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Austrian professional football players' union VfF adds to growing support for Justice for Players legal action against FIFA and several EU football Associations

Amsterdam 4 December 2025: The Austrian professional players' union "Vereinigung der Fussballer" (VfF) has announced its support for the "Justice for Players" class action lawsuit against FIFA and several national football associations.

This announcement follows the French trade union for professional footballers (UNFP) joining the class action alongside Justice for Players in October, as well as the Dutch and the Belgian professional players' unions (VVCS and United Athletes) announcing their support for the class action lawsuit in November.

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

The primary aim of this class action is to obtain fair financial compensation for all professional players and former players, regardless of their nationality, who have been under contract at some point in their career with a club in an EU Member State including the United Kingdom between 2002 and the present day. This financial compensation is owed based on the CJEU's Diarra ruling (4 October 2024) – because of the wage deflation caused by FIFA rules deemed illegal by the CJEU.

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.

Furthermore, the class action aims to ensure that FIFA adopts, through genuine dialogue, the governance reforms required by EU law, which include co-decision-making power for players' unions on all matters relating to players' working and employment conditions, in collaboration with the associations representing the clubs.

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

VfF will soon be sending its members and former members an information email explaining in concrete terms how players and former players can register free of charge and anonymously for the class action in order to apply for compensation. To familiarise themselves with this procedure, those who wish to do so can already find all of the necessary information on the Justice for Players website. The registration form is available via this link: <https://register.justiceforplayers.com/en?ccs=111>



Gernot Baumgartner, President of the Austrian players' union, said: "To support the class action is a no-brainer: first, it is our natural job to help players and ex-players secure fair compensation for the damage they suffered. Second, we are convinced that this class action is indispensable to help obtaining sound reforms of governance."

Lucia Melcherts, Chair of Justice for Players, said: "VdF's 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 Austria, 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."

For JfP, VdF was the obvious partner for Austria, due to its consolidated history and high representativeness as well as to the fact that VdF is the Austrian member of Fifpro Europe, which is the European players organisation approved by the European Commission to represent the professional players in the European social dialogue.

With VdF's support following the UNFP, VVCS, and United Athletes, 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