



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Justice for Players Welcomes Support from Belgian Professional Football Players' Union 'United Athletes' for Class Action Against the KNVB, FIFA and EU Football Associations

Amsterdam, 18 November 2025: The Belgian trade union for professional football players (United Athletes) has announced their support for the Justice for Players (JfP) Foundation class action lawsuit against KNVB, FIFA and several national football associations, including the Belgian football association. United Athletes is the sport division of the "Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens", the largest trade union in Belgium, with 1.5 million members.

This announcement follows the French trade union for professional footballers (UNFP) joining the class action alongside Justice for Players in October and the Dutch professional players' union (VVCS) announcing its support for the class action last week.

On 4 August 2025, the Dutch foundation JfP announced that it is leading a class action against KNVB, FIFA and several European football associations, on behalf of players who have played in European and UK clubs since 2002: www.justiceforplayers.com.

A preliminary analysis by economists at Compass Lexecon has estimated that affected professional footballers have earned on average approximately 8% less over the course of their career than they would have if the FIFA Regulations had not been unlawfully restrictive.

In a statement today, United Athletes said:

"As explained on the "Justice for Players" website (<https://justiceforplayers.com/> , available in French, Dutch, English, German, and Spanish), this class action lawsuit aims first and foremost to obtain fair financial compensation for all current and former professional players, regardless of their nationality, who were under contract at some point in their careers with a club in an EU member state (including Belgium) or the United Kingdom, between 2002 and the present day. This financial compensation is due—based on the Diarra ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) (October 4, 2024)—due to the wage deflation caused by FIFA rules deemed illegal by the CJEU. As explained on the "Justice for Players" website, this wage deflation has been estimated at 8% of all the salaries received by each player throughout their entire career.

Furthermore (and this is essential!), the class action aims to get FIFA to (finally!) adopt, within the framework of a genuine dialogue, the governance reforms required by EU law, which includes co-decision-making power for players' unions on all matters relating to the working conditions and employment of players, in collaboration with the representative associations of clubs.

It is in this context that United Athletes also decided to lend its support to "Justice for Players".



Lucia Melcherts, Chair of Justice for Players, said: “United Athletes’ decision to support the Justice for Players class action marks a further important step forward in ensuring that the rights of professional footballers are upheld under European law. The salaries earned by players in Belgium, like those across the EU and UK, have been affected by FIFA’s unlawful transfer rules, as confirmed by the European Court of Justice. Our action seeks not only to secure the financial compensation owed to players for the earnings they have lost, but also to bring about lasting reform of the rules.

With United Athletes’ support following the UNFP and VVCS, momentum is continuing to build across Europe for a transparent, fair and lawful framework that is fairer to players.

We encourage all players who have played for a club in the EU or UK since 2002 to visit www.justiceforplayers.com to join the legal action and play their part in helping to ensure that a fairer system is developed that will benefit the sport as a whole.”

JfP is seeking substantive changes to the FIFA transfer rules so that they comply with EU law and reflect European values and principles of free movement. It follows from the Diarra-judgment of the European Court of Justice that all players were harmed as a result of the FIFA transfer rules.

An estimated 100,000 professional football players, men and women are eligible to join the legal action. For more information, please visit www.justiceforplayers.com

JfP has instructed Netherlands-based law firm Finch Dispute Resolution, which specialises in class actions in the Netherlands to represent it in the class action. Dupont-Hissel, the law firm that is representing Mr Lassana Diarra, is also advising JfP.

This legal action is fully funded by Deminor, one of Europe’s leading providers of legal finance, so that players will not have to pay to join the legal action or assume the financial risk of this legal action.

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Notes to Editors

About Justice for Players

Justice for Players was founded to advocate for the interests of professional footballers across Europe. The board comprises of three members: Lucia Melcherts, Dolf Segaar and Franco Baldini. Lucia Melcherts has been the chair of Stichting Massaschade & Consument (Foundation for Mass

Damages & Consumers) since 2021. She also holds the position of Coordinating Specialist Advisor at the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security. Dolf Segaar founded his own law firm Segaar Law in July 2021, specialising in governance and litigation, with a strong focus on sports law. Franco Baldini is a former professional footballer and agent and spent over 20 years in different senior management roles at top international clubs and organizations, including AS Roma, Real Madrid, Tottenham Hotspur and the England National Team. He currently runs his own consulting firm IC20 Ltd.

www.justiceforplayers.com

About Finch

Finch Dispute Resolution is an independent Dutch litigation boutique law firm, founded in 2022. With a team of around 18 specialised litigators and 5 partners based in Utrecht, the firm handles corporate, commercial, financial, and class-action disputes—domestically and internationally. Finch is involved in several high-profile class actions against, among others, Booking.com, AbbVie, Tata Steel, Royal Dutch Philips, and ING Group.

<https://finch.nl>

About Dupont-Hissel

Jean-Louis Dupont and Martin Hissel are specialists in European law, particularly as applied to the sports sector. Together they have defended hundreds of cases, acting on behalf of all stakeholders in the professional sports sector, before the CJEU, the European Commission, the European Court of Human Rights, national competition authorities, national courts, international (including CAS) and national arbitration tribunals, and the internal judicial bodies of national and international sports associations. In particular, they have led and co-managed cases that resulted in landmark judgements of the CJEU regarding sports governance in the EU and beyond: Bosman (1995), Meca-Medina (2006), Royal Antwerp FC (2023), European Super League (2023), Lassana Diarra (2024) and RFC Seraing (2025).

www.Dupont-Hissel.com