



UEFA EUROPEAN AFFAIRS & GOVERNANCE

Governance consequences of EU sports law developments

The European Circuit – *Cross-border law in action: sport, sanctions and beyond*

Brussels, 11 June 2026

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About me



LIFE-LONG FOOTBALL LOVER

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY EU LAW TEXTBOOKS
TOOK PLACE OF FOOTBALL MAGAZINES

HUGE PRIVILEGE TO WORK ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
ON BEHALF OF EUROPEAN FOOTBALL

MOTIVATING TO WORK IN AN ORG/MODEL THAT IS
COMMITTED TO SOCIETAL OBJECTIVES

STILL REMEMBER WHERE I FIRST PLAYED. WISH I
COULD STILL PLAY 😊

Context

- Continued recognition of specific characteristics and legitimate objectives – not a fundamental challenge to specificity
 - Increasing scrutiny on how objectives and corresponding rules are developed, evidenced and justified
 - Leading to real change in governance consequences from EU sport law developments
 - Shift towards SGB legitimacy through process, evidence and stakeholder participation
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Point 1 – Evidence and process matter (more than ever?)



COURT OF JUSTICE
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

PRESS RELEASE No 203/23

Luxembourg, 21 December 2023

Judgment of the Court in Case C-333/21 | European Superleague Company



Thursday 14 Dec 2023

Shares

**FA RULE K ARBITRATION AWARD
PUBLISHED FOLLOWING
PROCEEDINGS BY FOOTBALL
AGENCIES**



award has been published today following the proceedings by football
ional Football Agent Regulations [NFAR] implementation.

European Leagues statement on the new solidarity
mechanism implemented by UEFA for its club
competitions

NEWS 24/09/2024 | EL NEWS



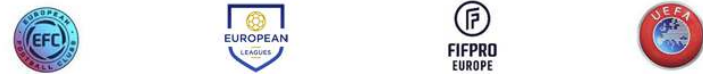
STATEMENT

New solidarity mechanism
implemented by UEFA for its club
competitions

Bosman asked whether sport was
subject to EU law.

The modern cases increasingly ask
how sporting autonomy should be
exercised within EU law.

Point 2 – From litigation to social dialogue (globally?)



EU Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Professional Football

Resolution of European social partners on the key principles of the football transfer system and its reform



FIFPRO STATEMENT
JUDGEMENT OF THE ECJ IN THE CASE OF LASSANA DIARRA VS FIFA
4 OCTOBER, 2024

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) has ruled that a central part of the FIFA transfer system, in place since 2001, constitutes a restriction of competition by object and a violation of the free movement of workers. On behalf of professional football players worldwide, FIFPRO welcomes these findings.

The ECJ has just handed down a major ruling on the regulation of the labour market in football (and, more generally, in sport), which will change the landscape of professional football.

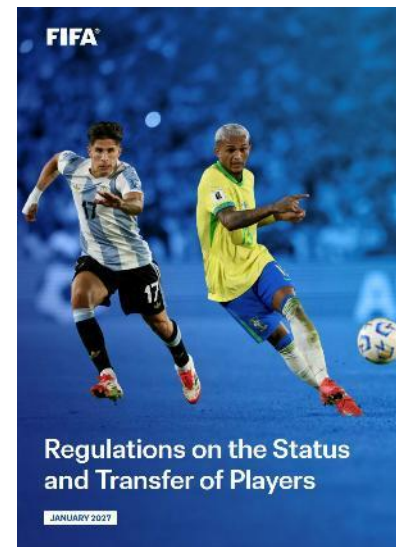
In this case, Lassana Diarra and FIFPRO/FIFPRO Europe/UNFP were up against FIFA and the Belgian Football Federation.

FIFPRO/FIFPRO Europe/UNFP will communicate in more detail after analysing the ruling in depth.

European football unites behind key principles of the football transfer system and its reform
Monday, December 1, 2025

Media Releases

EFC, European Leagues, FIFPRO Europe and UEFA driving change through EU social dialogue.

A group photograph of approximately 15 people, including men and women in business attire, standing in front of a screen displaying a video conference.

Diarra did not ultimately produce a purely legal solution.

It produced a governance solution.

Point 3 – Representativeness as the next big thing?



Fifa 'promoting fake unions' in player welfare consultation, says Fifpro

World players' union angered after not being invited to Morocco meeting convened by governing body.

☆ 11 NOVEMBER 2025 | PA

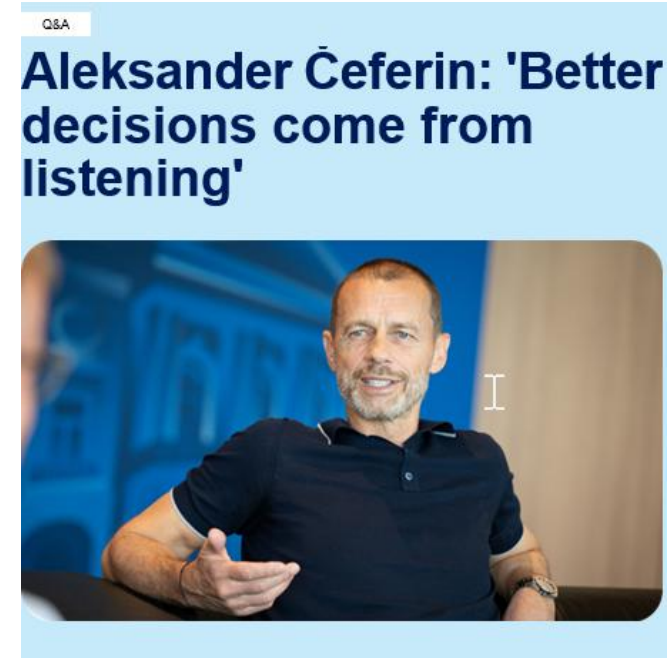
NEWS



How far does consultation need to extend before governance becomes effective? And how far can it extend before governance becomes impossible?

Conclusion

- Challenge for European sport is no longer proving that it is special – debate is largely settled
- Key is ensuring special characteristics are governed in a way that commands trust
- The future of sport governance will depend not only on the legitimacy of its rules, but on the legitimacy of the processes that create them



"The goal is to make UEFA a place where the football family can disagree constructively while still moving forward together."



Thank you

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL