

European clubs invest four times more than last year in winter signings: a mirage in today's crisis times

- ▶ The top 5 European leagues have spent almost 500 million Euros in winter signings: four times more than in 2010. This investment increase is paradoxical and is justified by the spending of 5 leading clubs who are not enjoying their best sporting moments. These 5 clubs (Chelsea, Liverpool, Inter Milan, Bayern Munich and Atlético Madrid) account for 50% of the amount invested.
- ▶ Chelsea is the club that has spent the most, making the market explode with the acquisitions of Fernando Torres (59 million Euros) and David Luiz (25). In contrast to other transfer windows, a domino effect has been produced and almost all the money acquired by the selling teams has been used to sign other players. For example, Liverpool signed Andy Carroll and Luis Suárez with the income of Fernando Torres' transfer.
- ▶ Real Madrid is the team that has taken the biggest advantage of its summer signings. Four of the six players Real Madrid signed, led by Di Maria (83%), have participated in more than half of the minutes the team has played. Individually, FC Barcelona's David Villa, who has been on the pitch 89% of the minutes Barça has played, is the most utilized summer signing.
- ▶ FC Barcelona rules the European standings for the second year in a row, having picked up an astonishing 91.23% of their possible points and being the only squad on the continent that has won all its games played on the road. Real Madrid is Europe's best team at home where it has won all the games played and also is the highest scoring squad and the team with the best net goal difference.
- ▶ Leo Messi is the most effective goal scorer. He scores every 71 minutes. The 2011 Golden Boot will be from the Liga BBVA as Barcelona's Messi and Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo are tied at the top of the European rankings with an amazing figure: 24 goals each. Ronaldo, who scores every 82.5 minutes, has not left the pitch at any stage of Real Madrid's games this season.

Madrid, February 10, 2011 – The top five European football leagues have spent almost 500 million Euros in player signings during the winter market, a figure that is four times bigger than 2010's. According to the *Football Transfer Review* study, launched today at ESADE and compiled and produced by Prime Time Sport –the firm headed and founded by FC Barcelona's former general director of marketing and FIFA's agent, Esteve Calzada-, the impressive increase is paradoxical.

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Polarization is without a doubt one of the main reason for the investment increase. Due to performances on the pitch falling below expectations, five European clubs (Chelsea, Liverpool, Inter Milan, Manchester City and Bayern Munich) have made 50% of the total investment. In Spain, three clubs, also looking to improve positions in the standings have made 89% of the local investment. Another important factor is that the investment in last year's winter market was excessively low. Despite the huge investment done by these teams, most of European clubs continue to be harmed by the economic crisis and the overspendings of previous years which makes them limit their players' acquisitions.

Chelsea (89 million Euros) is the club that has spent the most, followed by Liverpool (68). The third team with the largest investment, Inter Milan, comes way behind at 38 million Euros. At Inter, Moratti has bought for new manager Leonardo what he did not buy for Rafa Benitez. It is interesting to highlight that, among the elite European clubs, Real Madrid and Arsenal did not spend a single Euro during the winter market.

With the exception of France, all leagues invested more than last year. The Premier League recovered the leadership with 54% of the total investment. Spain's Liga BBVA dropped to the fourth place.

The departures of Torres and Ryan Babel pushed Liverpool to the pinnacle of the selling teams with a total of 66 million Euros. The only Spanish club in the ranking (9th place) is Espanyol, which reached 13 million thanks to the departures of Víctor Ruiz (Napoli) and Dídac Vilà (Milan). Anyhow, Liverpool reinvested the money received acquiring Carroll (41 million Euros) and Luis Suárez (31). Of course, Manchester City had to be among the leading spending clubs, acquiring Edin Dzeko (37 million).

Once again, players' departures were more than arrivals. Italy's Lega Calcio had again the largest rotation, while Spanish teams acquired the least amount of players compared with other top European leagues. After two years without being active in the winter market, FC Barcelona signed Afellay (3 million Euros). Real Madrid incorporated forward Emmanuel Adebayor but using a loan + buying option concept.

Five of the 10 most expensive signings of the 2010/11 season were done in the winter, including the top two (Torres and Carroll). The summer signings of Villa (FC Barcelona) and Di Maria (Real Madrid) are the only non-Premier League acquisitions among the top 10 in the season.

The investment of the Spanish league grows four times:

For similar reasons to the ones experienced in the rest of Europe, Spain's Liga BBVA has grown very high, reaching 32 million Euros which multiplies by four last year's figures.

Málaga is the team that has invested the most in signings with 11.5 million Euros. Málaga's and other two teams' operations that urgently need to improve their

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positions in the standings, Atlético Madrid and Sevilla, account for 90% of the total Spanish investment. Atlético has done the two most expensive acquisitions, signing Elías for 7.3 million Euros and Juanfran for 4.3. FC Barcelona made the third most expensive, acquiring Afellay for 3 million.

Eleven of the Liga BBVA clubs –Real Madrid among them- did not spend any money in signings during the winter market. Hércules and Getafe kept their rosters with no changes. Ironically, new owner of Racing Santander, Ali Syed, did not purchase the club with enough time to sign players. Racing’s only winter acquisition was Giovanni Dos Santos, who arrived through a loan.

Following Espanyol, Sevilla (6 million Euros) and Osasuna (4.3) were the most selling squads. Between the three, they accounted for 81% of the total Spanish clubs sales. Once again, players’ departures were more than arrivals, reducing clubs’ average rosters. Málaga had the largest player-rotation: five were signed and seven left.

Real Madrid takes the most advantage of summer acquisitions:

Real Madrid has taken more advantage of the players acquired last summer than any other team. Led by Di Maria (83%), four of the six players signed by Real Madrid have participated in more than 50% of the minutes played by the squad. Individually, David Villa heads the group of 2010 summer acquisitions. The Spanish forward has been on the pitch 89% of the minutes played by FC Barcelona. Downside notes in this category are FC Barcelona’s Mascherano (30%) and Real Madrid’s Pedro León (12%).

Real Madrid’s Cristiano Ronaldo is showing his stamina, being the only forward from Spain’s Liga BBVA who has participated in 100% of the minutes played by his team this season. Other field players who have been on the pitch all time include: Iraola (Athletic Bilbao), Bruno (Villarreal), Lora (Sporting Gijón) and Xabi Prieto (Real Sociedad).

FC Barcelona is the team that repeats its starting lineup more often. Eleven of Barça players have participated in more than 70% of the minutes played by their team. The opposite side is Valencia, where only three players have been on the pitch more than 70% of the time this season.

While no team has used more players (32) than Málaga, Zaragoza is the squad that has utilized the least amount of players (21). Real Sociedad (15) and Athletic Bilbao (14) are the clubs that have used more players from their respective development teams. While Barcelona, which comes third, has used 13, Real Madrid has only utilized 5. Almeria has never had this season a player from its development teams in its lineup.

FC Barcelona leads the European teams’ standings; under Mourinho Real Madrid is unbeatable at Bernabeu:

For the second consecutive year, FC Barcelona paces the European teams’ standings, having got an amazing 91.23% of the total amounts of points played. Barça has won all their games played on the road. Away from Nou Camp stadium, FC Barcelona also

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leads the European standings in categories such as total amount of goals scored and net goal difference.

While being third in the European standings, having achieved 84.21% of the points played, Real Madrid is the best home squad on the continent. Real Madrid has won all the games played at Santiago Bernabeu stadium and leads all European clubs in goals scored at home and best home net goal difference.

Besides FC Barcelona and Real Madrid, Valencia and Villarreal are also among Europe's top 10 squads. Following Real Madrid, Villarreal (3rd) and Espanyol (4th) are among the best European teams at home. After Germany's Bundesliga, Spain's Liga BBVA ranks second on the continent in goals scored per game (2.78).

The Golden Boot will stay in Spain:

The duel Leo Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo are starring in can't be matched in any other European league. Only Berbatov (Manchester United) and Tévez (Manchester City) at England's Premier League have scored more than 50% of the goals scored by the third-place player. Messi and Ronaldo head the top scorers on the continent with 24 goals each. Berbatov ranks third with 19 and Tévez is fourth with 18.

Messi is also the most effective goal scorer, having scored a goal every 71 minutes. Mario Gomez from Bayern Munich ranks second (81.6), Cristiano Ronaldo is third (82.5) and Berbatov is fourth (94.1).

About Football Transfer Review

The Football Transfer Review study is compiled and produced by Prime Time Sport that has become a referent in the football world. It collects and analyzes information to provide independent conclusions about the variables that decisively affect the teams' rosters and the player transfers in European and Spanish clubs.

About Prime Time Sport

Prime Time Sport is a marketing sports firm, founded and led by FIFA players' agent and former FC Barcelona general director of marketing Esteve Calzada. It provides an integral representation service for players, taking care of their image and their relationship with the media, as well as managing their sports and economic interests. Prime Time Sport also works with Spanish and European clubs in player signings and sales, and offers sports sponsorship consultancy to big advertisers and rights holders. Prime Time Sport has offices in Barcelona, Madrid and Brazil.

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