# Demographic analysis of professional football club coaches

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## 1. Introduction

The 56th edition of the Monthly Report of the CIES Football Observatory analyses the characteristics of the coaches at the head of 1,646 teams from 110 leagues in 79 countries worldwide. The study covers three aspects: the age, the length of stay in the club managed and the origin (national/expatriate). The Report also presents the rankings of the most represented origins among expatriate coaches of 1,875 clubs from 128 leagues in 91 countries.

**Figure 1: study sample**

UEFA

[ALB]: Superliga (12)
[ARM]: Premier League (9)
[AUT]: Bundesliga (12)
[AUT/2]: 2. Liga (16)
[AZE]: Premyer Liqa (8)
[BEL]: First Division A (16)
[BEL/2]: First Division B (7)
[BIH]: Premijer Liga (11)
[BLR]: Premier League (16)
[BLR/2]: 1. Division* (14)
[BUL]: First League (13)
[CRO]: 1. HNL (10)
[CRO/2]: 2. HNL (19)
[CYP]: 1. Division (12)
[CZE]: Czech Liga (16)
[CZE/2]: FNL (17)
[DEN]: Superliga (14)
[DEN/2]: 1st Division* (12)
[ENG]: Premier League (20)
[ENG/2]: Championship (24)
[ESP]: La Liga (20)
[ESP/2]: Segunda División (22)
[EST]: Meistriliiga (10)
[FIN]: Veikkausliiga (12)
[FIN/2]: Ykkönen* (12)
[FRA]: Ligue 1 (22)
[FRA/2]: Ligue 2 (20)
[FRO]: Meistaradeildin (11)
[GEO]: Erovnuli Liga (10)
[GER]: Bundesliga (18)
[GER/2]: 2. Bundesliga (18)
[GRE]: Super League 1 (13)
[HUN]: NB I (12)
[HUN/2]: NB II (19)
[IRL]: Premier Division (10)
[ISL]: Úrvalsdeild (12)
[ISR]: Ligat ha'Al (14)
[ISR/2]: Liga Leumit (16)
[ITA]: Serie A (20)
[ITA/2]: Serie B (20)
[KAZ]: Premier League (12)
[LTU]: A Lyga (6)
[LUX]: National Division (13)
[LVA]: Virsliga (10)
[MDA]: Divizia Națională (9)

[MKD]: First League (10)
[MLT]: Premier League* (16)
[MNE]: First League (10)
[NED]: Eredivisie (17)
[NED/2]: Eerste Divisie (21)
[NIR]: Premiership (12)
[NOR]: Eliteserien (16)
[NOR/2]: 1. Division (16)
[POL]: Ekstraklasa (16)
[POL/2]: I Liga (18)
[POR]: Primeira Liga (18)
[POR/2]: Segunda Liga (18)
[ROM]: Liga I (14)
[ROM/2]: Liga II (17)
[RUS]: Premier League (15)
[RUS/2]: FNL (17)
[SCO]: Premiership (13)
[SCO/2]: Championship (10)
[SMR]: Campionato* (15)
[SRB]: Super Liga (16)
[SRB/2]: Prva Liga (16)
[SUI]: Super League (18)
[SUI/2]: Challenge League (10)
[SVK]: Super Liga (12)
[SVK/2]: 2. Liga (16)
[SVN]: 1. SNL (10)
[SVN/2]: 2. SNL* (16)
[SWE]: Allsvenskan (16)
[SWE/2]: Superettan (16)
[TUR]: Süper Lig (18)
[TUR/2]: 1. Lig (17)
[UKR]: Premier League (12)
[UKR/2]: Persha Liga (16)
[WAL]: Premier League (11)

AFC

[AUS]: A-League (9)
[CHN]: CSL (16)
[HKG]: Premier League* (11)
[IDN]: Liga 1 (18)
[IND]: Indian Super League (10)
[IRN]: Persian Gulf Pro League (17)
[JPN]: J1 League (18)
[JPN/2]: J2 League (22)
[KOR]: K League 1 (12)
[KOR/2]: K League 2 (10)
[KSA]: Pro League (16)

[LIB]: Premier League* (12)
[MAS]: Super League* (13)
[QAT]: Stars League (12)
[SIN]: Premier League (9)
[THA]: Thai League 1* (19)
[UAE]: Arabian Gulf League (14)
[UZB]: Super League (16)
[VIE]: V.League 1* (14)

CONBEBOL

[ARG]: Superliga (22)
[ARG/2]: Primera Nacional (33)
[BOL]: Primera División (15)
[BRA]: Serie A (19)
[BRA/2]: Serie B (20)
[CHI]: Primera División (20)
[CHI/2]: Primera B* (16)
[COL]: Primera A (20)
[COL/2]: Primera B (16)
[ECU]: Liga Pro (16)
[PAR]: Division Profesional (12)
[PER]: Primera División (20)
[URU]: Primera División (16)
[VEN]: Primera División (19)
[CRC]: Primera División (12)
[GUA]: Liga Nacional (12)
[HON]: Liga Nacional (10)
[JAM]: Premier League* (17)
[MEX]: Liga MX (20)
[MEX/2]: Ascenso MX (13)
[NCA]: Primera Division* (10)
[PAN]: LPF* (10)
[SLV]: Primera Division* (12)
[USA]: MLS (26)
[USA/2]: USL Championship (35)

CAF

[ALG]: Ligue 1 (14)
[RSA]: PSL (16)
[RSA/2]: 1st Division* (16)
[TUN]: Ligue 1 (13)

OFC

[NZL]: Premiership* (11)

\* Analysis about expatriates only
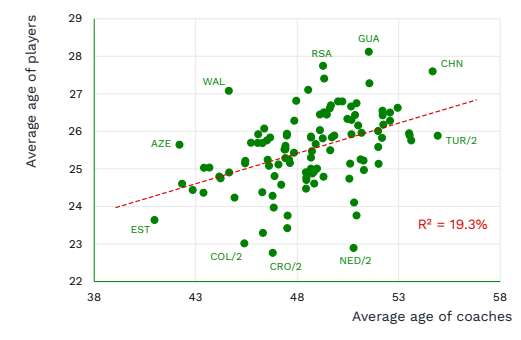( ) : Number of coaches

## 2. Age

The average age of the coaches in our sample is 48.8 years. At league level, the values vary from just 41.0 years of age for the ten top division Estonian clubs to 54.9 years of age for the second level Turkish competition. In this respect, it is interesting to note that the Turkish top division is the European championship where the average age of line-ups fielded by clubs during the 2019/20 season was the highest: 29.2 years of age.

A positive and significant correlation ($R^2$=19.3%) was measured between the average age of coaches and that of players at the level of the 110 leagues studied. This finding indicates that the more ageing players there are in a league, the more clubs that are part of it tend to employ experienced coaches, or vice versa.

### Figure 2: average age of coaches, by league

**Oldest coaches**

| | | | | average (48.8 years) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | TUR/2 | 1. Lig | 54.92 | |
| 2 | CHN | CSL | 54.67 | |
| 3 | FRA/2 | Ligue 2 | 53.61 | |
| 4 | PER | Primera División | 53.53 | |
| 5 | MEX | Liga MX | 53.51 | |
| 6 | IDN | Liga 1 | 52.95 | |
| 7 | COL | Primera A | 52.57 | |
| . | HON | Liga Nacional | 52.57 | |
| 9 | ALG | Ligue 1 | 52.24 | |
| 10 | CZE | Czech Liga | 52.21 | |
| 11 | JPN | J1 League | 52.20 | |
| 12 | BUL | First League | 52.17 | |
| 13 | BRA | Serie A | 52.01 | |
| 14 | GEO | Erovnuli Liga | 51.99 | |
| . | ITA/2 | Serie B | 51.99 | |

**Youngest coaches**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | EST | Meistriliiga | 40.97 |
| 2 | AZE | Premyer Liqa | 42.20 |
| 3 | FRO | Meistaradeildin | 42.33 |
| 4 | NOR/2 | 1. Division | 42.85 |
| 5 | ROM/2 | Liga II | 43.38 |
| 6 | LTU | A Lyga | 43.41 |
| 7 | VEN | Primera División | 43.67 |
| 8 | CRO | 1. HNL | 44.16 |
| 9 | IRL | Premier Division | 44.23 |
| 10 | WAL | Premier League | 44.63 |
| 11 | SWE/2 | Superettan | 44.64 |
| 12 | USA/2 | USL Championship | 44.92 |
| 13 | COL/2 | Primera B | 45.39 |
| 14 | SWE | Allsvenskan | 45.43 |
| 15 | NIR | Premiership | 45.44 |

### Figure 3: average age of players and coaches, by league

The award for the youngest coach among the clubs analysed goes to Ole Martin Nesselquist. The Norwegian will celebrate his 27th birthday on the 24th of June. Despite his young age, he has been leading the Strømmen team, in the second division of his native country, for already a year and a half. Conversely, the oldest coach is Hamdi Yilmaz (74.5 years of age). He trains Keçiörengücü, in the Turkish second division.

### Figure 4a: oldest coaches (age on 01/06/2020)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Hamdi Yılmaz, Keçiörengücü (TUR/2) | 74.47 |
| 2 | Jesualdo Ferreira, Santos (BRA) | 74.07 |
| 3 | Ivan Karaula, Cibalia (CRO/2) | 73.07 |
| 4 | Roy Hodgson, Crystal Palace (ENG) | 72.86 |
| 5 | Dick Advocaat, Feyenoord (NED) | 72.73 |
| 6 | Giampiero Ventura, US Salernitana (ITA/2) | 72.43 |
| 7 | Gregorio Pérez, Universitario (PER) | 72.42 |
| 8 | Julio Comesaña, Junior (COL) | 72.28 |
| 9 | Eugênio Machado Souto, Vitória (BRA/2) | 72.10 |
| 10 | Winfried Schäfer, Bani Yas (UAE) | 70.44 |
| 11 | Oscar Héctor Quintabani, Deportes Quindío (COL/2) | 70.04 |
| 12 | Nélson Baptista, Kashiwa Reysol (JPN) | 69.91 |
| 13 | Vladimer Khachidze, Torpedo Kutaisi (GEO) | 69.05 |
| 14 | Manuel Cajuda, Leixões (POR/2) | 68.98 |
| 15 | Bruce Arena, New England (USA) | 68.74 |

### Figure 4b: youngest coaches (age on 01/06/2020)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ole Martin Nesselquist, Strømmen (NOR/2) | 26.96 |
| 2 | Gavin Lee, Tampines Rovers (SIN) | 28.02 |
| 3 | Chris Hughes, Newtown (WAL) | 31.13 |
| 4 | Damir Lepen Jurak, Međimurje Čakovec (CRO/2) | 31.14 |
| 5 | Guillermo Abascal, Ascoli Calcio (ITA/2) | 31.16 |
| 6 | Ľuboš Benkovský, Slavoj Trebišov (SVK/2) | 31.29 |
| 7 | Alan Clarke, Black Leopards (RSA) | 31.35 |
| 8 | Mak Lind, Norrby (SWE/2) | 31.60 |
| 9 | Rokas Garastas, Kauno Žalgiris (LTU) | 31.81 |
| 10 | Francisco Meneghini, Audax Italiano (CHI) | 31.82 |
| 11 | Luis García, Real San Andrés (COL/2) | 31.91 |
| 12 | Răzvan Ciodar, Sportul Snagov (ROM/2) | 31.98 |
| 13 | Bryant Lazaro, Øygarden (NOR/2) | 32.05 |
| 14 | Ole Werner, Holstein Kiel (GER/2) | 32.10 |
| 15 | Kaido Koppel, Tammeka (EST) | 32.25 |

## 3. Length of stay

On average, on the 1st June 2020, coaches of the teams taken into account were in the job for 480 days. However, the median value is much lower: 30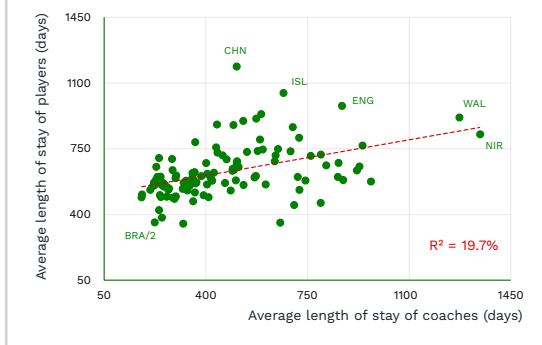1 days. This gap illustrates the fact that a small number of coaches that have been in charge of their teams for a long time pull the average up. The median values by league vary between 943 days in the Welsh top division and only 122 days in the Brazilian Serie B.

As for age, a significant and positive correlation ($R^2$=19.7%) exists between the average length of stay of players and coaches. This link is the reflection of important cultural differences in terms of management according to country. The more club owners in a given league have a tendency to change coaches, the easier it is to have a high turnover of players in a squad, or vice versa.

**Figure 5: median length of stay of coaches (number of days), by league**

| | | Highest number of days | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | WAL | Premier League | 943 | |
| 2 | SWE | Allsvenskan | 890 | |
| 3 | SUI | Super League | 701 | |
| 4 | NIR | Premiership | 676 | |
| 5 | SUI/2 | Challenge League | 662 | |
| 6 | USA/2 | USL Championship | 657 | |
| 7 | SCO | Premiership | 648 | |
| 8 | IRL | Premier Division | 573 | |
| 9 | BLR | Premier League | 556 | |
| 10 | KOR | K League 1 | 545 | |
| 11 | ENG | Premier League | 537 | |
| 12 | NOR/2 | 1. Division | 517 | |
| . | ISL | Úrvalsdeild | 517 | |
| . | USA | MLS | 517 | |
| 15 | ESP | La Liga | 506 | |

| | | Lowest number of days | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | BRA/2 | Serie B | 122 | |
| 2 | TUR/2 | 1. Lig | 124 | |
| 3 | LVA | Virsliga | 134 | |
| 4 | ALG | Ligue 1 | 141 | |
| 5 | LTU | A Lyga | 142 | |
| 6 | PER | Primera División | 147 | |
| 7 | GEO | Erovnuli Liga | 148 | |
| 8 | IDN | Liga 1 | 152 | |
| . | FRO | Meistaradeildin | 152 | |
| . | CRC | Primera División | 152 | |
| . | TUR | Süper Lig | 152 | |
| . | BOL | Primera División | 152 | |
| 13 | CYP | 1. Division | 162 | |
| 14 | PAR | Division Profesional | 163 | |
| 15 | COL/2 | Primera B | 166 | |

**Figure 6: average length of stay of players and coaches, by league**

The coach with the greatest longevity among the teams analysed is Bruno Luzi, who has been running Chambly, in the French second division, for nineteen years. On the 1st June 2020, eight other coaches were at the head of their team for at least a decade, among which three in the Americas: Peter Vermes, Pablo Vicò and Ricardo Ferretti.

**Figure 7: longest-serving coaches, number of days (01/06/2020)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Bruno Luzi, FC Chambly (FRA/2) | 6910 |
| 2 | Stephen Baxter, Crusaders FC (NIR) | 5586 |
| 3 | Mike Anhaeuser, Charleston Battery (USA/2) | 5540 |
| 4 | Andris Riherts, FC Metta/LU (LVA) | 5265 |
| . | Vegard Hansen, Mjøndalen IF (NOR) | 5265 |
| 6 | Frank Schmidt, FC Heidenheim (GER/2) | 4641 |
| 7 | Qurban Qurbanov, Qarabağ Ağdam FK (AZE) | 4353 |
| 8 | Peter Vermes, Sporting Kansas City (USA) | 3856 |
| 9 | Pablo Vicó, Brown de Adrogué (ARG/2) | 3804 |
| 10 | Ricardo Ferretti, Tigres UANL (MEX) | 3653 |
| 11 | Ben Olsen, DC United (USA) | 3588 |
| 12 | Vitali Zhukovskiy, FC Isloch (BLR) | 3439 |
| 13 | Stéphane Moulin, Angers SCO (FRA) | 3258 |
| 14 | Vardan Bichakhchyan, Shirak FC (ARM) | 3247 |
| 15 | Colin Caton, Bala Town FC (WAL) | 3196 |
| 16 | Gary Hamilton, Glenavon FC (NIR) | 3091 |
| 17 | Diego Simeone, Atlético Madrid (ESP) | 3083 |
| 18 | Christian Streich, SC Freiburg (GER) | 3077 |
| 19 | Francky Dury, Zulte-Waregem (BEL) | 3076 |
| 20 | Oleksandr Ryabokon, FK Desna (UKR) | 2998 |

## 4. Foreign presence

Altogether, 28.3% of coaches in charge on the 1st of June 2020 of the teams analysed grew up in another association than that of the club managed. This percentage is higher than that measured among players in the same competitions: 24.7%. This indicates that the labour market for coaches is even more international than that for footballers.

The proportion of expatriate trainers is over four fifths in five Asian premier divisions: Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, India and China. Expatriates make up at least half of the coaches in 24 out of 110 leagues studied. Conversely, in only 14 championships there are no clubs trained by an expatriate coach.

The percentage of expatriate players and coaches within a league are only weakly correlated ($R^2$=10.0%). This is explained by the high proportion of coaches imported from abroad in Asia, where quotas limit the presence of expatriate players. If we exclude Asia, the strength of the correlation increases ($R^2$=15.5%). This confirms that, without legal constraints, the internationalisation of the labour market for coaches and players takes place in parallel.

### Figure 8: % of expatriates among coaches, by league

| | | Highest % | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | KSA | Pro League | 93.8 | |
| 2 | UAE | Arabian Gulf League | 92.9 | |
| 3 | QAT | Stars League | 91.7 | |
| 4 | IND | Indian Super League | 90.0 | |
| 5 | CHN | CSL | 81.3 | |
| . | ECU | Liga Pro | 81.3 | |
| 7 | SMR | Campionato | 73.3 | |
| 8 | HON | Liga Nacional | 70.0 | |
| . | LVA | Virsliga | 70.0 | |
| . | PAN | LPF | 70.0 | |
| 11 | CYP | 1. Division | 66.7 | |
| . | GUA | Liga Nacional | 66.7 | |
| . | KAZ | Premier League | 66.7 | |
| 14 | IDN | Liga 1 | 61.1 | |
| 15 | BOL | Primera División | 60.0 | |
| 16 | PAR | Division Profesional | 58.3 | |
| 17 | BEL/2 | First Division B | 57.1 | |
| 18 | BEL | First Division A | 56.3 | |
| 19 | CHI | Primera División | 55.0 | |
| . | ENG | Premier League | 55.0 | |

### Leagues without foreign coaches

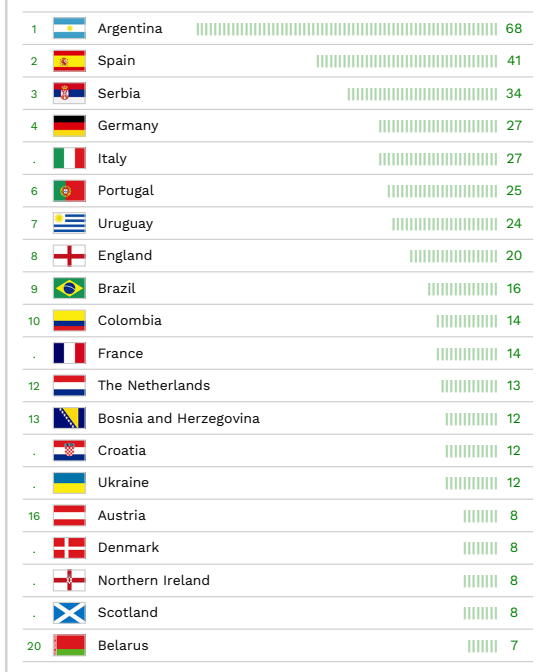| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| BRA/2 | Serie B | | ROM | Liga I |
| FRA/2 | Ligue 2 | | ROM/2 | Liga II |
| IRL | Premier Division | | SRB/2 | Prva Liga |
| ISL | Úrvalsdeild | | SVK/2 | 2. Liga |
| JAM | Premier League | | TUR/2 | 1. Lig |
| KOR/2 | K League 2 | | UKR/2 | Persha Liga |
| MEX/2 | Ascenso MX | | | |
| NIR | Premiership | | | |

### Figure 9: % of expatriates among players and coaches, by league (not including Asia)
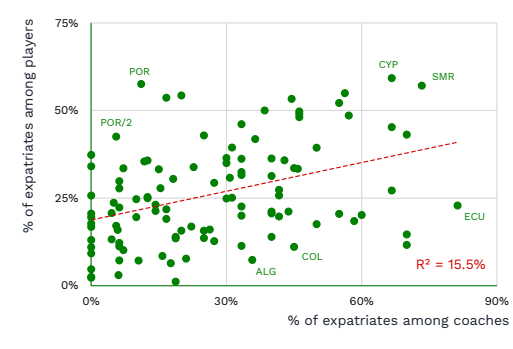
Argentina is the most represented nation among expatriate coaches. The 68 Argentinians present abroad on the 1st June 2020 were at work in 22 different countries. Most of them were active in other Latin American countries. Similar to players, their top destination was Chile (11 coaches). Spaniards are also well represented abroad (41 coaches in 21 countries), as well as Serbs (34 coaches in a record number of 24 countries).

**Figure 10: most represented origins among expatriate coaches**

| | | Country | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | Argentina | IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII | 68 |
| 2 | | Spain | IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII | 41 |
| 3 | | Serbia | IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII | 34 |
| 4 | | Germany | IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII | 27 |
| . | | Italy | IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII | 27 |
| 6 | | Portugal | IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII | 25 |
| 7 | | Uruguay | IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII | 24 |
| 8 | | England | IIIIIIIIIIIIII | 20 |
| 9 | | Brazil | IIIIIIIIIIII | 16 |
| 10 | | Colombia | IIIIIIIIIII | 14 |
| . | | France | IIIIIIIIIII | 14 |
| 12 | | The Netherlands | IIIIIIIIII | 13 |
| 13 | | Bosnia and Herzegovina | IIIIIIIIII | 12 |
| . | | Croatia | IIIIIIIIII | 12 |
| . | | Ukraine | IIIIIIIIII | 12 |
| 16 | | Austria | IIIIIII | 8 |
| . | | Denmark | IIIIIII | 8 |
| . | | Northern Ireland | IIIIIII | 8 |
| . | | Scotland | IIIIIII | 8 |
| 20 | | Belarus | IIIIII | 7 |

7

## 5. Conclusion

This pioneering study on the characteristics of trainers of professional football clubs worldwide shows that the typical profile for a coach is a male just under 50 years of age (48.8), in charge for less than one year (301 days) and having grown up in the country of the club managed (in more than 7 out of 10 cases). However, the percentage of expatriate coaches is even greater than that of players: 28.3% compared to 24.7% in the leagues studied.

The analysis of the biography of expatriate coaches included in the sample reveals that almost two-thirds of them are former professional players: 64.3%. As for the positions the latter played in, we observe an overrepresentation of defenders: 35% of coaches in the leagues studied compared to 30% among players. Conversely, the goalkeepers are underrepresented: 4% as opposed to 11%.