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Five National Football Unions From the Balkans Have Announced Their Full Support for Justice for Players Following Support From France (UNFP), the Netherlands (VVCS), Belgium (United Athletes) and Austria (VdF)

Amsterdam 9 December 2025: Five more national football players' unions have announced their support for the Justice for Players class action lawsuit against FIFA and several national football associations. The latest endorsements come from the national professional football players' unions of Slovenia (SPINS), Croatia (HUNS), Bosnia and Herzegovina (SPFBIH), North Macedonia (SFM), and Serbia (SPFN).

This announcement follows the French trade union for professional footballers (UNFP) joining the class action as a plaintiff alongside Justice for Players in October, as well as the Dutch, Belgian and Austrian professional players' unions (VVCS, United Athletes, and VdF) recently announcing their support for the class action lawsuit. With these announcements, the total number of European football players' unions backing the Justice for Players class action against FIFA has now reached nine.

These nine players' unions will inform their current and former members about the class action. Through their combined outreach, between 25,000 and 35,000 players and ex-players (both male and female) will be reached. All nine national unions are members of FIFPRO Europe, the European umbrella body representing professional footballers, and play an active role in representing players' interests at EU level through the European Social Dialogue.

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.

Lucia Melcherts, Chair of Justice for Players, said: “We welcome the support of five additional national players’ unions from across the Balkans, as it marks a major step forward in protecting the rights of professional footballers under European law. Players in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia, like their colleagues across the EU and the UK, have been negatively affected by FIFA’s unlawful regulations. This collective action seeks to secure the financial compensation owed to players for the losses they have suffered and to drive lasting, structural reform of the football governance framework.

The endorsement of SPINS, HUNS, SPFBIH, SFM and SPFN reflects the growing unity and strength of the players’ movement across Europe. Together with the earlier support from UNFP, VVCS, United Athletes and VdF, the growing support for this class action sends a clear message that players will no longer accept an unfair and unlawful system.

We encourage all current and former players who have played for a club in the EU or UK since 2002 to visit www.justiceforplayers.com and join the legal action, helping to build a fairer future for football.”

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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