

Talent scouting: an experience capital approach

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1. Introduction

Playing numerous games during the first years of a professional career is an essential condition in order to be able to compete in the top-level leagues worldwide. This report identifies the most promising U23 players in 31 top division championships in UEFA member associations by analysing their “experience capital” (fig.1). This notion refers to matches played in adult championships up until 23 years of age. This age is also taken into account by FIFA for the payment of training compensation when a first professional contract is signed.

To calculate experience capital, we attribute different values to matches according to an exclusive classification method that takes into account the performance of national association representatives in European club competitions¹, the division of the employer club in the domestic league and results achieved.

This report firstly analyses the level of experience of footballers currently employed by big-5 league clubs. We highlight the crucial role played by leagues outside of these championships in the sporting development of footballers up until the age of 23 (chapter 2). We then present the highest values for experience capital for under 23 players taking part in the leagues listed below (chapter 3). The latter are ranked in three categories: top level leagues (big-5), intermediate leagues and stepping stone leagues (fig.1).

¹ For extra-European countries, the value of matches was established according to correspondences made with European associations. For example, all other things being equal, a Brazilian first division match is equivalent to one in the top Portuguese league.

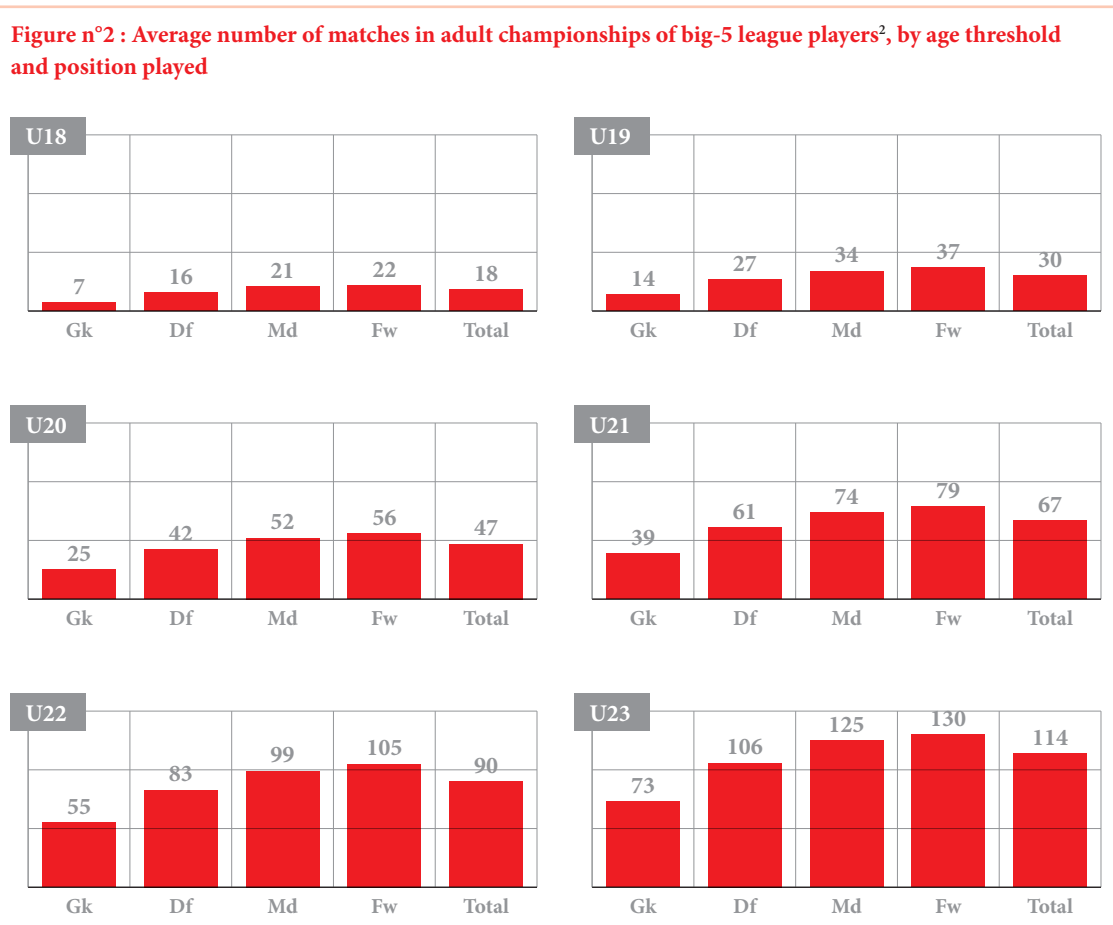
Figure n°1 : Leagues analysed and sporting level

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Top leagues (5) | England (Premier League), France (Ligue 1), Germany (Bundesliga), Italy (Serie A) and Spain (Liga) |
| Intermediate leagues (7) | Belgium (Pro League), Greece (Super League), The Netherlands (Eredivisie), Portugal (Primeira Liga), Russia (Premier League), Turkey (Süper Lig) and Ukraine (Premier League) |
| Stepping stone leagues (19) | Austria (Bundesliga), Belarus (Vysheyschaya Liga), Bulgaria (A League), Croatia (Prva HNL), Cyprus (Division I), Czech Republic (First League), Denmark (Superligaen), Finland (Velkkausliiga), Hungary (NB I Liga), Israel (Ligat Ha'al), Norway (Tippeligaen), Poland (Ekstraklasa), Romania (Liga I), Serbia (SuperLiga), Scotland (Premiership), Slovakia (Super Liga), Slovenia (PrvaLiga), Sweden (Allsvenskan) and Switzerland (Super League) |

2. Experience capital of players in the big-5 leagues

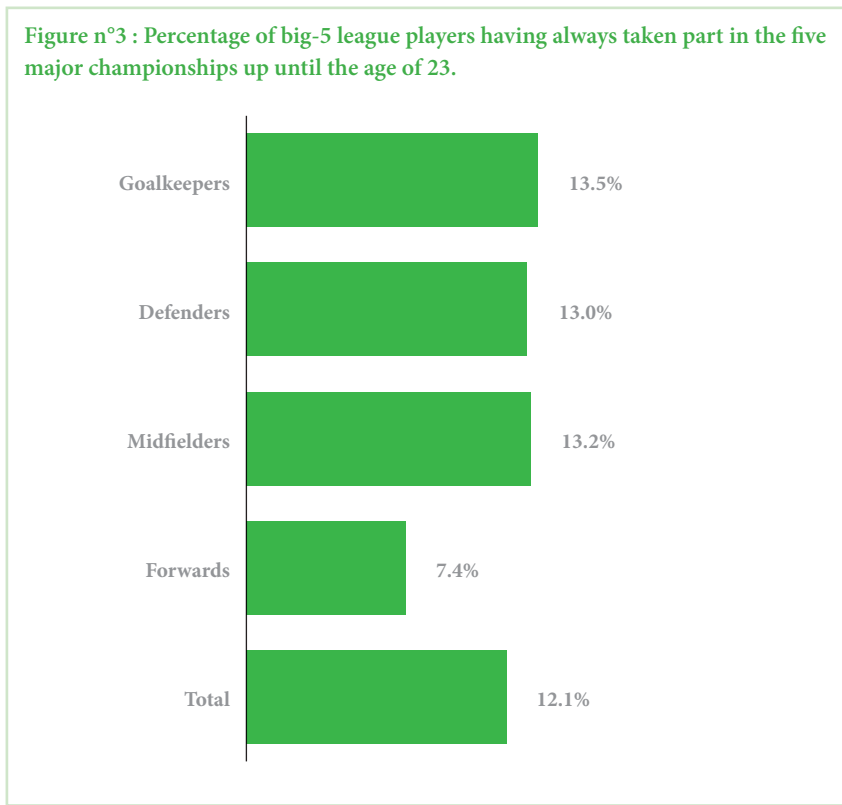
Current big-5 league footballers played on average 114 matches since the start of their professional career up until the semester of their 23rd birthday. The average number of matches played is 18 at 18 years of age, 30 at age 19, 47 at age 20, 67 at age 21, 90 at age 22 and 114 at age 23 (fig.2). Generally speaking, forwards start their professional career earlier and are thus likely to play a greater number of matches than footballers in other positions for each age threshold taken into account.

²B-team matches not taken into account.

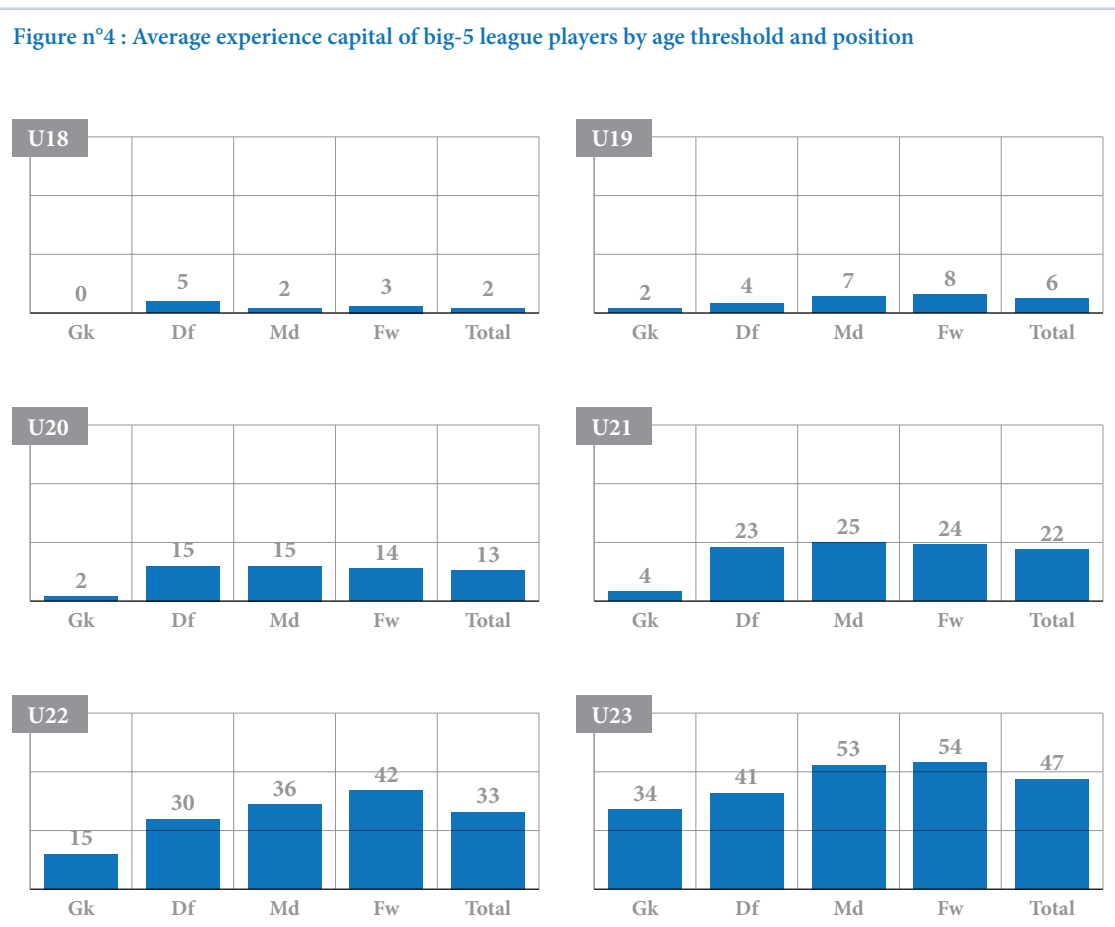


Among players aged 23 or over currently under contract with big-5 league clubs, only 12.1% have always played in teams taking part in the top European championships between the start of the professional career and their 23rd birthday (fig.3). The percentage of footballers having always played in the top leagues is particularly low among forwards (7.4%). This figure is approximately 13% for other positions. This data emphasises the crucial role of leagues outside the big-5 in the career development of players. Except for some exceptions, this holds true also for the most talented footballers.

Figure n°3 : Percentage of big-5 league players having always taken part in the five major championships up until the age of 23.



The analysis of average experience capital for big-5 league players, obtained by weighting the number of matches played according to league level and results, allows us to establish thresholds above which footballers from outside these championships have the best chance of gaining entry to them in the near future (see chapter 3). These values are calculated by position in order to take into account the differences in the sporting development of the career as described above. This analysis shows that in order to have a successful career in the big-5, midfielders and forwards must acquire more experience capital earlier on than defenders and goalkeepers (fig.4).



3. Tomorrow's stars

This section presents the five players with the highest values in terms of experience capital according to age category and position. We present rankings for the five major European championships (top leagues), intermediate level leagues and stepping stone leagues (see chapter 1). This approach permits the easy comparison of the values for experience capital. It also allows us to identify players outside the big-5 leagues who are most likely to join the most competitive championships, while also taking into account the average values presented in chapter 2.

Thanks to this analysis, we are able to highlight not only well-known players such as Thibaut Courtois, Romelu Lukaku, Raheem Sterling or Luke Shaw, but also footballers not yet taking part in the big-5 leagues but of whom we will surely hear much about in the future. We could mention Tonny Vilhena, Jetro Willems, Valon Berisha or Georgi Milanov, for example.

U20 [players born on or after 01/01/1995]

Goalkeepers

| Top leagues | Intermediate leagues | Stepping stone leagues |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Mouez Hassen , Nice (FRA) 12.1 | 1. Roman Pidkivka , Karpaty Lviv (UKR) 8.8 | 1. Georgi Kitanov , Chernomorets (BUL) 23.8 |
| 2. Simone Scuffet , Udinese (ITA) 10.8 | 2. Vitali Gudiev , Terek Grozny (RUS) 3.2 | 2. Dominik Livakovic , NK Zagreb (CRO) 18.8 |
| 3. Valentin Belon , Lens (FRA) 1.5 | 3. Miroslav Lobantsev , Lok. Moskva (RUS) 2.0 | 3. Predrag Rajković , Crvena Zvezda (SRB) 11.4 |
| 4. Rubén Blanco , Celta Vigo (ESP) 1.3 | 4. Anton Mitryushkin , Spart. Moskva (RUS) 1.5 | 4. Bartolomiej Drągowski , Jagiellonia (POL) 8.0 |
| 5. Pierluigi Gollini , Hellas Verona (ITA) 1.3 | 5. Sergey Revyakin , CSKA Moskva (RUS) 1.5 | 5. Vanja Milinković-Savić , Vojvodina (SRB) 7.8 |

Full Backs

| Top leagues | Intermediate leagues | Stepping stone leagues |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Luke Shaw , Manchester Utd (ENG) 65.8 | 1. Eduard Sobol , Metalurg Donetsk (UKR) 29.4 | 1. Stephen Hendrie , Hamilton Accies (SCO) 25.7 |
| 2. Calum Chambers , Arsenal (ENG) 41.4 | 2. Elmir Nabiullin , Rubin Kazan (RUS) 15.8 | 2. Tilen Klemenčič , Celje (SVN) 19.1 |
| 3. Jean-Philippe Gbamin , Lens (FRA) 22.7 | 3. Timothy Castagne , Genk (BEL) 11.7 | 3. Ebenezer Ofori , Solna (SWE) 16.3 |
| 4. José Gayá , Valencia (ESP) 21.4 | 4. Yarouba Cissako , Zulte Waregem (BEL) 10.9 | 4. Sebastian Rudol , Pogoń Szczecin (POL) 15.7 |
| 5. Dimitri Cavaré , Lens (FRA) 8.5 | 5. B. Bolingoli-Mbombo , Club Brugge (BEL) 8.8 | 5. Nicolae Vasile , Rapid București (ROM) 12.5 |

Centre Backs

| Top leagues | Intermediate leagues | Stepping stone leagues |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Niklas Süle , Hoffenheim (GER) 36.4 | 1. Ahmed El Messaoudi , Lierse (BEL) 9.1 | 1. Milan Škriniar , MŠK Žilina (SVK) 21.8 |
| 2. Tin Jedvaj , Leverkusen (GER) 25.9 | 2. Derrick Luckassen , Alkmaar (NED) 7.4 | 2. Marius Hoibraten , Strømsgodset (NOR) 16.2 |
| 3. Alessio Romagnoli , Sampdoria (ITA) 25.6 | 3. Sandy Walsh , Genk (BEL) 6.6 | 3. John Souttar , Dundee United (SCO) 12.3 |
| 4. José Giménez , Atlético Madrid (ESP) 16.1 | 4. Rami Bensebaini , Lierse (BEL) 4.5 | 4. Björn Utvik , Sogndal (NOR) 11.3 |
| 5. Gjoko Zajkov , Rennes (FRA) 12.0 | | 5. Srdjan Babić , Vojvodina (SRB) 10.9 |

Defensive/central midfielders

| Top leagues | Intermediate leagues | Stepping stone leagues |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Carlos Gruezo , Stuttgart (GER) 51.0 | 1. Tonny Vilhena , Feyenoord (NED) 76.8 | 1. Ionut Serban , Din. București (ROM) 48.0 |
| 2. Adrien Rabiot , PSG (FRA) 50.2 | 2. Youri Tielemans , Anderlecht (BEL) 33.7 | 2. Karol Linetty , Lech Poznań (POL) 30.3 |
| 3. Melker Hallberg , Udinese (SWE) 27.7 | 3. Jorrit Hendrix , PSV (NED) 32.6 | 3. Saša Zdjelar , OFK Beograd (SRB) 18.9 |
| 4. Pierre Höjbjerg , Augsburg (GER) 26.4 | 4. Nebojša Kosović , Standard (HUN) 23.9 | 4. Nikola Kolev , Litex Lovech (BUL) 13.3 |
| 5. Wylan Cyprien , Lens (FRA) 22.9 | 5. Danny Bakker , Den Haag (NED) 21.4 | 5. Charis Kyriakou , Apollon Limassol (CYP) 13.0 |

Attacking midfielders

| Top leagues | Intermediate leagues | Stepping stone leagues |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Maximilian Meyer , Schalke (GER) 52.8 | 1. Daley Sinkgraven , Ajax (NED) 26.8 | 1. Pione Sisto , Midtjylland (DEN) 36.4 |
| 2. Adnan Januzaj , Manchester Utd (ENG) 42.2 | 2. Otávio da Silva , Vitória Guimarães (POR) 26.7 | 2. Przemysław Frankowski , Jagiellonia (POL) 28.2 |
| 3. Leon Goretzka , Schalke (GER) 40.5 | 3. Aleksey Miranchuk , Lok. Moskva (RUS) 19.2 | 3. Simon Gustafson , Häcken (SWE) 26.7 |
| 4. Julian Green , Hamburg (GER) 31.4 | 4. Thom Haye , Alkmaar (NED) 17.0 | 4. Simon Skrabb , Atvidaberg (SWE) 24.4 |
| 5. Alen Halilović , Barcelona (ESP) 30.7 | 5. Ryan Gauld , Sporting CP (POR) 16.9 | 5. Herman Stengel , Vålerenga (NOR) 24.0 |

Forwards

| Top leagues | Intermediate leagues | Stepping stone leagues |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Divock Origi , Lille (FRA) 48.2 | 1. Bilal Basacikoglu , Feyenoord (NED) 27.9 | 1. Marko Pjaca , Dinamo Zagreb (CRO) 35.3 |
| 2. Ángel Correa , Atlético Madrid (ESP) 32.1 | 2. Richairo Živković , Ajax (NED) 27.2 | 2. Dorin Rotariu , Din. București (ROM) 33.7 |
| 3. Santi Mina , Celta Vigo (ESP) 28.7 | 3. Taxiarchis Fountas , Panionios (GRE) 26.6 | 3. Cameron Smith , Aberdeen (SCO) 23.1 |
| 4. Timo Werner , Stuttgart (GER) 28.7 | 4. Ricardo Kishna , Ajax (NED) 25.2 | 4. Mirko Marić , Lok. Zagreb (CRO) 20.0 |
| 5. Anthony Martial , Monaco (FRA) 28.2 | 5. Bertrand Traoré , Vitesse (NED) 22.7 | 5. Mariusz Stepiński , Wisła Kraków (POL) 19.2 |

U21 [players born on or after 01/01/1994]

Goalkeepers

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|------|---|-----|---|------|
| 1. Stefanos Kapino , Mainz (GER) | 33.1 | 1. Mickey van der Hart , Go Ahead (NED) | 5.4 | 1. Yvon Mvogo , Young Boys (SUI) | 25.6 |
| 2. Alessio Cragno , Cagliari (ITA) | 20.2 | 2. Rui Silva , Nacional (POR) | 4.2 | 2. Otso Virtanen , Mariehamn (FIN) | 13.5 |
| 3. Christopher Dilo , Rennes (FRA) | 3.8 | 3. Davy Roef , Anderlecht (BEL) | 1.6 | 3. Andreas Leitner , Admira Wacker (AUT) | 11.6 |
| 4. Brice Samba , Marseille (FRA) | 0.9 | 4. Guillaume Hubert , Standard (BEL) | 0.7 | 4. Stefan Čupić , OFK Beograd (SRB) | 7.6 |
| 5. Sacha Bastien , Reims (FRA) | 0.7 | 5. Sven Dhoest , Mouscron-Péruwelz (BEL) | 0.7 | 5. Daniel Kollar , FC Honka (FIN) | 7.5 |

Full Backs

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|--|------|--|------|---|------|
| 1. Benjamin Mendy , Marseille (FRA) | 60.8 | 1. Jetto Willems , PSV (NED) | 94.5 | 1. Frederik Holst , Brøndby (DEN) | 40.8 |
| 2. Jonny Castro , Celta Vigo (ESP) | 47.9 | 2. Jonathan Silva , Sporting CP (POR) | 43.0 | 2. Emil Krafth , Helsingborg (SWE) | 39.7 |
| 3. Abdul Rahman Baba , Augsburg (GER) | 42.7 | 3. Wallace Oliveira , Vitesse (NED) | 32.4 | 3. Róbert Mazán , Podbeskidzie (POL) | 36.6 |
| 4. Elseid Hysaj , Empoli (ITA) | 41.9 | 4. Joshua Brenet , PSV (NED) | 23.4 | 4. Kristoffer Haraldseid , Haugesund (NOR) | 32.7 |
| 5. John Stones , Everton (ENG) | 41.3 | 5. Jordan Lukaku , Oostende (BEL) | 19.8 | 5. Riza Durmisi , Brøndby (DEN) | 32.5 |

Centre Backs

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|------|---|------|---|------|
| 1. Marquinhos Aoás , PSG (FRA) | 66.8 | 1. Karim Rekik , PSV (NED) | 52.2 | 1. Patrick Banggaard , Midtjylland (DEN) | 36.6 |
| 2. Amyeric Laporte , Athletic Bilbao (ESP) | 66.1 | 2. Terence Kongolo , Feyenoord (NED) | 39.8 | 2. Pascal Gregor , Nordsjælland (DEN) | 29.9 |
| 3. Kurt Zouma , Chelsea (ENG) | 61.1 | 3. Dimitrios Goutas , Xanthi (GRE) | 37.4 | 3. Daniel Amartey , København (DEN) | 26.1 |
| 4. Matthias Ginter , Dortmund (GER) | 59.9 | 4. Chancel Mbemba , Anderlecht (BEL) | 34.9 | 4. Jacob Larsson , Brommapojkarna (SWE) | 26.1 |
| 5. Emiliano Velázquez , Getafe (ESP) | 41.3 | 5. Antonio Milić , Oostende (CRO) | 31.1 | 5. Jozo Šimunović , Dinamo Zagreb (CRO) | 24.6 |

Defensive/central midfielders

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|--|------|--|------|---|------|
| 1. Mateo Kovačić , Internazionale (ITA) | 81.5 | 1. Kyle Ebecilio , Twente (NED) | 48.2 | 1. Simon Tibbling , Groningen (SWE) | 39.3 |
| 2. Emre Can , Liverpool (ENG) | 45.3 | 2. Yassine Ayoub , Utrecht (NED) | 30.6 | 2. Ole Selnaes , Rosenborg (NOR) | 37.7 |
| 3. Nathaniel Chalobah , Burnley (ENG) | 39.6 | 3. Ibrahima Cissé , Mechelen (BEL) | 30.3 | 3. Dominik Wydra , Rapid Wien (AUT) | 33.8 |
| 4. Corentin Tolisso , Lyon (FRA) | 30.4 | 4. Julien de Sart , Standard (BEL) | 23.3 | 4. Petar Brlek , Slaven Belupo (CRO) | 26.5 |
| 5. Souhailo Meité , Lille (FRA) | 28.2 | 5. Christos Donis , Panathinaikos (GRE) | 18.1 | 5. Matti Klinga , HJK Helsinki (FIN) | 26.2 |

Attacking midfielders

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|------|--|------|---|------|
| 1. Lucas Ocampos , Monaco (FRA) | 80.8 | 1. Dennis Praet , Anderlecht (BEL) | 61.3 | 1. Louis Schaub , Rapid Wien (AUT) | 43.6 |
| 2. James Ward-Prowse , Southampton (ENG) | 56.5 | 2. Lucas Andersen , Ajax (NED) | 52.5 | 2. Ohi Omoijuanfo , Lillestrøm (NOR) | 35.6 |
| 3. Maximilian Arnold , Wolfsburg (GER) | 51.1 | 3. Óliver Torres , Porto (POR) | 48.0 | 3. Nikola Ninković , Partizan (SRB) | 34.5 |
| 4. Moi Gómez , Villarreal (ESP) | 50.7 | 4. Diego Lopes , Rio Ave (POR) | 47.1 | 4. Thomas Murg , Ried (AUT) | 33.6 |
| 5. Hakan Çalhanoğlu , Leverkusen (GER) | 50.0 | 5. Anderson Talisca , Benfica (POR) | 42.9 | 5. Claudiu Bumba , Astra Giurgiu (ROM) | 29.8 |

Forwards

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|------|--|------|--|------|
| 1. Raheem Sterling , Liverpool (ENG) | 95.9 | 1. Memphis Depay , PSV (NED) | 74.9 | 1. Marcel Sabitzer , Salzburg (AUT) | 63.6 |
| 2. Lazar Marković , Liverpool (ENG) | 72.7 | 2. Jean-Paul Boëtius , Feyenoord (NED) | 65.5 | 2. Gabriel Iancu , Steaua București (ROM) | 40.7 |
| 3. M'Baye Niang , Milan (ITA) | 62.8 | 3. Aleksandar Mitrović , Anderlecht (BEL) | 58.2 | 3. Veton Berisha , Viking (NOR) | 38.9 |
| 4. Gerard Deulofeu , Sevilla (ESP) | 47.8 | 4. Arkadiusz Milik , Ajax (NED) | 53.6 | 4. Mohamed Elyounoussi , Molde (NOR) | 38.4 |
| 5. Michael Frey , Lille (FRA) | 47.7 | 5. Viktor Fischer , Ajax (NED) | 51.2 | 5. Pavel Savitskiy , Jagiellonia (POL) | 37.4 |

U22 [players born on or after 01/01/1993]

Goalkeepers

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|------|--|------|--|------|
| 1. Jan Oblak , Atlético Madrid (ESP) | 57.2 | 1. Zauri Makharadze , Olimpik Donetsk (UKR) | 19.7 | 1. Oliver Zelenika , Lok. Zagreb (CRO) | 26.4 |
| 2. Timo Horn , Köln (GER) | 48.9 | 2. Nikos Giannakopoulos , Panionios (GRE) | 16.2 | 2. Sayouba Mandé , Stabæk (NOR) | 21.4 |
| 3. Nicola Leali , Cesena (ITA) | 43.2 | 3. Sokratis Dioudis , Club Brugge (BEL) | 16.1 | 3. Barak Levi , Maccabi Tel Aviv (ISR) | 18.7 |
| 4. Jack Butland , Stoke City (ENG) | 39.4 | 4. Mykyta Shevchenko , Zorya Luhansk (UKR) | 14.9 | 4. Dobrivoj Rusov , Piast Gliwice (POL) | 17.8 |
| 5. Loris Karius , Mainz (GER) | 35.2 | 5. Ederson Moraes , Rio Ave (POR) | 13.0 | 5. Florin Iacob , Braşov (ROM) | 16.5 |

Full Backs

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|--|------|--|------|--|------|
| 1. Juan Bernat , Bayern München (GER) | 75.3 | 1. Lucas Bijker , Cambuur (NED) | 43.1 | 1. Jonas Svensson , Rosenborg (NOR) | 62.9 |
| 2. Lucas Digne , PSG (FRA) | 73.5 | 2. Stelios Kitsiou , PAOK (GRE) | 39.0 | 2. Erik Janža , Maribor (SVN) | 36.6 |
| 3. Ben Davies , Tottenham (ENG) | 67.6 | 3. Ricardo Pereira , Porto (POR) | 37.6 | 3. Marvin Potzmann , Grödig (AUT) | 28.7 |
| 4. Raphaël Guerreiro , Lorient (FRA) | 50.0 | 4. Mitchell Dijks , Willem II (NED) | 35.9 | 4. Zaine Francis-Angol , Motherwell (SCO) | 26.6 |
| 5. Andre Wisdom , WBA (ENG) | 48.5 | 5. Xandro Schenk , Go Aheads (NED) | 32.2 | 5. Emil Jonassen , Odd (NOR) | 26.5 |

Centre Backs

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|------|---|------|---|------|
| 1. Raphaël Varane , Real Madrid (ESP) | 84.8 | 1. Miguel Rodrigues , Nacional (POR) | 44.7 | 1. Emil Bergström , Djurgårdens (SWE) | 46.7 |
| 2. Samuel Umtiti , Lyon (FRA) | 75.3 | 2. Dimitris Kourbelis , Asteras Tripolis (GRE) | 41.4 | 2. Berat Djimsiti , Zürich (SUI) | 45.5 |
| 3. Matija Nastasić , Manchester City (ENG) | 73.1 | 3. K. Triantafyllopoulos , Panathinaikos (GRE) | 37.8 | 3. Filip Helander , Malmö (SWE) | 39.6 |
| 4. Tomáš Kalas , Köln (GER) | 59.4 | 4. Brandon Mechele , Club Brugge (BEL) | 33.7 | 4. Gustav Valsvik , Strømsgodset (NOR) | 37.9 |
| 5. André Hoffmann , Hannover (GER) | 45.3 | 5. Dino Arslanagić , Standard (BEL) | 26.5 | 5. Magnar Ödegaard , Tromsø (NOR) | 36.6 |

Defensive/central midfielders

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|-------|---|------|---|------|
| 1. Paul Pogba , Juventus (ITA) | 108.3 | 1. Ergys Kaçe , PAOK (GRE) | 53.7 | 1. Etzaz Hussain , Molde (NOR) | 43.2 |
| 2. Geoffrey Kondogbia , Monaco (FRA) | 81.3 | 2. Joshua McEachran , Vitesse (NED) | 47.0 | 2. Ivan Močinić , Rijeka (CRO) | 36.7 |
| 3. Jordan Veretout , Nantes (FRA) | 60.5 | 3. Hannes van der Bruggen , Gent (BEL) | 42.6 | 3. Fredrik Jensen , Odd (NOR) | 31.8 |
| 4. Bruno Zuculini , Valencia (ESP) | 53.4 | 4. Alpaslan Öztürk , Kasımpaşa (TUR) | 36.8 | 4. Jaromir Zmrhal , Slavia Praha (CZE) | 30.7 |
| 5. Johannes Geis , Mainz (GER) | 52.8 | 5. Panagiotis Ballas , Atromitos (GRE) | 30.8 | 5. Kristoffer Barmen , Brann (NOR) | 28.0 |

Attacking midfielders

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|-------|---|------|--|------|
| 1. Julian Draxler , Schalke (GER) | 113.1 | 1. Adam Maher , PSV (NED) | 96.3 | 1. Valon Berisha , Salzburg (AUT) | 77.3 |
| 2. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain , Arsenal (ENG) | 106.0 | 2. Juan Quintero , Porto (POR) | 73.6 | 2. Nicolae Stanciu , Steaua Bucureşti (ROM) | 71.1 |
| 3. Thorgan Hazard , M'gladbach (GER) | 77.5 | 3. Andy Najar , Anderlecht (BEL) | 66.1 | 3. Massimo Bruno , Salzburg (AUT) | 56.7 |
| 4. Ross Barkley , Everton (ENG) | 74.4 | 4. Fred Rodrigues , Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR) | 58.9 | 4. Nikolaj Thomsen , Aalborg (DEN) | 48.0 |
| 5. Florian Thauvin , Marseille (FRA) | 73.9 | 5. Davy Klaassen , Ajax (NED) | 55.4 | 5. Ofir Mizrahi , Ironi Kiryat Shmona (ISR) | 37.3 |

Forwards

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|-------|---|------|--|------|
| 1. Romelu Lukaku , Everton (ENG) | 154.8 | 1. Zakaria Labyad , Vitesse (NED) | 84.1 | 1. Andreas Cornelius , København (DEN) | 52.1 |
| 2. Connor Wickham , Sunderland (ENG) | 89.3 | 2. Jürgen Locadia , PSV (NED) | 57.8 | 2. Yuya Kubo , Young Boys (SUI) | 49.1 |
| 3. Michy Batshuayi , Marseille (FRA) | 81.6 | 3. Rafa Silva , Braga (POR) | 50.7 | 3. Mikael Ishak , Randers (DEN) | 47.8 |
| 4. Richmond Boakye , Atalanta (ITA) | 73.8 | 4. Kerim Frei , Beşiktaş (TUR) | 43.9 | 4. Nicolai Brock-Madsen , Randers (DEN) | 41.3 |
| 5. Juan Manuel Iturbe , Roma (ITA) | 70.5 | 5. Giannis Gianniotas , Asteras Tripolis (GRE) | 42.6 | 5. Virgil Misidjan , Ludogorets (BUL) | 39.6 |

U23 [players born on or after 01/01/1992]

Goalkeepers

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|--|-------|---|------|--|------|
| 1. Thibaut Courtois , Chelsea (ENG) | 200.6 | 1. Mathew Ryan , Club Brugge (BEL) | 83.1 | 1. Cican Stanković , Grödig (AUT) | 34.2 |
| 2. Bernd Leno , Leverkusen (GER) | 125.4 | 2. Maksym Koval , Dynamo Kyiv (UKR) | 68.3 | 2. Thomas Kaminski , Anorthosis (CYP) | 31.7 |
| 3. Marc-André ter Stegen , Barcelona (ESP) | 106.6 | 3. Colin Coosemans , Waasland Beveren (BEL) | 46.8 | 3. Dominik Picak , Slaven Belupo (CRO) | 25.6 |
| 4. Mattia Perin , Genoa (ITA) | 61.3 | 4. Werner Hahn , Zwolle (NED) | 38.5 | 4. David Jensen , Nordsjælland (DEN) | 24.4 |
| 5. Francesco Bardi , Chievo (ITA) | 48.0 | 5. Matz Sels , Gent (BEL) | 35.8 | 5. Jova Levente , Ferencváros (HUN) | 22.3 |

Full Backs

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|-------|--|------|---|------|
| 1. David Alaba , Bayern München (GER) | 155.2 | 1. Laurens De Bock , Club Brugge (BEL) | 82.4 | 1. Adam Matthews , Celtic FC (SCO) | 78.7 |
| 2. Ricardo Rodriguez , Wolfsburg (GER) | 105.6 | 2. Mattias Johansson , Alkmaar (NED) | 63.1 | 2. Jonas Knudsen , Esbjerg (DEN) | 71.8 |
| 3. Daniel Carvajal , Real Madrid (ESP) | 102.4 | 3. Santiago Arias , PSV (NED) | 57.5 | 3. Pavel Kaderábek , Sparta Praha (CZE) | 55.6 |
| 4. Serge Aurier , PSG (FRA) | 88.6 | 4. Alex Telles , Galatasaray (TUR) | 51.8 | 4. Taleb Tawatha , Maccabi Haifa (ISR) | 52.4 |
| 5. Jon Aurtenetxe , Athletic Bilbao (ESP) | 79.1 | 5. Nicolai Boilesen , Ajax (NED) | 48.3 | 5. Marko Petković , Crvena Zvezda (SRB) | 42.3 |

Centre Backs

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|-------|---|-------|--|------|
| 1. Phil Jones , Manchester Utd (ENG) | 143.0 | 1. Bruno Martins Indi , Porto (POR) | 115.7 | 1. Martin Hinteregger , Salzburg (AUT) | 86.0 |
| 2. Stefan de Vrij , Lazio (ITA) | 135.7 | 2. Paulo Oliveira , Sporting CP (POR) | 56.3 | 2. Marcin Kaminski , Lech Poznań (POL) | 58.3 |
| 3. Jordi Amat , Swansea (ENG) | 77.0 | 3. Diego Reyes , Porto (POR) | 53.3 | 3. André Ramalho , Salzburg (AUT) | 46.4 |
| 4. Kyriakos Papadopoulos , Leverkusen (GER) | 73.1 | 4. Alexander Scholz , Standard (BEL) | 51.2 | 4. Georgi Terziev , Ludogorets (BUL) | 44.1 |
| 5. Enzo Roco , Elche (ESP) | 69.1 | 5. Joël Veltman , Ajax (NED) | 51.1 | 5. Ilia Milanov , Litex Lovech (BUL) | 43.8 |

Defensive/central midfielders

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|--|-------|--|------|--|------|
| 1. Marco Verratti , PSG (FRA) | 113.9 | 1. Fernando Martins , Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR) | 79.9 | 1. Patrik Hrošovský , Viktoria Plzeň (CZE) | 63.4 |
| 2. Jonjo Shelvey , Swansea (ENG) | 111.5 | 2. Carlos Casemiro , Porto (POR) | 79.4 | 2. Marcel Ziegl , Ried (AUT) | 54.9 |
| 3. Granit Xhaka , M'gladbach (GER) | 97.4 | 3. Oscar Hiljemark , PSV (NED) | 77.9 | 3. Stuart Armstrong , Celtic FC (SCO) | 53.0 |
| 4. Rubén Pardo , Real Sociedad (ESP) | 85.1 | 4. Musa Çağiran , Karabükspor (TUR) | 64.1 | 4. Ryan Jack , Aberdeen (SCO) | 52.0 |
| 5. Gilbert Imbula , Marseille (FRA) | 79.9 | 5. William Carvalho , Sporting CP (POR) | 61.3 | 5. Mohamed Elneny , Basel (SUI) | 51.2 |

Attacking midfielders

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|-------|---|-------|---|------|
| 1. Mario Götze , Bayern München (GER) | 175.5 | 1. Georgi Milanov , CSKA Moskva (RUS) | 110.5 | 1. Ladislav Krejčí , Sparta Praha (CZE) | 66.8 |
| 2. Iker Muniain , Athletic Bilbao (ESP) | 174.6 | 2. Markus Henriksen , Alkmaar (NED) | 98.2 | 2. Simon Thern , Heerenveen (SWE) | 64.7 |
| 3. Christian Eriksen , Tottenham (ENG) | 171.8 | 3. Zhano Ananidze , Spart. Moskva (RUS) | 66.6 | 3. Florian Kainz , Rapid Wien (AUT) | 63.7 |
| 4. Koke , Atlético Madrid (ESP) | 165.7 | 4. Pajtim Kasami , Olympiacos (GRE) | 63.2 | 4. Oliver Buff , Zürich (SUI) | 59.4 |
| 5. Isco Alarcón , Real Madrid (ESP) | 145.1 | 5. Hans Vanaken , Lokeren (BEL) | 59.8 | 5. Dor Micha , Maccabi Tel Aviv (ISR) | 57.8 |

Forwards

| Top leagues | | Intermediate leagues | | Stepping stone leagues | |
|---|-------|--|-------|---|------|
| 1. Neymar Júnior , Barcelona (ESP) | 129.2 | 1. Luc Castaignos , Twente (NED) | 106.6 | 1. Tomáš Přikryl , Sparta Praha (CZE) | 61.7 |
| 2. Lucas Moura , PSG (FRA) | 126.0 | 2. Ahmed Musa , CSKA Moskva (RUS) | 88.5 | 2. Muanes Dabbur , Grasshopper (SUI) | 55.3 |
| 3. Maxime Lestienne , Genoa (ITA) | 111.2 | 3. Vincent Aboubakar , Porto (POR) | 83.0 | 3. Niklas Bärkroth , Brommapojkarna (SWE) | 53.8 |
| 4. Heung-Min Son , Leverkusen (GER) | 109.7 | 4. Bernard Caldeira , Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR) | 76.2 | 4. Yann-Erik de Lanlay , Viking (NOR) | 53.2 |
| 5. Erik Lamela , Tottenham (ENG) | 107.2 | 5. Jody Lukoki , Zwolle (NED) | 60.5 | 5. Antonin Fantiš , Jablonec (CZE) | 51.5 |

4. Conclusion

The approach presented in this second Monthly Report provides the basis for the setting up of an efficient talent spotting system. With an economy of means, it firstly allows coverage of a large number of countries. Professional clubs can thus hope to outflank the competition even if they do not have a fully-fledged recruitment structure.

Secondly, it permits the pinpointing of countries where footballers are generally given a sufficient playing time allowing them to fully develop their potential. The success of a career in as competitive an environment as football depends indeed on the context in which the player finds himself as much as his intrinsic talent.

Finally, the method of experience capital allows clubs to optimise their approach regarding transfers by considerably reducing the risks inherent in such operations, from both the sporting and economic point of view. Our research team is at the service of clubs interested in finding out more about the practical modalities of implementing a talent spotting system of this kind.