

**PROTECTION OF MINOR FOOTBALL PLAYERS: UPDATED
REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND MOST RECENT MAJOR CASE
STUDIES**

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ABSTRACT: International transfer and first registration of minor players are topics that are attracting the attention of the stakeholders of the football industry due to the increasing number of applications for registration of minors filed each year with FIFA. However, the recent controversial cases involving top European clubs and the new exceptions granted by FIFA deciding bodies, prove that the current regulatory framework is far from being faultless: actually, the FIFA regulations have proved largely ineffective because of several deficiencies and inconsistencies that should be amended as soon as possible by the competent authorities in order to ensure a fair and necessary protection of minors.

The aim of the present contribution is therefore to analyse the current legal framework in order to identify specific issues, assessing their impact on the implementation of the rules on the protection of minors.

Keywords: Minor footballer – International transfer – Minor registration – Minor player protection – FIFA regulations – EU law – FIFA RSTP – FIFA Circulars – FIFA and CAS case law.

SUMMARY: 1. Introduction – 2. International transfer and first registration of minors: the current regulatory framework – 2.1 The first exception as per Article 19, para. 2 (a) of FIFA RSTP – 2.2 The second exception as per Article 19, para. 2 (b) of FIFA RSTP – 2.3 The third exception as per Article 19, para. 2 (c) of FIFA RSTP – 2.4 The fourth exception as per Article 19, paras. 3 and 4 of FIFA RSTP – 3. The two new exceptions provided under FIFA jurisprudence – 4. Registration of minors at academies pursuant to Article 19bis, para. 1 of FIFA RSTP – 5. Case studies – 5.1 The Barcelona case – 5.2 The Real Madrid case – 6. Conclusion

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