



INCREASING GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS



An analysis of the talent development ecosystem in Denmark



FIFA



FOREWORD



Dear friends,

My vision for FIFA in the coming years is to make football truly global. A major part of this is to pave the way to a landscape in which 50 national teams and 50 clubs, men and women, around the globe can genuinely compete for the title of world champions. This is easy enough to propose, but achieving it takes commitment.

FIFA's Talent Development Programme is a practical expression of that commitment. It is also a truly ground-breaking initiative and the very first of its kind globally. Over the course of the last year, a team of the world's foremost technical experts has conducted a comprehensive assessment of your member association, as well a selection of nominated academies, to gather detailed data about the structures and resources used to develop your young talents.

That data has now been compiled to produce this in-depth, country-specific report to present an overview of your country's ecosystem in which your young footballers are developed. In this report, you will find details on global benchmarks, along with a series of recommendations.

This country-specific report is part of our commitment, not only to you and your association, but to all talented players and stakeholders across your country.

We have referred to the talent development "ecosystem" precisely because everything is connected in our sport. We are all connected. Giving every talent a chance requires everyone to play their part. Through carefully considered recommendations, this report shows how each of your stakeholders can contribute to a richer talent development ecosystem.

The first-ever 48-team FIFA World Cup and the first-ever 32-team FIFA Women's World Cup are now in sight, and we want to see the strongest-possible competition for the crown of world champions. With the guidance of these findings, we hope and believe you will have a better chance of making FIFA's global tournaments even more spectacular.

Yours in football,

Gianni Infantino

FIFA President



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



1. Management and resources

The MA's Elite Department features four sections that follow the LTPD vision to create world-class team players. Since there is no technical director, the duties involved in the role are divided among the heads of the Elite Department sections. The DBU invests in its relationship with clubs as they are important stakeholders within player development. The Head of Elite Development, who has a strong technical background, works in close collaboration with all Elite Department staff to maintain the MA's quality standards.



2. National teams

The DBU has a national team strategy with clear KPIs for both men and women. The DBU participates in all available international youth competitions to prepare top talent for the senior national teams. The DBU Head of Development prefers to spend time playing matches to having lots of training time. Although the effectiveness of having a match analyst to support and develop the team is underlined, support in performance analysis is limited. The club training environment is at a high level, especially for boys. The DBU uses an effective youth licensing system to develop the club environment and to maintain high quality.



3. Domestic competitions

The DBU has a strong youth competition structure with a range of competitions at different levels. Clubs are ranked based on the quality of the youth licensing system, which is a strength of the competition set-up. The DBU handles league development through an annual evaluation of the youth licensing system. The focus is on creating an environment that fosters player development. The pathway into football is straightforward, with many clubs providing opportunities. There is also close cooperation between the DBU, League Association and the Grassroots Association to provide opportunities in a child-centred environment.

This individual report on your member association's high-performance ecosystem is part of a global analysis carried out in 2020. It spotlights various important areas on and off the pitch, compares them to global benchmarks, and gives specific recommendations on how to improve potential issues. The report itself is divided up into six main chapters, which are presented and summarised below.



4. Talent development and identification

Top clubs have a key role in boys' talent development, whereas the DBU is mainly responsible for girls' development. The DBU's talent identification system is organised based on strong collaboration with the top clubs and the DBU's Talent Centres. Although there are regional differences in club management, the fact that Denmark is a small country means there are no differences in talent identification. The geographical spread of the DBU Talent Centres and the youth licensing system are strong tools for talent development. Transition coaches, regulated through the licensing system, provide boys with a clear transition to senior football.



5. Academies

The quality and structure of the academy system are the foundations for the MA's long-term success. The more training and competitive playing opportunities are provided, the better players can develop. A competitive game programme is available for boys' U-17 to U-19 academy teams. Girls' academies use boys' programmes for scrimmages to supplement their league games. All academies have achieved, or are close to achieving, good player-to-coach ratios and activities are guided by qualified coaches.



6. Education

Coach Education is a Unit within the Elite Department. The DBU attaches great importance to coach education. The coaching programmes offer courses for coaches at all levels that are aligned with its overall vision on player development. Courses are generally made accessible and the DBU sets CPD standards to retain a licence. The Elite Department established a national philosophy which is discussed on the courses, but coaches are free to implement their own philosophy at various levels. The MA provides education for specialist roles as part of the education strategy. The licensing system represents a good means to make specialist courses mandatory for clubs.

General characteristics

FIFA World Ranking

♂ **12**♀ **14****10** out of 10 FIFA
Forward criteria
fulfilled

Population

million people

5.8

rank

111

GDP per capita

thousand USD

58.2

rank

7Professional male
players in Top 30
leagues

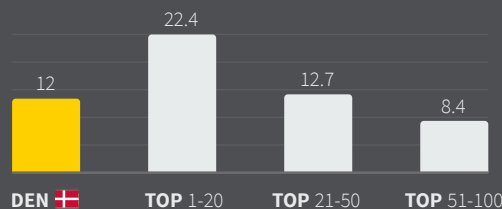
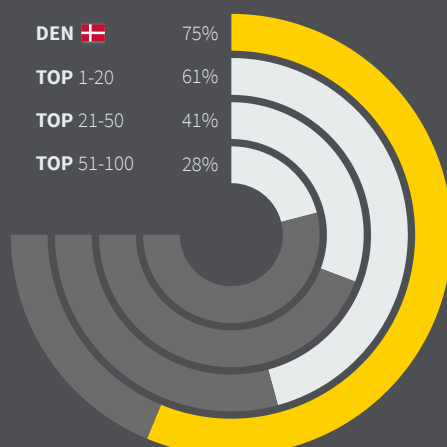
number of players

331

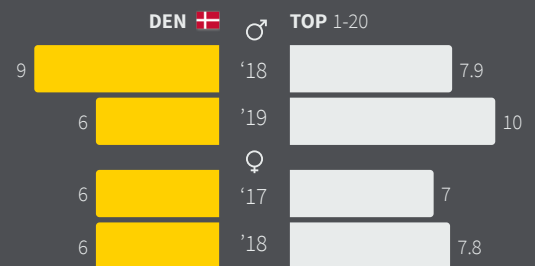
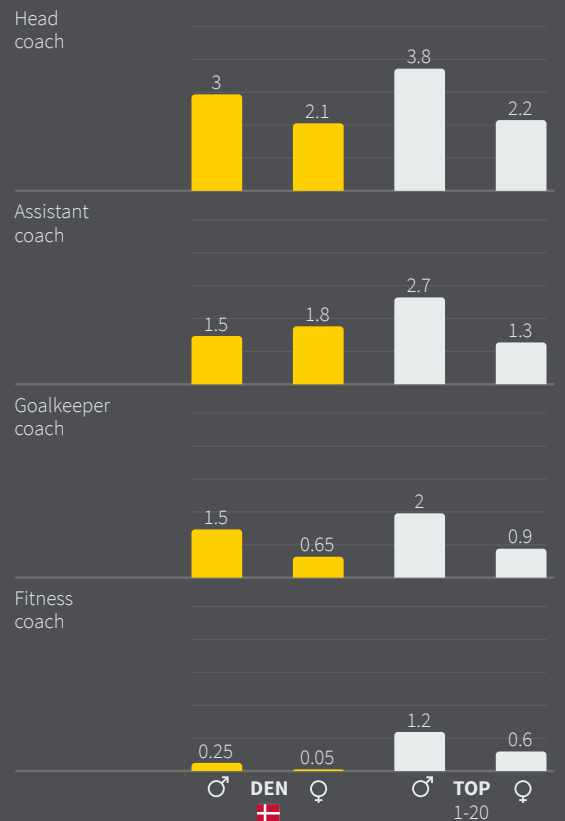
rank

17

Management and resources

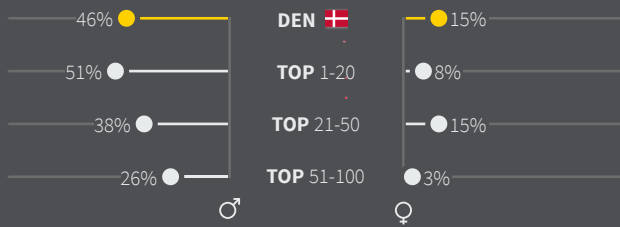
5
yearsTenure of the current
technical directorExistence of a written national playing
philosophyTOP 1-20 **75%**☒ ☒ DEN TOP 21-50 **55%**TOP 51-100 **58%**Human resourcing of the technical division
(in full-time equivalents)Percentage of senior and youth national team head and
assistant coaches holding a pro licence

National teams

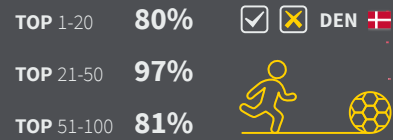
Number of official matches played by your U-16/
U-17 youth national teams compared to the Top 20Number of different coaches dedicated to youth
national teams (in full-time equivalents)

Domestic competitions

Percentage of professional teams in the first three tiers of the domestic competitions

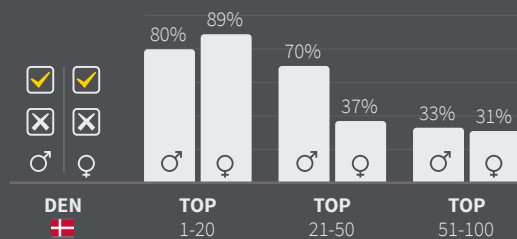


Grassroots competitions are part of the overall strategy for long-term player development.

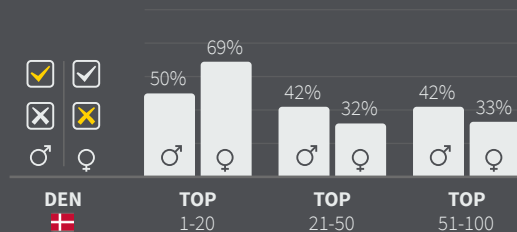


Talent development and identification

Existence of a talent identification system



Existence of a specific strategy for the transition of players from junior to senior level



Education

No. of active licensed coaches

2,650

Provision of specific education for coach educators

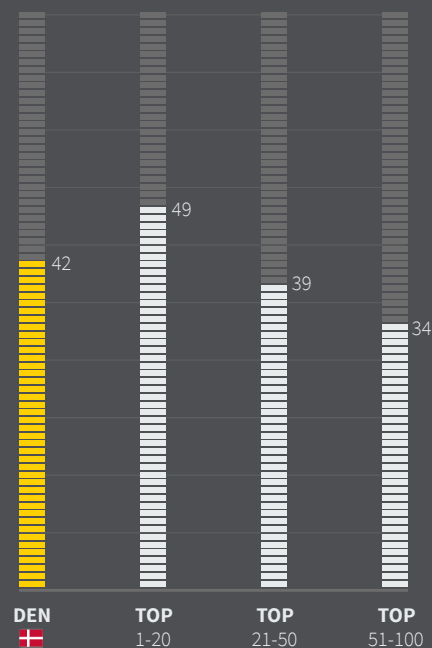


The national football philosophy is reflected in the coach education programme

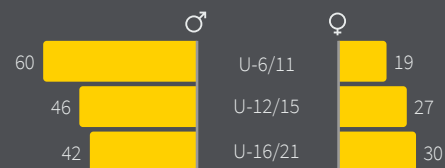


Academies

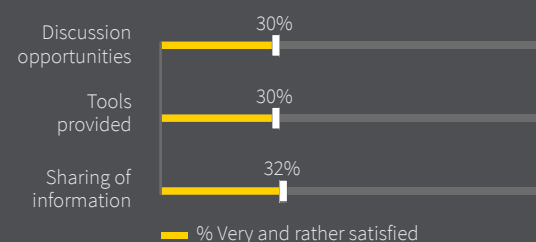
Number of international quality standards fulfilled by leading academies



Average number of games played by your leading academies per season



Satisfaction of the academies with the following MA-programs and services





INTRODUCTION

The development of talent enables each MA to reach its full potential.

At present, not all talents get a chance.

It is clear that much more can and needs to be done to make football truly global at the highest level. At the heart of this is a dedicated approach to talent development. Long-term commitment in this area leads to structural results. The forthcoming chapters show that talent development has a positive impact upon later success, both domestically and internationally. A concerted effort from all stakeholders (FIFA, confederations, associations, leagues and clubs) to influence the key factors of talent development could lead to a much-needed higher competitive balance – globally.

FIFA exists to govern the game, organise competitions and promote the development of football.

FIFA is principally responsible for organising international competitions that are fit for every purpose. Beyond its own tournaments, FIFA is duty-bound to support global football in partnership with the six confederations and its 211 member associations (MAs). As stated in [The Vision 2020-2023](#), one of FIFA's main objectives is to increase global competitiveness. Optimising their talent development schemes should ultimately reduce the gap between countries. FIFA's approach to achieving this objective is to:

- 1 **organise competitions that are fit for every purpose;**
- 2 **provide high-performance support programmes; and**
- 3 **enhance educational frameworks and share knowledge.**

"In many countries, the focus of the association is mainly on the senior national team, but this national team is always the product of football development across the country. Sustainable development is a long-term approach and requires dedication, confidence and patience."

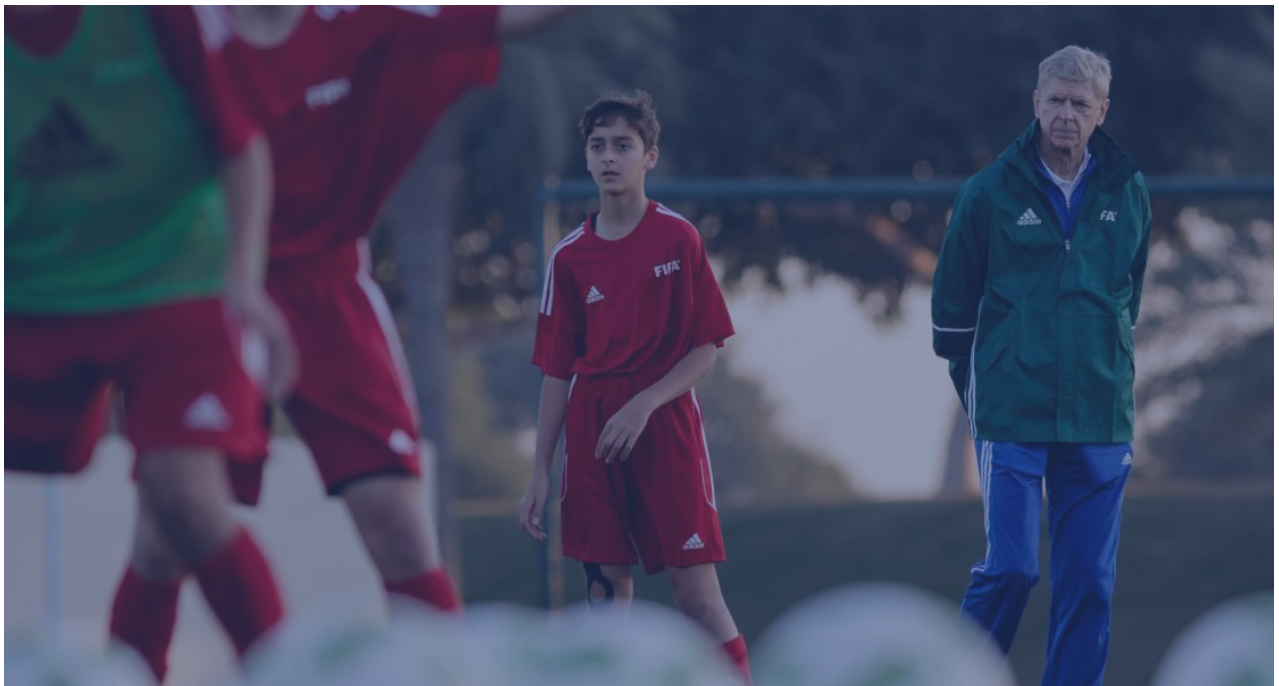
Arsène Wenger - FIFA Chief of Global Football Development

In support of this, the FIFA Talent Development Programme, led by Arsène Wenger, was launched in 2020 to ensure that every talented player gets a chance. To this end, FIFA set up a team of experts from all parts of the world to build relationships with MAs with a view to gaining a clear understanding of their men's and women's talent development ecosystem. The details of this global project are outlined below:

THE WHY - Awareness of the different talent development systems across the globe and the factors impacting the player pathway and international success.

THE WHAT - The link between a country's geopolitical status and its talent development ecosystem, and the impact on football performance.

THE HOW - The design of the ecosystem analysis and the method through which it was delivered to ensure all data collected was valid and reliable.



1. The why

We want to make football truly global.

Gianni Infantino - FIFA President

As time passes, and with the increase in the sport’s exposure due to the plethora of viewing methods, the world of football is attracting more and more attention globally. An indication of this was the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™, which was attended by over three million fans and seen by a wing 3.6 billion viewers, making it the most-watched football event of all time.

With the millions of male and female footballers across the globe, plus the innumerable children dreaming of lifting the World Cup, it is clear that FIFA, the six confederations and the 211 MAs must all work together to drive the continuous development of both men’s and women’s football, and to ensure that games remain exciting.

Football development lies at the heart of FIFA’s overarching mission. To truly impact the sport’s development, there must be an understanding of the current global landscape. As such, there are four questions to examine around specific aspects of football growth:



Is there a competitive balance globally?



Are MAs reaching their full potential?



Are opportunities for players balanced across the globe?



Is women’s football growing equally across the globe?



Competitive imbalance

When it comes to the standard of football, the disparity between different regions of the world has been steadily widening. FIFA intends to take concrete steps to bridge this gap, with the long-term ambition of enabling at least 50 national teams and 50 clubs around the globe to compete at the very highest level. It is clear from the data below that there is a marked imbalance, with European football dominant across international competitions .

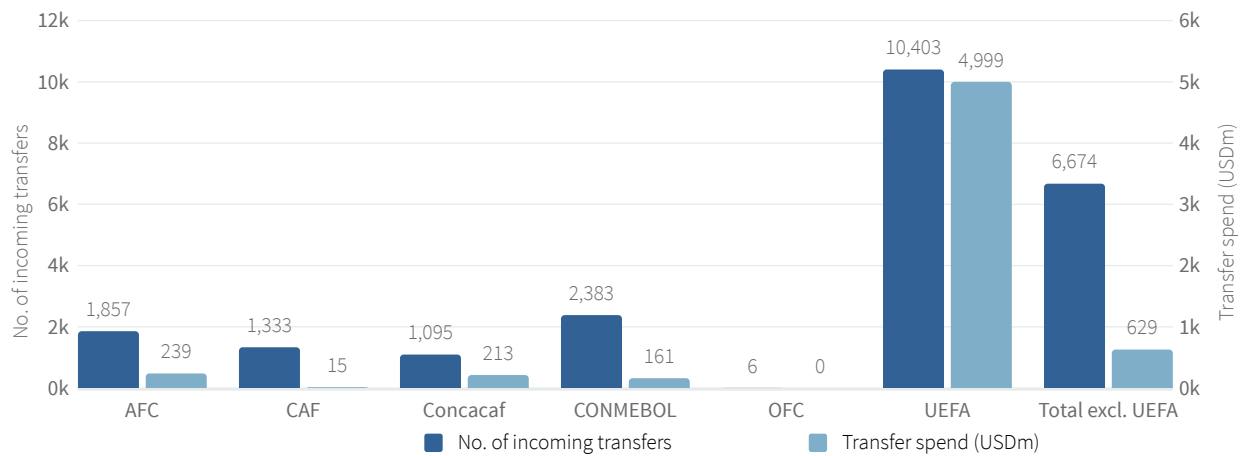
Position	2018	2014	2010	2006
Champions	France	Germany	Spain	Italy
Runners-up	Croatia	Argentina	Netherlands	France
3rd place	Belgium	Netherlands	Germany	Germany
4th place	England	Brazil	Uruguay	Portugal

Illustration 1 | Semi-finalists in the last four editions of the FIFA World Cup™



In 2020, UEFA clubs spent 456% more on transfer funds than their AFC, CONMEBOL, OFC, CAF and Concacaf counterparts combined.

Illustration 2



Transfer spend (USDm) and number of incoming players per confederation in 2020.

Reference: FIFA Global Transfer Market Report 2020

From 2010, there was a steady increase in the total number of international transfers, which peaked at 18,047 in 2019. However, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting suspension of basic football activities across the world, that figure decreased by 5.4% – the first such decline in ten years. Although the number of transfers in 2020 was still higher than in 2018, this overall downward trend is a clear sign of the effects of the pandemic and an indication of the enormous financial strain being felt by MAs and their respective football structures across the globe.

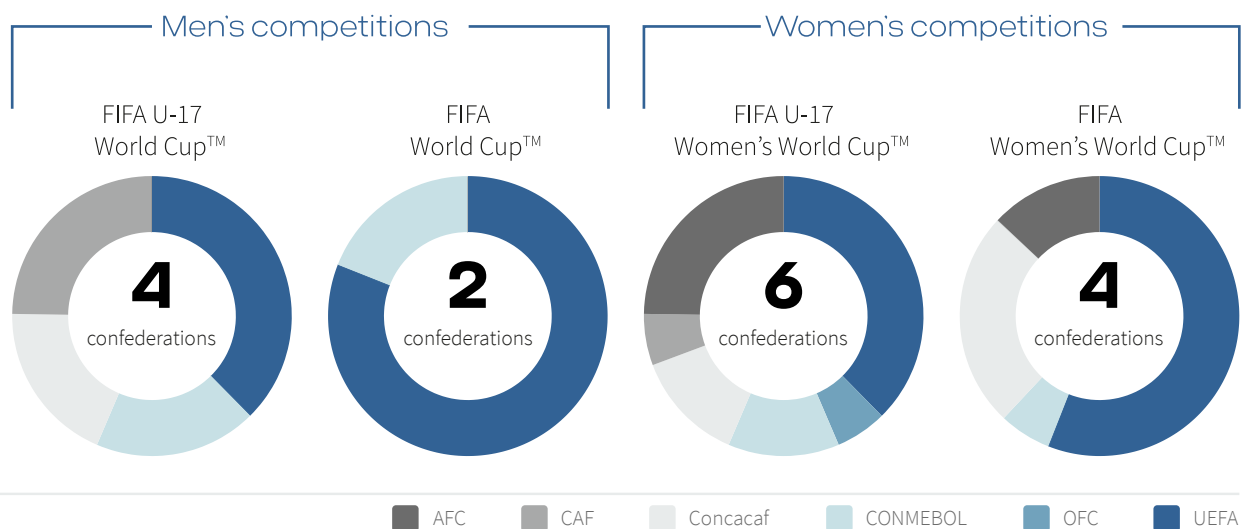


Not all MAs reaching their full potential

For an MA to reach its full potential and maximise opportunities for future success, there must be an awareness of existing issues, and efforts must be made to support talented boys and girls in the country and develop a pathway to facilitate the step up to senior football. With so few nations able to manage this transition, what are the contributing factors? Are there barriers to entry hindering access to professional domestic competitions? Are senior-team resources limited? Is there strategic misalignment within the MA? Understanding such pitfalls will give countries the opportunity to realise their potential and grow the game in their region.

Illustration 3

Number of confederations represented in the semi-finals at the last four World Cups by U-17 and senior men's and women's national teams:



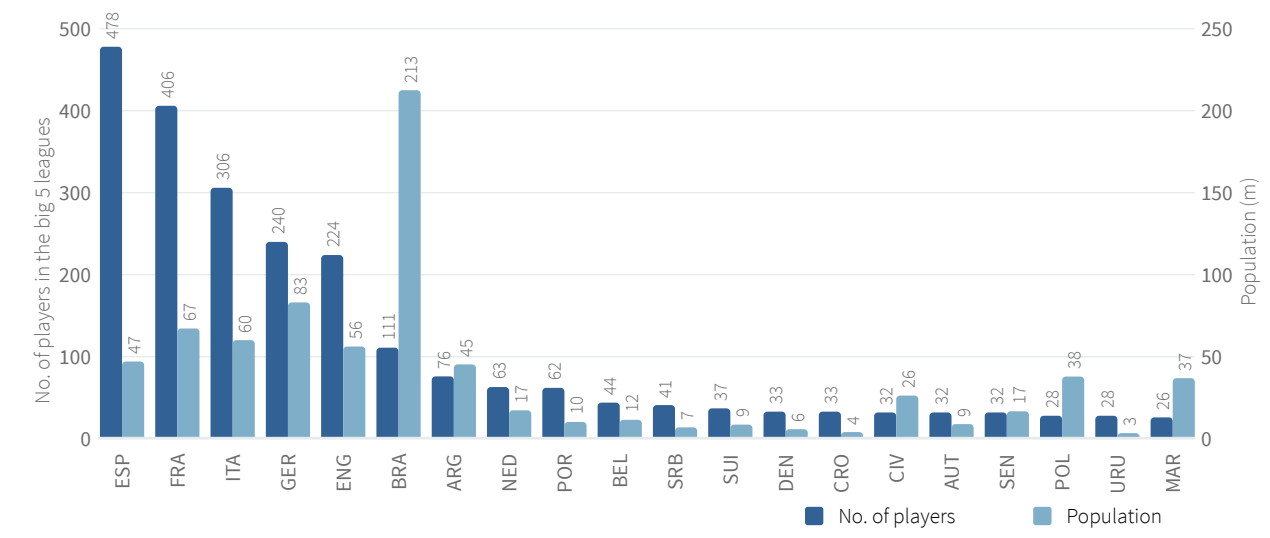


The imbalance of playing opportunities across the globe

The average age of a debutant in the Big 5 leagues (England, France, Germany, Italy and Spain) is 21.7 years [Source], with clubs in these competitions offering significantly fewer debuts than those in the next five championships in 2020 (2.8% v. 6.1%) [source]. This highlights the importance of having a pathway that supports regular exposure to competition from U-18 to U-23 level, and with such a small percentage of players coming through the academies, this is an area that requires attention. As shown in Illustration 4, Spanish footballers are the most popular across the Big 5 leagues, making up 16% of players across these leagues. The “Big 5” countries not only have the capacity to produce and keep domestic talent in their leagues but they can also attract best international talent from across the globe [source].

Spanish players dominate the Big 5 leagues, yet Spain has the smallest population of the top five countries.

Illustration 4

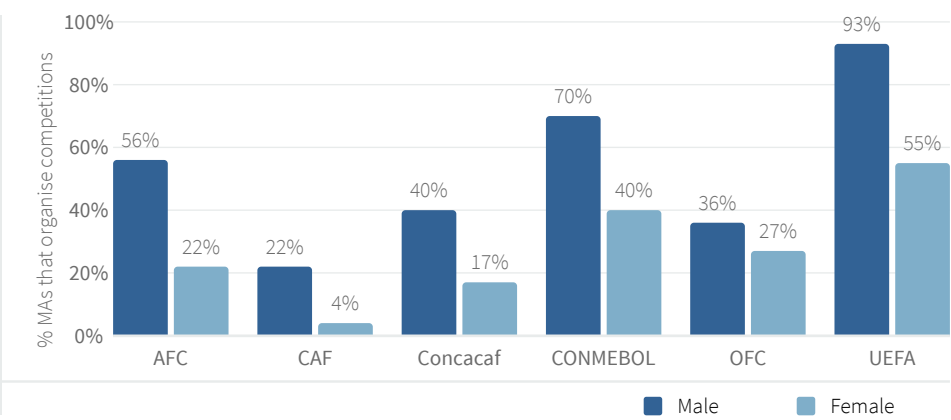


Sources: World Bank – DataBank. Office for National Statistics, National Records of Scotland, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency – population estimates. Nationalities of players in the Big 5 leagues in 2020/21 - www.FBref.com

When this dominance is put into perspective against the population of the players’ countries of origin, there is an apparent imbalance and disparity in the opportunities available for talented football players to reach the top leagues in the world. As illustrated below, the opportunities for young boys and girls to participate in organised competitions vary across the globe. There must be a drive to facilitate and work towards the objective of giving every talented player a chance. The absence of regular and consistent playing opportunities, both domestically and internationally, puts certain age groups and countries at a distinct disadvantage

There is a disparity in the opportunities available to talented football players.

Illustration 5



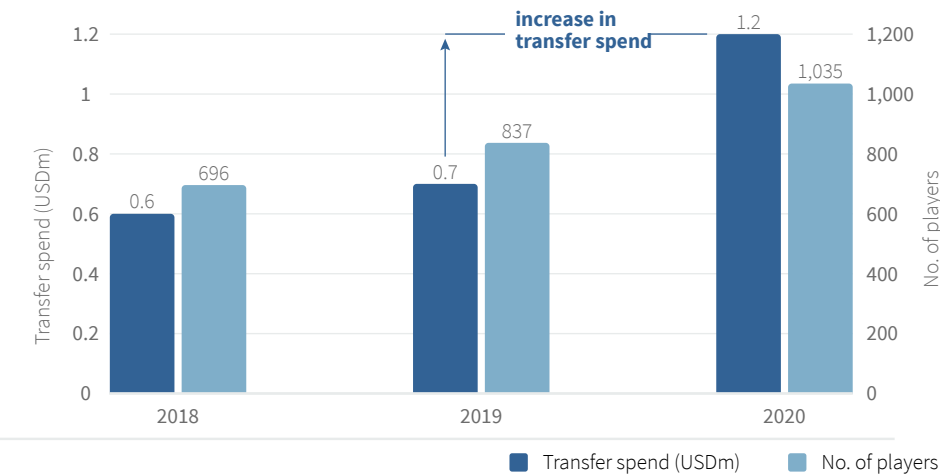
Percentage of member associations per confederation that organise boys’ or girls’ competitions in at least two age categories.
Source: FIFA. Per the FIFA Forward Development Programme Regulations – Forward 2.0, article 6 paragraph 3b. (points v. and vi.)



The rapid growth of women’s football

Over recent years, there has been a meteoric rise in the visibility and popularity of women’s football, with over 13 million players now participating across the globe [\[source\]](#). In the same vein, the FIFA Women’s World Cup 2019™ saw a 30% increase in the number of viewers, from 764 million to 993.5 million [\[source\]](#). Despite this growth and FIFA doubling its investment between 2019 and 2022, there are clear gaps that need to be addressed at both domestic and national level across youth and senior football to ensure that every player gets a chance and that all MAs can achieve their full potential.

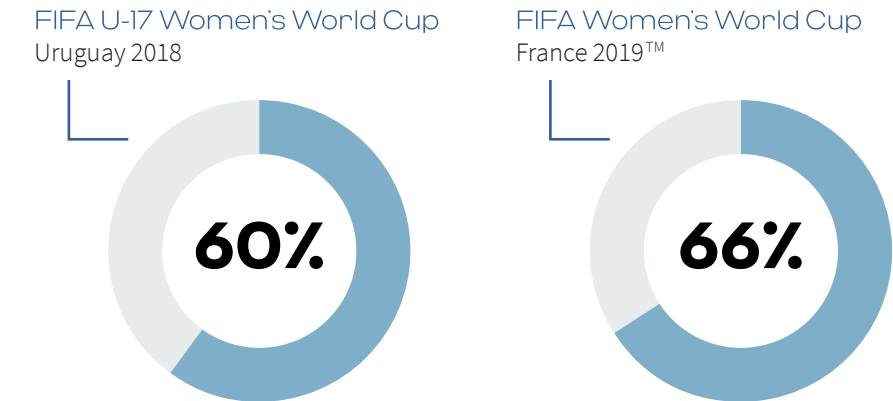
Illustration 6



The development of the women’s international transfer market: 2018 - 2020
Source: FIFA Global Transfer Market Report 2020

Despite the meteoric rise of women’s football globally, one out of three nations still does not have a women’s national team at either senior or junior level.

Illustration 7



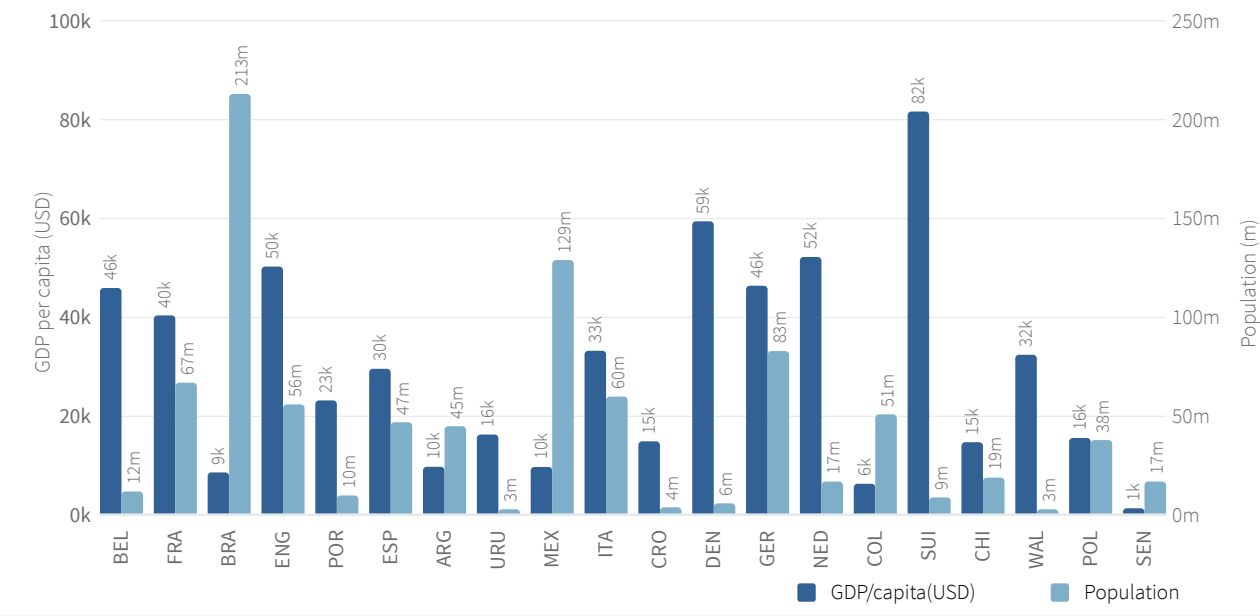
Comparison of the percentage of member associations that entered a team into the qualifying competitions for the FIFA U-17 Women’s World Cup Uruguay 2018 and the FIFA Women’s World Cup France 2019™.
Source: FIFA Women’s Football Member Associations Survey Report 2019

2. The what

Money and population alone are not a predictor of international success – the development ecosystem is key.

International football success does not always depend on a country’s characteristics in terms of GDP and population. Therefore, it is clear that we need to understand the talent development ecosystem that enables relatively small nations to compete at the pinnacle of international football. Such insight can also help to identify associations that are not reaching their full potential.

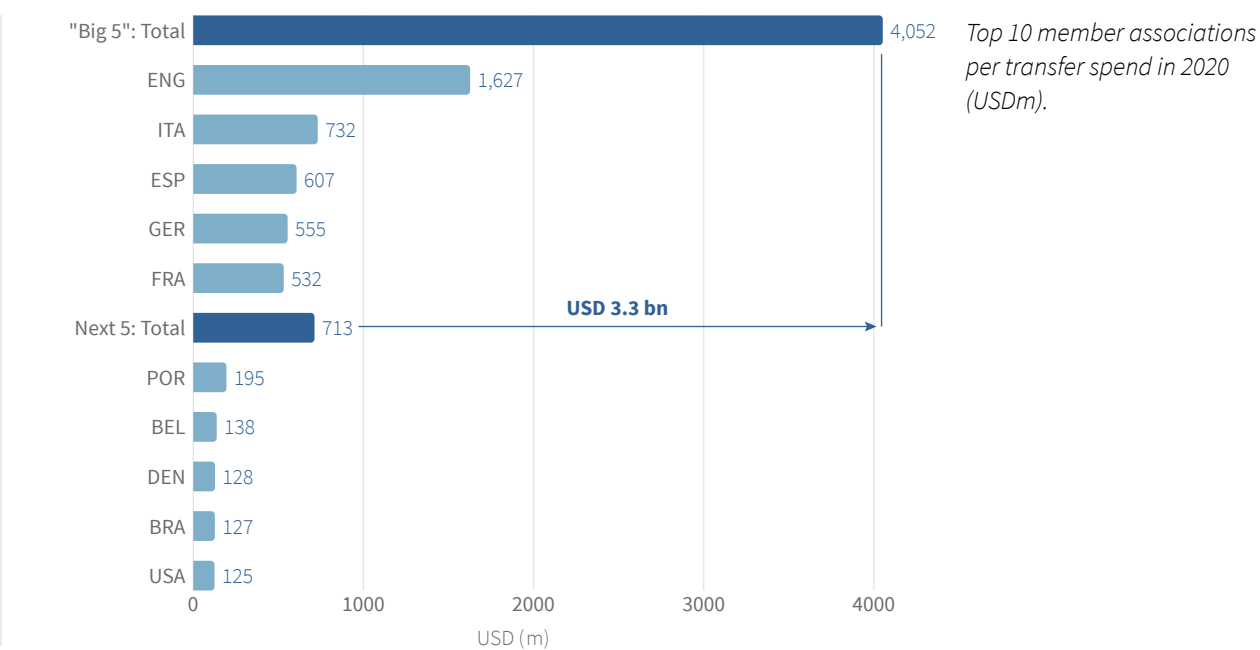
Illustration 8



Population and GDP per capita of the top 20 countries in the FIFA/ Coca-Cola Men's World Ranking as of 10 December 2020.
Sources: World Bank – DataBank

In 2020, the "Big 5" leagues had a combined transfer spend of USD 4,052m, 469% more than the next five leagues.

Illustration 9



It must be noted that, as shown in Illustration 9, before COVID-19, the football industry's elite clubs and associations were enjoying what seemed to be stable growth. However, the impact of COVID-19 has been devastating for both clubs and associations across the globe, with KPMG [\[source\]](#) reporting an initial aggregate decrease in total operating revenues of approximately USD 1.44bn amongst clubs in the top ten European leagues. This is a new financial era for modern football, and it is one that must be met with caution to ensure the game's future is protected.

As shown in Illustration 8, Croatia and Uruguay have achieved significant international success with not only the smallest populations and lowest GDPs of all the MAs in the top 20 of the FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking, but also the sparsest domestic league revenues. Further to this, Denmark has the third-lowest population but the highest GDP per capita in the top 20, whereas Senegal has the 13th-highest population inside the top 20 but the lowest GDP per capita.

Based on the assumption that money and population alone are not a predictor of success, smaller countries with fewer financial resources can achieve great results. It is clear that the structure of the country's football ecosystem and provision throughout the player pathway is having an impact on international achievement. It is this ecosystem that we are setting out to examine and understand in a bid to bridge the gap to ensure that each MA can reach its full potential and that every talented player gets a chance.

The analysis matrix

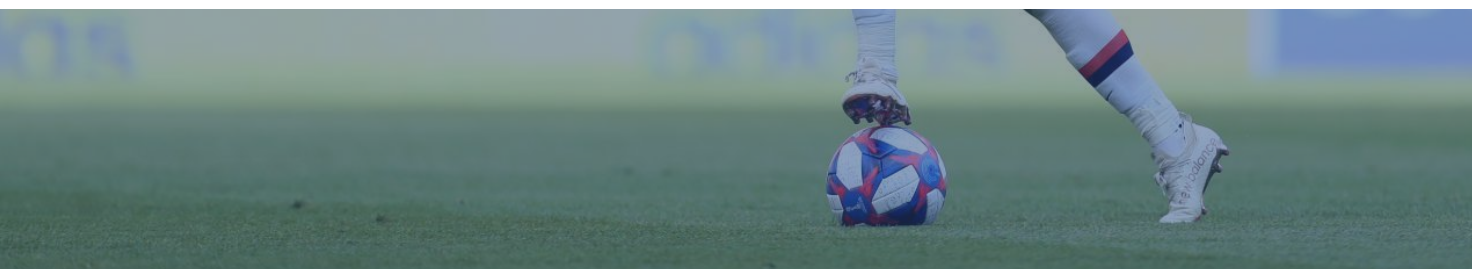
To understand the talent development ecosystem in each country, it was crucial to gain a clear picture of the opportunities available to talented male and female individuals and the processes and structures that are in place to support their pathways.

Interaction within the matrix

As shown in Illustration 10, the analysis matrix was designed to facilitate the examination of talent development across MAs. This matrix portrays how an age-appropriate support framework specific to football ("AREAS") must be coupled with appropriate management and resources ("OPERATIONS") at each stage of development in order to facilitate the progression of talented young footballers, both male and female. With such structures in place throughout the player pathway, MAs will have every opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential.



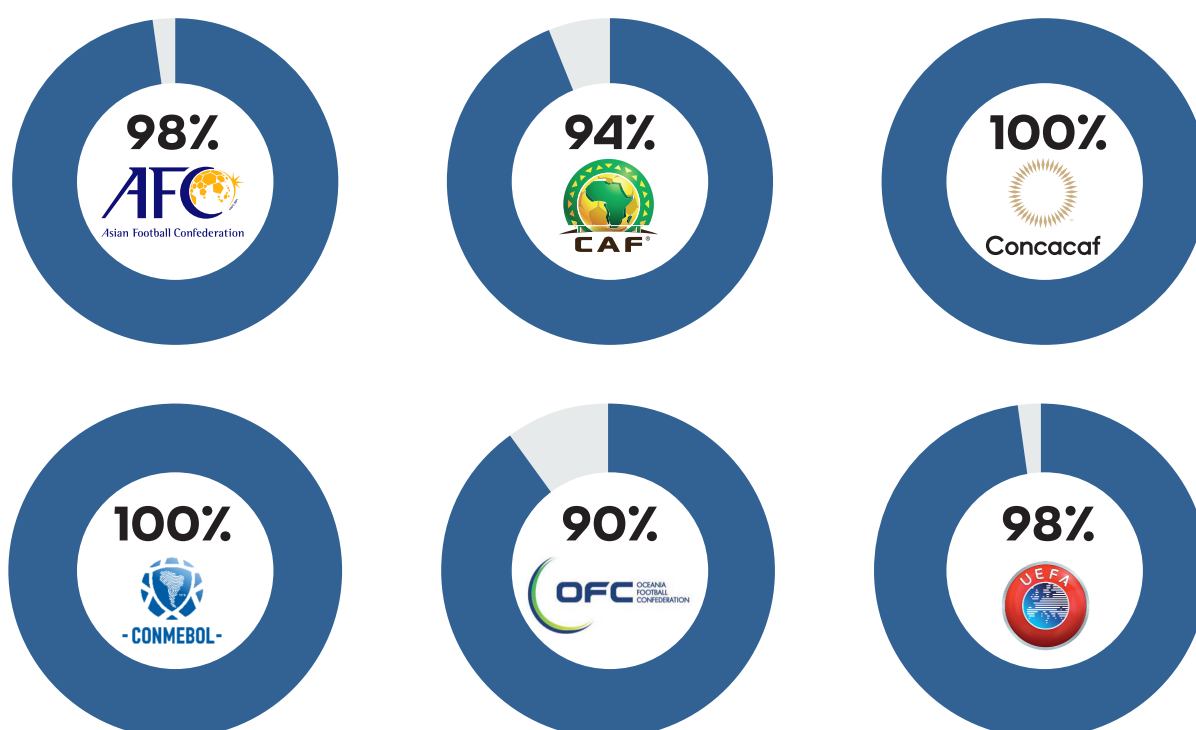
Illustration 10 | The three key dimensions of the analysis matrix that forms the basis of the talent development ecosystem analysis



3. The how

205 MAs accepted the invitation to participate in the process, which encompassed over 2,000 surveys, over 2,500 templates, over 85,000 questions and over 1,000 interviews.

Illustration 11



Percentage of member associations per confederation taking part in the talent development ecosystem analysis.

Methodology

All 211 MAs were invited to participate in this analysis, with 205 accepting the opportunity. However, this report is based on the 190 MAs that had completed the ecosystem analysis process by the deadline of 31 January 2021.

The people

In December 2019, FIFA brought together a vastly experienced and diverse group of strategic thinkers with a proven track record in football to form a high-performance team tasked with spearheading the delivery of the ecosystem analysis. Each of the 16 high-performance teams included a high-performance expert and a high-performance manager and was assigned a set of MAs to support on this fact-finding mission. In collaboration with Double Pass, using its scientific, proven methodology, analysts located across the globe set out to investigate the critical success factors of selected elite academies within each MA.

Throughout this process, FIFA's regional technical consultants were integral in becoming a conduit between the high-performance team and the MA and helping to build a fruitful relationship.

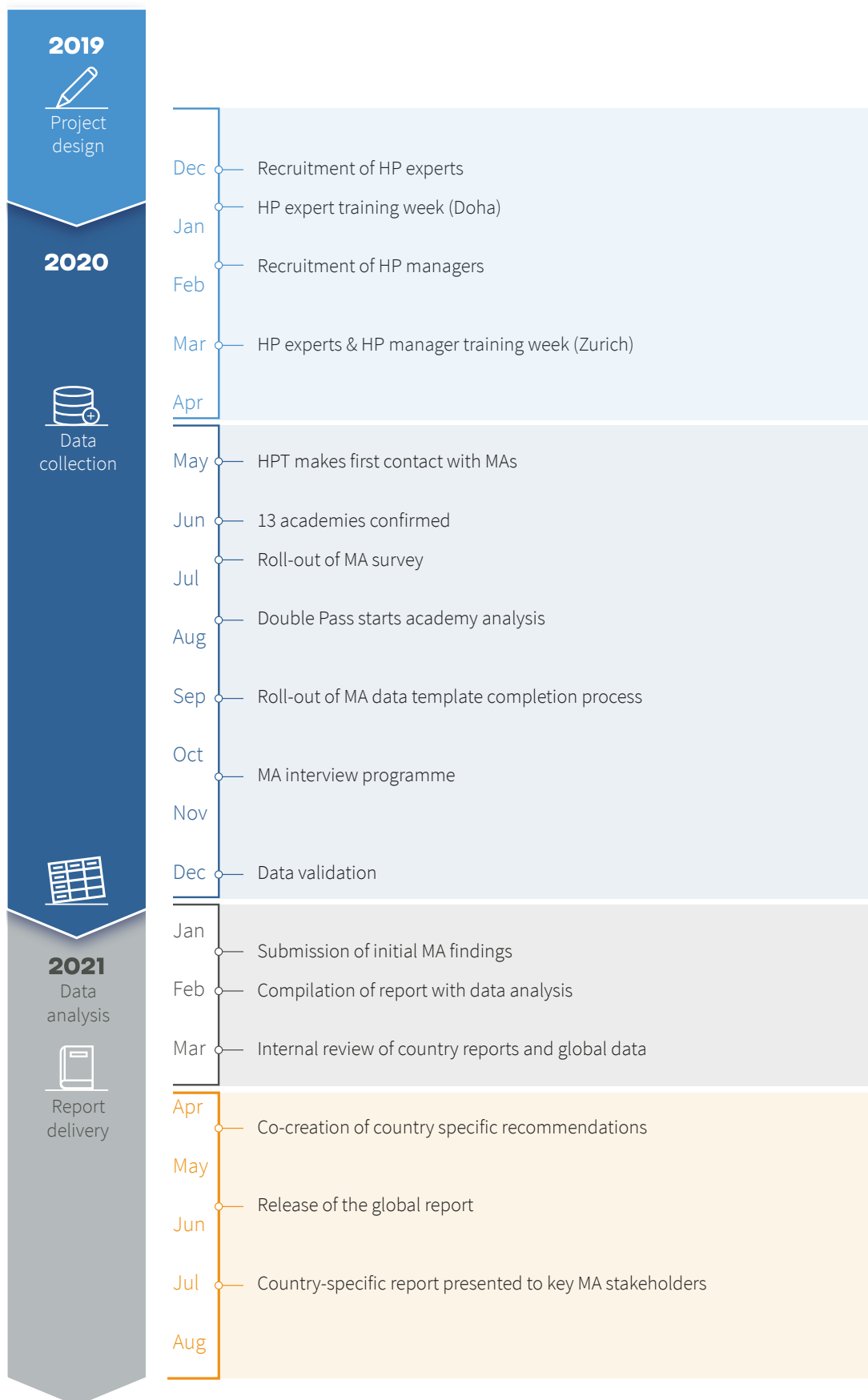


Illustration 12 | *The plan - road map*

The process

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the initial plan was for this process to be conducted in person with the high-performance teams embarking on a three- to four-day site visit to each participating MA to validate data, interview key stakeholders and observe the ecosystem in practice. Regrettably, the process had to be redesigned due to the impact of the pandemic and the resulting travel restrictions, while taking the welfare of all involved into account.





Analysis content		
	Survey modules	14
	Template modules	11-13
	Academy analysis	<p>Up to 13 academies selected, with analysis conducted by Double Pass</p> <p>Three in-depth evaluations (interview + CAMP survey), 2:1 split (boys' or girls' academies)</p> <p>Up to ten (five boys', five girls') academies analysed through the CAMP survey only</p>
	Interview programme	Eight to 12 interviews incorporating executive management, leaders of technical departments, coach education staff, talent identification staff, youth and senior national-team coaching and support staff and professional league representatives

Illustration 13 | The ecosystem analysis process

This remodelled online ecosystem analysis followed the same process across all MAs, with four forms of data collection for each association. As shown in Illustration 13, this consisted of MA-specific surveys, data templates, an interview programme led by a high-performance team and an analysis of selected domestic academies conducted by Double Pass.

The process of collecting information was conducted over a seven-month period during which positive working relationships were formed between high-performance teams and MAs. With regular contact through weekly video calls, groundbreaking results were achieved: greater insight into the football landscape within the country and the MAs' needs was obtained and, most importantly, trust was built up among those working within associations.



The data

This is the first time that FIFA has conducted analysis of this magnitude, with the scale of the collection and dissemination of data unrivalled on the global stage. FIFA sees this as the basis of future research and a continuous evaluation process. The analysis in this report is based on the participation of 190 MAs, and the findings and comparisons herein are drawn from a data set comprising 2,140 completed surveys, 2,734 completed templates and 1,143 interviews.

Despite the undoubted boon represented by the huge amount of data collected, it must be noted that throughout this analysis journey, there have been many challenges and restrictions due to the absence of critical data points from across the associations. Data forms the basis for analysing the state of play and helps to make developments become visible. It provides important insight and information and is therefore essential for making informed, objective decisions and assessments. As a result, we urge each and every MA to facilitate the discovery of similar insights internally by collecting data to produce association-specific key performance indicators for progress assessment and to enable the development of its own ecosystem for the future.

In this report, average values from comparison groups are given. The basis for determining the comparison groups was the FIFA/ Coca-Cola World Ranking (for both men and women) from December 2020, with levels I-III respectively bringing together the countries ranked 1-20, 21-50 and 51-100. When referring to aspects explicitly applicable to the women's game, the report uses the FIFA/ Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking for countries accordingly.

The comparisons presented in this report can be highly informative and have the potential to enhance practice. However, they must be treated with caution. Each and every MA is different, with its own football ecosystem, cultural background and social structures across the country. Consequently, what works in one MA will not necessarily work in another, due to the needs and demands of different regions across the globe, denoted by the cultural background and historical development of football in a given country. From an interview perspective, we also found that, on occasion, there was a range of interpretations of certain questions, which was reflected in the answers and does not always allow for reliable comparisons to be drawn. However, it was important for us to present these questions, the corresponding answers and data, as they can provide valuable suggestions for the development of adequate long-term plans.

The report

As shown below in Illustration 14, the analysis will enable the development of an MA-specific report outlining the current football landscape of the country along with a global report highlighting trends and critical success factors across the world. Both of these elements will support the creation of a tailor-made programme for each MA.



Illustration 14 | Expected project outcomes



Acknowledgements

Without the hard work, dedication, support and openness of the MAs and their staff, this analysis would not have been possible. Thank you to everyone involved who took time to support us in completing the surveys and templates, coordinating the interview schedules and being on hand to deal with any queries.

Building strong relationships across the Danish Football Association over the last year was key to enabling the completion of an intense interview programme and the collection and dissection of multiple data points. This process has led us to create this report to reflect the talent ecosystem in Denmark.

MA counterparts

Vinnie Baun, Flemming Berg, Ole Bjur, Kenneth Brogaard, Albert Capellas, Laura Christensen Hald, Anders Friis, Kim Hallberg, Søren Hermansen, Kasper Hjulmand, Mikkel Høgdahl Bjerg, Jakob Jensen, Frank Johnsen, Lars Knudsen, Kenneth-Heiner Møller, Peter Møller, Kristian Mørch Rasmussen, Katrine Pedersen, Søren Randa-Boldt, Johanna Rasmussen, Theis Rasmussen, Peter Rudbæk, Lars Søndergard, and Morten Wieghorst.

Participating academies

AaB, Boldklubben af 1893, Ballerup-Skovlunde Fodbold, Brøndby IF (Girls), Dalum/Naesby Pigefodbold, FC Copenhagen, FC Midtjylland, FC Nordsjaelland, FC THY Piger, DBK Fortuna Hjørring (Girls), IF Lyseng / AGF (Girls), KoldingQ, OB, Silkeborg IF, Team Odense Q, Viborg Q (Team Viborg), Viborg SF - Elite

The FIFA high-performance team



High performance expert

Hesterine de
Reus



High performance manager

Luis Miguel
Del Risco
Torres

1. MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES

Through thoughtful management, MAs can take significant steps towards achieving their performance objectives.

The management and resources of a member association (MA) influence a wide range of departments across the association, as well as all levels of the wider football community. The process of identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an MA's performance in all of its areas – from strategy to the national playing philosophy – can significantly contribute to the realisation of the broader objectives and goals that the MA has set for itself and its footballing community.

1.1 General management

The following section provides a picture of general management, the long-term strategy for player development, and the support for executing this strategy through sufficient budgeting and data management. It is imperative that the MA outline a clear direction – supported by sufficient financial and empirical backing – that it wants the organisation and its staff and players to work towards.

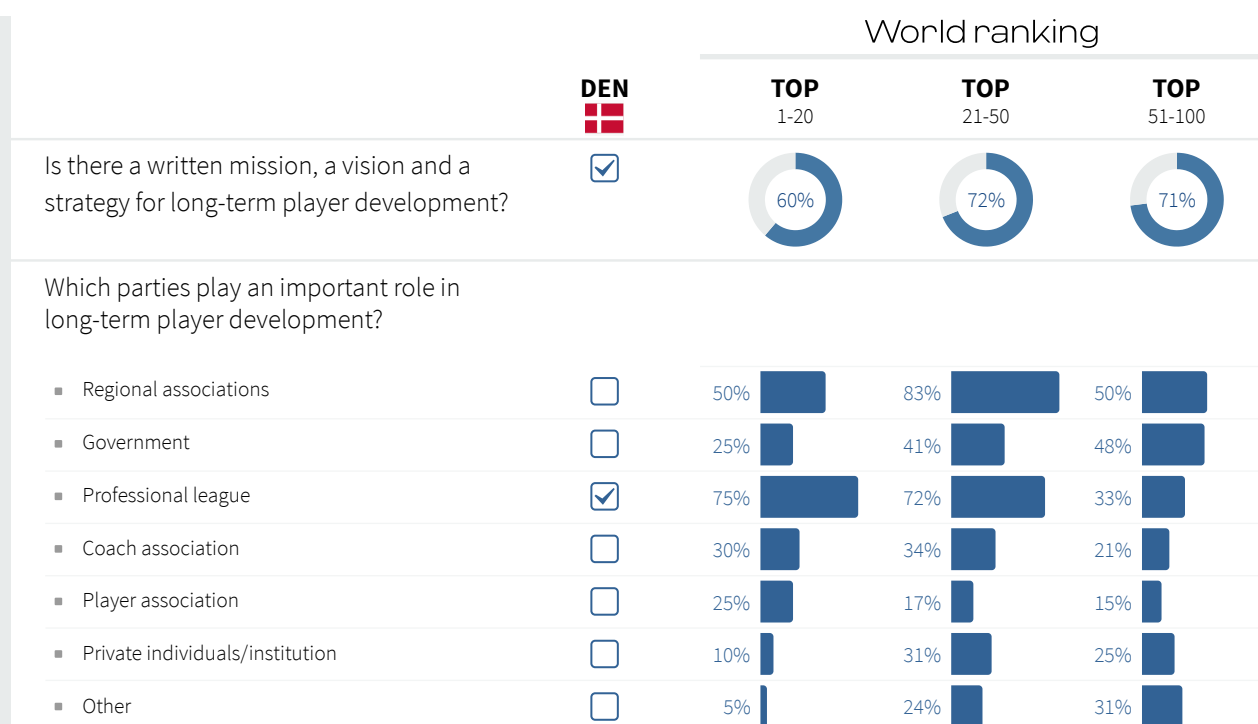
Long-term player development (LTPD) strategy

As is the case at any organisation, a strategy is needed to help the MA achieve its goals or objectives. More specifically, a clear LTPD strategy must be established to realise the targets that the MA sets for itself and the footballing environment as a whole.

69% of member associations in the top 100 have a written strategy for LTPD.

The majority of MAs have a strategy for LTPD, with the breakdown by ranking group ranging from 60% (top 20) to 71% (MAs ranked 51-100). The successful delivery of such a strategy requires engagement from a range of agencies and stakeholders. The most popular key stakeholders amongst the top 100 are regional associations, the government and – particularly in the top 50 – the professional league.

Illustration 1.1



Finding

National strategy for player development and the associated key stakeholders

- The DBU's LTPD Strategy involves developing world-class team players with strong individual and team values, whilst involving all stakeholders on and off the pitch.
- The strategy for the women's game, the DBU Vision 2020, focuses on the development of elite and amateur players and starts in the four to five age group.
- The MA (particularly in girls' football) and the clubs (boys' game) are the key stakeholders within player development. The DBU's Youth Licensing System has played a key role in player development within the clubs' youth programmes, offering an environment that promotes development rather than being results-oriented.

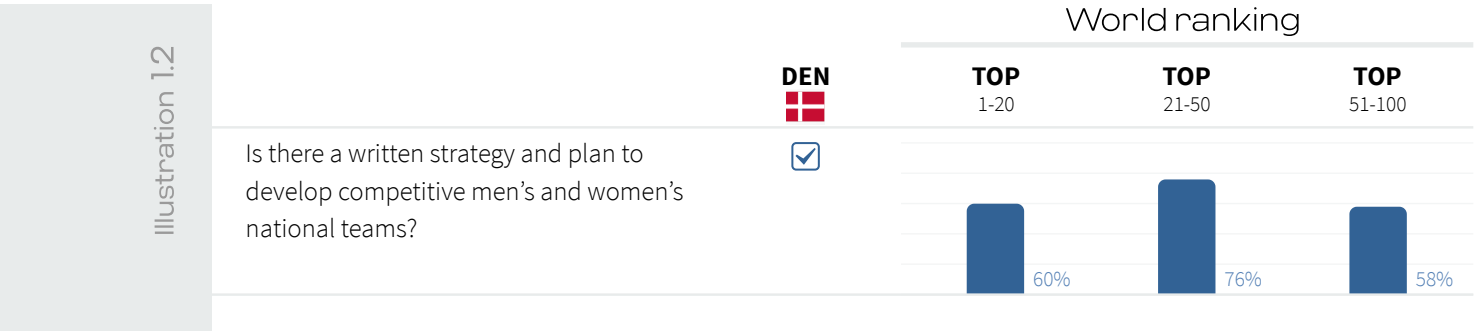


The existence of a written national-team strategy

Having a written strategy formally acknowledges the targets – and the means to achieve these targets – that have been set by the MA. Furthermore, a written strategy minimises room for miscommunication between those who are pursuing it, allowing faster progress towards the goals set by the MA. The strategy then has to be brought to life and implemented to fulfil its purpose.

Approximately 35% of the MAs across the top 100 do not have a written plan to develop competitive national teams.

The top 100 MAs are similar in their focus on the development of their national teams, with a range between 58% (top 51-100) and 76% (MAs ranked 21-50) of associations having a strategy in place.



Finding

The written strategy for national teams

- There is a clear strategy to develop competitive national teams, with clear performance KPIs for the men's and women's national teams.
- The national playing philosophy, which is updated regularly with input from all national-team coaches, is implemented via the DBU Talent Centres, where players up to the age of 15 learn about elements of the DBU playing style. Players are then involved in an ongoing development process across all national youth teams to build competitive national teams.
- Clear focus points per age group for both elite and amateur players provides good guidance for player development and also creates a strong foundation for the national teams.
- Women's football and girls' development presents some challenges. Given that the female club environment is not as well developed as the boys' set-up, the DBU has a major role to play in educating girls throughout their pathway.









Data management

Technical leaders can benefit from data insights gained from processing and analysing relevant data in many ways. However, a prerequisite for the processing and analysis of data is for data to be first collected and then presented informatively. Effective data management is necessary to guarantee that these basic requirements are met.

All of the top 20 MAs have a database for players, coaches and match officials.

The vast majority of the top 100 MAs have a data management system to track registered players. However, the top 20 use such a system to a greater extent for the tracking of match officials, as well as for the management of coach education and talent development.

Illustration 1.3

Do you have a data management system in place for:	DEN 	World ranking		
		TOP 1-20	TOP 21-50	TOP 51-100
▪ Registration of players		100%	100%	98%
▪ Competition management		95%	90%	88%
▪ Registration of coaches		100%	79%	85%
▪ Registration of referees		100%	79%	81%
▪ Coach education management		84%	79%	65%
▪ Talent development management		63%	45%	31%
▪ Management of the national team(s)		89%	66%	71%

Budget allocation

The strategy, mission and direction that the technical leadership sets need to be grounded in financial realities. An analysis of budget allocation can provide an insight into why technical goals are or are not being reached.

1.4

Percentage change in annual technical expenditure using 2016 as the base year	2017	2018	2019
	 -9.1%	 3.1%	 8.1%

Finding

The use and management of data to inform practice

- The DBU uses data management systems to collect information across a wide range of areas, from the registration of players and coaches to competition, talent development and the management of the national teams.
- Having these dedicated systems in place to collect relevant data about such areas clearly provides further support and improves the quality of work being undertaken.
- The insight provided by such data offers numerous benefits and the DBU seems to have found a way to make strategic decisions about how to use performance-related data to assess and continue its progress in terms of player development.

1.2 Organisational structure

The following section illustrates how the technical division is situated in the organisational structure of the MA. The organisational structure of an MA is comprised of many components. The multidisciplinary make-up of technical divisions provides the opportunity for associations to accommodate them in unique ways that can help the functioning of both the division and the association.

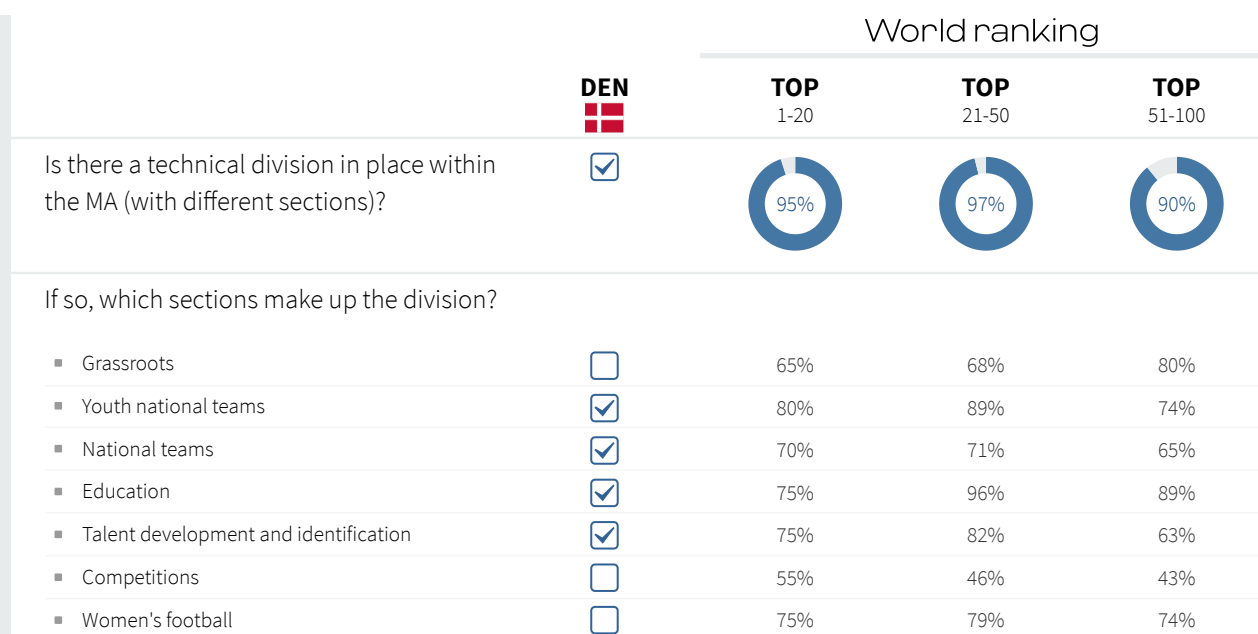
Technical division

Effectively incorporating a technical division into the organisational structure of an MA and giving it a high enough platform at executive level enable MAs and their corresponding footballing communities to capitalise to the maximum on the benefits and expertise provided by technical divisions.

Education, youth national teams, talent development and women's football are all key sections of the technical division across the top 50 MAs.

93% of MAs in the top 100 have a technical division. Associations ranked 51-100 are more likely to have the grassroots game as part of the technical division, with education, talent development & identification, and women's football more prominent in the structure of the technical division across the MAs ranked 21-50.

Illustration 1.5



Finding

The technical division's operational structure and its representation at board level

- The MA has a political structure (general assembly, board and four advisory committees: governance, grassroots, professional football and national teams) and an administrative set-up with five departments.
- The Elite Department (the Technical Division) is comprised of four sections: Senior National Teams, Youth National Teams, Talent Development (Boys and Girls) and Coach Education.
- They hold quarterly meetings to exchange information and discuss plans. A monthly management group meeting is held between the Director of Football and the Head of the Elite Department, as well as regular informal meetings (i.e. relating to competitions). The Director of Football represents the Elite Department at the ExCo meeting.



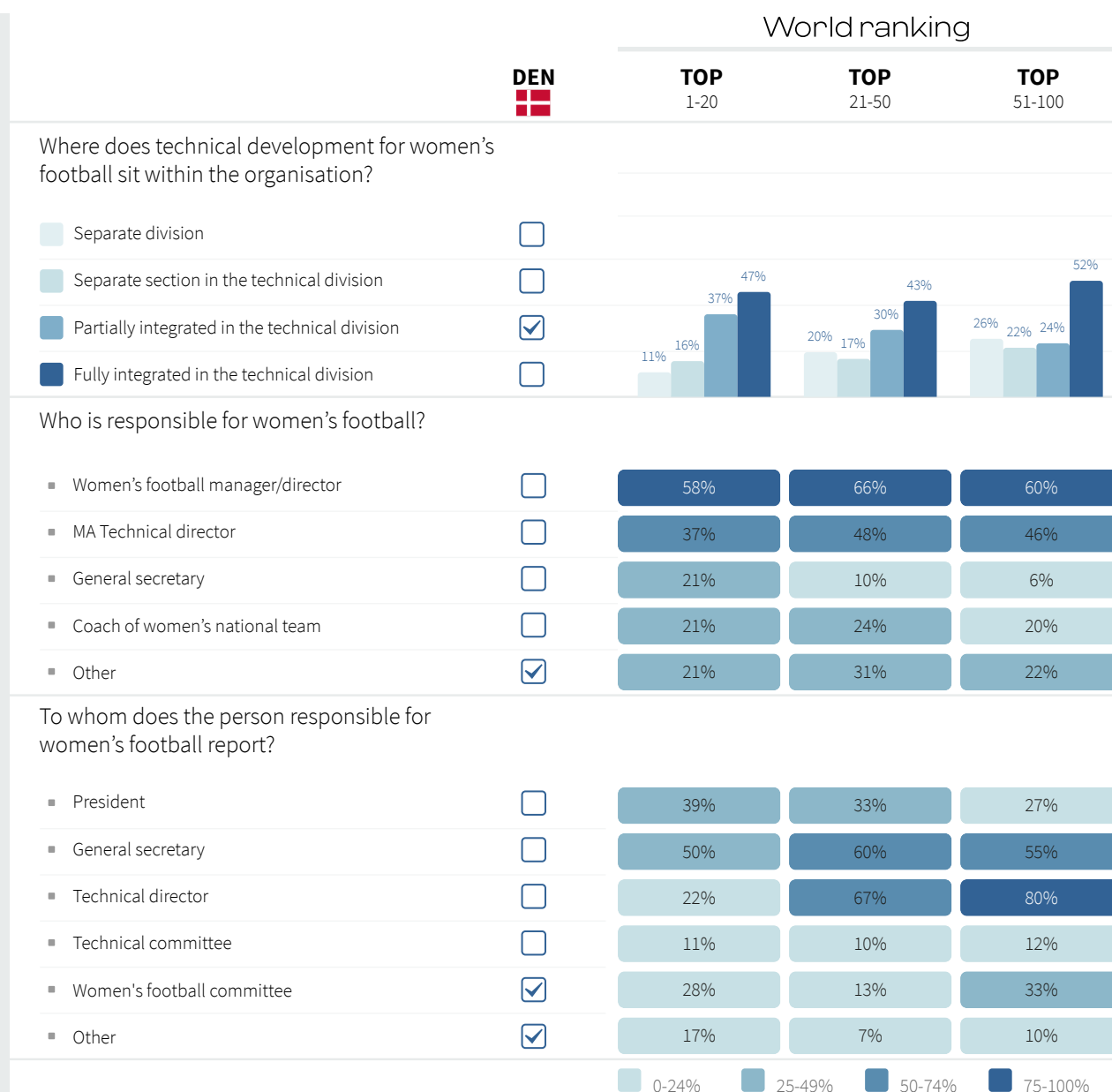
Women's football

This section focuses on the current status of technical development within parties in the MA that are specifically relevant to women's football. It is important for an emphasis on technical development – and its corresponding benefits – to be seen in these parties as well, in order to match the ever-increasing popularity of the women's game.

MA's adopt various models of integrating women's football into their organisation according to their circumstances.

Across the top 100, the majority of member associations tend to fully integrate women's football in the technical division. Furthermore, associations in the top 100 will often have a head of women's football or a director who reports to either the technical director or the general secretary. In some MAs, multiple people are responsible for women's football.

Illustration 1.6



1.3 Technical leadership

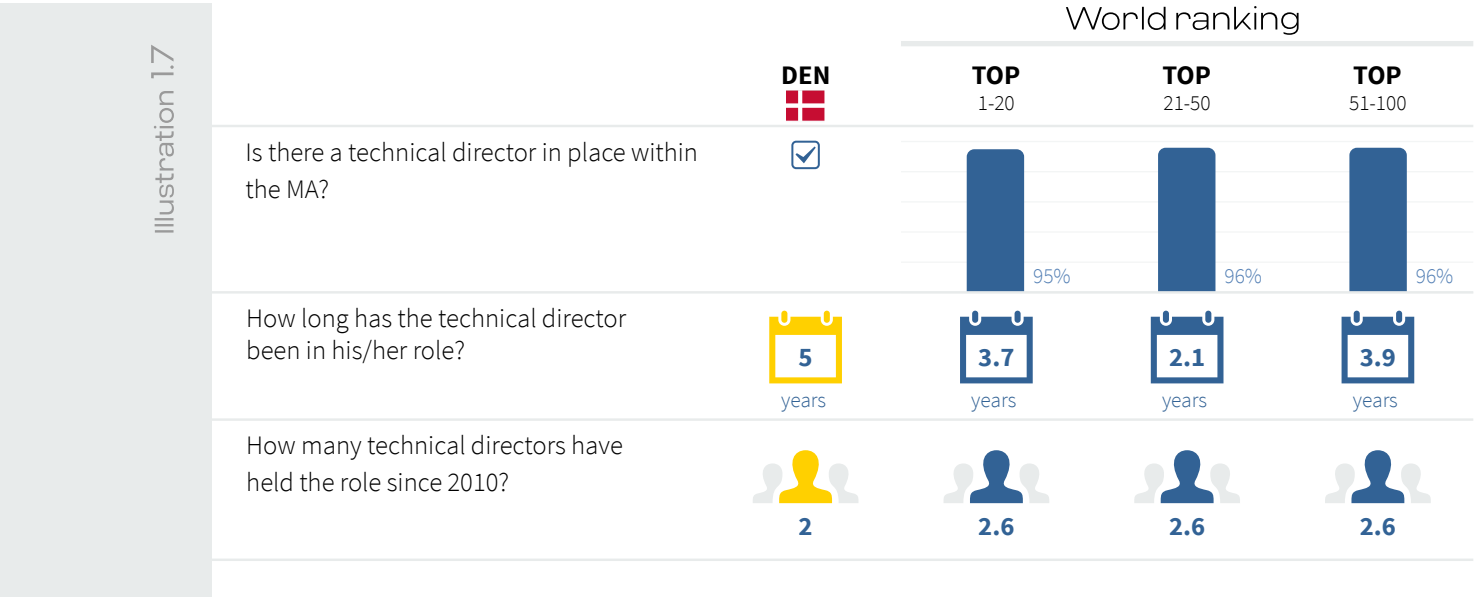
Given its wide remit, the technical leadership has a strong influence within an MA. When aspects such as a national playing philosophy, strategic planning and the role of the technical director are implemented effectively, the technical leadership can play an important part in raising the standard and health of a football environment.

Technical director

The following section looks at the various processes in place at your MA regarding the role of the technical director. Although leadership quality comes from the individual, there are also certain structural requirements in order to give the technical director the opportunity to lead effectively.

MAs ranked 21-50 offer the least stability in the role of the technical director, with an average length in post of 2.1 years.

Although 96% of MAs in the top 100 have a technical director, the limited time in which technical directors are in post (2.1 to 3.9 years across the top 100) is a key issue in guaranteeing the design and implementation of long-term strategies. Across all associations, within a ten-year period, generally there will be between two and three changes of technical director.

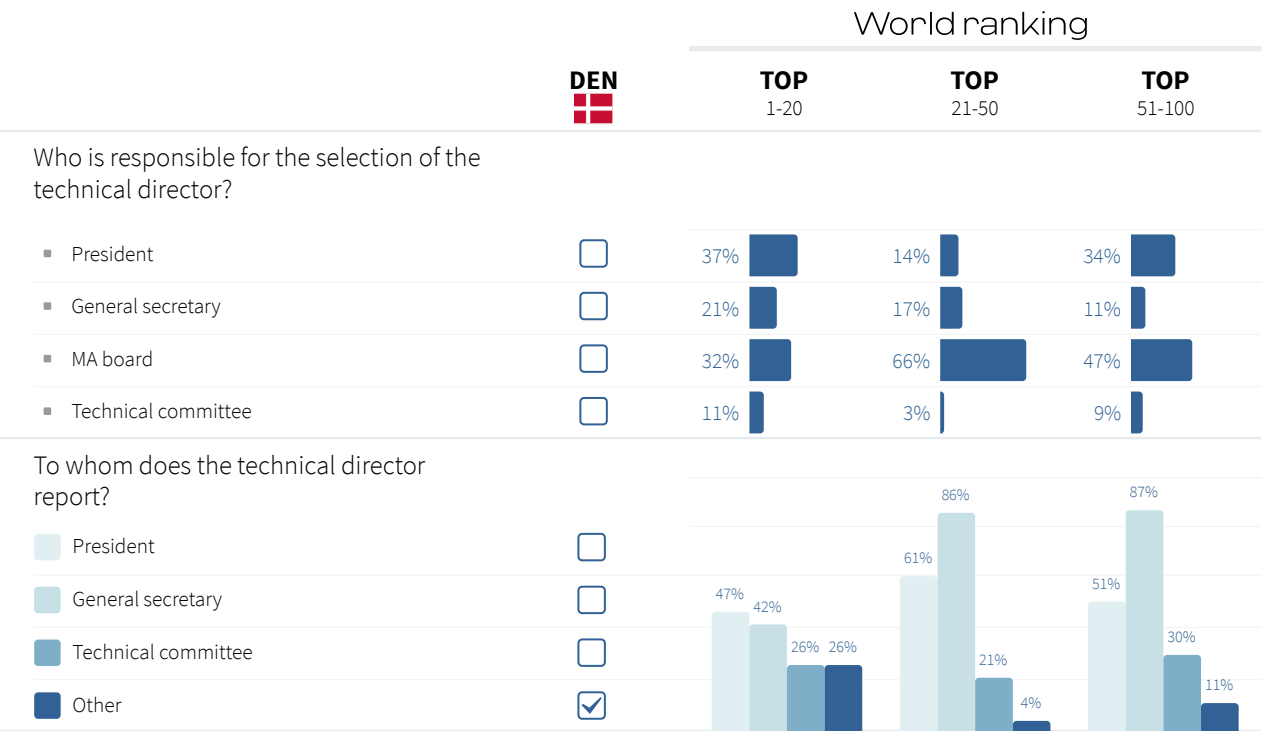




The MA board plays a significant role in the selection of the technical director across the top 100 MAs.

A greater percentage of the top 20 MAs have their president take the lead in the appointment and management of the technical director. Conversely, in associations ranked 21 to 100, it more frequently falls to the MA board to select the technical director and to the general secretary to manage him or her.

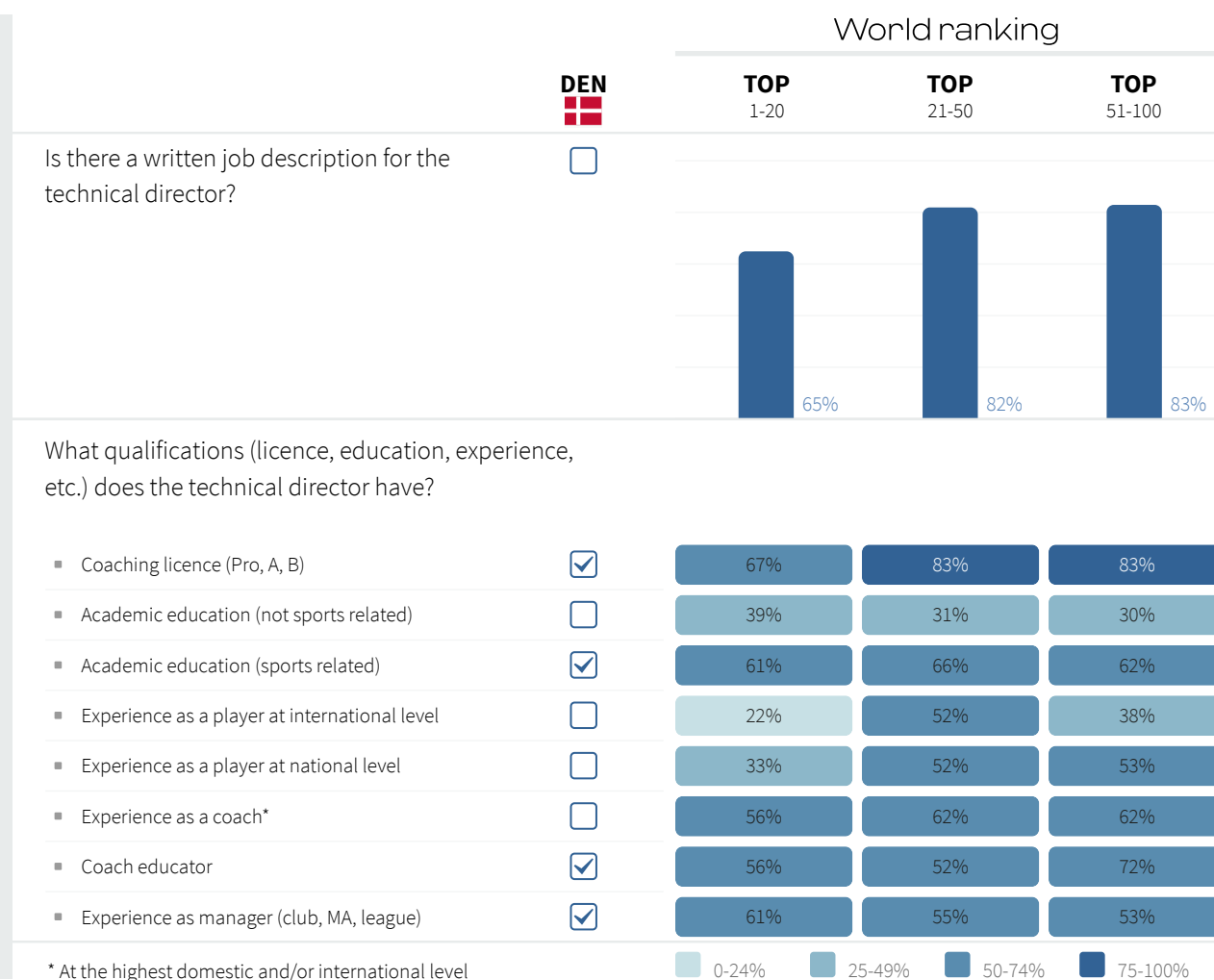
Illustration 1.8



55% of technical directors in the top 100 MAs have experience as a club, association or league manager.

83% of technical directors in the MAs ranked 21-100 have a coaching licence as opposed to 67% of those in the top 20, with more technical directors at associations ranked 51-100 being qualified coach educators (72%). Furthermore, across the top 100, 63% of technical directors have a sports-related academic qualification. From a human resources perspective, most MAs have a written job profile for the technical director.

Illustration 1.9



Finding

The technical director and the assigned roles and responsibilities

- The role of technical director within the DBU differs from the standard technical director position. In terms of the organisational structure, the Director of Football oversees the department, with the Head of the Elite Department responsible for its overall administration.
- However, it is the Head of Elite Development, who has a strong technical background in several areas, that is assigned the title of Technical Director, although the duties of the role are divided among the section heads that make up the Elite Department.
- Women's football is integrated within the Elite Department. Any reference to national teams refers to both genders and talent development covers both the boys' and girls' national teams.



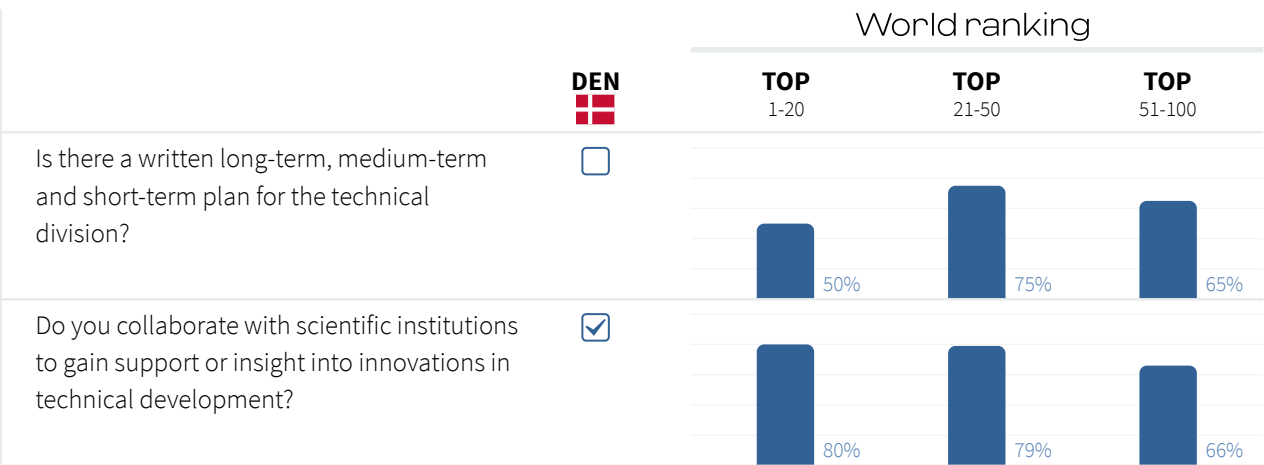
Strategic planning

Similar to the overarching strategy necessary for setting the general direction of MAs, strategic planning specific to the technical division is needed to outline the unit’s direction for the short-, medium- and long-term future. Additionally, strategic planning also entails working with and gaining insight from scientific institutions outside football.

A significant number of MAs have yet to create a written strategy for the management of the technical division.

Approximately 35% of the top 100 member associations do not currently have a written long-term plan for the technical division. A large proportion of the top 100 associations (73%) collaborate with scientific institutions, with more MAs in the top 50 choosing to do so.

Illustration 1.10



Finding

Strategy of the technical division and its collaboration with scientific institutions

- The DBU has no specific development plan for its Elite Department. All Elite Department staff work to the guidelines within the LTPD Strategy to achieve competitive national teams. Examples that highlight this alignment are the Coach Education Department and the establishment of the playing philosophy.
- Regular assessment, interaction and feedback is part of the work culture. When adjustment is required, it is implemented.
- There is a strong relationship between the DBU and the clubs, who are an important stakeholder within talent development. The MA provides clubs with a player development framework, but the clubs ultimately have freedom in terms of how they educate players.
- The DBU works with universities and primarily on research. As a result of such partnerships, a Project and Analysis Department was created. Research requests relating to the DBU’s needs may be submitted by any of the MA’s departments.

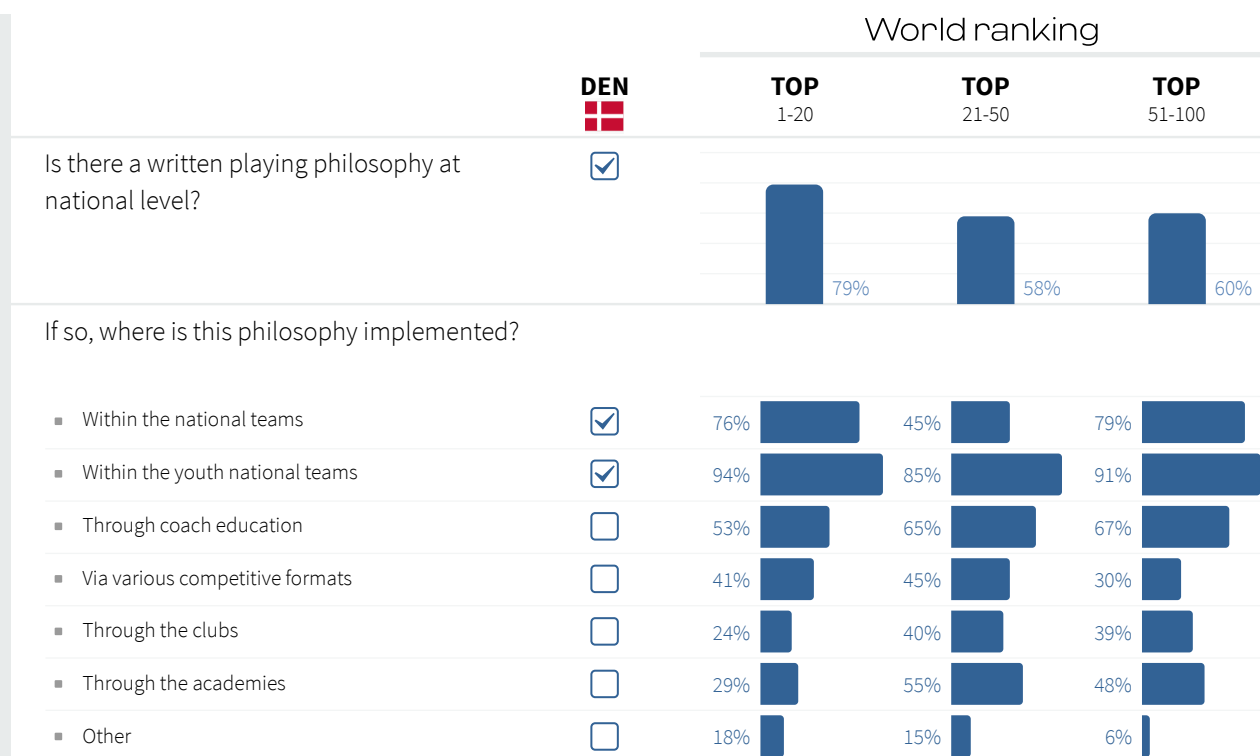
National playing philosophy

A national playing philosophy has numerous benefits for a footballing community: it synchronises the domestic footballing environment despite varying levels of ability, increases the utility of youth products for clubs and national teams, and contributes to a sense of national football identity.

Leading MAs are more likely to have a written national playing philosophy in place.

There is a clear distinction between the top 20 MAs, where 79% have a written playing philosophy in place, and the lower ranked MAs (21-100), as only 59% of them have such a philosophy. Most MAs that do have this philosophy in place implement it across the youth national teams (90%), coach education (64%) and senior national teams (68%).

Illustration 1.11



Finding

Implementation of the national playing philosophy

- The national playing philosophy has been reviewed and rewritten by all of the national team coaches. The Danish Way 2.0 is linked to the Danish national identity.
- It is implemented through the national teams. Elements of the philosophy are introduced at U-13, U-14 and U-15 levels at the DBU Talent Centres and players are familiar with the philosophy before playing for the U-16 national teams.
- As part of the long-term strategy, the MA works with the national youth teams to create a clear identity and a Danish culture. Playbooks for different age levels are being produced.
- Clubs are free to follow their own vision and playing style. The MA considers diversity in playing styles to be an asset in terms of player development and that it enhances the high-quality club environment that boys are exposed to.
- Given that the girls' club environment is not yet fully developed, the DBU plays a major role in girls' player development.



1.4 Resources

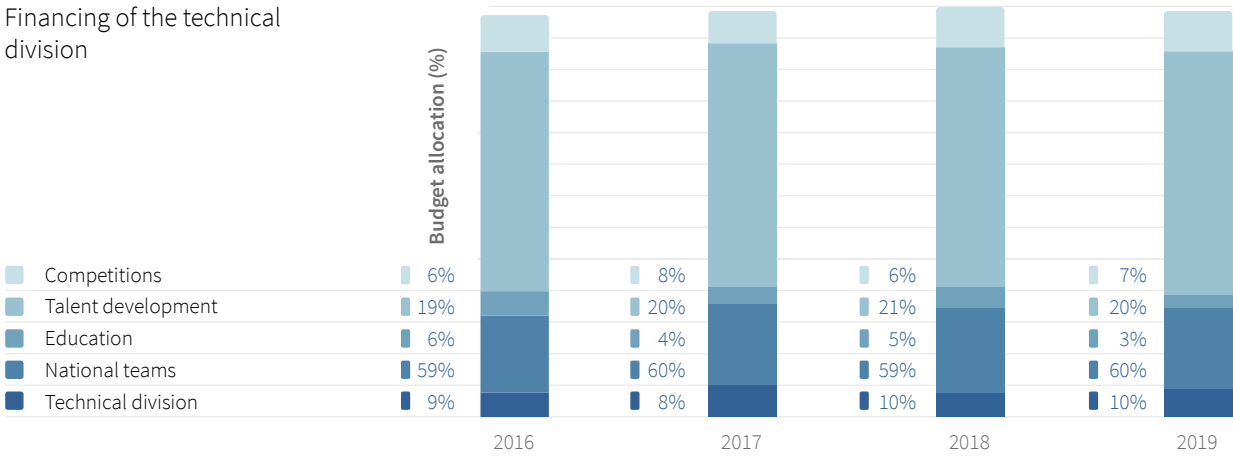
The section below illustrates the resources available to your MA’s technical division. Sufficiently resourced technical divisions can carry out their specific role and disseminate their findings to other areas within the MA. Without sufficient resources, their ability to do this to a desirable standard will wane.

Financial resources

Chief among the resources required for the technical division are financial resources. Here, we look at the budget allocation for your technical division and how it has changed in comparison to other departments over recent years.

Illustration 1.12

Financing of the technical division



Finding

The budget planning process for technical development

- The overall budget is determined annually by executive management. Budget planning is discussed during management group meetings and is based on the departments’ activity plans.
- Prior to the executive management budget meetings, the Elite Department meets with all heads of sections to discuss and draw up the activity plan.
- The Elite Department is represented in these meetings by the Director of Football and the Head of the Elite Department, who are members of the management group.
- Where projects require additional funding, the four committees and the Board are approached by the management group to ensure that the project is aligned with the strategic plan.
- Coach education is deemed as an important tool to accomplish the DBU’s vision regarding holistic player development. However, there has been a considerable drop in spending in this area over the past four years. This suggests that it is worth examining the impact of this decision on the strategy.

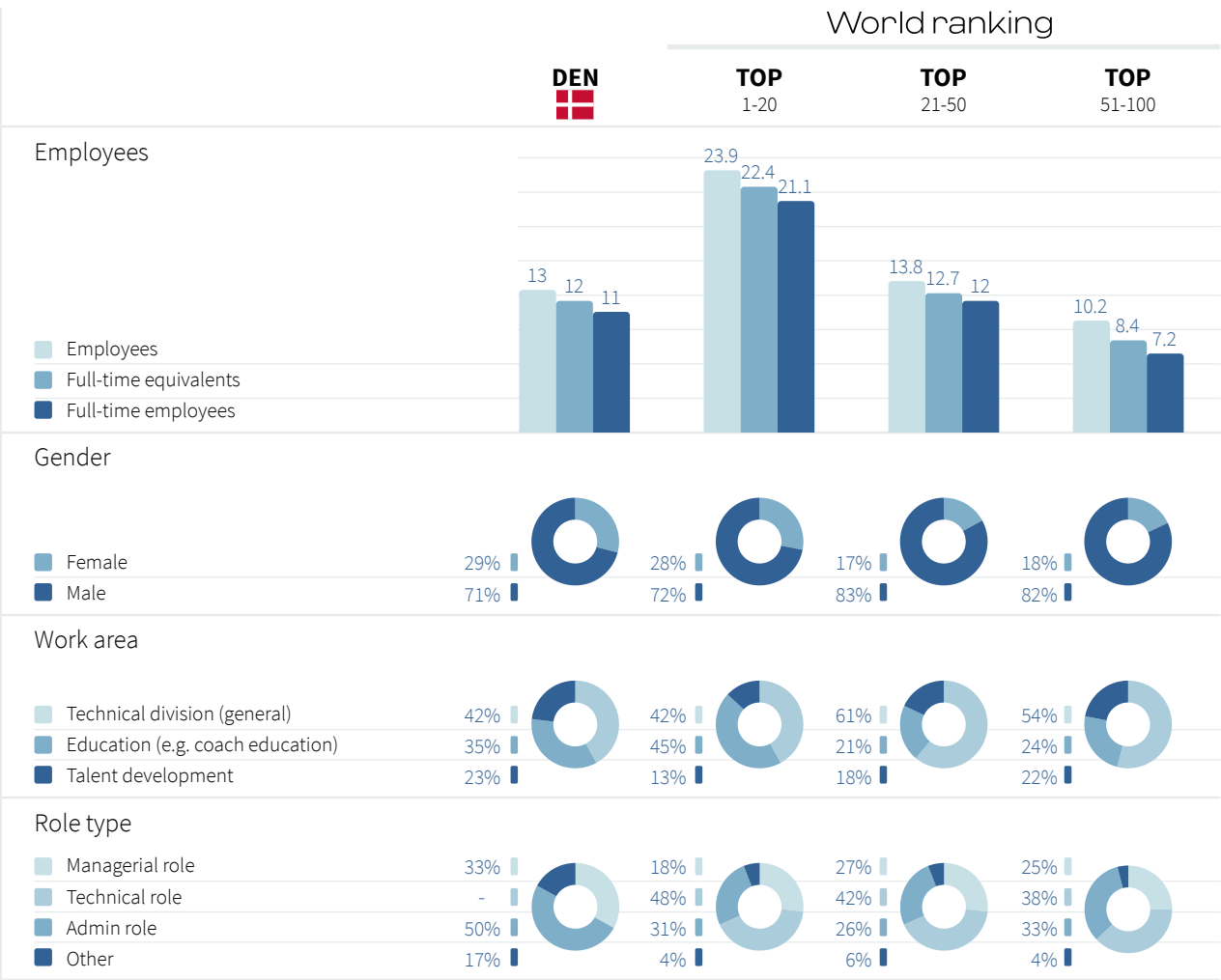
Human resources

Sourcing the best-suited individuals for roles within the technical division will have a direct influence on the division’s work and consequently the performance of the MA altogether. Thorough and effective staffing practices help guarantee that those hired will be useful additions to the division.

The top 20 MAs have the highest numbers of staff working within the technical division.

Overall, MAs ranked in the top 20 employ more staff in their technical division than lower-ranked MAs. Regarding women’s representation, an average of 28% of the staff in the top MAs are female, a number that drops to 18% in the MAs ranked between 21 and 100.

Illustration 1.13



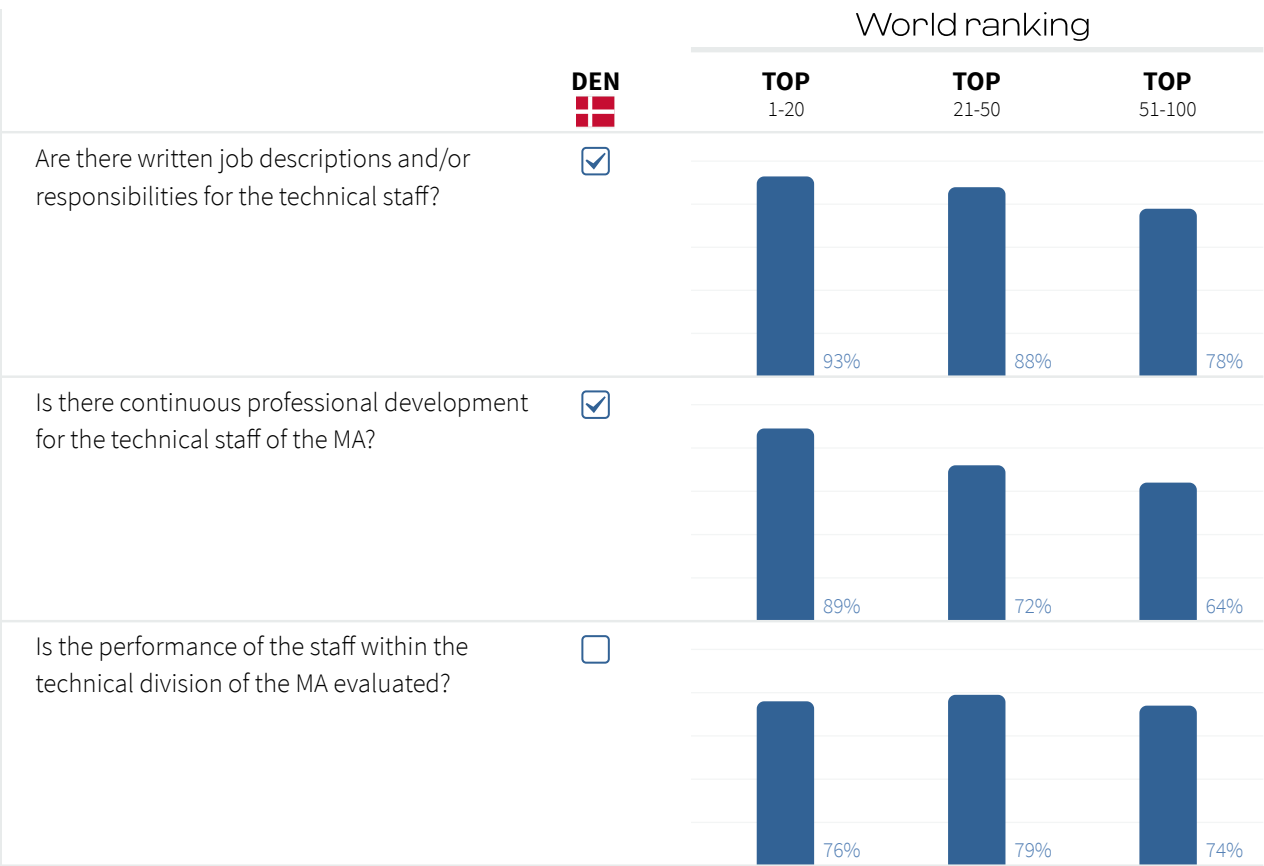
Human resource management

This aspect of human resources looks after the well-being of employees, provides them with opportunities for development, and ensures that the technical division has a sustainable work environment where staff can meet the targets set by the MA.

89% of the top 20 MAs support technical staff with continuous professional development (CPD).

MAs in the top 20 appear to have a greater support network for human resource management than their lower-ranked counterparts. A larger proportion of the highest-ranked group have job descriptions in place and support their staff with CPD. However, only 64% of associations ranked between 51 and 100 support the development of technical staff through organised CPD.

Illustration 1.14

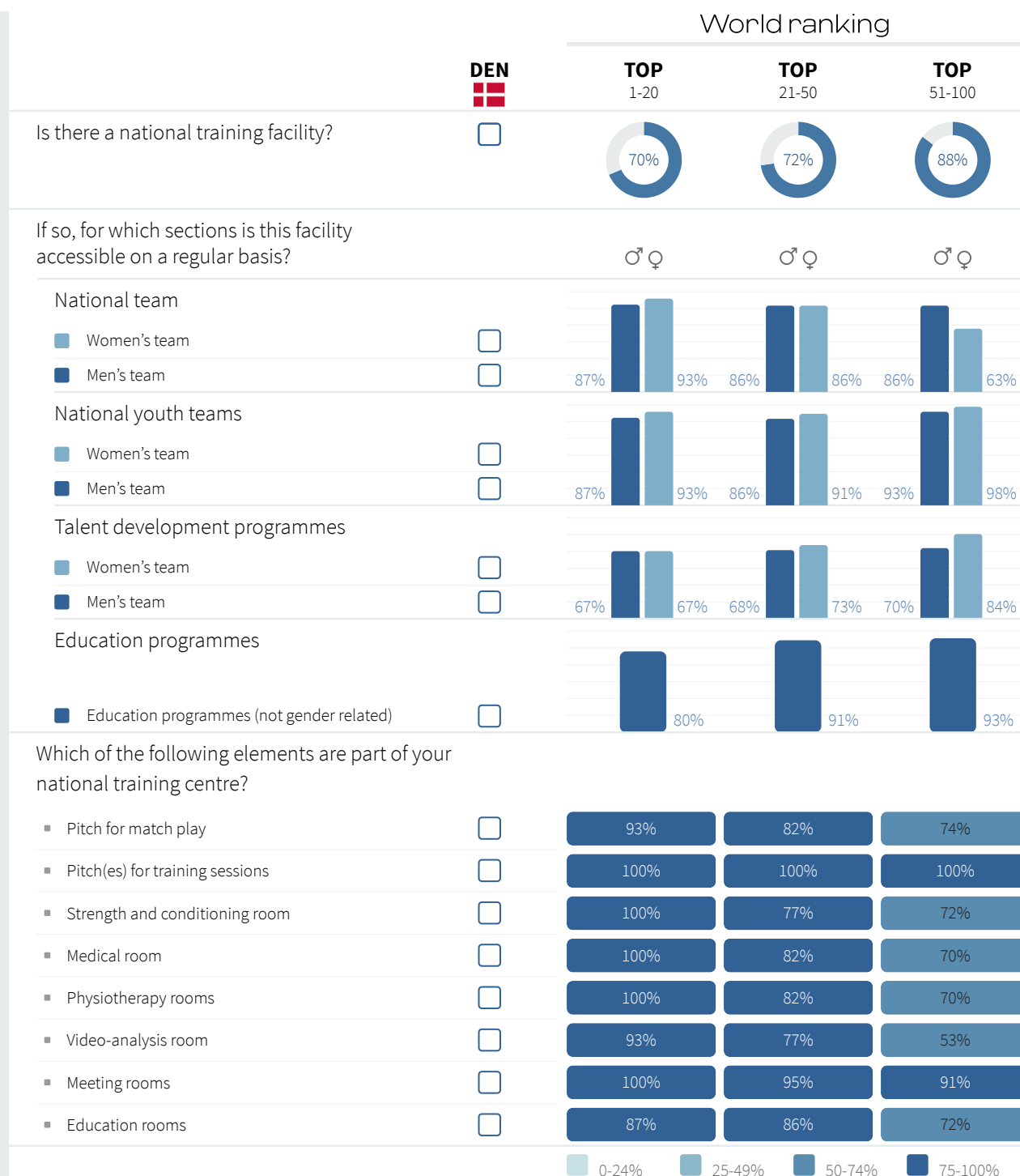


Infrastructure

As well as serving as the pinnacle of football infrastructure in a given country, a modern national training facility provides a state-of-the-art platform for honing players’ skills and fitness, and consequently influences performance on the pitch. An MA with a facility that caters for the multidisciplinary nature of modern football will reap the vast rewards of this approach.

80% of the top 100 member associations have a national training facility.

A greater percentage of MAs ranked from 51 to 100 have a national training facility (88% compared to 71% of the top 50). Although national training centres are more commonplace in lower-ranked member associations, these facilities tend not to be fully equipped – specifically in the areas of medicine, video analysis and strength & conditioning. National training centres are used for a multitude of purposes to support both the men’s and women’s game.



Finding

National training facilities

- The MA has no national training centre. Club facilities are rented by all of the national teams and for the activities of the DBU Talent Centres.
- Although the Club Licensing System ensures the domestic facilities are of a high standard, the facilities for national-team activities are rated as average when compared to international standards.
- The global profile and potential of Danish football suggests that the MA needs a training facility to enhance player development.



MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES

SUMMARISING NOTES

- The MA's administrative structure features five departments that follow the LTPD vision to create world-class team players. With no technical director, the duties involved in the role are divided among the heads of the Elite Department sections. Staff members are generally well qualified across the various areas of expertise and regular interaction and feedback is part of the work culture.
- The DBU's budget processes is agreed by an executive management group. The budget for the development of the national teams has increased in recent years.
- There is a strong relationship between the DBU and the clubs in terms of talent development for boys. The MA provides clubs with a development framework, but the clubs have the freedom to educate their players and are supported by the club and youth licensing systems.
- The DBU lacks a national training centre. The global profile and potential of Danish football suggests that the MA requires a facility to enhance player development.
- There are challenges in terms of the development of women's football. The club environment fails to meet the required standards and the DBU has a major role to play in educating girls throughout their pathway.

Recommendations

1. The performance standards on the international scene continue to develop. Having a national training centre appears to be a necessary step to enhance player development.
2. The professionalisation of women's football is developing apace across the leading countries. We recommend that discussions be opened to explore the feasibility of the women's top flight becoming part of the professional ranks.
3. Performance analysis is an area to be developed, with the need to educate staff and implement the analysis across all men's national teams and the female national teams.



2. NATIONAL TEAMS

Exposure to the highest level of football in the world.

National teams offer their players an unrivalled development experience. The elite-competition and tournament situations of international football provide an incredible learning process. National teams are important for the health of their domestic football environment as well. A team's success on the global stage can inspire younger generations, generate interest in the game, and drive amateur engagement in their community.

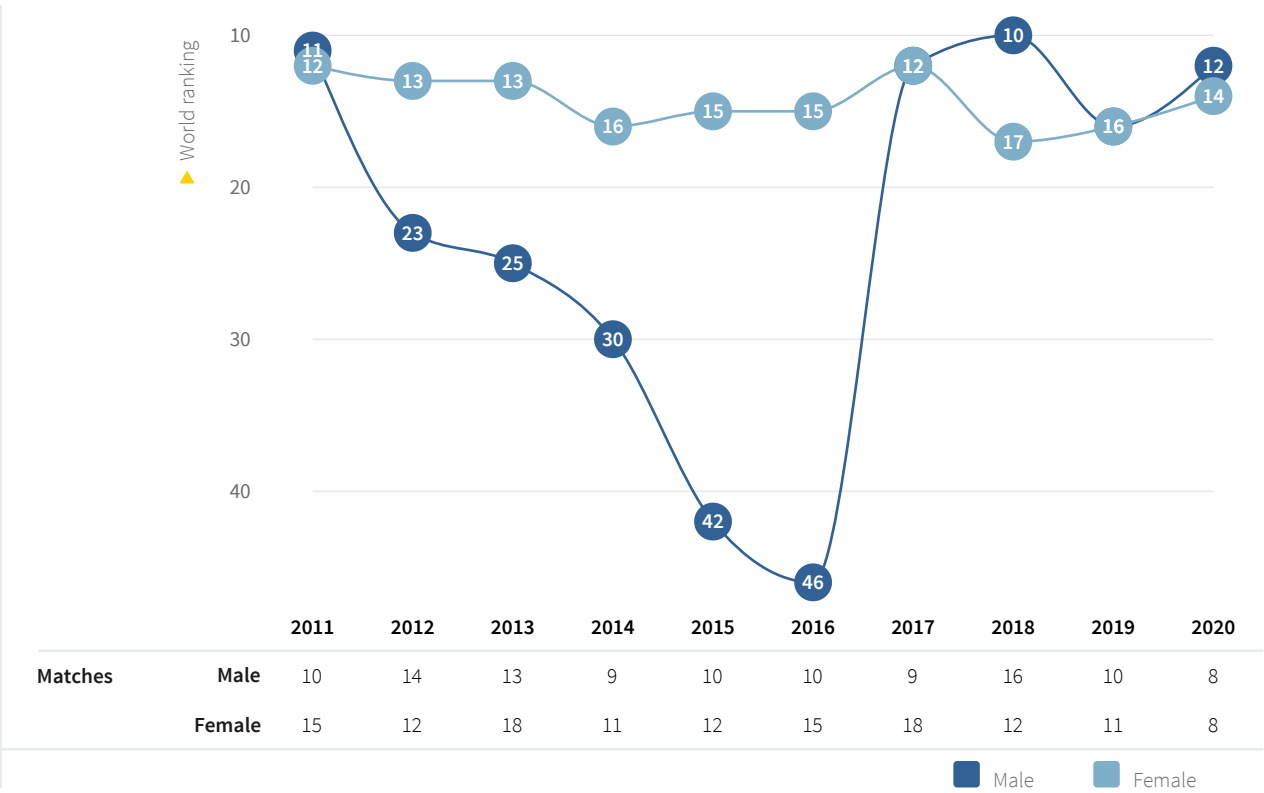
2.1 Strategic management

This section reviews the MA’s management structure and the alignment across the national teams from youth to senior. Having such alignment across the national teams is essential to maximise the individual development practices and to support the transition pathway for the best players in the country. This comes in the form of a national playing philosophy, a multi-disciplinary coaching and development methodology, national player profiling and KPIs, a performance support network and the communication and collaboration of staff across all squads

Performance and playing opportunities at senior level

The participation and performance of a national team in qualification campaigns and international tournaments are two fundamental ways to assess a national team’s success. National teams first need to participate in qualifiers, and if they are successful, they can then participate in continental or global tournaments. Below is the ranking evolution of your senior national teams over a ten-year period along with the number of matches played (official and friendly).

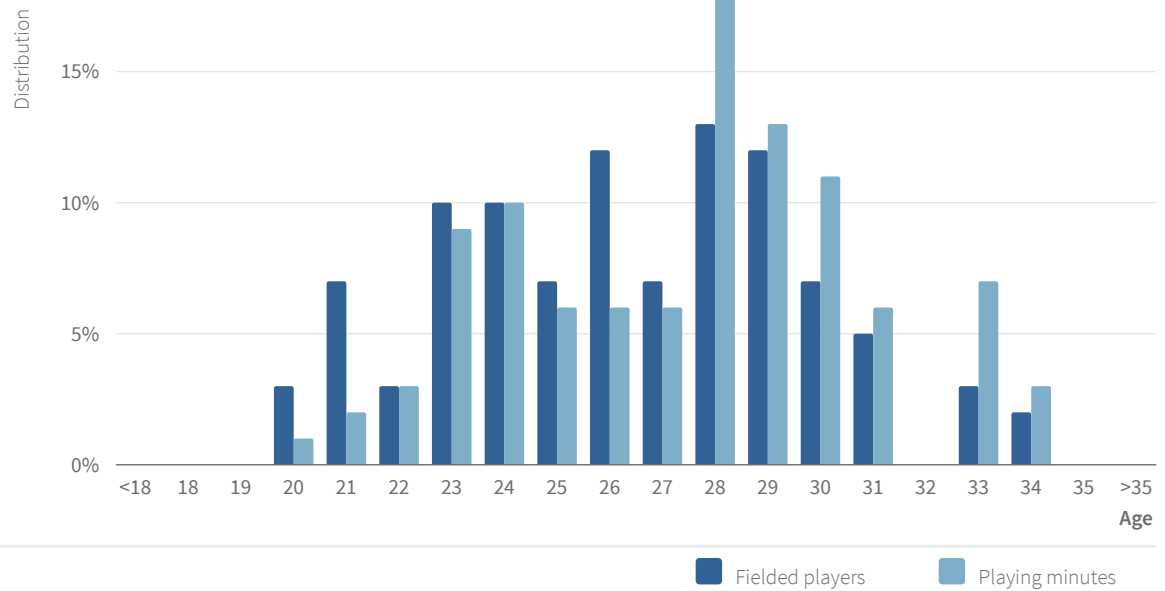
Illustration 2.1



Men's senior team age profile

The illustration below shows the age distribution of your men's senior national team and the playing minutes accumulated by these players over a two year period from 2019 to 2020 (data courtesy of CIES).

Illustration 2.2

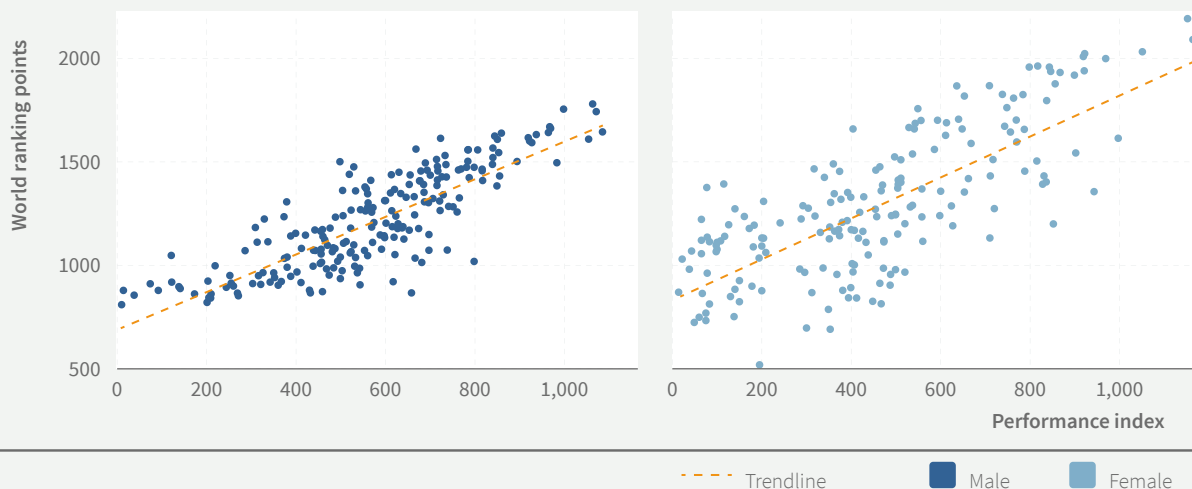


Infobox

Introducing the performance index

The performance index is an average score created from the results of all matches played over a set time period, with each match result weighted based upon the level of competition. In this instance, the time period is eight years broken down into two-year cycles. The match weighting takes into account the following levels of classification; friendly, continental qualification, World Cup qualification, continental final, and World Cup final, with each level receiving a progressively higher weighting. i.e. the more games played and won at a higher level results in a higher performance index score.

As shown in the graphs below, an MA's performance index score given its results over a two-year cycle correlate to the world ranking. Given that these two metrics correlate, youth and senior team performances can now be aligned and compared over a set period of time.





Performance and playing opportunities at youth level

International matches provide unrivalled learning opportunities. High levels of participation and success at youth level are closely linked to future achievements.



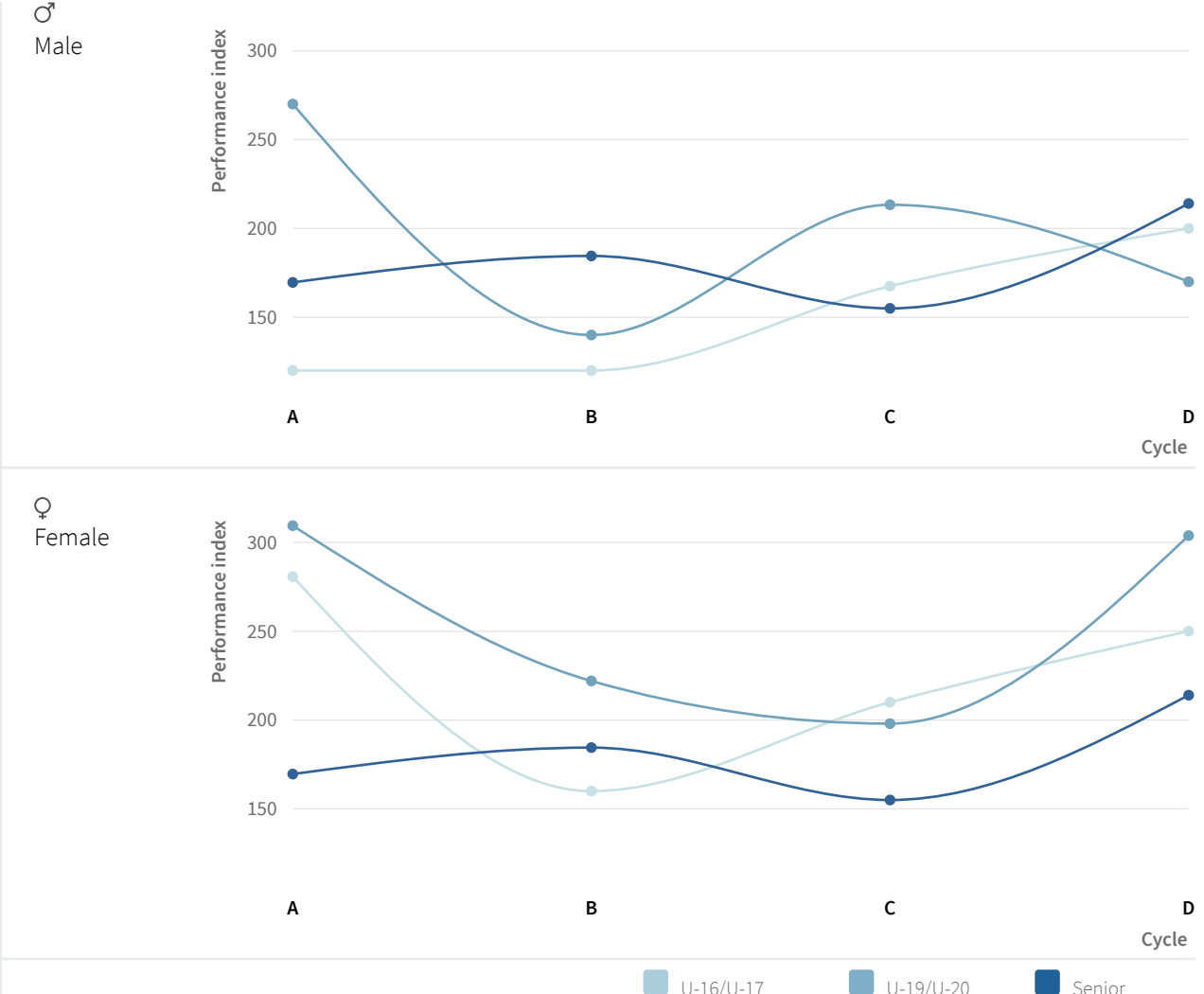
Success at youth level leads to a greater potential for senior team success.

The illustrations below show your youth national team performance index for the U-16/U-17 and U-19/U-20 age groups in comparison to your senior national team performance index for both men and women over a period of four two-year cycles. The cycles are aligned to the World Cup cycles at both youth and senior levels (men’s, senior: 2011-2018; men’s, youth: 2012-2019; women’s, senior: 2012-2019; and women’s, youth: 2011-2018).

Illustration 2.3

♂
Male

♀
Female



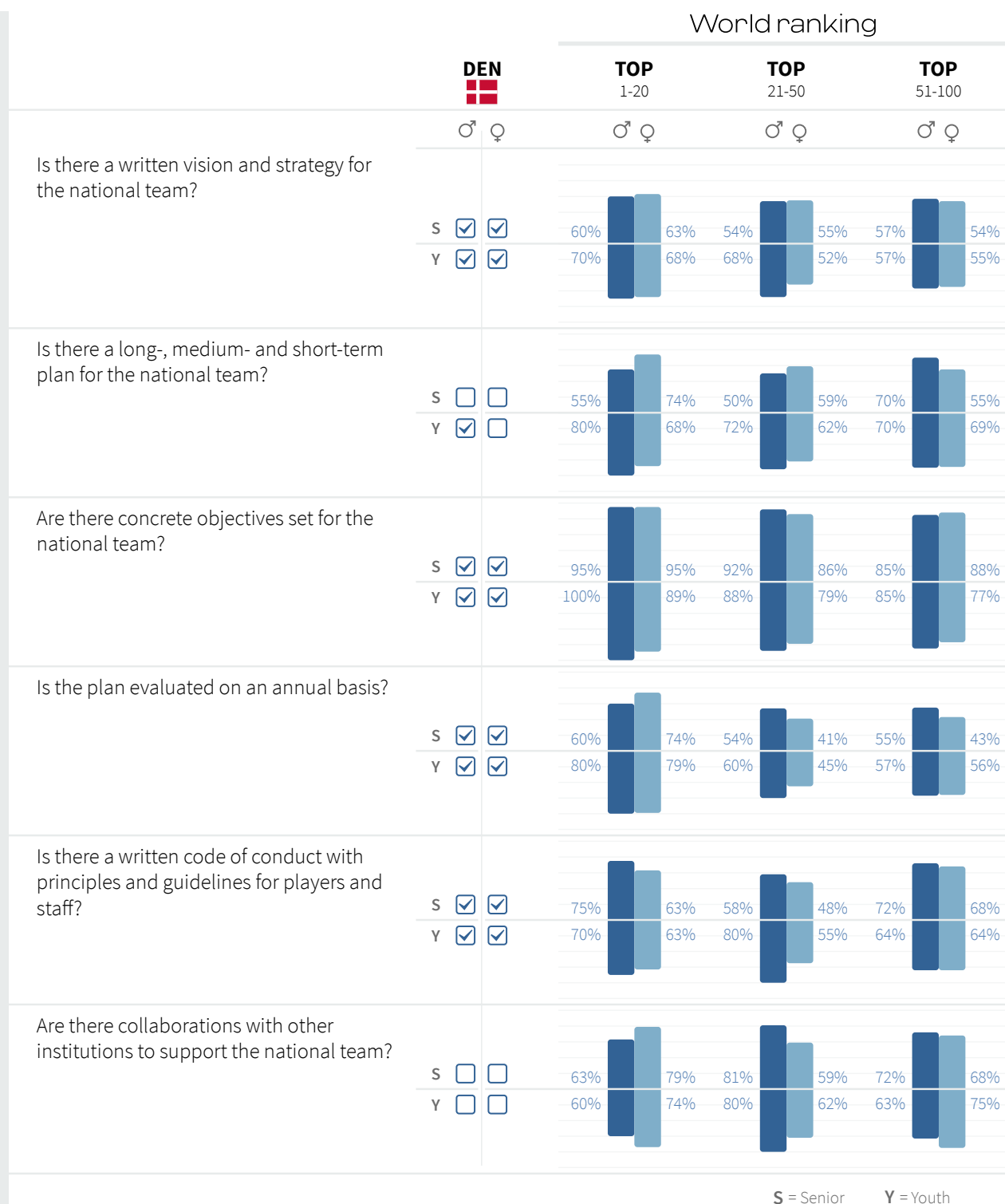
Strategic planning

Having a clearly defined vision and strategy enables all areas of the national team structure to become aligned through guided working practices in order to maximise player transition and sustained national team success. Illustration 2.4 shows the different ways in which strategy and planning are evident amongst your national teams.

Only 57% of the top 100 MAs have senior men's national team strategy in place.

Approximately 95% of the top 20 MAs have structured objectives for all national teams, both youth and senior. Furthermore, 61% of MAs in the top 100 have a long-term plan for their senior men's national team, with the top 20 more likely to evaluate progress annually.

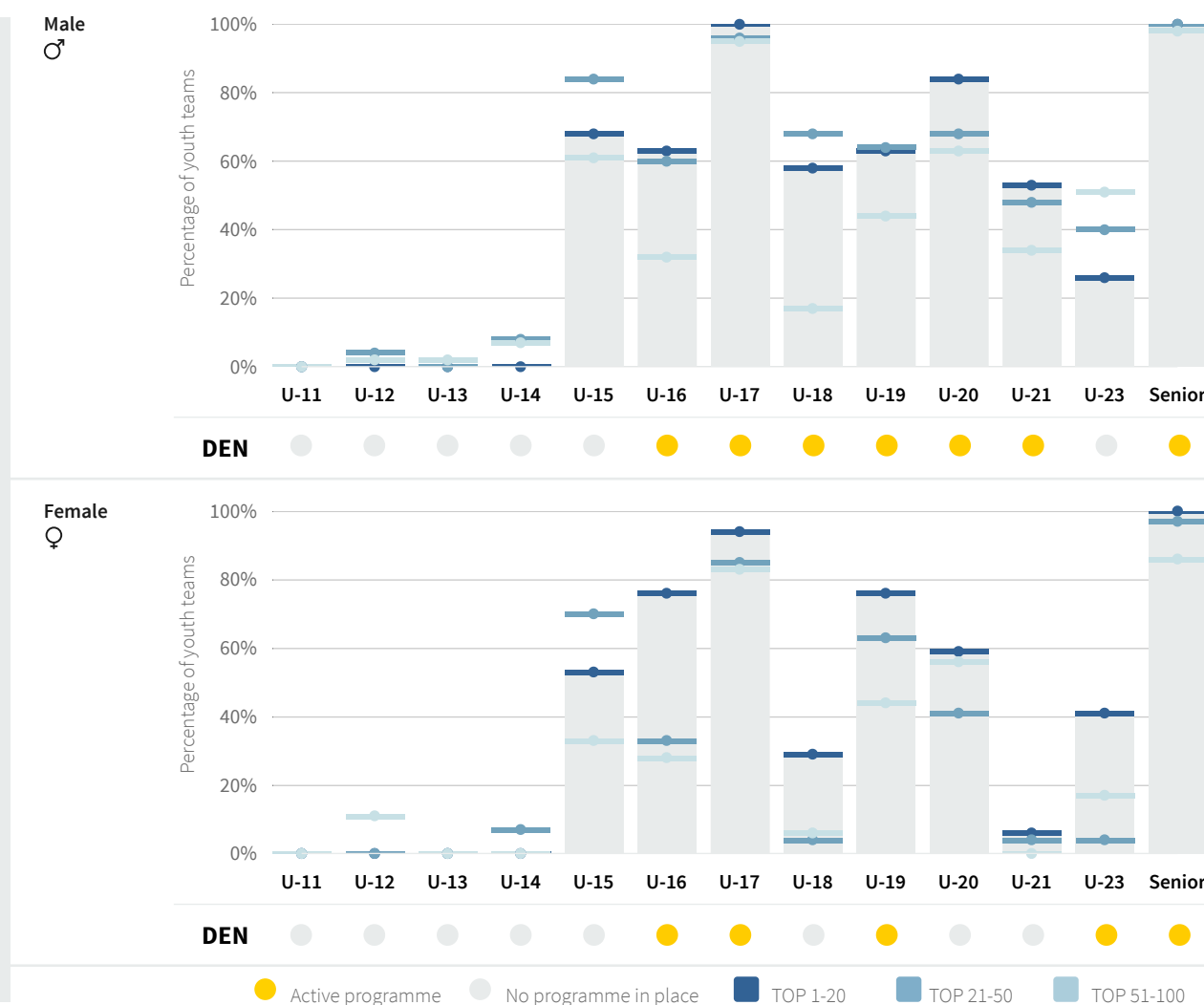
Illustration 2.4



National teams programme

To maximise all of the development opportunities provided by youth national teams while avoiding any gaps in the development process, a consistent pathway throughout the appropriate age groups is required. The illustration below indicates the percentage of member associations that have an active national team at the indicated age level from U-11 to senior.

Illustration 2.5



Finding

Strategy and performance of the national teams' programme

- The DBU has a national team strategy with clear KPIs for both men and women. In general, the strategy focuses on the development of world-class players, both on and off the pitch.
- The DBU organises national team programmes for women's U-16, U-17, U-19 and U-23. For men, there are programmes for U-16, U-17, U-18, U-19, U-20 and U-21.
- The women's national team has performed at a consistent level over the years, but they have not yet made the breakthrough to become a top-ranked European country.
- The men's national team has performed less consistently over the last ten years. After a huge drop in the world ranking, they have recovered their performance level.
- The men's youth teams' performance over the 2019/2020 season positioned Denmark as one of the best European nations.
- The women's U-17 and U-19 teams have managed to qualify for one of the last two UEFA championships, and they reached the U-19 semi-finals in 2018.

2.2 Resources

This section investigates the MA’s investment in creating a high-performance environment. A high-performance culture is essential for maximising player development in youth teams as well as for gaining competitive advantages for the senior national team playing at the elite level. Whether it be specialist coaches, a national training centre, access to tactical analysis modalities, or the delivery of performance support services, all play a role in creating a high-performance environment.

Financial resources

National teams – especially senior national teams – account for a significant amount of an association’s budget. However, a successful senior national team can in return provide a valuable source of income for the entire domestic football pyramid. Thus, providing financial support for national teams not only influences those specific teams, but also contributes to the overall health of the domestic football community.

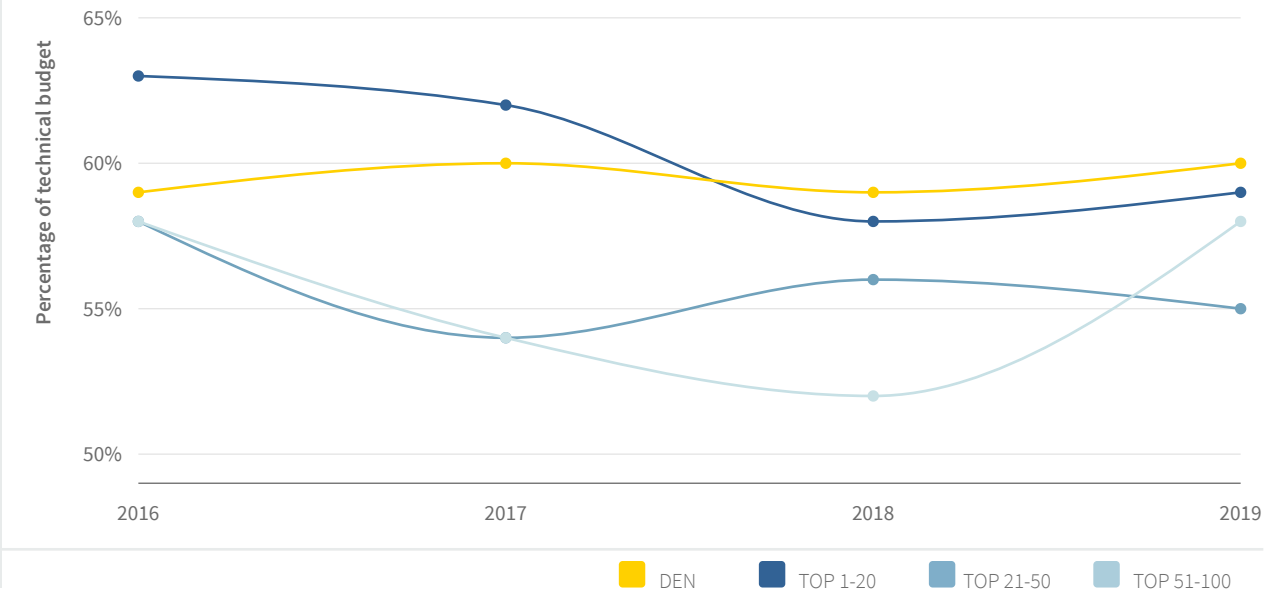
Technical expenditure on national teams

The following illustration displays the percentage of the total technical expenditure on all national teams as part of the overall budget and its development over the last four years. In addition, the distribution of budget amongst your association’s various national teams between 2016 and 2019 is presented.

The top 20 MAs spend a greater percentage of the technical budget on national teams.

Between 2016 and 2019, top 20 MAs invested between 59% and 63% of their technical budget on the national teams. MAs ranked 21-100 spent a similar percentage of their national teams, an investment ranging from 52% to 58% of the technical budget across the same four-year period.

Illustration 2.6

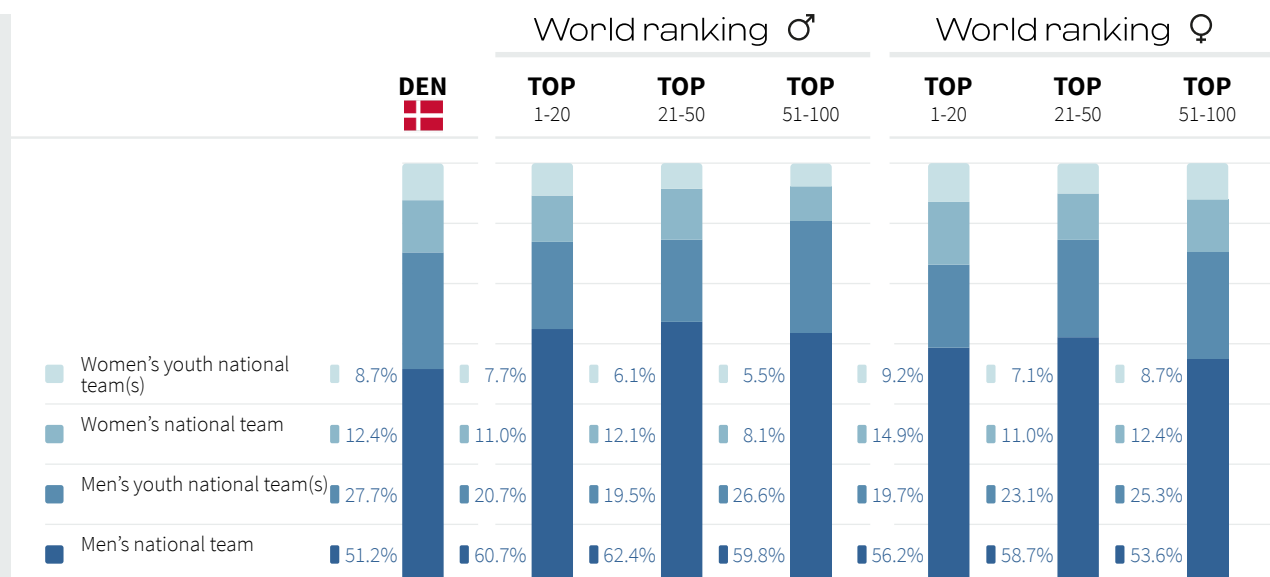




MA's in the top 100 spend over 80% of their national team budget on men's youth and senior national teams.

As shown below, approximately 60% of all money spent by the top 100 MAs on their national teams is allocated to the senior men's squad, with men's youth national teams representing the second largest spend with investments ranging from 19.5% (in MAs ranked 21-50) to 26.6% (in MAs ranked 51-100) of the overall spend. However, when based upon the women's world ranking, the MAs in the top 20 spend a greater amount on their senior and women's youth national teams with a combined investment of 24.1% of the overall budget.

Illustration 2.7



Finding

Budget planning process of the national teams

- The team managers of the men's national team and men's youth national teams are responsible for the programmes' budget planning process. The budget is more or less the same every year. The team managers prepare the draft budget and forward it to the Head of the Elite Department for approval. As it is a yearly fixed budget, team managers only adjust the activities according to the budget.
- If there are budget increase requests, they need to be escalated to the National Teams Committee and the Board for approval.
- The women's national teams had a fixed budget for the past ten years, but recently the senior team became more flexible to expand the squad number and play more matches. It is a fixed budget decided by top management and finally administered by the team managers.
- It is difficult to get budget approved for unexpected or short-term development opportunities, especially for the women's youth teams.
- The distribution of the budget across all national teams is less concentrated on the senior men's

Human resources

Elite national teams require a variety of support staff working behind the scenes in order to function at a high standard. Employing the necessary specialists – and in correct numbers – is a crucial process for guaranteeing tangible results in international competitions. As international football is the highest level of the game, the backroom staff should match the calibre of the players with whom they work.

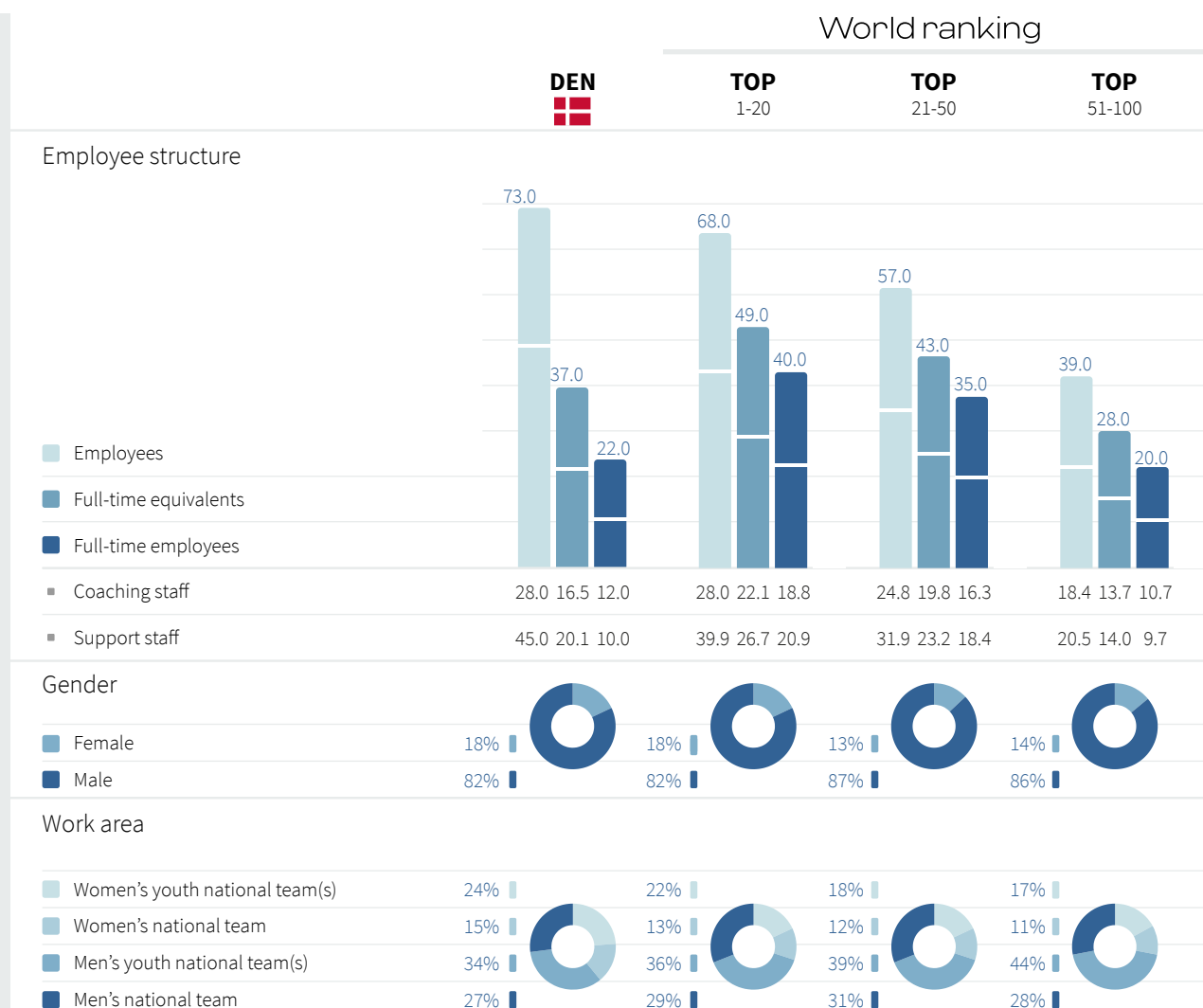
National team staff overview

A balanced allocation of staff can optimise the processes and performances of an association's national teams. Included below are the total numbers of employees for the men's national team, the women's national team, the men's youth national teams, and the women's youth national teams. We have also analysed how many of these employees are full-time as well as the full-time equivalent of all employees working for the national teams. One FTE is equivalent to one person working full-time. Note: the data reflects the staffing situation in January 2020. Staff changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic are not taken into account.

The top 20 MAs employ more staff to support their national teams than those ranked lower in the top 100.

86% of the staff attached to the senior and youth national teams of the top 100 MAs are male. Furthermore, approximately 70% of the national team workforce across the top 100 associations are dedicated to the men's national teams at youth and senior levels.

Illustration 2.8



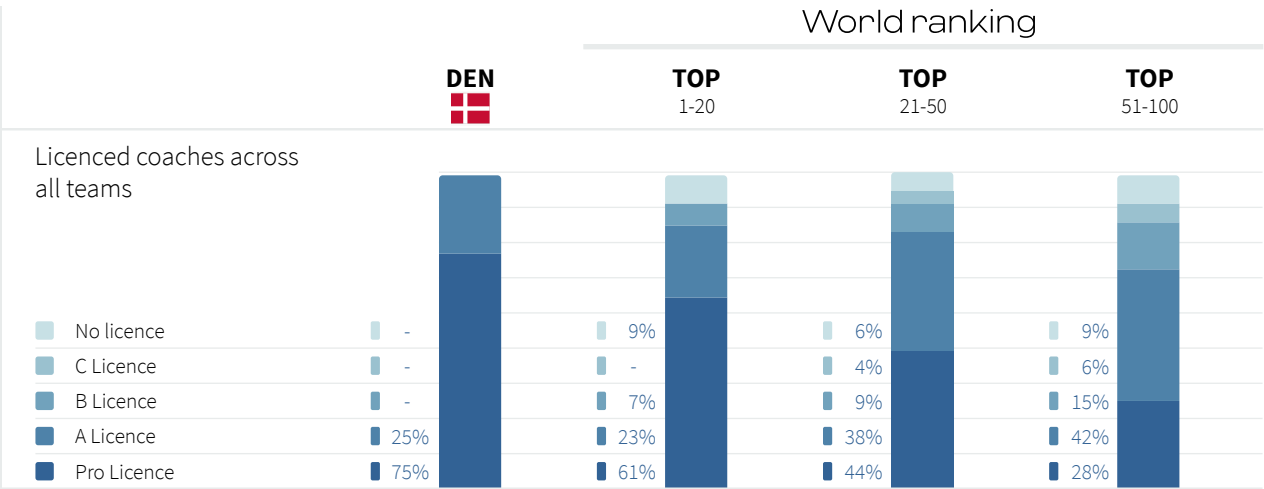
Coaching staff qualifications

The level of qualifications obtained by the coaching staff is an important aspect of any national team’s human resources. Below is a chart which displays the various types of coaching licences obtained by the head and assistant coaches of your national teams.

Top 20 MAs have the highest percentage of Pro Licence coaches at national team level.

61% of the coaches working for the top 20 MAs have a Pro Licence, a figure that falls to 44% and 28% in the 21-50 and 51-100 ranking groups respectively. However, the top 50 MAs have over 80% of national coaches qualified at either Pro or A Licence level compared to 70% in MAs ranked 51-100.

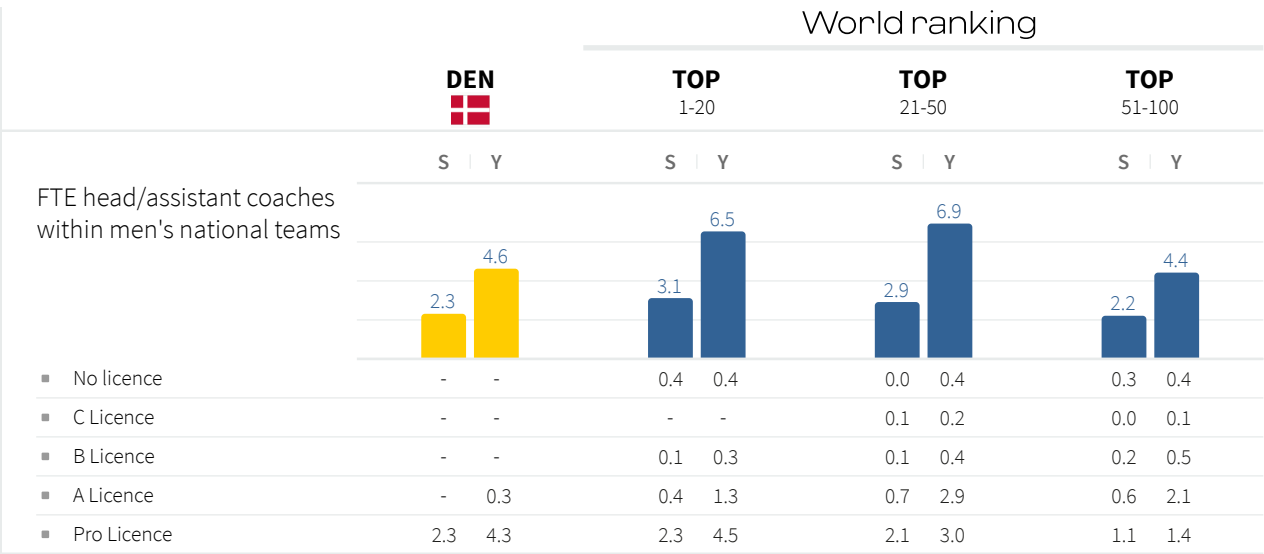
Illustration 2.9



Top 20 MAs have approximately 2.7 times more FTE Pro Licence coaches working across all men’s squads than MAs ranked 51-100.

At senior level, the top 50 MAs have a similar FTE number of Pro Licence coaches, with top 20 MAs having 2.35 and MAs ranked 21-50 having 2.08. At youth level, the gap widens between youth and senior across the top 100, with the top 20 MAs having 4.45 FTE Pro Licence coaches compared to 2.97 and 1.44 for MAs ranked 21-50 and 51-100 respectively. This shows that across men’s national teams, leading MAs have more highly qualified coaches to support their players.

Illustration 2.10

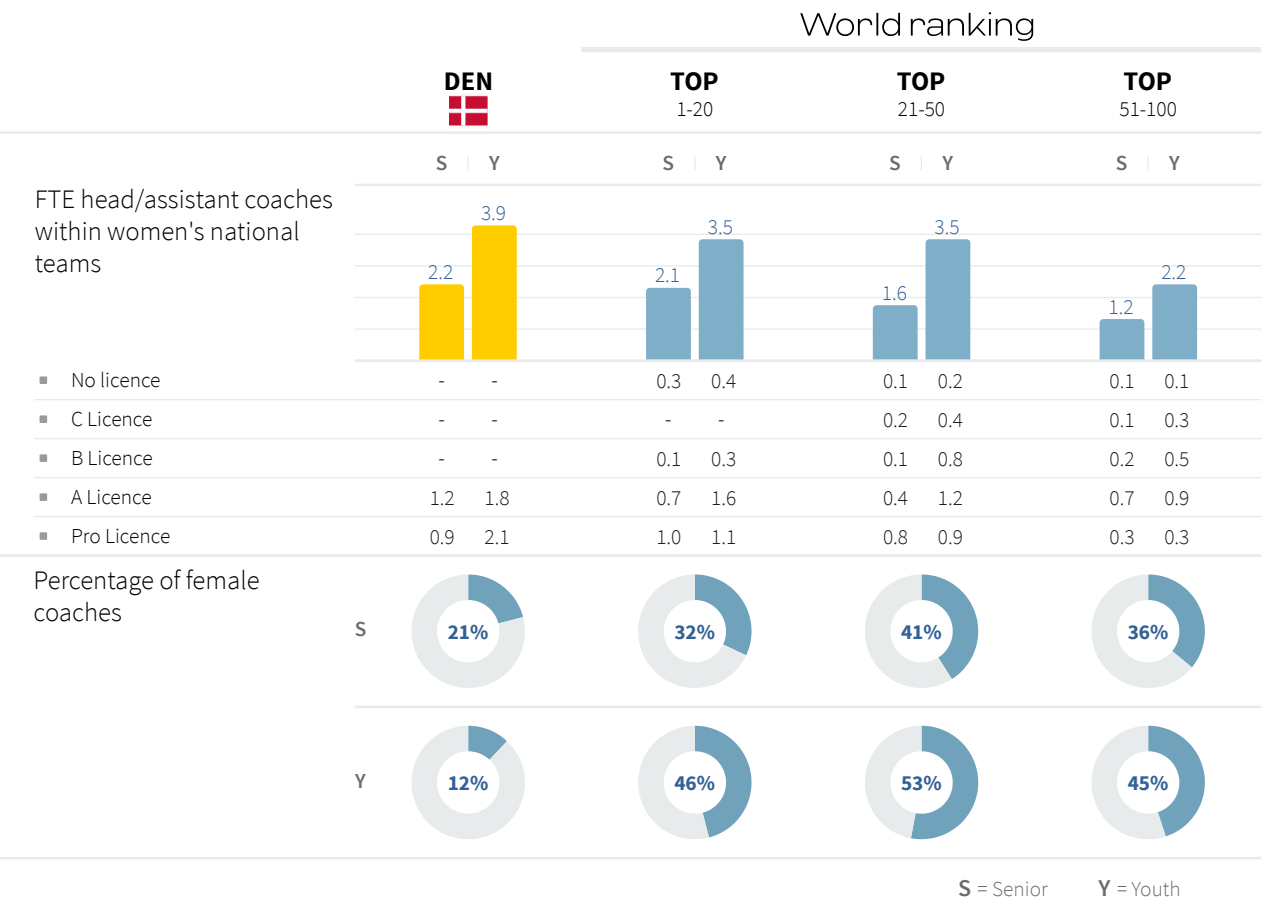




The greatest percentage of female senior women's team coaches is in the top 21-50 MAs, with 41%.

The top 20 MAs have the most number of Pro Licence coaches (1.0) at senior level, with the MAs ranked 51-100 having the least (0.3). Together with top 20 countries, MAs ranked 21-50 share the highest number of coaches (3.5) working with youth national teams.

Illustration 2.11



Infrastructure

The pitches that national teams train and play on are at the pinnacle of a country’s footballing infrastructure. Having a high standard of facilities that are readily accessible for the national teams is key to the development and competitive progression of the association across all squads, both youth and senior. Based upon the perceived ratings provided by your association, the illustration below presents the quality of both the training and home pitches used by your national teams.

Illustration 2.12



Finding

Quality of pitches available to the national teams

- The pitches available for the men’s national team (MNT) programme are considered as average in comparison to international standards. Most of the time, the senior national team’s programmes are held abroad.
- The women’s national team (WNT) use a rented home stadium with good infrastructure for matches and training. Due to the great professionalisation steps in the women’s game, the WNT staff have higher demands for their home stadium. A bigger capacity and a tracking system to monitor the players is preferred.
- The DBU does not have a national training centre. For youth national team (YNT) activities, the clubs' good quality infrastructure is used. For international matches, stadiums are rented, and the infrastructure is of good quality. The training environment is average for the women's youth national teams.
- The DBU would like to have a national facility for the YNTs. They feel they can improve a lot in this area.





2.3 Processes of the senior national teams

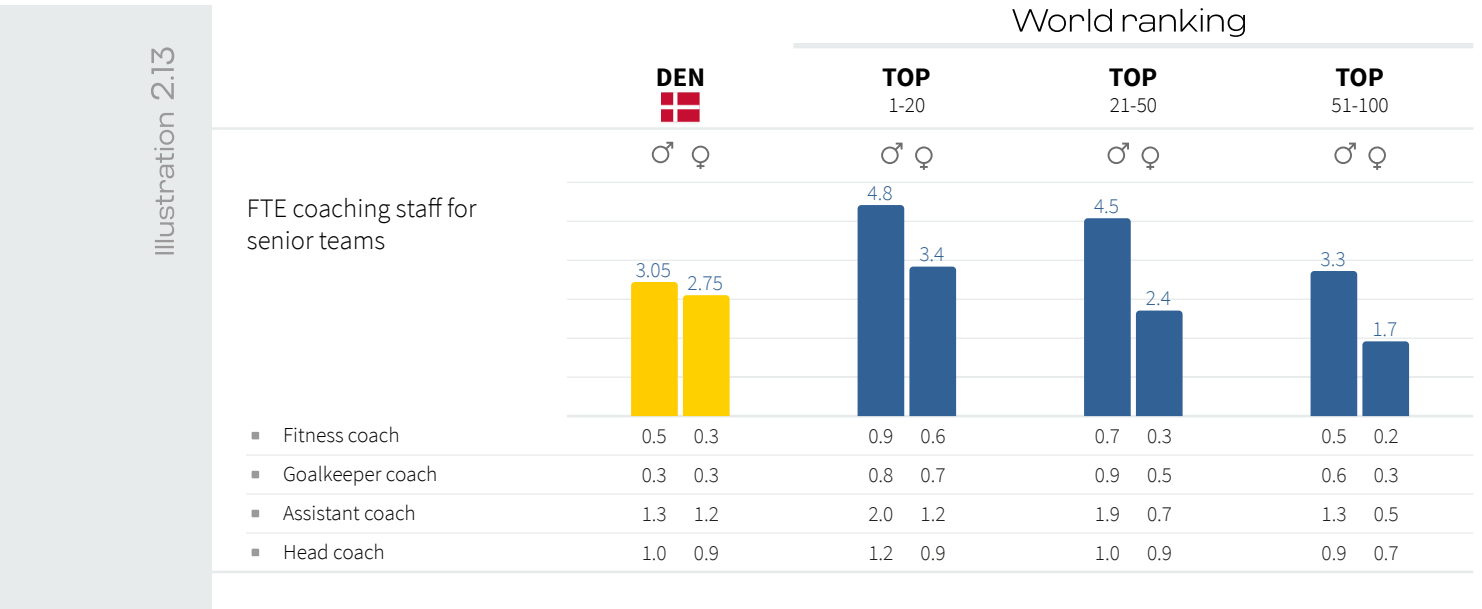
This chapter analyses the mechanisms in place to support the work of the men’s and women’s senior national teams in their quest for international success. It is widely known that the relative success of these teams can have a substantial impact upon the growth of the game in the country, both through the financial facet of investments and endorsements into the sport and from a surge in participation across both male and female domains.

Coaching staff

Having the right number of necessary coaching staff is important for the overall functioning of a national team. The number of people employed by your national teams in these roles is displayed below in absolute numbers (full-time equivalents).

MAs in the top 20 have the largest coaching staff cohort at senior level.

The top 20 women’s senior national teams are more resourced in the areas of fitness, goalkeeping and assistant coaches compared to their lower-ranked counterparts. The top 20 men’s senior national teams follow a similar trend, except for goalkeeping, as MAs ranked 21-50 have the most resources in this area.



Team schedule

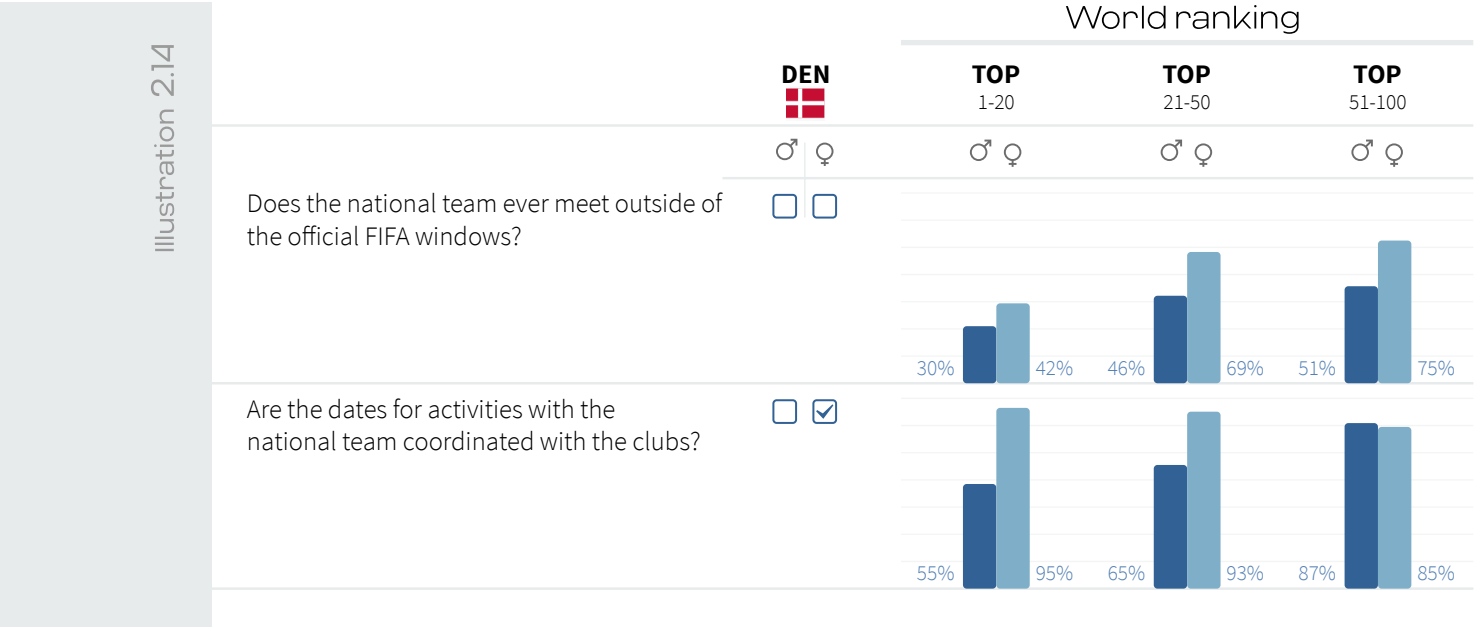
Like any football team, national teams need to guarantee their players playing time and training sessions to ensure that they develop. As national team players are primarily occupied by their club duties throughout the year, it is important that national teams allot enough time in their calendar so that players and coaching staff can gel as their own group.

Calendar and club coordination

The windows for national teams to meet in a calendar year are limited. Therefore, it is crucial for national teams to plan and prepare appropriately throughout the year to maximise the time available with the players. Additionally, communication between national teams and domestic clubs is necessary to ensure the smooth transition of players to and from national teams. Whether your national teams meet outside official FIFA windows – and whether these teams coordinate national team activities with domestic clubs – can be seen in the following illustration.

MAs ranked outside of the top 50 are more likely to meet outside of official FIFA windows.

51% of men’s teams and 75% of women’s teams ranked 51-100 meet outside of official FIFA windows. Furthermore, these teams are more likely to coordinate the senior men’s dates with the associated clubs. Across the top 100 MAs, dates for women’s activities are more likely to be coordinated with clubs than dates for men’s activities.



Finding

Cooperation with domestic clubs regarding the release of senior players

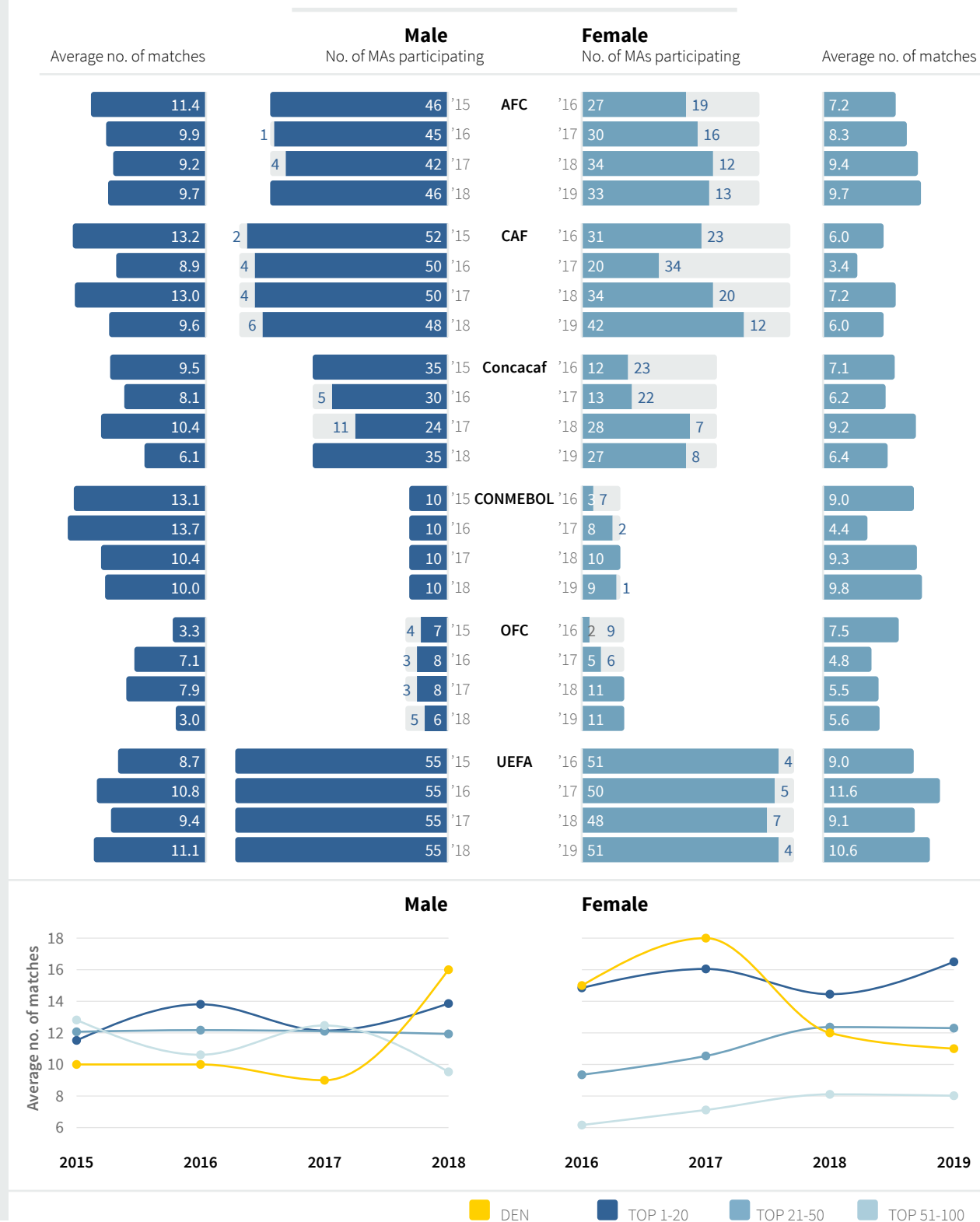
- The DBU has formal and regular protocols regarding the release of players for the senior national teams. These are based on and limited to FIFA rules. The DBU notifies the clubs to release the players by written letters.
- The senior national teams follow the official FIFA calendar to play matches. The coordination of matches follows FIFA regulations. The schedule of the Danish leagues, for both men and women, is adjusted to the international calendar.
- The WNT coaches in particular make a huge effort to maintain good cooperation with the clubs. This cooperation is via both formal and informal communication, depending on the clubs’ professional status. Informal cooperation with domestic clubs is more frequent.
- MNT players are mainly based in overseas leagues. MNT staff try to create good communication lines with these clubs and collect medical, injury and workload-related data.

Competitive playing opportunities

Playing competitive international games is crucial to the development of players and for the future success of the senior national team. The following illustration shows the total number of official and friendly matches played by your men's and women's senior national teams. The timeframes are based on their respective World Cup cycles (men's: 2015-2018; women's: 2016-2019). Illustration 2.15 also shows the number of senior national teams per confederation that have played at least one match and the average number of games that each team played per year in their respective World Cup cycles.

Illustration 2.15

Confederations



Finding

Appropriate number of matches and training days for the senior national teams

- The men’s national team (MNT) uses all available playing dates. No friendly matches are played outside the FIFA window. Training sessions are held prior to and in between the matches of the FIFA window.
- The number of matches for the MNT increased significantly in the last year of the previous World Cup cycle. WNT matches dropped significantly after the Women’s EURO in 2017.
- The WNT staff have a number of matches at their disposal within the FIFA windows. The option for more consistent friendlies, apart from FIFA and UEFA competitions, is taken into account.
- The DBU is aware of the gap between the women’s U-19 and WNT, and support the idea to start an extra age group competition to bridge the gap. This competition would also challenge the DBU to further develop the domestic environment for this transition age group.

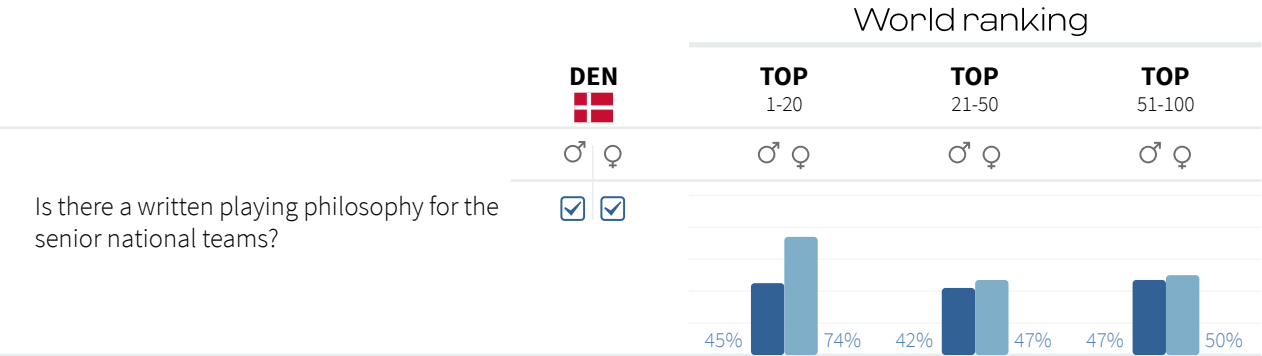
Playing philosophy

A playing philosophy can help to sustain certain performance standards in a national team over a prolonged period and provide a template for incoming coaches and players to follow. Subsequently, an overarching philosophy is invaluable to the long-term stability of any national team, giving it a solid foundation to achieve its performance goals.

A national playing philosophy is more prevalent across senior women’s teams.

54% of women’s senior national teams in the top 100 have a playing philosophy, compared to 45% for men’s national teams. The top 20 women’s MAs have the highest percentage at 74%, compared to 45% for the men’s in the same ranking group.

Illustration 2.16



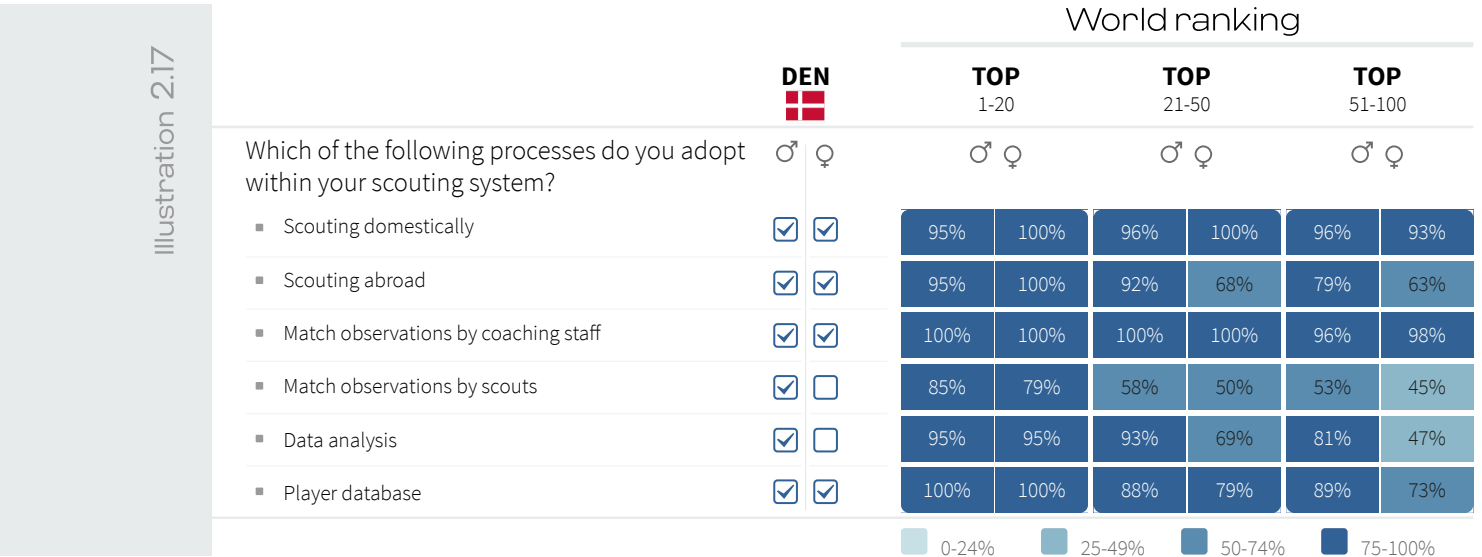


Scouting and team selection

The national team is meant to be made up of the best players available to that country. The scouting process is meant to reflect this. Scouting and selection should be based on proven practices so that a promising squad can be formed. The following table identifies the scouting and selection practices that your association and the top 100 associations undertake.

Top 20 MAs adopt a more comprehensive scouting system at senior level.

Member associations in the top 20 collectively utilise a greater array of processes as part of their scouting system. Furthermore, use of data analysis and the production of a player database is commonplace in the top 20.



Finding

The scouting and selection process for the senior national teams

- The MNT coach is responsible for player selection. Armed with an idea for the playing style and players needed for the next match, the technical staff closely follow 40-50 players in their club matches, live or on video. Performance data also supports the scouting system.
- The MNT coach follows a data structure for selection, using workload data, injury reports, estimate reports based on availability from a fitness point of view two weeks before a game and a prediction report based on availability in regards to playing strategy as the last step before selection.
- The WNT coach selects the WNT. The final squad mainly comes from a pool of around 30 players. The main scouting methods are watching matches in the domestic league and through Wyscout for players based abroad. The coach also travels overseas to see the players' club environment.
- WYNT players' progression is monitored via meetings with WYNT coaches.

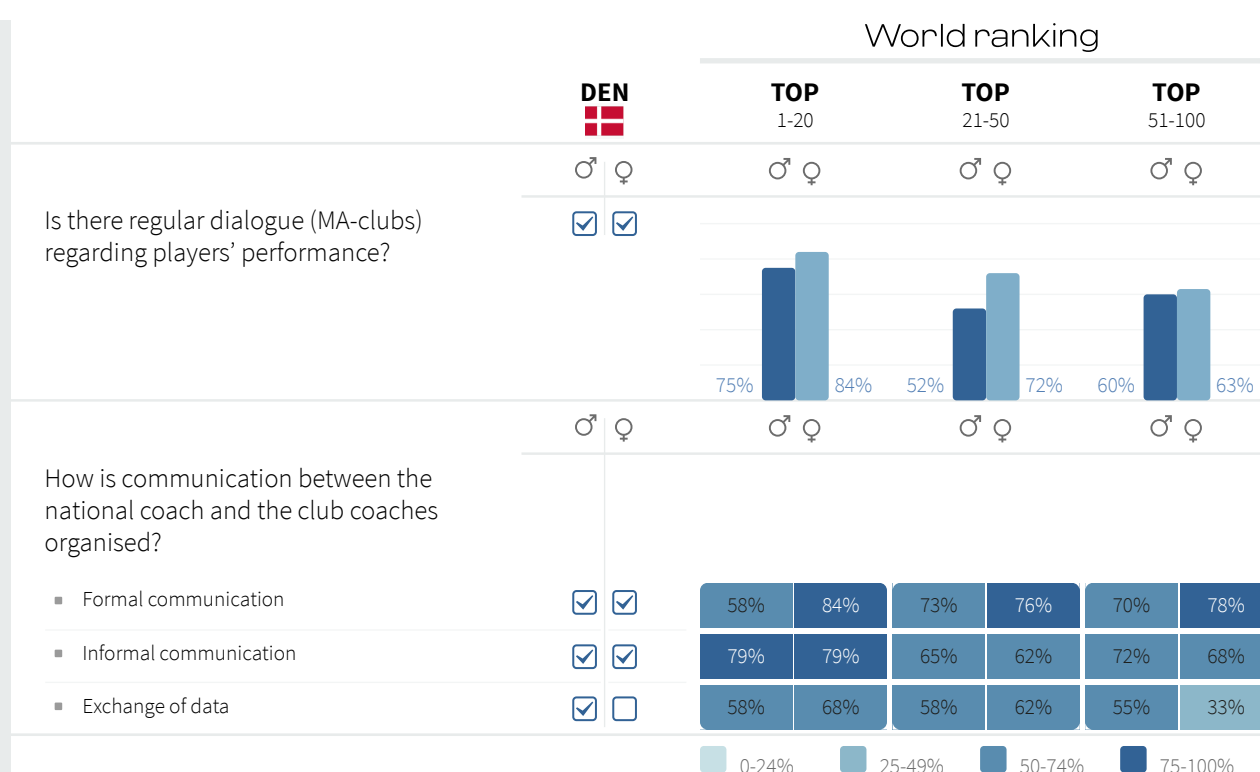
Communication with club coaches

The way the football season is structured means that national team players (or players under consideration for national team selection) will play most minutes for their club teams, resulting in club coaches having more opportunity to assess them. Considering the informed opinions of club coaches can have great value for national teams when evaluating a player's form, development and potential. The ways in which the national teams of your association carry out communication with club coaches can be seen below.

A greater percentage of the top 20 MAs communicate regularly with clubs on player performance than their lower-ranked counterparts.

84% of women's teams and 75% of men's teams of MAs ranked in the top 20 have regular contact with clubs on player performance. Women's teams ranked 51-100 and top 21-50 men's teams are least likely to form such relationships. Furthermore, a greater percentage of top 20 MAs exchange data with clubs.

Illustration 2.18



Finding

Communication with domestic club coaches

- The MNT staff consider a trustful relationship with clubs as a key aspect. A lot of data is shared in both directions.
- WNT staff and clubs have a communication structure. Communication channels are used for knowledge-sharing with less-developed clubs. Sharing the playing principles with club coaches is an example.
- Through a clear methodical approach, the MNT staff exchange information with the clubs regarding the players' national team performance. High-level reports are handed to the clubs. Medical, injury and workload-related data is collected from the clubs' sports science units.
- The WNT's communication with club coaches and sporting directors regarding player performance is rather informal. Days before and after the camps, the physical and training load data of the players is shared between the physical trainers of both the WNT and the clubs. Clubs receive a medical report for all of their players after national team programmes.

2.4 Processes of the Youth National teams

This section delves into the working practices of the youth national teams in discovering and nurturing the best talent in the country, with the aim of creating a senior national team for the future. The developmental initiatives that are performed within the youth national team set-up are vital in creating an elite learning environment, not only for players, but also for national team staff. These initiatives maximise the development opportunities that the players are exposed to and help to strengthen the national talent pool, sufficient playing opportunities being the most important measure.

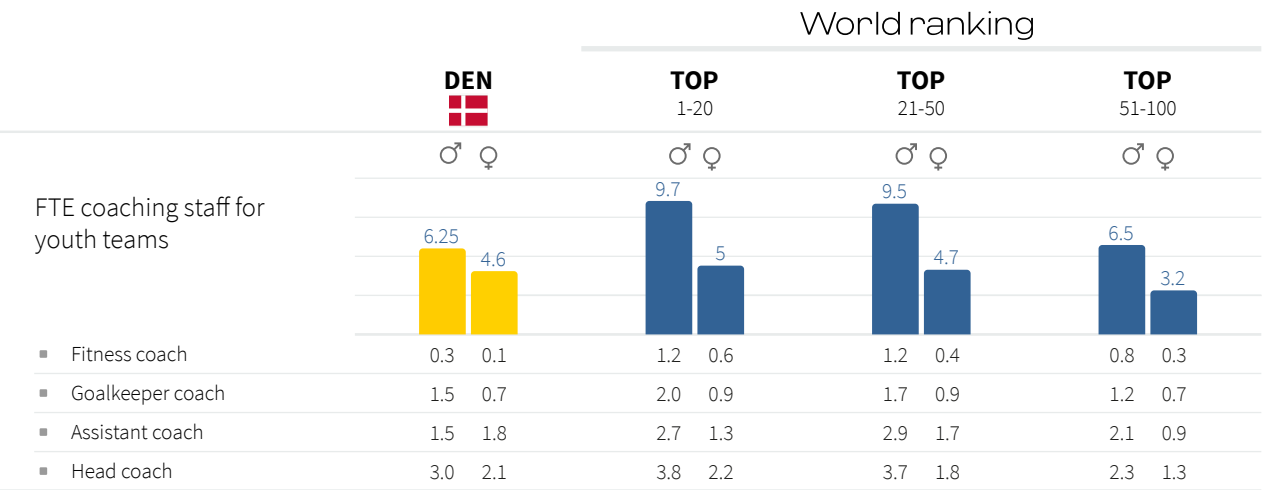
Coaching staff

Having a coaching set-up that consists of the right number of staff is just as important for youth national teams as it is for their senior equivalents. The number of people that your men’s and women’s youth national teams employ in these coaching roles is shown below in absolute numbers.

Men’s youth national teams have a more comprehensive coaching team than women’s youth national teams.

Across the top 100 MAs, men’s youth national teams have a greater number of coaching staff than women’s youth national teams. Moreover, the top 50 MAs have greater staffing resources across both genders than their lower-ranked competitors.

Illustration 2.19



Team schedule

Youth national teams may find gathering outside of official international schedules necessary. Training camps, friendly matches, domestic tournaments and participation in various competition set-ups are an essential part of player and team development. Such events guarantee the best possible preparation for official tournaments.

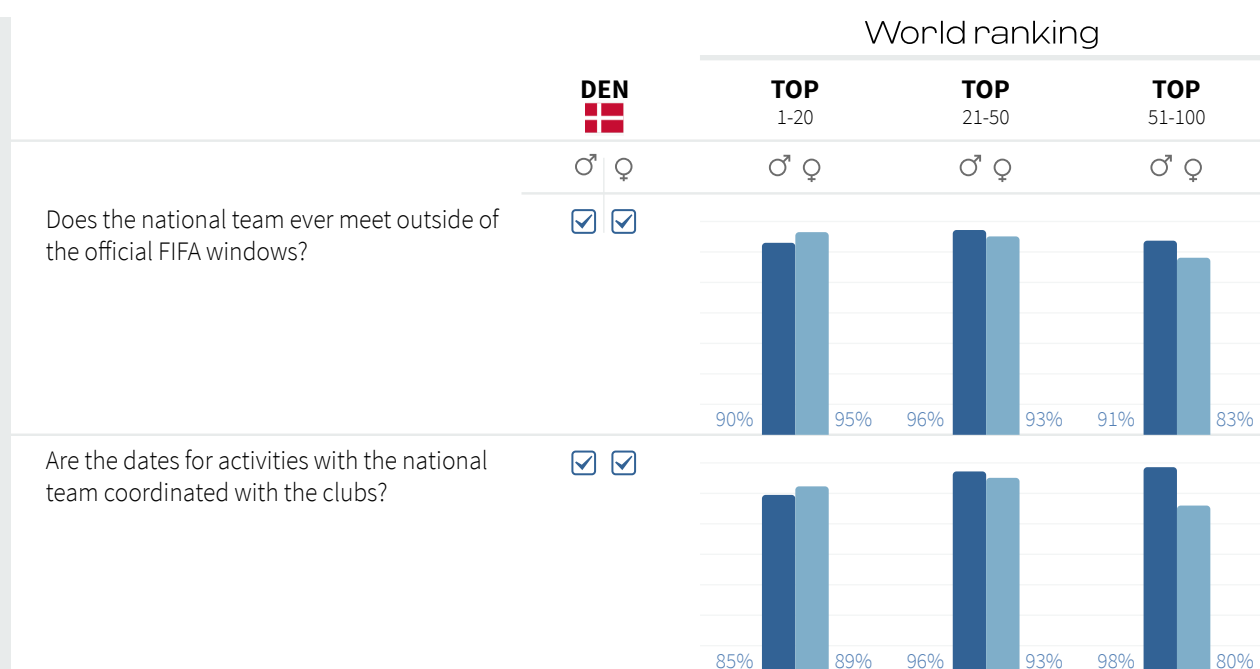
Calendar and club coordination

Whether your youth national teams meet outside of official FIFA windows – and whether these teams coordinate national team activities with domestic clubs – is shown below.

92% of the top 100 MAs have their men's youth teams meet outside of official FIFA windows.

Comparably, across the top 100, 88% of MAs have their women's youth teams meet outside of official FIFA windows. Furthermore, 86% of women's youth national teams and 95% of men's youth national teams coordinate activities with their domestic clubs.

Illustration 2.20



Finding

Agreements and cooperation with domestic clubs regarding the release of youth players

- The DBU cooperates well with the clubs. This is a key aspect of the talent development structure.
- Clubs receive letters regarding the release of youth players three days before the training camps.
- The U-19 men's and women's youth national teams hold activities during the official FIFA windows. The clubs accept that activities for the other youth national teams (YNT) take place outside of the FIFA dates.
- The men's youth national teams (MYNT) winter camps take place in January (outside of the FIFA window). The women's youth national teams (WYNT) camps are staged outside of these windows, at the end of the summer, when the clubs are not competing.
- The calendar for the youth leagues is coordinated with the YNT match schedule. The DBU sends the clubs the MYNT schedule every six months. A WYNT draft programme is shared but only confirmed after all clubs agree, with a few still displaying some resistance.

Competitive playing opportunities

Playing both friendly and competitive international matches is essential for giving youth players more experience. Illustration 2.21a and 2.21b present the number of official matches and active teams during the last youth World Cup cycle (men's: 2018-2019; women's: 2017-2018) per confederation for the U-16/U-17 and U-19/U-20 age groups respectively. Furthermore, Illustration 2.22 presents the official number of matches (FIFA or confederation competitions) played by your U-16/U-17 and U-19/U-20 men's and women's youth national teams in comparison to their counterparts over the same youth World Cup cycle.

Illustration 2.21a

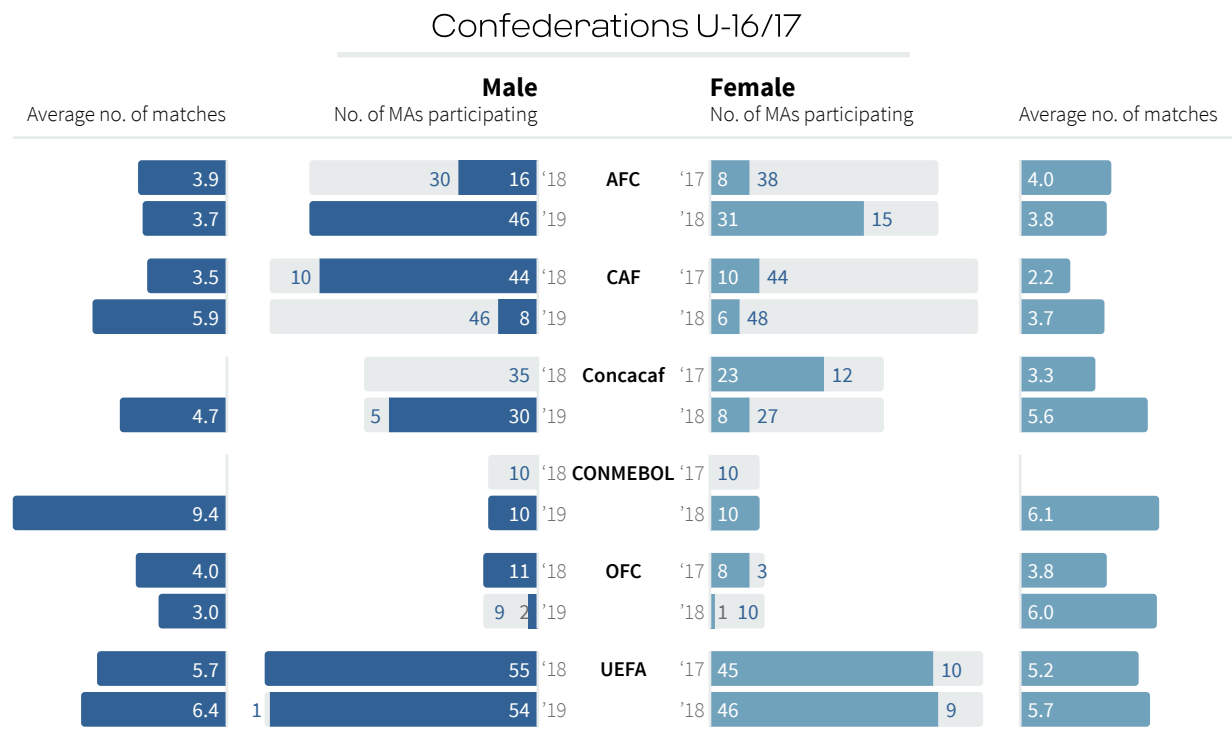
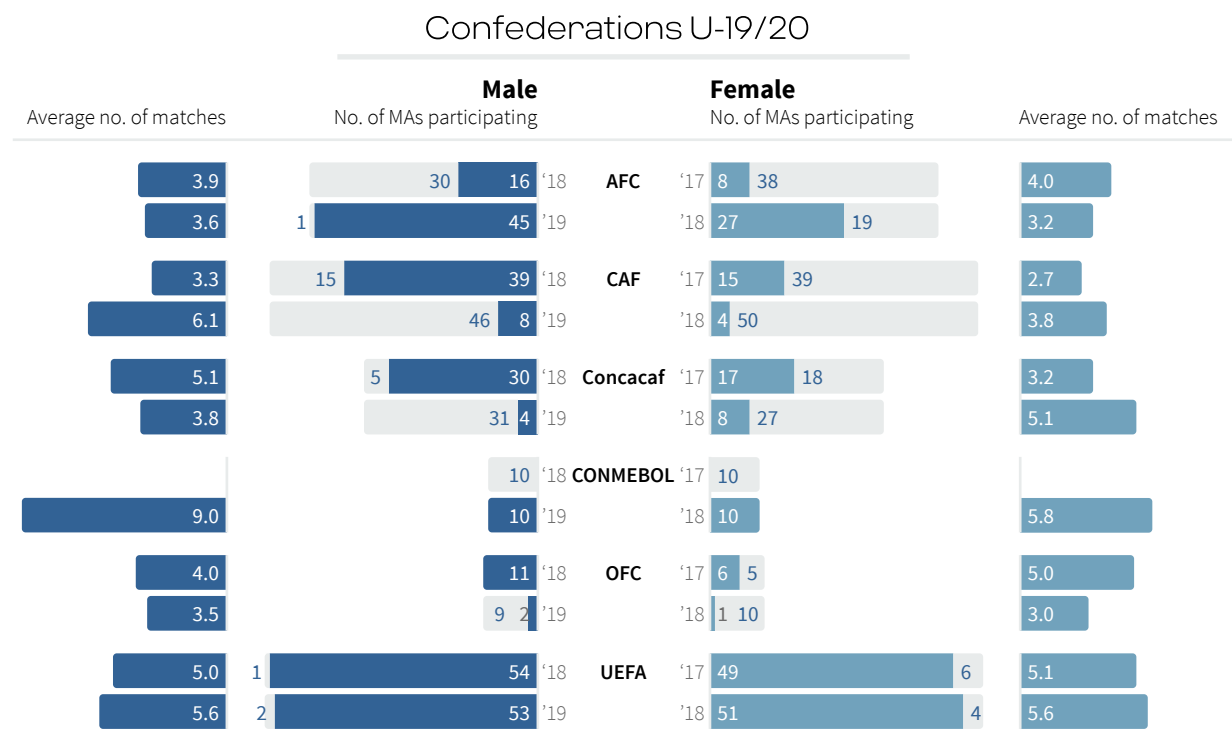
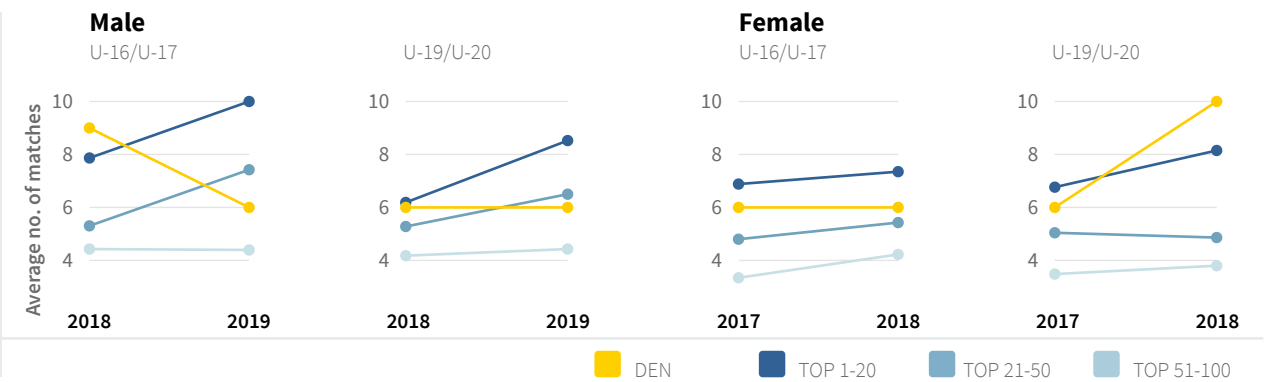


Illustration 2.21b



National teams

Illustration 2.22



Finding

Appropriate number of matches and training days for the youth national teams

- The YNTs participate in all international competitions. The number of matches is determined by results, as winning sees the teams progress to the next round. The teams play enough matches as long as they qualify for the EURO.
- The MYNTs play a good number of games and in particular a good number of friendlies against competitive opponents.
- The quality of the club training environment for MYNT players is high. Even though the MYNT coaches would prefer to have more training time, they are happy with the current situation.
- The number of training sessions for the WYNTs has increased over the last five years. The WYNT coaches believe that offering even more training opportunities is important to boost player development.
- The DBU's Head of Development considers that the MA's job is to provide its YNTs with enough competitive matches to promote player development, rather than lots of training time.

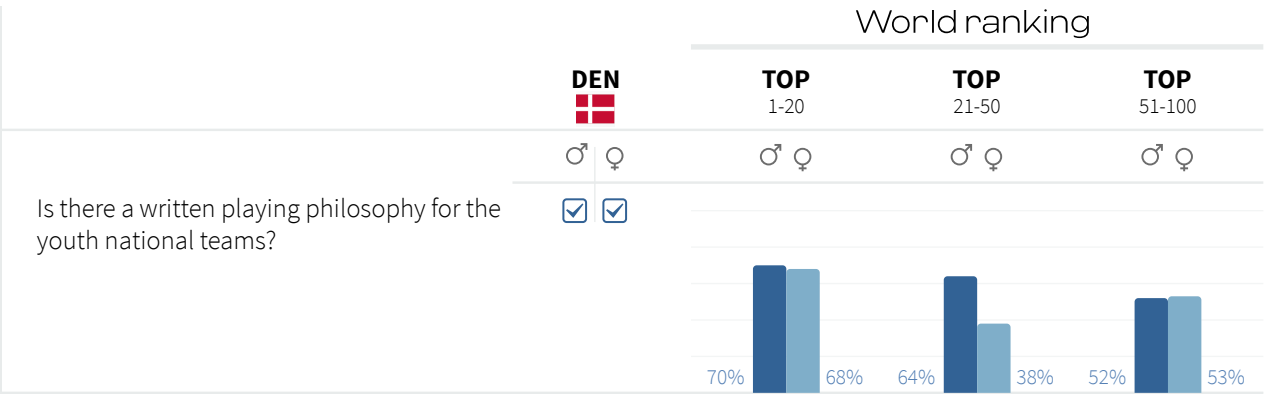
Playing philosophy

Having youth national teams adhere to an overarching playing philosophy can assist in developing players in a way that will make them valuable assets to the senior national team in the years to come. The table below shows whether your national teams have a written playing philosophy.

Top 20 MAs are more likely to have a national playing philosophy at youth level.

More than 68% of MAs ranked in the top 20 have a national playing philosophy. Associations ranked 51-100 have the lowest percentage supporting a written playing philosophy for their men's youth national teams, whereas for women's youth national teams, the MAs ranked 21-50 have the lowest percentage at only 38%.

Illustration 2.23

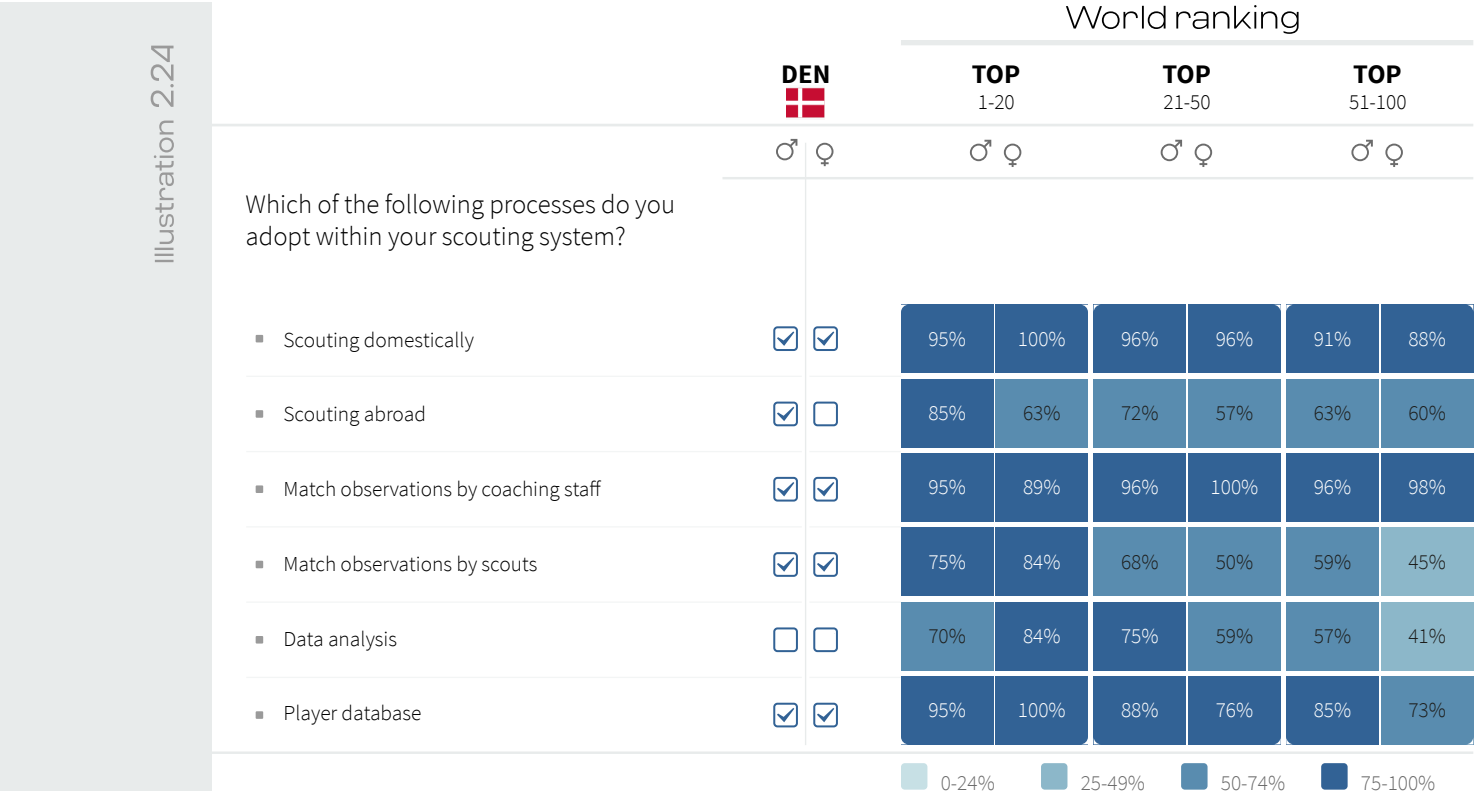


Scouting and team selection

An effective scouting and team selection system is a rewarding practice in youth football. Identifying players with a natural aptitude for the game early on, and on an ongoing basis, allows youth national teams to optimise these young players’ potential. The graph below shows the processes related to effective scouting that your youth national teams undertake.

Top 20 MAs adopt a more comprehensive scouting system at youth level.

85% of men’s teams and 63% of women’s teams in the top 20 scout abroad for talent, more than any other ranking bracket. Scouting domestically and match observations by the coaching staff are still the most popular methods across the top 100, with top 20 MAs more likely to use a player database at youth level.



Finding

The scouting and selection process for the youth national teams

- The MYNT and WYNT head coaches are responsible for selecting the final squad, with most players selected from the DBU talent centres.
- The scouting system for the MYNTs is based on match observation, video footage, informal meetings with club coaches and conversations with sporting directors. The MYNT coaches produce scouting reports.
- The DBU has recently allocated part of its budget to allow MYNT coaches to scout abroad, where necessary. The MA trusts the opinion of the local club coaches more than the views of the foreign clubs.
- Scouting of WYNT players is mainly based on match observation, discussions with colleagues and conversations with club coaches.
- The WYNT coaches know all of the players at the top clubs. Coaches try to visit club training sessions to gain a better understanding of the club environment. Some talented players play for small clubs, where the environment is not on a par with that of the top clubs.

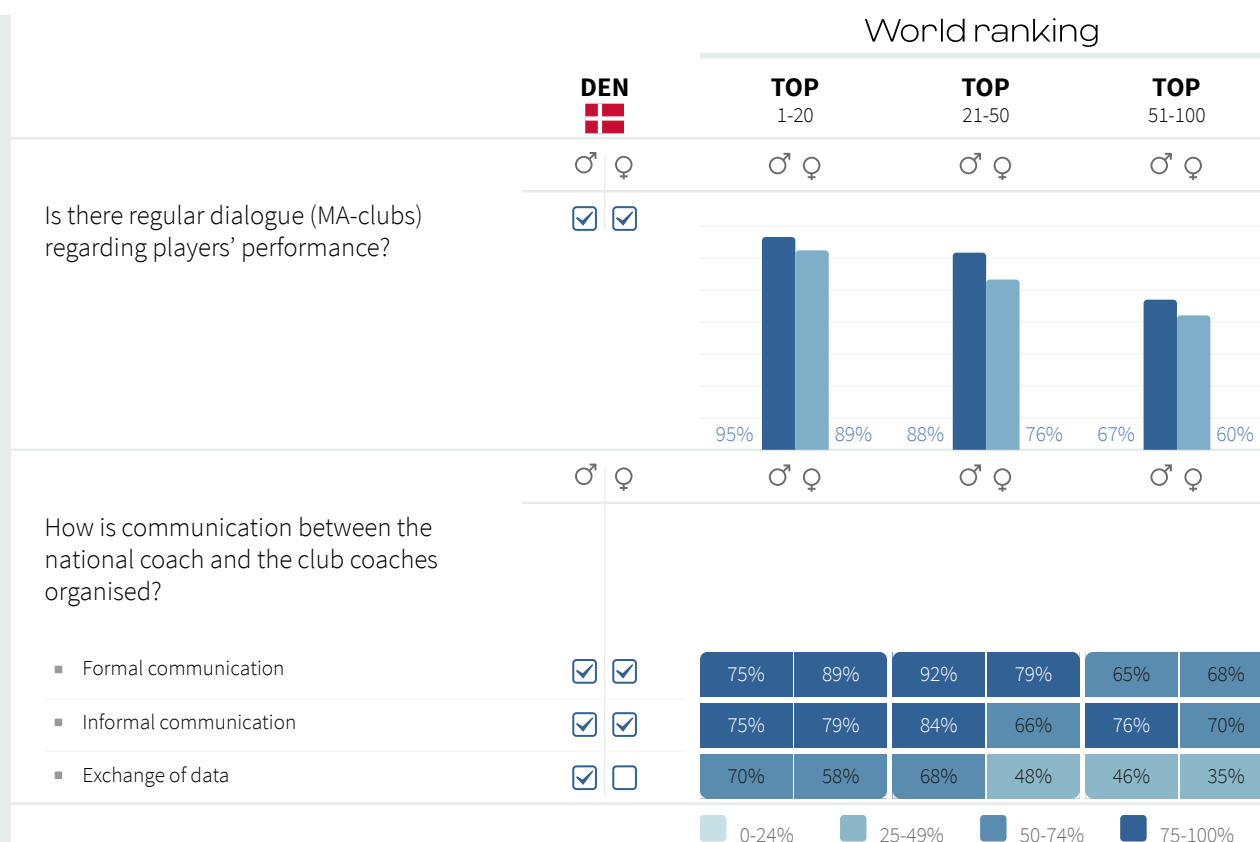
Communication with club coaches

As stated previously, transparent communication with the club coaches of national team players is both a necessary and beneficial exercise. The ways in which the staff working with your association's youth national teams facilitate communication with club coaches are displayed below.

A greater percentage of the top 20 member associations communicate regularly with clubs on player performance than lower-ranked MAs.

95% of men's youth teams and 89% of women's youth teams ranked in the top 20 have regular contact with clubs on player performance. Associations ranked 51-100 are least likely to form such relationships with domestic clubs. Furthermore, a greater percentage of top 20 MAs exchange data with clubs.

Illustration 2.25



Finding

Communication with domestic club coaches

- The WYNT coaches cooperate well with the club coaches. The DBU coaches visit clubs, invite club coaches to WYNT training camps and invest in coach education via knowledge sharing. The U-19 WYNT players mostly play in the Danish top flight and performance feedback, workload and training content is shared with their clubs.
- The WYNT coaches would like to receive more information on what players do in the club environment. The communication is currently largely one-directional.
- The MYNT coaches and club coaches communicate on an informal basis to discuss the performance of players with the club teams.
- The DBU holds formal meetings biannually with the top youth clubs to discuss playing style, tactical issues and player performance. The MYNT coaches also provide club coaches with performance feedback after the training camps as part of the DBU's workflow. This is the only regular, formal dialogue.

2.5 Performance support services

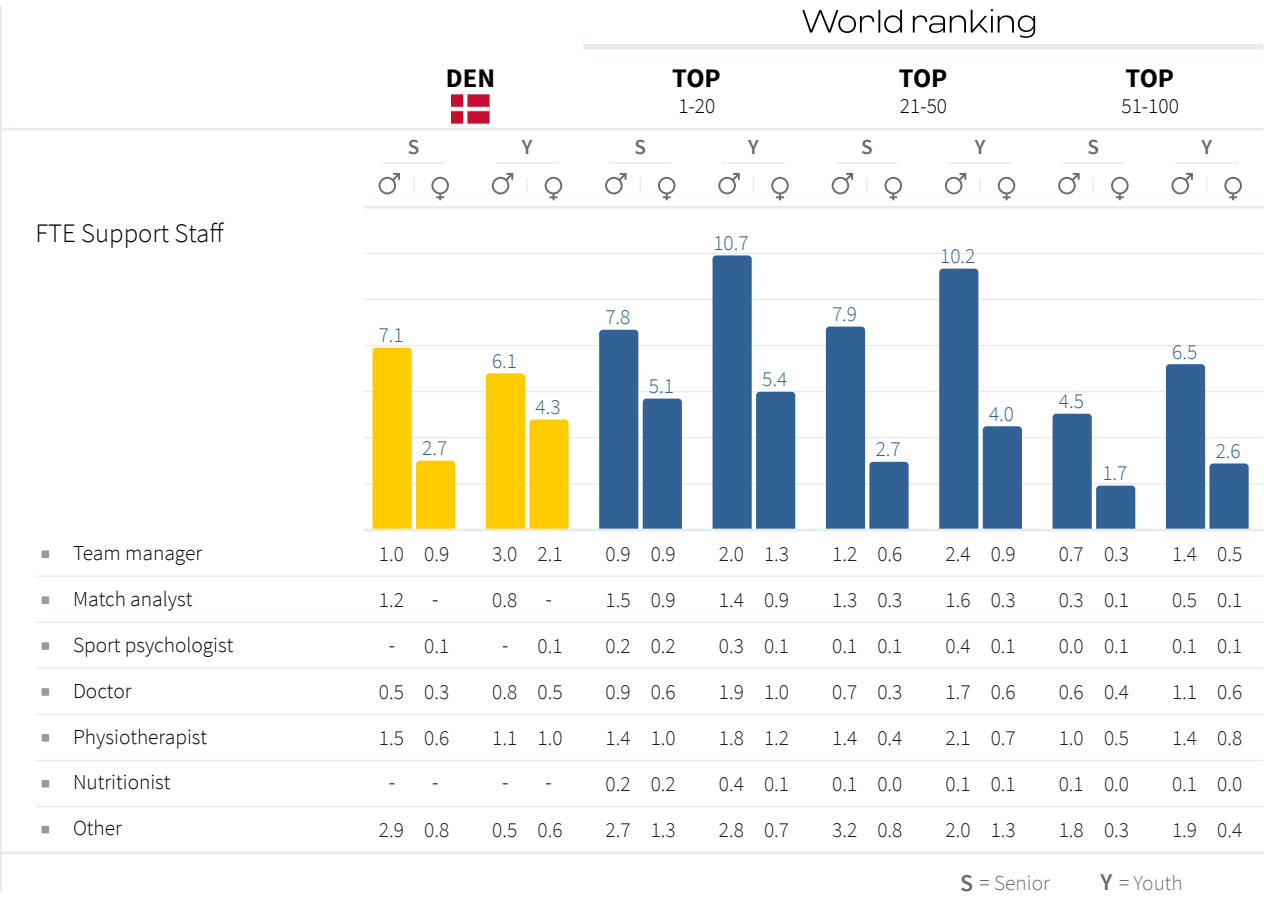
This section investigates the access to high-performance expertise and the support frameworks available to the senior men’s and women’s national teams. This service is vital in terms of making informed decisions to maximise the performance output of both the team and the individual whilst minimising the risk of injury and championing an elite learning environment.

Breakdown of support staff

A healthy distribution of the necessary support staff is needed to sustain the high-level performance standards of national teams. Below is a table that indicates this distribution across your national teams.

Top 20 MAs have a more comprehensive performance support team than their lower-ranked competitors.

MAs ranked in the top 20 have a greater number of performance staff supporting all national squads, except from the top 21-50 senior men’s teams. However, women’s teams are still considerably under-resourced when compared to the men’s teams across all age groups and rankings.



Performance analysis

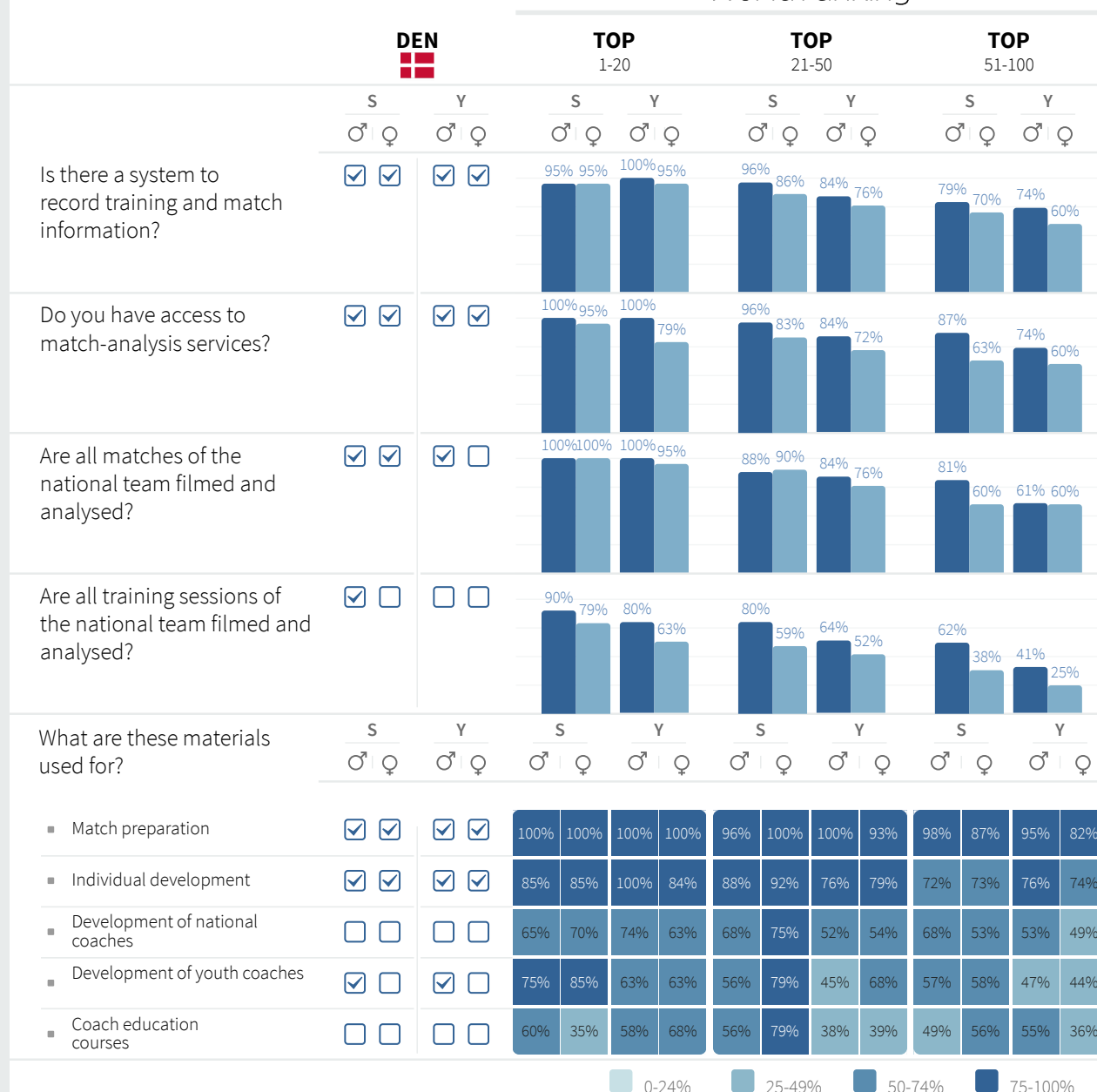
The following section displays how your national teams implement match analysis. The ability to look at previous matches and to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of a team’s performance is a critical process for both team and individual player development. Below is a table that shows the availability of match analysis for the men’s and women’s national teams at both youth and senior levels.

Performance analysis is used to a greater extent across the top 20 MAs.

Video analysis is used across a multitude of platforms to aid the development of players and coaches to a greater extent in the top 20 MAs. Nations ranked 51-100 use this process the least in supporting player and coach development.

World ranking

Illustration 2.27



Finding

Performance analysis and its implementation across the national teams

- The DBU employs a full-time performance analyst for its MNT. All training sessions and matches are recorded to allow the team to review tactical content. Clips are shared with players via an online platform. The U-21 MYNT also has access to a match analyst.
- As for the WNT, all matches are recorded, whilst training sessions are only recorded upon request. The assistant coach prepares clips with the use of a match analysis tool. The effective use this tool involves an ongoing learning process.
- All MYNT games and most training sessions are recorded. The U-15, U-17 and U-19 local club games are also uploaded into Wyscout. A lot of material is available but the MYNT coaches often fail to find the time to analyse it properly for the purpose of player development.
- Recordings of all WYNT matches are available to the coaches, who aim to share match clips with the players via a match analysis platform.



Sports science

Incorporating sports science into national teams is part of the wider multidisciplinary approach that modern football requires. In this way, national teams can discover innovative ways to boost a player's physical and mental performance. The extent to which sports science practices are implemented in your senior and youth national teams can be seen in the following illustration.

Senior national teams of MAs in the top 20 use sports science support to a greater degree than those of lower-ranked MAs.

89% of women's senior national teams in the top 20 have sports science support compared to 48% of MAs ranked 21-100. The same pattern holds true for senior men's national teams, with 85% of senior men's national teams in the top 20 compared to 65% in MAs ranked 21-100. Sports science is less well established at youth level, particularly in the women's game.

Illustration 2.28



Finding

Sports science and its implementation across the national teams

- The MNT has a part-time fitness coach, who monitors players using GPS technology, and a performance analyst, who analyses tracking and event data.
- The WNT fitness coach is responsible for monitoring players through GPS data tracking. There is also a database with a pool of players who compete in the top European leagues.
- Physical data for the MYNT and WYNT players is monitored via GPS and observation. The U-21 side is the only MYNT with a fitness coach. Appointing match analysts is considered to be a bigger future priority than recruiting fitness coaches.
- Team Danmark, an organisation to promote elite sport, supports the WYNTs by providing a sport psychologist. All of the coaches would like to have stronger links with Team Danmark.
- Individual strength and conditioning programmes, plus injury and workload data are usually managed by the clubs and reinforced by the national-team fitness coaches.

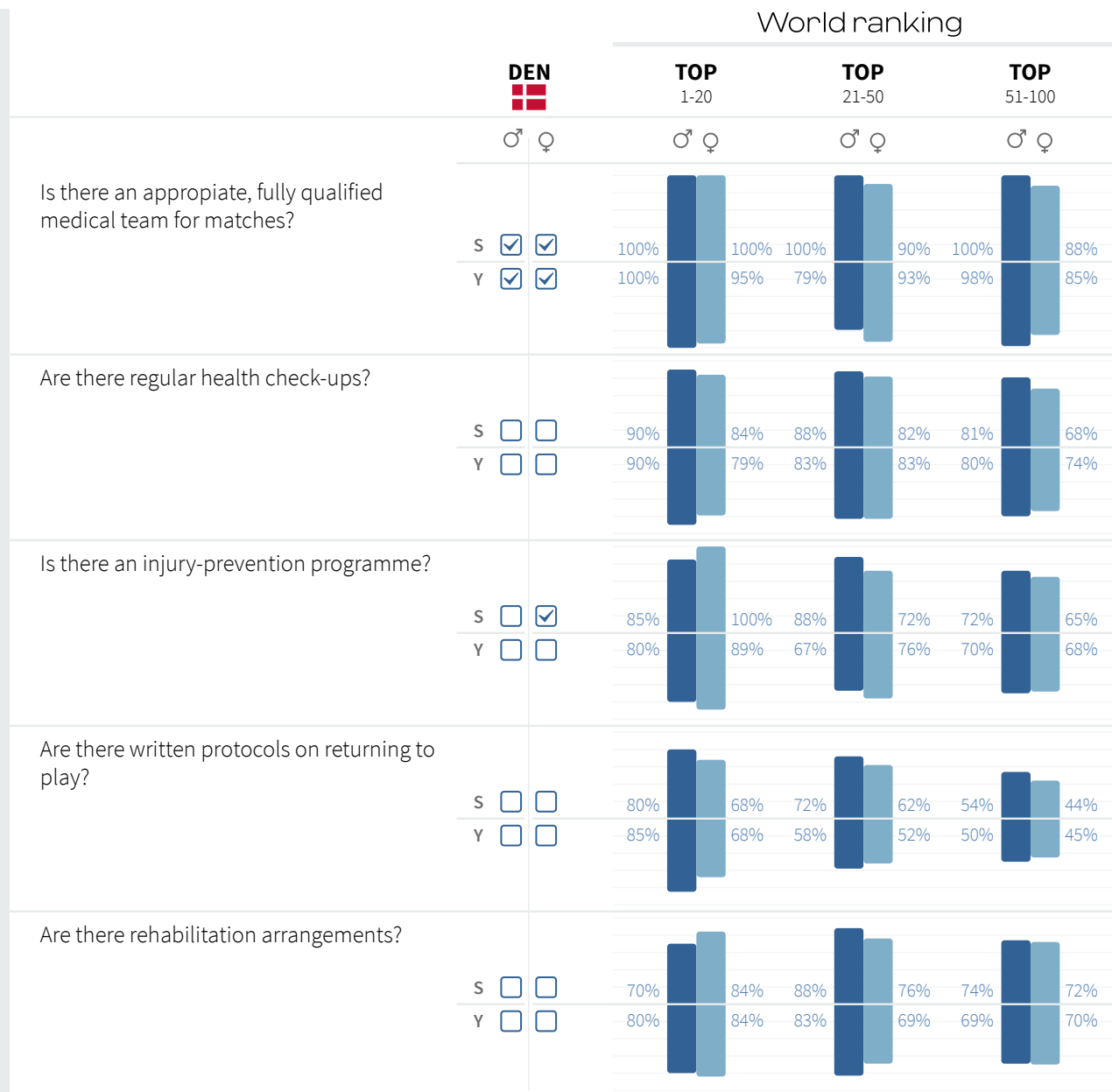
Medical provision

The nature of the international schedule, where tournaments and qualifiers consist of many games in quick succession along with long-distance travel, is particularly demanding on the human body. A fully qualified medical team is needed to deal with injuries as well as to prevent injuries through sound medical advice. Whether your senior and youth national teams have access to an appropriate medical team and its practices is displayed below.

Medical provision is more comprehensive in MAs ranked in the top 20.

All senior men's national teams in the top 100 have access to a qualified medical practitioner. Outside of the top 20, medical provisions and processes appear to be less comprehensive across all teams at both youth and senior levels.





Finding

The medical team and its provision across the national teams

- In line with the regulations, the MNT has access to a medical team (a doctor and several physiotherapists).
- The WNT is satisfied with its medical provision. An experienced physiotherapist is on duty during both training sessions and games. A qualified doctor is only available at matches. The WNT would like to have access to a larger medical team during major tournaments.
- The standard of the medical staff that support the MYNTs and WYNTs is high. A highly qualified physiotherapist is available during all training sessions and matches, whilst a doctor is in place only for matches.
- Many WYNT players suffered knee injuries two years ago. FIFA 11+ injury prevention program has once again been promoted from U-14 level and the DBU brought in a knee specialist, who developed a training programme that is followed by all players four times a week.
- All clubs receive medical reports when players report back from national-team duty.

Player-care programme

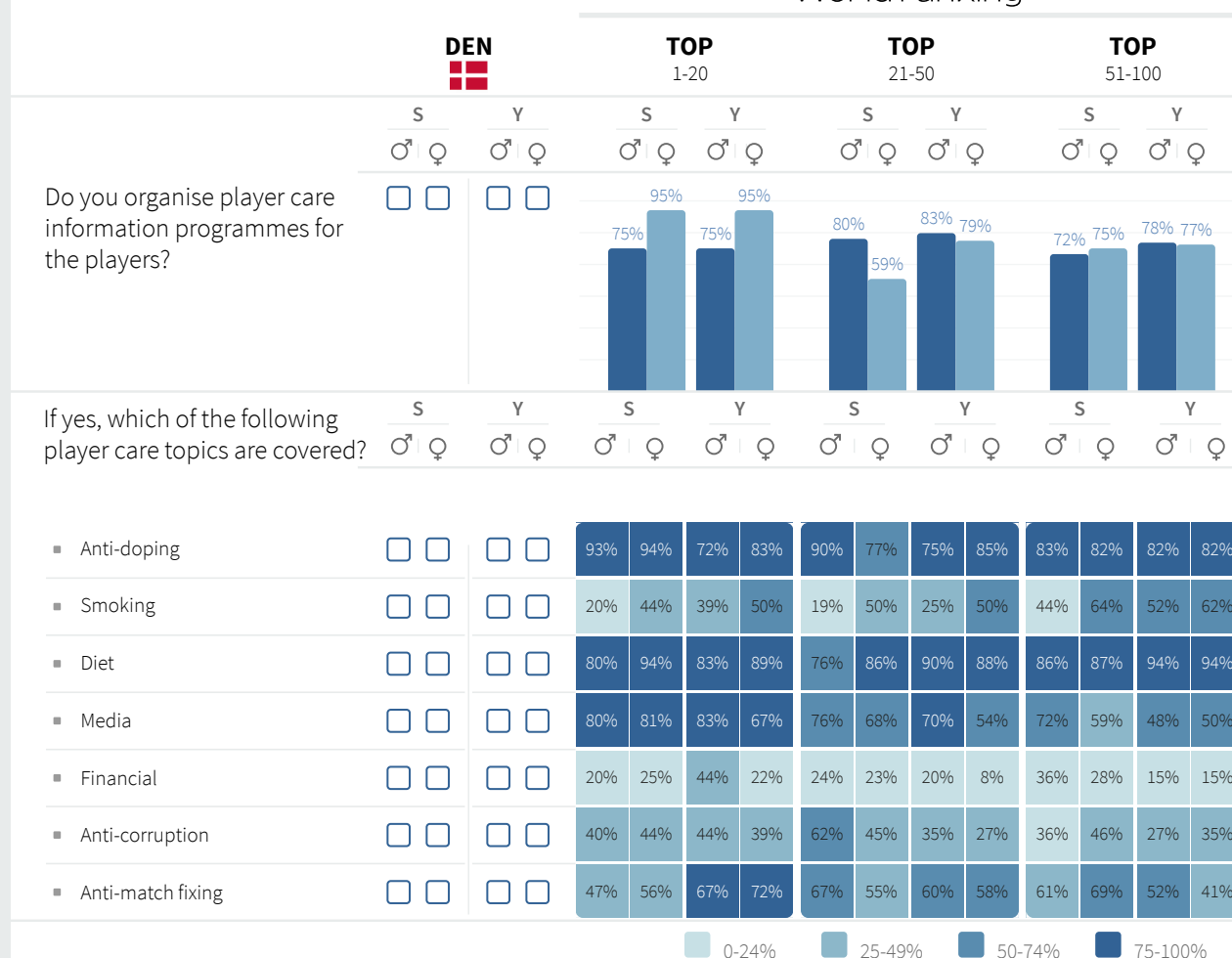
A good player-care programme is intrinsically valuable to player well-being as well as to a team's performance. Playing for the national team is a great honour but it comes with a unique set of challenges. Additional player-care support helps players overcome these challenges and gives them the clarity of mind needed to perform at the top level. The two tables below illustrate the aspects of player-care programmes that are provided to your senior and youth national teams.

77% of MAs across the top 100 provide player-care programmes for their national team players.

Women's teams in the top 20 MAs are more likely to have a player-care programme (95%). Moreover, doping, nutrition and media training are the most popular topics for MAs in the top 100.

Illustration 2.30

World ranking



Holistic education

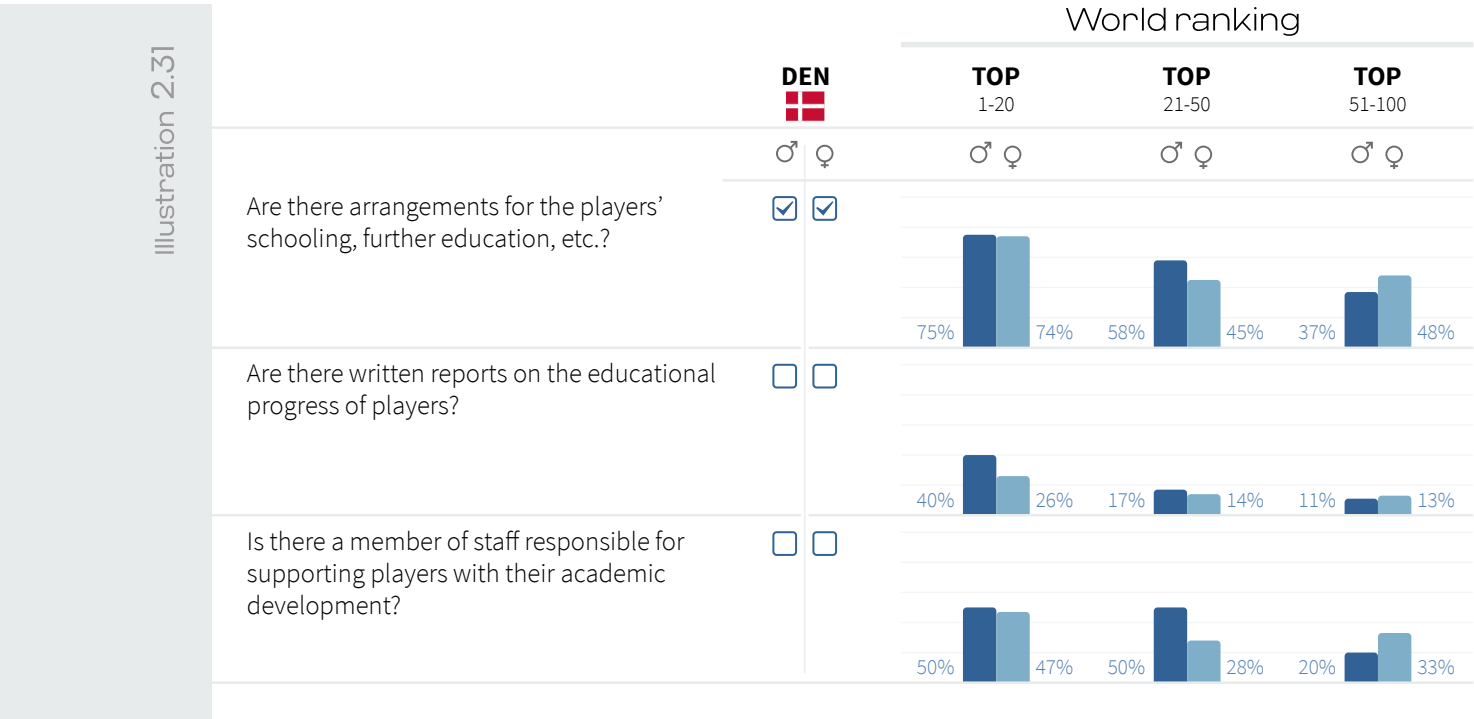
This section analyses your MA's commitment to the holistic education of youth national team players. There are many reasons for continuing a player's education alongside their playing career. Additionally, the benefits of education are not merely restricted to youth team players, as further education can help to forge new career paths for players in the latter stages of their playing career. By emphasising holistic education, national teams ensure that their players develop as citizens as well as players.

Processes

Processes need to be put in place to ensure that players are fulfilling their academic and basic well-being requirements. Youth players in national teams can miss out on parental guidance when away from their family. National teams need to ensure that the necessary support is provided and that travelling away from home is an enriching – and not detrimental – experience for young players. Whether these types of processes are in place within your national teams can be seen in the following table.

65% of the top 100 men’s MAs do not have dedicated staff responsible for supporting players with their academic development.

75% of the top 20 men’s MAs support education around training camps and games compared to between 45% of MAs ranked 21-100. The trend is similar for the women’s national teams, with only 47% of MAs ranked 21-100 supporting education during training camps. Written education reports are more prevalent across the top 20, but this is still low at only 40%.



Formal education


National teams should provide academic guarantees to their young players and their respective institutions in return for the large amounts of time that players dedicate to fulfilling their national team duties. National teams need to be in constant communication with each youth player’s school to guarantee that the player maintains the necessary academic standards expected of them. The areas in which your national teams communicate with the schools of their players, as well as the number of school days missed by players due to playing duties, is shown in the illustration below.

Children can miss up to five weeks of school per year whilst attending national team activities.

Whilst on international duty, most children miss between 11 and 25 days of school per year. In some cases, girls (15%) are more likely than boys (10%) to miss more than 50 days (ten weeks) of school per year whilst representing their country. Furthermore, top 20 men’s MAs (58%) are more likely to support a player’s education with substitute lessons than lower-ranked MAs.



Illustration 2.32

		World ranking							
		DEN 	TOP 1-20		TOP 21-50		TOP 51-100		
On which topics is there cooperation between the school authorities and the MA?		♂ ♀	♂ ♀		♂ ♀		♂ ♀		♂ ♀
■ No cooperation		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	32% 16%		22% 31%		41% 35%		
■ Possibility to pass exams		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	32% 53%		57% 34%		39% 38%		
■ Flexibility regarding the demands of school		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	47% 58%		78% 55%		57% 45%		
■ Guidance of teacher		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	32% 21%		39% 10%		24% 23%		
■ Substitute lessons		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	58% 53%		43% 31%		20% 28%		
■ Individual education plans		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	32% 47%		35% 21%		28% 23%		
Missed school days because of national team activities		♂ ♀	♂ ♀		♂ ♀		♂ ♀		♂ ♀
■ None		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	0% 0%		8% 3%		9% 3%		
■ Between 1 and 10		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	6% 6%		13% 14%		13% 28%		
■ Between 11 and 25		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	39% 28%		29% 41%		38% 43%		
■ Between 25 and 50		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	39% 50%		42% 21%		31% 18%		
■ More than 50		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	17% 17%		8% 21%		9% 10%		

0-24%
 25-49%
 50-74%
 75-100%

Finding

Holistic education and the support provision to youth players

- The Danish education system is flexible and supportive of the YNTs.
- Players miss between 25 and 50 days of school while they are with the MYNTs and WYNTs and recovery lessons or the chance to sit exams while representing Denmark evidence the good relationship with the schools.
- During the YNT training camps, coaches are aware of the players' academic circumstances and allow them the time to do their schoolwork.
- The DBU believes that bringing the club competition calendar in line with the FIFA/UEFA calendars and factoring in the academic calendar was a positive step and a strategic decision for player development.

NATIONAL TEAMS

SUMMARISING NOTES

SENIOR

- The distribution of coaching staff across the MNT and WNT is adequate. When compared to international standards, the quality of the local pitches for the MNT is average, whilst the demands of the WNT have increased in regards to their home stadium.
- The MNT uses all playing dates and the number of matches has increased significantly. The number of matches contested by the WNT has dropped over recent years, but the team plays several matches during the FIFA windows and organises friendlies. The DBU supports the idea of launching a competition to bridge the gap between the U-19 WYNT and the WNT.
- The MNT staff exchange information with the clubs regarding player performance for the national team. Developing a relationship of trust with the clubs is considered to be key. The communication between the WNT, the club coaches and sporting directors is frequent but rather informal.
- The MNT and WNT are selected by the coaches. The MNT staff closely monitor players in club matches and are supported by performance data. The WNT staff observe a pool of players who play domestically and abroad.
- The MNT and WNT benefit from a good sports science and medical provision. Unlike the WNT, the MNT has access to a match analyst.

Recommendations

1. Major strides are being taken towards the professionalisation of women's football. On account of the improved environment at club level, the demands for the national-team set-up have increased. It is recommended that the MA review the current WNT environment and the number of matches played.
2. The DBU recognises that performance analysis is an area that requires development. We recommend that the MA improve the level of support offered by performance analysis and scouting data for both senior national teams and provide staff with educational opportunities to improve the interaction between the coach and the analyst.



YOUTH

- The MYNTs (U-16, U-17, U-18, U-19, U-20 and U-21) and the WYNTs (U-16, U-17, U-19 and U-23) have adequate numbers of qualified coaching staff. The provision of fitness coaches could be improved.
- The DBU has no national training centre. The clubs' infrastructure, which is of good quality, is used for MYNT activities. The training environment for the WYNTs is of average quality. Stadiums of a good standard are rented for international matches.
- The DBU participates in all international youth competitions. The MYNTs play a good number of competitive friendlies.
- All YNT coaches cooperate well with the club coaches, both formally and informally. Performance feedback is shared with the top clubs.
- Scouting for the YNTs is mainly based on match observation and conversations with club coaches and sporting directors, particularly in the case of the MYNTs. The WYNT coaches know all of the players at the top clubs and try to visit club training sessions to scout players and also to gain an understanding of the club environment.
- The sports science and particularly the performance analysis provision is limited and led mostly by the head and assistant coaches. The medical provision and arrangements for basic education are adequate.

Recommendations

1. The importance of having a data analyst to support and develop the teams was highlighted. We recommend that further performance analysis support be offered to all YNTs and for the YNT coaches to be educated on the interaction with the performance analyst to fully exploit this resource.
2. International matches are key to player development. As the number of matches is determined by the results, we recommend that more friendly matches of a competitive standard be added to the WYNT programme to offer players more experience and ensure that talented youth players are given enough match exposure.
3. As is the case in many other countries, the DBU finds that the gap between the women's U-19 national team and the women's senior national team is big and is growing. To prevent a gap opening up with the top European nations, we recommend that a transition team, supported by a FIFA age-group competition, be implemented to bridge the gap.
4. We recommend that the MA begin discussions and explore the benefits of having a national training centre that is available to all youth teams.

A background image showing a soccer player in a blue jersey celebrating with a trophy, surrounded by other players and fans. The image is overlaid with a dark blue gradient.

3. DOMESTIC COMPETITIONS

Domestic competition is vital to the growth of the game and the development of national talent.

The structure of domestic competition underpins the development of young players and their opportunity to reach their full potential. Having a competitive games programme throughout each stage of the player pathway is essential to support a progressive and challenging development environment to maximise the learning experience for all players. Such a games programme will not only grow the game, but will also optimise development.

3.1 Management and resources

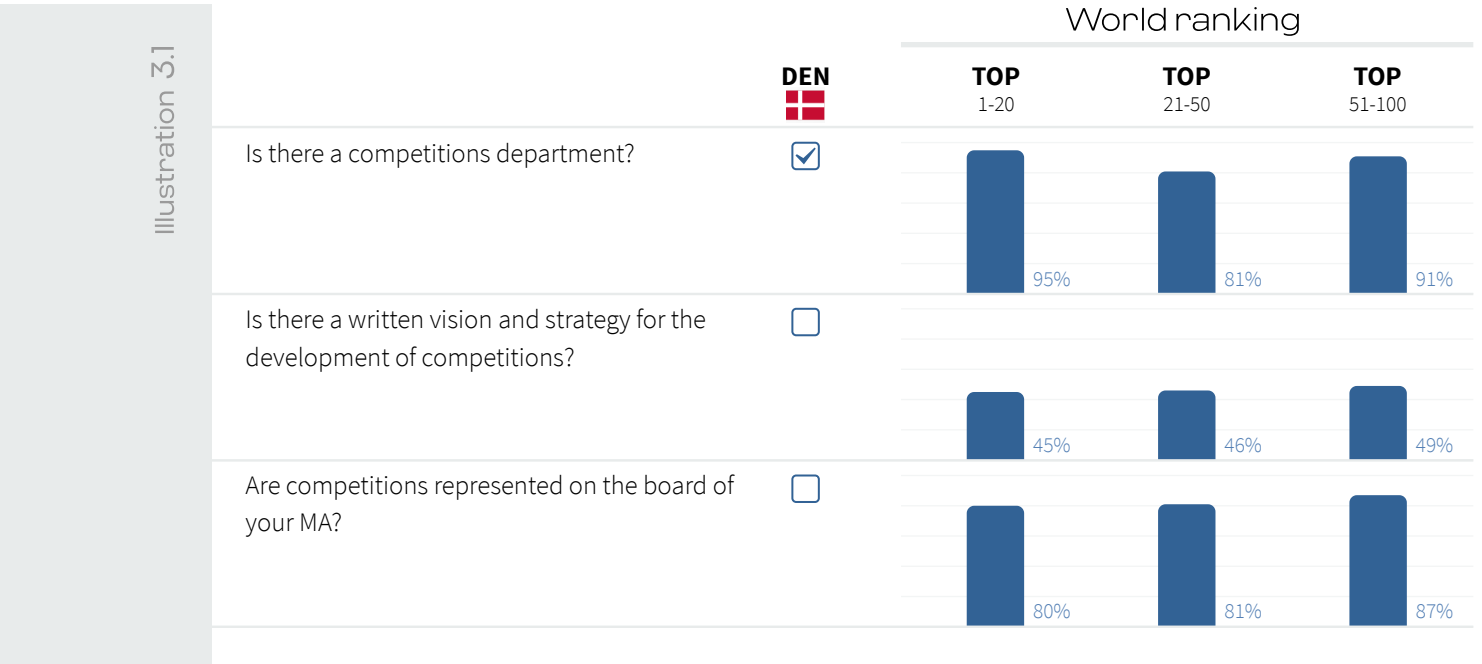
This subsection illustrates the structure and organisation of the member association’s (MA) strategy in the development of domestic competitions. Development of – and adherence to – a long-term strategy is critical to the growth of the game in the country and its impact on the future success of national teams. In particular, talent development is directly affected by the competition structures and regulations.

Strategy and organisation

Embedding a competitions department with a strategy into the structure of your association can aid the development of your football community. Whether this has happened at your association can be seen below.

Most MAs have a competitions department, but very few have a written vision and strategy.

89% of MAs in the top 100 of the FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking have a dedicated competitions department, with most (84%) being represented at board level. However, very few have a written vision and strategy for the development of competitions, with 47% of the top 100 associations having such a strategy in place.



Finding

Cooperation between the competitions department and technical development

- The MA manages the elite youth competitions (boys’ U-19, U-17, U-15; girls’ U-18), the men’s fourth and fifth tiers and the elite women’s leagues through its Competitions Department, which is part of the Grassroots Association, which oversees amateur football.
- The League Association (DF) runs the country’s elite men’s leagues.
- The MA’s Competitions Department and its Elite Department cooperate on an ongoing basis in regard to the strategic decisions required for league development across all age groups.
- The development of the leagues comes under the remit of the Elite Department and the Youth Development Committee.
- The youth licensing system, which is reviewed and improved on an annual basis, is the main tool for league development.
- The club ranking system is a strong point within the competition set-up. The clubs are ranked according to the quality of the youth licensing system, and not on results.

Cooperation with the league

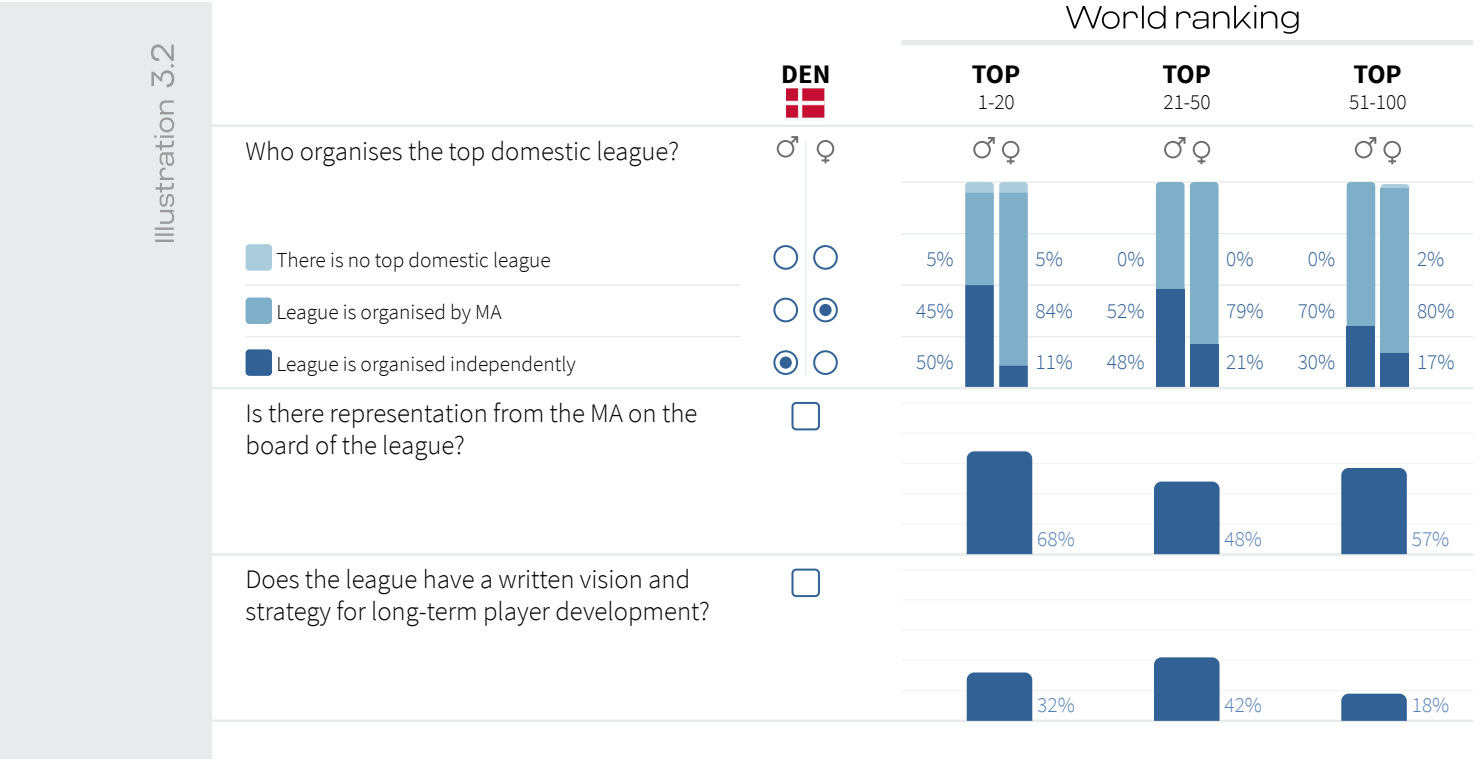
Domestic competition structures are influenced by the set-up of the football pyramid and by the relationship between the top-tier competition organiser and the MA. The human resource structure of this body (if cooperation with such an institution is in place) can give more detailed insight into the main focus areas.

Top-tier competition organiser

Having a unified player development strategy for both your association and the independent top-tier league(s) ensures that player development is sustained throughout all competitions in the pyramid. The following illustration displays the cooperation and player development strategy between your league(s) and association

The majority of top-tier men's and women's domestic leagues are organised by the MA

50% of the men's top-tier domestic leagues in associations ranked 1-20 are organised independently. Of all the independently organised leagues across the top 100, only 57% have a representative from the MA on the board. More ominously, only 28% of these leagues have a written strategy for long-term player development.



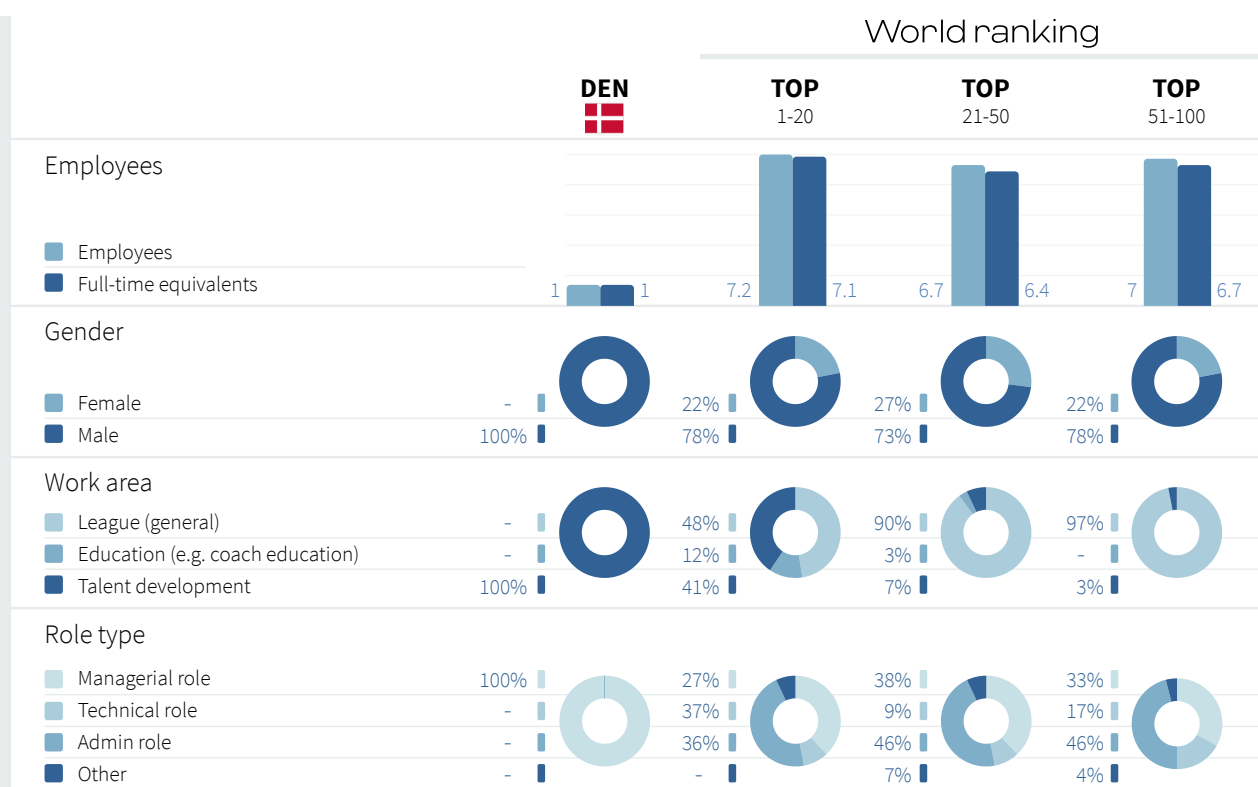
Professional league staffing

What is the staff structure of the top league with which your MA cooperates (if applicable)? What is the gender make-up of this staff structure? What is the percentage of full-time staff (full-time equivalents)? How many staff members are dedicated to the areas of talent development and education compared to the administrative section?

There is a greater focus on talent development in the top 20 MAs.

Professional leagues within the top 20 MAs dedicate 41% of their relevant staff members to talent development, compared to 7% and 3% of leagues in MAs ranked 21-50 and 51-100 respectively. Across the top 100, there is a consistently low percentage of female staff (22% to 27%) employed within professional league structures. Additionally, from a structure perspective, there is an upward shift in the proportion of the roles deemed technical, increasing from 9% in MAs ranked 21-50 to 37% in the top 20.

Illustration 3.3



Finding

The role of the member association and the league in terms of player development

- The league employs a head of talent development, who is responsible for player development. This staff member works closely with the DBU's Elite Department on the basis of a common and clear strategy which is aimed at player development.
- The League Association and the MA work hand in hand to create an environment that fosters player development. This is primarily based on the youth licensing system.
- The two licensing systems (club and youth) are successful elements within the player development set-up. Within club licensing, great importance is placed on educating coaches.
- The transition coach and annual international clubs' transition tournaments aim to ensure that male players in the U-18 to U-21 age groups are offered a competitive environment to support the transition into their clubs' senior squads.

3.2 Senior competitions

This section illustrates the senior competition structure in your country. It is widely known that the level of domestic competition and its structure can define the opportunities for players, coaches and support staff. Whether it be facilities, development infrastructure and support networks, income generation, or playing opportunities, all aspects of the game expand with the level of competition in the country.

Competition structure

The table below shows, according to the information provided by the MA, how many teams and leagues are part of your competition structure in the first three tiers of your football pyramid.

Top-tier men's leagues across the leading 20 MAs have, on average, 17.6 teams.

The number of teams per top-tier league in men's football steadily increases from 14.6 in MAs ranked 51-100 to 17.6 in the top 20. In women's football, the number of teams per top-tier league increases, to a lesser extent, from 10.3 teams in the 51-100 benchmark group to 11.3 in the top 20.

Illustration 3.4

		World ranking							
Tier	Number of	DEN		TOP 1-20		TOP 21-50		TOP 51-100	
		♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀
1	Leagues	1	1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.1
	Teams	12	8	17.6	11.3	16.5	10.1	14.6	10.3
2	Leagues	1	4	1.1	1.5	1.4	2.0	1.3	2.7
	Teams	12	20	21.3	23.9	24.0	19.1	20.8	26.1
3	Leagues	2	3	1.8	4.6	2.8	1.6	3.4	0.6
	Teams	28	25	45.6	52.5	46.4	16.4	60.7	6.4

League status

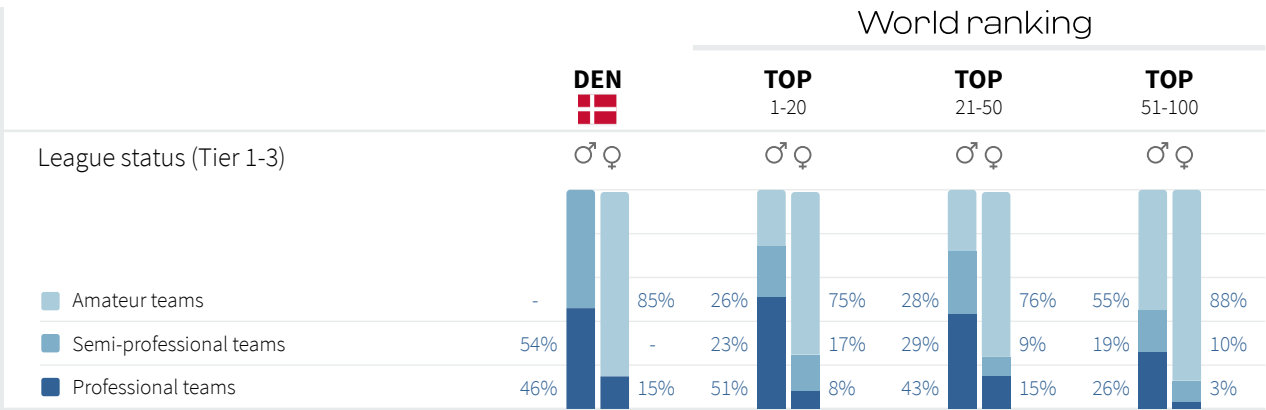
The number of professional, semi-professional and amateur teams participating in an association's top three tiers provides insight into the health of the overall football environment. Having enough professional playing opportunities contributes to good health. A breakdown of the top three tiers can be found below.

Across the top 50 MAs, clubs in men's top three tiers are mostly fully professional, whereas the women's game has an overall lack of professional clubs.

As expected, the MAs in the upper reaches (top 20) of the world have a higher combined percentage of professional and semi-professional teams. This is drastically different for women's football, as the vast majority of women's clubs across the globe are amateur, with the largest percentage of professional clubs (only 15%) located in MAs ranked 21-50.



Illustration 3.5



Top-tier competitions

Top-tier competitions can serve as a flagship for the development of domestic football. Most of the time, these leagues will attract the highest number of spectators and will help to develop your top home-grown players. Therefore, it is helpful to have a closer look at the characteristics of your top-tier competitions and their constitution.

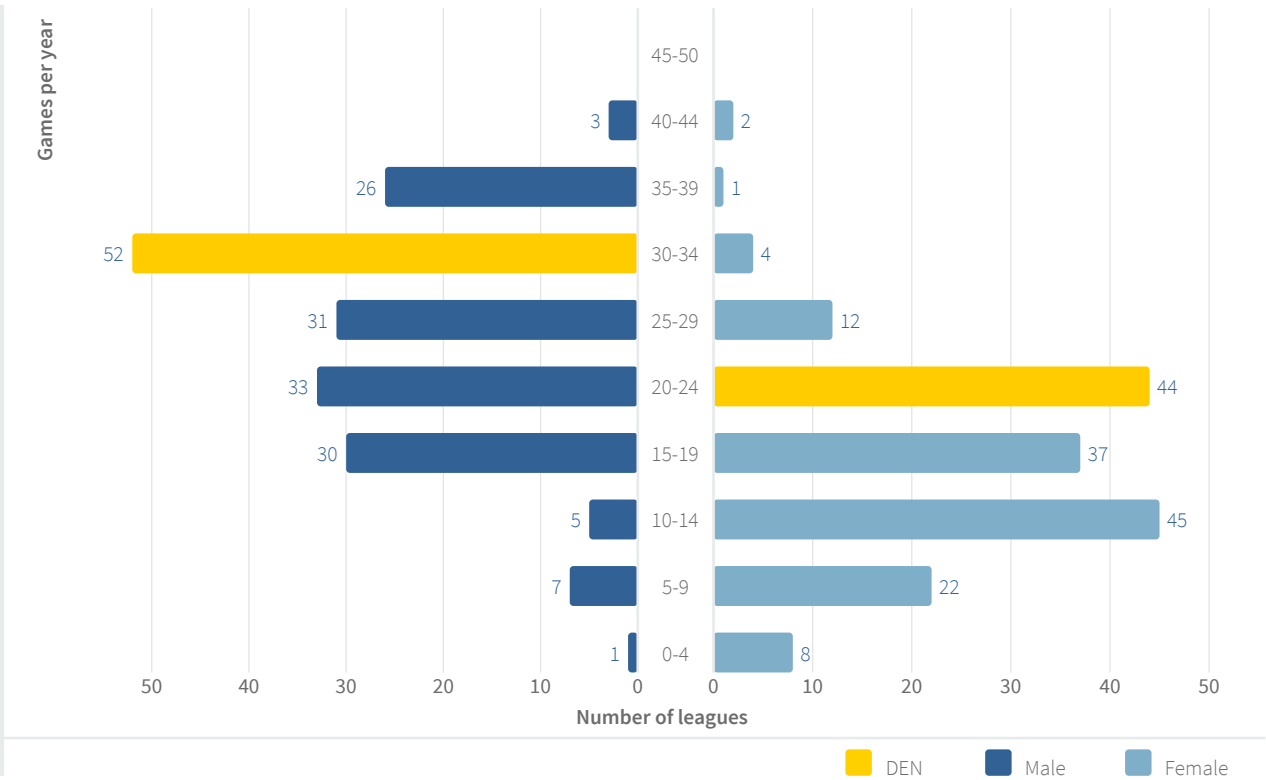
Number of matches played per year

Playing competitive matches is a fundamental aspect of player development. With too little playing time, players cannot acquire the experience needed to compete at the highest level. The table below shows the guaranteed minimum number of games per year that your leagues provide.

The most common range for the number of games in top-tier women’s leagues is 10-24 per season, whereas it is 30-34 in top-tier men’s leagues.

Globally, men’s league structures deliver more playing opportunities, with 52 of the top domestic leagues offering 30-34 games per season. This is in stark contrast to the women’s game, in which 45 of the top leagues offer 10-14 games per season, with a further 44 leagues offering 20-24 games a year.

Illustration 3.6



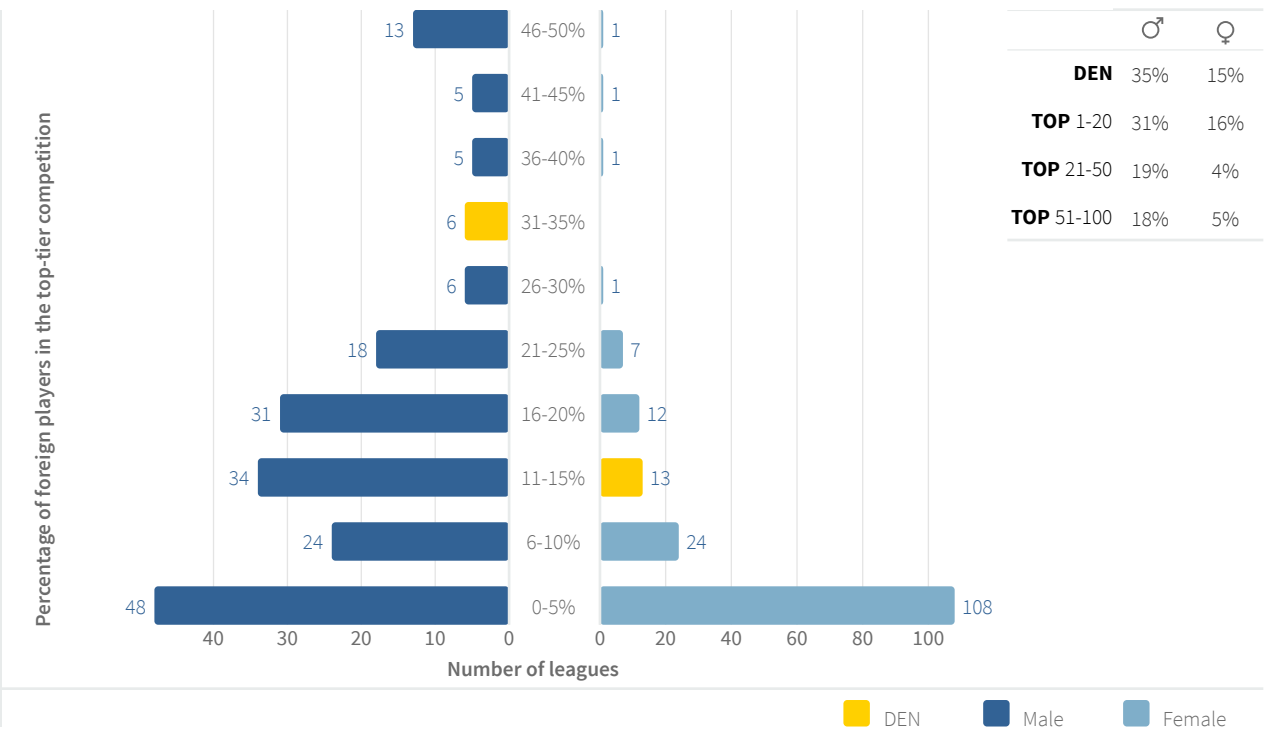
Foreign players in top-level competitions

Striking the right balance between home-grown (a player who, regardless of their nationality, has been trained by their club or by another club in the same national association), domestic (a player who is eligible to represent the national association in which their club resides) and foreign players (players who are not eligible to represent the national association in which their club resides) is a significant topic for top-level competitions. Having too many foreign players can restrict opportunities for domestic talent. The percentage of foreign players playing in your top leagues is displayed below.

There is a greater percentage of foreign players in the top-tier men's and women's leagues in the top 20 MAs.

The top 20 MAs in the men's game have the highest percentage of foreign players per team (31% compared to 18% outside the top 20). The same pattern can be seen in the top-tier women's leagues, but on a lesser scale (16% in the top 20 compared to 5% outside), allowing top-tier women's teams to have a greater proportion of domestic talent.

Illustration 3.7



Finding

Set-up of the senior competition structure

- The League Association is one of the two organisations that make up the DBU, the other being the Grassroots Association.
- The league consists of between 48 and 52 clubs across the top three tiers of the men's game. The leagues below the aforementioned divisions are managed by the Grassroots Association.
- Women's football comes under the umbrella of the DBU's Grassroots Association. The first and second tiers are run by the MA, whilst the third tier is managed by the regional associations.
- Although the total number of participating teams in the men's elite leagues is below average amongst the leading 20 MAs, the top two leagues are professional and offer reasonable playing opportunities.
- The structure of the women's league features a top-tier professional league, which based on its standing, the number of participating teams, matches per season and the percentage of foreign players performs well when compared to the leagues in the top 20 MAs.



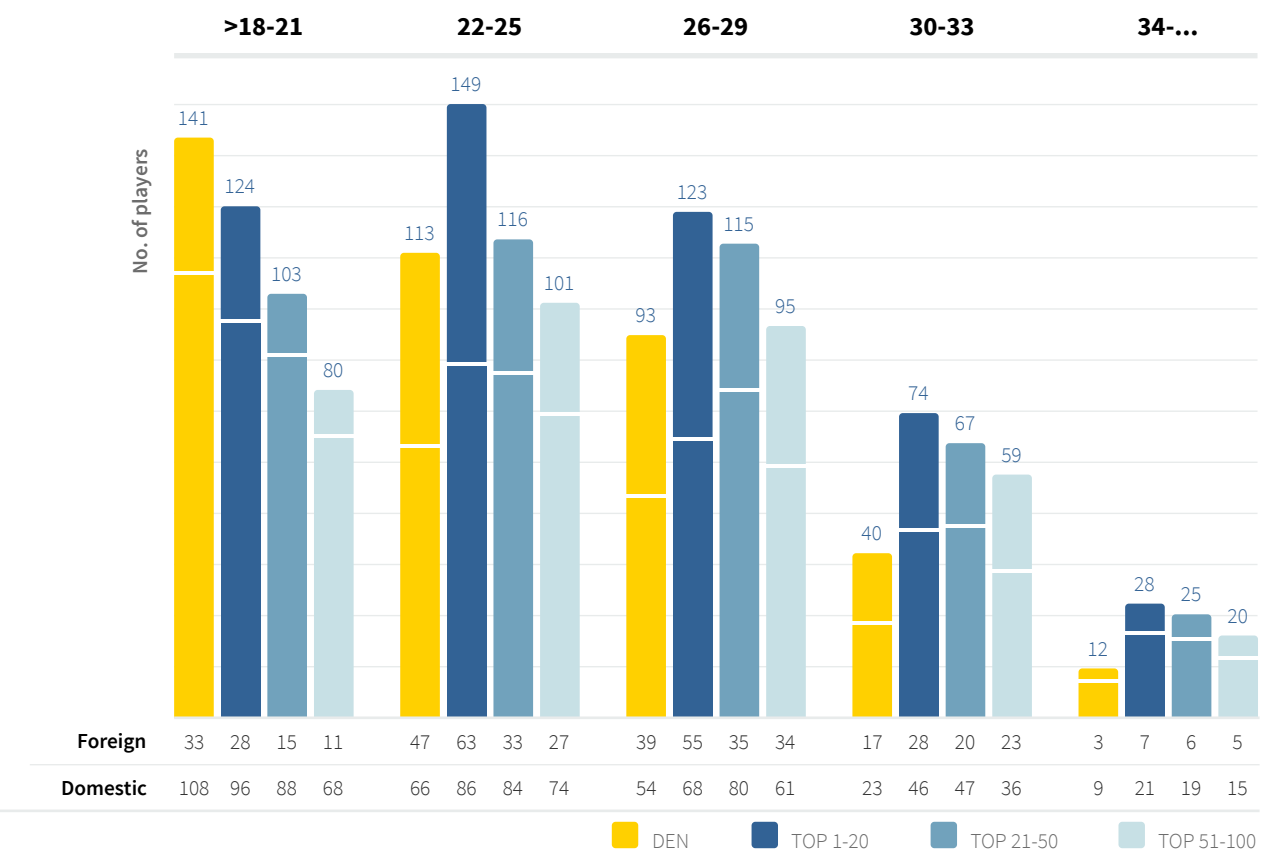
Age profile of the top-tier men’s league

The average player age can be a good indicator of a league’s strength. An essential part of maintaining effective player development and sustaining high-level competition over time is to ensure that the league achieves a good balance between talented young players and experienced elite players. The illustration below presents the number of players, both domestic and foreign, in each age bracket across the top 88 men’s domestic leagues worldwide (data courtesy of CIES).

Leagues in the top 20 MAs have the highest proportion of players aged 18-25.

Across all benchmark groups, between the ages of 18 and 21, domestic leagues have a greater proportion of domestic players than players from overseas. Furthermore, the top 20 domestic leagues have the highest proportion of players between the ages of 18 and 25 along with the highest number of foreign players across the top 100 between the ages of 22 and 25. The age profile shifts more towards older age groups across the MAs as they get further away from the top 20.

Illustration 3.8



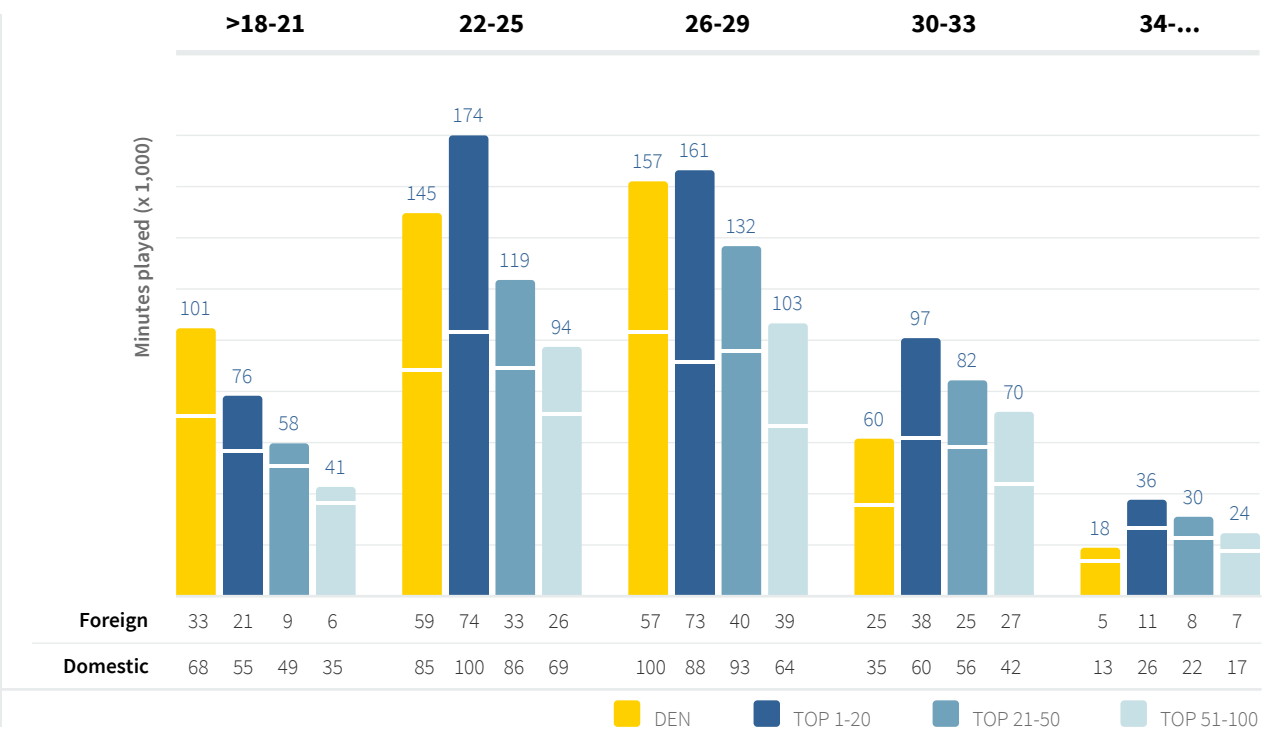
Average playing time for foreign and domestic players

For the development of talent, no matter at what age, playing time is crucial. Having access to the top-tier domestic competition for young players along with a long-term strategy is critical for the effective transition of players into the senior game. The next step is to sustain this playing time through the decisive years of development, allowing players to establish themselves and inevitably enhancing the performance of the national team. The illustration below presents the playing time of domestic and foreign players in each age bracket across the top 88 men’s domestic leagues worldwide (data courtesy of CIES).

Top 50 MAs offer the most match minutes to players aged 18 to 21.

The top 50 MAs offer approximately 14% of all playing time to players aged 18 to 21, compared to 12% in MAs ranked 51-100. However, in this age group, leagues within MAs ranked 21-50 offer a greater percentage of playing time to domestic players (85%), compared to 74% in the top 20 MAs. Lastly, MAs ranked 51-100 offer the largest proportion of game time to players aged 30+.

Illustration 3.9



Infrastructure

The infrastructure of a football community can influence its competitions. Infrastructure of a good standard can provide solid foundations to develop promising players, whereas below-par facilities can hinder this process.

Finding

Standard of the infrastructure available to stage the matches in the top league(s)

- The standard of the infrastructure that hosts the men’s top-flight fixtures is generally good and adequate. Its quality assurance is regulated by the club licensing system.
- The provision of suitable floodlighting is seen as a limiting factor in many stadiums, in view of UEFA standards.
- Given women’s football top tier is set up under DBU amateur football, the league is contested in less developed facilities, which is an area that requires special attention.



3.3 Youth football competitions

An effective talent pathway is reliant upon a progressive and competitive games programme. Such a competitions structure should first and foremost have the capacity to maximise participation across the country to grow the game and its talent pool. Youth football, in particular, must be progressive across the phases of development, deliver multiple high-performance learning experiences, and be age-appropriate – based upon an awareness of growth and maturation – and aligned with the development methodology of the association.

Participation

The bigger the football family, the better. Youth players are the beating heart and soul of football culture all around the globe. But it is not simply the number of players that counts. To get a clear impression of the status quo in terms of participation, aspects such as the player pool (size) in comparison to the size of the population can be helpful.

Player pool

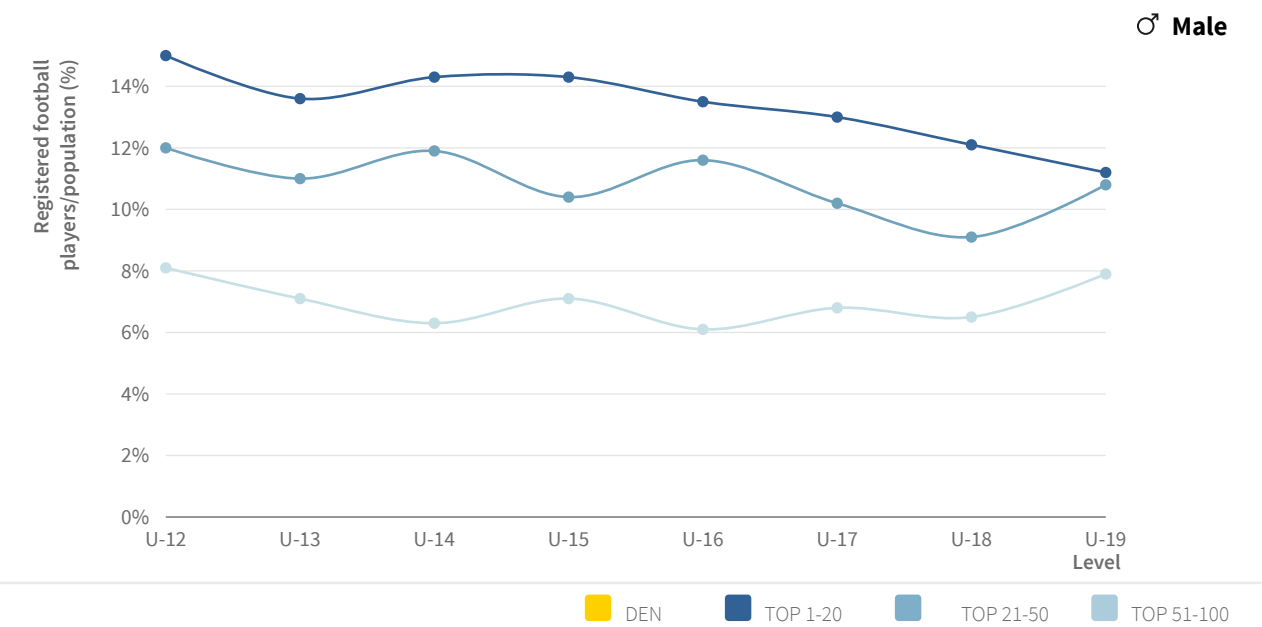
The player pool is the percentage of all registered male and female players in different age levels in comparison to the population of your country, irrespective of their competition level. Talent development can be enhanced by a large player pool and the high level of participation it generates. Since larger player pools create fiercer competition, the elite-level teams will ultimately see higher-calibre players enter their development pathways. The data displayed in the illustrations below is self-reported by MAs.



The higher-ranked MAs have the highest percentage of registered male players across all age groups.

In men’s football, the highest percentage of registered players (in comparison to the population) can be found in the top 20 MAs for all age groups between U-12 and U-18. However, it must be noted that from U-15 upwards, this percentage decreases in the top 20 MAs to the point that it reaches the same percentage as MAs ranked 21-50. Furthermore, at U-19, there is an upward shift in the percentage of registered players per population in the MAs ranked 21-100.

Illustration 3.10a





The higher-ranked MAs have the highest percentage of registered female players.

In women’s football, the highest percentage of registered players (in comparison to the population) can be found in the top 20 MAs for all age groups between U-12 and U-19. However, this percentage declines from the outset to less than 3% at U-19 level – in stark contrast to the numbers in the men’s game. MAs ranked 51-100 have an increase in the number of registered players at U-15 level; however, this overall percentage is incredibly low, standing at approximately 1% of the population.

♀ Female

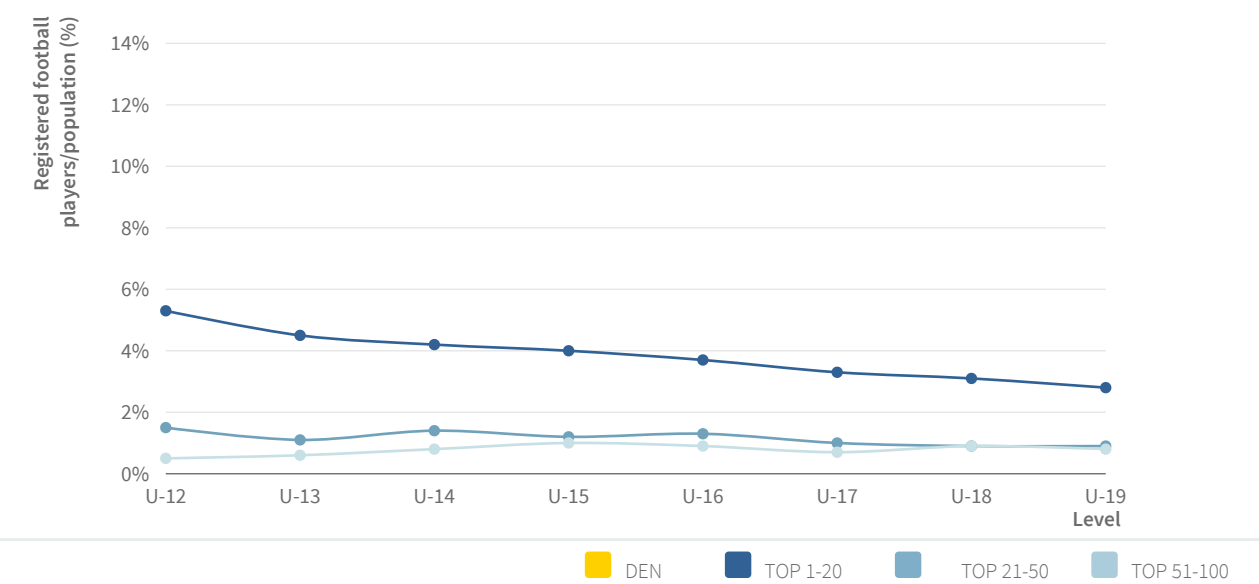


Illustration 3.10b

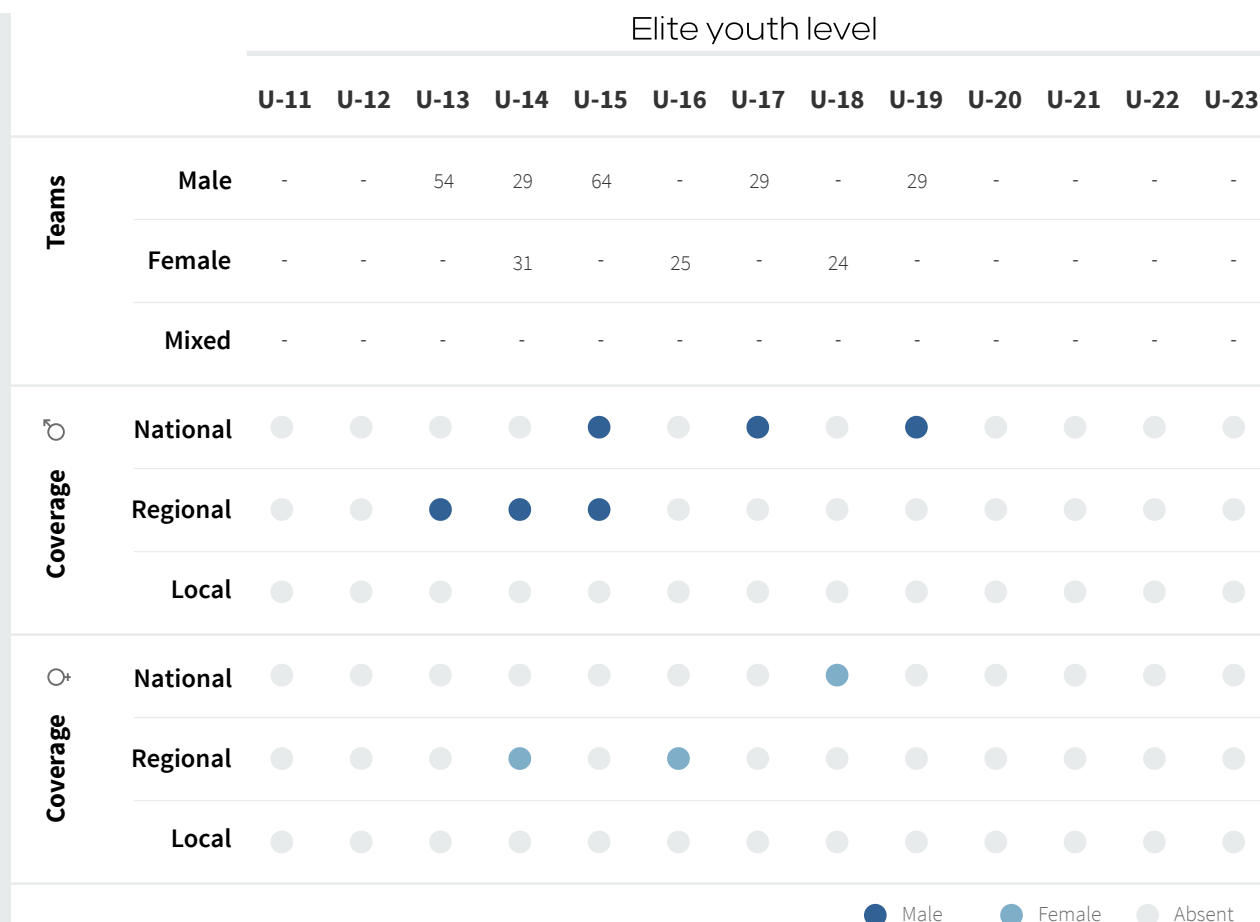
Elite youth competitions

Competitions at elite youth level play an important role in player development as they concentrate on the MA's biggest talents. Adequate and diverse competitive formats at this level can have a major impact on player development.

Competition structure

Separated by age bracket, the following illustration displays the number of male, female and mixed teams in your elite youth competitions. It also indicates whether these competitions are organised at national, regional or local level.

Illustration 3.11



Finding

Quality and quantity of playing opportunities for registered youth players

- A strong point in the Danish system relates to the fact that all clubs have an academy and provide players with sufficient opportunities.
- The DBU's elite youth competitions consist of national leagues for both boys (U-15, U-17, U-19) and girls (U-18). Meanwhile, the regional associations are responsible for the regional leagues for boys (U-13, U-14, U-15) and girls (U-14, U-16).
- The competitive formats of these leagues, particularly in the case of the boys' leagues, provide an adequate and progressive programme of fixtures. In terms of girls' football, it is considered that there is scope for further development of the competitions across all age groups.
- The DBU's focus on overall development instead of results represents a strong point within its youth competitions.
- The youth licence, in which the education of coaches features as an important element, enhances the quality of the footballing activities.



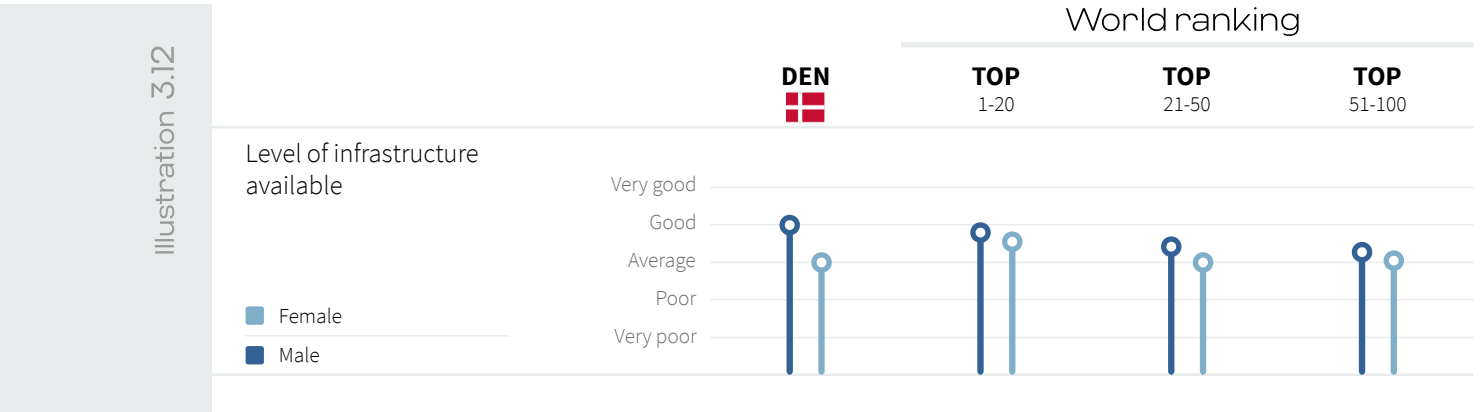
Youth football infrastructure

To help young players reach their potential, your football ecosystem needs to offer adequate facilities to host competition and training.

The Illustration below illustrates the level of infrastructure available for both boys’ and girls’ competitions in your country compared to the world top 100. Note that this is a subjective evaluation by the MA.

In comparison to girls, boys have better access to competition infrastructure across all of the top 100 MAs.

It is evident, across all member associations from 1 to 100, that boys’ football receives better infrastructural support than girls’ football.



Finding

Standard of the infrastructure available to stage youth competitions

- The standard of the infrastructure for youth competitions is good, with the youth sides using the same pitches as their respective first teams.
- Many boys’ academies are officially registered as a part of professional men’s clubs, whereas girls’ academies are mainly registered as belonging to amateur clubs. As a result, the standard of the infrastructure is inferior in the girls’ competitions.
- Generally speaking, the clubs devote more resources to the boys’ set-up.

3.4 Grassroots competitions

Grassroots football is the foundation of the pyramid and the development pathway. Between U-5 and U-12 levels, there must be a focus on participation and growing the game across the country in a bid to develop and expand the pool of young male and female footballers. Grassroots football plays a key role in shaping football culture. Better access to grassroots football creates more opportunities for young players to get involved.

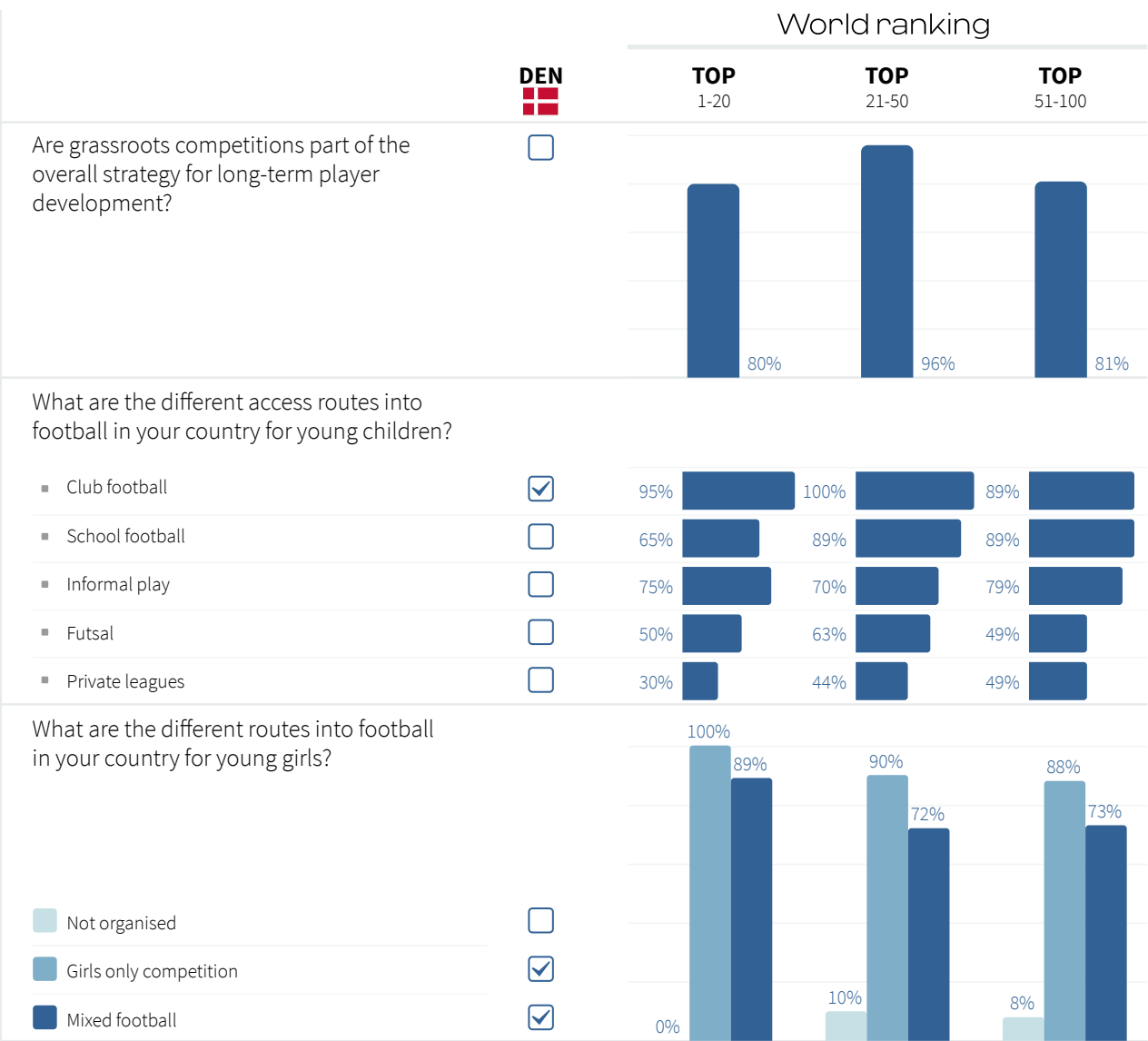
Organisation and strategy

Organising different routes into football helps to generate interest in the game. Furthermore, having a strategy for the grassroots sustains interest over the long term. The level of organisation and the presence of a strategy in your association’s management of grassroots football can be seen in the illustration below.

85% of the top 100 MAs have grassroots as part of the LTPD strategy.

85% of MAs in the top 100 have grassroots as part of their overall strategy for long-term development, although the figure is as high as 96% among the top 21-50 MAs. Club football is seen as the dominant access route to football for young children, with school football and informal play being close behind. From a girls’ perspective, female-only competitions are the most prevalent access route, with mixed football a close second. However, some MAs in the 21-100 ranking band currently have no organised girls’ football in their country.

Illustration 3.13

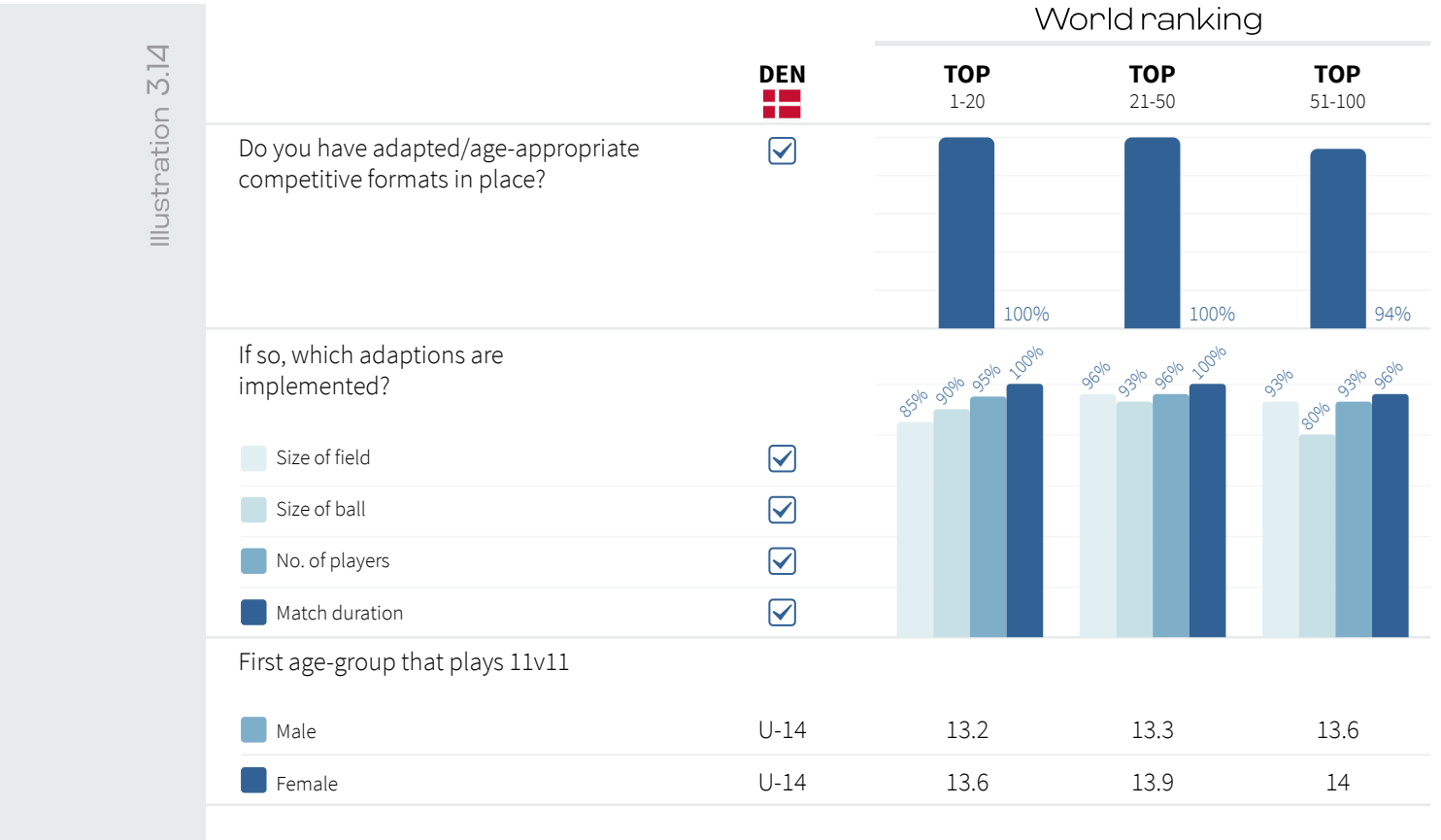


Age-appropriate competitive formats

Tailoring the football experience for different ages by adapting factors such as pitch size and player numbers can increase the retention of young footballers playing the game. Whether your association adapts the game according to the age of young players can be seen below.

All MAs ranked 1-50 have age-appropriate game formats, with 11v11 starting at the average age of 13.

The vast majority of MAs in the top 100 have age-appropriate game formats, with more MAs focusing on adapting the match duration and the number of players than the size of the ball and the size of the pitch. As you move further away from the top 20, 11v11 game formats are introduced later for both boys and girls.



Finding

Use of age-appropriate competitive formats to aid player development

- Creating an environment that fosters development is at the heart of the DBU’s player development strategy.
- The pathway into football is straightforward. Over 1,000 clubs have an academy that features a range of age groups, which start from junior football, whilst some have introduced mixed teams.
- The youth leagues, organised by the DBU’s Grassroots Association and the regional associations, are played in adapted formats up until U-13 level.
- Given that the regional associations have autonomy from the DBU to implement competitive formats at grassroots level and in view of their results-based approach, there is clearly a marked contrast with the DBU’s focus on an ecosystem that fosters the development of youth talent.
- In addition, the DBU’s “Children’s Football Strategy”, run in conjunction with the League Association and Grassroots Association, aims to create a child-centered environment, where children are able to develop their talent in line with their own ambitions.



DOMESTIC COMPETITIONS

SUMMARISING NOTES

- The youth competitions focus on creating an environment to promote development rather than a results-oriented approach. A strength is that clubs are ranked on the basis of their quality, through the youth licensing system.
- The league's head of talent development plays a key role in player development. There is a strong collaboration with the MA's Elite Department, based on a common and clear strategy aimed at developing players.
- There is a strong youth competition structure with a range of competitions at different levels. As for the elite-player provision, the MA runs national boys' leagues at U-15, U-17 and U-19. There is a U-18 national girls' league.
- There is a big gap, especially between U-19 and the men's senior level. This transition must be addressed by organising more regular competitions.
- The DBU has an important role in girls' player development, due to the lack of competitive environment for younger age groups.
- There are adapted age-appropriate competitive formats up until U-13. There is a lack of consensus between the DBU and the regional associations. The DBU launched an active collaboration at grassroots level to implement child-centered competitions for boys and girls across all age groups.

Recommendations

1. Competitions are based on fulfilling environment criteria instead of results. We noticed an active collaboration with the Grassroots Association to implement an environment-based competition in all age groups for boys and girls. The youth competition structure on the girls side seems an area of attention; we advise the further development of the club environment for girls and to increase match opportunities.
2. There is a big gap, between the highest age group competitions and the senior level, both men and women. This transition must be addressed. We recommend to roll out initiatives to support the transition of youth players, especially on the girls side.
3. To further support the professionalisation of women's football, we recommend to open discussions and explore the feasibility of the women's top flight becoming part of the country's professional ranks.

4. TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTIFICATION



Every talent deserves a chance.

It is an unfortunate fact that many talented players in the world are not spotted – and also that many of the gifted individuals who are identified do not ultimately fulfil their potential, often due to gaps in the development process. Thorough talent identification and development minimises these inefficiencies. Talent development should also be impartial: selecting which youngsters to develop ought to be based not on age or socio-economic factors, but on the value that the player brings to the football pitch.

4.1 Talent development strategy

The following section illustrates how talent development is managed in your football community. Managing talent development properly guarantees that players with a natural aptitude for the game are identified and nurtured, which is vital for the growth of the football environment to be sustained.

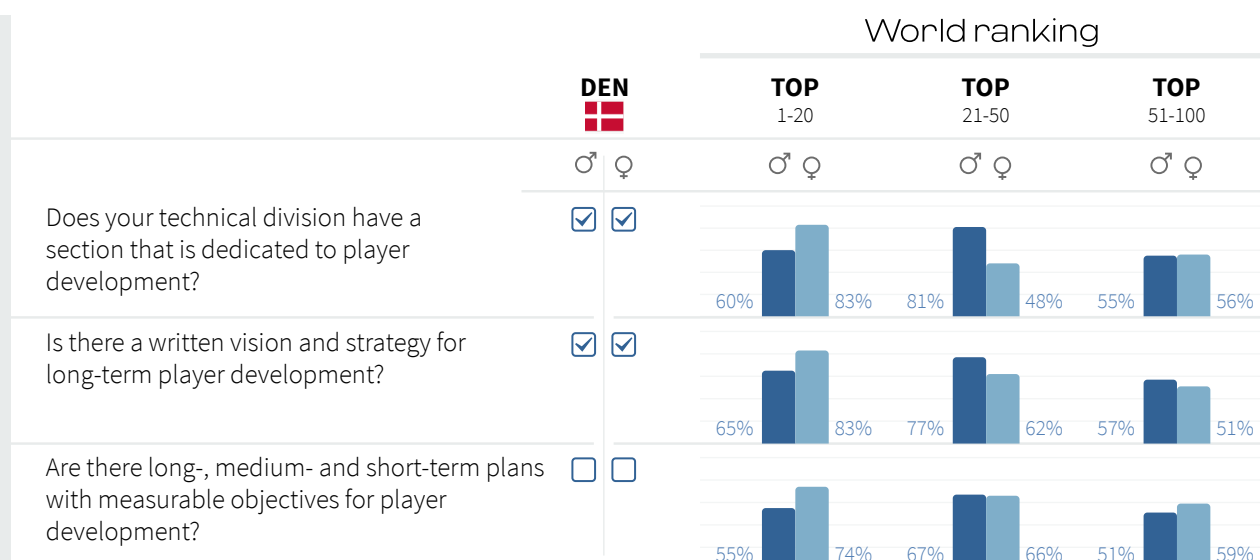
Strategy and planning

Setting a clear direction for talent development helps ensure transparency between the parties involved in the process. Having a unified vision and strategy creates tangible goals for staff to work towards when developing talented individuals.

A significant number of MAs have committed to the implementation of a talent development strategy with identified targets.

Of the top 20 women's MAs, 83% have a specific section in their technical division that focuses on talent development, in contrast to only 60% of the men's top 20. Across nearly all areas of management and planning, the degree to which this is implemented rises as one moves up the three ranking groups in the women's game. There remains, however, a significant number of MAs which have neither a strategy nor targets for talent development.

Illustration 4.1



Finding

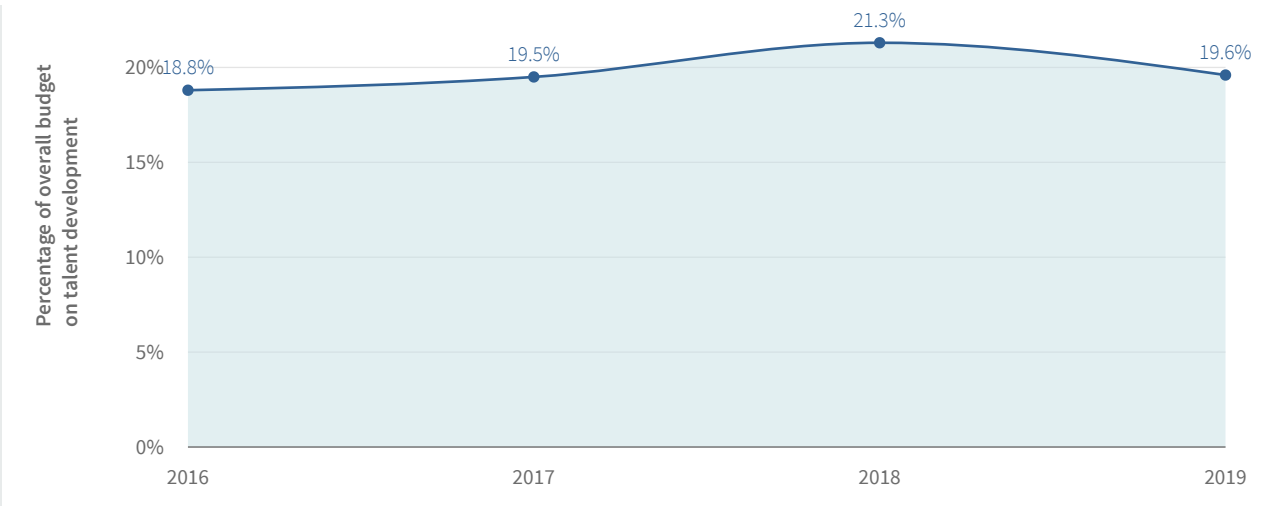
Player development as a part of the technical division

- The DBU has two Talent Development sections in the Elite Department, one for girls and one for boys. The Senior Women's Team Coach and Head of Elite Development are both key roles.
- Top clubs have an important role in boys' talent development, providing a developmental environment rather than a results-oriented one. The DBU has systematic collaboration with the clubs in the two top tiers via six Talent Coaches, each linked to a number of clubs.
- The DBU has a leading role in talent development for girls, clubs do not have such a relevant role in this area.
- The DBU Vision 2020 is a clear development strategy for girls, for both elite and recreational players. Qualification for the 2020 Olympics was the objective of this plan.
- The DBU development plan is based on three pillars: clubs, TOP centres and Talent Centres for boys and girls. The Talent Coaches and their close links to clubs represent a strength.

Financial resources

With the right amount of financial resources, talent development can be organised in a way that guarantees a steady supply of suitable players for elite and national-level teams. Below is the percentage of your association’s budget allocated to talent development.

Illustration 4.2



Institutions

Football institutions play a key role in developing prospects. Working with a broad range of such organisations – from schools to elite-club academies – and having them adhere to an overarching development plan helps to create an environment where talent is properly nurtured. The following table illustrates which institutions partake in the player development process both in your country and in the top 100 MAs.

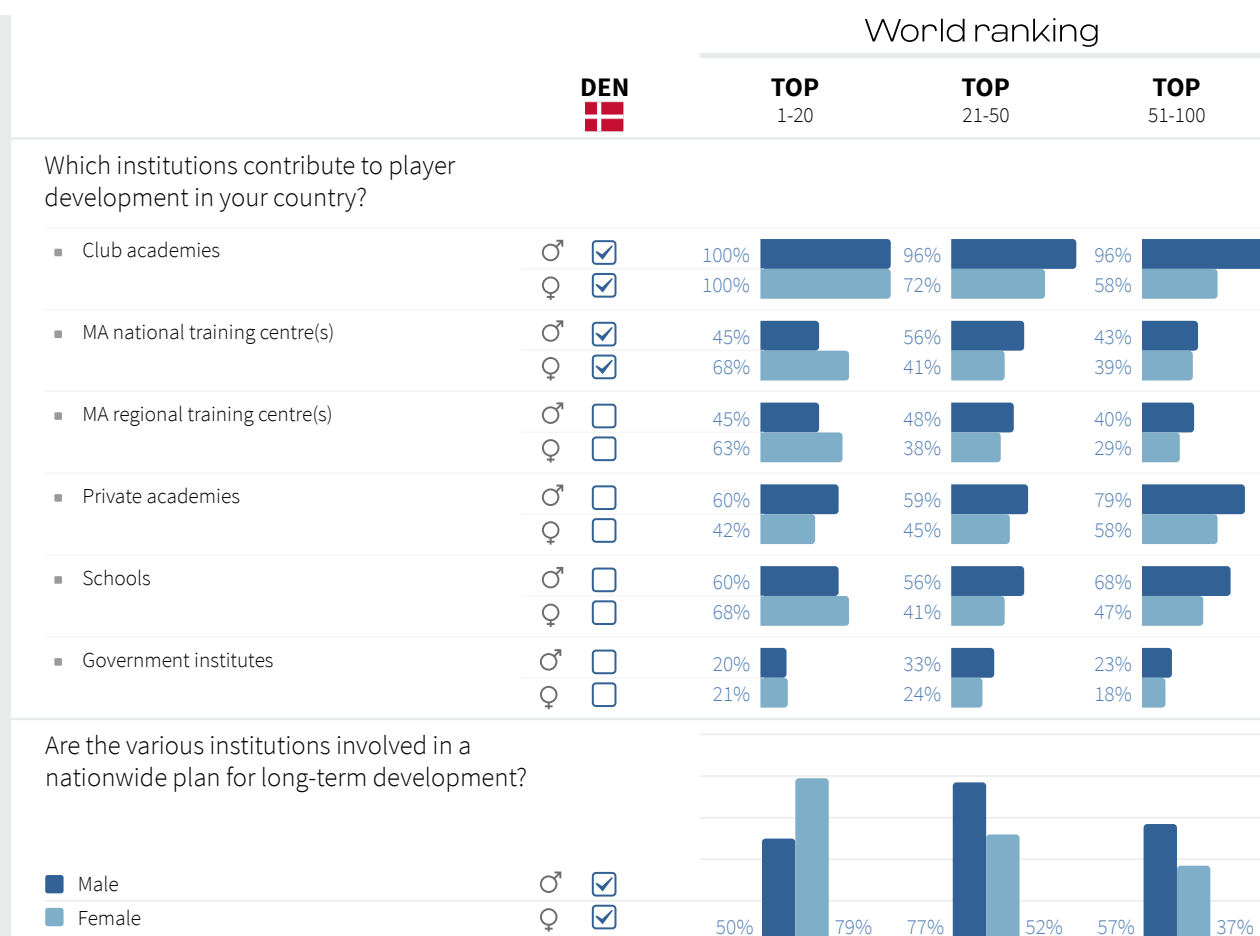
Club academies are the dominant key stakeholders in player development across the top 100 MAs.

The majority of MAs in the top 100 see club academies as the key stakeholders in the development of male and female players. A significant number of MAs also recognise the importance of leading national and regional training centres/academies in supporting player development. In women’s football, 79% of the top 20 MAs include various institutions and academies as part of their national plan for long-term player development, compared to just 50% of the top 20 men’s MAs.





Illustration 4.3



Finding

Involvement of academies in a nationwide plan for long-term player development

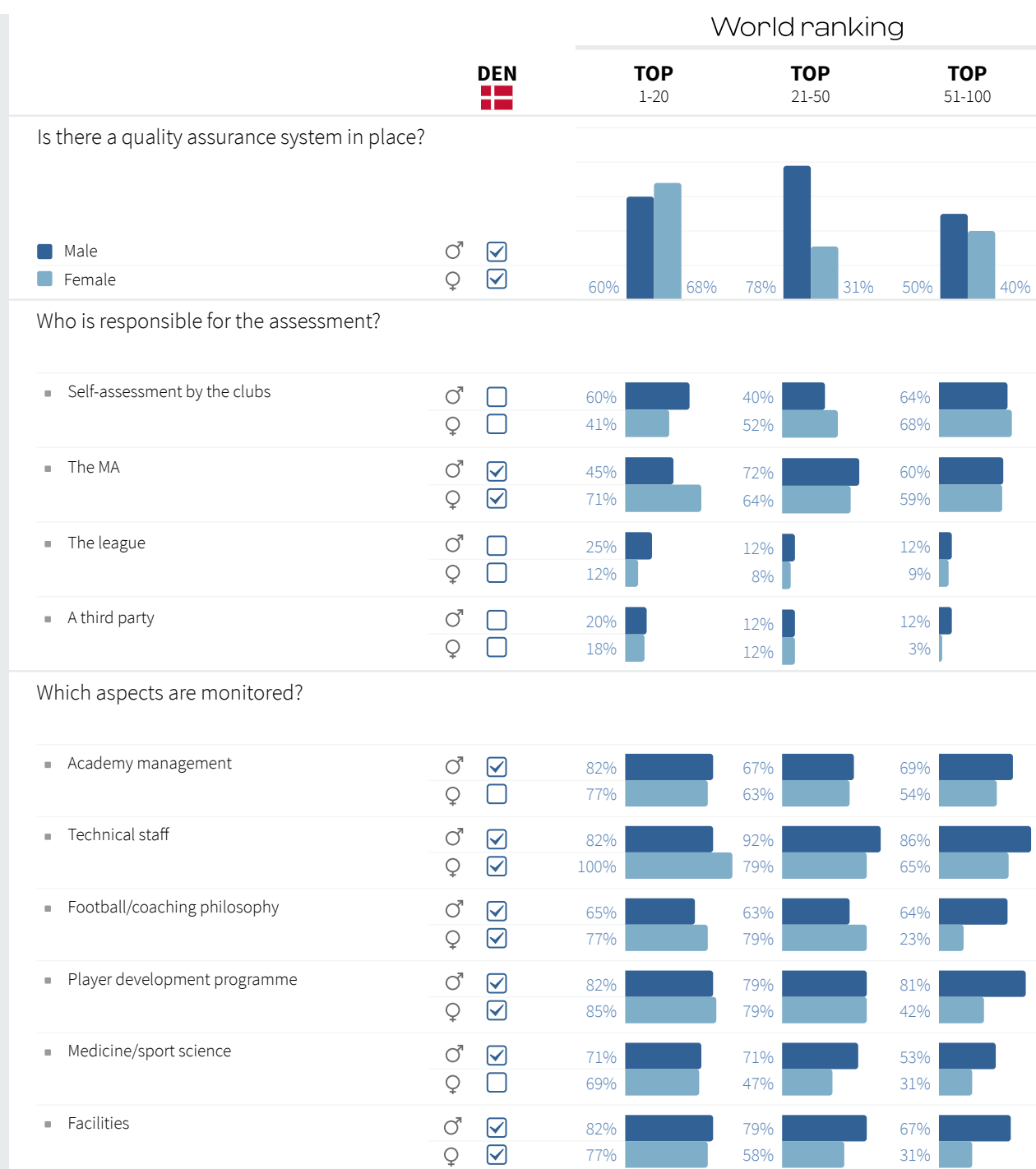
- In Denmark, clubs' youth teams are the most important type of academy for player development. All clubs have youth programmes and provide players with enough opportunities.
- Clubs are ranked through the DBU youth licence system, a crucial tool in their development strategy. The environment for talent development has reached a high level at the top-ranked clubs, where the strongest youth academies are.
- Around 600 clubs send their best U-10, U-11 & U-12 boys' players to DBU TOP centres across Denmark for extra weekly development activities. The TOP centres are an important scouting platform for the top-ranked clubs, the main stakeholders for player development in the U-13 & U-14 age groups.
- The DBU has the main responsibility for girls' development, running six Talent Centres. Club academies are not yet highly developed, as the environment is not challenging enough for the most talented players.

Quality assurance

The aim of quality assurance is to adhere to a defined standard for talented young players throughout their development. By focusing on maintaining the quality of the various stages involved in a player's development, quality assurance can help guarantee that when youth players are called up by the senior team, they have attained the necessary level.

Quality assurance systems for academies are not commonplace across the top 100 MAs.

Among the top 20 MAs, 60% of boys' academies and 68% of girls' academies undergo a form of quality assessment. Outside of the top 20 (21 to 100), this number drops to approximately 37% of associations, particularly in women's football. Furthermore, a high proportion of academies with such a system in place have the assessment conducted by the MA.

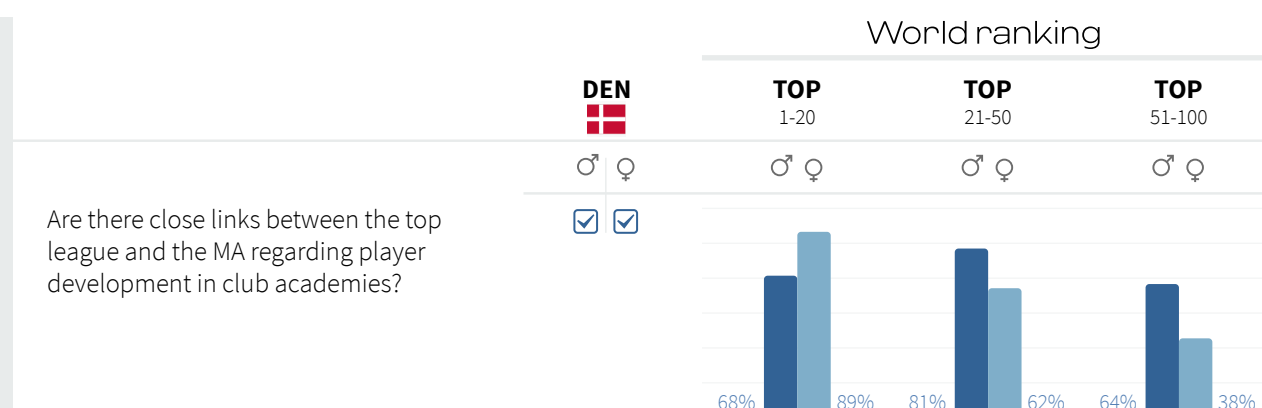




Top 50 MAs have closer links with the top league in supporting player development at club level.

68% of the top 20 men's MAs have close links with the top league to support the development of club academies, rising to 81% in the 21-50 ranking group. In women's football, this type of relationship is not as commonplace in MAs outside of the top 50, with only 38% of these associations appearing to have brokered such a partnership with the top league.

Illustration 4.5



Finding

Collaboration between the MA and the top league

- DBU Talent Coaches have a strong relationship with the coaches at the top-ranked clubs. All take part in a supervised programme, established by the DBU, and benefit from sharing knowledge and best practices.
- The youth licence system is a valuable tool to build a developmental environment in clubs' academies and ensure high quality for players. A stars-based system is used to rank the overall quality of clubs.
- The boys' clubs with the highest star ranking participate in the U-19, U-17 and U-15 Elite leagues. The youth licence includes measures regarding boys' transition from junior to senior football.
- The youth licence system for women's football is only established at U-18 level, with 13 clubs. This is the only age group with a nationwide league.

4.2 Talent identification and promotion

This section highlights the talent identification (TID) practices in your MA's football community. A prerequisite for talent development is identifying and recruiting – through the introduction of processes and programmes – players who have what it takes to play at elite level.

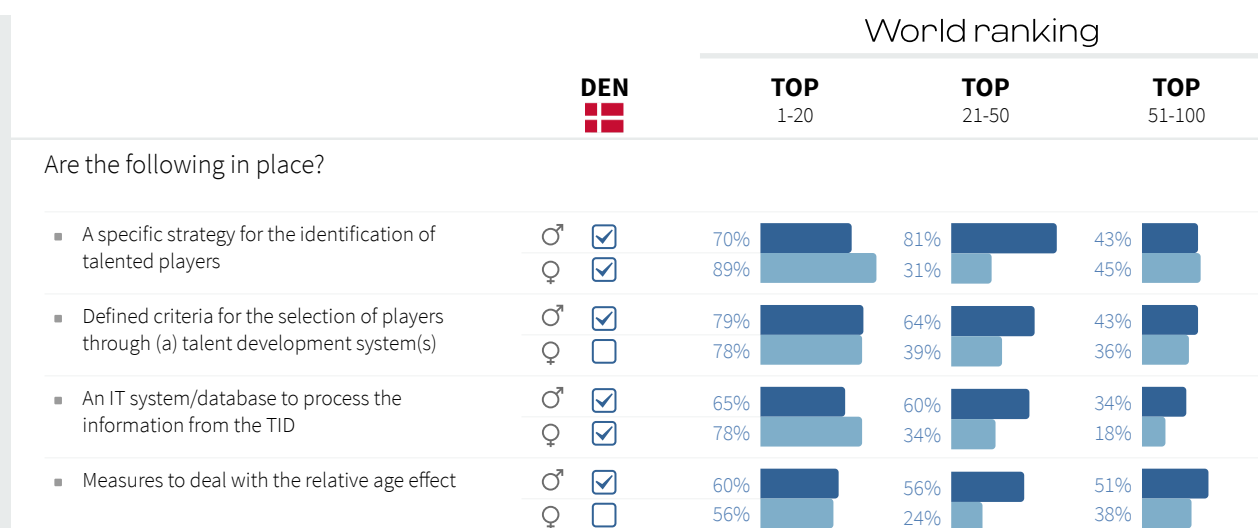
Talent identification strategy

Determining what constitutes a player with the necessary talent to perform at elite level is a step that all MAs should include in their identification practices. Outlining an identification strategy for scouts and other relevant parties to follow helps shape the characteristics of the talent pool of an MA's football community in a way that ties in with its wider footballing goals.

A high number of MAs in the top 100 do not have a TID strategy in place.

Although men's football appears to take account of the relative age effect more than women's football, only 51% of the MAs ranked from 51 to 100 implement such programmes. In the women's game, a higher percentage of the top 20 MAs have a specific strategy for talent identification of players in place, with 89% of MAs having such a strategy compared to 70% for the men's. Furthermore, across both the men's and women's top 100, lower-ranked countries are less likely to have an IT system or player selection criteria in place.

Illustration 4.6



Finding

Specific strategy for the identification of talented players

- The DBU talent identification (TID) strategy is built on collaboration with the top clubs and the set-up at Talent Centres (TC).
- At U-13/U-14 the 14 top-ranked clubs have a major role in player development after identification at the TOP centres. The DBU collaborates with licensed clubs in the second tier to create development activities for identified talent (U-13 to U-14) at DBU TCs.
- The eastern and western U-15 TCs are the next step on the talent pathway. Invites are issued to the most talented players in the U-14 & U-15 groups, from the licensed clubs in the second tier and the 14 top-ranked clubs. This feeds into the two U-16 national teams (NT) for the most talented boys.
- For girls, the MA is the main stakeholder for TID and development with DBU TCs. Starting with a U-14 group programme in six TCs, it continues in two U-15 TCs before progressing to further development with two U-16 NTs.

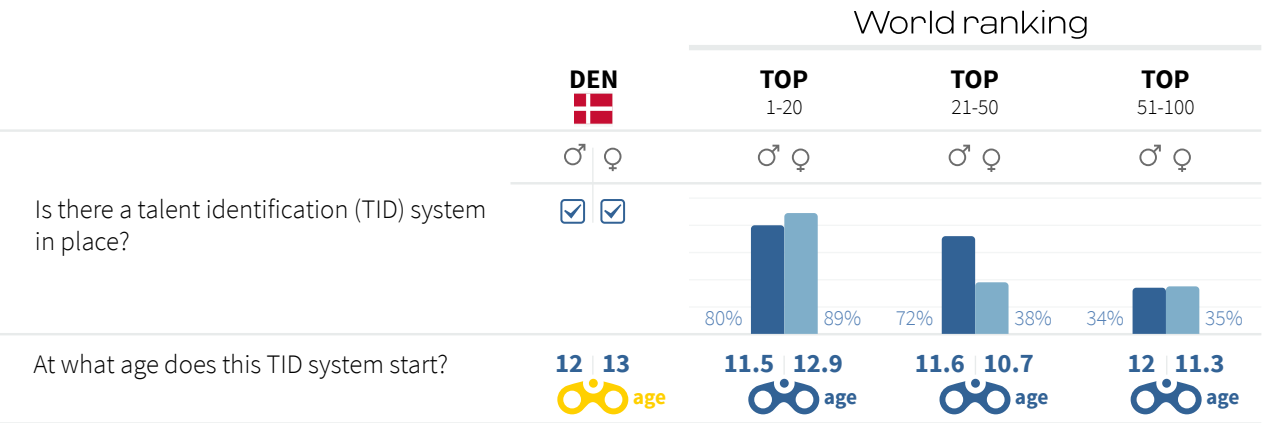
Talent identification system

The illustrations below highlight your MA's system for identifying players with potential. The types of process in place influence the amount of talent that is identified. The more effective the process, the greater the number of players with strong natural ability that are identified.

A high percentage of MAs in the top 20 have a TID system in place.

More than 80% of the top 20 MAs adopt a systematic approach to TID. This number decreases significantly in the lower-ranked MAs, especially on the women's pathway where only approximately 36% of MAs ranked 21-100 have a TID system in place for female players. Across the top 100 MAs, TID appears to start between the ages of ten and 12.

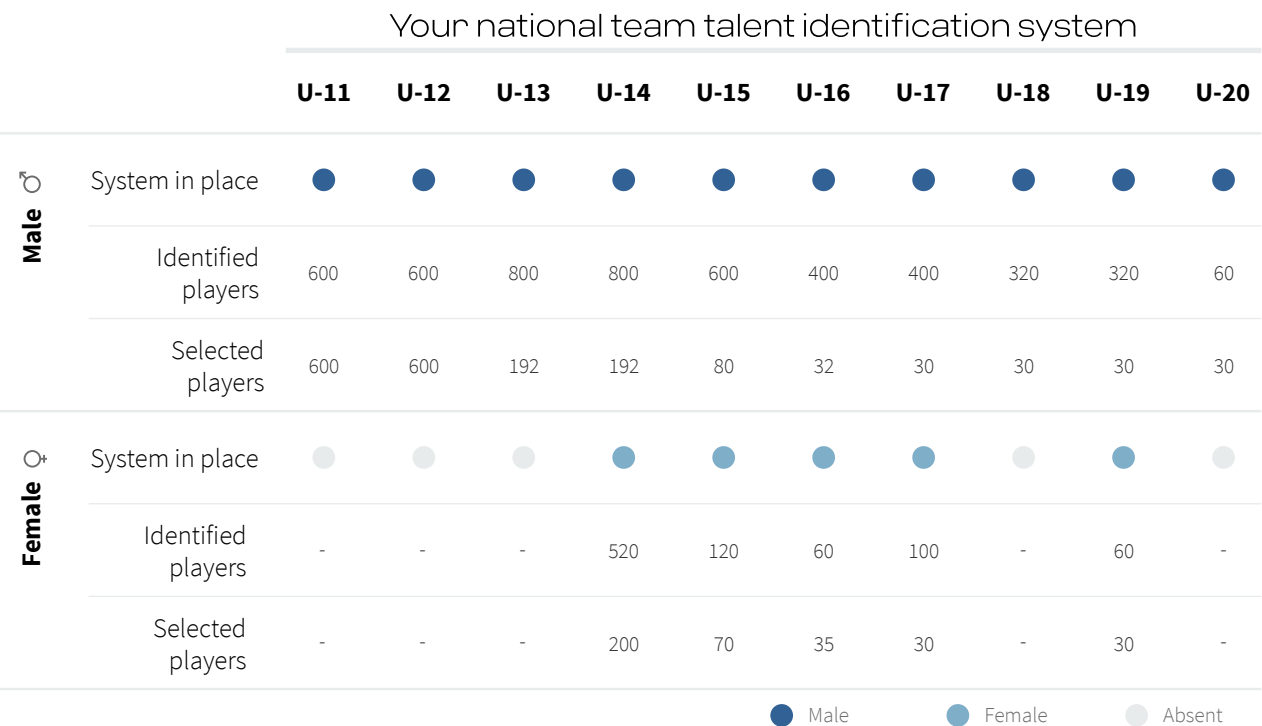
Illustration 4.7



System set-up

The illustration below shows which of your male and female youth age brackets have a talent identification system, the number of players that enter these systems on an annual basis, and the number of players who are ultimately selected for further activities after being identified.

Illustration 4.8



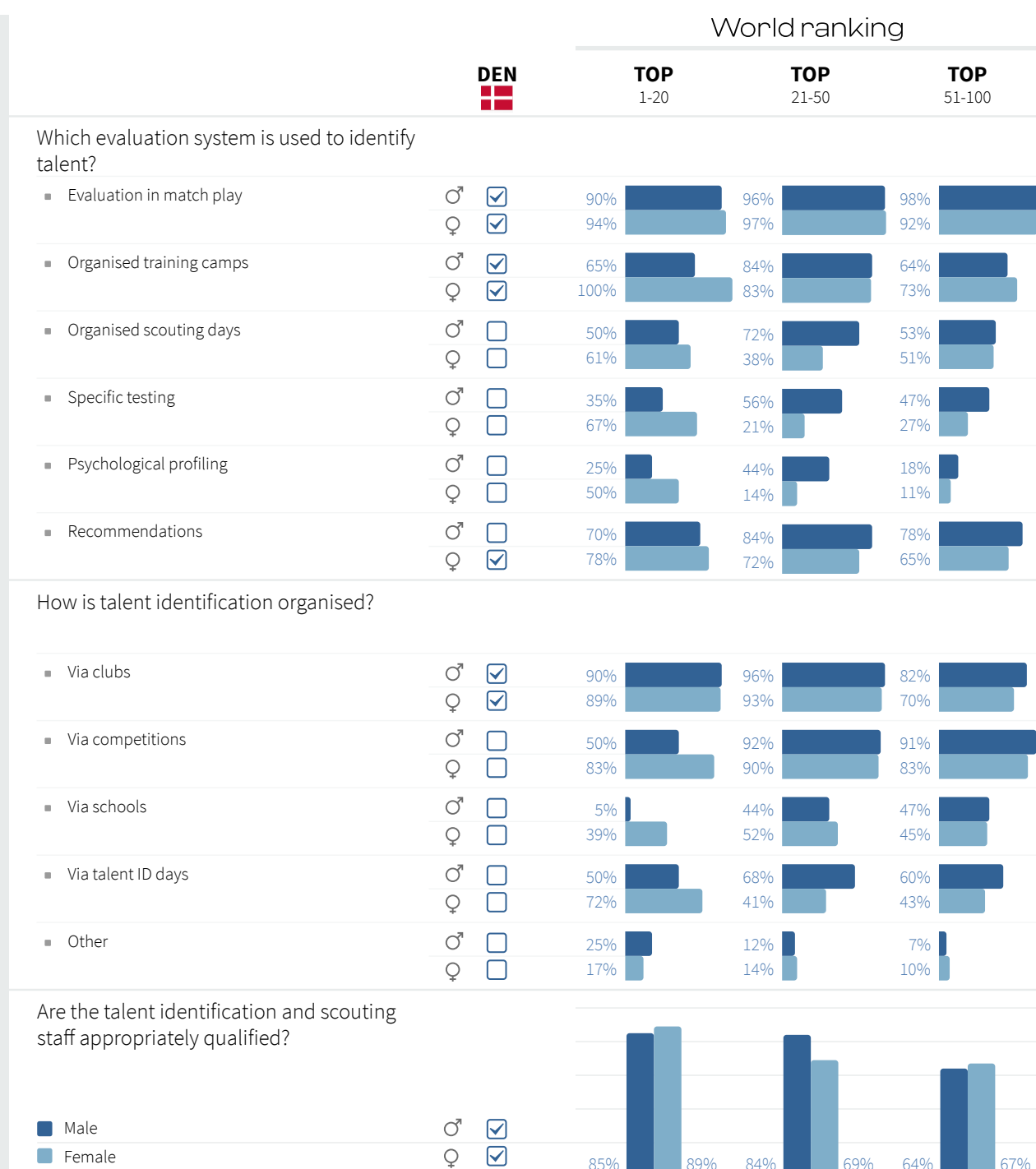
Organisation of talent identification

An effectively organised talent identification system creates a large pool of promising players from which elite teams can choose. The way talent identification is organised in your country, and the methods used for evaluating the talent, can be seen in the illustration below.

In the majority of the top 100 MAs, TID is organised through clubs.

Match play is the most popular form of evaluation across the top 100 MAs, with specific testing and psychological evaluations being the least-used methods. Player identification across the top 100 in both the men's and women's game is organised primarily through clubs, competitions and TID days. Furthermore, the top 20 MAs have a higher percentage of appropriately qualified scouts and TID staff than the lower-ranked MAs.

Illustration 4.9



Finding

The organisation and structure of the national Talent ID system

- The DBU TID system is organised on collaboration with the clubs in the first and second tiers, DBU TCs and youth national teams (YNT).
- DBU Talent Coaches start observing U-10, U-11 and U-12 boys at the TOP centres. One challenge of this set-up is the late developers, who might be overlooked at U-10, U-11, U-12 level and would not be invited to the TOP centres, affecting their exposure to top-ranked clubs.
- Supervised by the Elite Department, Talent Coaches and YNT coaches are responsible for TID. The youngest players scouted for the TCs are U-13 boys and U-14 girls.
- Talent Coaches are selected based on their scouting skills rather than their coaching skills.
- For girls, the only youth licence for U-18 clubs is a challenge for the TID system. Club coaches may not sign up the best girls for DBU U-14 Talent Centres and the club environment is not challenging enough.

Post-identification activities

Once talented individuals have been identified, they are then enlisted in further activities or programmes that develop their talent. The various activities and programmes undertaken by your country's promising players are displayed below.

The top 100 MAs mostly select players for the national teams following identification.

91% of the top 100 men's MAs and 92% of the women's top 100 MAs select players for the national team following identification. Further to this, those women's national teams in the top 20 use regional teams, regional training camps and national training camps more than men's teams, following identification.

Illustration 4.10

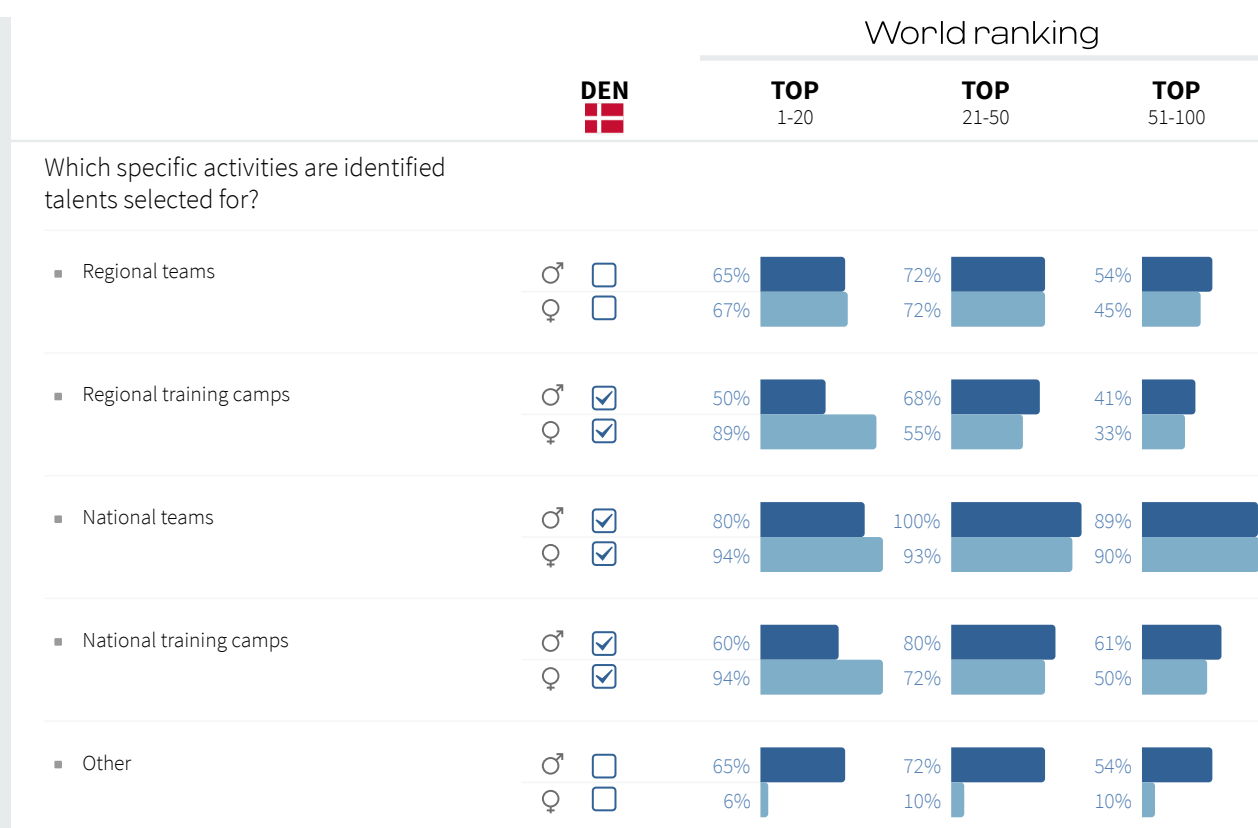


Illustration 4.11 and 4.12 display the various categories selected for your country’s promising youth players after talent identification, broken down into the U-11 to U-20 age groups.

Illustration 4.11

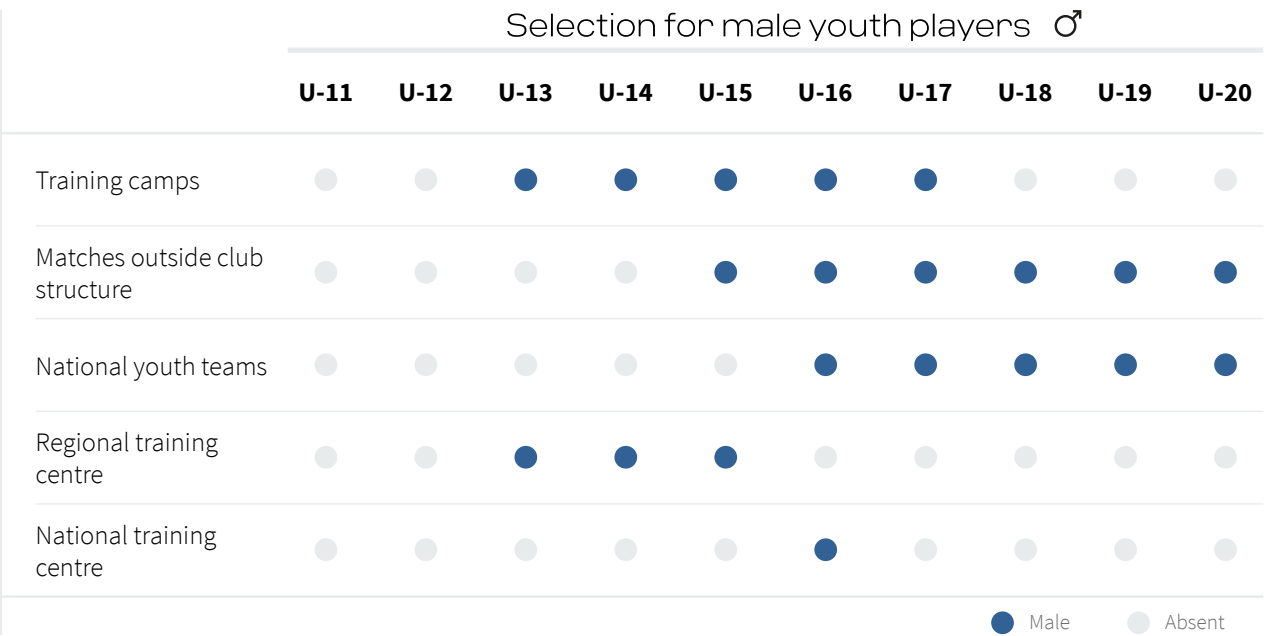
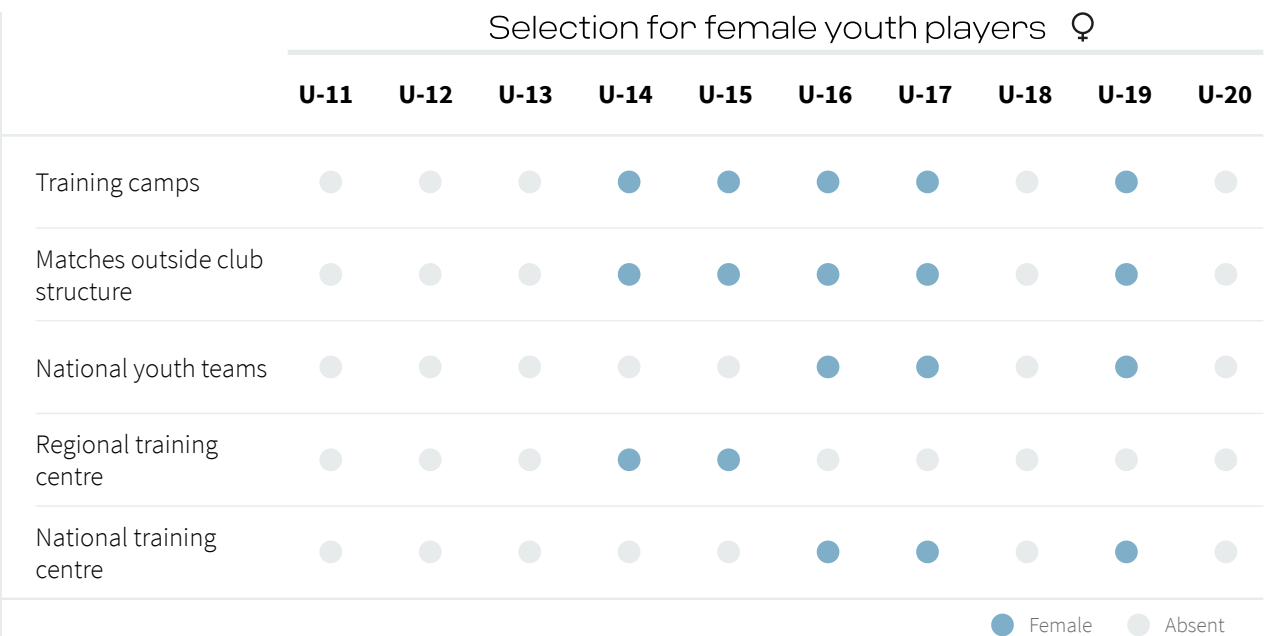


Illustration 4.12





Regional differences

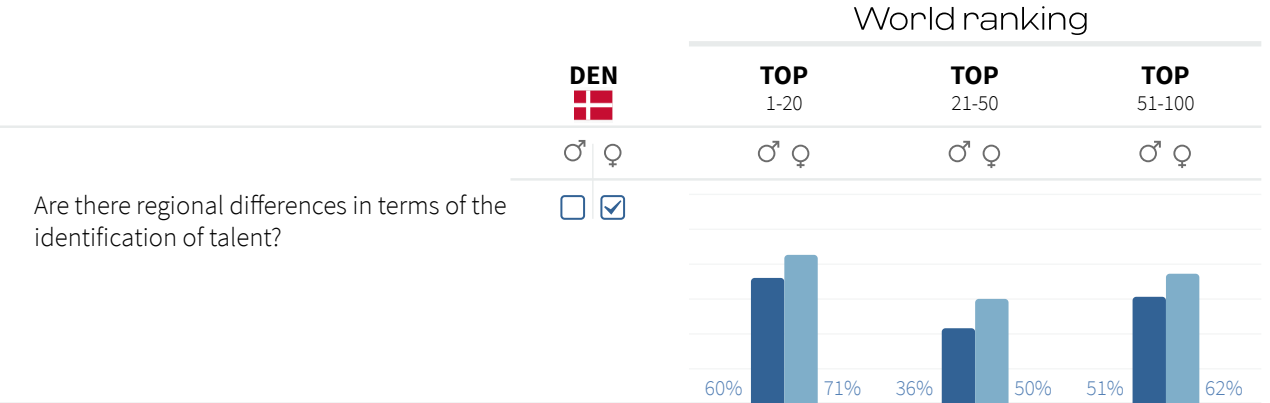
There may be regional differences in talent identification across a given country. Identifying and acknowledging these differences can be useful steps towards mitigating any negative consequences they may have on maximising a country’s pool of talented players. Whether there are regional differences across your football community can be seen below.



A considerable number of MAs acknowledge that they face regional differences in talent identification.

60% of MAs in the men’s top 20 and 71% of MAs in the women’s top 20 acknowledge that they have regional differences in the identification of talented players. Across the top 100, regional differences are more prevalent in women’s football.

Illustration 4.13



Finding

Regional differences in terms of talent identification

- Although there are differences in club management between the western and eastern regions, the fact that Denmark is a small country means that there are no regional differences in terms of TID, especially for boys.
- A structured TID system captures the best talent from each region. National leagues at U-15, U-17 and U-19 levels make it easier for DBU Talent Coaches and boys’ NT coaches to identify boys for the Talent Centres and YNTs.
- There is only one regular national league at U-18 level for girls, while lower age-group competitions are at regional level and of lower quality. The first step to identify talented girls consists of the DBU relying on clubs who sign up their players for the U-14 Talent Centres, rather than the MA having an active role in TID across the different regions. This set-up hinders the exposure of all talented girls to identification by the DBU.



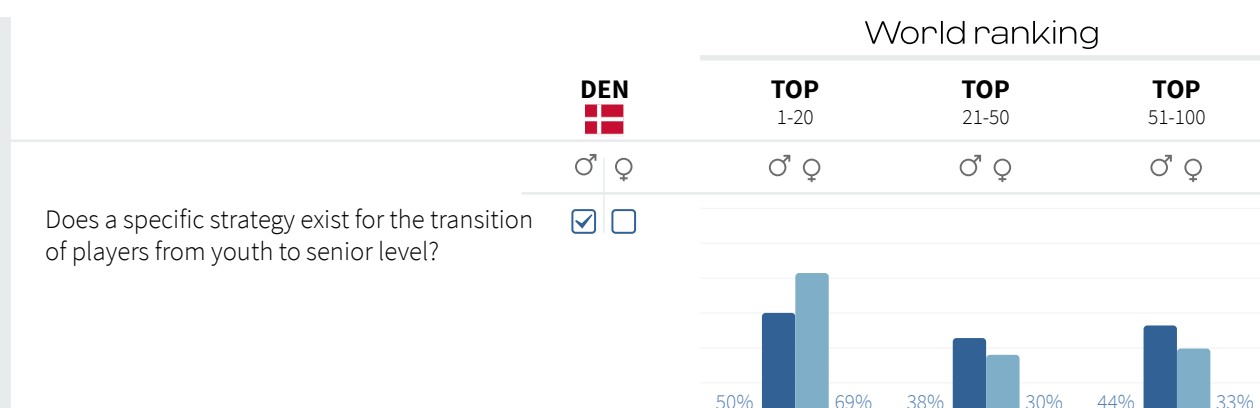
4.3 Transition from youth to senior

Moving youth players up to senior level has an incredibly positive effect on their development and can determine the heights they will reach in their prime. Specific strategies can be created to guarantee a transition whereby young prospects receive the senior exposure needed early on to become high-quality senior players.

A significant number of the top 100 MAs do not have a strategy in place for transitioning players to senior football.

Across the top 100, only 43% of MAs in men's football have a strategy in place for the transition of players from youth to senior level. For women, it is a similar picture outside the top 20, although in the top 20 itself, 69% have such a support strategy in place.

Illustration 4.14



Finding

Measures in place to facilitate the transition between junior and senior level

- The transition from junior to senior is structured and implemented, and functions well for boys. The collaboration with clubs with regard to talent development is key in the continuous development of the player pathway by the DBU and the clubs.
- The implementation of the transition coach at top clubs is the latest development between the DBU and clubs. It is regulated in the youth licence system and facilitates the transition for boys. The club transition coach acts as the link between the U-19 and senior teams.
- Annual international club transition tournaments are being introduced to offer a more competitive environment for the U-18 to U-21 age groups.
- No such clear transition process exists for girls. The DBU does not have strong collaboration with clubs and a youth licence system has only been established for the U-18 level. With only a U-18 national league in place, the DBU does not have a consistent competitive pathway for girls.



TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

SUMMARISING NOTES

- Top clubs have a key role in boys' talent development, providing a developmental environment. Clubs are ranked with the DBU youth licence system, a crucial tool in the development strategy. Top-ranked clubs have a high-quality environment for talent development.
- The DBU has the main responsibility for development of girls, running six TCs spread out across the country. Womens' club academies have a lower-quality environment. A youth licence system has only been established for the U-18 level.
- The DBU's TID system is organised based on strong collaboration with the top clubs, DBU TCs and YNTs. DBU Talent Coaches with good scouting skills have a strong relationship with the top-ranked clubs. Talent Coaches and YNT coaches are responsible for identifying talent.
- The late developers overlooked at the U-10 to U-12 TOP centres and not scouted by the best clubs represent a challenge in the TID set-up. To identify talented girls, the DBU relies on clubs signing up their U-14 players for DBU TCs, which is a weakness of the TID system for girls.
- Structured and supported transition from junior to senior exists for boys but there is no such clear transition process for girls.

Recommendations

1. The talent structure on the boys' side is a strong area for the DBU. On the girls' side, a similar structure has been implemented but is not yet as advanced. We advise that more emphasis be placed on the development of the talent structure for girls.
2. To improve the club environment for talent development in the women clubs we recommend to further implement the youth licence system for women's football and to develop the youth leagues.



5. ACADEMIES

The quality of the academy system is decisive for the future success of the member association, the professional league and the national teams.

The vast network of academy structures is linked to clubs, schools and private companies, in addition to regional and national associations, and can be considered as the feeder system for the national teams. As a consequence, the (future) success of any member association (MA) is largely determined by the capacity and performance of this academy system. Talented players are recruited and developed by these academies and follow their pathway to the top along these structures. Moreover, academies are also responsible for the players' personal and social development, with the aim of moulding these youngsters into well-rounded people.

5.1 Participation and academy types

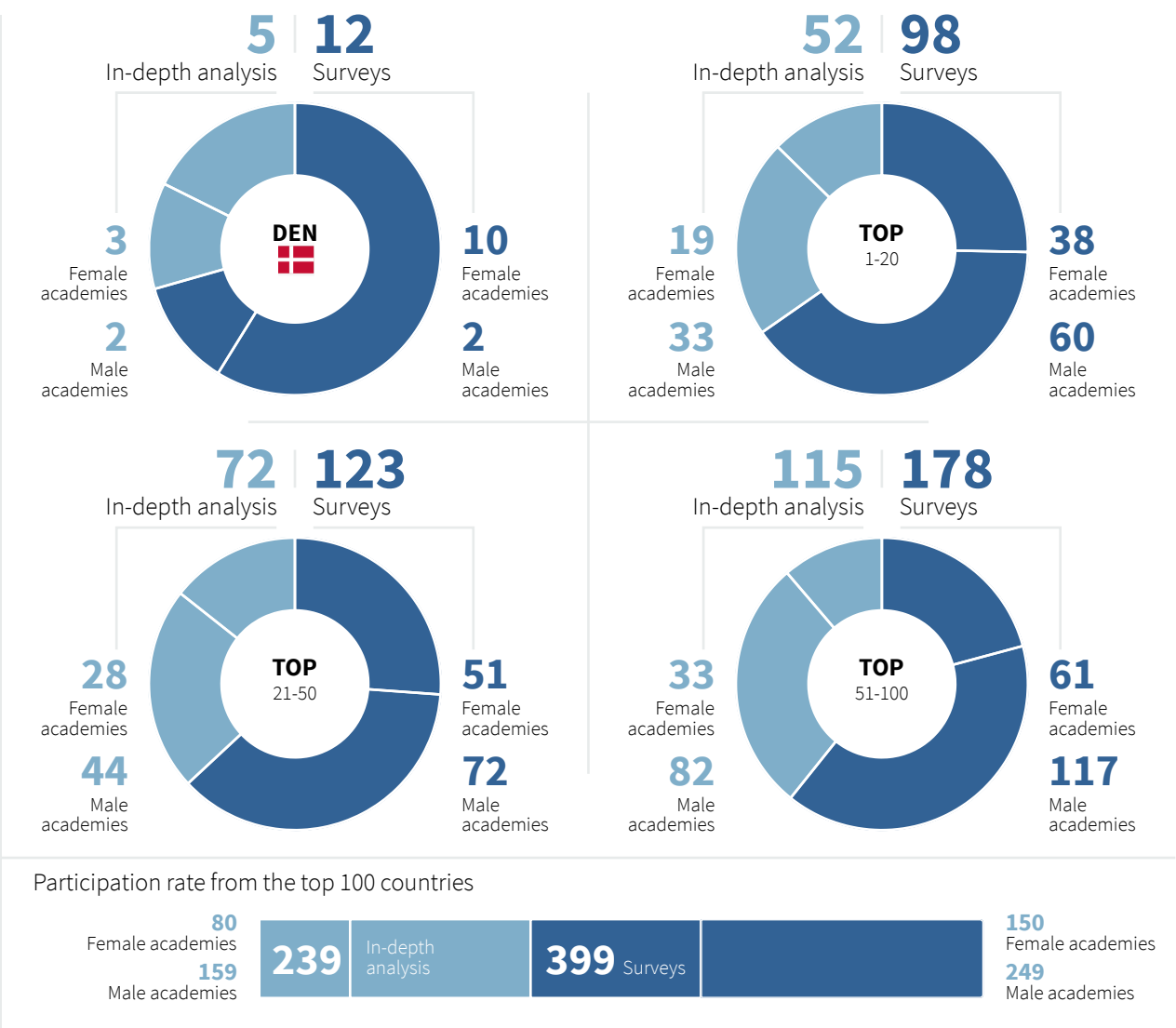
The Academy Analysis focused on all environments and institutions that develop the most talented players in the country. In most cases, these are youth academies at (professional) clubs, but they also include national or regional training centres operated by the MA, elite schools run by the government, private academies and a mixture of various other approaches.

More than 1,000 academies from 130 FIFA member associations participated in the Academy Analysis.

The graphs below show the participation rates for the in-depth analysis and the survey, with a focus on the proportion of boys’ and girls’ academies and different types of organisations. All selected academies, whether they were invited for the in-depth analysis or only for the survey, were given access to the online Club and Academy Monitoring Platform (CAMP). Of the 1,027 academies that started to complete the questionnaire, 864 (84.1%) fully completed the ID Card with general information about their teams, programme, staff and facilities. This means that an average of 6.6 academies per MA shared sufficient quantitative data about all these aspects.

In the in-depth analysis of the leading academies (an average of 2.8 per MA), in addition to the data collected via CAMP, documents were analysed by a team of experts and interviews were conducted with various key figures from the academy. This allowed us to provide a more objective analysis of these academies and to provide them with a report with concrete findings and action points.

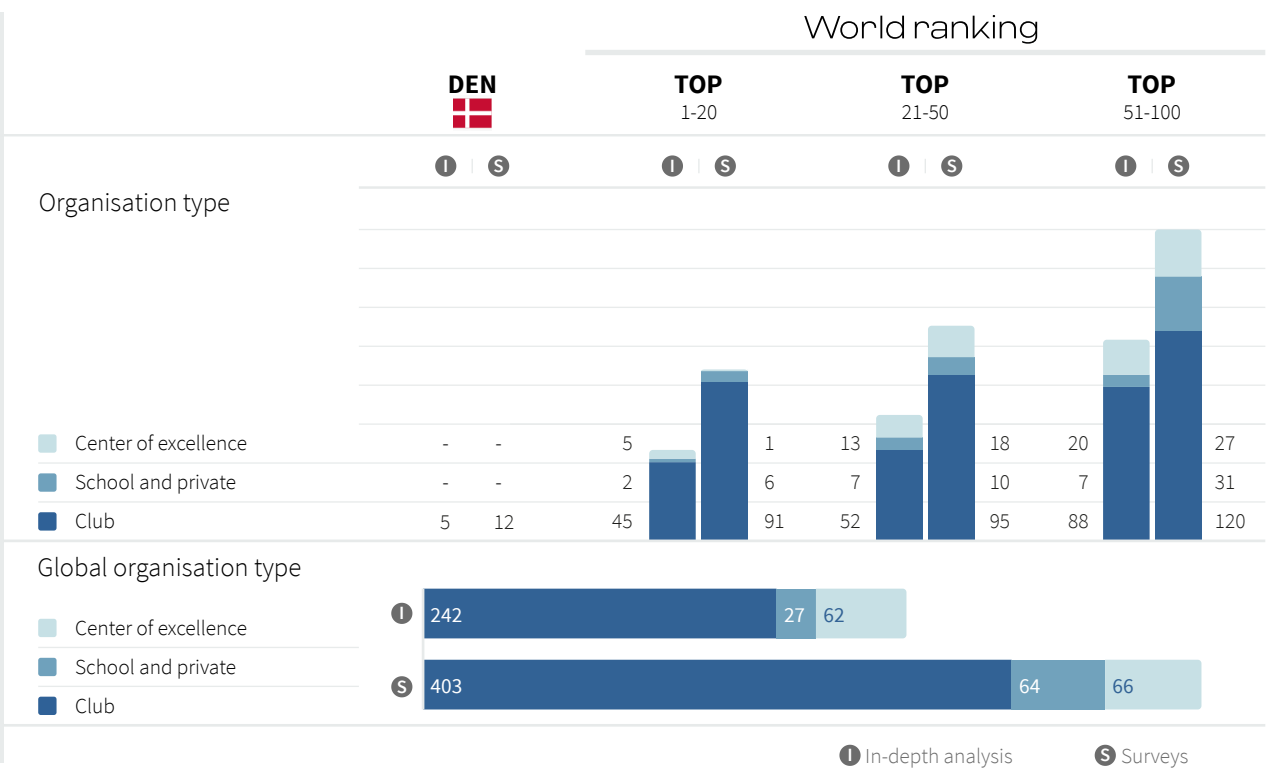
Illustration 5.1





The graphs below present the composition of the samples according to the types of organisation. Three quarters of the academies in the total sample were related to a traditional club structure. In the top 20 MAs, this contingent was even higher, accounting for 90% of the sample. 15% of all academies can be considered a “centre of excellence” linked to a national or regional association. The smallest group (10%) was academies related to schools or private institutions.

Illustration 5.2



Finding

Cooperation with the selected academies for the in-depth analysis

- All clubs had a positive approach to the analysis and to the opportunity to gain an outsider's view. One club did not respond after the interviews to complete their file and survey or to provide any post-interview thoughts. This club was also challenged by its internal re-organisation process and the impact of Covid-19.
- Three out of five clubs provided training sessions for analysis and four clubs completed the survey process. An adequate amount of documentation was provided, reflective of the current state and capacity of each club and academy.

5.2 Typical academy structures and pathways

The pathways for academy players to senior football mostly differ for boys and girls according to the type of academy. In this section, information is presented about the age groups and teams, as well as the training and playing opportunities for these academy players in the main phases of the development pathways.

Age groups and teams

The tables below provide an overview of the average number of teams and players per age group, as well as the player/coach ratio within the various teams for boys and girls.

Overall, there are about 50% more age groups at boys' academies compared to girls' academies.

In general, boys' academies have an average of 7.7 age groups, compared to 5.4 at girls' academies. In the youngest phase (U-6 up to U-11), there tends to be a high number of teams in each age group. In the second phase (U-12 to U-15), these numbers start to decrease, and in the oldest phase (U-16+), age groups are regularly structured per two or three years.

Overall, we see that girls' academies in the top 20 MAs have a greater number of players than those in the lower-ranked MAs for almost all age-group phases. On the other hand, for boys' academies, MAs in the lower reaches (51-100) have a higher number of players compared to the other ranking groups.

In general, the average number of players per coach is 12.5 for boys' academies and 11.9 for girls' academies. For boys' academies, within all ranking groups, the U-12 to U-15 phase has the highest player/coach ratio. In girls' academies, the player/coach ratio tends to increase with ranking group and age-group phases.

Illustration 5.3





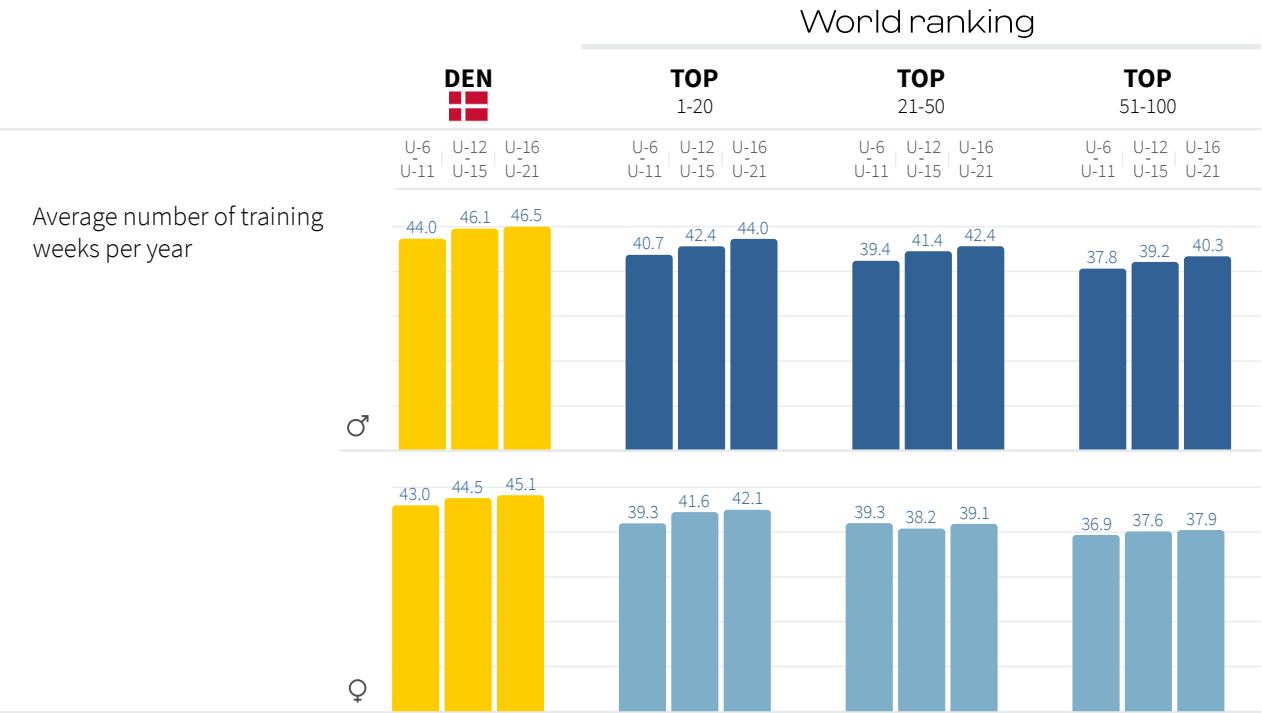
Training opportunities

Maximising the number of training opportunities and the contact time between a coach and a player leads to a greater chance of development. The data below gives an overview of the training opportunities at academies across the top 100 MAs for both boys and girls.

Academies in the top 20 MAs have the highest number of training weeks per season.

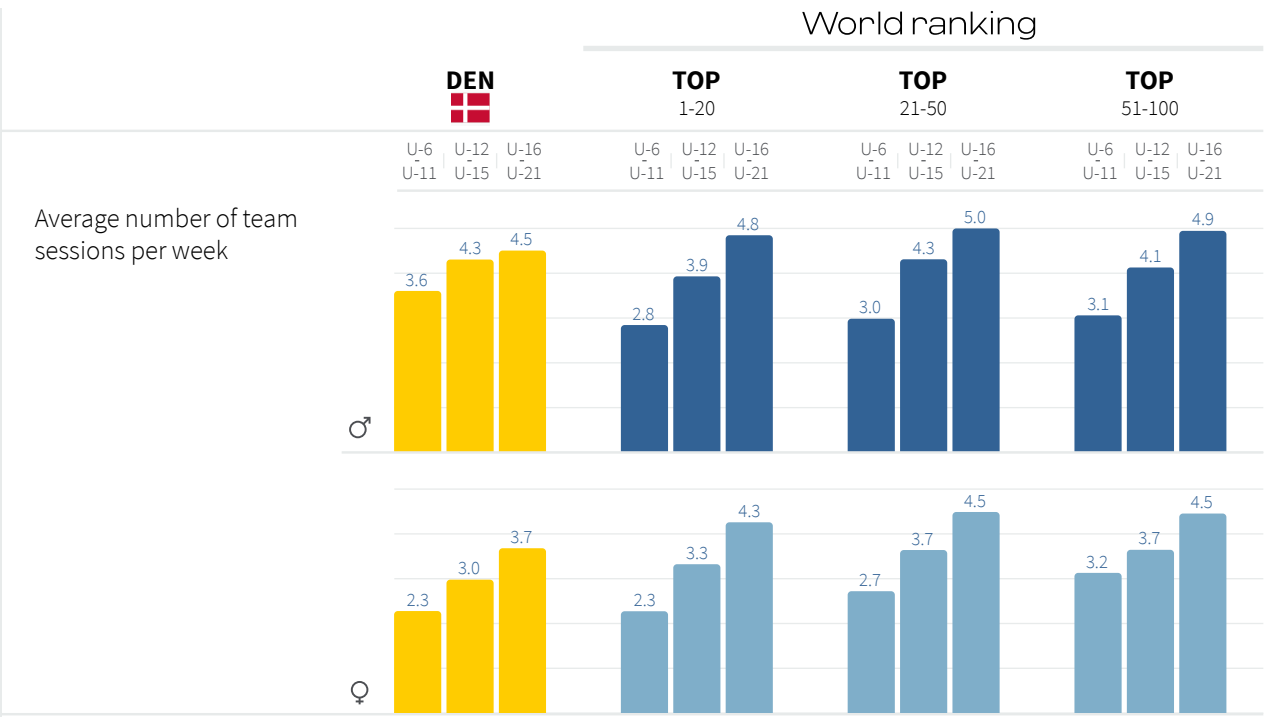
The graphs below show the average number of training weeks per year and the average number of training sessions per week. In general, boys have more training weeks than girls (on average 39.0 weeks for boys compared to 37.9 weeks for girls). For both genders, the academies in the top 20 MAs have significantly more training weeks than the lower-ranked countries.

Illustration 5.4



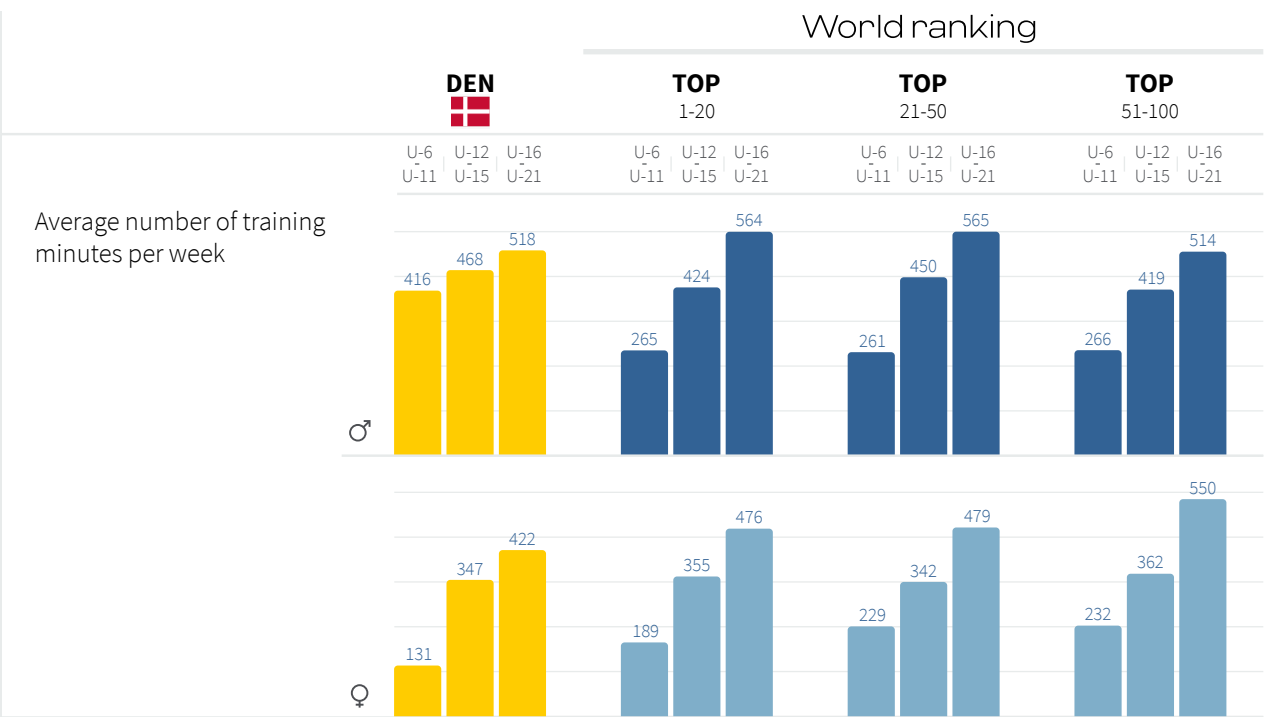
With an average of 5.3 training sessions per week, boys have an average of 206.7 training opportunities per season (team and individual sessions together). At girls’ academies, the average sum of team and individual training sessions per week is 4.7, giving them an average of 178.1 training opportunities per season.

Illustration 5.5



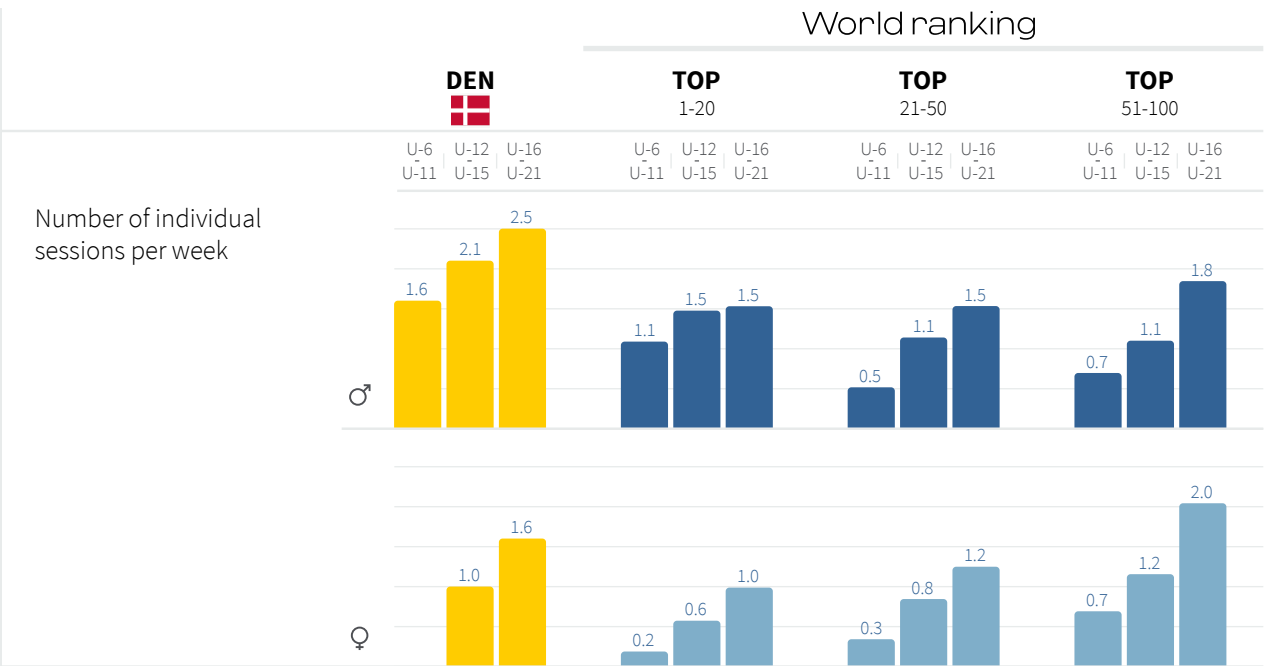
Overall, we see that academies in the top 50 MAs complete significantly more training minutes per week (team and individual training together). While boys have an average of 424.1 training minutes per week, the average for girls is slightly lower (395.6 training minutes per week).

Illustration 5.6



In general, individual training sessions are not frequently organised. This is an area for improvement for both boys’ and girls’ academies, including in the top 20 MAs.

Illustration 5.7



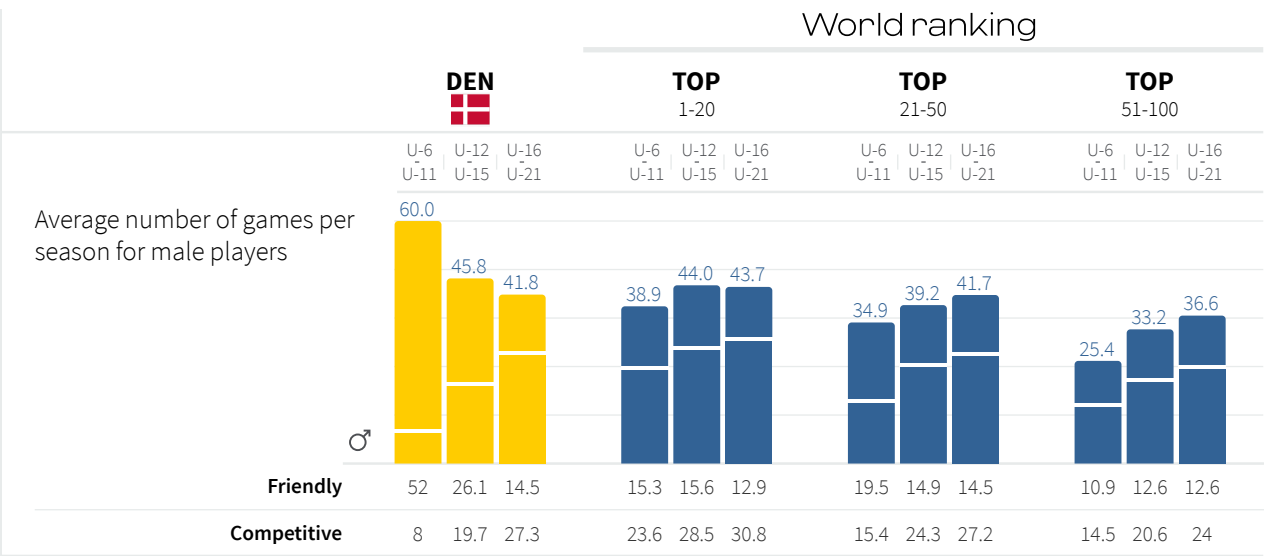
Playing opportunities

Game time and playing opportunities are crucial for the development of players, no matter at what age. The data below gives an insight into the playing opportunities at academies across the top 100 MAs for both boys and girls.

Boys at academies in the top 20 MAs play more “meaningful games” per season, particularly in regular competitions.

The graph below shows the average number of games per season, regular competition matches and friendlies combined for boys in the three main phases of the pathway. The number of competition games appears to differ significantly for the boys’ academies in the higher-ranked MAs.

Illustration 5.8

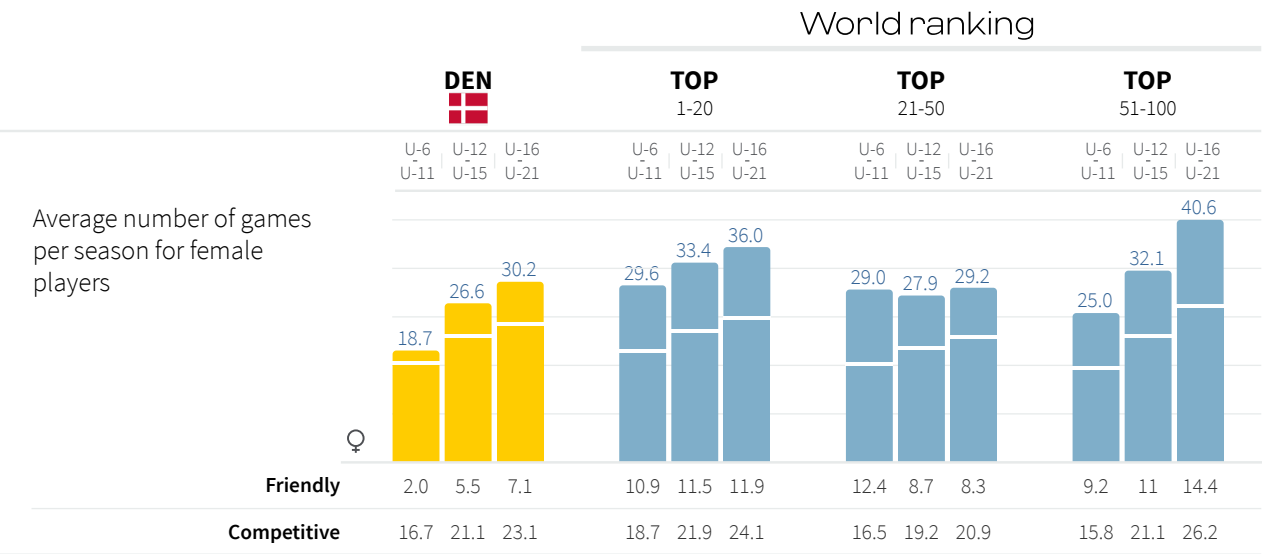




In general, there are fewer playing opportunities for girls, mainly due to a significantly lower number of matches at girls' academies.

Below is a similar graph for girls' academies. Among these, the differences in the number of matches appear to be less prominent between the top-ranked MAs and the rest. On the other hand, it is clear that there are fewer (competition) matches for girls compared to boys, especially in the higher-ranked MAs.

Illustration 5.9



Finding

Typical academy structures and pathways

- The two boys' academies are well-structured, with a clear pathway and transition strategy from their youth to first teams. The girls are best connected between the U-18 and first team environments. All academies have achieved, or are close to achieving, good player-to-coach ratios. The more individual approach in boys' academies is the result of their having full-time coaching and support staff resources.
- A full evening academy training programme is in place for all boys and the oldest girls. On average, the girls' U-12 to U-16 teams train about three evenings per week, which is two or three sessions less than the boys' teams. All programmes organise training opportunities in the mornings.
- A competitive game programme is available for U-17 to U-19 boys' academy teams, but there is a stated need for more competitive games and tournaments for the younger teams. The girls' academies use local or internal boys' programmes for scrimmages to supplement their league games. All academies provide international challenges annually.

5.3 Overall evaluation of the academies

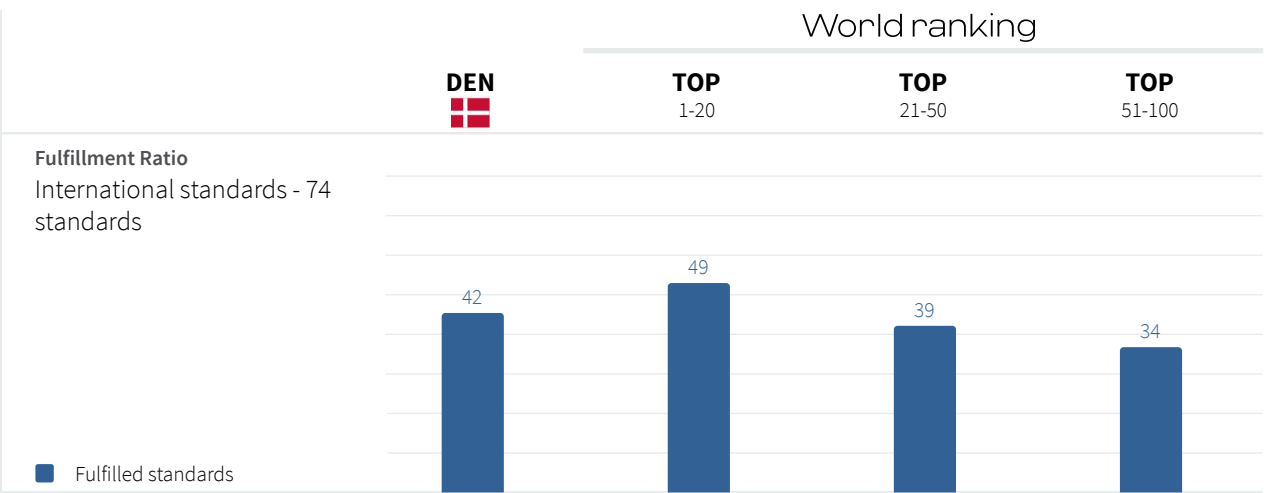
The capacity and performance of any talent development system are dependent on the availability of appropriate resources like staff, infrastructure and technology. Besides this, structures, strategies and procedures have to be properly designed and aligned to execute the managerial, football-specific and supporting processes in an efficient way. Permanent monitoring of the implementation and the output is key to effective talent development.

In the in-depth analysis of the leading academies per MA, 230 criteria were checked to evaluate these critical success factors. In the Double Pass model, these are related to 12 key areas or dimensions clustered over four main components: management, football, support and resources. Research at the University of Brussels resulted in a selection of 74 international standards that have a significant impact on the productivity of an academy. Although these factors have not been validated for other academy structures (such as centres of excellence and schools), we used them as a guideline to analyse the actual status of the academies in the different countries.

Leading academies in higher-ranked MAs have a higher fulfilment ratio for the international standards.

With an average of 66% of fulfilled international standards, the leading academies in the top 20 MAs have significantly higher scores than those in the MAs ranked between 21 and 50 (53%) and those in the MAs between 51 and 100 (46%). In general, with an average fulfilment ratio of 51%, boys' academies scores higher than girls' (43%). For the few mixed academies in our sample, the fulfilment ratio of 50% is similar to that of the boys' academies. It is important to note that this objective analysis is only based on the selected leading academies per MA.

Illustration 5.10



The radar diagram below shows the average fulfilment ratio of the leading academies in the MAs ranked in the top 20, in those ranked between 21 and 50, and in those ranked between 51 and 100 on the different dimensions. With the exception of facilities and organisation, it is noticeable that the hierarchy of the world ranking is respected in all dimensions in terms of higher fulfilment ratios for academies in the higher-ranked MAs.

Average fulfillment ratio by dimension



5.4 Management

Long-term success in talent development and academy management requires a clear strategy and structure to create the right setting and culture. An analysis of these three management-related dimensions (strategy, organisation and human resources) provides a clear picture of the potential for further business growth.

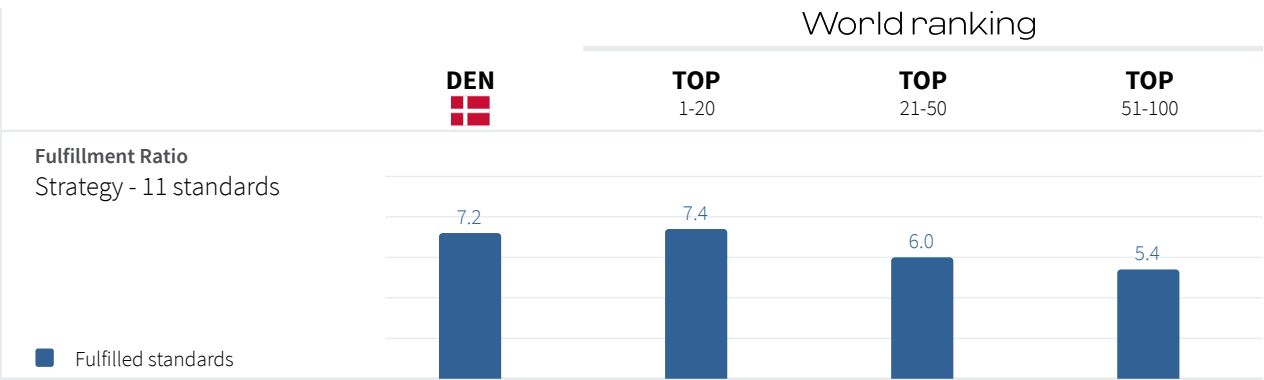
Strategy

This dimension analyses the different elements of a strategic roadmap for the academy. For instance, we evaluated whether there is a sustainable vision for the football business model and if a strategic role for the academy is present. In addition, this dimension examined whether the mission and vision are translated into strategic objectives and operational goals. Lastly, we also checked whether performance targets are monitored as a measure to evaluate the effectiveness of the action plan.

The best-performing academies work more purposefully, with sharply defined targets (KPIs) that are continuously monitored.

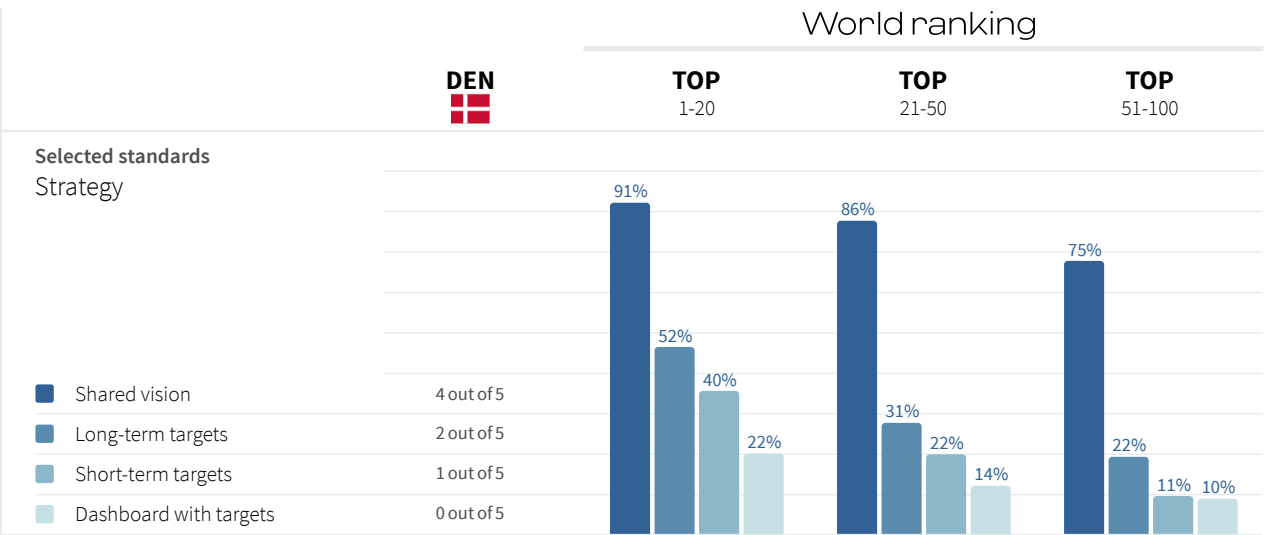
The leading academies in MAs in the upper reaches of the FIFA world ranking fulfil more standards for strategy, whereas the global average is about half of the 11 selected standards.

Illustration 5.12



Most of the organisations have a shared vision regarding talent development. A few have defined strategic objectives for the academy and have translated these into operational goals. Only 10% of the academies monitor their performance targets on a permanent basis.

Illustration 5.13



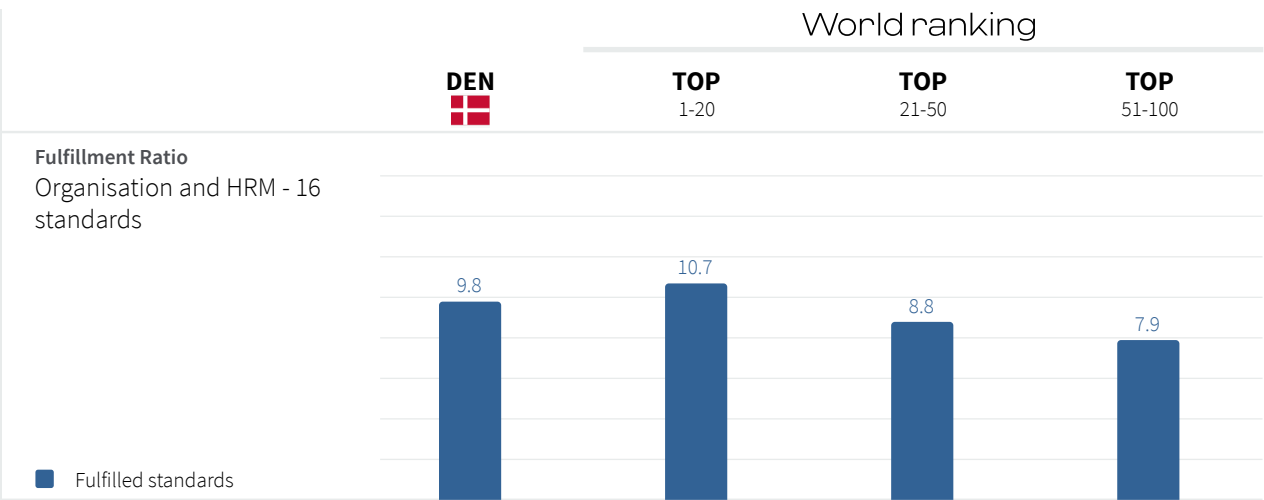
Organisation and HRM

In these dimensions, the focus is on the position of the academy in the organisational set-up and its potential as a learning environment. This analysis examines whether there is a clear decision-making model or committee structure that covers the strategic planning process of the organisation and the different key areas. Additionally, it identifies whether the performance of the academy staff is monitored and evaluated by observing their contribution to the overarching objectives, and lastly whether continuous improvement is guaranteed at all levels.

The academy management of the most productive academies is better positioned in the decision-making model.

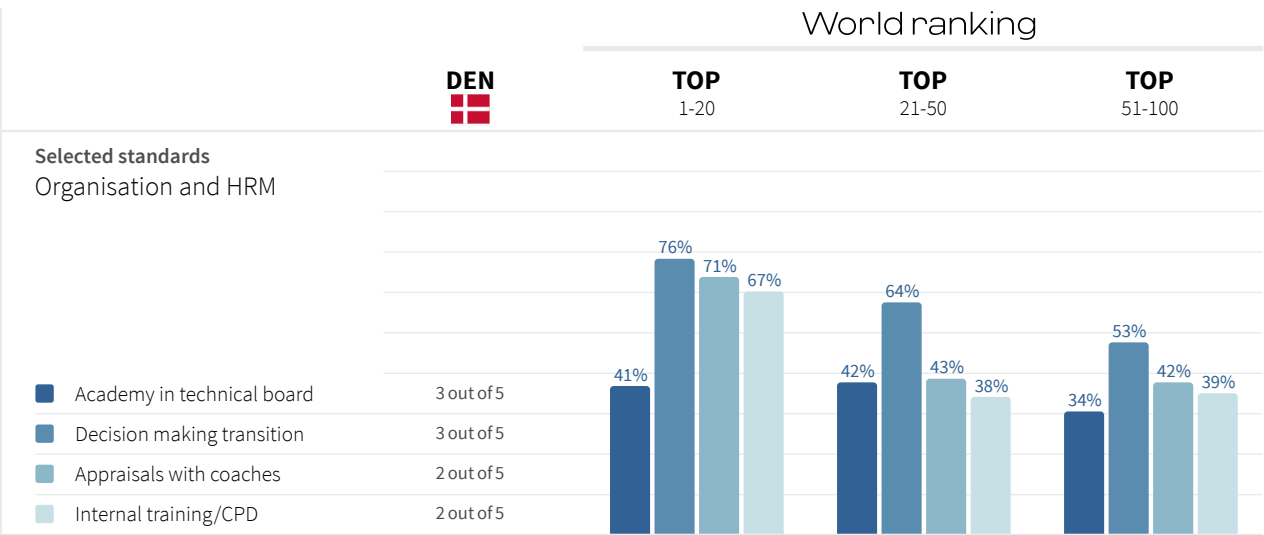
Where there appears to be little difference between the top 50 MAs in terms of organisation, it is clear that the leading academies in the top 20 MAs have a higher fulfilment ratio for human resources or people management.

Illustration 5.14



Although a decision-making process has been outlined for the transition of players at more than half of the academies, we noted that the academy management is formally involved in the technical board of the organisation in only a minority of cases. HR activities such as performance appraisals and professional development of staff seem to be implemented better in the top 20 MAs, in particular for boys' academies, in comparison to academies in lower-ranked MAs.

Illustration 5.15



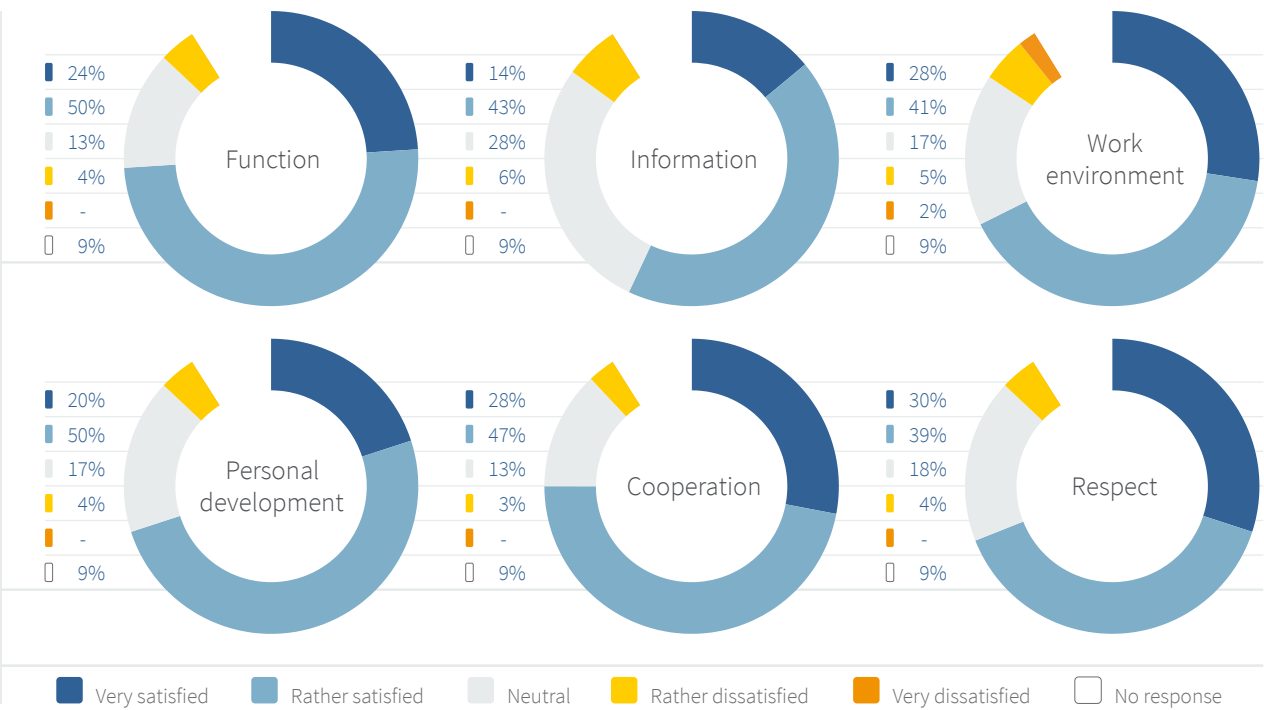
Coach satisfaction survey

A well-functioning HR policy should result in more satisfied and better-performing staff members. For this, we conducted a coach satisfaction survey focusing on the key factors: the function, the extent to which one is informed, the colleagues, the work environment, the possibilities for personal development and the respect one receives.

Coach satisfaction can be considered a key performance indicator for a successful HR policy and a well-managed academy.

The graph below shows to what extent the coaches at the participating academies in your country are satisfied with these aspects

Illustration 5.16



5.5 Football

The football programme is at the heart of any academy. Team development examines how the football philosophy is translated into a curriculum to develop the desired player profiles for the professional game. This must guide the coaching staff on how to put the football philosophy into practice. The individual development of players focuses on maximising the football potential of each individual player and providing them with a clear pathway to professional football.

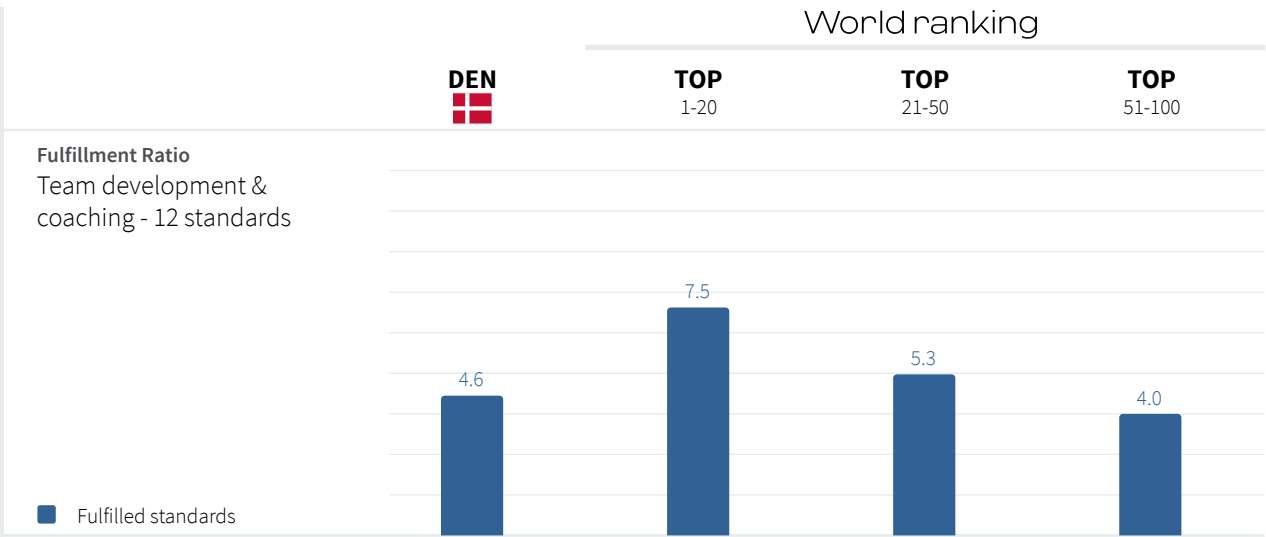
Team development and coaching

This dimension analyses whether there is a well-defined football philosophy, including a style of play that represents the identity of the organisation on the pitch. In addition, it examines whether there is a football curriculum to inform coaches about what to focus on in different age groups, and lastly, whether there is a preferred methodology and coaching DNA that translate football theory into practice.

The higher-ranked MAs have better-defined football and coaching philosophies at their leading academies.

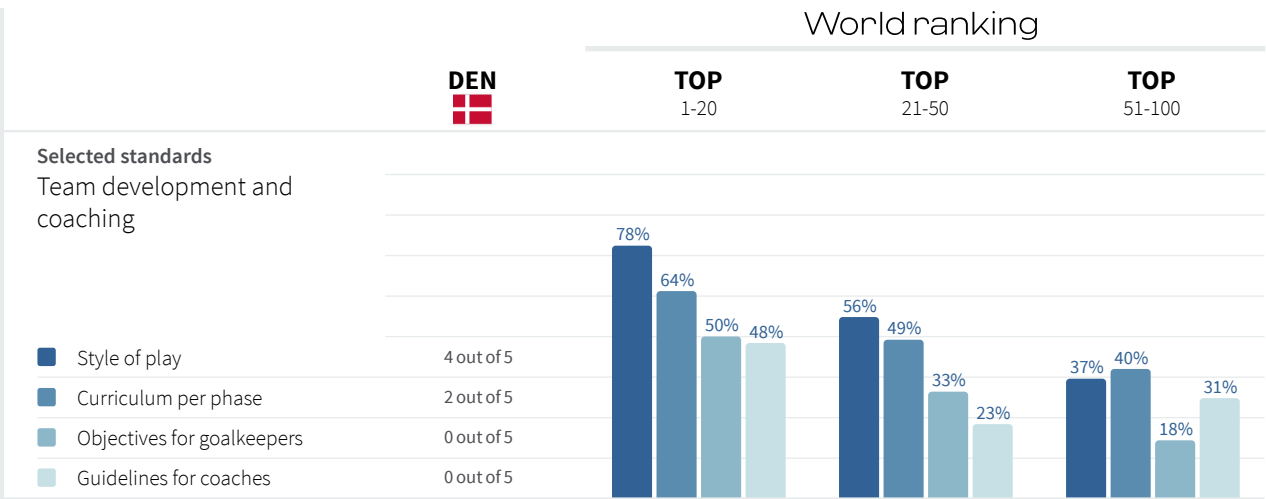
The academies in higher-ranked countries in the world ranking fulfil more standards for team development and coaching, especially on the boys' side. Nevertheless, the overall average is less than half of the 12 selected standards, which means that the football philosophy still has to be created or better documented to give more guidance to the coaches.

Illustration 5.17



When we focus on some of these standards, we see that most of the leading academies have a defined style of play. These numbers systematically decrease when we look at how this is translated into a curriculum with objectives for the different phases (including goalkeepers) and concrete guidelines for coaches in terms of a session, exercise and coaching DNA.

Illustration 5.18



Vision for talent development and individual development

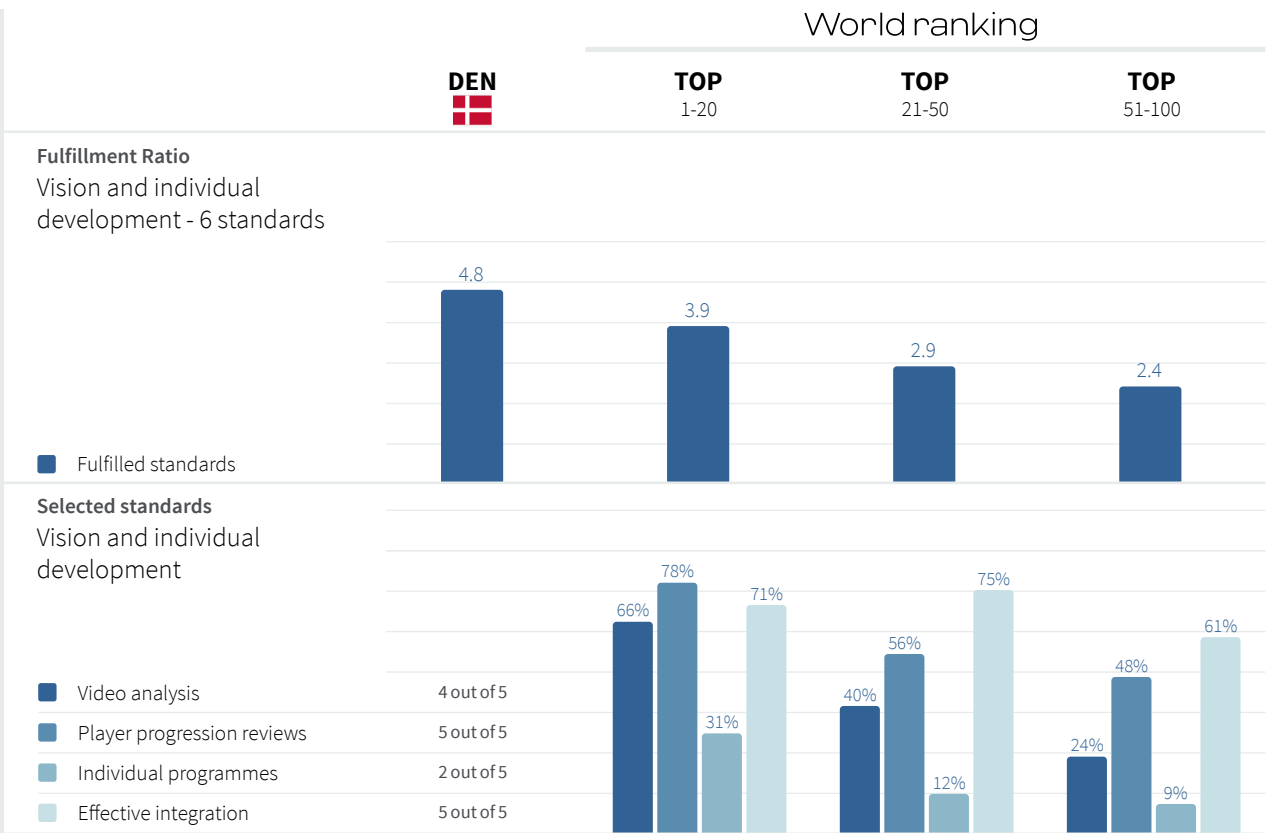
In this section, the individual development of a player is examined, focusing on the efforts made by the academy to maximise each player's football potential. Firstly, we looked at how player profiles are translated into individual key qualities. Next, we analysed how players are individually screened and evaluated, and how individual programmes and action plans are implemented in daily practice. Lastly, we examined how young players are integrated into the professional environment, with a focus on the completion of their individual development.

The best-performing academies focus more on the individual development of their top talents.

The following illustration explains some of the differences in the individual approach towards talent development at the leading academies in different MAs. It is clear that only a few academies work with individual programmes for their players, mostly in the top 20 MAs.



Illustration 5.19



Finding

Football programme of the academies

- As well as the weekly cycles, all academies have a playing style and principles. However, girls’ academies more frequently fail to connect them with player profiles and learning objectives. Boys’ academies are stricter about enforcing club guidelines through their pathway since girls’ academies are still looking to solidify the connection between the first team, academy and pre-academy philosophies.
- All clubs document an approach to prioritising individual development over winning in the younger age groups. Winning is more important in the U-18 and first team environments. Players’ early elite-level status is more critical in boys’ academies due to club philosophies and the standard of international competition.
- Although details and uniformity can be improved, holistic development, player reviews and IDP work are more advanced in boys’ teams as the girls’ academies rely mainly on their U-18 and first team environments to have structured reviews of performance development plans.

5.6 Support

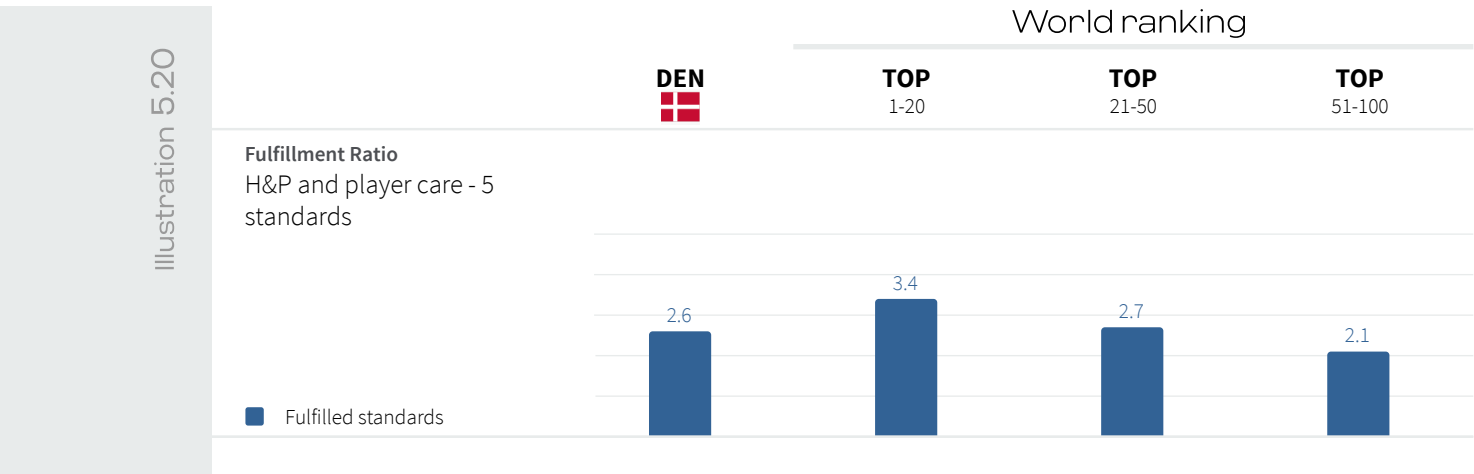
In any high-performance environment, it is important to provide young talent with professional support, both on and off the pitch. Because of the increasing physical and mental load, a health & performance programme should be in place to ensure that players are healthy and ready to perform. Besides this, academies are also responsible for the social welfare and personal development of these youngsters. Another department that supports the coaching staff is Talent ID and Recruitment.

Health & performance and player care

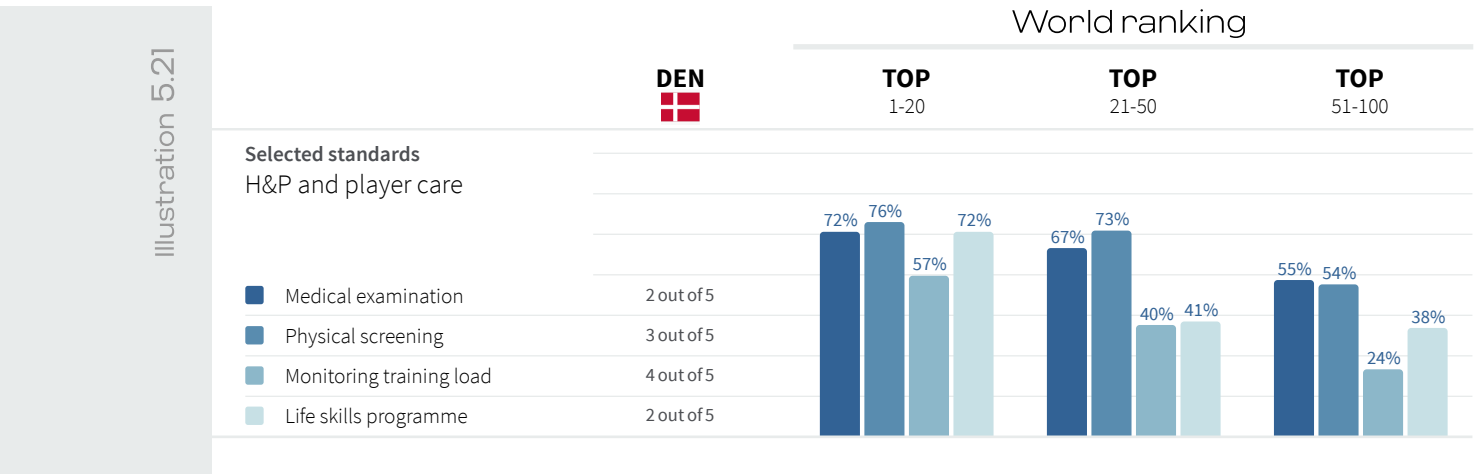
These dimensions focus on the holistic perspective of player development. They examine how the physical fitness and mental performance of academy players are developed and monitored. We also checked whether a protocol for injury prevention, treatment and the return to play is in place. Besides this, we evaluated how the academy gives support to its players in combining elite football with their studies and how top talents are prepared for life as a professional football player.

In any high-performance environment, it is important to provide young talent with professional support, both on and off the pitch.

In this analysis, only a few basic criteria were evaluated regarding health & performance and player care. Nevertheless, we found that, on average, only half of these criteria are met by the leading academies in the top 50 MAs.



The graph below shows the fulfilment ratio of four international standards regarding these supporting procedures. Academies in the top 50 MAs score higher on these standards, especially for boys' academies.



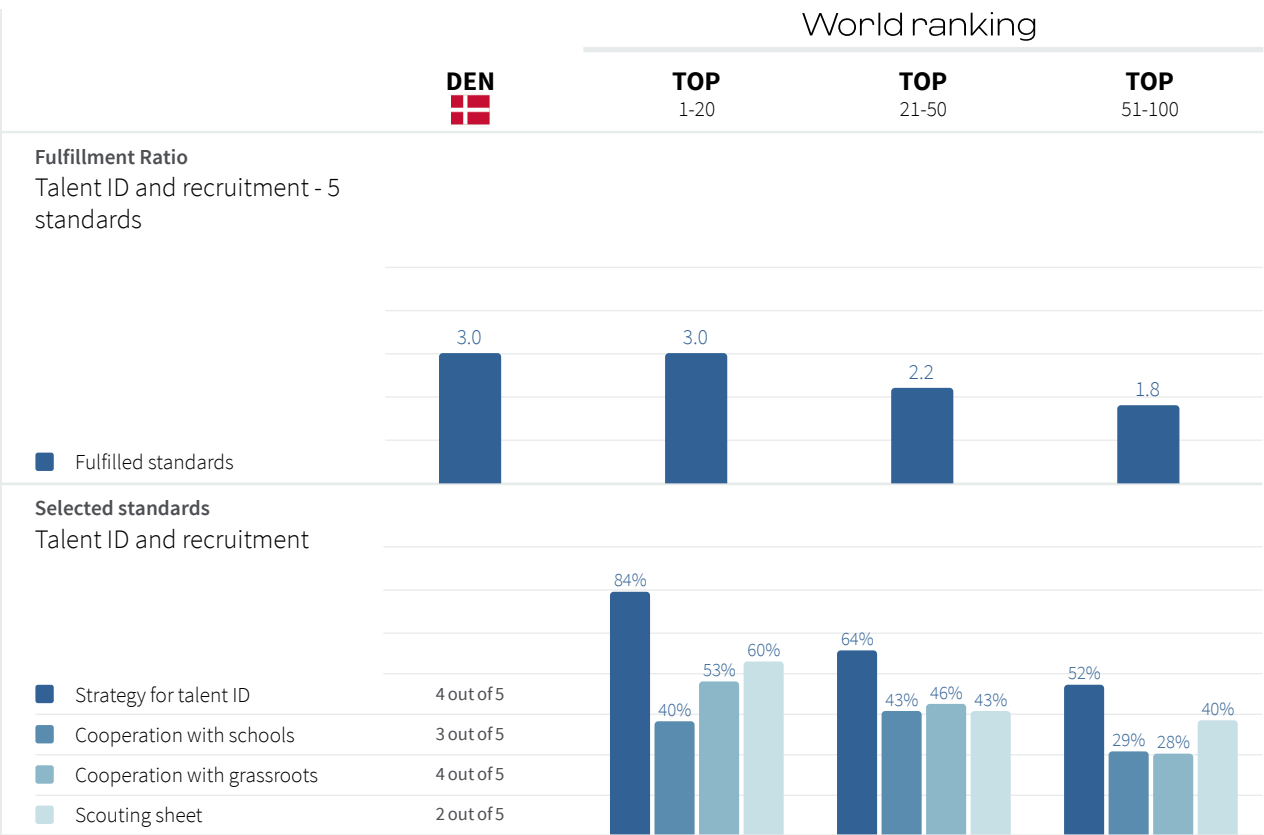
Talent ID & recruitment

This dimension analyses the academy’s strategy for identifying and recruiting the best available talent for its football programme. It examines whether there is a shared vision on talent, a defined process for talent identification and whether the academy has a network of scouts.

Talent ID & recruitment is a key area with room for improvement in most MAs, for both boys and girls.

The graph below shows the number of cases in which the scouting strategy is translated into partnerships and concrete guidelines for scouting staff. For these items, a significant difference can be seen between the top 50 MAs and the rest.

Illustration 5.22



Finding

Support related dimensions

- The boys’ academies document and implement a structured approach to medical screening, physical testing and conditioning, injury prevention and rehabilitation, and life skills programmes. Due to limited support resources in girls’ academies, even the most frequently implemented support programmes (individual load management, testing, and injury prevention) are most effectively used in the U-18 and first team environments. Clear club and academy approaches to support activities are missing.
- Both boys’ programmes have a clear scouting strategy, procedures and templates in place, supported by internal pre-academy and international scouting. Girls’ academy scouting is focused on top-end players and targeted selection mainly in the U-18 age group from the DBU’s national youth team events.
- Due to the limited overall player pool and staff resources, scouting has not evolved into having departments with clear documentation, templates and databases.



5.7 Resources

One fundamental aspect that largely determines the capacity of any professional academy is the availability of sufficient resources in terms of people and infrastructure. The people aspect deals with the availability of qualified and specialised staff. Infrastructure focuses on the facilities for both players and staff. Both dimensions are directly dependent on the budget spent on the academy.

Staffing

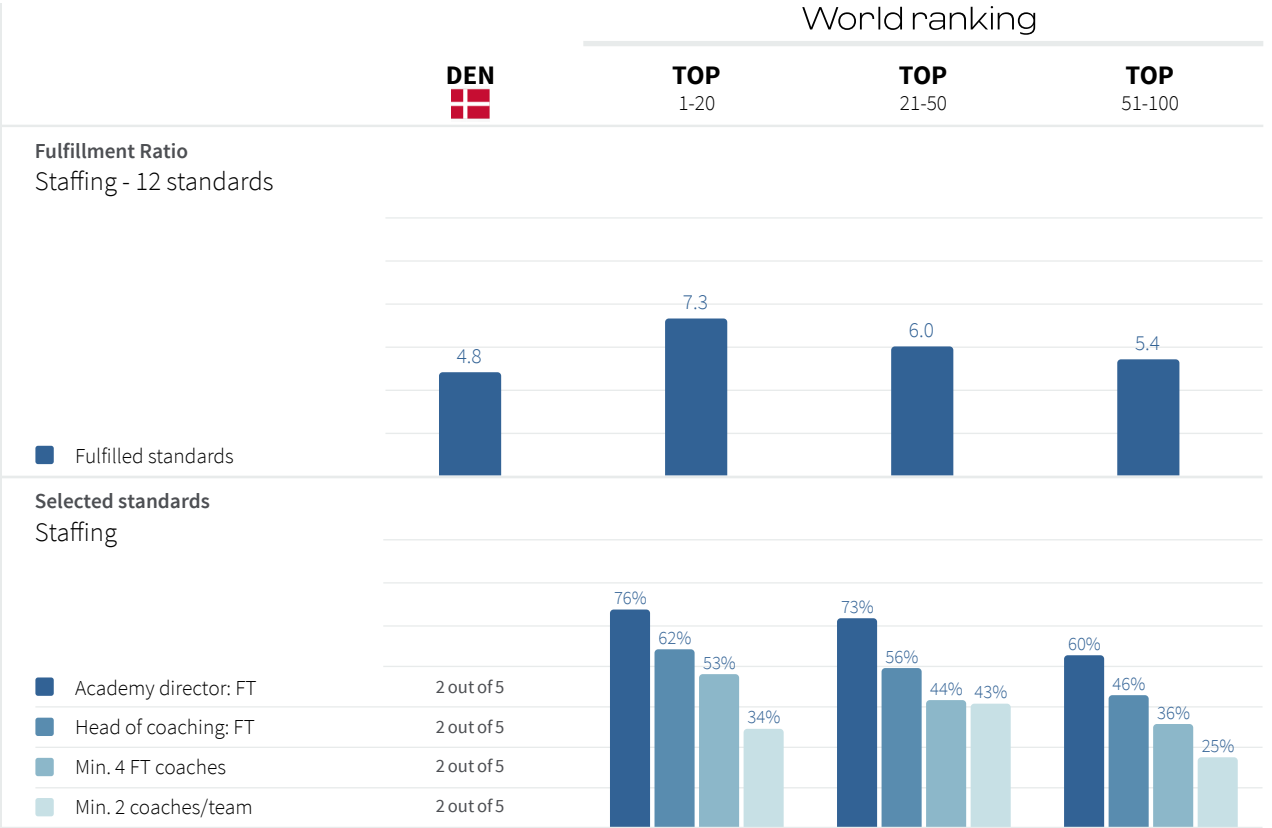
This section is about the level of specialisation of the academy staff. It explores whether leadership roles are fulfilled in an exclusive manner, and examines the size and composition of the coaching staff. Additionally, it addresses aspects such as whether coaches are sufficiently qualified and experienced to fulfil their roles and whether there are specialists available to support specific aspects of player development.



The level of specialisation of the coaching and support staff is significantly higher at boys' academies, especially in the top 50 MAs.

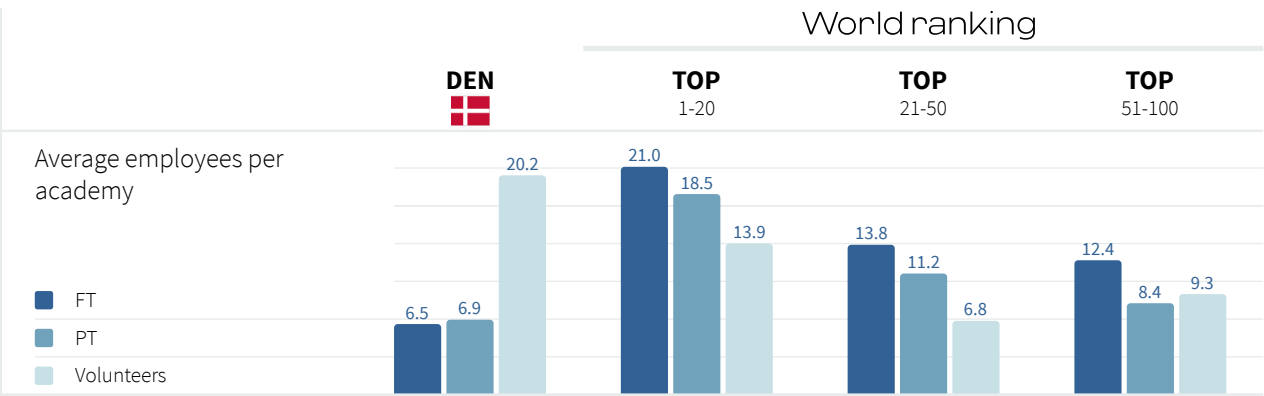
While the majority of leading academies have a full-time academy director, we also noticed that half of them do not have a head of coaching who works full-time for the academy. The same applies to the coaching staff, as we found that only the leading academies in the top 20 MAs have at least four full-time coaches for their academy teams.

Illustration 5.23



When we focus on employment status, we can conclude that academies in the top 20 MAs have, on average, more full-time, more part-time and more volunteer staff members.

Illustration 5.24



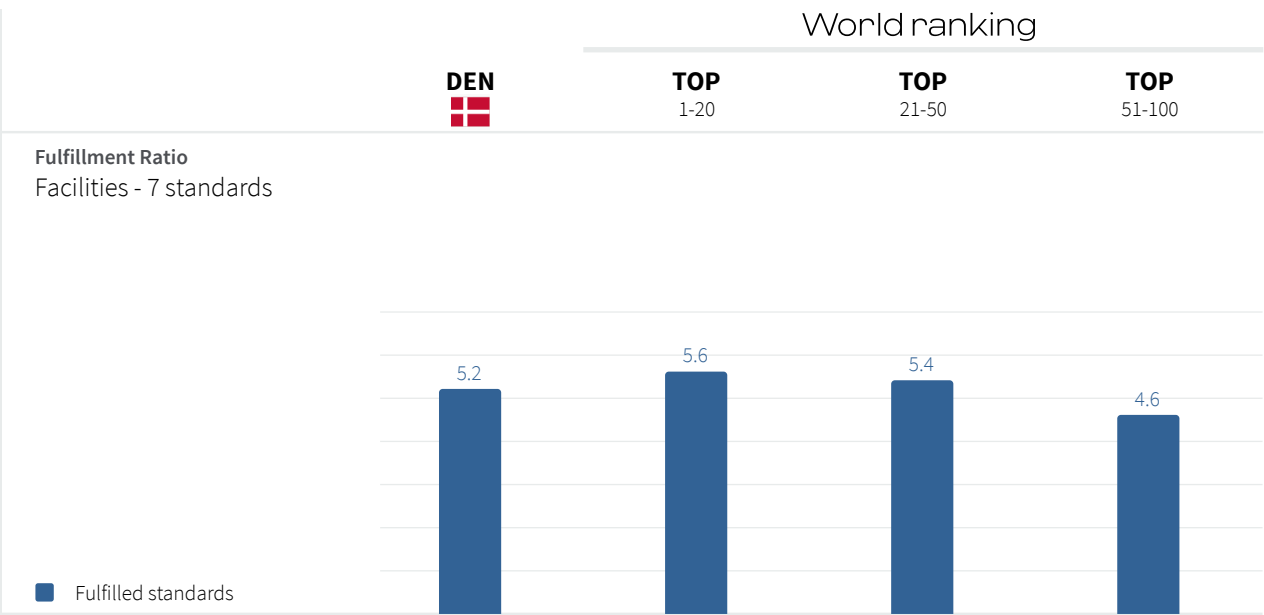
Infrastructure

This dimension is about the physical setting of the academy in terms of facilities for players and staff. We examined whether there is a centralised location for all academy activities, and whether academy teams have sufficient access to high-quality pitches and other training facilities. Lastly, we considered whether academy staff have access to a modern and functional work environment.

It seems that the minimum requirements regarding facilities are available for most academies, especially in the top 50 MAs. However, the main difference may lie in the quality of these facilities.

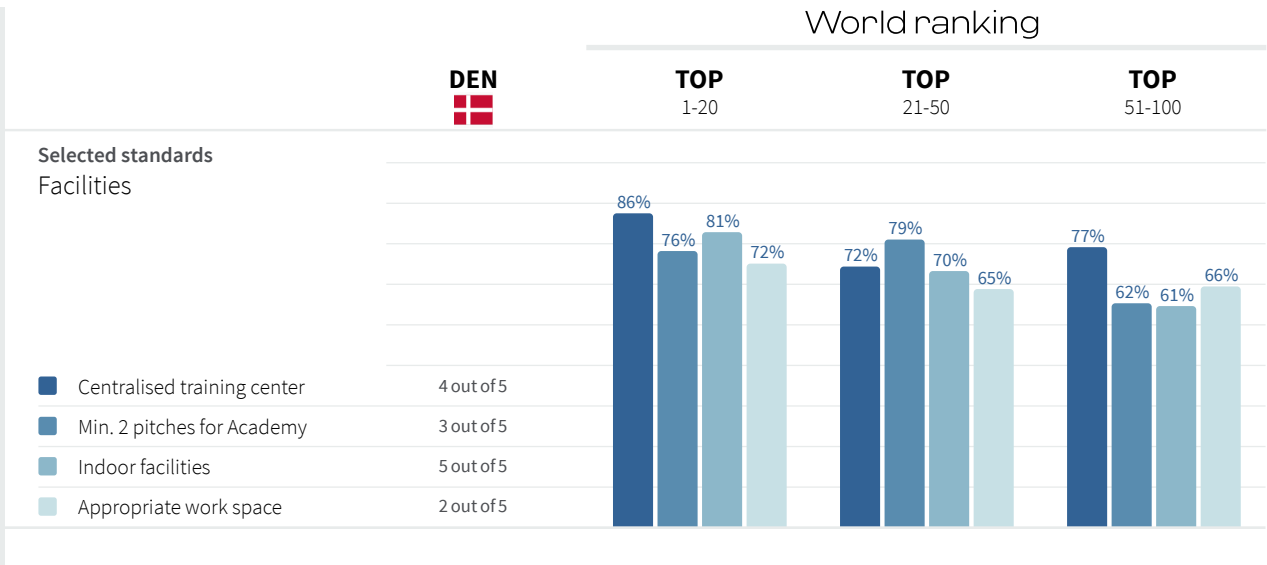
In general, we observed relatively high scores for the availability of specific infrastructure. After all, the focus was more on the availability, rather than the quality of the facilities, which could not be evaluated on-site because of COVID-19.

Illustration 5.25



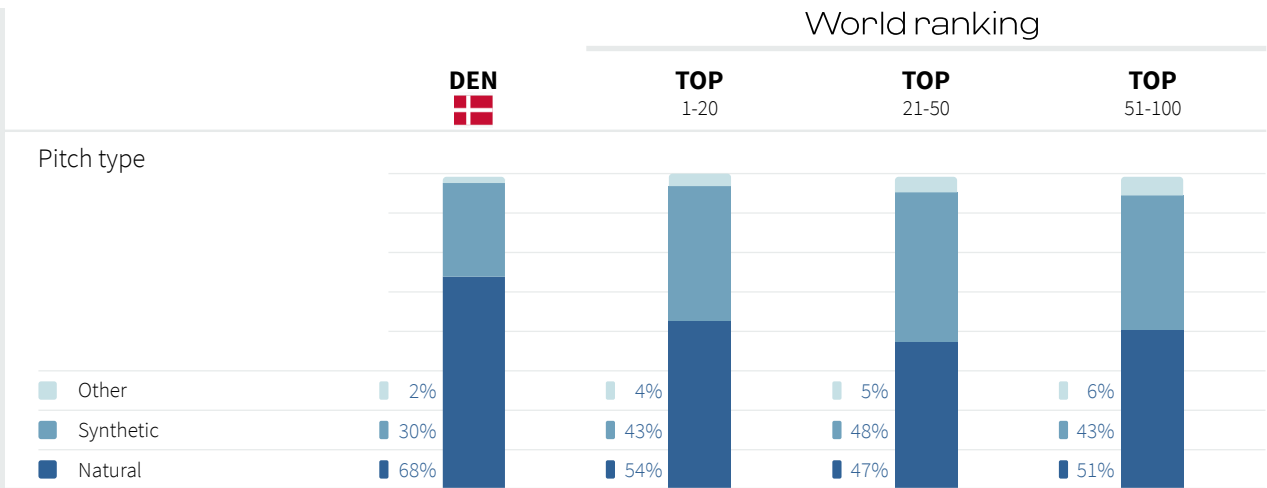
Most of the leading academies in each MA have access to a centralised training centre with a minimum of two pitches for the academy. In most cases, they also have access to indoor facilities for strength and conditioning.

Illustration 5.26



About half of the pitches for the academy teams are made of natural grass, which is almost in balance with synthetic surfaces. In all, two thirds of the academies have a synthetic grass pitch available.

Illustration 5.27



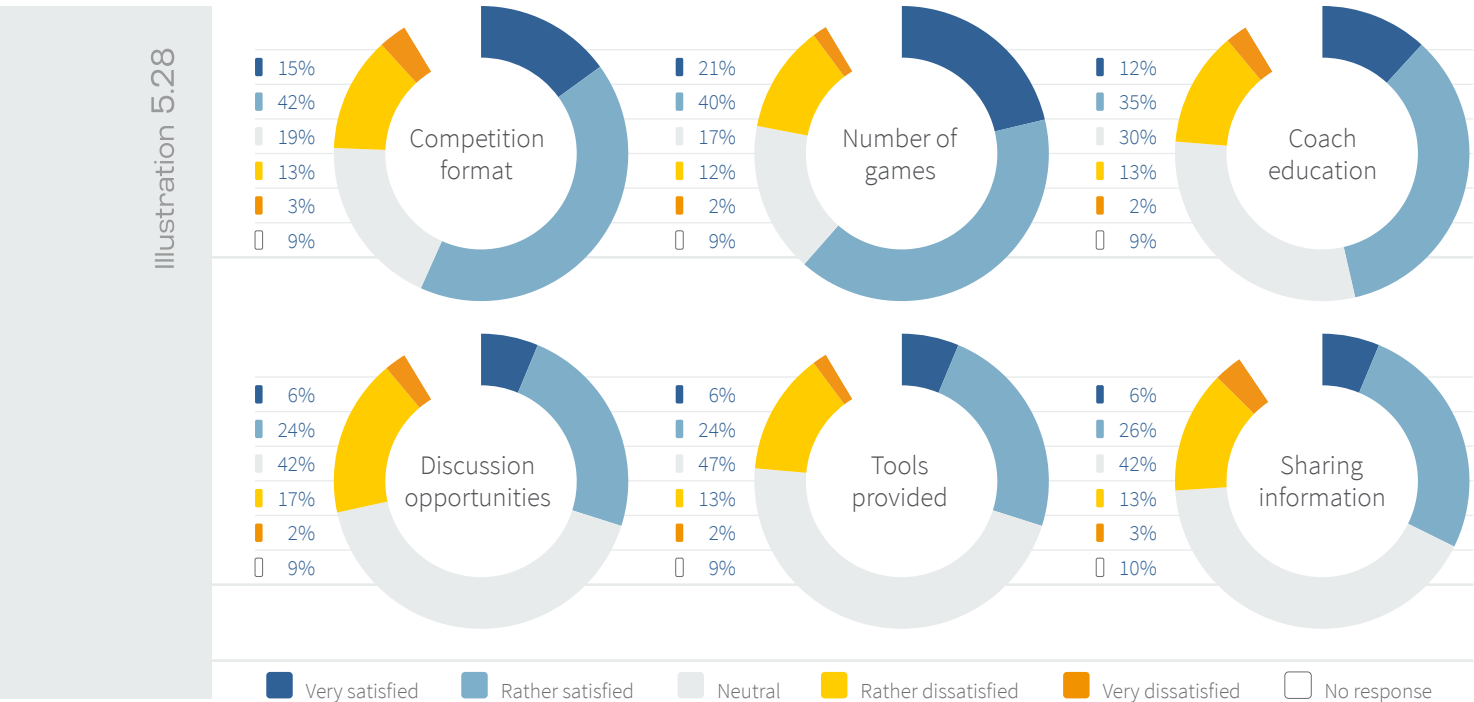
Finding

Staffing and facilities of the academies

- Boys' academies have over 30 FTE staff available including FT academy leadership, coaching and key support staff. However, the girls' top academies operate using mainly volunteer-based resources with FT equivalent staff numbers ranging from 0.5 to 2.5. In the girls' academies, the U-18 head coach position is often the best resourced, as other coaches, academy leadership and support staff are PT or volunteer hires.
- Boys' academies operate in high-level, centralised facilities connecting the academy and the first team players and staff. With top-level aims, the boys' academies are looking to improve the capacity of their facilities and to relocate some parts of their programmes soon.
- The girls' academy leadership, coaches and support staff are coping in their current office facilities, but upgrades are needed, especially as programmes grow and evolve. A girls' academy residency programme is still a rarity and, if provided, can give the club a competitive advantage over others.

5.8 Relationship with the member association

Finally, the coach satisfaction survey also included a section about their perception of the MA’s programmes and services. As shown in the graph below, the satisfaction of the academy staff was assessed in terms of the competition format and the number of meaningful games for their team, the quality of coach education organised by the MA, the opportunities to discuss football with MA experts, the tools they receive from the MA, and the information that is shared by the MA.





ACADEMIES

SUMMARISING NOTES

- **FOOTBALL MODEL (COACHING AND MENTORING)** - A coaching and mentoring programme can be based on coaching DNA or connected to the MA's coach education programmes to support and guide the development of FT and PT coaches. A clearly defined Coaching DNA and Coach Development Framework (CDF) can be implemented and monitored to optimise staff quality.
- **HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE (PHYSICAL AND MENTAL PERFORMANCE)** – A comprehensive health and performance programme needs to be implemented in all age groups. This would start with structuring a health and performance department, followed by the implementation of related strategies. Although staff resources may be limited, a more club-driven, age-specific approach should be developed to support staff, coaches and players in all health and fitness-related programming.
- **CONTEXT (WOMEN-SPECIFIC)** – A starting point may be to look at the evolution of women's football to understand the challenges and opportunities in this area, including aspects such as greater women's empowerment and women's impact on the Danish football landscape. A first topic could be the possible strategies that women's clubs can implement, based on the general environmental context.

Recommendations

1. Implement a specialised coaching and mentoring programme which is customised for all Danish clubs and academies in order to develop their coaches and support staff.
2. Establish or extend the health and performance department to optimise the well-structured MA processes with a more club-driven health and performance strategic programme.
3. Implement a programme to improve girls' and women's football across the Danish football landscape, including how to structure and set up an academy environment with KPIs.



6. EDUCATION

The quality of the coaching determines the quality of the talent.

A focus on education and the creation of a lifelong learning culture within a member association (MA) are both critical to the development of the game. Such a comprehensive strategy will determine the development of coaches, support practitioners and players and, in turn, will ultimately lead to future international success. The talent development workforce across the country must be regularly upskilled to have an impact upon creating an elite learning environment in which young players can develop and thrive. This impact can be felt across all levels, genders and age groups. To this effect, it is important that the education across all technical domains is up to date, challenging and appropriate for the demands of the modern game.

6.1 Management and strategy

The implementation of a nationwide coach education strategy and the associated framework is paramount for the development of the workforce aligned with the MA's long-term objectives. A well-structured and executed education strategy will ultimately impact upon the growth of the game by enhancing participation, with increased levels of player development leading to better home-grown players and ultimately to a more attractive domestic league. To achieve such success, appropriate finances and resources must be assigned to meet the educational demands to enhance both the men's and women's game.

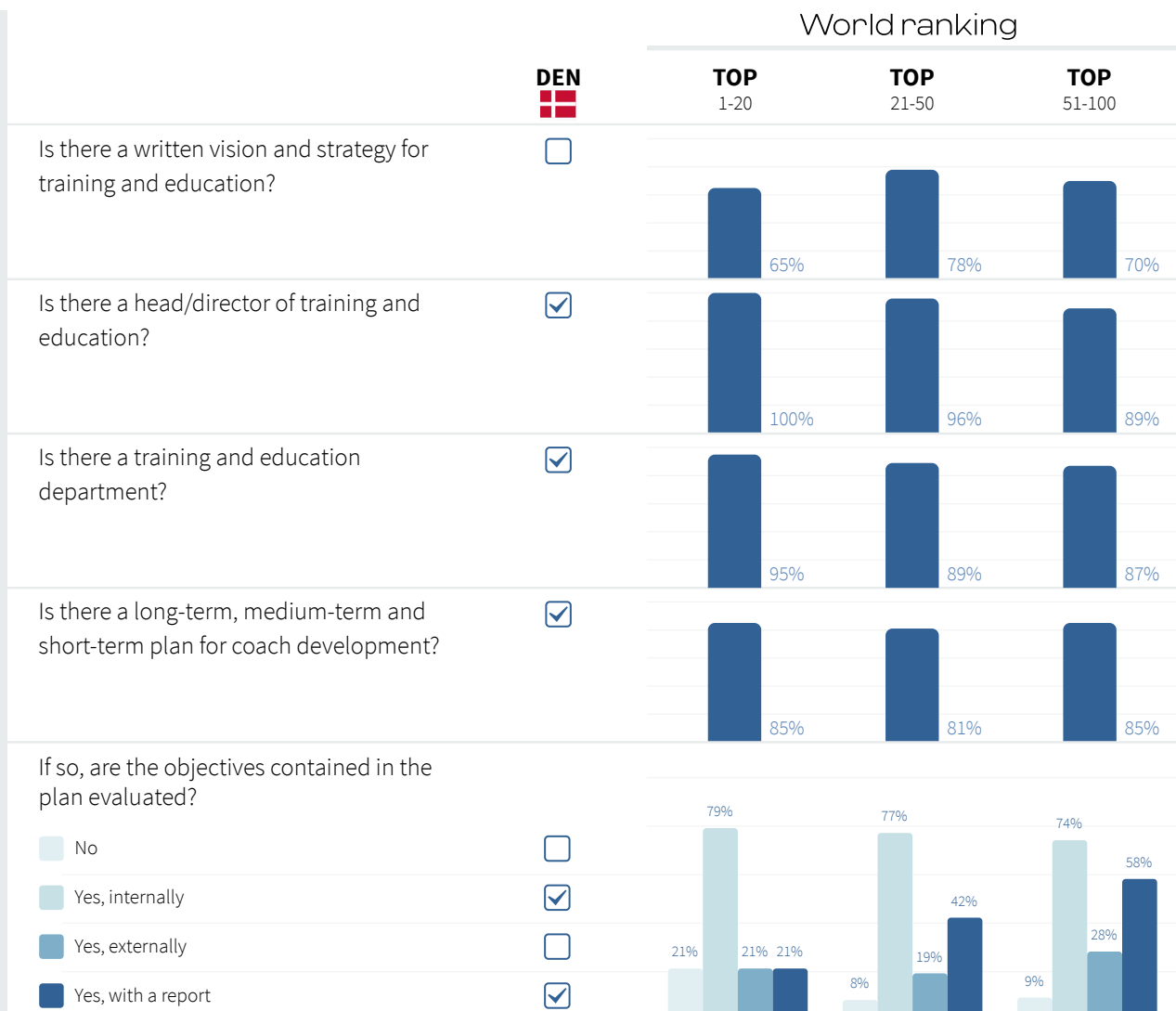
Structure

Where is education given emphasis within the structure of the association? A structure that acknowledges the importance of education by creating leaders and departments that prioritise the implementation of education in football will reap rewards, both domestically and internationally.

All of the top 20 associations have a head/ director of training and education, but only 65% have a national strategy for education and training.

78% of MAs ranked 21-50 have a national strategy for education, this being the highest score across the ranking groups. Furthermore, 95% of the top 20 MAs have a department dedicated to education, compared to 88% of MAs ranked 21-100.

Illustration 6.1



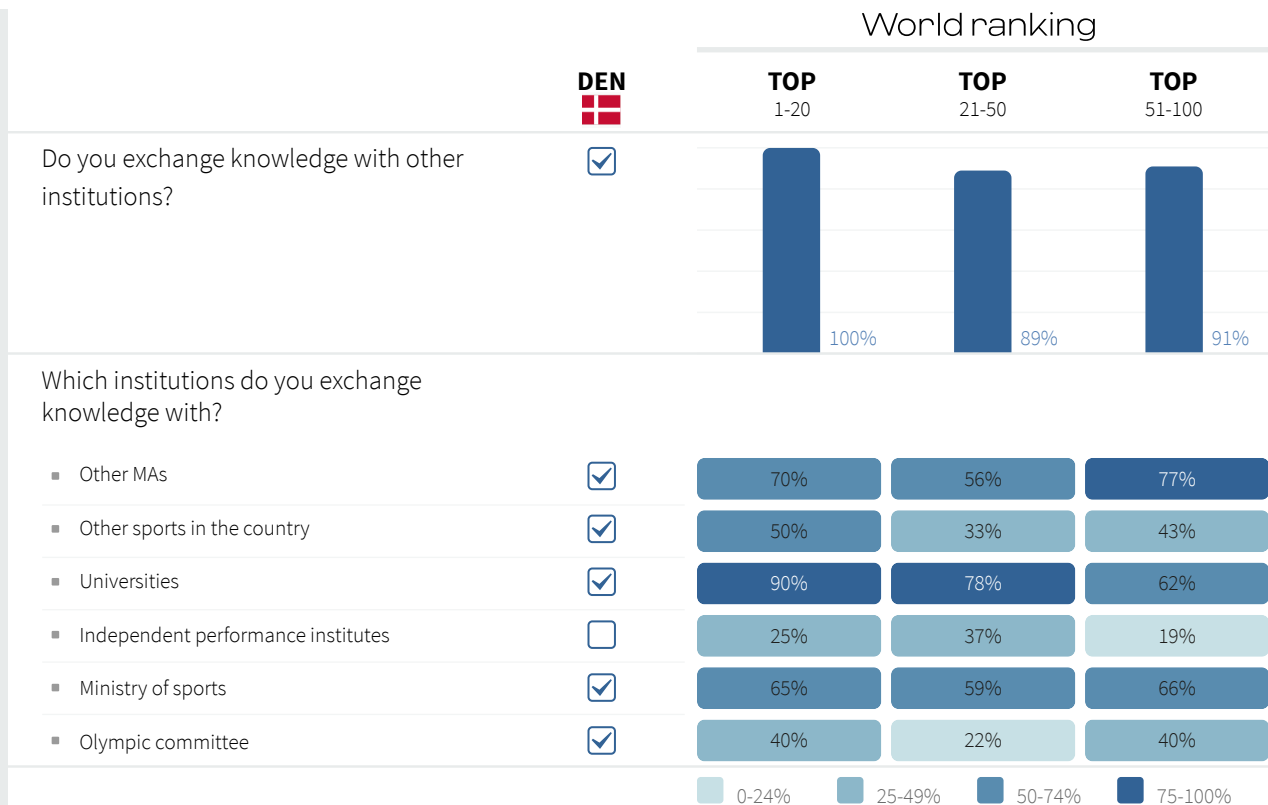
Collaboration

A significant amount of knowledge learnt through coach education is research-based. With so many methods and specialists available to conduct such high-quality research, no single institution can possess all of the resources required for a state-of-the-art football education framework. As a result, for an MA to create the best education practices, it has to collaborate with multiple institutions and adopt a growth mindset throughout the association.

Top-ranked MAs exchange knowledge with external institutions.

All MAs ranked in the top 20 exchange knowledge with external institutions, compared to 90% of MAs in the 21-100 ranking band. Across the top 100, those MAs that do exchange knowledge tend to do so with other MAs, universities and the ministry of sports.

Illustration 6.2



Finding

The national education strategy

- Coach Education is considered to be vital within the DBU's vision on player development.
- Coach Education is a department within the Elite Division. There are four full-time staff in charge of coordinating the delivery of coaching courses at all levels.
- All Elite Division departments operate independently from a formal supervision or regular official meetings between them. Informal communication is a regular feature. The head of the Elite Division is the coordinator across the departments.
- As part of club licensing system, all top-tier clubs employ a head of coaching, who supports the club coaches. The Coach Education Department is in regular contact with the heads of coaching.
- The DBU works with the league association on coach education. They work independently, organising technical workshops on specific topics and recently launched a coach education podcast. It is considered that this cooperation can be further enhanced.

6.2 Coach education

The development of the coaching workforce is one of the cornerstones in the production of elite players within any MA. The MA's coach education strategy should be clearly defined and aligned with the coaching convention of the confederation, and it should be reflective of the MA's long-term player development strategy. Developing a coaching workforce that is attuned to the modern game and understands the demands and challenges of the elite environment will have a direct impact upon the development of young players across the country.

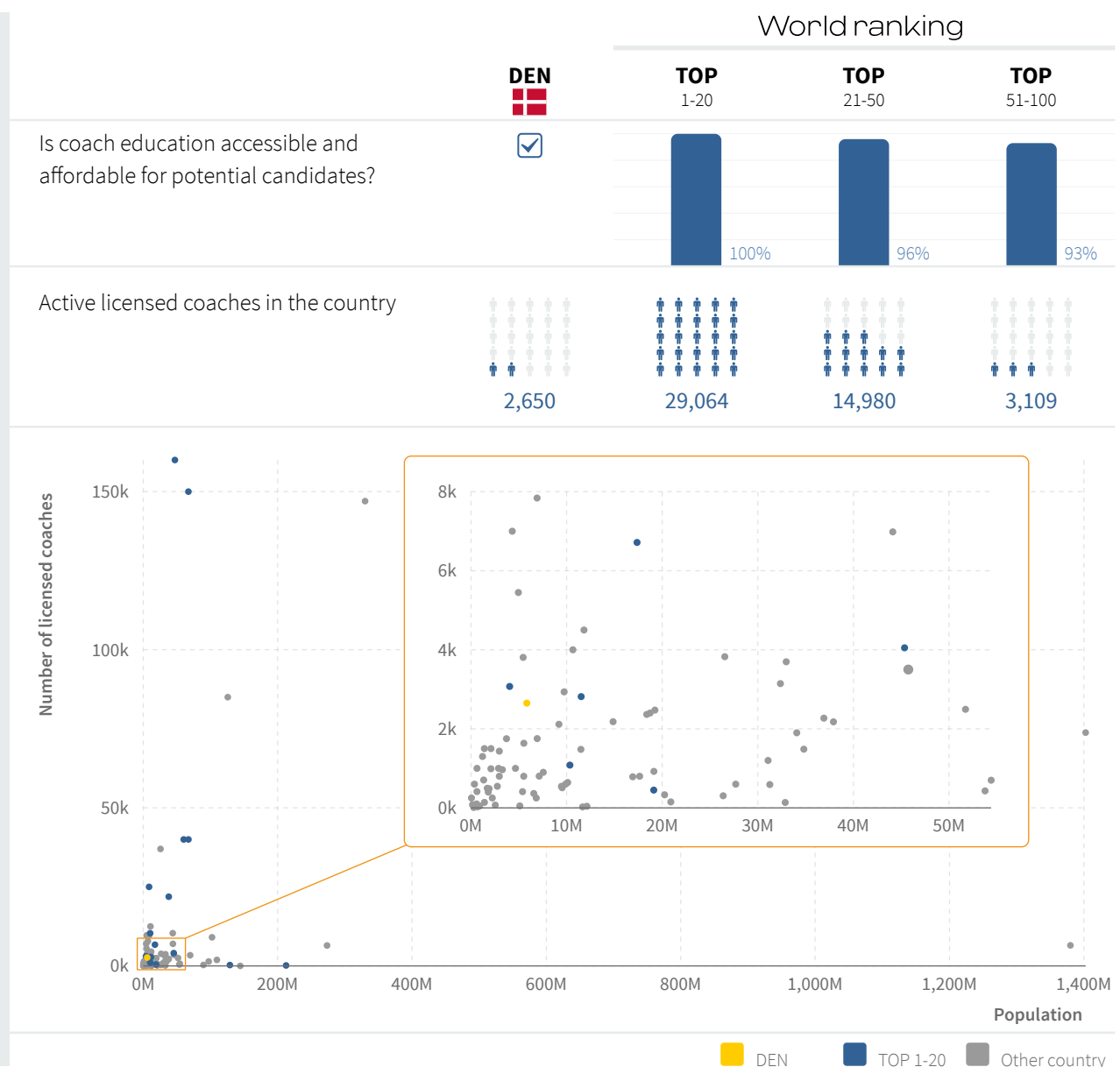
Coaching licence pathway and curriculum

An appealing and easily accessible route into the world of coaching as well as a progressive pathway through the coaching licence framework are two significant contributors to a country's emphasis on football education. In addition, a curriculum that trickles down from elite teams to the grassroots elicits effective coach and player development throughout. Adherence to an overarching national football philosophy can be a useful way of synchronising a domestic football community despite various levels of ability.

Top 20 MAs have the highest number of licensed coaches.

All member associations in the top 20 deem their education accessible and affordable, compared to 94% of MAs ranked 21-100. Furthermore, top 20 MAs have a greater number of licensed coaches in their country, with an average of 29,064 coaches compared to 14,980 and 3,109 in MAs ranked 21-50 and 51-100 respectively.

Illustration 6.3



Finding

Accessibility to coach education

- Given the importance the DBU attaches to coach education, courses are generally made accessible. The C licence and grassroots courses are organised regionally by the regional associations, with the DBU overseeing the training and providing course content. The A, B and Pro licences are delivered in blocks and organised centrally at a dedicated facility.
- Although the DBU does not provide funding for the courses, these are made affordable, with some local governments covering up to 80% of costs. In addition, some female coaches benefit from UEFA scholarships.
- Denmark has around 2,650 licensed coaches across over 1,600 clubs. The licences are divided up as follows: 150 Pro, 650 A, 1250 B and 600 C licences.
- In addition to providing education for instructors, the DBU holds biannual meetings, with a view to overseeing the established direction and achieving objectives.

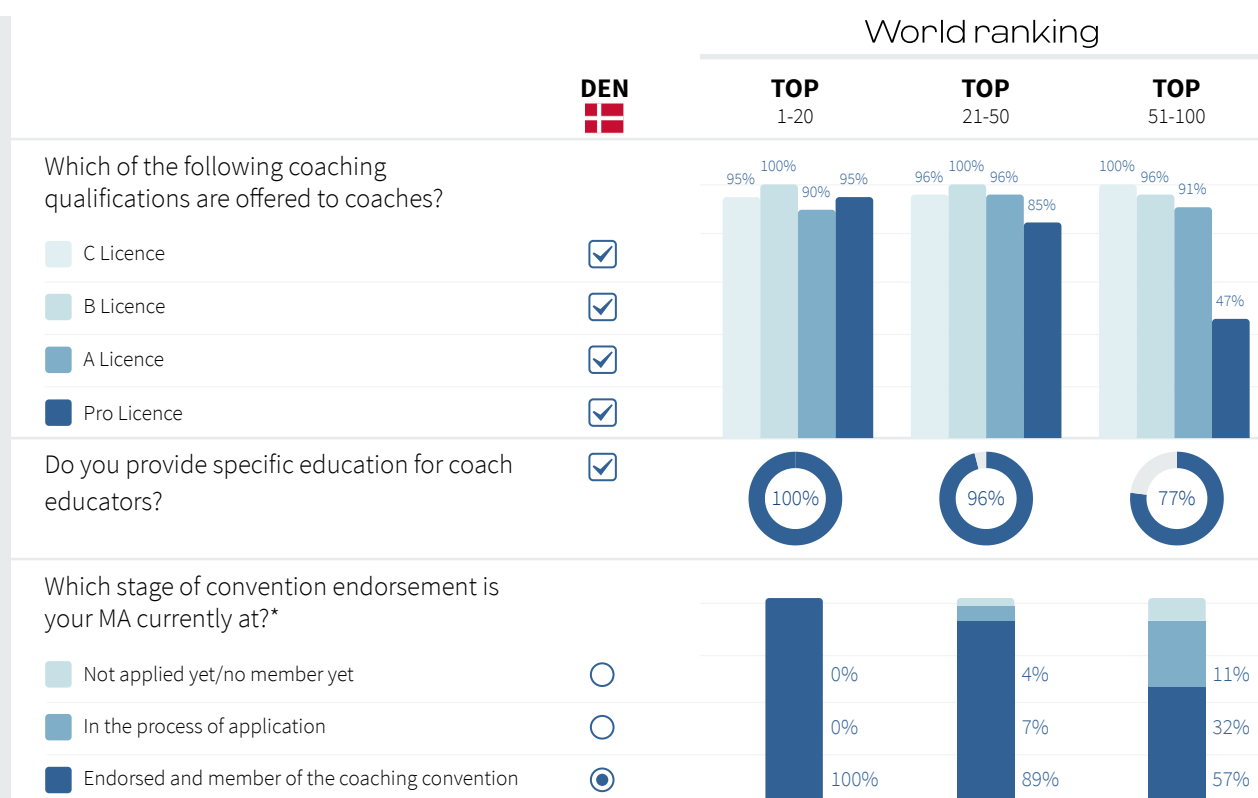
Football coaching course programme

Offering a diverse and wide range of coaching courses for all levels can help an MA achieve the strategic aim of educating potential future coaches. These programmes prepare coaches to step into the world of coaching, from youth to senior football. They then have the option of progressing to the C Licence, B Licence, A Licence and Pro Licence. A large pool of qualified coaches at all levels, from grassroots to senior football, is crucial for player development.

Only 47% of MAs ranked 51-100 offer Pro Licence courses.

Top 20 associations offer the most comprehensive education programme, particularly at A and Pro Licence levels. Furthermore, top 20 MAs provide specific training for coach educators, something that only 77% of MAs in the top 51-100 offer.

Illustration 6.4



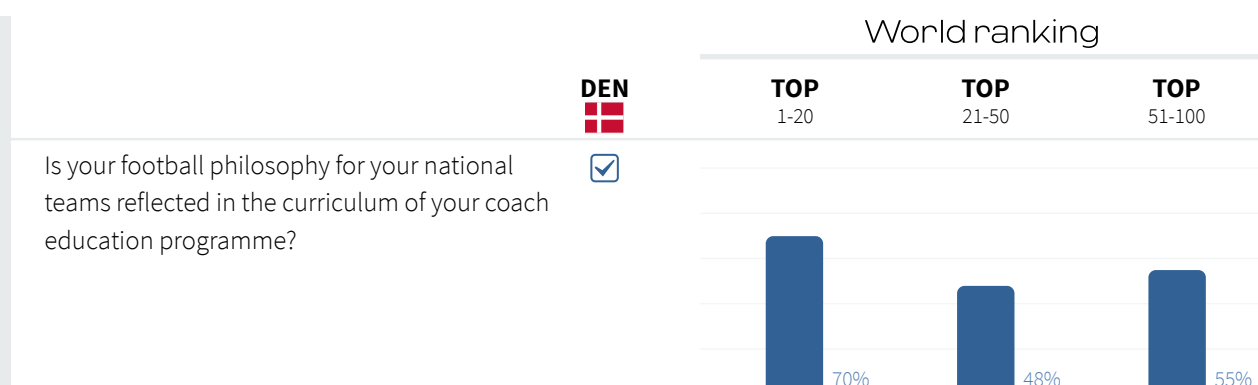
*Not applicable to Concacaf MAs



Only 56% of MAs across the top 100 reflect their football philosophy in the education curriculum.

MAs in the top 20 are more likely to have their national football philosophy embedded in their education curriculum, with 70% doing so, compared to only 52% of associations ranked 21-100.

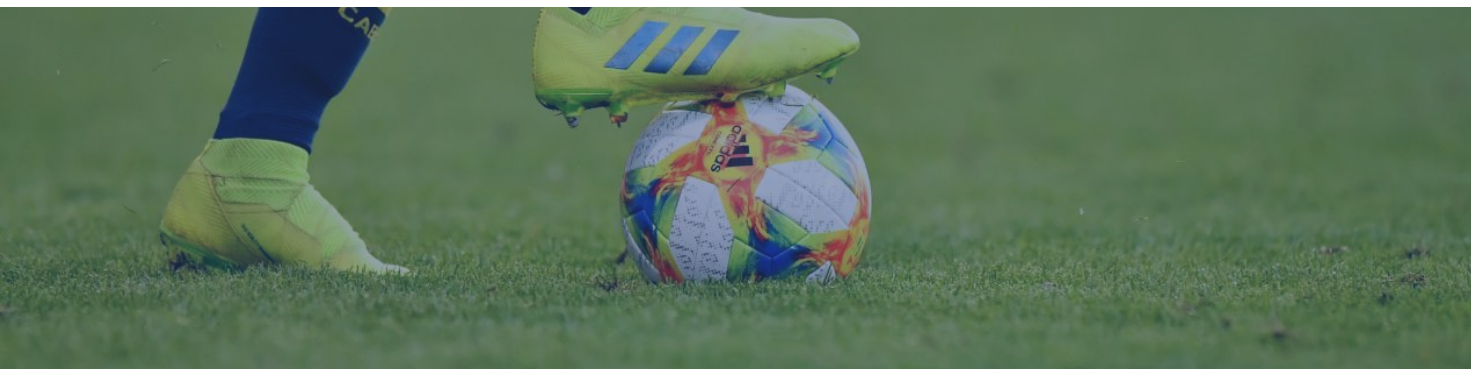
Illustration 6.5



Finding

The link between coach education and the national football philosophy

- As a member of the UEFA Coaching Convention, the DBU follows the UEFA course standards and reality-based learning has been introduced across all levels.
- Courses are divided into modules, which have a fixed structure: preparation, course attendance and reflection. The delivery methods meet the DBU's demands on player development.
- The DBU Elite Division has established a clear football philosophy for the national teams that is aligned to the overall player development strategy. This national philosophy is discussed in the licence courses.
- Guidelines for coaches in training and match scenarios are discussed during the courses, but the coaches are free to decide on the playing style and how to coach it at the various levels.
- The DBU and the clubs meet regularly and work closely together, which is an asset for player development. The club and youth licensing system set clear standards for the club training environment.



Coach identification and development

Knowing the best coaches in the country is crucial for the development of the game. A principled approach to the identification and development of male and female coaches is required to discover such promising talent. Taking a further step in placing them at the pinnacle of the sport where their talent can then be realised can accelerate their development and their impact upon the game in the future.

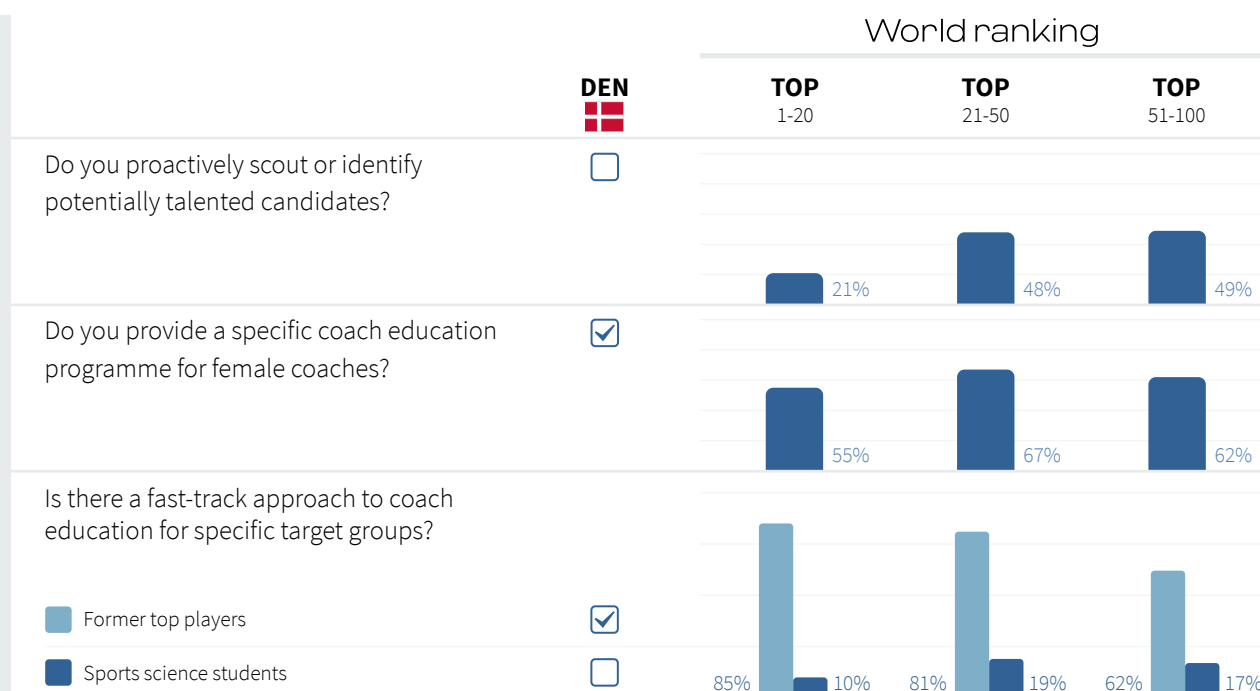
Coach identification

Many individuals begin their coaching careers as a hobby and not as a profession, so highly talented coaches can be found at the lower end of the football pyramid as well as at the top. A comprehensive identification process is therefore essential to ensure that talent at all levels of the pyramid is identified and brought into an elite environment where their capabilities can flourish.

Only 62% of the top 100 MAs provide a specialist coach education programme for female coaches.

Top 20 MAs are less likely to facilitate a process for identifying talented coaches or to provide a programme for female coaches. However, top 20 MAs provide more support for ex-players on fast-track programmes.

Illustration 6.6



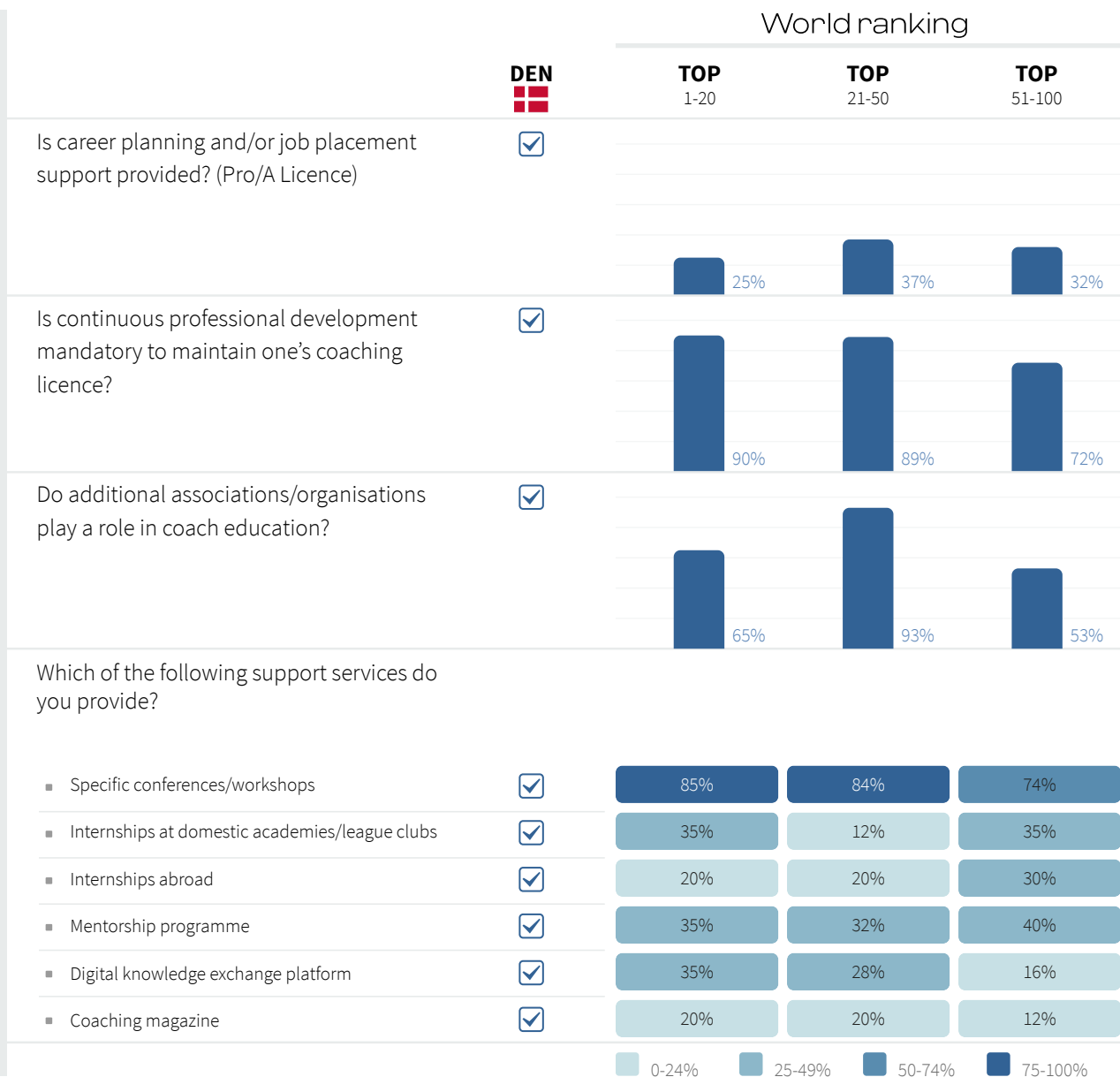
Coach development

Once talent has been identified, it is important to nurture it by providing opportunities. Internships, workshops, career planning, mentorships and coaching magazines are just some of the many methods that can be used to help promising coaches on their journey to fulfil their potential. Furthermore, having a re-licensing process and mandatory continuous professional development (CPD) regulations allows the MA to conduct quality assurance on the level of coaching across the country.

89% of the top 50 MAs make CPD mandatory for maintaining a coaching licence.

90% of the top 20 MAs make it mandatory for licence holders to undertake CPD to maintain their licence. Furthermore, the MAs ranked between 21 and 50 are more likely to use additional associations or organisations in the role of coach education (93% compared to 65% of MAs in the top 20). 79% of associations in the top 100 provide educational support in the form of conferences and workshops, but only a low percentage offer a mentorship programme, with the greatest support (40%) coming from associations ranked between 51 and 100.

Illustration 6.7



Finding

Coach identification and development

- The DBU has no formal structure to identify talented coaches. Instructors sometimes identify talented coaches on the courses. The following skills are informally safeguarded: football, people and communication. The DBU provides specific education for (former) female players, with tailor-made A and B courses organised in the past. These courses are similar in terms of content, time investment and assessment to the men's courses but are tailored to fit around life schedules.
- The DBU has CPD standards to retain a licence that follow UEFA guidelines. CPD guidelines are designed to cover a three-year period to renew a licence. The MA offers refresher courses that enable candidates to earn points.
- Other actions led by the DBU to support coaches include: an annual "Great Coach Day", topic discussion via the MA's website under the "Trainer Lounge" section, whilst further training is offered through the club licensing system.

6.3 Other roles

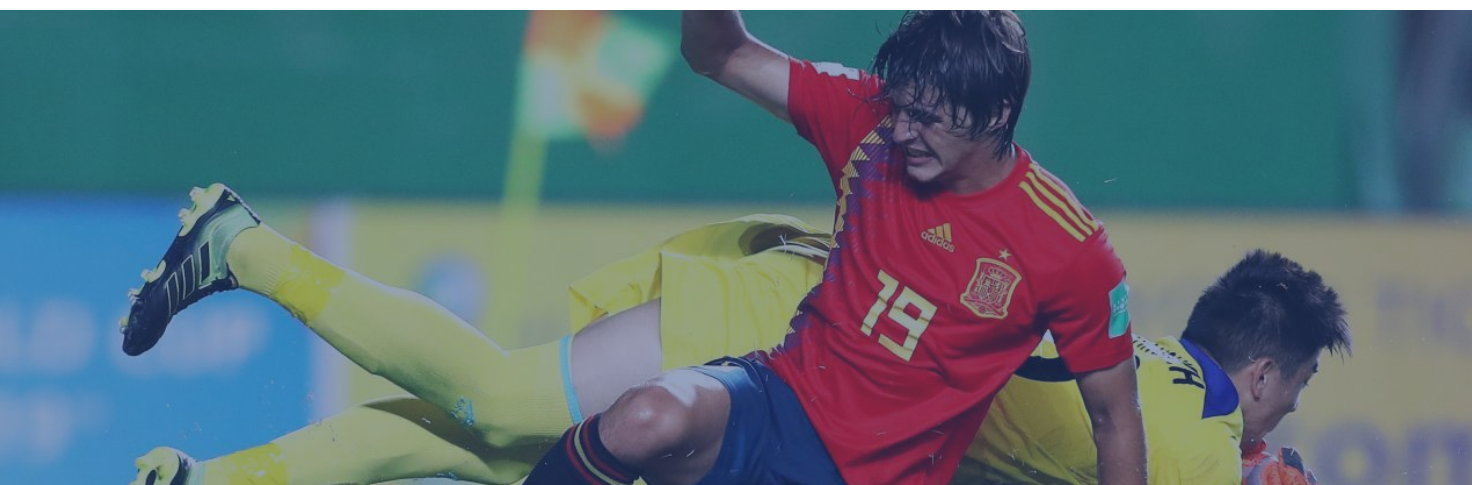
Education for support roles and the wider multidisciplinary team is critical, both for the progression of the coaching workforce and for player development within an association. Elite player development is multifaceted, and all skillsets across multidisciplinary teams must be well resourced with knowledge of the modern game. There must be plans in place to structure and develop the whole technical workforce in order to fully embrace talent development and advance the game across the country. Such plans must be clearly aligned with the MA's player development strategy. This ensures that the needs identified for player development are met and resourced appropriately.

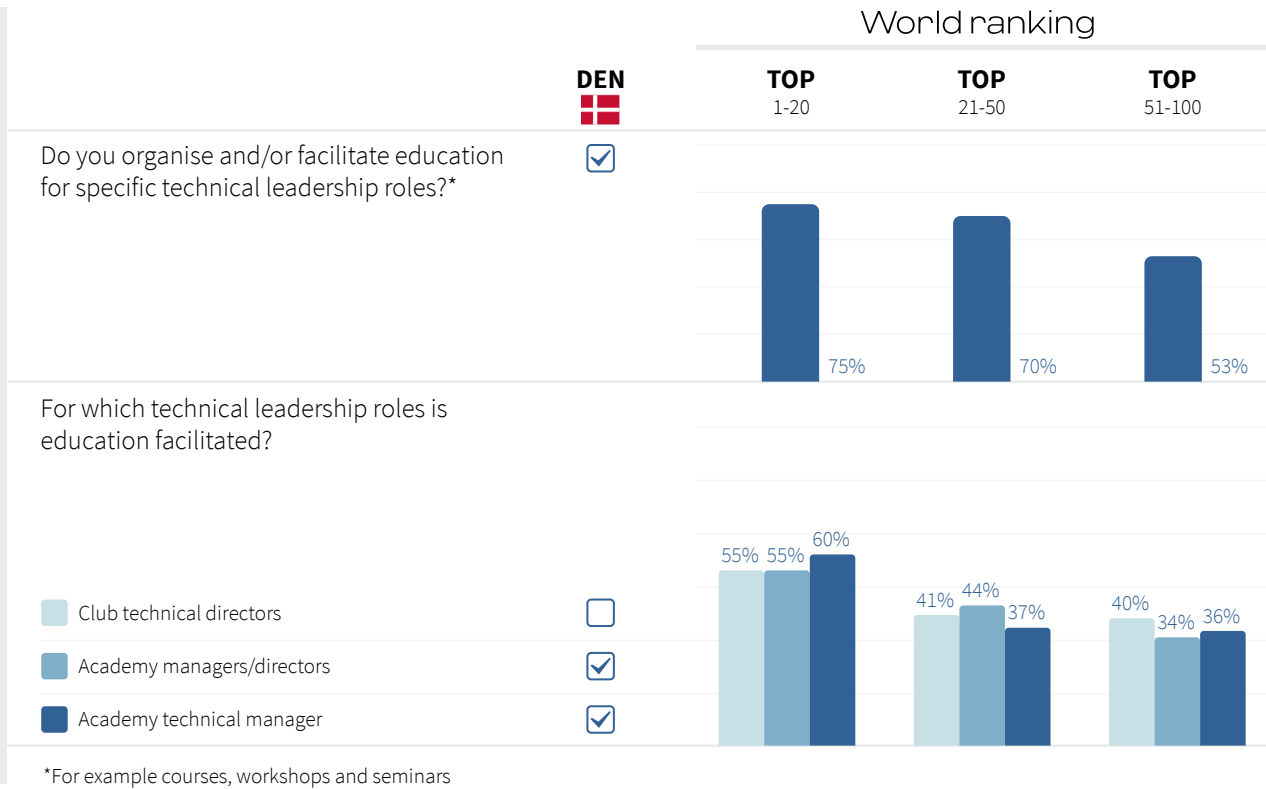
Programmes

Training programmes and courses are effective ways to enhance the benefits that clubs gain from these support roles. As with any education framework, these courses must be grounded in empirical research. New research, findings and methods of significance to these multidisciplinary positions are constantly being discovered. Consequently, it is important to continue to expose these specialists to relevant programmes through which they can enhance their understanding of their field.

Top 20 member associations offer greater provisions for the development of technical leadership roles.

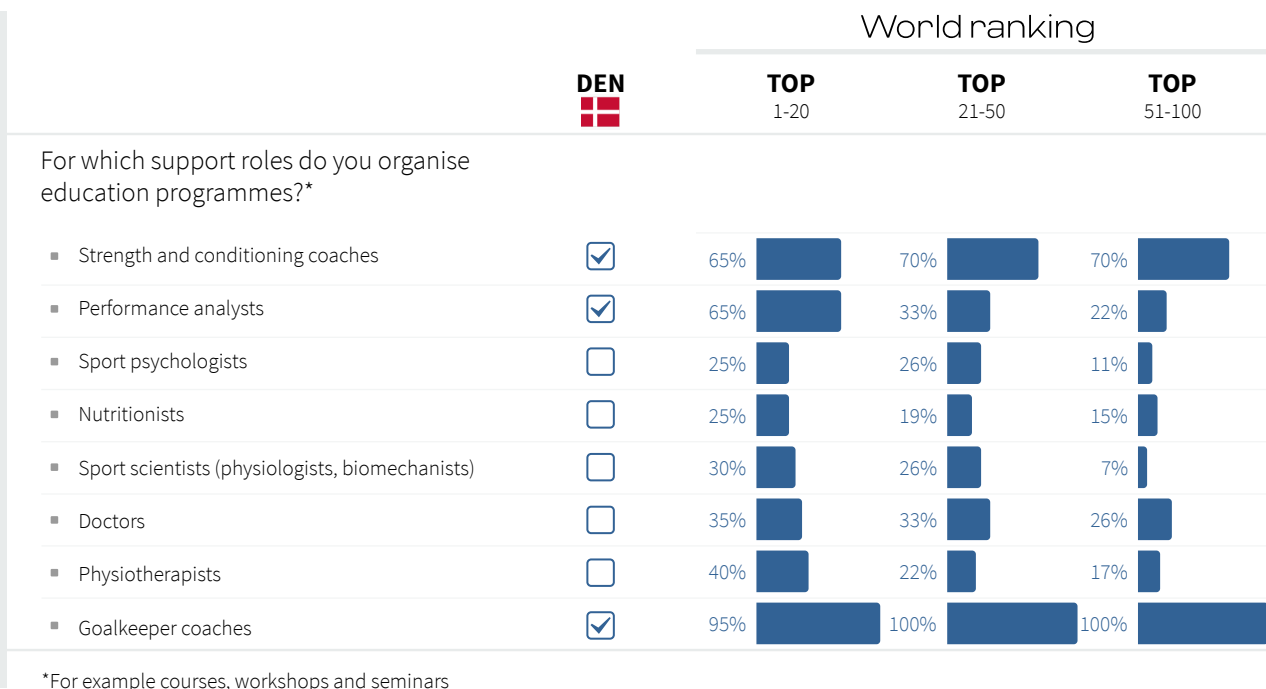
75% of associations in the top 20 offer specific courses for technical leadership, and these associations make such courses available to club technical directors, academy managers/directors and academy technical managers on a relatively uniform basis (55%-60%). These numbers fall drastically for the lower-ranked MAs, however.





The top 20 MAs offer a more comprehensive education programme for supporting roles.

99% of associations in the top 100 support the education of goalkeeper coaches and also focus on strength and conditioning (69%). The top 20 MAs have a greater provision for performance analysts than any other ranking group (65% of MAs in the top 20 compared to 26% of MAs between 21 and 100). However, the lowest provision of education across the top 100 MAs is for sports psychology, nutrition and sports science (18%, 18% and 17% respectively).



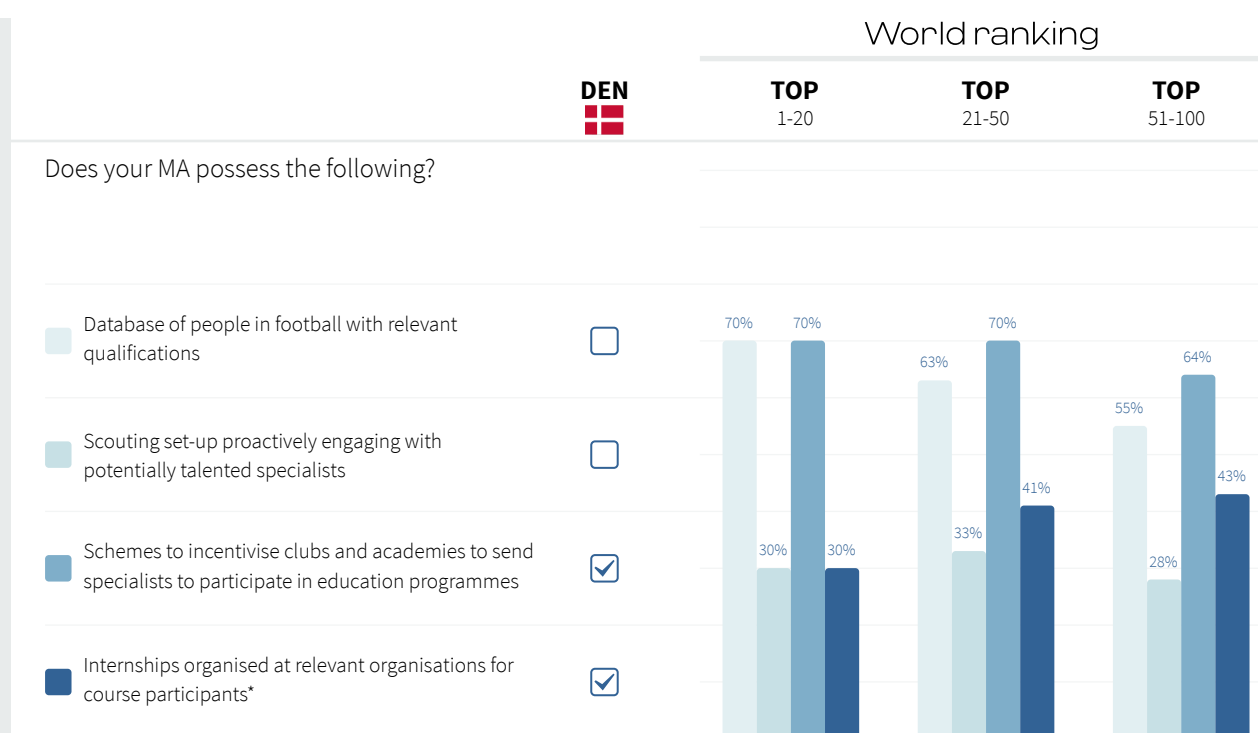
Supporting professional development

Bringing together all of the knowledge and expertise that these roles offer is essential for the success of elite-level teams, both internationally and domestically. Modern-day football finds itself in a place where there are often only the finest of margins between top competitors. As a result, every bit of expertise is required to achieve success at the highest level. The benefits of these niche roles, however, cannot be felt fully if they are not supported.

The top 20 MAs are more likely to have a database of specialist practitioners but are less likely to organise specialist internships.

70% of the top 20 MAs have a database of people working in football and holding specialist qualifications, higher than any other ranking group (63%-55%). A relatively high number (67%) of associations across the top 100 offer incentives for specialists to participate in education programmes; however, very few offer specialist internships or scout potentially talented specialists (28%-33%).

Illustration 6.10



* For example associations, clubs and academies

Finding

Training and education of specialist roles

- The MA provides education for specialists “as part of its education strategy”. As some courses only require a few hours of study, the MA prefers not to refer to them as specialist courses, but as refresher courses or further education. A range of courses for the wider football community are advertised on the MA’s website. These include club management, as well as more technical courses, such as goalkeeper and Talent ID training.
- The MA spoke of the challenges involved in running such courses, given the time-consuming nature of the coordination activities and the available resources for such small demand. As a result, the DBU believes that it must carry out market research to identify the needs and develop courses to meet them.
- The licensing system represents a good means to make specialist courses mandatory for clubs, as part of the DBU’s efforts to exert an influence on improving the club environment.



EDUCATION

SUMMARISING NOTES

- The DBU attaches great importance to coach education. The coaching programmes offer courses for coaches at all levels that are aligned with its overall vision on player development. The Coach Education Division is part of the Elite Division. The head of education is responsible for delivering high quality to enhance coaching standards in Denmark from the elite level to grassroots. The division operates independently from the rest of the Elite Division department.
- The MA's Elite Division has a clear football philosophy for the national teams. This national philosophy is discussed in the licence courses, but the DBU does not intend on forcing club coaches to follow the philosophy. Guidelines for coaches in training and matches are discussed during the courses, but they are free to decide on the playing style and how to coach it at the various levels.
- Courses are generally accessible to potential candidates. Although the DBU does not provide funding for the courses, these are made affordable thanks to external support. The MA does not have a formal structure in place to identify talented coaches. The DBU instructors do sometimes identify talented coaches enrolled on the courses.

Recommendations

1. Coach Education is considered to be vital within the DBU's vision on player development. We recommend to develop courses or workshops on specific topics, tailored to the local needs. The DBU could consider to further enhance the cooperation with the League Association on coach education.
2. A formal structure to identify talented coaches is lacking. We advise to establish a formal structure to identify talented coaches and a programme to enhance coaching skills.
3. A national philosophy as a guide for players, coaches and coach educators impacts the quality of football in a country. We advise to strengthen the links between the national football philosophy and coach education in the basic-level courses (B and C licenses).

Boys talent pathway

A talent pathway is the player development structure created by an MA, forming the route from grassroots to senior level and reflecting the development opportunities within a country. It encompasses five distinct areas: football accessibility, preparation for competitive football, high- performance youth football, and the transition from junior to senior and professional level. Playing opportunities, talent identification and talent promotion are all vital aspects at every level of the talent pathway.





U-16 to U-18
High performance youth football

There is one U-15 and two U-17 and U-19 national leagues with 14-15 clubs in each. Clubs need to fulfil the DBU’s youth licence development criteria to compete in the top leagues. The best players at U-15 from all licensed clubs are invited to two regional DBU talent centres. Players are challenged to join the top-four clubs, from where the core of the men’s youth national team (MYNT) is selected.

U-18 to U-23
Transition from junior to senior

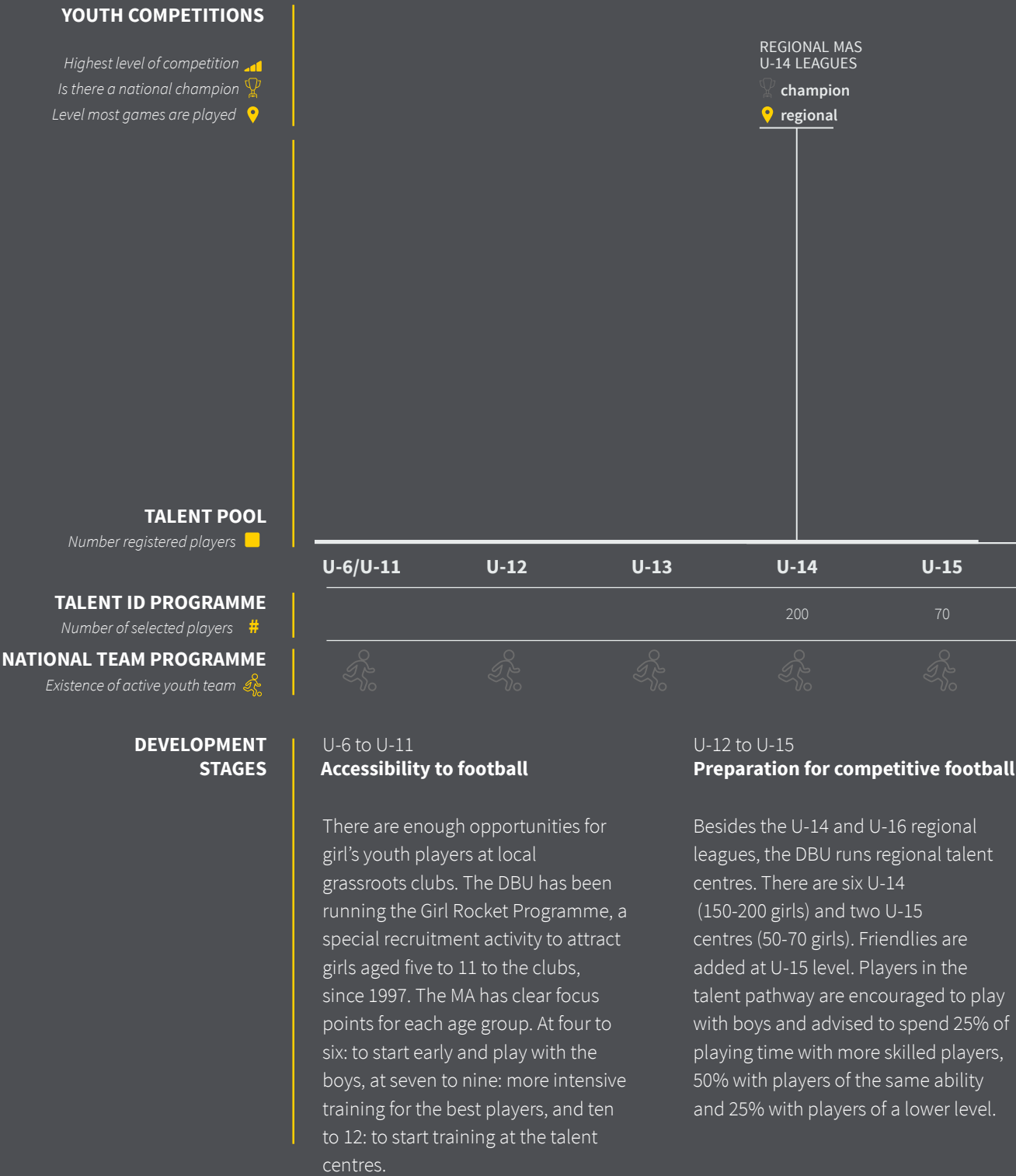
The DBU seeks to facilitate transition. As a part of the youth licensing system, the five-star clubs have a transition coach, whose remit includes overseeing development opportunities for talented players. Annual international club transition tournaments aim to offer more competitive matches for U-18 to U-21 players. The U-18 to U-21 MYNT annual programmes provide enough playing opportunities, including competitive friendlies.

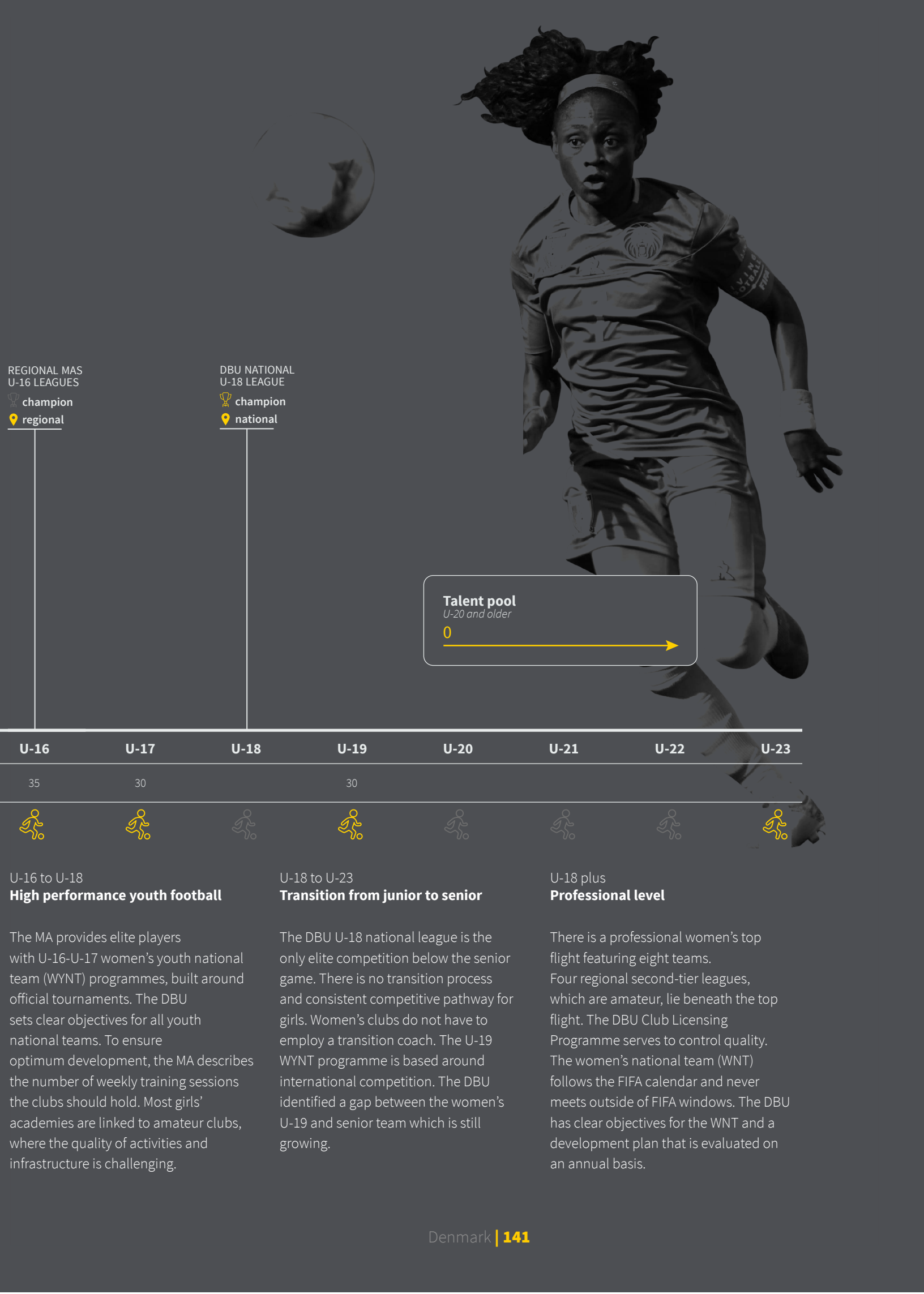
U-18 plus
Professional level

At professional level, the top leagues are the Superligaen and the 1st Division. The third tier features two semi-professional national leagues. The Superligaen offers emerging talent sufficient playing time before they play overseas. The men’s national team follows the FIFA calendar and plays no matches outside the FIFA windows.

Girls talent pathway

The opportunity to progress through a clear talent pathway is equally vital for the development of female players as it is for males. A thorough and objective identification system should be in place to ensure enough talented female players are selected. Identified players must then receive both sufficient playing and progressive development opportunities to help them fulfil their true potential. A pathway with these characteristic helps ensure all players get a chance.





REGIONAL MAS
U-16 LEAGUES

 **champion**

 **regional**

DBU NATIONAL
U-18 LEAGUE

 **champion**

 **national**

Talent pool
U-20 and older

0



U-16 **U-17** **U-18** **U-19** **U-20** **U-21** **U-22** **U-23**

35

30

30



U-16 to U-18
High performance youth football

The MA provides elite players with U-16-U-17 women's youth national team (WYNT) programmes, built around official tournaments. The DBU sets clear objectives for all youth national teams. To ensure optimum development, the MA describes the number of weekly training sessions the clubs should hold. Most girls' academies are linked to amateur clubs, where the quality of activities and infrastructure is challenging.

U-18 to U-23
Transition from junior to senior

The DBU U-18 national league is the only elite competition below the senior game. There is no transition process and consistent competitive pathway for girls. Women's clubs do not have to employ a transition coach. The U-19 WYNT programme is based around international competition. The DBU identified a gap between the women's U-19 and senior team which is still growing.

U-18 plus
Professional level

There is a professional women's top flight featuring eight teams. Four regional second-tier leagues, which are amateur, lie beneath the top flight. The DBU Club Licensing Programme serves to control quality. The women's national team (WNT) follows the FIFA calendar and never meets outside of FIFA windows. The DBU has clear objectives for the WNT and a development plan that is evaluated on an annual basis.

GLOSSARY



AFC	Asian Football Confederation
CAF	Confederation of African Football
CONMEBOL	South American Football Confederation
Concacaf	Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football
OFC	Oceania Football Confederation
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association

Academy	<p>Typically the part of a football club that trains young players who might one day become part of the first team.</p> <p>An academy may also be based at the national association. In this context, it may be referred to as a centre of excellence. Its role is still to develop young players for the senior team, but the focus is on the national team rather than on a particular club.</p> <p>There are also examples of private academies and schools, which can also be a focus for the development of young footballers. These environments all have one thing in common: they select and train the players based upon their potential to make it at the professional level of the game.</p>
Academy Performance Plan (APP)	A long-term strategy developed by an academy that provides coaches and support staff with clearly defined performance targets closely aligned to a club/association's football philosophy
Club Academy Monitoring Platform (CAMP)	System that was used by Double Pass to monitor academies throughout the Global Ecosystem Analysis
Continuous professional development (CPD)	A planned, continuous and lifelong process whereby coaches further develop their personal and professional qualities, and improve their knowledge, skills and practice. CPD is often a prerequisite to maintain a coaching licence and is offered by many MAs as part of their licensing programme
Data management system	The platform(s) used to record all performance-related data for the effective functioning of football systems
Domestic player	A player who is eligible to represent the national association in which their club resides
Fast-track approach	The practice of accelerating the learning pathway for certain target groups. In the context of coach education, it is typically used to enable former professional players to speed up the process of achieving their coaching qualifications.
Foreign player	A player who is not eligible to represent the national association in which their club resides
Full-time equivalent (FTE)	Refers to an employee's scheduled hours divided by the employer's hours for a full-time working week
Home-grown player	A player who, regardless of their nationality, has been trained by their club or by another club in the same national association

Licensed coach	An individual who holds an up-to-date and valid coaching qualification endorsed by the national association. The licence should be commensurate with the level at which the coach is coaching in order for it to be valid.
Long-term player development (LTPD)	The concept of designing appropriate coaching programmes for players subject to the stage of their development. Typically, LTPD is divided into phases, from foundation phase through to youth development (which may be sub-divided into pre- and post-pubescent stages) and finally professional development. The LTPD model will usually seek to capture all aspects of a player's development, including technical, tactical, physical, psychological and social aspects.
Member association (MA)	FIFA member association
Player care	Term used for a range of services that focus on the mental and physical well-being of players. These services will relate to the wider health and well-being of the player rather than the football-specific aspects of a player's development.
Playing philosophy	Usually a document that shows how the MA has embedded an approach to playing the game. It will impact upon the tactical approach adopted by the national teams and it is likely to impact upon other aspects of football policy within the MA, such as the approach to coach education, coaching and player recruitment, and development.
Relative age effect (RAE) (also known as the birth date effect)	The process by which children born in the earliest part of the year are more likely to be selected for representative teams or academy squads. The RAE is most pronounced in sports that select early developers (i.e. pre-pubescent). It has been identified as a significant bias in many football systems around the world.
Return-to-play protocols	standardised process that national teams and clubs will usually have for bringing a player back to fitness after injury
Sports science support	The range of services available designed to support the performance of players. Typically, this will include physiology, strength and conditioning (athletic training), psychology, physiotherapy and nutrition.
Talent identification	A key discipline within the wider scouting process, referring to processes and programmes that are set up to identify players who have the potential to be professional/national team players. Talent identification aims to detect, select, recruit and develop players who have the skills and competencies to succeed at the predetermined level. Referred to as "TID" in combination with talent development.

Technical division	The departments that are responsible for the delivery of all technical football aspects of the work of the association (typically this will be coaching, player development, recruitment, scouting, performance analysis, etc.)
Technical leaders	Those staff, other than coaches, who have specific technical duties to carry out in support of the MA, for example the director of coaching, the head of coach education or the technical director him/herself
Top league	The senior competition for men and for women in a country. This will usually be the professional league. If there is a senior professional league that has multiple divisions, the top league refers to the highest division.
Top-tier competition	The highest national championship in a country, regardless of professional/ amateur status
Youth league	An age-restricted competition usually subject to maximum age criteria, but it may also have minimum age criteria as well

Abbreviations used in the infographics:

- Y:** Youth
- S:** Senior
- M:** Male
- F:** Female



**“Invest in the future of the game.
Give every talent a chance.”**

Arsène Wenger



Published by

Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FIFA-Strasse 20, P.O. Box, 8044 Zurich, Switzerland
T: +41 (0)43 222 7777 FIFA.com Produced in Switzerland

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FIFA.com

Content & Production

FIFA Technical Subdivision - High Performance Programmes
Philippka-Sportverlag

Analysis Data

Double Pass
CIES
FIFA internal sources

Graphic design

Jaaf Design
VMLY&R Branding

Photos

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