were analysed once questionnaires with missing key data and geographical outliers were excluded.

<sup>2</sup> Female players were also included if they were playing professionally in a second league.

<sup>3</sup> National team could be under-17, under-20 or senior team.

<sup>4</sup> "A professional is a player who has a written contract with a club and is paid more for his (sic) footballing activity than the expenses he (sic) effectively incurs. All other players are considered to be amateurs".

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# WELCOME

## THEO VAN SEGGELEN

FIFPro Secretary General

## CAROLINE JÖNSSON

Chair, FIFPro Women's Football Committee

**FIFPro is proud to present here the first global study of working conditions in women's football. Our national member unions have helped us survey nearly 3,600 players in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas.**

Our aim was to learn as much as possible about a wide range of issues across the highest women's leagues through the eyes of elite female players worldwide. They confided in FIFPro, and their stories tell of their collective struggle for their rights. Together, they reveal the issues they have to deal with on their own: doubts about their status, discrimination, and the daily struggle to make a living out of the game. For too long, the term semi-professional has served as an excuse to treat women players in a substandard manner. It has been a reason to give them worse rights than other workers.

Flicking through these pages, you will find the results of interviews with some of the players. We will continue having these discussions through in-depth focus groups. The data in this report can serve as a platform for FIFPro to pursue change together with football stakeholders.

The bottom line is that we must pave the way for decent and secure jobs for women as professional footballers. This career path for women is only now becoming a viable option. The fact that this opportunity has arrived so late is unacceptable. It shows how football has fallen far behind other sectors of society when it comes to gender equality.



The bottom line is that we must pave the way for decent and secure jobs for women as professional footballers.

Yet, we know that football could be leading the way. In other instances, football has been able to take initiatives ahead of time. It has been able to shape attitudes.

For us, one of the most reassuring findings from the survey was the fact that the perceived level of solidarity amongst female players is high. That is to say, the foundation for positive change is already here. We all have a responsibility now to support this move for change.

This report comes at a critical moment. It aims to better understand the needs of professional female football players, and to give space to the voices of a silent majority.

Women players know what it means to be treated as sidelined elite footballers. They need to get the structures in place to support their own rights and the rights of the next generation. It starts with recognition. And then job security. Players should, like all employees, feel valued and secure in their workplace.

They should have adequate rest, be well cared for by medical staff, and expect protection against discrimination from fans, clubs and federations. They also need support with childcare and maternity leave so that they are not forced to make unfair choices about their careers. The findings contained in this report confirm that much work still needs to be done

to ensure female players are given the same rights as other workers. We believe this data can be a turning point for women's football, and a platform for FIFPro to pursue future negotiations with football's leading authorities.

Today, much of the potential for the future growth of our beautiful game sits in women's football. But that growth will remain potential, and stay unrealised if players are not given their rights and protections.

Let's make this the start of a new beginning, a turning point for women's football, and show how our sport can be a game-changer. This year has been a milestone for the collective voices of women's football. We have seen women's teams around the world demanding their rights and better working conditions with the support of players' unions. After decades of marginalisation, women footballers are now being heard.

THEO VAN SEGGELEN  
FIFPro Secretary General

CAROLINE JÖNSSON  
Chair, FIFPro Women's  
Football Committee

# CASE STUDY

## THE AVERAGE GLOBAL PLAYER

We are proud to present the first ever global study of working conditions in women's professional football. These findings are a reference point for the current state of the game and highlight the realities that professional players face in their daily lives across the women's game.

### AVERAGE AGE

**69%** OF PLAYERS ARE BETWEEN 18 AND 23 YEARS OLD

### EDUCATION LEVEL

**84%** OF PLAYERS HAVE FINISHED SCHOOL EDUCATION

30% HAVE A UNIVERSITY DEGREE

### AVERAGE CONTRACT

**12 MONTHS**  
IS THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF A PLAYER CONTRACT

47% HAVE NO EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

### AVERAGE MONTHLY SALARY

**\$600** IS THE AVERAGE SALARY OF THE GLOBAL FEMALE PLAYER

50% OF PLAYERS GET NO PAY  
ALMOST TWO-THIRDS OF THOSE WHO DO RECEIVE  
A SALARY EARN LESS THAN \$600 PER MONTH

### DUAL CAREERS

**46%** OF PLAYERS COMBINE THEIR FOOTBALL CAREER WITH STUDY

30% COMBINE THEIR FOOTBALL CAREER WITH ANOTHER JOB

### SHORT CAREERS

**90%** OF PLAYERS SAY THEY MIGHT QUIT FOOTBALL EARLY

REASONS FOR QUITTING EARLY INCLUDE STARTING A FAMILY, AND FINANCIAL OR CAREER REASONS

# INTO THE LIGHTS

## Guaranteeing the rights of female players and growing the women's game

**Women footballers need viable paths to careers as professional players. They must be given basic rights as workers, including decent pay and conditions. This is critical not only for the players, but also to unleash the game-changing potential of women's football.**

Women's football around the world is currently enjoying strong and consistent growth. The career of a professional footballer is now, finally, starting to become a viable option for women. The delay in these opportunities is the result of the unjust suppression of the women's game for much of the last century. While progress is being made in the women's game, stable and secure jobs remain rare, and major challenges persist.

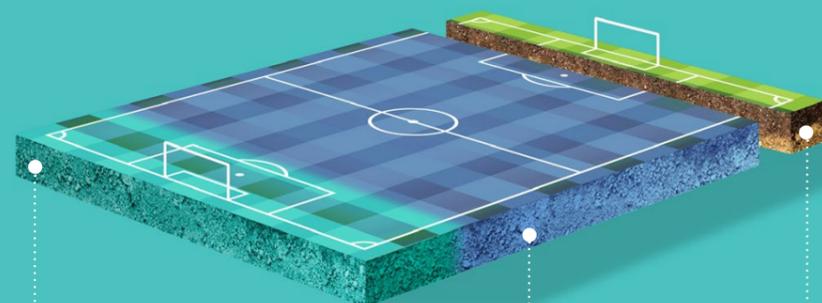
### The shape of the women's game

The women's global game exists on a spectrum. A relatively small group of recognised professionals sit at one end, and a relatively large group of amateurs sit at the opposite end. Between these two groups, in the large middle area where many female players fall, there is tremendous uncertainty. The lines in the middle between professional and amateur overlap and blend together, and these players are often deemed 'semi-professionals'.

This middle area is problematic because many players who qualify as professionals (according to the FIFA Regulations) do not make a living from their football. Likewise, many

players are labelled amateurs although they play under professional conditions. Both these conditions harm the development of the game.

There is fragmentation and variability along the spectrum. Yet almost all players, regardless of where they are, face constant pressure to extend their careers. Their precarious working conditions are characterised by an underlying lack of stability and security. In other words, even at the 'professional' end of the spectrum, players do not always enjoy dignified and secure working conditions.



#### THE AMATEUR SIDE OF THE SPECTRUM

is generally characterised by: no contracts, no pay, and usually no protections or rights at all (see the FIFA Regulations' definition of amateur).

#### THE MIDDLE SECTION IS BLURRED TERRITORY

It is somewhere between professional and amateur. It is filled by a large group of players whose employment status is mostly undefined. Its parameters and endpoints overlap and blend into both the professional and amateur ends of the spectrum. Some players have contracts, some do not, and many just don't know. There are different types of contracts, there is no standardisation, and only some offer pay. It is often irregular, unstable and insecure.

#### THE PROFESSIONAL END OF THE SPECTRUM

is formed by a small group of recognised professional players. Most - but not all - of them enjoy stable employment conditions. There is significant fragmentation even within this group.

## Why this report?

**Stereotypes and misinformation characterise public perceptions of professional female footballers. Female players have long been invisible to the wider public. There is little data on their experiences, and there are few references on which to draw. The painful lesson we are learning is that if their stories are hidden, it is easier to deny them their rights.**

**There have only been a few studies about female footballers, like the 2014 FIFA Women's Survey. But the 2017 FIFPro Global Employment Report: Working Conditions in Professional Women's Football is the most far-reaching survey of its kind and the largest data collection on working conditions in women's football. This report is part of FIFPro's research series on employment conditions in professional football. It is the first of its kind with a focus on women's football.**

**FIFPro and its member unions recognise that data is a powerful tool: it can help make female players more visible, and it can help protect them. This research is a comprehensive analysis of the conditions female players face in the top leagues worldwide. It offers crucial information that can be used to understand the challenges and develop solutions. It can also reveal broader issues that have implications for all levels of the game.**

**The purpose of this report is to create measurable and comparable evidence in order to:**

### Inform

the industry, public and policy makers with reliable data to better understand the specific nature of a career in professional football via first-hand feedback from the players

### Protect

the rights of players as citizens and employees by raising awareness of their experiences

### Improve

the labour conditions of professional players worldwide by providing a basis for decision making

### Monitor

changes in employment conditions in the global football industry over time

**Football stakeholders must work together to banish stereotypes, modernise governance and free up new resources. Only when these issues are addressed will women's football truly flourish.**

Even amongst national teams, many players face substandard working conditions. Football stakeholders must work together to banish stereotypes, modernise governance and free up new resources. Only when these issues are addressed will women's football truly flourish.

Women's football should not be seen as a poor relation of men's football. To advance the women's game, football stakeholders should take an innovative and specifically-tailored approach. The evolution of women's football might even be used to guide the men's game.

These are the issues addressed in the 2017 FIFPro Global Employment Report. It is a comprehensive and far-reaching survey analysing an area that has seen little research until now: the labour conditions of professional female players in the world's most popular team sport.

#### Female players must be provided with:

- decent jobs
- proper training environments
- meaningful competitions

These conditions are essential for players and the healthy growth of the game from a sporting and an economic perspective. Unless they are met, the game will lose the idols and stars around which it needs to grow. Cultivating these conditions means:

**INVESTING** in professional infrastructure, from the physical and psychological training environments to marketing efforts, league structures and good governance.

**INNOVATING** with unique models for contracts, payments, prize money, sponsorship and competitions, recognising the unique context of elite female players today.

**ENSURING** minimum employment conditions and legal standards are rolled out across women's professional leagues worldwide.

**RESPONSIBILITY** for all stakeholders in international football to intervene along these core actions for the positive development of the women's game.

Action in these areas must not be about blindly seeking equality with a commercial football model that fails to put the rights of players at its core. As the women's game grows, it should preserve the many positive aspects it currently has, including strong levels of solidarity, its ability to blend careers with education, and its recognition that women footballers are more than just players.

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WOMEN'S GAME

## A story of marginalisation, resilience and passion

**Women may have played the beautiful game for as long as it has existed. From early incarnations of football during China's Han Dynasty to the British Ladies' Football Club founded in 1894.**

But football has been deeply rooted in our societies predominantly and historically as a male-defined space. A long history of gendered power imbalances in the game across geographies has meant that access to opportunities and resources for women in football from the global to local has been hampered and inhibited. It has meant that there have been long periods when the football establishment disapproved of the women's game and women participating in the sport regularly confronted forms of exclusion, discrimination and injustice.

It is critical to glance back at the evolution of the women's game over the last century in order to understand how barriers of the past are reflected and persist in the current state of women's professional football today. It is also critical to acknowledge how football today owes much to the women who kept the spirit of the game alive during those days when society looked down on their activities and to the female players who continue to persevere in the face of ongoing obstacles to the professionalization of their sport.

### A GLANCE BACK...

Women were banned from playing football in several countries during the twentieth century including Germany, Brazil, England and the Netherlands. In practical terms, these bans often prevented clubs from either founding women's sections or opening their grounds up to women's teams. Where there were no official bans, many unofficial barriers attached to cultural norms stood in the way of women's involvement in the game in many other countries. Stereotypes spread about women's football, and these still harm the development of the women's game today.

By the late 1960s, after almost half a century of bans, many national associations began lifting their restrictions on women's football. The first unofficial Women's World Cup was held in Italy in 1970: also known as Martini Rosso Cup, it was organised by the Federation of Independent European Female Football (FIEFF) and gathered seven countries. An estimated 50,000 spectators watched Denmark beat Italy in the final. Mexico hosted the second Women's World Championships the next year, again won by Denmark. It was followed by four Mundialito invitational tournaments in the 1980s in Italy.

It took until 1984 for the first official European Championship to be held, which was won by Sweden. Soon, FIFA itself became involved, organising the Women's Invitation Tournament in China in 1988. The inaugural FIFA World Cup took place in 1991, in China, and was won by the USA. The 1999 World Cup final was watched by 90,185 people at the Rose Bowl in Los Angeles, a record crowd for a women's sporting event to this day. The 1999 tournament also launched female players as global stars, like Mia Hamm.

Women's football was accepted as a discipline at the 1996 Olympic Games (the men's game was already an Olympic sport in 1900), and the 2012 Olympic Final at Wembley Stadium was seen by a crowd of 83,000.

However, the legacy of exclusion has meant that women have struggled for opportunities and remuneration in the sport. It has also made gender equality in professional football a distant reality. Women's football enjoys far less television and media coverage than men's, and as a result, much less sponsorship and other commercial revenue—at the same time one could say, women's football receives far less sponsorship, and as a result, much less media coverage and commercial revenue. This paradigm highlights the fact that all football stakeholders are implicated in this vicious cycle that has held women's football back—and thus all stakeholders must take responsibility for turning this around.

“  
There is still some discrimination around women's football. If you say that you play professional soccer to some people, they laugh. They assume you don't make any money, that it's not a real thing.”

Shea Groom, Kansas City,  
U.S. National Women's Soccer League

# COUNTRY FOCUS

## ENGLAND

In England, women's football enjoyed spectacular popularity during the First World War. The most successful team of the era was Dick, Kerr's Ladies from Preston, which pulled in a 53,000-strong crowd to one game in 1920 (with thousands more fans locked outside). That was the high point in England: as the men returned from the war, the women's game was effectively banned, with the Football Association saying it was "quite unsuitable for females".

### 1918-1920

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL GROWS AFTER WWI; 53,000 FANS ATTEND MATCH IN PRESTON

### 1921

THE FA BANS WOMEN'S FOOTBALL, SAYING THE GAME IS 'UNSUITABLE FOR FEMALES'

### 1971

FA LIFTS BAN ON WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

### 1972

FIRST OFFICIAL INTERNATIONAL MATCH

### 1991

WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE (WNL) LAUNCHED

### 1993

FA TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

### 1994

FA TAKES ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE WNL, WHICH BECOMES THE FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE

### 1998

HOPE POWELL BECOMES ENGLAND'S FIRST FULL-TIME COACH

### 2002

FOOTBALL BECOMES MOST PLAYED SPORT FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN

### 2008

FA WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE (FA WSL) IS ANNOUNCED

### 2011

FA WSL IS LAUNCHED WITH A SINGLE DIVISION OF EIGHT TEAMS

### 2014

ENGLAND PLAY FIRST MATCH AT NEW WEMBLEY IN FRONT OF A CROWD OF 45,619

### 2015

ENGLAND WIN BRONZE AT 2015 FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

### 2015-2017

RIISING NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL STARS PLAYING IN THE FA WSL

### 2017

BARONESS SUE CAMPBELL LAUNCHES FA'S STRATEGY TO DOUBLE PARTICIPATION IN WOMEN'S FOOTBALL AND DOUBLE FANS BY 2020  
ENGLAND REACH SEMI-FINALS OF UEFA WOMEN'S EURO 2017

# 11 TOP FINDINGS

## Overview

### 1 DENIAL OF PROFESSIONAL STATUS

Professional female players are not always recognised as such by football stakeholders – or even by themselves. It means they are not given the appropriate rights and protections, and don't usually ask for them either.

### 2 LEAVING THE GAME EARLY

A startling 90% of respondents gave at least one reason to consider leaving the game early, ahead of their expected retirement age.

### 3 NO PAY, LOW PAY, LATE PAY

49.5% of respondents are not paid by their clubs, and most of those paid receive low wages. More than 60% of paid players take home less than \$600 a month, only a tiny few make more than \$4,000 a month. 37% say they are paid late.

### 4 WRITTEN CONTRACTS ALL TOO RARE

Only 53% of players say they have a written contract with their club, and of these, 15% do not know what type of contract they have. At national level, only 9% of capped players say they have a written contract.

### 5 NATIONAL PRIDE CAN'T PAY THE BILLS

35% of national team players are not paid to represent their country. Of those paid, 38.5% say it is often late. It's an honour, but women should not be out of pocket to represent their nation.

### 6 PRIZE MONEY: FAIR SHARE?

66% of respondents say they are disappointed with the prize money in women's football tournaments. The prizes for men's and women's events are not equal, in both absolute terms and in terms of revenue share.

### 7 CLUB VS COUNTRY

30% of players confront clashes between club and country fixtures, a tough choice that no player should have to make. FIFA and the regional confederations need to coordinate the international match calendar with leagues.

### 8 DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

17.5% of players report gender discrimination, 5.4% report homophobia and 4.5% report racism. 3.5% say they have been sexually harassed.

### 9 WHO CARES? LITTLE SUPPORT FOR FEMALE PLAYERS WHO WANT CHILDREN

Only 2% of respondents have children, and 47% say they would leave the game early to start a family.

### 10 MATCH-FIXING HITS THE WOMEN'S GAME

The women's game is not immune to match-fixing: 5% of respondents say they have been approached to fix a match. Those paid little or late are more likely to be approached.

### 11 THE WOMEN'S GAME CAN TEACH US ABOUT DUAL CAREERS

33% say they work other jobs alongside their football. Nearly half (46%) are currently studying. This is partly because women's football pays poorly, but it also shows the sport's positive ability to nurture dual careers.

# 1 Top finding

## DENIAL AND DOUBT OF PROFESSIONAL STATUS

THE SURVEY FINDINGS REVEAL A CRITICAL MISMATCH BETWEEN HOW FEMALE PLAYERS SEE THEIR OWN PROFESSIONAL STATUS AND HOW OTHER FOOTBALL STAKEHOLDERS, INCLUDING THEIR CLUBS AND FEDERATIONS, SEE THEM. THESE DISCREPANCIES SAY A LOT ABOUT THE LACK OF STANDARDISATION ACROSS THE WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL GAME. THEY RAISE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT PLAYER STATUS, PLAYER RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS, THE SPECTRUM BETWEEN AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL, AND THE PATHWAYS FOR AMATEURS TO BECOME PROFESSIONALS.

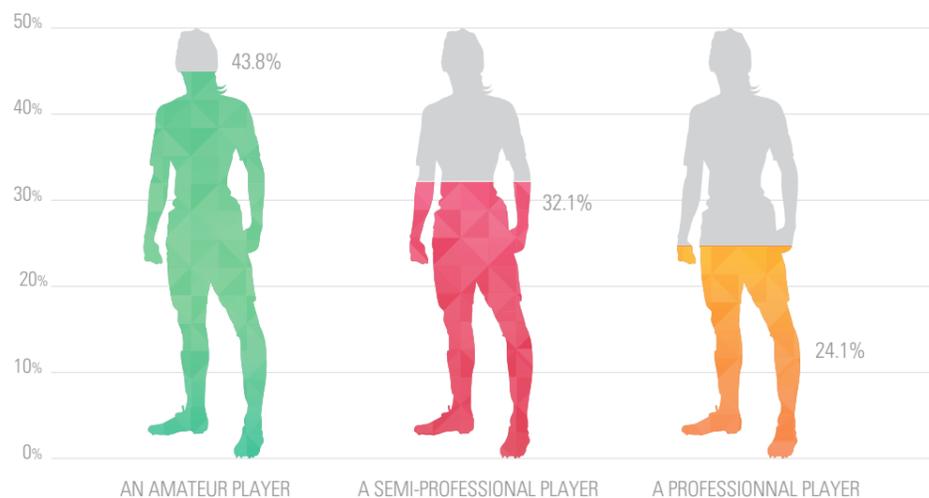
These findings add to FIFPro's support for professionalising the women's game by creating professional leagues with minimum standard contracts and protections for all female players competing in them.

FIFPro believes the challenges in identifying and categorising professional female players today can be understood by listening to these players categorise themselves. Respondents were asked whether they see themselves as a professional player, a semi-professional player or an amateur player. We found that 44% of

respondents considered themselves amateurs, 32% described themselves as semi-professionals and only 24% as professionals.

The category 'semi-professional' does not exist in FIFA Regulations. However, 'semi-professional' was offered as a response in the survey because it is a self-identifying term in the women's elite game around the world. The survey shows that about one-third of respondents see themselves as falling somewhere on the spectrum between professional and amateur.

### PERCEIVED PLAYERS' STATUS



Our findings reveal that just 18% of players are professional according to the FIFA Regulations: they meet the criteria of having a written contract and being paid more for their footballing activity than the expenses incurred. The rest, 82%, would be considered amateurs. It is important to acknowledge, however, that players may have interpreted this to mean all living expenses, as opposed to merely football expenses (the Regulations refer to the latter). This potential misinterpretation could also be tied to the notion that being a professional means living off one's football salary and nothing else. While this might be the 'football dream', it is not among the official FIFA criteria for being a professional and it should

not get in the way of players being entitled to their rights and protections.

When we applied the FIFPro working definition of a professional (players who receive income from any source for their footballing activity) to the survey sample, 60% of respondents met the terms. This is telling as we see that it is very close to the figure that emerges when we combine those who identified themselves as semi-professional with those who identified themselves as professionals. How players see their own status could be one of the strongest indicators for determining who is indeed a professional football player.

“  
If clubs want to use women players every day, they need to pay them like professionals.”

Anonymous

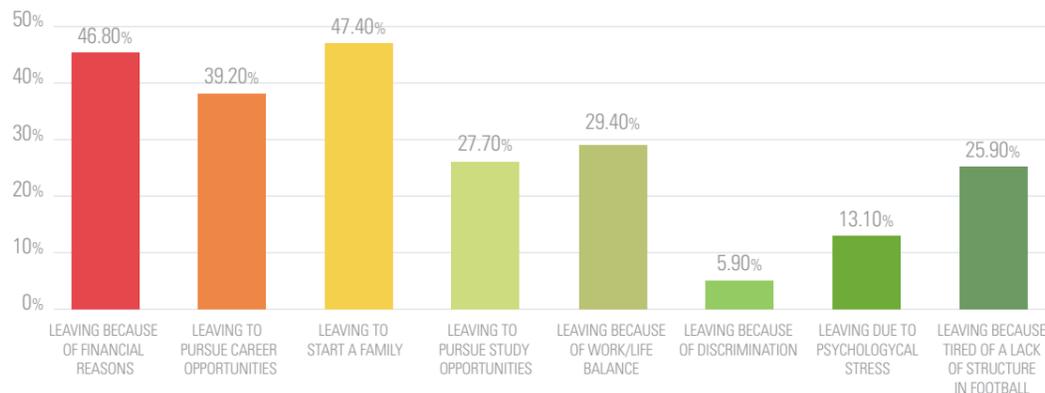
# 2 Top finding PLAYERS LEAVE THE GAME EARLY

ALL TOO OFTEN, FEMALE PLAYERS FIND THEMSELVES QUITTING THE GAME BEFORE WHAT MIGHT BE CONSIDERED THEIR PEAK. THIS IS ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES WITH THE MEN'S GAME. WHILE MEN TEND TO CONTINUE UNTIL THEIR MID-THIRTIES, OR WHEN THEY LOSE THEIR PACE AND STRENGTH AS TEAM ASSETS, WOMEN LEAVE ON AVERAGE MUCH EARLIER. POOR PAY AND FINANCIAL INSECURITY ARE AMONG THE KEY REASONS WOMEN CITE FOR LEAVING FOOTBALL, TOGETHER WITH A LACK OF SUPPORT FOR THOSE WISHING TO HAVE CHILDREN.

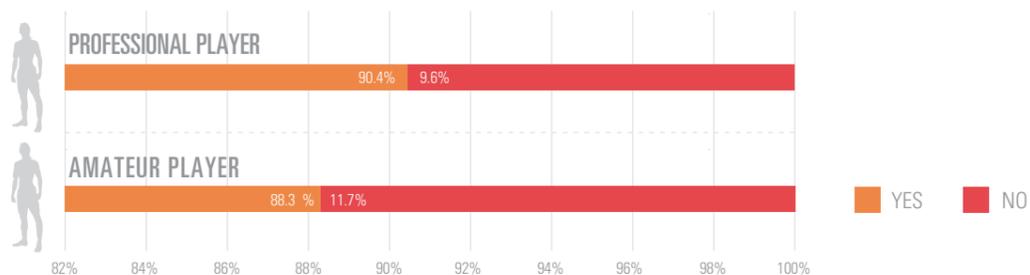
We asked whether players would consider leaving the game early, and if so for what reasons. A startling 90% of respondents identified at least one reason why they would consider leaving the game early,

which is often ahead of their expected retirement age. This was one of the most worrying findings relating to the development of a player's career and the stability of the women's game.

## REASONS FOR CONSIDERING LEAVING EARLY



## REASONS FOR CONSIDERING LEAVING EARLY



A lack of financial incentives to stay, wanting to pursue career opportunities outside of football, and a desire to start a family dominated the reasons players gave for considering leaving the game early. It ties in with the findings set out above about low pay and the lack of childcare support. When we compare these findings with the results in section 3.3, that nearly 70% of respondents were under 23, we can speculate that the lack of financial or childcare support in the game is a significant

factor in the drop-off at what should be the peak of a player's career. Further support is given to this contention when we look at the age in which players are most likely to consider ending their career in football, with players between 24 and 33 the most likely to think of leaving. Players under 18 were the most enthusiastic about staying in women's football, although even in this age group, three-quarters were considering ending their career early.

“  
In the two decades that I have been a professional football player, I have seen great players walk away from the game.

Hope Solo,  
USA

# 3 Top finding NO PAY, LOW PAY, LATE PAY

THE WORK OF FEMALE PLAYERS NEEDS TO BE RECOGNISED FINANCIALLY. THEY NEED DECENT PAY. ONLY HALF GET ANY SORT OF WAGE FROM THEIR CLUBS. OF THOSE WHO ARE ON WAGES, THE PAY IS MINIMAL AND OFTEN LATE. THIS IS ALSO THE CASE WHEN WOMEN PLAY FOR THEIR NATIONAL TEAM: ONLY A FEW FEMALE PLAYERS ARE PAID BY THEIR NATIONAL FEDERATION.

## We sought detailed information on the sources of players' football income:

- Almost half of respondents (49.5%) are not paid by their club. It should be noted that this is a survey of elite players in the top leagues, so the total figure for women's football worldwide would be much higher.
- 42% of players say they do not receive any money to play football (this group was not considered 'professional' according to the FIFPro definition).
- Where players do receive income, this mainly comes from their clubs (i.e. 50.5% of the total number of respondents). In 13% of cases, the source is the national team.
- For 4% of players, the income comes from a company or sponsor.
- In 3% of cases, players do not know the source of their football income.

## Most players who are paid receive low wages:

60% | PAID PLAYERS TAKE HOME BETWEEN \$1 AND \$600 A MONTH, AFTER TAX

30% | EARN BETWEEN \$600 AND \$2,000 A MONTH

1% | EARN \$8,000 A MONTH OR MORE

Men's football suffers from chronic delayed payments of salaries and other remuneration.

## This phenomenon is also found in the women's game, and should be addressed:

37% | OF ALL RESPONDENTS REPORTED LATE PAYMENTS

9% | OF PLAYERS ENDURED PAYMENT DELAYS OF OVER THREE MONTHS

Interestingly, the level of late pay for women (37%) is consistent with what we found in the men's survey in 2016, where 41% of the nearly 14,000 players involved said they experienced overdue pay in the previous two seasons. The figure is 33% for female players who have written contracts, and 49% for those who don't.

“ Only in the top three teams in the league are players truly cared for. I train four to five days per week for no salary, and my travel expenses are not covered. I have a part-time job to make ends meet.

Anonymous,  
England

# 4 Top finding WRITTEN CONTRACTS ALL TOO RARE

GIVEN THE LACK OF PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES, CLUBS AND RESOURCES FOR WOMEN IN THE ELITE GAME, FEMALE PLAYERS FACE HEAVY PRESSURE TO FIND A STABLE TEAM IN A STABLE LEAGUE AND TO SECURE THEIR PLACE THERE. WITH FEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE PROFESSIONAL GAME, IT MEANS THAT FEMALE PLAYERS OFTEN ACCEPT SHORT OR INFORMAL CONTRACTS (E.G. VERBAL AGREEMENTS) WITH POOR LABOUR CONDITIONS AND HIGH JOB INSECURITY.

## CLUB CONTRACTS

Having a written contract is a critical basic element of employment. If there is a dispute between club and player, the player needs a physical copy of the terms of employment so she can defend her rights. Just over half of the respondents, 53%, reported having a written contract with their club. This rate is much lower than that of men at 92% (FIFPro, 2016). However, the rate is slightly higher for professionals (by FIFPro definition): 72% of professionals reported having written contracts. Even if they have a written contract in

place, there is significant regional disparity in terms of whether players have access to a physical copy.

What is also striking is that only a minority of players have an employment contract. Even when players have an employment contract with their club, it lasts on average less than two years, leaving little in the way of job security.

## WRITTEN CONTRACT AND PLAYER STATUS



76.00% | AMATEUR PLAYER

27.90% | PROFESSIONAL PLAYER



72.10% | PROFESSIONAL PLAYER

24.00% | AMATEUR PLAYER

PROFESSIONAL PLAYER | AMATEUR PLAYER

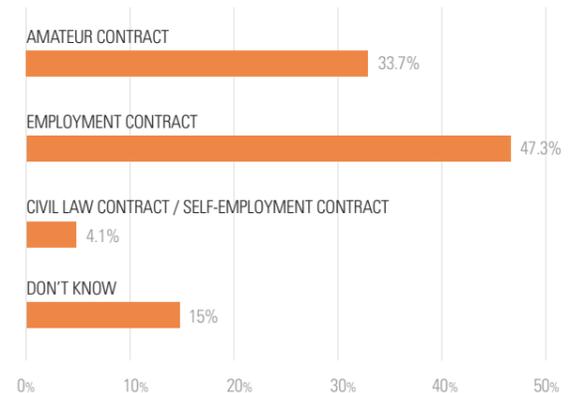
## Club contract types

The existence of an employment contract is significant in defining the nature and range of rights that professional footballers may enjoy. The absence of an employment contract indicates a precarious situation. It often disguises a relationship of subordination and dependence and may be also associated with worse employment protection and working conditions.

### The survey found that of all respondents with a written contract:

- 47% have an employment contract
- 34% have an amateur contract
- 4% have a civil law/self-employment contract
- 15% were not actually aware of the type of contract they have (this is a significant finding given the implications for enforcement)

## TYPE OF CLUB CONTRACT



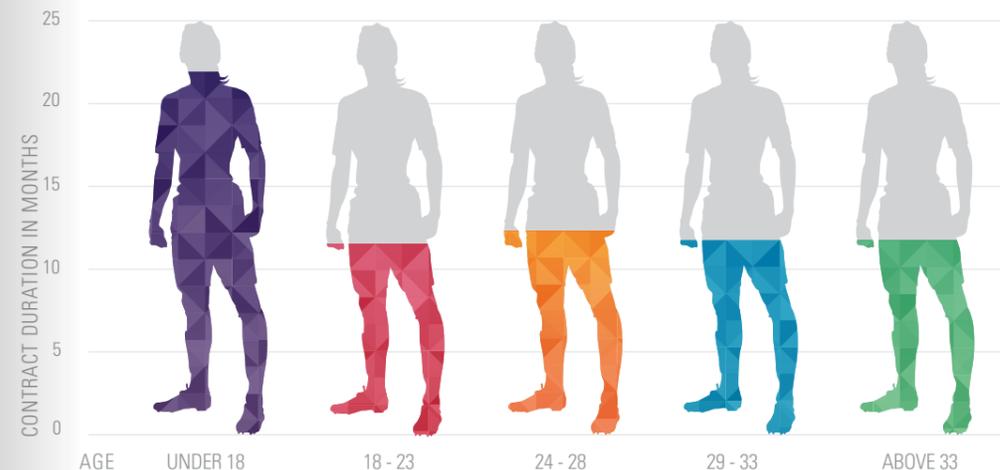
## Club contract duration

A contract does not guarantee job security, especially if it is only for a short duration. The FIFA Regulations on the Transfer and Status of Players (RTSP) say a contract must have a minimum length from its effective date until the end of the season, and a maximum length of five years. Short-term contracts create enormous stress for players and undermine team stability.

A minority of female football players surveyed had an employment contract, and the duration of an employment contract (the median was 12 months) was significantly shorter than that of men. A contract of less than two years leaves little in the way of job security.

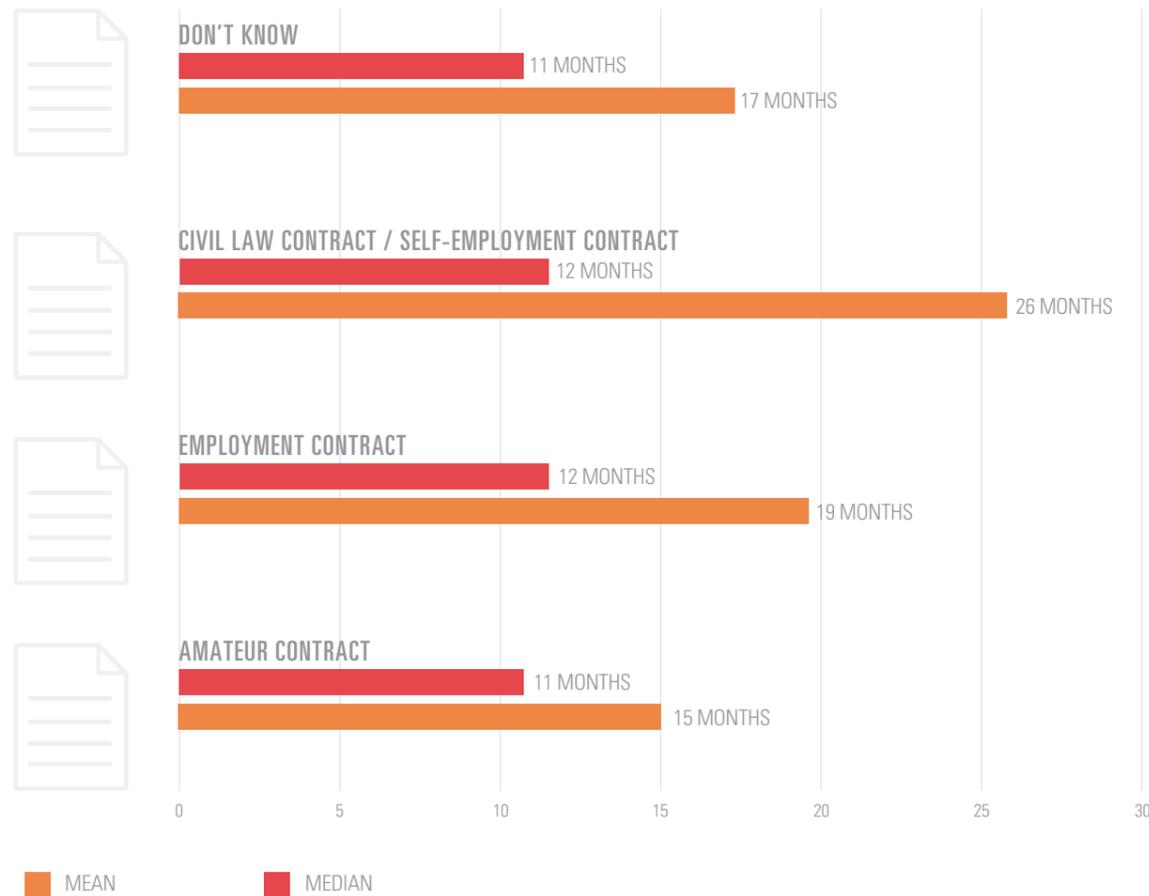
The professional contracts of female players under 18-years old were longer than the average for all players, and their median duration was 22 months. The contract duration for professional players drops with age (i.e. from 22 to 12 and then 11 months): it falls just as players move out of the under-18 group. The findings seem to confirm a negative relationship between age and contract duration: the older the player, the more likely their contract will be shorter. Older players are effectively forced out of the game.

## CONTRACT DURATION AND AGE – PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS



The figure below shows that the median duration for employment and self-employment/civil law contracts was the same, i.e. 12 months. In the case of amateur contracts, the duration was slightly shorter, at 11 months.

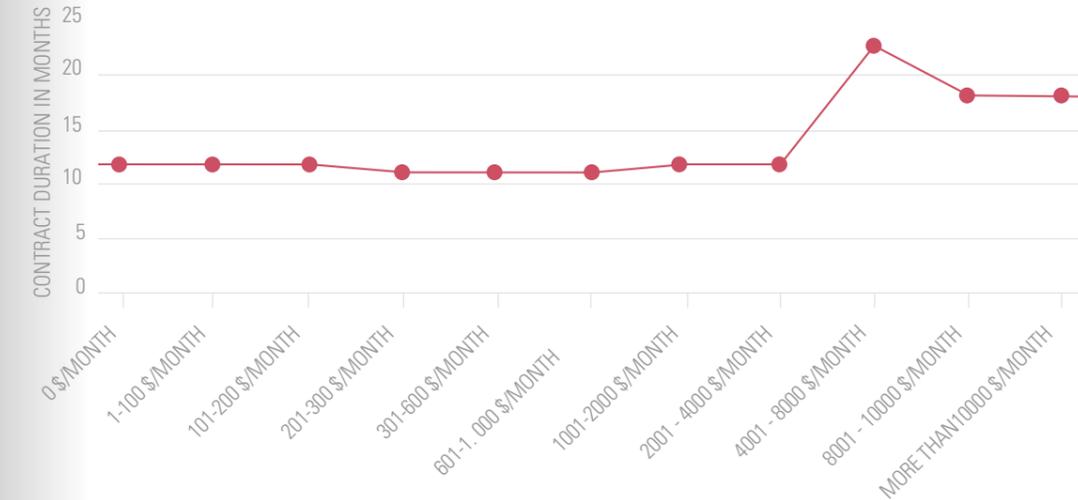
### CONTRACT DURATION PER TYPE OF CONTRACT



There is also a link between contract duration and salary levels. As the next figure shows, longer contracts were associated with higher salaries. The difference was particularly pronounced for those earning between \$4,001 and \$8,000 per month: players in this category had an

average contract of 23 months compared to 11 or 12 months in the lower salary categories. The findings also confirm that elite players in these higher salary categories (\$4,001 and \$8,000 per month) had to accept shorter contracts than the higher paid men (FIFPro 2016).

### SALARY AND CONTRACT DURATION



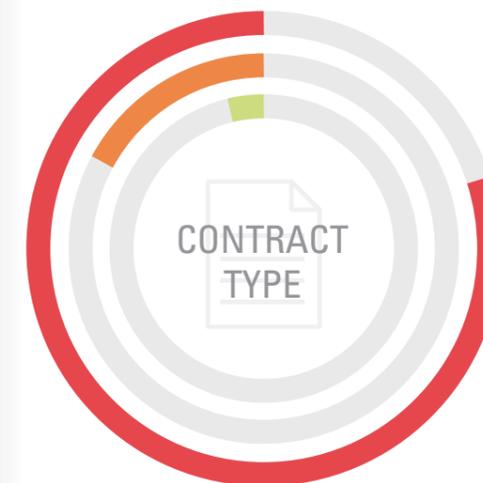
#### National team contracts

National team players, like club players, were also asked about the type of contract they had in place and the duration. Our findings show that slightly less than one in ten national team players (9%) have a written contract in place..

#### National team contract types

Strikingly, 79% of national team players could not say what type of contract they had. Only 17% of national player respondents with written contracts reported having employment contracts, and only 4% of national team players reported having civil law/self-employment contracts.

### CONTRACT TYPE – NATIONAL TEAM PLAYERS



## CONTRACT COPY – NATIONAL TEAM PLAYERS



80.1% | NO COPY

15.4% | PERSONAL COPY

4.5% | AGENT HAS A COPY

### National team contract duration

When players had a written contract in place, they were asked about its length. Almost three quarters of national team players (74%) said they did not know the length of their contract. In 13.5% of cases, the contracts with the national teams were determined for every time they were called

into a training camp. In 7% of cases, the contracts with the national team were determined for a calendar year; and in 4% of cases, the contracts were determined with a specified start and end date (4%). Only 2% of contracts were arranged around each tournament.

### BASIS FOR DETERMINING CONTRACT DURATION



### Copies of contracts

When national team players had a written contract in place, they were asked whether they personally (or through their intermediaries) had a copy of the contract. Only 15% of respondents had personal copies. In 4.5% of cases, there were copies with the players agents. That means a staggering 80% of national team players do not have a copy of their contract.

“  
We’re moving from being grateful for just being able to play to realising that things could and should be better.”

Hedvig Lindahl,  
Sweden

# 5 Top finding NATIONAL PRIDE CAN'T PAY THE BILLS

FIGURES SHOW THAT PLAYING FOR ONE'S COUNTRY CAN PUT PLAYERS OUT OF POCKET. GIVEN THE MEAGRE CLUB SALARIES, NATIONAL TEAM PLAYERS CAN BE LEFT SCRAMBLING TO PATCH TOGETHER THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THEIR FOOTBALL.

**The survey revealed some grim findings about what it really means to play for one's country:**

- More than a third of players, 35%, were not paid at all to play for the national team
- 68% were not satisfied with national team compensation
- Even in cases where they were paid, 42% did not get enough to cover expenses

Some 38.5% of national team players reported delays in payment. This is slightly above the figure for club-related delays, at 37%. Most were paid within three months, but a worrying number of players reported delays of over six months. For 3.5% of players, they took over a year to be paid.

The figures on national team payment shed further light on the precarious working conditions of female football players, confirming that only a very small number of players can rely on their playing career to support them, and even fewer can rely on one source of football income.

**SINCE 2015, WE HAVE SEEN A PROMISING DEVELOPMENT: WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAMS ARE SPEAKING UP AND DEMANDING BETTER CONDITIONS LIKE NEVER BEFORE:**

**11/2015**  
AUSTRALIA

FOOTBALL FEDERATION AUSTRALIA (FFA) AND PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLERS AUSTRALIA (PFA) ANNOUNCED A FOUR-YEAR 'WHOLE OF GAME' COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT (CBA) THAT DELIVERS AFFORDABLE INCREASES IN PLAYER PAYMENTS AND IMPROVED CONDITIONS FOR PLAYERS ACROSS THE AUSTRALIAN MEN'S AND WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAMS AND THE MEN'S A-LEAGUE. ADDITIONALLY, PFA HAS COMMITTED TO PROVIDE IMPROVED PLAYER CONTRACT SECURITY, AS WELL AS INCREASED INCREMENTAL INVESTMENT IN PLAYER WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES OVER THE TERM.

**07/2016**  
CHILE

AFTER CHILE FAILED TO QUALIFY FOR THE 2015 WORLD CUP, THE NATIONAL FEDERATION (ANFP) DID NOT ARRANGE ANY MATCHES OR TRAINING SESSIONS FOR TWO YEARS. THE TEAM DROPPED FROM 41ST TO 128TH IN THE FIFA RANKINGS. IONA ROTHFELD AND SOME OTHER PLAYERS DECIDED TO SET UP A WOMEN'S PLAYERS ASSOCIATION AS THE FEDERATION OFFICIALS STONEWALLED PLAYERS. THEY SET UP THE ASOCIACIÓN NACIONAL DE JUGADORAS DE FÚTBOL FEMENINO (ANJUFF) IN JULY 2016, WHICH HAS INJECTED NEW ENERGY INTO WOMEN'S FOOTBALL IN CHILE.

**04/2017**  
USA

USA – THE US WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM AND THE US SOCCER FEDERATION RATIFIED A NEW CBA IN APRIL 2017. IT INCLUDES A COMMITMENT FROM THE US SOCCER FEDERATION TO PAY THE CLUB SALARIES OF ALL US NATIONAL TEAM PLAYERS COMPETING IN THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE (NWSL); IT ALSO ENTAILS A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN DIRECT COMPENSATION; PER DIEMS THAT ARE EQUAL TO THOSE OF THE MEN'S TEAM; AND GREATER FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PREGNANT PLAYERS AND PLAYERS ADOPTING CHILDREN.

“  
We're trying to figure out where women's soccer is going. We may not have the same exact structure as the men. Equal isn't the right word. It would be equitable, because we are asking for a different structure.

Becky Sauerbrunn,  
USA

**04/2017**  
**IRELAND**

IN APRIL THIS YEAR, THE PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLERS' ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND (PFA IRELAND) HELPED THE WOMEN'S TEAM REACH A DEAL WITH THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND TO ADDRESS ITS COMPLAINTS AND END THE PROSPECT OF A STRIKE. IRISH PLAYERS SPOKE UP BECAUSE THEY RECEIVED NO COMPENSATION FOR SPENDING UP TO 40 DAYS OF THE YEAR ON NATIONAL-TEAM DUTY. THEY RECEIVED NO REIMBURSEMENTS, SO PLAYERS EITHER HAD TO TAKE HOLIDAY PAY, HOLIDAY LEAVE, OR LEAVE WITHOUT PAY TO PLAY FOR THEIR COUNTRY. MANY PLAYERS WITH JOBS OUTSIDE FOOTBALL COULD NOT TURN UP FOR NATIONAL-TEAM DUTY.

**09/2017**  
**ARGENTINA**

ARGENTINA'S NATIONAL WOMEN'S TEAM WENT ON STRIKE OVER THEIR FA'S TREATMENT OF PLAYERS. THEY HAD NOT PLAYED AN OFFICIAL MATCH FOR TWO YEARS AND RECEIVED NO ADEQUATE COMPENSATION FOR THE TWO MONTHS THEY SPENT IN TRAINING CAMP.

**09/2017**  
**BRAZIL**

SEVERAL PLAYERS FROM THE BRAZILIAN WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM, INCLUDING CRISTIANE, ONE OF WORLD'S MOST RECOGNISED PLAYERS, STEPPED DOWN FROM THE TEAM IN SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR TO PROTEST CONDITIONS. THEY SAID THEY REFUSED TO CONTINUE PLAYING FOR A FEDERATION THAT FAILED TO PROPERLY RECOGNISE THEIR WORK.

**10/2017**  
**NORWAY**

THE NORWEGIAN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION AGREED TO GIVE BOTH NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAMS EQUAL PAY CONDITIONS. NORWAY IS THE FIRST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO TAKE SUCH A STEP. NORMALLY, WOMEN NATIONAL TEAMS RECEIVE VASTLY INFERIOR TERMS TO THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS. SOME EVEN HAVE TO FINANCE THEIR OWN NATIONAL TEAM CAREERS.

**11/2017**  
**DENMARK**

DENMARK'S WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM PLAYERS CHALLENGED THEIR COUNTRY'S FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION'S (DBU) RELUCTANCE TO MEET THEIR TWO MOST IMPORTANT DEMANDS: A BASIC MONTHLY FEE FOR ALL PLAYERS; AND THAT PLAYERS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED EMPLOYEES OF THE DBU. IN NOVEMBER, THE DANISH WOMEN REACHED A NEW DEAL WITH FAIR AND BASIC COMPENSATION, ADDRESSING THE FACT THAT MOST PLAYERS DO NOT RECEIVE AN ADEQUATE FOOTBALL INCOME FROM THEIR CLUBS.

**11/2017**  
**SWEDEN**

THE PLAYERS OF THE SWEDISH WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM AGREED A NEW DEAL WITH THEIR COUNTRY'S FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION BRINGING THEIR PAY AND CONDITIONS CLOSER TO THE MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM.

**11/2017**

UNIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS AND NEW ZEALAND ARE CURRENTLY IN TALKS WITH THEIR NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS ABOUT NEW TERMS FOR THEIR WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM.

“  
**We have to take  
days off to work for  
the national team but  
we're not reimbursed.**

Aine O’Gorman,  
Ireland

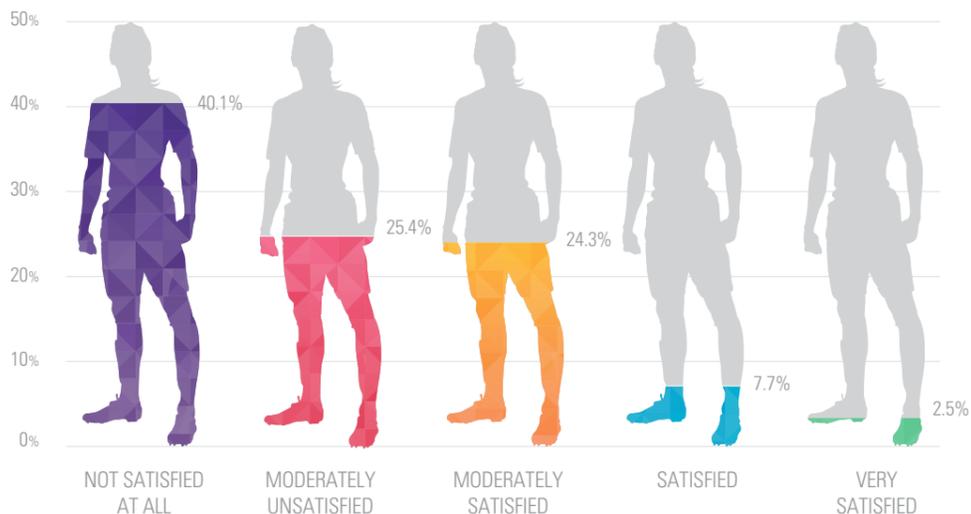
# 6 Top finding PRIZE MONEY: FAIR SHARE?

TWO THIRDS OF RESPONDENTS SAY THEY ARE DISAPPOINTED WITH THE PRIZE MONEY IN WOMEN'S FOOTBALL TOURNAMENTS. THE PRIZE MONEY FOR MEN'S AND WOMEN'S EVENTS IS NOT EQUAL, IN BOTH ABSOLUTE TERMS AND IN TERMS OF REVENUE SHARE.

Prize money at international sport competitions has been a subject of recent debate, particularly when it comes to gender equality and the disparity in prize money between men's and women's tournaments. National team players in this survey were asked if they were satisfied with the prize money

available for major football tournaments, regional and global. Two thirds of all national team player respondents were not satisfied. Only 2.5% of players were "very satisfied" with the prize money.

## PRIZE MONEY SATISFACTION



### We believe the responses capture two potentially different things:

- it could reflect the level of satisfaction with the prize money available for such tournaments in terms of what they take home in their pockets as players, which is a share of the total money awarded to their National Federation by FIFA and its confederations;
- it could capture their feelings regarding the total money awarded to their National Federation by FIFA and its confederations, which could refer to the wide disparity between the levels of prize money awarded men's and women's teams in international football tournaments.

If female players are to have realistic career paths, they must have viable economic prospects. Women's football around the world depends heavily on national teams, which means that the

funding that players receive for their national team performance is critical in giving them a viable career path. This is the context for the redistribution of prize money.

The redistribution must be decent and equitable. Much like the drive for 'equitable' pay that the US women's national team pursued earlier this year, prize money from major tournaments may not necessarily need to be 'equal' to that of the men. But it needs to be fair. In light of the above, women may in some cases even need more than the men. Debates about prize money should consider how remuneration structures from federations for female national team players may need to be fundamentally different from that of male national players.

“  
The European  
Champions League  
must review its revenue  
sharing model and  
realise that it must also  
be profitable for the  
clubs and players.  
It's discouraging that  
we receive such a  
tiny percentage of  
the money.”

Anja Mittag, German international

# 7

Top finding

## CLUB VS COUNTRY

ALMOST A THIRD OF PLAYERS FACE CLASHES BETWEEN CLUB AND COUNTRY FIXTURES, A TOUGH CHOICE THAT NO PLAYER SHOULD HAVE TO MAKE. THE FIFA INTERNATIONAL MATCH CALENDAR (IMC) INDICATES THE DATES FOR OFFICIAL INTERNATIONAL MATCHES AND FRIENDLY MATCHES. BEYOND THESE FIFA DATES, MANY COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY ONES WITHOUT A REGULAR OR STABLE NATIONAL LEAGUE COMPETITION, INVITE THEIR NATIONAL TEAM PLAYERS TO COMPETE IN INTERNATIONAL MATCHES OUTSIDE THE IMC. CLUBS ARE NOT OFFICIALLY REQUIRED TO RELEASE THEIR PLAYERS FOR NATIONAL TEAM MATCHES THAT OCCUR OUTSIDE THE IMC, WHICH CAN FORCE PLAYERS TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THEIR CLUB COMMITMENT AND THEIR NATIONAL TEAM COMMITMENT.

In this survey, national team players were asked to consider whether they ever had a clash between their club commitments and their national team commitments that fell on dates outside the FIFA IMC. Survey evidence suggests that more than two thirds

of the respondents had not had such a clash, but 16% did and 14% did not experience it personally but knew a teammate who had experienced such a clash.

### CLASH BETWEEN CLUB AND NATIONAL TEAM COMMITMENTS



70% | NO

15.8% | YES

14.2% | NO, BUT I KNOW  
A TEAMMATE WHO HAS  
EXPERIENCED A CLASH

This 30% total represents a significant number of players forced to choose between their club and national team commitments. It means the international game is losing its best players, and it makes the work environment smaller and less stable. The onus should not fall on players to have to make this type of choice.

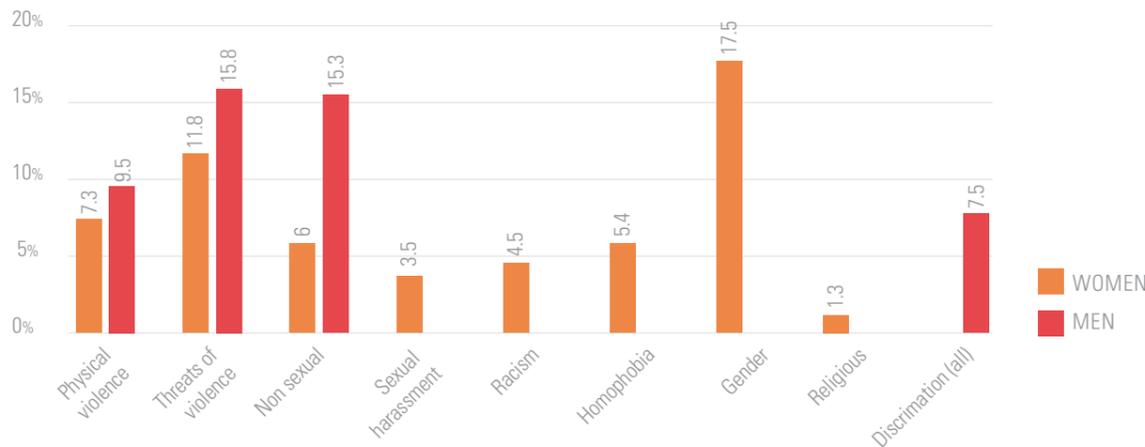
“  
There are rarely  
clashes between  
national and  
club calendars  
in the men’s game.  
Why can’t it be the  
same for women?”

Marta Vieira da Silva,  
Brazil

# 8 Top finding DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

WE FOUND WORRYING LEVELS OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT IN THE WOMEN'S GAME. WE SUSPECT THAT IT MAY BE EVEN HIGHER THAN THE FIGURES SUGGEST. SPEAKING OUT ABOUT ABUSE IS NOT EASY. FANS TENDED TO BE PERPETRATORS OF MOST OF THE ABUSE REPORTED, AND AMATEUR PLAYERS APPEARED TO BE SLIGHTLY MORE EXPOSED TO THIS THAN PROFESSIONALS.

## EXPERIENCE OF ABUSE/DISCRIMINATION (WOMEN'S/MEN'S COMPARISON)



## GENDER DISCRIMINATION BY SOURCE



**69.9%** | EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION ON BASIS OF GENDER BY FANS ON MATCH DAYS

**52.8%** | EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION ON BASIS OF GENDER BY FANS ON NON MATCH DAYS

**7.4%** | EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION ON BASIS OF GENDER BY PLAYERS

**11.9%** | EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION ON BASIS OF GENDER BY CLUB MANAGEMENT

**5.5%** | EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION ON BASIS OF GENDER BY COACHING STAFF

## Gender Discrimination

**17.5% of players reported experiencing discrimination on the grounds of their gender.**

Given that professional football is structured inherently around gender division, with the most access, opportunities, resources, and lucrative football careers given to men, this is a remarkably low figure. However, it is worth noting that respondents were asked to report only on discrimination experienced by individual perpetrators (e.g. fans, players, club management, coaching

staff) in the form of overt and expressed discrimination (e.g. verbal abuse based on gender). Of those who did report discrimination, 70% said the perpetrators were fans on a match day. Respondents were not asked about their experiences of structural and institutionalised gender discrimination, e.g. the women's game having lower quality fields, a lack of investment in new technologies, sub-par training times etc., which is an area that requires further investigation.

## HOMOPHOBIA BY SOURCE



**63.1%** | EXPERIENCED HOMOPHOBIA BY FANS ON MATCH DAYS

**55.3%** | EXPERIENCED HOMOPHOBIA BY FANS ON NON MATCH DAYS

**11.2%** | EXPERIENCED HOMOPHOBIA BY PLAYERS

**7.8%** | EXPERIENCED HOMOPHOBIA BY CLUB MANAGEMENT

**15.6%** | EXPERIENCED HOMOPHOBIA BY COACHING STAFF

## Homophobia

**Overall, 5.4%, or 180 players reported experiencing homophobia from fans, players, club management or coaching staff.**

We saw an alarmingly high rate in Morocco, over 60%. Respondents from five countries (Denmark, Ireland, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia and Uzbekistan) reported no instances of homophobia. However, some of these responses need to be analysed with care in the context of "anti-gay propaganda" laws and cultural stigma. It would be unsurprising if, in certain contexts, players are unwilling to report homophobic abuse. Some 17% of respondents from Venezuela experienced homophobia, with Israel and the USA also above 10%.

Again, as with the other questions on discrimination in the survey, respondents only referred to experiences where individuals were the perpetrators. Homophobia by federations was not surveyed, but it has been reported, for example in Nigeria<sup>5</sup>, and it must be addressed. Likewise, institutionalised homophobia in women's football as a part of structural discrimination must be investigated further.

<sup>5</sup> The Nigerian Federation made overtly homophobic statements towards women's football in 2016 blaming the poor state of women's football on homosexuality. <http://www.newsweek.com/nigerian-official-caught-womens-football-hesbianism-row-470305>

## RACISM BY SOURCE



**71.8%** | EXPERIENCED RACISM BY FANS ON MATCH DAYS

**25.5%** | EXPERIENCED RACISM BY FANS ON NON MATCH DAYS

**15.4%** | EXPERIENCED RACISM BY PLAYERS

**9.4%** | EXPERIENCED RACISM BY CLUB MANAGEMENT

**60%** | EXPERIENCED RACISM BY COACHING STAFF

### Racism

**4.5% of players reported experiencing racism.**

Female players competing in countries outside their own (also known as non-nationals) were more likely to report racism or discrimination on the grounds of nationality (11%) than nationals (4%). Of those reporting experiencing racism, 72% of the perpetrators were reported to be fans on match days (see Figure 8.7); 107 players reported having experienced this.

Institutionalised racism as a part of structural discrimination in women's football was not captured and requires further investigation.

## EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY SOURCE



**30.2%** | EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY FANS ON MATCH DAYS

**33.6%** | EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY FANS ON NON MATCH DAYS

**16.4%** | EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY PLAYERS

**22.4%** | EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY CLUB MANAGEMENT

**39.7%** | EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY COACHING STAFF

### Sexual Harassment

**3.5% reported experiencing sexual harassment.**

While the proportion was relatively low (116 individuals from the sample of 3,295), this should not belittle the experiences of such harassment. It was also clear that some players had experienced sexual harassment from a number of different perpetrators. Sexual harassment by coaching staff was a particularly worrying finding, and was reported to us by 46 players. It is likely that for such a sensitive subject, which is known to have the potential to trigger feelings of embarrassment, shame and/or guilt, the actual figure is higher. This area demands further investigation.

“ I have experienced the positives and negatives of supporting those who speak up against discrimination. I hope fewer people have to endure such disgraceful treatment. But if they do, I hope they too find the strength, courage and conviction to stand up for what's right.

Anita Asante, England

# 9 Top finding

## WHO CARES? LACK OF SUPPORT FOR FEMALE PLAYERS TO HAVE CHILDREN

ONLY 2% OF RESPONDENTS HAVE CHILDREN, A TOTAL OF 61 PLAYERS. BUT 47% SAID THAT THEY WOULD LEAVE THE GAME EARLY TO START A FAMILY.

**This highlights the importance of providing support to female players through parental policies and childcare provisions.**

Maintaining a career in women's football is difficult for women with children. Players may put off becoming pregnant or becoming a parent; and when they do become pregnant, they are more likely to leave the game.

The lack of childcare provision in football may be one important reason for this. Of the players who had children, 61% reported that they received no childcare support. Clubs or national federations provided maternity pay for only 8% of respondents with children. Childcare support within the game was also extremely limited: only 3% of clubs provided support, and no-one confirmed whether the national association provided childcare support. 14.5% of respondents with children were provided childcare support by the state.

Uncertainty about maternity benefits and protection both during pregnancy and after childbirth should not be a factor influencing a female player's decision to have a child. The appropriate benefits and protections for players to become mothers must be standardised across the women's professional game, and the proper training conditions must be in place to offer players the opportunity to return to their peak performance after giving birth.

61%

OF PLAYERS WHO HAD CHILDREN REPORTED THAT THEY RECEIVED NO CHILDCARE SUPPORT

8%

OF PLAYERS WHO HAD CHILDREN WERE PROVIDED MATERNITY PAY BY CLUBS OR NATIONAL FEDERATIONS

3%

OF CLUBS PROVIDED CHILDCARE SUPPORT

14.5%

OF PLAYERS WHO HAD CHILDREN WERE PROVIDED CHILDCARE SUPPORT BY THE STATE

“  
Women are quitting football to start a family. I don't think it should be a choice they have to make.”

Ali Riley,  
New Zealand

# 10

Top finding

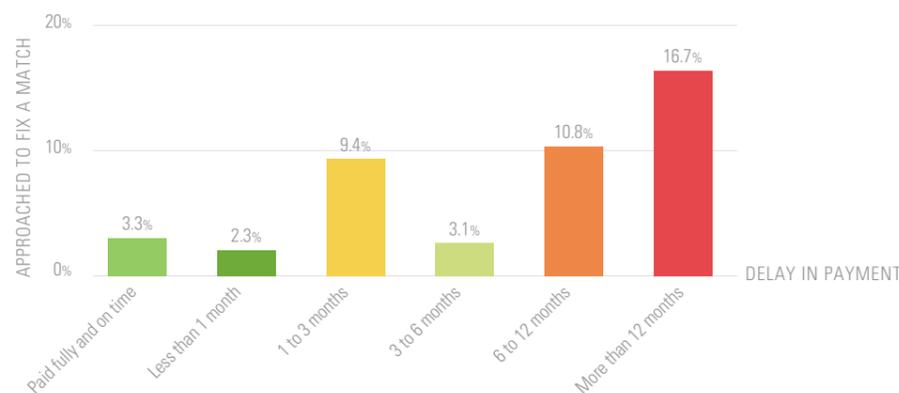
## MATCH-FIXING HITS THE WOMEN'S GAME

THE WOMEN'S GAME IS NOT IMMUNE TO MATCH-FIXING: 5% OF RESPONDENTS SAY THEY HAVE BEEN APPROACHED TO FIX A MATCH, AND THE RISK RISES THE LONGER THEIR CAREER LASTS. PLAYERS PAID LITTLE OR LATE ARE ALSO MUCH MORE LIKELY TO BE APPROACHED

The women's game appears to be less attractive than the men's game for match fixers as seen in the FIFPro 2016 Men's Survey. But the amateur women's game is more attractive than the elite women's game: 6% of amateurs reported being approached, compared to 4% of professional players.

It is important to note that this match-fixing can be motivated for sporting rather than for betting reasons - for example, fixing the match to stay in a league instead of making money from betting winnings.

### MATCH-FIXING AND LATE PAYMENT (CLUB)



One area of interest was whether professional women would be more likely to be approached than amateurs playing further down the pyramid. We were surprised to find that (bar the oldest age range) professional women reported fewer approaches, just 4.4%, compared with 6.2% of amateur players.

Some 10.5% of professional players over the age of 33 reported being approached, almost identical to the 10.7% of over-33 respondents in the 2016 FIFPro Men's Survey. This also suggests that the tools for combatting match-fixing in the men's game could be applied to the women's game. However, the numbers of both amateur and professional players in this category were low and we must be cautious about treating them as representative. One thing is clear though: match-fixing is by no means limited to the men's game.

Players who said they were not paid were more likely to be approached (6%). And players paid little or late were much more likely to be approached: 16.4% when there is a delay of 12 months

or more, and 10.7% for those who pay their own expenses. Players who said they were satisfied with their pay were much less likely to be approached to fix a match (4%).

Generally, we can speculate that the women's amateur game may be more attractive than the elite game for those looking to fix matches. The fact that there were fewer approaches in the professional game was also largely borne out by an analysis of approaches by salary.

Over 9% of those earning between \$101-200 a month said they had been approached. Of the 50% of players who reported not being paid a salary, over 6% said they were approached to fix a match, again indicating that the problem is not limited to the elite women's game. In fact, players earning over \$201 a month were considerably less likely than the average player to be approached.

“  
We suspected there was some online gambling by the owners of the guest team on one specific game as there was pressure on their own players to lose the match. After the match, the FA and to the police were informed.”

Anonymous

## 11

Top finding

## THE WOMEN'S GAME CAN TEACH US ABOUT DUAL CAREERS

ONE THIRD OF WOMEN SAY THEY WORK OTHER JOBS ALONGSIDE THEIR FOOTBALL, WHILE NEARLY HALF REPORTED BEING IN A COURSE OF STUDY. THERE ARE GOOD AND BAD ASPECTS TO THESE FINDINGS. FEMALE PLAYERS MAY BE DOING THIS BECAUSE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL IS NOT SEEN AS WELL-PAYING OR A SECURE CAREER CHOICE, BUT THIS IS ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY. IF DONE WITH THE APPROPRIATE BALANCE, IT CAN TURN THESE OUTSIDE ENGAGEMENTS INTO SOMETHING POSITIVE FOR THE SPORT AND FOR THE PLAYERS.

### Football and work

While the vast majority of professional male players train and play the game on a full-time basis, a full third of female players work other jobs alongside their football career. Of those who work other jobs, the mean number of hours per week is over 27 hours. Clearly, while some players have casual jobs in which they only work a few hours, others are in significant, and often full-time, employment.

As we have pointed out, the FIFA definition of professional does not necessarily mean full-time, and this is borne out by the finding that 64% of professional players were also working away from football. Of those professionals who were working, the mean number of hours per week was 20, so lower than the overall mean. However, a number of professional players reported working up to 56 hours per week in addition to the time playing football.

It is important to note that these figures do not tell us about the number of hours players spend on training and games. It may be the case that many of these players are taking on the double

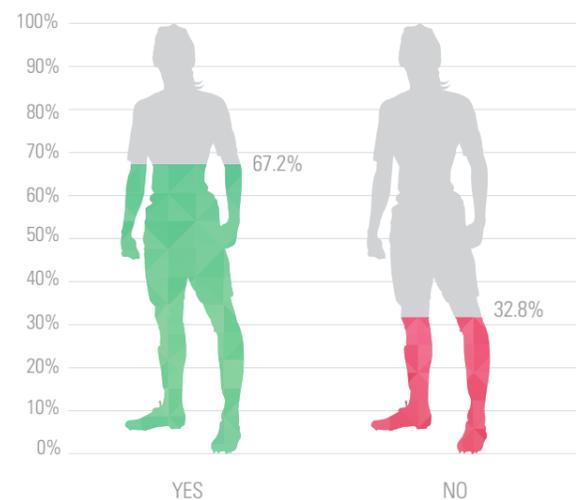
burden of football commitments plus additional jobs, and not necessarily playing 'part-time'.

At the same time, there are positive aspects to the fact that so many female players pursue dual careers: they are working or engaging in a second career track alongside their football. Work experiences and skills in areas beyond playing are essential for preparing players for life after their playing careers and can help with life balance while playing.

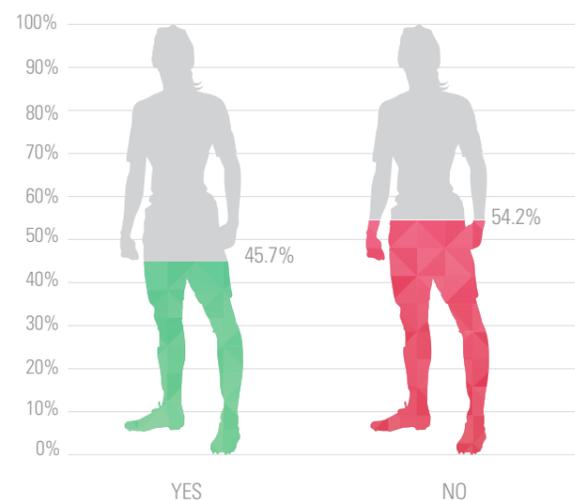
### Football and studying

One of the key differences between the men's and the women's game concerns players studying while they play. Nearly half of the female players reported being in a course of study, with the mean time of those responding positively being 27 hours per week. Around one fifth of players are with clubs in higher education partnerships or offering other educational study opportunities, while 23% of respondents were under 18, so the high number of players who are also in a course of study should not be surprising.

#### PLAYERS CURRENTLY WORKING



#### PLAYERS CURRENTLY STUDYING

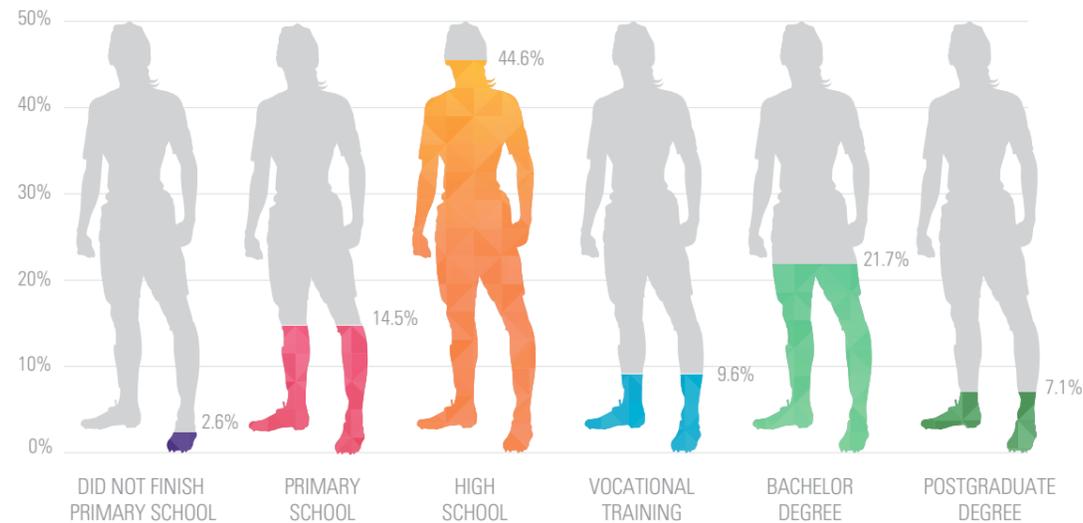


“ Throughout my playing career, I pursued - both out of necessity and desire - work and studies beyond the pitch. When this was in balance, it made me a more composed, calm and focused goalkeeper, and a wiser person.

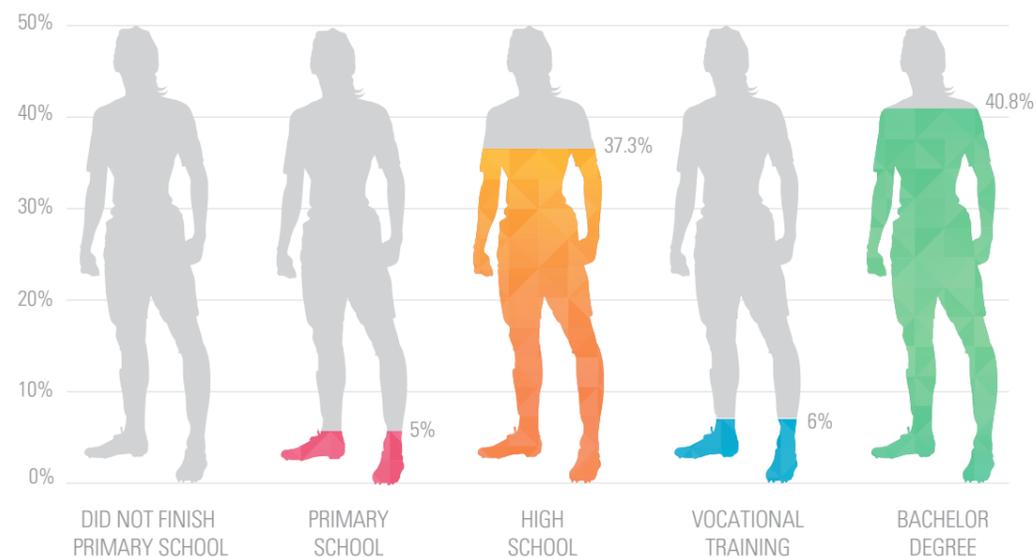
Caroline Jönsson,  
Sweden

Another important comparison is in terms of the highest level of education attained. Female players were more likely to have a university degree as their highest level of education (graph below), while male players were more likely to have a high school degree as their highest level of education.

### NATIONAL



### NON-NATIONAL



We see it as very positive that many female players pursue education alongside their football careers and that a significant number have a university degree as their highest education level attained. Female players are arguably more well-rounded in terms of social and educational development than their male counterparts. Furthermore, even if a footballer - male or female - plays to their prime, the career of a professional athlete is relatively short so it is important to prepare for a post-football career.

However, as with outside employment, education takes up a significant amount of time for a significant number of female players. Players should not be so insecure in their football careers that they feel compelled to pursue outside work or study engagements. Rather, they must be given adequate space for these pursuits.

“  
As well as playing for Melbourne Victory, I recently graduated with a double degree in science and chemical engineering, and I’ve been offered a job in a pharmaceutical company.”

Alexandra Gummer,  
Australia

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## THE FOOTBALL INDUSTRY NEEDS TO DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT AND ENFORCE EXISTING STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONALISM IN THE WOMEN'S GAME.

**Improving existing working conditions and creating as many decent and secure jobs as possible for female players will spur the positive development of the game.**

If the women's game and its players are to thrive, then professional football stakeholders — FIFA under its new leadership, the confederations, national football associations as well as public policy makers and legislators — must act together decisively on these issues.

Understanding the specific needs of women's football is critical to taking any steps forward. While women's football has obvious parallels with the men's game, it is not identical, and it does not share all the same challenges. The women's game diverges from the men's game in many significant areas due to the social, economic, and political context out of which it has evolved.

In many ways, the development of the women's game reflects the cultural changes in society. The struggle for equal opportunities has been long and hard-fought, and it is still not over. Because of this, the football establishment should not merely cut and paste formulas from men's football onto the women's game.

### 1 TREAT THE WOMEN'S GAME AS AN ASSET - FOR SPORT AND SOCIETY - RATHER THAN AS A COST

Football is the people's game and the largest sport in the world, with a massive societal impact. If it wants to maintain this influential position, then there is no bigger priority than the women's game.

Women's football is in its early stages of professionalisation and there are tremendous opportunities to shape and steer it based on values of integrity and players' rights. Women's football could even serve as a model for the men's game to follow. The women's game has many positive features that should be nurtured and maintained as it professionalises.

The fact that so many female players pursue dual careers is a tremendous opportunity on which to build. Many women players are also students: they should be able to maintain their studies. They should even be encouraged to continue their higher education while balancing their football careers. The same is true for work opportunities, which can help prepare them for post-playing careers and give balance to their playing careers. Unions can play an important role in this by providing the framework to ensure educational programs are offered and accessed by players.

Findings from the survey reveal that solidarity in the women's game is strong: 85% of respondents feel solidarity with their teammates. And this may be one of the key components behind players getting increasingly vocal and publicly challenging the fact that their game has been seen as a cost rather than an asset. Player unions have an important role to play now in supporting this movement that is underway.

Female players may also serve as a source of leadership, not only for changing the conditions in their game, but in being game-changers for the sport overall. Their passion and dedication to the game, along with their sportsmanship and fair play, must continue to flourish. The connection that the women's game has to the grassroots, local fans and community networks must not be lost as women's football ventures down the path of professionalisation and commercialisation.

### 2 MINIMUM EMPLOYMENT AND LEGAL STANDARDS

Women's professional football urgently needs global standards. It must clear up the blurry middle area in the female game so the thousands of women currently playing in uncertain, precarious conditions are respected and protected. A set of minimum employment and legal standards should apply to the women's professional leagues worldwide, clearly stating what it means to be a professional in the women's game.

We accept that not every top female league will be professional. Many elite leagues in the men's game are also not professional: only 80 countries in the men's game have professional leagues, leaving 131 that are not. However, while professionalism in the men's game has developed along with market demand, FIFPro believes the women's game needs top-down intervention to jumpstart its economic viability. FIFPro is asking stakeholders in the international football community to join us in examining possible routes for professionalising women's football in certain countries.

A professional women's league needs minimum employment and legal standards to ensure decent protection for both female players and clubs. This means providing maternity support and childcare for female players so that women do not feel they have to leave the game simply because they want to have children.

The woman's game needs new approaches as it implements - and improves - its legal standards. Some mechanisms can be copied from the men's game, while some are already in place, but simply need enforcement.

#### These include:

- Minimum requirements for standard player contracts.
- Improved arbitration at national and international level to ensure swift recourse to justice, for example, through FIFA's Dispute Resolution Chamber. As it can only apply to players with a professional status, this reinforces the urgent need to professionalise the women's game around the world.
- Club licensing systems must properly address employment standards at many levels. Requirements and standards for football associations, similar to club licenses, should also be pursued.
- Labour laws at national and supranational level must be more consistently applied to professional football.

### 3 EDUCATE PLAYERS AND INCREASE ACCESS TO REPRESENTATION

This survey reveals an unfortunate lack of basic awareness among many female players with respect to their contracts and their rights. Education is critical for empowerment and women footballers should be well informed on the terms and conditions of employment and their player status. This is crucial for the enforcement of their rights and self-

awareness as professionals.

Football unions play an important role in education and awareness-raising amongst players. This extends to education on issues such as psychological and physical performance, safety and well-being, where knowledge, for example, on the links between performance and the menstrual cycle is an area that requires more attention.

Unions have secured significant wins for many female players. The strong sense of solidarity amongst female players must be upheld, as they strive for stronger common standards. This may ultimately also benefit male players.

Many football unions are going through a process of self-education and strategy development on the difficulties facing women footballers today. Indeed, other sport organisations are also going through the process of embracing women's sport. This includes finding domestic solutions to questions concerning the status of female players competing as professionals in amateur leagues. Global cooperation in this area may prove critical.

Unionisation of female players in many parts of the world is growing but still has a long way to go. The growth opportunities for unions are significant in the women's game. The union aims must include bringing in more female players as members, as well as in management and decision-making structures.

### 4 STRENGTHEN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AS A CORE ELEMENT OF FOOTBALL GOVERNANCE

Collective bargaining must be universally accepted and integrated in all relevant decision-making structures between employers and players. This shared responsibility is nothing more than good governance. The democratic checks and balances of institutionalised collective bargaining help redefine the governance of the game. In many cases, collective bargaining has been a vehicle for stability, growth and innovation.

Both collective representation and the fair negotiation of standards for female players are important at all levels given the growth of the women's game and the complexity of employment structures (a few month-long contracts, national teams as significant income sources, etc). All relationships between clubs, players and federations must be based on these principles to ensure sustainable and broadly supportive conditions for the game and its key protagonists.

### 5 TACKLE DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT IN WOMEN'S FOOTBALL, FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Discrimination and harassment are very serious issues in both the women's and men's game. While discrimination on the basis of race, sexuality, religion and gender permeate

many aspects of football, gender discrimination is particularly prevalent in the women's game.

Our headline global figures on discrimination and harassment are likely to be lower than the experienced reality for female footballers. This may be due to the fact that these are sensitive subjects on which to report. The revelations in late 2017 about sexual harassment in the entertainment industry, sport, media and politics (and the subsequent #MeToo campaign) revealed the scale of this problem in the wider community and the difficulties in speaking out. Nor is this just about individual cases: structural discrimination is also a problem across institutions – although it was not captured in this survey.

We need to conduct more in-depth qualitative work such as focus group discussions with players to understand more about player experiences, and the real challenges in addressing these issues.

## 6 | DEVELOP AN ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE WOMEN'S GAME

Professional female players may need alternative and innovative payment and playing structures that do not replicate the men's system. This would take account of the different historical context of the women's game. These alternative structures could cover prize money, national team arrangements and club benefits, as well as playing schedules with regards the FIFA International Match Calendars and regional confederations.

### CLUBS

Many clubs in the women's game do not pay decent wages nor do they offer their players proper protections. The argument is often one of economic viability. Instead, many clubs offer non-financial benefits such as housing, food, gym membership, and educational opportunities. While these are important and cut down on expenses, decent wages and proper protections must accompany these non-financial benefits. Important steps would include, for example:

- Financial investment in women's professional leagues by FIFA and the confederations;
- Club licensing systems, which would improve and incentivise investment in professional women's teams of major international clubs playing under fair conditions;
- Earmarking parts of financial agreements with sponsors, broadcasters and other investors for the development of the women's game.

### FEDERATIONS

Women's national team players need their federations to step up and offer more stable and secure payment terms than what they currently offer the men in the conventional framework of pay-for-play basis (e.g. matches, training camps). Professional and amateur women who play for their national team may need help from the national federation, given that their clubs are providing little if any financial support.

It is important to acknowledge here that different federations offer different national women's team payment structures, reflecting

the different history of women's football to men's. This could have implications for the contract type and duration. For example, the players in US women's national team have annual employment contracts with their federation. The fact that national teams are unlikely to pay any salary to injured players must also be addressed in new contract and payment models.

Federations should acknowledge the unique context that elite female players face in the current stage of the game's development and consider responding accordingly with tailored contract and payment models.

### PRIZE MONEY

FIFPro is very concerned about the pitiful share of tournament revenue that reaches female players. There are questions about whether FIFA, confederations and the federations are redistributing enough money from these events to promote women's football. The small sums that women players receive are just a fraction of the total prize money.

Female players should receive a significant share of the prize money that comes into their federation, which should be a significant share of the revenue that FIFA generates in any four-year competition cycle. A minimum figure should be established. In setting this figure, FIFA and the federations should account for the lack of financial remuneration female players generally receive from their clubs (in comparison to most male players competing on the international level), and should aim to provide at the very least basic financial stability to female players. This would be hugely positive for women players who often depend on national team earnings. It would also enable female players to commit to the game even more professionally.

Federations must ensure that female professionals have access to their rights and protections under the FIFA Regulations on the Status & Transfer of Players (RSTP). We should address situations that might create a conflict over rights. For example, players might be defined as professionals under the FIFA RSTP, yet their federation could consider their league amateur, thus limiting player protections under labour law.

### FIFA INTERNATIONAL MATCH CALENDAR

In addition to alternative payment structures, the women's game may also need alternative playing structures, with a different FIFA International Match Calendar (IMC). More competitive national team games for the women might help grow the game in parallel to the increasing club investment. But if that is to happen, FIFA will have to arrange the IMC carefully. Here, again, the women's IMC will likely be very different to the men's.

### MATCH-FIXING

Developing an economically sustainable women's game also means addressing match-fixing. As the women's game becomes more professional and commercial, match-fixing is likely to grow. We must be aware of this and consider preventative intervention if it threatens the integrity of the game. It is important to acknowledge that the problem is not limited to the elite women: our findings suggest that match fixing takes place at all levels of the game. Preventing match-fixing starts with players enjoying decent employment conditions.

## ABOUT THIS SURVEY

FIFPro will use the findings from this report in its approach to all relevant institutions and stakeholders in and around football. FIFPro will continue its research and advocacy together with female players and the unions to ensure that step-by-step, more women can enjoy decent, fair work conditions as they pursue their professional football careers.

FIFPro is not advocating a change in the definition of professional players under the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players. Instead, it is advocating for female players to be recognized as professionals. That means being given the opportunity for a career path in football with decent and dignified working environments.

The ambiguity around the term 'professional' in the women's game today reflects the disparity and lack of standardisation in the sport. In this report, FIFPro created its own working definition of the female 'professional' player to accurately capture the reality across this fragmented landscape at the top of women's football today. This definition lets us include many more female players who should be counted - and thus protected - under the category of professional:

Players who receive income from any source for their footballing activity, in contrast to amateurs who do not receive any income for the same activity.

This remains one of the single biggest obstacles for the development of the sport and the role of women in sport: many of the best in the game are not professionals.

## UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

The analysis of the responses by the University of Manchester sought to identify global trends, regional and national phenomena, as well as particularities in the employment market for professional footballers, vis-à-vis workers in other sectors.

Cross tabulations, comparing results of two or more questions, can lead to a deeper understanding of the prevalence of certain phenomena as regards, for example, certain age groups, national or international players, or, more broadly, how results relate to each other. As this survey is intended to be the first of a series, its findings will provide a baseline for future comparison and measurement of specific areas.

MANCHESTER  
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The University of Manchester