

**FIFA®**

# RE PO RT



## International Transfer Snapshot

SEPTEMBER 2023



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# 01. OVERVIEW

This is the fourth annual edition of FIFA's International Transfer Snapshot, released shortly after the conclusion of the mid-year transfer window, during which transfer activity is usually at its peak. This report encompasses all international transfers involving professional football players that occurred between 1 June and 1 September 2023 and provides a comprehensive overview of the key metrics that reveal the current state of affairs within the professional ranks of both men's and women's football.

The figures show a clear upwards trend, both in terms of the number of completed transfers (+2.2% and +19.1% in men's and women's professional football, respectively) and the total spending on international transfer fees (+47.2% and +140.8%, respectively). While most of the spending came from clubs in Europe (81.6%), a substantial part of this growth was also driven by clubs in Saudi Arabia, which spent a total of USD 875.4 million – the second largest amount out of any association in this period.

In men's professional football, a total of 10,125 transfers were completed during the 2023 mid-year window – a new all-time high for the transfer window in the middle of the year. Almost 20% of these transfers included a transfer fee. In total, transfer fees amounting to USD 7.36 billion were agreed between clubs. While the vast majority of this money was spent by clubs based in Europe, this represents a drastic increase of 47.2% compared to the total outlay in the same period last year and it even surpasses the previous record of USD 5.80 billion, set in the mid-year window of 2019, by more than 25%.

The FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023™ fuelled the growing enthusiasm for women's football around the world even further and also spurred the transfer activity in the women's game to new heights. Compared to the 2022 mid-year transfer window, total spending on transfer fees more than doubled, reaching a record high of USD 3.0 million in the 2023 mid-year transfer window. A total of 829 transfers were completed – an increase of 19.1% compared to the 2022 mid-year window.



# 02. MEN'S PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

## Transfers and transfer fees

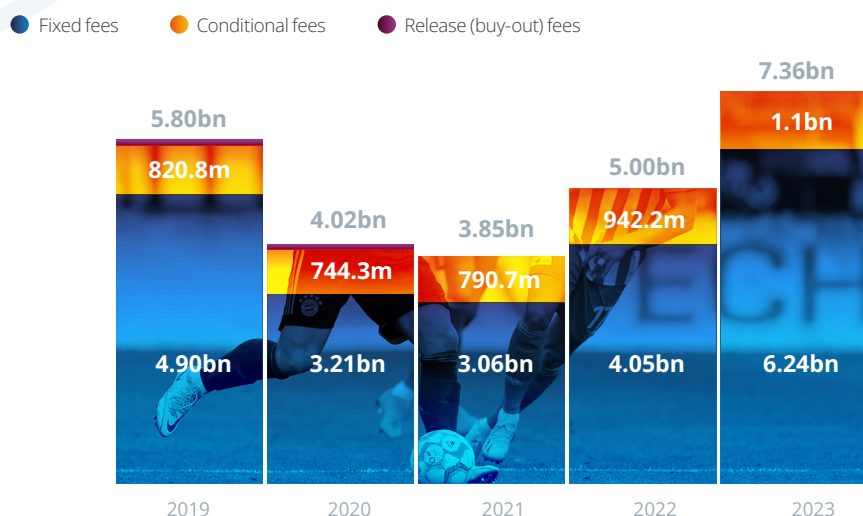
With a total of 10,125 international transfers and total spending on transfer fees of USD7.36billion, the 2023 mid-year transfer window set new records.<sup>1</sup> Compared to the 2022 mid-year transfer window, the number of transfers grew by 2.2% and spending on transfer fees increased by more than 45%, meaning that even the previous mid-year record, set in 2019, was surpassed by 26.8%.

Figure 1: International transfers during the mid-year transfer window



**10,125**  
international  
transfers in the 2023  
mid-year window, a  
new record

Figure 2: Transfer fees in USD during the mid-year transfer window



USD  
**7.36bn**  
spent on transfer  
fees, more than in  
any other mid-year  
window

<sup>1</sup> At the time of publication, there were 616 pending transfers for which an International Transfer Certificate (ITC) had been requested by the engaging association before the end of the 2023 mid-year transfer window. If the releasing association issues the ITC in any of these transfers, the figures for this period will change accordingly.



## Football agents in transfers

The total amount of service fees for club agents declared in international transfers during the 2023 mid-year transfer window was USD 696.6 million. This constitutes the highest-ever total for a mid-year transfer window and corresponds to nearly 10% of the total spending on transfer fees. Ten years ago, in the mid-year transfer window of 2013, this ratio was much lower as the service fees for club agents amounted to 5.8% of all transfer fees.

Even though there still are more than three months of 2023 to go, the total amount of service fees for club agents since the beginning of the year has already reached USD 865.0 million. This is also the highest total ever recorded and 38.8% higher than in the whole of 2022. As TMS only captures service fees paid for club agents in international transfers, this total does not include service fees paid in the context of domestic transfers or any service fees paid to player agents. The full revenue of all football agents is thus likely to be even substantially higher.

Club agent service fees reached  
**9.5%**  
of the total transfer fees in the mid-year transfer window 2023

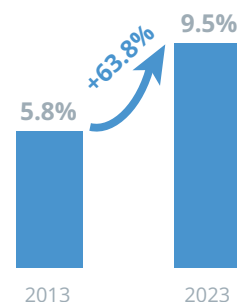
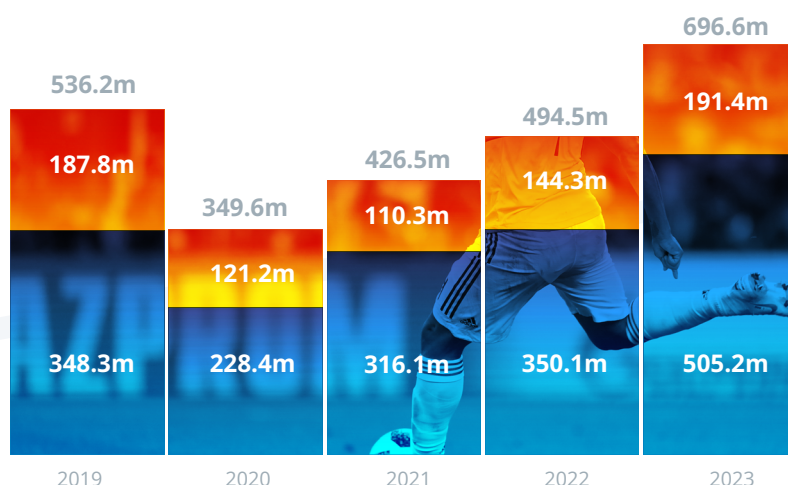


Figure 3: Spending on service fees for club agents during the mid-year transfer window

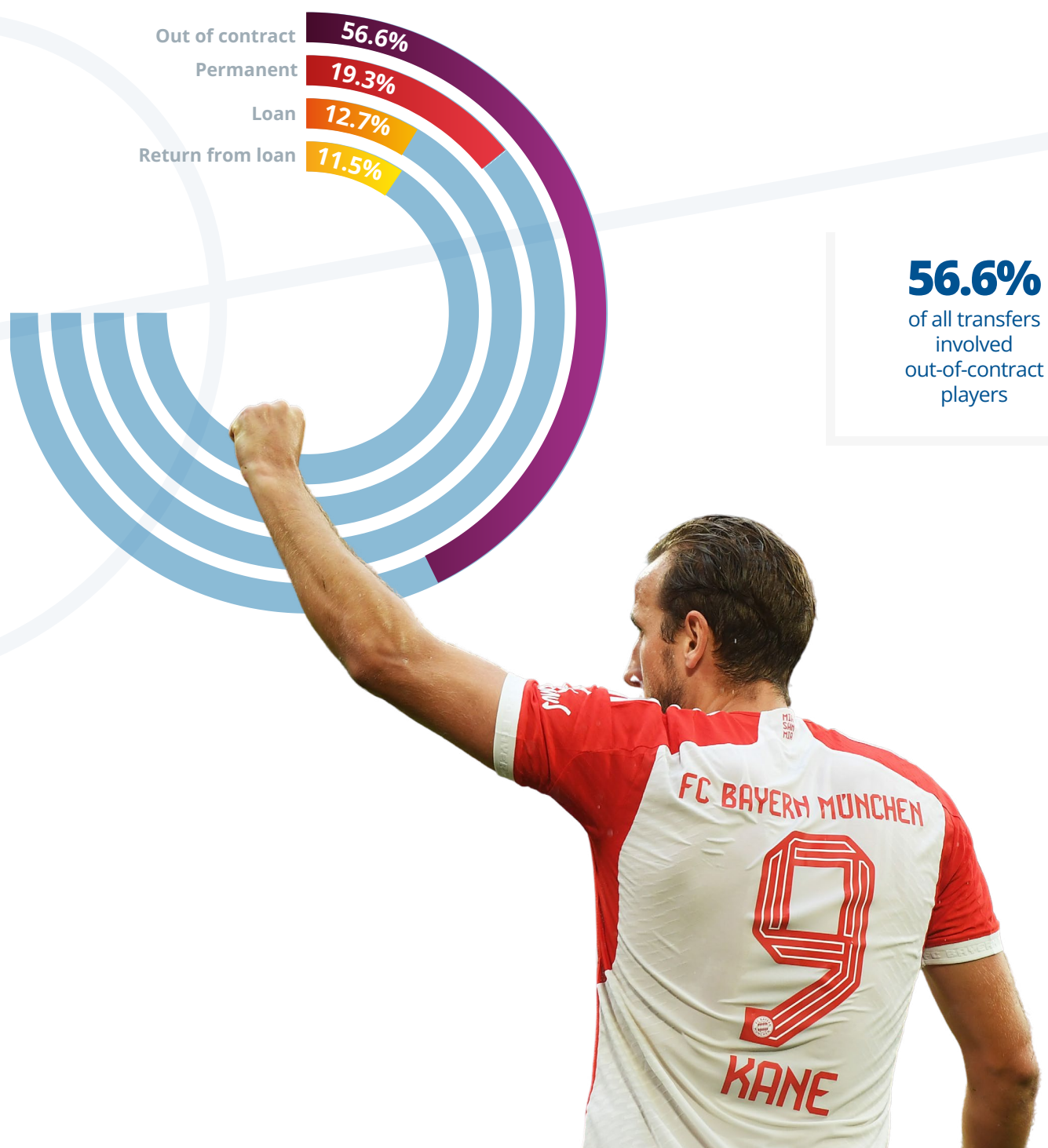
Agent type ● Engaging club ● Releasing club



## Transfer types

As in previous years, out-of-contract transfers once again constituted the majority of transfers during the 2023 mid-year transfer window, namely 56.6% of the total. The remaining 43.4% of all transfers consisted of permanent transfers (19.3%), loan deals (12.7%) or players returning to their parent clubs from a loan (11.5%).

Figure 4: Transfers by type (mid-year 2023)



## Transfers and fees by player age

Players between the ages of 18 and 23 were involved in more than half (52.8%) of the 1,985 international transfers that included a transfer fee, followed by players aged 24 to 29 (38.7%). These two groups also accounted for the majority of the total spend on transfer fees (47.3% and 43.3%, respectively). However, the highest average transfer fee (USD 5.9 million) was in fact recorded for the 106 transfers with fees of players aged 30 or older.

Players aged 30 or older accounted for

**5.3%**

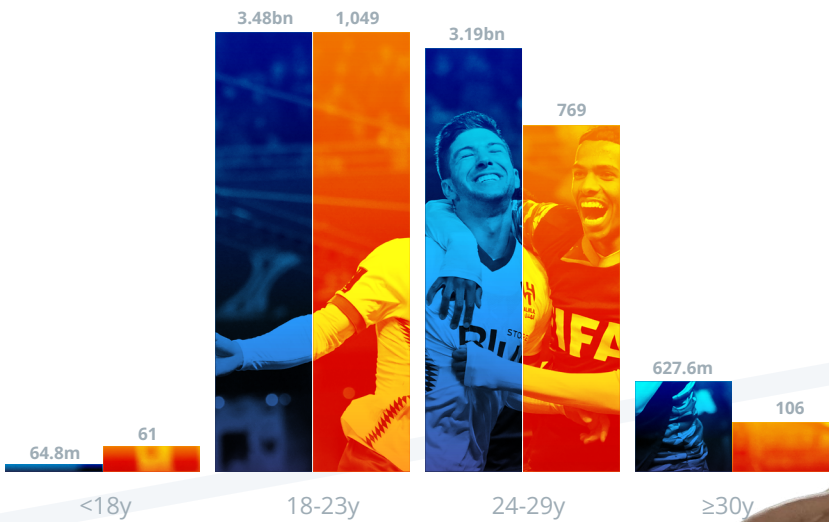
of all transfers with fees and for

**8.5%**

of the total spend on transfer fees

Figure 5: Spending on transfer fees in USD and number of transfers with transfer fees by player age (mid-year 2023)

● Transfer fees (USD) ● Number of transfers with fees



## Transfers by confederation

More than 75% of all international transfers during the 2023 mid-year transfer window involved at least one club from UEFA. Similarly, European clubs were responsible for more than 80% of the global total spending on transfer fees and received more than 90% of these fees. With a total outlay of USD 1.03 billion, clubs from the AFC accounted for 14.0% of the total spend on international transfer fees in the 2023 mid-year transfer window. This is the first time ever that spending on transfer fees by clubs from any confederation other than UEFA surpassed 10% of the global total.

Figure 6: Transfers and transfer fees in USD by confederation (mid-year 2023)

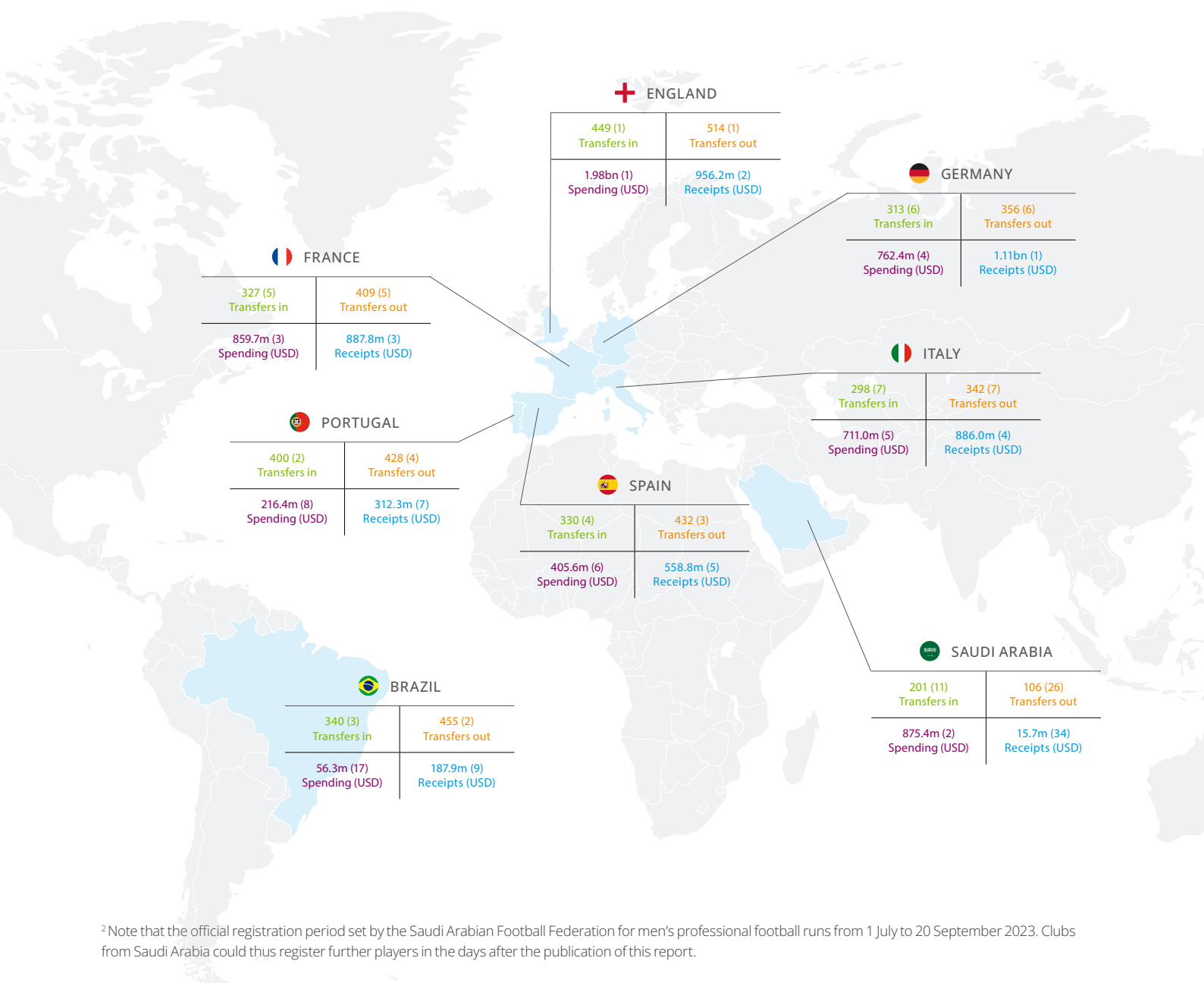


*The amounts for spending on and receipts from transfer fees are only shown for confederations with at least five incoming and outgoing transfers with transfer fees respectively.*

## Top associations

Clubs from England registered a combined total outlay of USD 1.98 billion, once again the highest total of any association. Among the associations with the greatest transfer fees, Saudi Arabia experienced by far the biggest growth compared to the previous mid-year transfer window. Saudi clubs spent a total of USD 875.4 million on transfer fees during the 2023 mid-year window, the second highest of all associations and more than 3,100% more than a year earlier.<sup>2</sup> Clubs from Germany led the way in terms of the transfer fees they received from outgoing transfers with an intake of USD 1.11 billion, representing more than 15% of the global total.

Figure 7: Associations featuring in at least one of the top five rankings by incoming transfers, outgoing transfers, spending on transfer fees or receipts from transfer fees (mid-year 2023, global ranks in parentheses)



<sup>2</sup> Note that the official registration period set by the Saudi Arabian Football Federation for men's professional football runs from 1 July to 20 September 2023. Clubs from Saudi Arabia could thus register further players in the days after the publication of this report.





# 03. WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

## Transfers and transfer fees

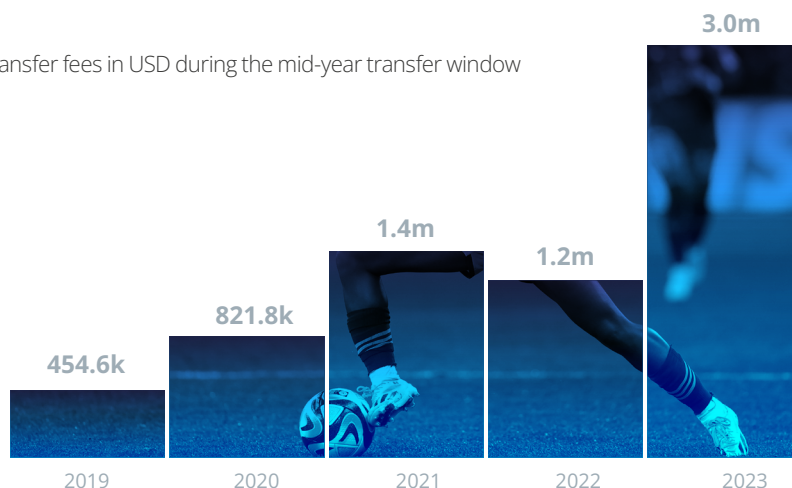
After celebrating the biggest-ever FIFA Women's World Cup™ in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, the women's game is currently at the centre of attention more than ever before. Women's leagues and clubs all around the globe are keeping that momentum up in their preparations for the new season. A total of 829 international player transfers were completed during the 2023 mid-year transfer window, representing an increase of 19.1% compared to the previous mid-year window. Spending on international transfer fees also reached new heights in the mid-year window of 2023, with a total of USD 3.0 million spent – more than ever before and 140.8% above the level of the 2022 mid-year window. There was at least one agent acting on behalf of a club in 73 of the 829 transfers in the 2023 mid-year window. The total service fees for agents reached USD 0.9 million – more than 30% of the clubs' spending on transfer fees.

Figure 8: International transfers during the mid-year transfer window



**829**  
international transfers,  
an increase of  
19.1% compared to the  
2022 mid-year window

Figure 9: Transfer fees in USD during the mid-year transfer window



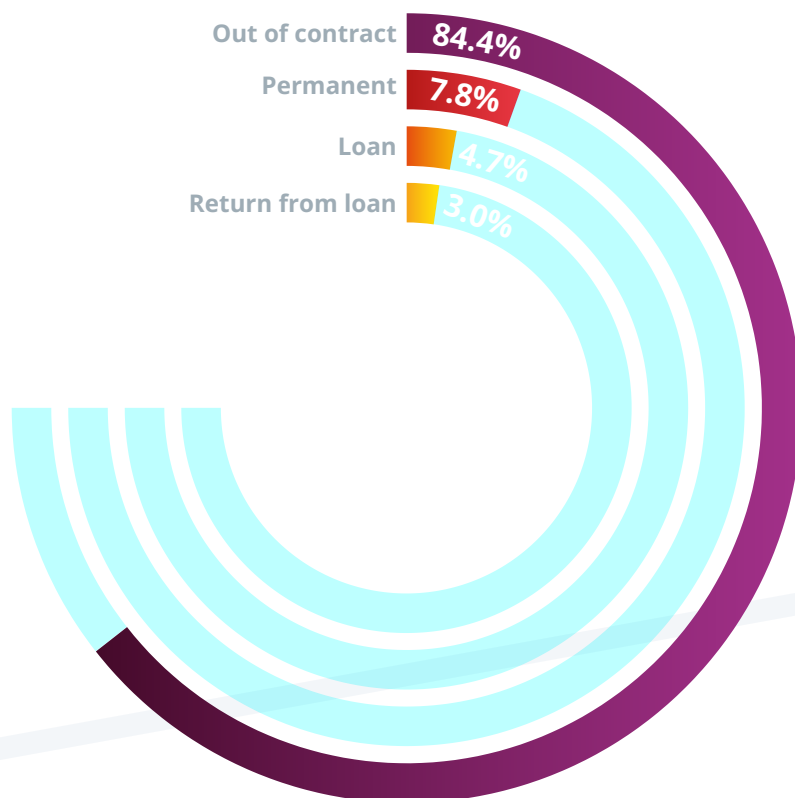
USD  
**3.0m**  
spent on transfer fees,  
140.8% more than in  
the 2022  
mid-year window

## Transfer types

As in the men's game, most transfers in the 2023 mid-year transfer window (84.4%) involved out-of-contract players, slightly less than in the equivalent period last year (87.2%). About half of the remaining transfers consisted of permanent transfers (7.8%), with the other half split between loan deals (4.7%) and players returning to their parent clubs from a loan (3.0%).

**84.4%**  
of all transfers  
involved  
out-of-contract  
players

Figure 10: Transfers by type (mid-year 2023)

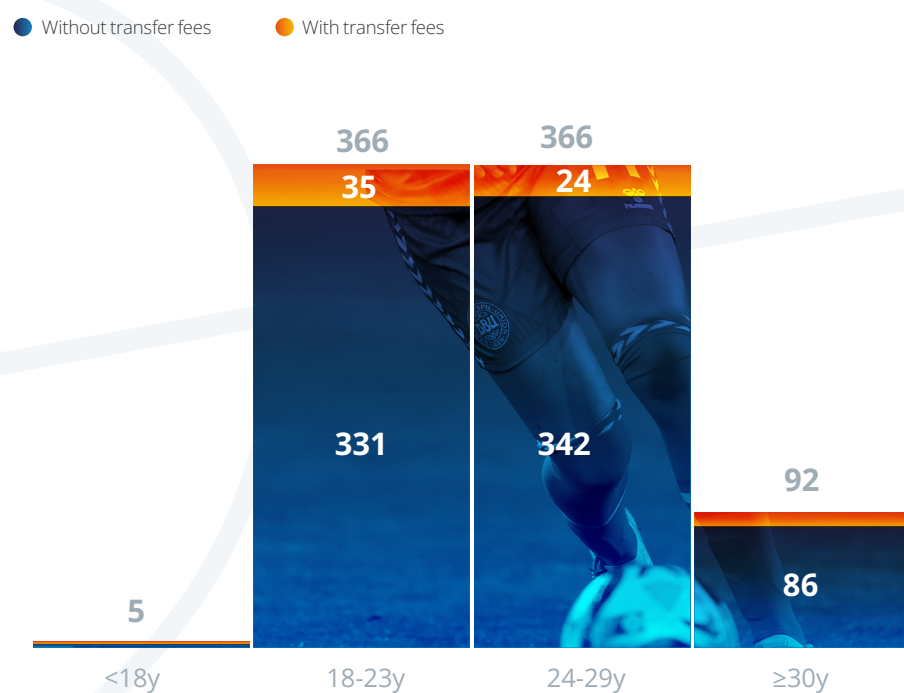


## Transfers by player age

Players between 18 and 23 years of age and those between the ages of 24 and 29 were equally represented in international transfers in the 2023 mid-year transfer window, with each of these groups accounting for 44.1% of all transfers. While 18- to 23-year-old players were involved in the highest number of transfers with fees, the total spending on transfer fees was dominated by those aged 24 to 29, with total fees of USD 1.7 million (57.4% of the total).

Players aged 24-29 accounted for **44.1%** of all transfers and for **57.4%** of the spending on transfer fees

Figure 11: Transfers by player age (mid-year 2023)



## Transfers by confederation

The majority of international transfers of female professional players in the 2023 mid-year transfer window involved clubs in UEFA (634 incoming and 565 outgoing transfers). The biggest relative increase in the number of incoming transfers happened in CAF, where clubs registered 50% more players from abroad than in the 2022 mid-year window.

Figure 12: Number of incoming and outgoing transfers in the 2023 mid-year transfer window and growth rates compared to the 2022 mid-year transfer window by confederation



## Top associations

With 55 incoming transfers, clubs from Germany registered the highest number of new players in the 2023 mid-year transfer window. On the releasing side, France was number one, with 53 outgoing transfers. The USA was the only non-European association among the top five, with 33 incoming transfers (number 5 in the world) and 48 outgoing transfers (number 3 in the world).

Figure 13: Associations featuring in at least one of the top five rankings by incoming or outgoing transfers in the 2023 mid-year transfer window and growth rates compared to the 2022 mid-year transfer window (global ranks in parentheses)





# METHODOLOGY

All transfer data provided in this report relates exclusively to international transfers of professional football players within the scope of 11-a-side football.

Transfer data has been analysed for all transfers completed between 1 June 2023 and 1 September 2023. The data was extracted from TMS on 6 September 2023. When making comparisons with previous years, we used the interval from 1 June to the last day of the official registration period of most European associations, i.e. 1 September for 2022, 31 August for 2021, 5 October for 2020 and 2 September for 2019.

All references to transfer fees in this report are to the sum of all fixed, conditional and release (buyout) fees as declared in TMS. All fees are treated as upfront payments for calculation purposes, notwithstanding any instalment plans that may be agreed by clubs. All amounts are automatically converted into USD based on the conversion rate on the day when the transfer instruction is entered in TMS.

The numbers that feature in this report have been rounded.

Ties in graphs showing the top five associations have been broken at random.

We distinguish between four types of international transfers:

- Out of contract: when players who are no longer contractually bound to any former club sign an employment contract with a new club in a different association and no transfer agreement between clubs has been signed.
- Loan: when players are temporarily engaged by a new club: a) on the basis of a loan agreement between the club with which they have an employment contract and a club of another association, during the term of their employment contract with their parent club; or b) when the loan is extended by the new club with the agreement of the parent club.
- Return from loan: when players return to their parent club after a loan spell at another club.
- Permanent: when players are permanently engaged by a new club and a transfer agreement is signed between the new club and the former club, or when a club permanently engages players it has had on loan, with the agreement of the former club.



# DISCLAIMER

The information in this report is based on individual transaction data provided directly by football clubs in TMS. FIFA assumes no responsibility for the accuracy, completeness and reliability of the information provided by the clubs. With regard to any technical references included in this report, please be advised that in the event of any contradiction between this report and the actual text of the relevant regulations, the latter shall always prevail. Equally, this report may not alter existing jurisprudence of the competent decision-making bodies and is without prejudice to any decision that the said bodies might be called upon to pass in the future.

Due to the nature of the TMS database, the presence of pending transfers, the potential cancellation of transfers, and data corrections, numbers may differ from one report to another. In the event of any contradiction between this report and other publications by FIFA, the most recent shall always prevail.

## Source of data and preparation of report

The source of all data and information (unless explicitly stated otherwise) is:

FIFA  
Legal Strategic Projects Subdivision  
Legal & Compliance Division  
Zurich, Switzerland

## Data protection

The data contained in TMS and in this review is covered by Swiss data protection law.



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