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The Football Governing Bodies and the Stakeholders: An Analysis of their Relationship in the European Context



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This article aims to provide an exhaustive overview of the current status of football stakeholders's relationships at the European level. The views expressed below are those of the authors and do not necessarily align with any mentioned governing body.

Overview of the Governance of Football in the European Continent

The Football Governance System: the Governing Bodies and the Stakeholders

The football governance system, in a similar way to other sports, operates in a hierarchy. Following a pyramid structure, the International Federations reside at the top, followed by the Continental Confederations, the members of which are the National Federations. In the case of football, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) stands at the top, followed at the continental level by Confederations such as the Union des Associations Européennes de Football (UEFA) or the Confederation of African Football (CAF) and, lastly by the National Federations, such as the Italian *Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio* (FIGC).

The main functions of international federations are to promote the sport they govern at every level and set the rules of the game, both from an organizational and technical standpoint; every affiliated national federation will follow that. They are also responsible for setting the calendar of international competitions, for the technical training and accreditation of international referees, for setting medical rules that concern the health of athletes and for the government and control of their respective disciplines.

In contrast, Continental Confederations need to follow the technical rules set by their respective International Federations. Still, they hold the exclusive power to organize and manage their sports activity in their continent of influence.