



# TRANSFER REPORT 2020/21

**How Covid changed  
the transfer market**

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Dear all,

I wrote back in April on the Driblab website that we were not going through easy times and the sad reality is that this pandemic has affected many industries if not all of them. Football, and particularly professional football, is not and will not be immune to it until a vaccine is discovered and distributed worldwide.

The financial crisis across Europe has resulted in a steep drop in the value of footballers as clubs prepared to cut transfer spending this year. Clubs incomes were heavily affected and rolled over to the now 2020-21 season. The top 3 main revenue streams were TV broadcasting, Game tickets and commercial revenues (Sponsors, ads, merchandise etc) and they were all affected one way or another. Right now TV rights are basically the main source of income for the majority of clubs due to the pandemic de-facto killing in-game activation, museum and stadium tours, merchandising offline and many other sources of revenue.

With a solid €5bn transfers value in 2019, according to TransferMarkt, the market was on an average increase trend of 10-15% annually between 2016 and 2019 in the top 5 European Leagues. This year, the market has faced a remarkable hit as the number of players signings in the summer market was decreased by -33% compared to the previous year. In terms of value, transfers had a massive decrease of -40% after a remarkable growth of 20% between 2018 and 2019. Also the average value per signing was down -12% compared to the year prior. These numbers show the depths of the transfer's recession. 2020 will be remembered for many things football-wise, but it will also be the first summer with no -official- signings of over €100m since 2015.

**This big decline in volume of player movement is going to affect the transfer market for at least the next 12-24 months, and thus should drive clubs to be keen on efficient spending more than ever before.** At Driblab we believe that evaluating players through a data analysis lens have a higher success rate than those only made based on instinct and intuition. In 2019, Driblab participated in more than €560m in player transfers and these players had a **surplus-value of +29% a year later.**

As I mentioned in the original letter published in April, this isn't business as usual. **This report shows with figures that the market has been disrupted and those who adapt to it the fastest will enjoy a severe competitive advantage.**

Feel free to reach out to us anytime and be safe during these dark times

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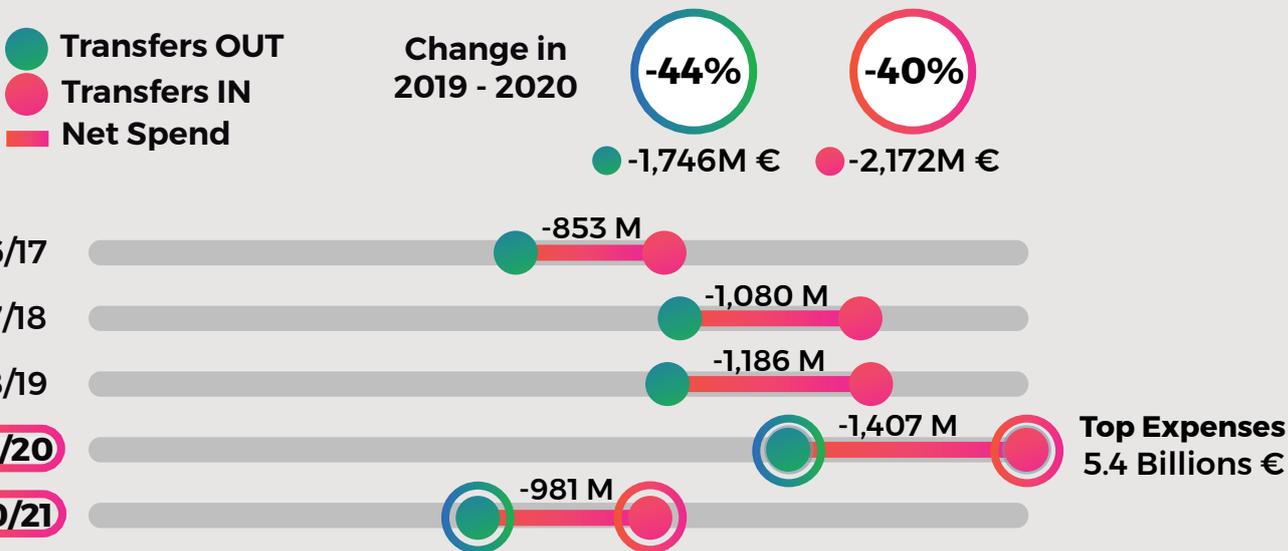
## Transfer Market Evolution

The football transfer market showed a remarkable growth in the last decade, especially in the last five years. Both the number of transfers and the average value per player were on a growing increase. Until the COVID year arrived and the market changed.

### Transfer Market Evolution - Five best leagues

In this year's transfer window, teams inside the five best leagues bought 33% less players than a year ago. A tough reality for football industry that can be summed up in one fact: **40% decrease** with a total buys of 3.3bn € compared to last year's 5.5bn €.

#### Last five seasons - Five best leagues



#### N° of movements



#### Average fee (in euros)



#### Type of transfer (%)



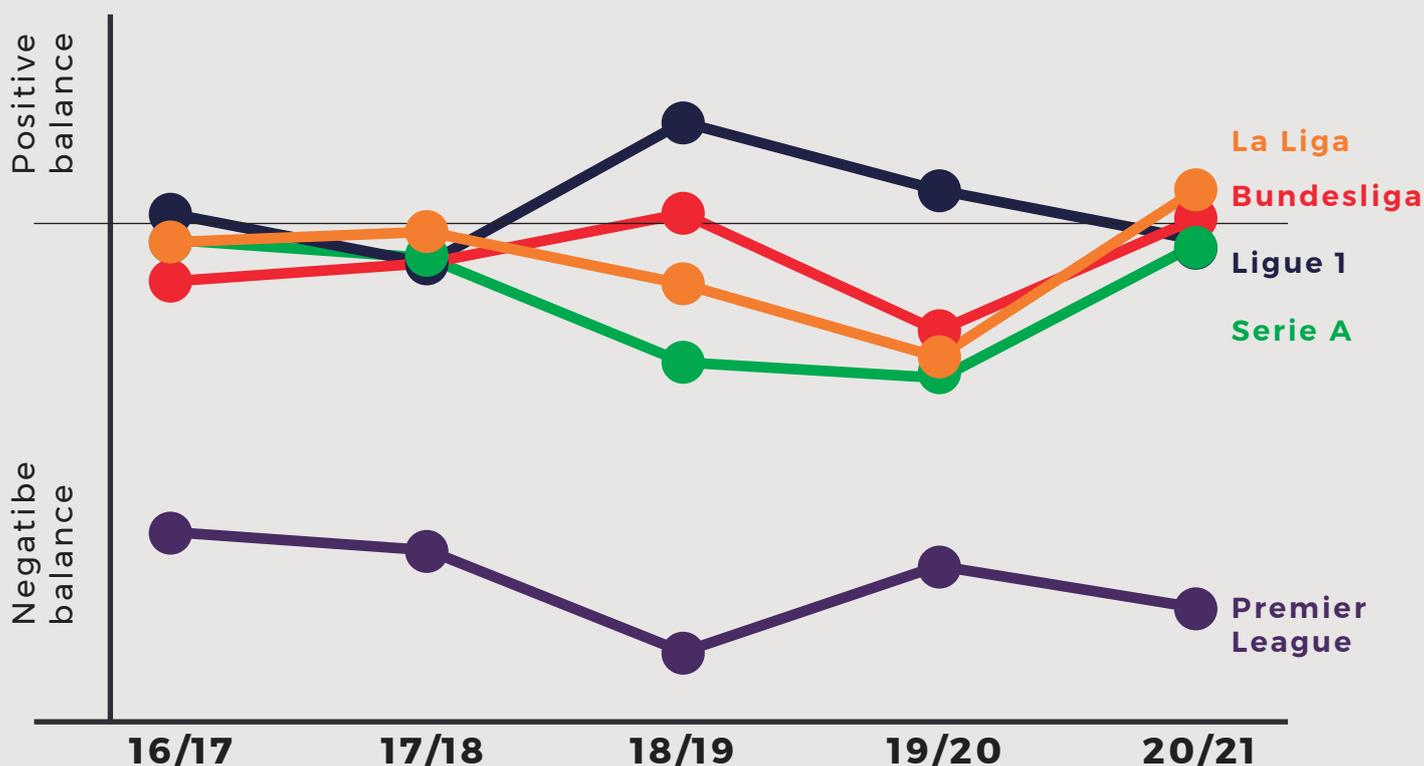
## Different realities for the Premier League and the rest of big leagues

The breakdown shows how each league invested during the COVID transfer window. With the Bundesliga almost at a draw level of net spend in this transfer window, Premier League widens its gap with the rest of the leagues and La Liga stands out at the opposite end.

### Net spend in last transfer window 2020/21



### Trends in net spend - Last five seasons - Big leagues





Premier League

# Premier League DRIBLAB REPORT

## Top 25 transfers

Premier League tops the big leagues as the biggest spender in total transfer values made with 1.4Bn € of total transfers. Makes the highest average value per player with a staggering 18.3M € per each signing.

The English league was the least hit as they only dropped 9% than last year's spending. Eight English clubs in the top 12 spenders in the five best leagues and also signing **17 out of the top 25 transfers** of this transfer window.

- PL 17
- LL 3
- SA 3
- BU 1
- LI 1



## Average fee per buy



18.3 Mill. €



8.2



8.1



7.9



5.8

## PL non stop spending - Man City case

With the signing of Ruben Dias, Man City have signed 5 of the 10 most expensive defenders ever (Dias, Cancelo, Laporte, Mendy and Stones).

### R. Dias - Performance 19/20



Man City signed the two highest fee defenders of this summer. Ruben Dias from Benfica for 68m € and Nathan Aké from Bournemouth for 45m €.



LaLiga

## Spanish football looks for other ways

La Liga received the biggest hit in the post-COVID transfer window. The Spanish league showed a massive drop in the players' brought in. After a 1.3bn € worth of signings done in 2019, this year showed the economical effect on the country most hit by the pandemic in Europe with 412m € signings, **the highest drop among the top five leagues, with 69% less spending** than last year and 48% less players arriving to Spain.

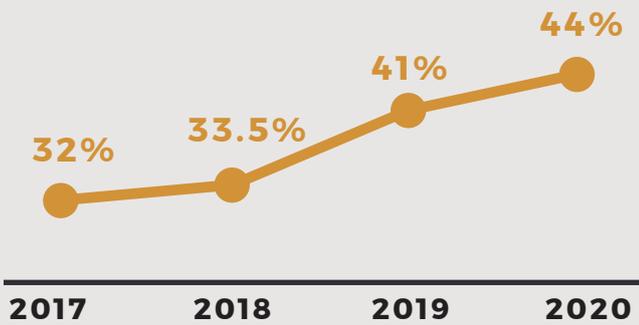
**-52% incomes**

**-69.1% expenses**

### Champions League clubs per league - Balance



### Increased influence outside the big five leagues



### La Liga % of expenditure in players out of top five leagues.

Barcelona may be the most recognizable example investing in Trincao and Dest but more and more clubs are expanding their frontiers like Real Valladolid with S. Weissman or Eibar with D. Kadzior.

#### Championship

- P. Estupiñán (16M €)
- Luis Suárez (7M €)
- Á. Giménez (2.8M €)

#### Eredivisie

- Serg. Dest (28M €)
- Ous. Idrissi (12M €)

#### Austria

- S. Weissman (4M €)

#### Portugal

- Trincao (31M €)
- M. Acuña (10,5M €)

#### China

- Y. Carrasco (27M €)

#### Croatia

- Ivo Grbic (7M €)
- D. Kadzior (2M €)

#### Segunda Division (top transfers)

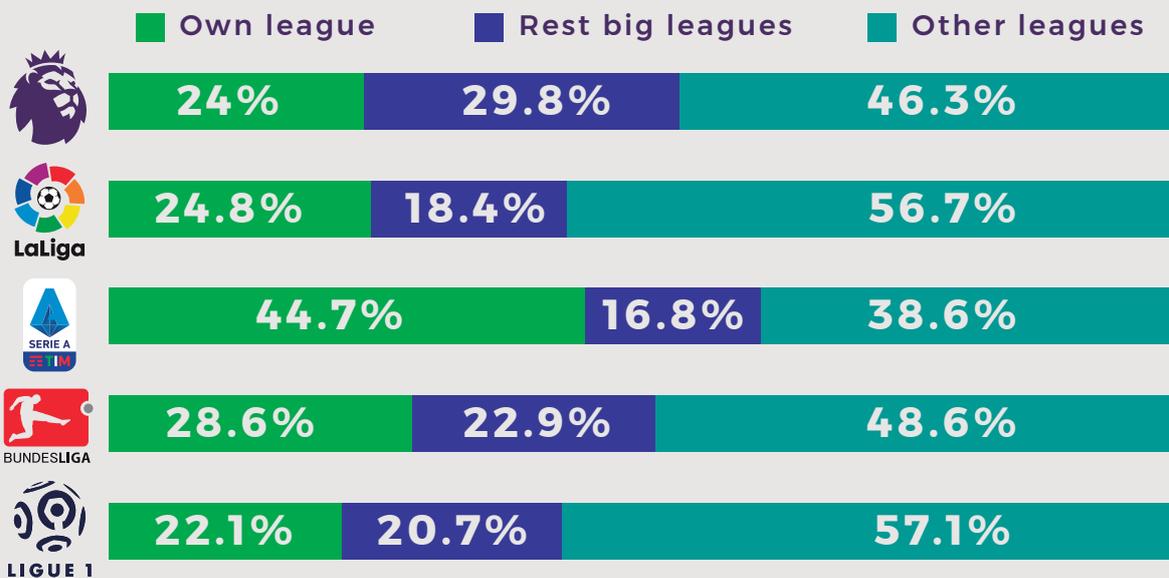
- L. Milla (5M €)
- R. Guti (5M €)
- Pedri (5M €)
- Bono (4M €)
- A. Lozano (2,5M €)
- B. García (2,1M €)
- J. Pombo (1,2M €)
- D. Siovas (1M €)



## Serie A relies even more on the local market

Serie A had the highest number of players sold with 5 teams in the top 6 clubs of most transfers out (Napoli, Inter, Sassuolo, Genoa and Atalanta). Napoli had the highest number of players leaving the team, selling ten players and loaning out other ten names, makes the team on top the list of selling players and the second in values after Barcelona.

The Italian League was the big competition with the most internal transfers having 88 signings between Serie A clubs which marks 44.7% of all the signings done during the transfer window.



### Loan + Buy: the Italian Job

During this window Transfermarkt registered only 39 paid loans in five big leagues: 23 of those loans happened in Serie A. A different type of signings for Italian clubs.



F. Chiesa (10M € + 44M €)  
 Á. Morata (10M + 35M)  
 W. McKennie (2M + 18.5M)



S. Tonali (5M + 30M)

M. Kumbulla (3M + 30M)  
 B. Mayoral (2M loan fee)



T. Bakayoko (2M loan fee)



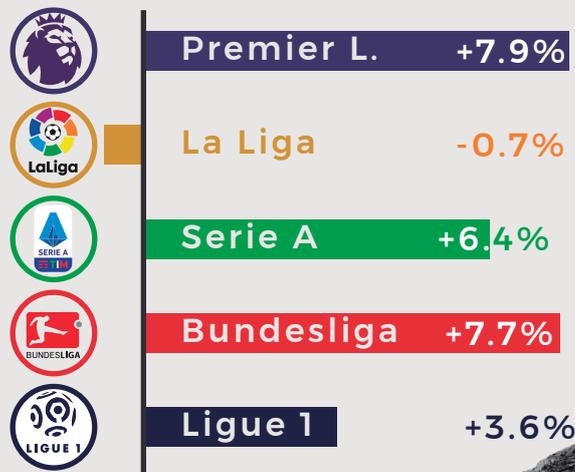
BUNDESLIGA

# Bundesliga DRIBLAB REPORT

This year's transfer window was the first since 2015 that we don't see a €100m transfer during the summer but Kai Havertz was the closest to this mark with a 80m € move from Bayer Leverkusen to Chelsea.

In recent years German football has confirmed itself as the league with the most attractive young talent on the market. After the sales of Timo Werner and Kai Havertz it seems clear that Haaland, Sancho, Reyna, Diaby or Thuram are some of the most promising names to go out to a big club in next transfer windows.

## Compound Annual Growth Rate in average sell fee (2016-2020)



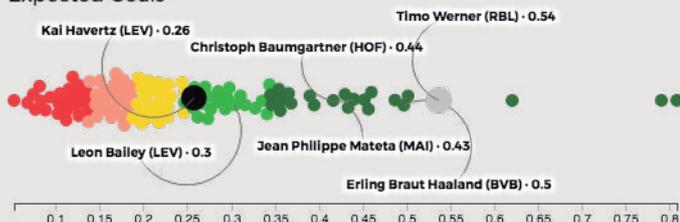
## Biggest U24 transfers in 2020/21

<b>K. Havertz</b>	 → 	<b>80M€</b>
<b>Arthur</b>	 → 	<b>72M€</b>
<b>V. Oshimen</b>	 → 	<b>70M€</b>
<b>R. Dias</b>	 → 	<b>68M€</b>
<b>T. Werner</b>	 → 	<b>53M€</b>

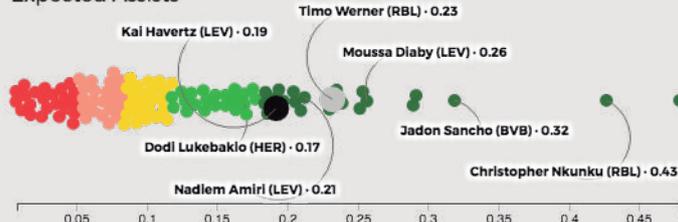
## Best league for young attacking talent?

Our beeswarm graphic shows all the U23 forwards, attacking midfielders or winger with more than 750 minutes played in league in the 2019/20. As we see below both Havertz and Werner were among the best players in xG and xA per 90 minutes.

Expected Goals



Expected Assists





LIGUE 1

# Ligue 1 DRIBLAB REPORT

Despite the economic problems in French football, the only major league that did not end post-Covid, the bet remains clear: young and cheap talent. This can be seen in the percentage of free transfers of U20 players. Buying cheap and selling expensive is still the goal of Ligue 1.

French football is the big league with the lowest average fee per transfer (6.2 million), something usual years ago, but the summer of 2020 has affected the incomes from sales, especially in transfers to the Premier League.

## 2020 Free Signings U20 players

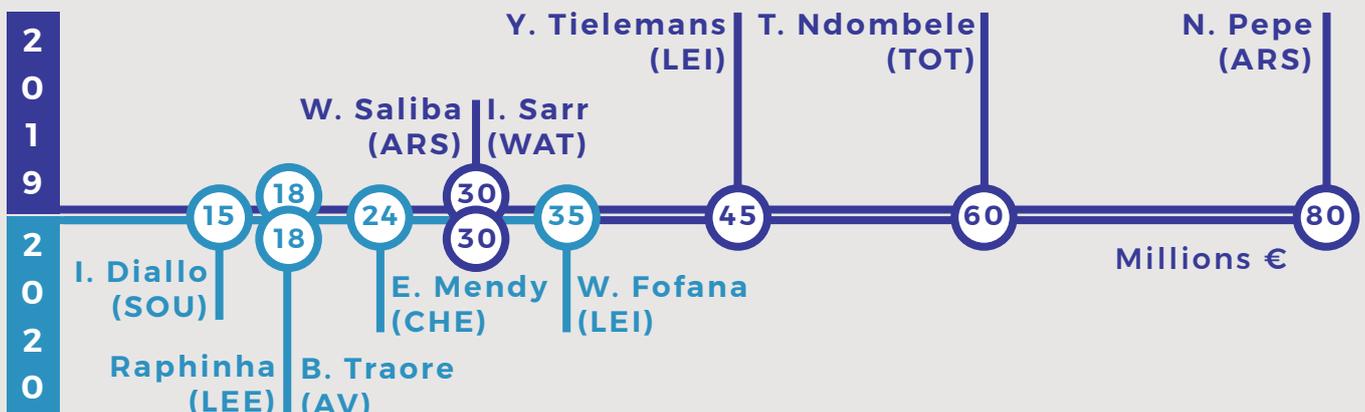


## Ligue 1 players sold to Premier League



This latest transfer window has marked a negative trend for Ligue 1 in terms of sales to the Premier League. More players but a much lower average fee. English football has preferred to buy from the Bundesliga and this has been noticed in the sales prices compared to last season.

## Top 5 Ligue 1 players sold to Premier League 2019 and 2020





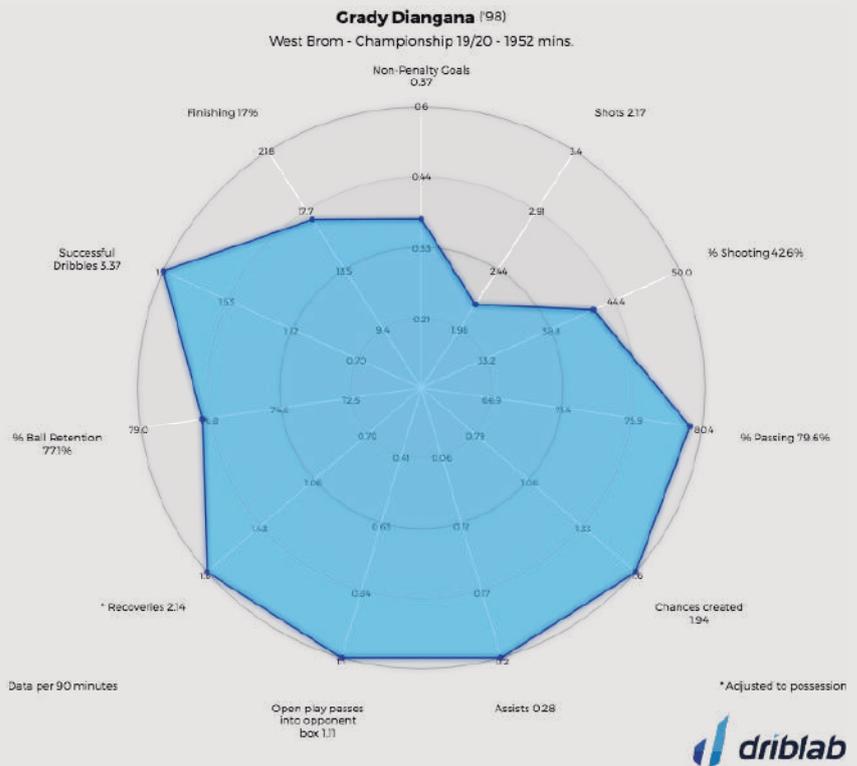
# A quick look at efficient signings · Premier L.

## GRADY DIANGANA (1998)

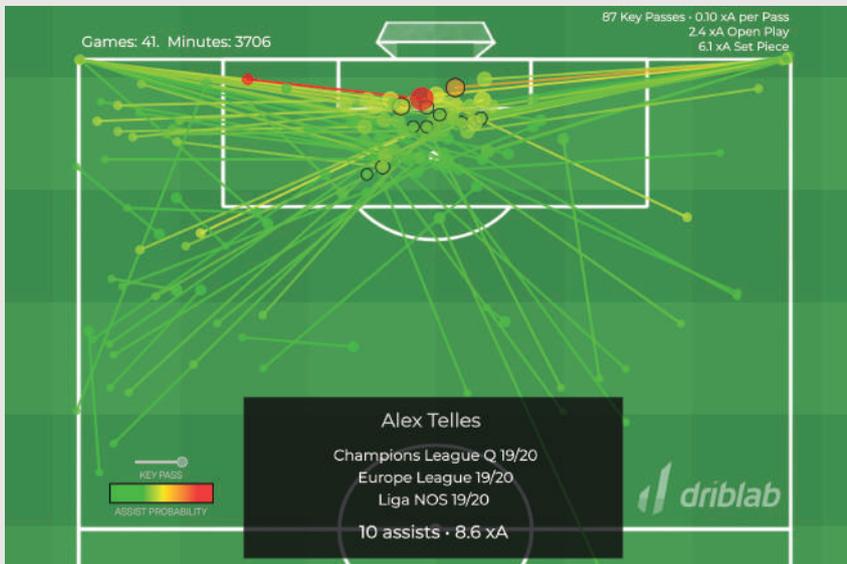
From West Ham to WBA

Transfer fee: 13.5M €

Diangana's magnificent performance last season at the Championship pushed West Brom to try his signing. Now they will again enjoy a player with a great capacity to generate imbalances in the opposite half. He frequently carried the ball into the final metres of the field, in part because of his ability to surpass rivals in one-on-one situations. He averaged 3.37 successful dribbles, 5.49 touches in the box and was able to create many chances for his teammates in open play situations. Furthermore, the goal probability of goal from his key passes was high.



Telles' Key Passes Map at Porto in 2019/20 (including set pieces situations) · 0,16 xA per 90 minutes



## ALEX TELLES (1992)

From Porto to Man. United

Transfer fee: 15M €

United took the opportunity to sign one of the most productive full-backs in European leagues at a low price. Telles is a player who contributes both in the defensive phase - with 4.31 ball retrievals for 90 minutes - and in the offensive one. In 2019/20 he generated a total of 8.6 expected assists, generating a lot of danger through set piece situations. In addition to that, he has a virtue that is difficult to see in this position: is really strong in aerial disputes (65,1%).

**Expected Assists (xA):** A metric that measures the probability of a key pass (a pass that ends with a shot) of becoming a goal.

### OTHER NAMES

**KENNY TETE (1995)**

From O. Lyon to Fulham

Transfer fee: 3.2M €

**JOËL VELTMAN (1992)**

From Ajax to Brighton

Transfer fee: 1M €

**DALE STEPHENS (1989)**

From Brighton to Burnley

Transfer fee: 1.10M €



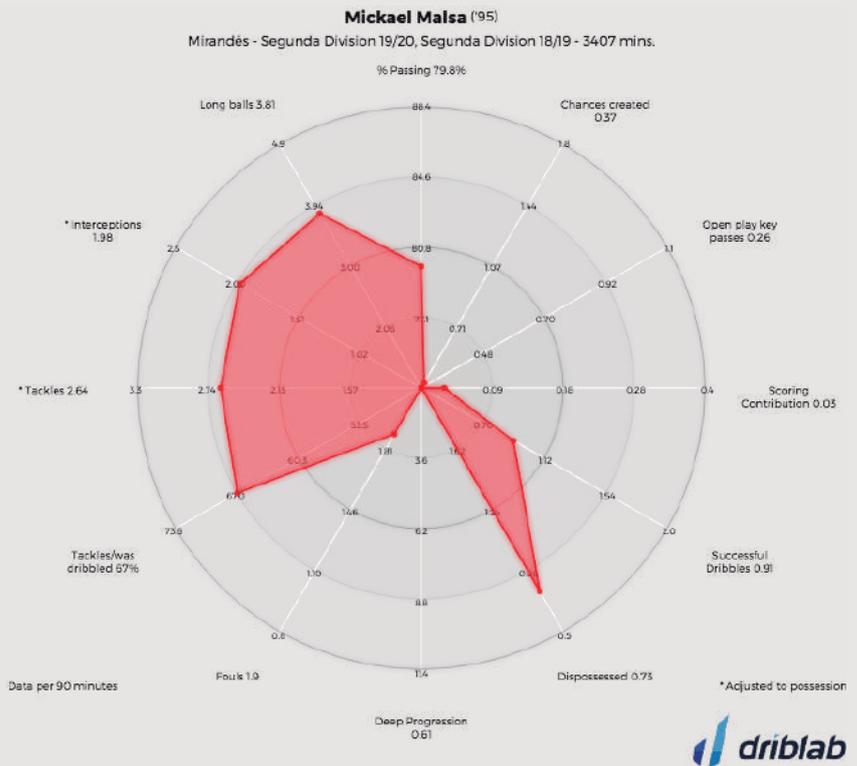
## ● A quick look at efficient signings · La Liga

### MICKAËL MALSA (1995)

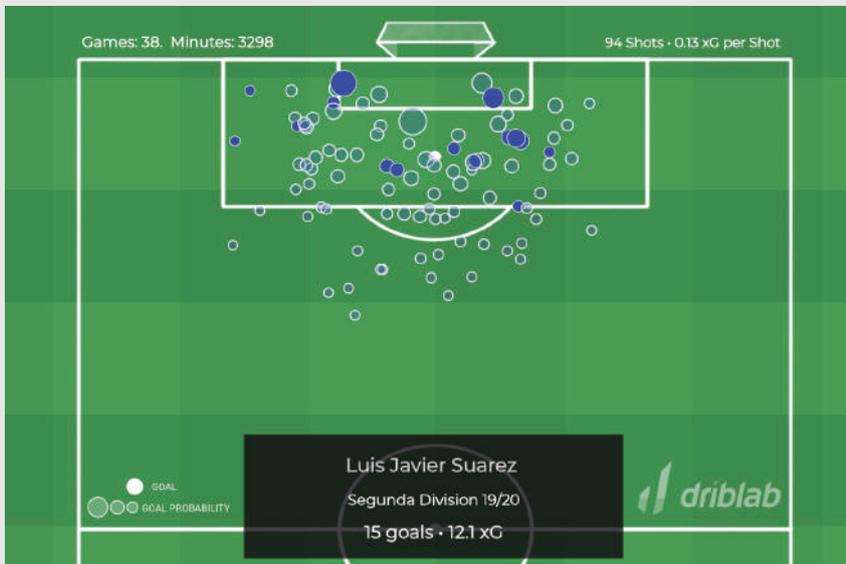
From Mirandés to Levante

Free transfer

After conceding its opponents 1.56 expected goals per game in 2019/20, Levante should improve defensively this season. And this French 'stopper' could solve some problems. Malsa has excelled in the last two seasons in recovery tasks, with almost 3 successful tackles and 1,91 interceptions per 90 minutes. In addition to that he's quite productive in the aerial disputes and does not take risks with the ball, with very few steals suffered. Despite he completes 3,78 long-range passes, his percentage of completion is slightly below average.



### Suárez's Finishing Map at R. Zaragoza (2019/20) · 2.57 shots, 0.35 xG per 90 minutes



### LUIS J. SUÁREZ (1997)

From Watford to Granada

Transfer fee: 7M €

Granada surprised by acquiring a forward who is expected to make a lot of noise this year. At Zaragoza, Suárez registered 4.94 touches in the opposite box in a league (Segunda Division) in which the average is significantly lower and showed an awesome accuracy in the finishing. He got 15 goals with shooting situations that amounted to 12.1 xG, scoring several quite difficult attempts. In addition to that, he showed ability to dribble or to generate chances for others.

**\*Expected Goals:** A metric that measures the goal probability of each shot. The probability is determined by factors such as the place of the shot, the distance to the target, the angle, the part of the body with which the shooter contacts the ball, etc.

### OTHER NAMES

**JAWAD EL YAMIQ (1992)**  
From Genoa to Valladolid  
Transfer fee: 1.25M €

**JEISON LUCUMÍ (1995)**  
From Tigres UANL to Elche  
Free transfer

**OUSSAMA IDRISSE (1996)**  
From AZ Alkmaar to Sevilla  
Transfer fee: 12M €



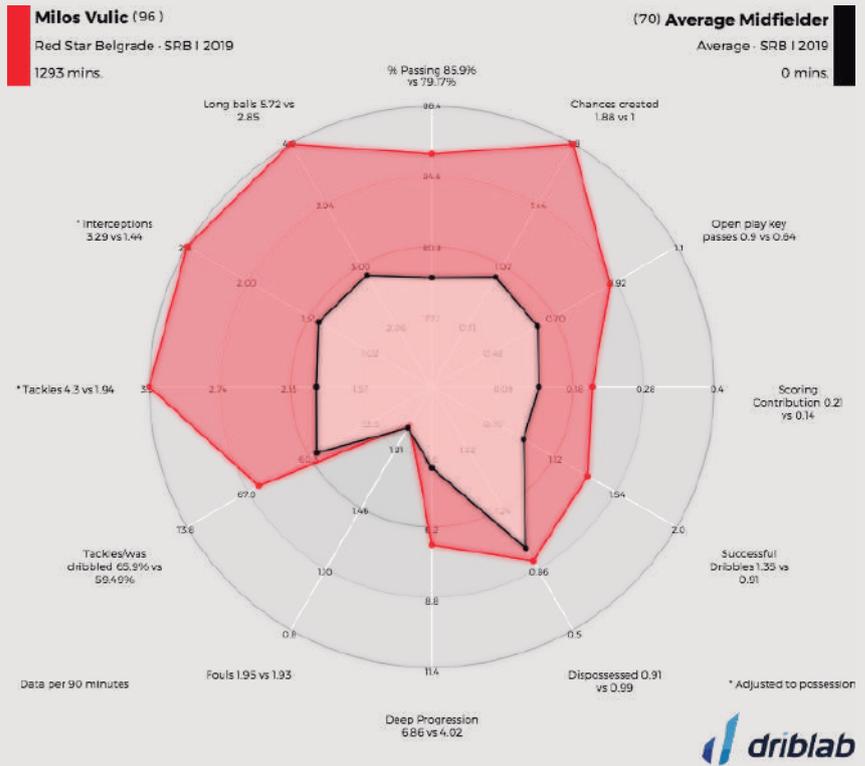
## ● A quick look at efficient signings · Serie A

### MILOŠ VULIĆ (1996)

From Red Star to Crotone

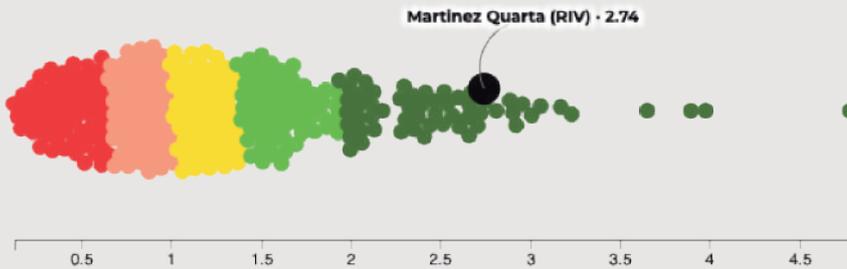
Transfer fee: 800k €

Interesting wager by Crotona for a midfielder that we consider ready to support an adaptation to Italian football. As we can see on the radar on the right, Vulić was able to handle a lot of different aspects in his last year in Serbia, being above average of the rest of the midfielders within his league in almost every parameter we take into account. He is a player with an excellent ball handling, who makes few mistakes in passing and who makes many plays progress throughout the games. Besides he created 1.88 chances per 90 minutes.

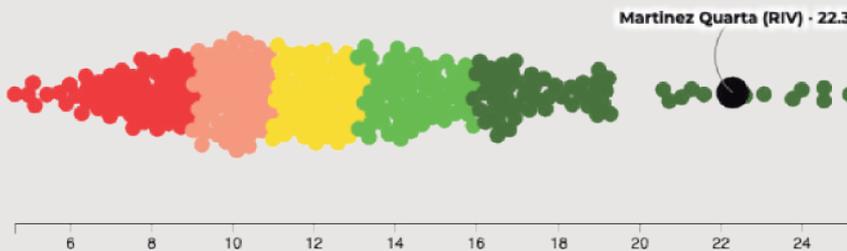


### Centre-backs with at least 700 minutes played at CONMEBOL leagues · 2020 or 19/20 (Argentina)

Tackles



Ball Progression



**Ball Progression:** Advance of 10 metres or more achieved through a pass or a carry.

### L. MARTÍNEZ QUARTA (1996)

From R. Plate to Fiorentina

Transfer fee: €6mill.

Fiorentina probably got the centre-back with the most projection in South America. Quarta excels for his solid performance with the ball (he participated in the build up of 0.34 xG per 90 minutes and got numerous ball progressions in 19/20) and especially for her volume of successful defensive actions. He averages 2.82 interceptions, has shown a high effectiveness rate in tackling actions (81.4%) and has registered an extraordinarily high figure of clearances (5.88).

### OTHER NAMES

**ADRIEN SILVA (1989)**

From Leicest. to Sampdoria  
Free transfer

**ARDIAN ISMAJLI (1996)**

From Hajduk S. to Spezia  
Transfer fee: 2.50M €

**JENS PETTER HAUGE (1999)**

From Bodø Glimt to Milan  
Transfer fee: 5M €

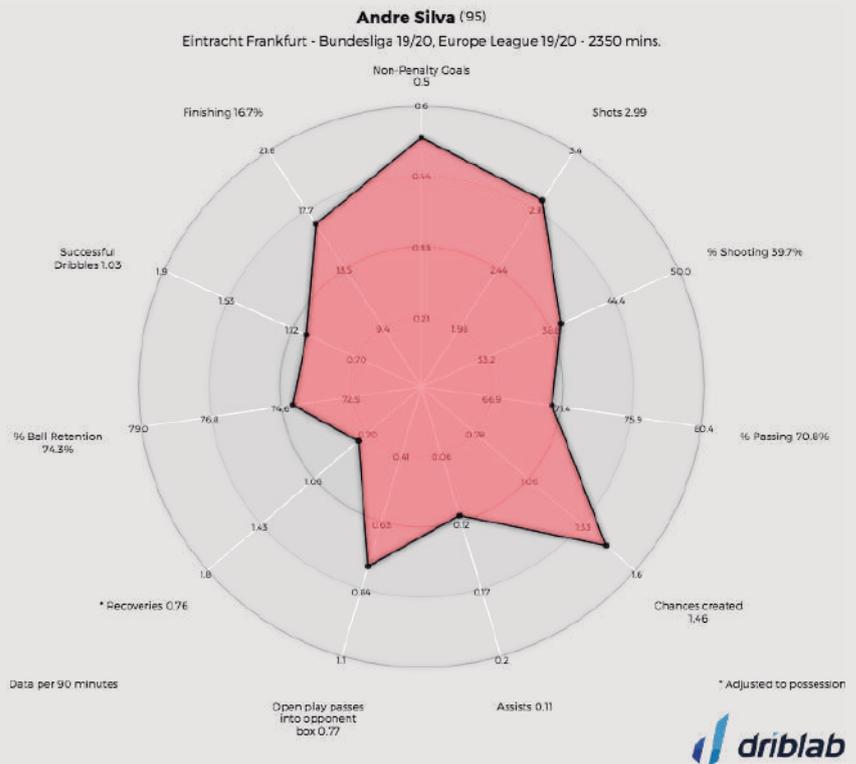
## A quick look at efficient signings · Bundesliga

### ANDRÉ SILVA (1995)

From Milan to Eintracht F.

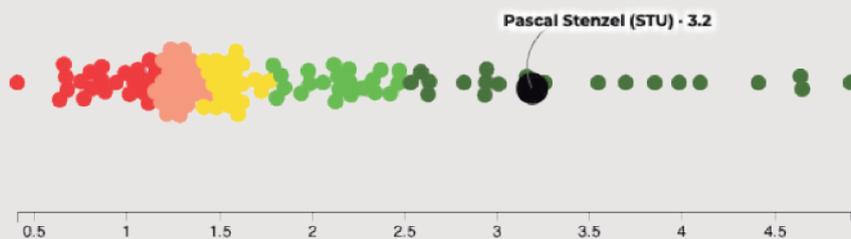
Transfer fee: 9M €

It's really difficult to find and sign an U-25 forward with metrics like the ones André Silva has. In the radar on the right we can see that he is a player who combines a great presence in the finishing zones with quite good figures in the creative phase. He can retain the ball, associate or generate chances for his team-mates. Anyways, what stands out most in his performance is his cold blood in the decisive metres, scoring 13 goals in 2019/20 with shooting situations of which 12.66 xG were estimated. In spite of losing Ante Rebić, it seems a good move Eintracht.

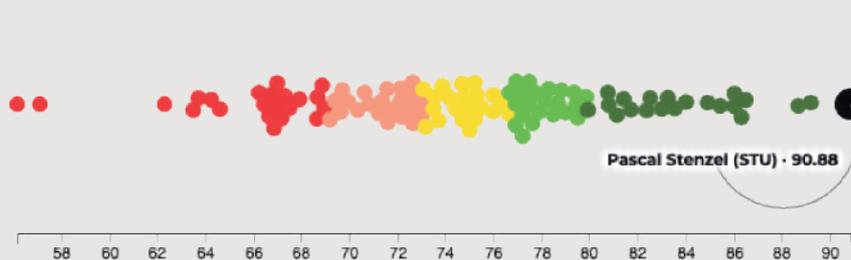


### Full-backs & wing-backs with at least 700 minutes played in Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2 · 2019/20

Tackles



Passing %



Ball Progression: Advance of 10 metres or more achieved through a pass or a carry.

### PASCAL STENZEL (1996)

From Freiburg to Stuttgart

Transfer fee: 1.30M €

After a quite productive loan period both for the club and the player, Stuttgart signed Stenzel permanently. Although his impact in the final metres of the field could be better, this young right-back had very complete level the last season in Bundesliga 2. He completed almost 91% of his passes and did it generating that the plays usually progressed. In addition to this, his defensive contribution was important for Stuttgart, with 5.28 ball recoveries per 90 minutes of play.

### OTHER NAMES

**KEVIN STÖGER (1993)**  
From F. Düsseldorf to Mainz  
Free transfer

**DEYOVAISIO ZEEFUIK (1998)**  
From Groningen to H. Berlin  
Transfer fee: 4M €

**MIKE VAN DER HORN (1992)**  
From Swansea to A. Bielefeld  
Free transfer



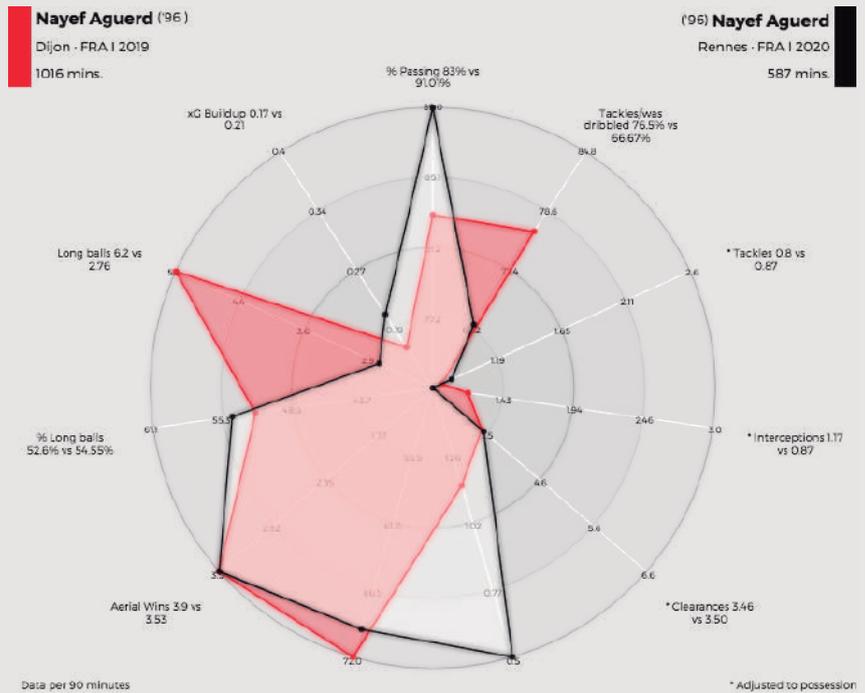
## A quick look at efficient signings · Ligue 1

### NAYEF AGUERD (1996)

From Dijon to Rennes

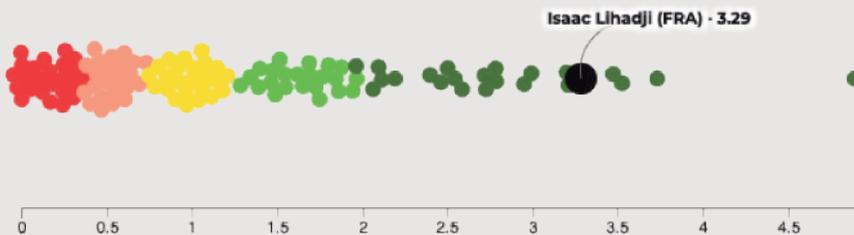
Transfer fee: 4M €

The last season this Moroccan centre-back was one of the Ligue 1's most prolific players in individual disputes, with a top success rate in aerial duels (77.2%). His effectiveness in tackling actions (76.5%) was also considerably above average. But beyond that, he showed a lot of assurance to his team in the decision-making with the ball. In fact, in his first 500 minutes at Rennes Aguerd is completing 91% of his passes, even though he does not use long-range displacement as much as he did at Dijon. His influence in the build up of xG could be better.

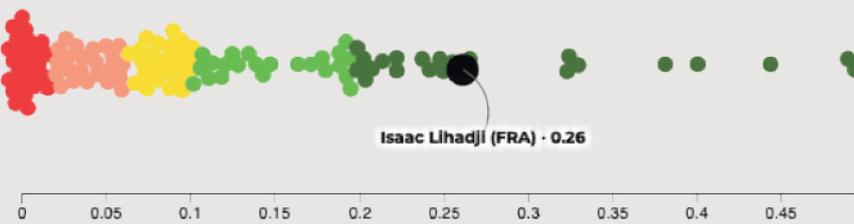


### Players with at least 300 minutes played U-17 FIFA World Cup 2019

Successful Dribbles



Expected Assists



### ISAAC LIHADJI (2002)

From O. Marseille to Lille

Transfer fee: €300k

With an eye to the future, Lille signed one of the most prominent talents from the last U-17 World Cup. In addition to finishing the tournament with 3 goals, Lihadji was one of the most productive dribblers, with over 3.29 successful take ons per 90 minutes. In addition to that, he generated a lot of danger with his key passes, generating 0.26 expected assists, a significantly higher average than players like Pedri Gonzalez (SPA), Eugenio Pizzuto (MEX) or Gabriel Verón (BRA).

**Expected Assists (xA):** A metric that measures the probability of a key pass (a pass that ends with a shot) of becoming a goal.

### OTHER NAMES

**JONATHAN CLAUSS (1992)**  
From Arminia Biel. to Lens  
Transfer fee: 1.20M €

**M. SCHNEIDERLIN (1989)**  
From Everton to Nice  
Transfer fee: 2.23M €

**CENK ÖZKAÇAR (2000)**  
From Altay to O. Lyon  
Transfer fee: 1.50M €

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**'This report shows with figures that the market has been disrupted and those who adapt to it the fastest will enjoy a severe competitive advantage'**

