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Comparing citizenship and naturalization policies in international
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The case of the 2019 Asian Football Cup

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List of abbreviations

AFC	=	Asian Football Confederation
ASEAN	=	Association of South East Asian Nations Football Federation
CAF	=	Confédération Africaine de Football
CAFA	=	Central Asian Football Association
CFO	=	Commisson on Filipinos Overseas
CONCACAF	=	Confederation of North and Central American and Caribbean Association Football
CONMEBOL	=	Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol
EAFF	=	East Asian Football Federation
FA	=	(British) Football Association
FIFA	=	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FINA	=	Fédération Internationale de Natation
IAAF	=	International Association of Athletics Federations
IOC	=	International Olympic Committee
KNVB	=	Koninklijke Nederlandse Voetbalbond (Dutch Football Association)
LFA	=	Lebanon Football Association
OFC	=	Oceania Football Confederation
PFF	=	Philippine Football Federation
QFA	=	Qatar Football Association
SAFF	=	South Asian Football Federation
UEFA	=	Union of European Football Associations
VFF	=	Vietnam Football Federation
WAFF	=	West Asian Football Federation

Introduction

In a more migratory world, national allegiances are becoming more fluid, affecting the architecture of national identity, pride and cohesion. Within the field of international sports, the environment of increasing switches of national allegiances is, therefore, one of the most applicable researchable fields of such a development, with the connection between the athlete and the country he or she is representing in international tournaments being blurred and less natural than before. Therefore, international sports federations all have their own rules and regulations stating under which circumstances an athlete is able to represent a nation and to what extent an athlete is able to switch his or her allegiance during their international sports career. Although the International Olympic Committee (IOC) might be experienced as the equivalent of the United Nations within the world of international sports, the umbrella organization leaves the decision-making processes on national allegiances up to the sports federations themselves. For example, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) decides who is allowed to represent a nation member state in international football, the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) is doing the same for athletes in track and field sports and the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA) has their own rules clarifying under which conditions international swimmers can compete for a nation in international tournaments.

When taking international football as an example, one can notice many players who have represented multiple countries in international games in the past, with the legendary Ferenc Puskás who represented both Hungary and Spain and former Real Madrid icon Alfredo Di Stéfano representing Argentina, Colombia and Spain in his international football career. However, with the FIFA having their own regulations on national allegiances on the one hand, and national rules on citizenship and naturalization on the other, football players often struggle to fill in all the necessary requirements to be able to compete for the nation they wish to represent. For example, in 2004, the Ivorian Salomon Kalou tried to compete for the Netherlands during the 2006 FIFA World Cup, with the Koninklijke Nederlandse Voetbalbond (KNVB, the Dutch Football Association) accepting Kalou as one of their players (Vliegenberg, 2006). However, the Dutch minister of Immigration, Integration and Asylum Rita Verdonk decided different, declining Kalou's request for naturalization. Besides, the decision of an athlete to represent a certain nation is not always accepted, as the concept of loyalty to the country they are born and raised in, is playing an important factor in the public sphere. This happened, for instance, when Mesut Ozil and Ilkay Gundogan, as players of the

national German football squad, took a picture with Turkish president Erdogan, leading to a lot of controversy in the German press, stating that the players were giving the wrong example when promoting their loyalty to the Turkish state instead of Germany (Olterman, 2018).

A recent and very interesting example of citizenship controversy in international football was the achievement of 2019 Asian Cup winner Qatar. After beating the United Arab Emirates in the semifinals of this continental tournament, two of the Qatari players were blamed for not being eligible to play for Qatar, and were, therefore, not allowed to represent the country in such an international sports event. An official complaint from, not very surprisingly, the United Arab Emirates, was sent to the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) in order to request a disqualification of Qatar from the tournament and the replacement of Qatar in the final of the 2019 Asian Cup by the United Arab Emirates (“Ophef over Qatar als finalist Azië Cup”, 2019). Although the request was declined and Qatar ended up beating Japan in the final to win their first Asian Cup, problems surrounding naturalizations in international sports were, again, underlined.

In this thesis, I will, therefore, investigate citizenship policies in international sports, taking the 2019 Asian Cup as a case study. I will take a look at the different policies of the competing countries in this international football event and compare citizenship and naturalization policies of both countries with a relatively high number of foreign-born athletes and those who lack naturalized athletes within their national football selection. While some countries are indeed represented in international sports by more foreign-born athletes than athletes born in the country itself, some countries have a much lower percentage of athletes with a different country of origin or do not have any at all. Do citizenship and naturalization policies explain why one country is represented more by foreign-born players and other ones more by “nationals”? Therefore, I am proposing the following research question:

What are the differences between the 2019 Asian Cup competing countries in terms of their representation by foreign-born athletes, and to what extent can these differences be explained through their different citizenship regimes?

First, this thesis will focus itself on the theoretical framework, wherein research will be discussed upon the topic of citizenship in international sports. Furthermore, I will elaborate on the comparison between different types of citizenship changes and how these can be defined. Last, I will create my own perspective and see to what extent this paper contributes to existing

literature and research on naturalizations of foreign-born athletes in international sport. After my theoretical framework, I move on to the research design of the thesis, starting off with the operationalization of the thesis and the methods that are used during the research. Also, I will elaborate on four case countries, which will all be beneficial of giving an overview of the different kinds of citizenship policies of the 2019 Asian Cup competing countries. The selection of these countries will, therefore, be explained in this first chapter. These individual case study chapters will follow after I have elaborated upon the relationship between international football and the process of athletes switching allegiance. Therefore, in the third chapter, I will give an insight into how these are intertwined, and in which angle the policy-making processes on citizenship and naturalization of foreign-born athletes in my case countries need to be approached. Finally, after I have presented all researched outcomes for each case country, I will come to the final conclusion of the thesis and try to answer the main question mentioned above.

Theoretical Framework

In this part, I will take a look at the theoretical framework of this thesis. First, I will present and discuss earlier research that has been done considering the research topic. Furthermore, I will elaborate to what extent this thesis will make a contribution to this broader debate.

1.1. Theoretical framework

Naturalization is the legal act or process by which a non-citizen of a country may acquire citizenship or nationality of that country. On what basis this process can be established, differs from state to state. With the concept of nationality referring to the legal relationship between an individual person and a state, nationality also includes the jurisdiction of the state over a person and affords the person the protection of the state (Sassen, 2002). Citizenship, however, refers to the relation between a member of polity and the polity itself. In other words, citizenship is the status of a person recognized under the custom or law as being a legal member of a sovereign state or nation (Sassen, 2002). As Sassen described citizenship as ‘the legal relationship between the individual and the polity’, the term citizenship can relate to many forms and definitions (Sassen, 2002). Citizenship tends to be largely connected to the national dimension, with its legal status entailing which persons the state recognizes as a citizen and the formal basis of rights and responsibilities of the individual in relation to the state. However, national laws about who is a citizen differ by country, and so does the concept of a citizen. Therefore, Sassen describes that ‘two decades have brought conditions for a change in the institution of citizenship’, as she refers to a more flexible development of international law of nationality and the acceptance of dual or multiple nationalities (Sassen, 2002). Some scholars even believe dual and multiple nationalities will become the norm in the future (Rubenstein & Adler, 2000). Still, the importance of nationality lies with the central role of states and a possible decline of this role will unconditionally affect the value of nationality.

As the regulations of the IOC state that an athlete’s nationality is dependent on his/her citizenship status, thus allowing them to get selected by national committees, the understanding of citizenship is crucial in trying to understand the practices of changing

nationality and the representation of nations by foreign-born athletes (Jansen et al., 2018). Citizenship can be encountered by looking at the nationality laws that determine who is legally part of a country and can be seen as an official “citizen”. Furthermore, citizenship has often been distinguished by two popular ideal types of policies of attributing membership (Brubaker, 1990; Jansen et al., 2018). The first type is called *jus sanguinis*, which means that citizenship has been acquired through descent. This is, for instance, the case in Germany, where children born outside the German territory are eligible to German citizenship if they have German parents. The second ideal type of citizenship acquisition is *jus soli*. In these cases, citizenship is acquired by birth in a certain territory. People who are born in the United States, for instance, are subject to the US jurisdiction, and, therefore, are automatically connected to US citizenship.

As Sassen already mentioned that citizenship can relate to many forms and definitions, the main principles of *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli*, through which naturalizations are regulated, are insufficient to define all different types of citizenship. Moving closer to the topic of naturalization in international sports, one should not only encounter the migration of athletes solely as problematic but should rather look to what extent an athlete is actually “naturalized” and how closely they are related to the country they nowadays represent. The lack of understanding the principle led to a remarkable debate in Great-Britain in 2012 when foreign-born athletes were given permission to compete for the country in the 2012 Olympic Games in London. British press responded heavily, stating the athletes were “bought” and given passports in order to win more British medals at the Games. In doing so, the Britishness of foreign-born athletes representing Great-Britain was intensively disputed (Jansen, 2018). Soon, the major actors within this debate were named “Plastic Brits”, making them look like fake competitors in the eyes of the public opinion (Kelly, 2012). What overruled this controversy, however, was the misconception of these specific athletes, who were given the permission to represent Great Britain right before the Olympic Games simply because their own country (often an island or a ‘group of islands having a form of self-governance) lacked an Olympic committee (Schulting, forthcoming). Since these athletes were born within the borders of the British Overseas Territories, both the athletes and Team Great Britain brought something together. In other words, their citizenship was much “thicker” than an athlete who decided to avoid competition within the country he or she was born in and, therefore, decided to request citizenship elsewhere. In the Netherlands for instance, the latter even has a word for such an athlete and is called “Schaatsbelg” (English: “Belgian speed skater”). The term came up after several Dutch ice speed skaters decided to compete for another country (with the

former Dutch speed skater and Olympic Champion Bart Veldkamp deciding to compete for Belgium since 1996 as the most famous example) to improve their chances of competing at the Olympic Winter Games and avoid competition of fellow Dutch speed skaters (Oudshoorn & Tax, 1996).

In order to oversee the dynamics of citizenship, including the influence of the processes of naturalization, two new principles can be added to *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli*. The first principle, *jus domicilii*, includes people who are granted citizenship as a result of an established residence in a country. Often, this happens after a person is eligible to acquire citizenship after living in a country for a minimum number of years and has met certain other requirements such as a minimum income and language proficiency. The second principle embraces the acquisition of citizenship via marriage and is called *jus matrimonii*. In international sport, this sometimes happens after athletes decided to marry a foreign-born colleague or coach (Schulting, forthcoming).

Big sports events like the Olympic Games intent to promote ‘international respect and goodwill in order to contribute to a more peaceful world’, while the perception of sports is to serve as the firebox of a post-national idea of citizenship within a world dependent on separate nation states and policies (Paulín & Jimenez, 1984). While this might be the intention, events like the Olympic Games have also been used as a surface for the inscription of narratives of nationhood (Kostakopoulou & Schrauwen, 2014). Olympic athletes are seen as the nations’ heroes and are supposed to embody the national communities’ spirit and values. However, sportsmen and sportswomen can also decide to not represent the nation in which are born in, moving away from this national atmosphere. The commotion of Qatar naturalizing and selecting non-native players is not part of a recent development in international sports or football per se. For a matter of fact, Qatar is far from the only country who is known for being represented by foreign-born athletes in international sports. As Jansen & Engbersen have shown, non-native athletes have represented countries ever since the existence of the Olympic Games (Jansen & Engbersen, 2017). Furthermore, they found out the Games did not become more migratory, and the representation of countries by foreign-born athletes is not a new phenomenon. What could be new, however, is the form and changes of policies leading to the naturalization of an athlete. Within international sports, media attention on this topic grew, looking more critically at athletes changing citizenship (Jansen, 2018). Naturalizations of athletes, all in all, is not a new phenomenon. Should it be encountered as controversial then?

For Spiro, the process of switching allegiances indicates that national citizenship seems to be less important than it was before. Confirming the post-national idea of Sassen, changing citizenship within international sports is becoming more and more common and resisting against such a conception is not sustainable (Spiro, 2012). If athletes change citizenship within righteous and legitimate limits, any form of opposition against an individual decision to switch to another nationality is, according to Spiro, impossible. As a consequence, Spiro introduces a club sports model which will completely change international sports. This post-national idea means a certain end to the representation of nations by nationals and the beginning of “Olympic citizenship” (Spiro, 2012).

As long as this futuristic idea is not yet applicable, it can be seen as hypothetical. Still, sports federations should take into account that swapping nationality within international sports is hard to stop and the possibility of unfair international competition is at the doorstep. In other words, what if the richer countries could “buy” the best athletes in the world, and the poorer countries will lose their athletes to richer ones? This idea has been criticized by Shachar, as she states that nowadays, countries are already “picking winners” (Shachar, 2011). She explains how everywhere in the world, countries try to provide passports to those with exceptional talent in the hope that it will result in international performances.

What is important, however, is the study of the willingness of countries to secure membership rights to highly skilled migrants. A standard narrative when discussing this issue is that the rise of the global information economy and the corresponding “skill shortage” that is experienced in various countries lead to industrialized countries recruiting foreign human capital (Shachar, 2006). As a result, an interaction takes place between competing nations seeking for skilled migrants, in which governments control their own national membership rights and allocate the property of citizenship. In doing so, countries are willing to use this power as part of recruitment strategies to attract the “best and the brightest” (Shachar, 2006). States can offer permanent membership rights, and they will increasingly do so in order to support their industries. This is what Shachar calls the “talent-for-citizenship” exchange. Here, not only economic factors play a motivational role for skilled migrants to leave their home country in favor of a new one. Also, the fact that they enjoy the security and prosperity that is attached to a membership in a stable and appropriate polity makes changing citizenship a “pulling factor” for migrants. Therefore, citizenship is important in understanding why skilled migrants from, for instance, poorer and less stable countries, decide to migrate. (Shachar, 2006).

The action of attracting Nobel Prize contenders, technology wizards, successful athletes and other high-skilled migrants represents a significant shift in the conception of citizenship which include concepts like collective identity, belonging and loyalty into a recruitment tool for bolstering a nation's standing relative to its competitors (Shachar, 2011). Here the practice of "picking winners" through fast-tracked, strategic grants of citizenship becomes visible when the intersection of sports and nationality is placed at the center of how citizenship could be used by states to attract skilled migrants. Here, citizenship regimes are forming the official executors of the membership transaction in their possible willingness to utilize selectively the lure of citizenship. In doing so, citizenship is approached by looking at individuals with particular abilities or talents and the recognition by governments to use the power of membership affiliation within the competitive global environment (Shachar, 2011). The ability to employ fast-tracked citizenship serves as a commodity for governments of countries to seek for human capital abroad. If citizenship is reconfigured as a tradable asset of different citizenship regimes, one could see to what extent citizenship regimes put to use the aspect of recruiting athletes and other top performers on the transnational global market of human capital.

The notion of citizenship reflecting the membership of a nation also takes into account that granting citizenship to those who lack any relation to a country become 'talented strangers' who fairly become 'valued members' of a new body politic (Kostakopoulou & Schrauwen, 2015). Here, sportsmen and sportswomen are no exception within citizenship regimes creating stimulating or discouraging rules for attracting high skilled professionals and scientists from abroad. Such regulations are taken up in citizenship laws of countries and could differ from very strict, complex and long naturalization requirements to very straightforward, fast-tracked naturalization policies. As a result, naturalization processes lead to lawfully admitted newcomers of any nationality becoming citizens of a "new" country. The grant of membership by citizenship regimes thus serves to let migrants make valuable contributions to the country through their work or talent, however, differ per country in terms of rules and regulations.

1.1.1. Citizenship regimes concerning foreign-born athletes

With citizenship becoming a more fluid topic, the influence of the citizenship regimes of certain countries on the policies for naturalization of foreign-born athletes is an under-researched topic. In other words, what makes the nation more or less likely to be represented

by non-native athletes, looking at the different policies of countries. In order to distinguish them, various factors or criteria characterize the types of citizenship regimes that exist concerning countries which are represented by foreign-born athletes in international sports.

1.1.1.1. Citizenship law characteristics

Looking at the different types of citizenship mentioned above, countries could have liberal citizenship laws including multiple pathways (*jus matrimonii*, *jus domicilii*, etc.) leading to citizenship, as well as the possibility of dual citizenship. In Italy, for instance, a person automatically becomes an Italian citizen by birth (*jus sanguinis*) if an Italian citizen recognizes the child at a time after birth (Fichera, 1992). Also, children born in Italy to stateless or unknown parents acquire Italian citizenship (*jus soli*). Other forms of citizenship acquisition in Italy take place via marriage (*jus matrimonii*) or by naturalization. In terms of naturalization, foreigners can apply for Italian citizenship after ten years of legal residence in Italy, reduced to five years for those who have been recognized as stateless or refugee and four years for citizens of EU countries. On the contrary, a country like the United Arab Emirates has very restrictive citizenship law characteristics. Here, the *jus sanguinis* principle, thus the acquisition of citizenship through descent, is much stronger than in more liberal countries. Applicants can only acquire citizenship by having the appropriate bloodline. This only counts for the father's ancestry, while a mother's citizenship background is not taken into account. While a woman can get Emirati citizenship via marriage, a foreign male cannot access the Emirati citizenship marrying an Emirati wife. Also, the process of naturalization in the UAE is less accessible than in, for instance, a country like Italy. Although Arabs with ancestral origins in Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar can access the Emirati citizenship at short notice (three years of settlement or seven for Arabs other than citizens of Bahrain, Oman and Qatar), non-Arabs should, next to be proficient in the Arabic language, settle in the UAE for no less than thirty years. Furthermore, dual citizenship is prohibited in the UAE, making it necessary for applicants to give up the original nationality. Last, there are countries which, almost unconditionally, give citizenship to people born in the country (*jus soli*). Brazil, for instance, strongly holds on to this principle and only requires that the foreign-born parents of a child born in Brazil should not work for their country's government in Brazil by the time the child is born (Henderson, 2014).

1.1.1.2. Special provisions for athletes?

What is of great importance for this thesis is the possibility of certain exceptional, deviating articles within the citizenship law of countries. Under Dutch citizenship law (article 10), for instance, a special rule is included, which states that, in special cases, Dutch citizenship could be granted. Ionescu investigated the application of this law on athletes in the Netherlands and concluded that that accelerated naturalization via this law is justified if the naturalization serves ‘a cultural interest to the Netherlands’, which also includes an interest in Dutch sports (Ionescu, 2017). This might happen to athletes representing the Netherlands in international sports competitions and games. Furthermore, the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport determined the level of sports performance minimum needed to be eligible for accelerated naturalization and the athlete in question should, preferably, be a role model for young people or formatting a campaign of fair play (Ionescu, 2017). Special provisions for athletes in citizenship law is, therefore, an important factor within the influence of a certain citizenship regime on the representation by foreign-born athletes.

1.1.1.3. Strategies used for attracting foreign-born athletes

As the Dutch ministry has determined a certain level of sports performance to decide whether an athlete is eligible for naturalization and representation of the country, no official document or strategy is known that the Dutch ministry attracts or is scouting abroad for talent with the intention of naturalizing foreign-born athletes. What could, for instance, be the case, is that sports federations within countries strive to improve the success of national teams by teasing foreign athletes playing in their national sports competitions to also compete for the country. In Malaysia, for instance, the CEO of the United States Sports Academy in Malaysia expressed his concerns to the Malaysian minister of Sport that the country’s football association ‘seems to have thrown the towel on developing the sport in Malaysia’, referring to the use of naturalized players to bolster national team performance (Price, 2018). In 2018, the Malaysian ministry of Sport created an official strategy plan to attract and naturalize foreign-born players, with the hopes of improving the national team’s football world ranking (De Silva, 2018). Therefore, a special committee was formed to prepare and fine-tune the matters pertaining to naturalizing players. Having an official strategy for naturalizing athletes like Malaysia, is of great importance in order to investigate the relationship between the citizenship regime and the representation of countries by foreign-born athletes. Even without,

strategies could be identified, looking at the personal stories of athletes on how they were approached to compete for another nation than the one they are born in (Reiche & Tinaz, 2018). As Reiche & Tinaz, showed how coaches may influence athletes in taking decisions like these, it is hard to prove they are part of a broader strategy to attract foreign-born talent.

1.1.1.4. Alternative form of citizenship for athletes?

It is far from obvious to think an athlete getting a passport in a foreign country will automatically receive full and equal citizenship. Although under-researched, Reiche & Tinaz opened up the question of whether foreign-born athletes become fully naturalized, or only receive temporary passports during their international sports career competing for the “new” country. They concluded that, in some countries, foreign-born athletes were, if possible, allowed keep their original passport, next to a special “temporary” athletic passport of the country they represent in international sports and only exceptional athletes were allowed to keep their new passport themselves. In other words, athletes were only allowed to carry their new passport when needed (for instance at the airport or hotel check-in) and had to hand them in as soon as it was no longer necessary to keep it with them (Reiche & Tinaz, 2018). Also, they raised up the question of whether athletes, who did receive a permanent passport, were having the same citizenship rights as full citizens. If not, it would mean foreign-born athletes would remain second-class citizens.

However, temporary citizenships for foreign-born athletes, as shown by Reiche & Tinaz, seems to be legal according to international law. According to Babar ‘citizenship means different things in different places’ and ‘has been tailored to suit particular circumstances’ (Babar, 2017). What Babar explains, is that although citizenship may confer specific privileges and rights upon citizens, there is no international agreement on what specific bundle of rights are associated with it. Therefore, it could be stated that, in the case of some countries, foreign-born athletes suffer a form of civic exclusion when speaking in terms of civic stratification (Lockwood, 1996; Morris, 2006). This concept, originally worked out by Lockwood, argues that the actual enjoyment of rights depends on two interlinked axes of inequality: the presence or absence of legal, bureaucratic rights, and the possession of moral or material resources to access those rights. Although in this thesis, I will not go too much in-depth on the concept of civic stratification, it should be taken into account when looking at the type of citizenship foreign-born athletes acquire, and how similar or dissimilar their

citizenship status is after switching allegiance to a foreign country and representing it in international sports.

1.1.1.5. Mandatory change of athlete's name?

Another factor that could play a role for an athlete who started competing for a foreign country, is the possibility of changing his or her name into a more “representational” one. In Turkey, for instance, a lot of Kenyan long-distance runners had to change their original names into common Turkish names. For 2016 alone, Mike Kipruto Kigen became Kaan Kigen Ozbilen, Vivian Jemutai became Yasemin Can, Mirriam Jepchirchir Maiyo became Meryem Akda and Amos Kibitok became Aras Kaya (Schulting, forthcoming). According to Reiche & Tinaz, name changes in international sports occur as a result of naturalizations of athletes and were found necessary to protect the athletes from international media attention (Reiche & Tinaz, 2018). Also, the desired name should sound more common to, in this case, Turkish. However, in Arabic countries, for instance, this is even playing a bigger role, considering the involvement of the Arab characterization of citizenship laws. In other words, when naturalizing a foreign-born athlete, while at the same time, trying to follow the national, Arab-based law, changing a name would take away some part of contradiction or controversy considering the justification of a non-Arab becoming a national.

1.1.1.6. Mandatory movement of an athlete to “new” country?

A possible influencing factor within the naturalization process of a foreign-born athlete is a possible mandatory movement to the country an athlete is going to represent. Here, it is important to distinguish the mandatory residence of an athlete before naturalization and after the athlete is starting to represent a country in international sports. If an athlete wants to represent a country, certain requirements must be met of both the country's citizenship law (which might include a minimum number of years of residence to apply for citizenship) and the sports federation. Some sports federations like the FINA already require twelve months of residence prior to the athlete's first representation for the new national sports federation (‘FINA General Rules’, 2014). In chapter three, I will elaborate on similar rules and regulations of the FIFA.

Whether, according to FIFA rules and regulations, a mandatory movement within international football is already a fact or not, one should also take into account that a lot of

football players (like other sportsmen and sportswomen) are already residing abroad, earning a living at sports club competing in foreign competitions. What could be likely to happen, is that players, when performing well in a national competition, could be asked to switch allegiance to the country they are already residing in (Campbell, 2010; Schulting, forthcoming). What could be interesting, is see whether this principle is used in combination with 1.1.1.2. So far, no research has been done on this category of athletes, while it is known that some football players like the earlier mentioned Salomon Kalou, are interested to join the national squad of the foreign nation they are earning a living in. Although Kalou did not succeed, other ones like the Brazilian-born football players Mehmet Aurélio (born Marco Aurélio Brito dos Prazeres) and Douglas Franco Teixeira became football players of national federations after playing well for their club in respectively Turkey and the Netherlands.

However, these examples are presenting players who were already living in the country they were later going to compete for. What if an athlete never lived in a country, but yet represents it in international sports events? Here, the criterium in paragraph 1.1.1.2. could be interesting to look after. What should be taken into account, however, is that it could be hard for countries to ask their foreign-born athletes to remain resided within its borders. Some might have to train at different surfaces and altitudes in order to train appropriately and perform their absolute best, while others train abroad, simply because their training staff and facilities are residing somewhere else.

1.1.1.7. Preference of attraction of athletes with specific geographical, religious, or linguistic backgrounds?

Looking at the origins of foreign-born athletes in a country, the characteristics of the foreign-born athletes could lead to a certain track to only one specific area of the world, meaning a country prefers to only be represented by foreign-born athletes meeting a specific linguistic or geographic background. What could also be the case, is that athletes need to at least learn the language of the country they are going to represent (Reiche & Tinaz, 2018). In the Netherlands, a footballer who wants to represent the country, also, just like every applicant for the Dutch citizenship, needs to pass his or her “inburgeringscursus” (citizenship education course) to be able to acquire knowledge about the country they want to represent. In the Netherlands, however, famous naturalization cases in football like Kalou (Ivory Coast) and Douglas (Brazil) do not show a lot of similarities in terms of their linguistic, religious, or geographic backgrounds. A preference of naturalization of athletes meeting the same

characteristics is, therefore, not very likely to be the case in the Netherlands. However, in some, more religious-based citizenship countries, this preference might be more likely to happen. When speaking in terms of religion, 1.1.1.5. is closely connected to this principle when looking at religious involvement in national citizenship laws for naturalization.

1.1.1.8. Level of “Thickness” of citizenship

Moving even closer to theories taking into consideration these aspects of nationality swaps in international sports, Oonk & Van Campenhout have presented a model using the concept of Bauböck (Oonk & Van Campenhout, 2017; Bauböck, 1999). Within this model, they distinguish “thick” and “thin” citizenship cases of athletes who changed nationality. An athlete who changed his or her nationality because of a close family relative already owning a different passport, could, therefore, be indicated as having a “thicker” relation to the “new” country than an athlete who has no other relation to the country he or she is representing than the actual representation itself. Such cases could be indicated as the “thinnest” and are, therefore, qualified as citizenship-for-sale (Oonk & Van Campenhout, 2017). This concept has been introduced by Oonk & Van Campenhout and further researched by Jansen, Oonk & Engbersen, concluding that, although happening, athletes who could be qualified to such a group are part of a vast minority within all cases of athletes who swapped nationality (Jansen, Oonk & Engbersen, 2018). How the model of “thick” and “thin” citizenship works and how it looks like will be elaborated in my research design.

1.2 What is missing?

Still, although athletes without any relation to the country are forming a minority within the bigger picture, they are also the ones who can be seen as the most extreme, yet least investigated cases within international sports migration. Jansen et al. proposed to call these transitions, wherein citizenship is being traded for talent, *jus talentii*. In other words, within this form of citizenship acquisition, an exchange is taking place between handing over passports on the one side, and contribution of human capital or skills on the other. Although this might sound like a moral, yet non-lawfully principle, the concept of *jus talentii* can be traced in national citizenship laws of multiple countries. In Turkish law, for example, an exception has been realized that allows citizenship to be granted to anyone who “is believed to necessarily need to obtain citizenship” and “contribute to the development of the Turkish

industry, agriculture, technology, culture, sport and economy”. These kinds of exception in national laws, involving the granted citizenship of talented athletes, has been under-researched.

Although Shachar already mentioned the “talent-for-citizenship” exchange and her concept of “picking winners”, she took into account athletes as a specific case study to show how such an exchange could take place within the “global race for talent”, it lacked a cross-comparison between different types of citizenship regimes and what the similarities and differences between such citizenship regimes are. Furthermore, in contrast to earlier research of Jansen, Oonk and Engbersen, I will take a look at a non-Western case: the Asia Cup. Therefore, the point of view of this research could contribute to making a wider picture of sports policy-making and national citizenship and naturalization policies overall. By looking at how naturalizations in international sports take place, these cases are extremely useful in order to understand the relationship between sport and naturalization policies. Also, it could lead to a better understanding of how sports policies reflect a bigger, more societal picture of how talents are distinguished from non-talents, as is the case in Qatar. Here, migrants have gained passport to represent the country in international football, while other migrants can never access the same level of citizenship while ironically building the stadiums their fellow migrants are supposed to be competing in. As Kostakopoulou and Schrauwen have explained earlier, the topic of nationality swapping in international sports is not necessarily about the fact that non-nationals are able to represent a country in which they are not born in or do not have any specific relationship with at all. The concerning and most relevant aspect of this thesis subject is about the possible “double standard” countries are using when consciously blocking the possibilities and life improvement of migrant laborers in favor of their national citizenship, while making exceptions for talented newcomers, who should be able to make a contribution to the national prestige (Kostakopoulou & Schrauwen, 2014). Therefore, I will select four 2019 Asian Cup competing countries who represent the continent in many different ways, including countries with a relatively big number of foreign-born athletes, and those with more “nationals”. In doing so, I strive to make a broad comparison between the 2019 Asian Cup competing countries and look at possible differences and similarities within their policies for naturalization of foreign-born athletes and to what extent these differences can be explained from their citizenship regime background.

Research Design

I will first elaborate on the operationalization part of my thesis. Furthermore, I will take a look at which methods I am going to use, as well as the selection of my cases. Also, possible hypotheses and ethical considerations will be discussed in this part of my research proposal.

2.1. Operationalization

Before moving on to citizenship regimes and how to identify them, this thesis will take a look at the rules of regulations for switching allegiance in international football and which changes in these rules took place over time. Therefore, I will investigate official documents of the FIFA, as well as the AFC. Also, I will shortly compare the most important rules of switching allegiance with other sports federations in order to place international football within the broader discussion of switching allegiance in international sports.

After I have clarified under which circumstances athletes can switch allegiance in international football, I will try to connect this phenomenon with the different kinds of citizenship regimes of the case countries of this thesis. First, the eight criteria which were identified and discussed in my theoretical framework will be used to distinguish and analyze the different kinds of citizenship regimes and naturalization policies for foreign-born athletes in the case countries of my thesis:

1. Citizenship law characteristics
2. Special provisions for athletes?
3. Strategies used for attracting foreign-born athletes
4. Alternative form of citizenship for athletes?
5. Mandatory change of athlete's name?
6. Mandatory movement of an athlete to the "new" country?
7. Preference of attraction of athletes with specific geographical, religious or linguistic, backgrounds
8. Level of "Thickness" of citizenship

These eight criteria will form an overview of the citizenship regime per case country, clarifying the policies for naturalization of foreign-born athletes for each separately. In order to connect the different citizenship regimes of the case countries to the representation of their football teams at the 2019 Asian Cup by foreign-born athletes, statistics will be used to picture each football team and support the citizenship regime analysis. Therefore, I have created new statistics which are based on the screening of all the individual foreign-born football players of the four case countries. These statistics include the (1) country of origin of the foreign-born football players, (2) the average age of the football players at the time of playing their first official international senior football match for the country they nowadays represent and (3) the “thickness” of the citizenship of the foreign-born athletes.

1. Country of origin

This statistic is necessary to see in which parts of the world the athletes are born in, before representing the case country at the 2019 Asian Cup. This could be useful to see whether there is a relationship between the country the athlete is born in, and the case country they nowadays represent. Do these countries, for instance, have colonial ties? Did a lot of guest workers move from one country to the other? Was there a lot of domestic competition, which “forced” the athletes to look for career-related possibilities elsewhere? These are all questions related to the environment of changing allegiance and the process of foreign-born athletes representing their “new” nation.

2. Average age

When looking at the average age of the foreign-born athletes at the 2019 Asian Cup, the main aspect that is useful for this research is the age the athletes had at the time they made their debut in a non-friendly senior football match for the case country. Although this remark looks very detailed, one should know that according to the FIFA rules and regulations, a football player is allowed to participate for multiple countries in both friendly and junior (under the age of 21) matches. After competing for a nation in a non-friendly senior football match, there is no way back to ever switch allegiance and represent another nation in international football. In other words, making the decision for playing for a certain nation in an official senior football match is a decision of a lifetime, especially for those owning multiple passports and having dual citizenship. Therefore, I have screened every foreign-born participant for the case

countries to see at which age they played their first official senior game for the case country and decided to represent this nation for the rest of their career. It could, for instance, be interesting to see if the average age of the foreign-born players of a country is relatively high or low. With countries statistically represented by the latter, it is of great importance to see whether the naturalization policy of foreign-born athletes is part of a certain strategy to “claim” talents as soon as possible before they decide to represent another nation. This “muscle drain” at a young age is, after all, one of the main domains of this thesis and, therefore, this statistic is of great importance. Other requirements for representing a FIFA nation state member will be discussed in the third chapter of this thesis.

3. “Thickness” of the citizenship

The last statistic shows the “thickness” of the citizenship of the foreign-born athletes. Although this concept has been explained in the theoretical framework, the statistical illustration works rather different. Also, the connection between “thickness” of citizenship and the different citizenship types need further explanation.

Again, the term refers to the relationship between the athlete and the case country. An athlete having no other connection with the case country than just the representation of the country in international sports games or tournaments can be referred to as having a “thin” citizenship connection with the case country, while others who, for instance, have a parent who holds the passport of the country the athlete hold a much “thicker” relationship with the case country. In order to make the “thickness” statistically visible, I have distinguished seven different categories of “thickness” of citizenship. Before explaining each category, it is important to state that the category does not automatically state that the foreign-born athlete was officially naturalized according to citizenship rules and regulations of the case country because of the relationship mentioned in the statistic. Still, it is useful to see what the actual relationship is, in order to connect the citizenship regime and the naturalization policies of the case countries with their representation (or no representation at all) by the foreign-born athletes. An athlete who, for instance, played for a football club in a case country, and lived for a couple of years there, might be asked to represent the country where the football club is residing in. Sometimes, under the *jus domicilii* rule, the athlete could apply to become a citizen of the country, but sometimes living in a country for quite some time is not sufficient enough to become a citizen. When an athlete is still able to represent the country in international sports when meeting all requirements of the world sports federation, another law

within the citizenship regime must have played a factor in naturalizing the athlete enough to let him or her represent the country in international sports. In this case, the *jus talentii* principle is likely to be involved when looking at possible exceptional laws of the case country. Therefore, the aspect of citizenship law, possible special provisions for athletes and “thickness” of citizenship itself are discussed in the theoretical framework and included under the first, second and last criterium in the first part of the research design.

The first three categories are connected to the *jus sanguinis* principle and distinguish a connection between the athlete and the case country through (1) paternal descent (father having the nationality of the case country), (2) maternal descent (mother having the nationality of the case country) or (3) a descent via older generations (grandparents and further). Another category has been created to represent the athletes who solely have a (4) territorial relation with the case country. This includes athletes who lived in a country for more than five years and could be identified as “established” in the case country. Also, if an athlete (5) married a partner have the citizenship of the case country, makes their relationship “thicker”. The most remarkable category has been called (6) “citizenship-for-sale”, after the concept of Oonk & Van Campenhout which was discussed in the theoretical framework of this thesis. This included all athletes who do not have any other relationship with the country they represented at the 2019 Asian Cup than the representation itself. This category is therefore closely related to the *jus talentii* principle and could be linked to possible legal exceptions in the case countries for those who could make an exceptional contribution to the country when having the countries citizenship one way or another. The last category includes (7) all athletes who were unable to sufficiently identify and could, therefore, not be categorized. Their relationship with the case country remains unknown, with no or insufficient information leading to an explanation of the relationship between them and the case country.

In this thesis, I will solely focus on foreign-born athletes in the yet to be announced selected case countries. Therefore, there is no category related to the *jus soli* principle. Although this could be of great importance, none of the case countries makes use of this principle, with the athletes born in the country, yet having a migration background and lack the citizenship of the case country. Still, athletes could, for instance, have been born in the country, without having the citizenship at the time of birth, but getting it for some legal reason later in their career. However, considering the size of the research, this aspect was not included, creating an important limitation in this research. When discussing, for instance, the United States, this category should have been included, since this country strictly holds on to

this principle. Furthermore, some countries have combined laws on *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*. If these countries would have been included in this research, the combined *jus soli/jus sanguinis* principle would also have been another category. When looking, for instance, at the case countries of Jansen & Engbersen on Olympic migration, this type of citizenship regime comparison, (partly) taking into account *jus soli* could have been applicable. However, here, the limitation of solely looking into Western countries would be a footnote worth mentioning.

Last, what should be included is an overview of the perspectives of the two main actors of the naturalization process: the country and the athlete. What motives behind naturalizations could be identified? What is at stake for the country? And what is at stake for the athlete? This overview could be created out of the outcomes of the citizenship regime analysis.

2.2. Methodology

In this methodological part, I will first explain my data collection, as well as the dataset that has been used for this research. Furthermore, I will take a look at the other sources used, before moving on the selection of the case countries.

2.2.1. Data collection

The data used for this thesis include both qualitative materials, as well as other, more qualitative sources. Therefore, I will distinguish them into two different paragraphs.

2.2.1.1. Quantitative datasets

As I have mentioned before, I made use of statistics to clarify the differences of the 2019 Asian Cup competing countries by looking at their foreign-born players. For my thesis, I, therefore, used a quantitative method by creating statistics based on the official 2019 Asian Cup database of 552 players (24 teams x 23 players) (“2019 Asian Cup Teams”, 2018). In doing so, I used the official 2019 Asian Cup order of groups and created an overview per country to see to what extent natives and non-natives represent the nation. The data that was retrieved from the official website of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) includes all individual information per player as their country of origin, career history and the age they had at the time of naturalization will be important for my research. Therefore, this dataset is

used to create the three statistical analyses on the average age, country of origin and “thickness” of the citizenship of the 2019 Asian Cup Football players, representing the case countries at the 2019 Asian Cup. All statistics can be found in the Appendices A, B and C.

2.2.1.2. Other Sources

In order to investigate the nine criteria mentioned above, official documents concerning citizenship rules and regulations in the four case countries need to be retrieved to make a comparison. Also, these must be compared with the rules and regulations of the FIFA and AFC, in order to see what it takes to represent a case country in International Football. Therefore, I will make use of official FIFA and AFC documents, that are available on their official websites. These will be elaborated upon in the third chapter of this thesis. Last, but certainly not the least important, interviews with the 2019 Asian Cup foreign-born football players and coaches in magazines and newspapers (in English, French, German and Dutch) have been analyzed, by critically reviewing them in order to see under which conditions and circumstances naturalization took place. Since football players are popular for news items, the naturalization of football players came up as a topic in lots of magazines and newspapers of the participating countries of the 2019 Asian Cup. This is a great source of information on the relationship between the athlete and represented case country.

2.3 Case Selection

In Table 1, all 2019 Asian Cup participating countries and their group number are shown, including their number of foreign-born players in their tournament squad, the geographic region of the country within the Asian continent, the population size, the majority religion and, if so, the former colonial ruler. Out of these five characteristics, I selected the **Philippines, Qatar Vietnam and Lebanon** as the case countries for my thesis.

2.3.1. Substantiation of the case selection

Group number 2019 Asian Cup	Country	Number of foreign-born players in tournament squad	Geographic region	Population size (rounded to the nearest thousand)	Majority religion	Former colonial ruler / protector
A	United Arab Emirates	2	Middle East	9.600.000	Islam	Ottoman Empire / UK
A	Thailand	2	Southeast Asia	68.864.000	Buddhism	France / UK
A	India	0	South Asia	1.324.171.000	Hinduism	UK
A	Bahrain	0	Middle East	1.425.000	Islam	UK
B	Australia	4	Australia	25.367.000	Christianity	UK
B	Syria	0	Middle East	18.284.000	Islam	France
B	Palestine	9	Middle East	4.816.000	Islam	UK
B	Jordan	2	Middle East	10.171.000	Islam	UK
C	Korea Republic	0	East Asia	51.446.000	Unaffiliated	Japan
C	China	0	Central/East Asia	1.403.500.000	Chinese folk Religion	-
C	Kyrgyzstan	2	Central Asia	6.389.000	Islam	USSR
C	Philippines	19	Southeast Asia	100.081.000	Christianity	Spain / US
D	Iran	1	Middle East	81.672.000	Islam	-
D	Iraq	1	Middle East	36.203.000	Islam	Ottoman Empire / UK
D	Vietnam	1	Southeast Asia	94.569.000	Buddhism	France
D	Yemen	0	Middle East	27.584.000	Islam	UK
E	Saudi Arabia	0	Middle East	33.000.000	Islam	Ottoman Empire
E	Qatar	5	Middle East	2.642.000	Islam	UK
E	Lebanon	9	Middle East	6.007.000	Islam / Christianity	France
E	DPR Korea	0	East Asia	25.367.000	Unaffiliated	Japan
F	Japan	1	East Asia	126.440.000	Shinto	-
F	Uzbekistan	1	Central Asia	33.254.000	Islam	USSR
F	Oman	0	Middle East	4.425.000	Islam	UK
F	Turkmenistan	0	Central Asia	5.662.000	Islam	USSR

Table 1: Case selection criteria

With the selection of the countries mentioned above, I included one country which is represented by a majority of foreign-born athletes (Philippines), two with large minority groups of foreign-born athletes (Lebanon and Qatar) and a country with almost no foreign-born athletes (Vietnam). Logically, this was done to implement countries which were represented by a high number of foreign-born athletes at the 2019 Asian Cup, as well as countries with almost none foreign-born athletes. Second, I included two Middle-Eastern and two South-East Asian countries, which are covering a big part of the geographical atmosphere of the AFC, with countries for various parts of the football federation. Third, I took into account the size of the population by selecting two countries with a population around a hundred million (Philippines and Vietnam) and two with a smaller population below ten million (Lebanon and Qatar). Considering the thought that countries with a smaller population deal with an insufficient number of sportive talents to represent the country in international sports events, this principle, as is shown in Table 1, is not always true. In other words, as countries with a smaller population size do not automatically contain a higher number of foreign-born athletes, countries with a lower number of foreign-born athletes do not always have a bigger population size themselves. In 2019, for instance, England-born Nico Yennari became the first ever naturalized player to compete for China (Church, 2019). Still, it is useful to include countries with different population sizes in order to see if population size does matter at all. Fourth, I included countries which all represent a different kind of religious atmosphere which can impact the rules and regulations concerning naturalization. This is, for instance, the case in Qatar, where religion is strongly involved within the citizenship regime of the country. As Qatar is taken as a case country among the Islamic countries within the AFC, the Philippines has a Roman-Catholic background. Vietnam, although ruled by the communist party, has the Buddhism religion as the biggest religion in the country, while Lebanon has a very mixed population concerning different types of religions. Last, I took into account the former colonial history, that might impact the naturalization processes in the country and could explain ties between certain athletes and the country they represent. While the Philippines have a Spanish (later the US) colonial history, Vietnam was ruled by the French for a long period of time. Also, Lebanon was formerly under French rule, but also has an Ottoman historical background. The colonial history of Qatar included multiple Arab rulers but ended up as a British protectorate, before gaining independence.

2.3.2. *Jus soli* limitation in case selection

As mentioned previously at the end in paragraph 2.1. this thesis does not take into account case countries holding on to the *jus soli* principle, creating an important limitation in this research. However, the reason for putting aside these countries is not because none of the participations holds on to this principle. In fact, both Iran and Thailand (partially) include *jus soli* in their citizenship law, making them possible case countries for this research with having at least one foreign-born athlete within their 2019 Asian Cup squad. As I stated before, the reason for leaving out case countries with a *jus soli* principle is also its boundary, by putting the emphasis on the foreign-born athletes of the selected case countries as the main focus area of this research when seeking for differences and similarities of citizenship regime representations in international sports.

Speaking in terms of *jus soli* this does not mean that this was not possible. However, due to the limitations of the time span of this master thesis, taking into account the *jus soli* principle would have meant that this research should have gone beyond the aspect of being a “foreign-born athlete”, broadening the researchable playing field with the inclusion of football players with a migratory background who became were not foreign-born, yet not nationals either. In other words, when taking into account *jus soli*, investigated players in a dataset similar to this research would have not only be checked by the criterium of whether their place of birth was outside of the country they nowadays represent, but also by the fact if players born inside the country became nationals by the *jus soli* principle.

2.3.3. Beyond *jus sanguinis* in the Philippines, Qatar, Vietnam and Lebanon

Apart from Iran and Thailand, none of the 2019 Asian Cup competing countries include the *jus soli* principle. Therefore, all of the selected countries hold on to the element of *jus sanguinis* as their main principle of citizenship law. What should be highlighted is that this thesis goes beyond this principle and focuses not only on how they fill up their version of *jus sanguinis*, but also how they cope with all other criteria mentioned in paragraph 1.1.1.

To clarify this idea, I will introduce some of the differences that will be emphasized further upon in in the separate case study chapters. The first in-depth comparison between countries with a *jus sanguinis*-based citizenship law is the presence or absence citizenship acquisition via both the paternal and maternal line. In the Philippines and Vietnam, for example, this is the case. In the other two case countries however, only the paternal line

decides whether a person is allowed to access citizenship. A second aspect that might influences the handling of *jus sanguinis* are laws and provisions for descendants. In Lebanon, for instance, the citizenship law includes a law that offers the possibility to let Lebanese descendants (relating to many previous generations) access the Lebanese citizenship. Also, in Vietnam, the citizenship law aims to make it easier for descendants of previous generations to easier access the Vietnamese citizenship. However, they do not follow the Lebanese model of creating a specific law but included this aspect in its naturalization policies by excluding people with Vietnamese blood from certain restrictive criteria. Last, and going even more beyond the aspect of *jus sanguinis*, are the “gaps” in the law, specifically made for skilled migrants. With the exception of the Philippines, all other case countries included exceptions within its citizenship and naturalization policies for skilled or talented migrants. In Qatar, this aspect is even stronger, given the fact that the head of state is taken into account as the one who decides who becomes a citizen and is, therefore, “profitable” for the prosperity of the country. In Vietnam and Lebanon, however, the law does not let a sole figure decide who is helpful for the nation and should, therefore, receive citizenship via an easier pathway, but, for one way or another, implement the open definition of “helpfulness” within its law, suggesting that the possibility of making a request to access citizenship via this “gap” can be made when needed.

2.4. Ethical considerations

In terms of ethical considerations, this thesis might be confronted with stereotyping migrants into certain categories. Like the “thick and thin”-citizenship model already showed a certain classification. I believe this thesis needs to look after the individual perception of, in this case, the sportsmen that will be investigated. Therefore, I should not present or intend the idea that an individual athlete who swapped nationality should be identified as a cheater or a spill in some kind of controversial system. Therefore, the focus of this thesis should be more on policy and should be careful when implementing individual examples of migrants.

Chapter 3

- Switching allegiance in international football and the AFC Asian Cup -

On May 1, 1904, the first ever official international football match took place between the national association football teams of Belgium and France in the Stade du Vivier d'Oie in Brussels. Although Scotland and England already played the first ever international match in 1872, both teams were part of the British Football Association (FA), and, therefore, this match did not become the official international football match ever to be played. In Brussels, the young French journalist, and organizer of the match, Robert Guérin, spoke to his Belgium colleague Louis Muhlinghaus about the idea of inviting other nations' football associations to seek for a possibility of working together in developing the international game of football. On May 21, 1904, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) was founded at the Union Française de Sports Athlétiques in Paris. At the invitation of Guérin and Muhlinghaus, seven representatives of different European national football associations came together and signed the foundation act of the FIFA, creating an umbrella organization which established a collaboration between the football associations of France, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. The day after, also the German federation joined the pack. A remarkable absentee in this collaboration was the FA. Already founded in 1863 as the first Football Association ever to exist, the British wanted the approval of all nations within their association, taking into account the independent decisions of the Scottish, Welsh and Irish association. However, Guérin did not want to wait for the approval of the FA and contacted the other national associations to consider the possibility of founding an overarching federation for football associations. Almost one year later, on April 14, 1905, also the FA joined the other nations as a member of the FIFA. The organization only consisted of European Associations up until 1909, when South Africa became the first non-European member of the FIFA, followed by the national associations of both Argentina and Chile in 1912 and the United States in 1913.

With the foundations of the FIFA, the first FIFA Statutes were created with the following points determined: (1) the reciprocal and exclusive recognition of the national associations represented and attending, (2) clubs and players were forbidden to play simultaneously for different national associations, (3) recognition by other associations of a

player’s suspension association and (4) the playing of matches according to the newly formed Laws of the Game of the Football Association (‘FIFA statutes’, 2018). Still, these statutes were only of a provisional nature, making it easier for additional members to accept them.

In this chapter, I will explain the organization of the FIFA and how rules and regulations of national team eligibility are intertwined within the institute of the FIFA. I will go through the eligibility rules step-by-step and will, shortly, compare these rules with statutes of another sports federation in order to put them into perspective. Last, I will put my case study of the 2019 Asian cup at the forefront of this thesis, by elaborating a little more on its background and how switching allegiance in international football affected this event.

3.1 Confederations and international tournaments

After additional members from different continents joined the FIFA, the governance of international football started expanding to continents all over the world. Already in 1916, the football associations of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay gathered together in Buenos Aires to officially found the Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol (CONMEBOL), the first continental governing body to facilitate international football within the continent of South America. In doing so, they were also able to organize the first ever continental tournament and named it the Copa America. It was up until after the World Wars that also other continents started to build up their own confederations. All of the confederations mentioned below reside within FIFA. Still, they organize their own continental tournaments themselves.

Continental Federation	Year of Formation	Number of FIFA members	Official language	Continental Tournament
Asian Football Confederation (AFC)	1954	47	English, Arabic	AFC Asian Cup
Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF)	1957	56	English, Arabic, French	Africa Cup of Nation
Confederación Sudamericana	1916	10	Spanish, Portuguese	Copa America

de Fútbol (CONMEBOL)				
Confederation of North and Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF)	1961	41	English, French, Spanish, Dutch	CONCACAF Gold Cup
Oceania Football Confederation (OFC)	1966	11	English	OFC Nations Cup
Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)	1954	55	English, French, German	UEFA European Championship

Table 2: Continental confederations of the FIFA

The FIFA remains the umbrella organization of all members and is responsible for all world tournaments, including the FIFA World Cup and FIFA Women’s World Cup, which are held every four years, first in 1930 in Uruguay (men) and in 1991 in China (women). With currently having 211 members, the FIFA exceeds the UN in terms of members. Anno 2019, apart from Monaco, Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, the Marshall Islands and the Vatican, all independent countries in the world have a national football association with a FIFA membership (‘World Cup 2018: Which countries are not members of FIFA?’, 2018). Furthermore, also dependent territories, such as Gibraltar and the Faroe Islands have independent FIFA membership. Also, Palestine, as a dependent territory, has a FIFA membership and is also a member of the AFC. As the United Kingdom nowadays contains four different associations (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland), all of them have separate FIFA membership, leading to England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

competing separately from each other in international football. Even recently, new FIFA members join the organization. In 2013, South Sudan became the 209th member, joining the AFC and in 2016, Kosovo and Gibraltar were accepted as the 210th and 211th member of the FIFA, joining the UEFA ('FIFA: 'Kosovo and Gibraltar become members of world governing body', 2016).

Not all countries that are geographically located in a continent are also a member of the continental federation. The UEFA, for instance, carries members which could be identified as being transcontinental such as Armenia Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Russia. Israel, as a UEFA member, was, quite remarkably, a founding member of the AFC. However, in 1974, the AFC members voted Israel out of the AFC group, as Arab members of the AFC felt political pressure from above to refuse to play against Israel. Not earlier than 1992, the Israel Football Association was accepted by the UEFA to join the confederation and participate in UEFA tournaments.

In South America, all current members have been present within the CONMEBOL since 1952, with Venezuela joining last. Guyana, Suriname and the French overseas department of French Guiana, while geographically part of South America, never joined the CONMEBOL, but rather joined the CONCACAF. Consisting of being a former British territory, a former Dutch territory or a current French territory, these members decided that historically, they would better fit in the North American confederation instead of the South American one.

After winning almost every edition of the OFC Nations Cup, Australia decided to leave the OFC due to sporting reasons and joined the AFC in 2006. Although they did not lack competition anymore, they won the Asian Cup in 2015, making Australia the only FIFA member to ever win continental titles in multiple continents.

3.2 Rules and regulations of national team eligibility

As the original statutes of the FIFA already stated, players were forbidden to play simultaneously for different national associations (FIFA, 2018). As the governing body of international football, the FIFA is responsible for regulating the guidelines whether an athlete is eligible to represent a FIFA member in official matches. Although players were forbidden to simultaneously represent countries, representing a new team and switching allegiance was possible as long as the player held citizenship of the country they wished to represent. Players made use of this system as the famous Alfredo Di Stéfano used to play for Argentina and

Spain and former Hungary football star Ferenc Puskás switching allegiance to the Spanish national football team.

In January 2004, the FIFA inserted new rules into their statutes, making it possible for players to represent one country at junior level (below the age of 21) and represent another nation at senior international level (senior football teams) (FIFA, 2018). This rule was implemented to allow athletes with dual citizenship to make a decision of allegiance at a later stage of their career. However, in March 2004, the FIFA already amended their policy on international eligibility within football, as they were noticing athletes participating for countries without a “clear connection” between the athlete and the nation. Therefore, they stated that athletes must have at least one parent or grandparent who was born in the country the athlete wishes to represent, or that an athlete has been resident in that country for at least two years. This, of course, next to the acquisition of the citizenship of the “new” country. In 2008, the residency requirement of two years was extended to five years as FIFA President by the time, Joseph Blatter, stated that ‘if FIFA does not take care about the invaders from Brazil towards Europe, Asia and Africa the 2014 or 2018 World Cup, out of the 32 teams you will have 16 full of Brazilian players’, referring to a lot of naturalized Brazilian players who switched allegiance to other countries during their career (‘Blatter wants EU to allow quotas’, 2007).

At the moment the FIFA rules and regulations on eligibility and switching allegiance still take into account the 2004 and 2008 amendments. The rules for national team eligibility are laid out in the articles 5-8 of the FIFA Statutes of the Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes, section III. Eligibility to play for representative teams (FIFA, 2018):

Article 5. Principle
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Any person holding a permanent nationality that is not dependent on residence in a certain country is eligible to play for the representative teams of the association of that country2. With the exception of the conditions specified in article 8 below, any player who has already participated in a match (either in full or in part) in an official competition of any category or any type of football for one association may not play an international match for a representative team of another association.

Article 6. Nationality entitling players to represent more than one association

1. A player who, under the terms of art. 5, is eligible to represent more than one association on account of his/her nationality, may play in an international match for one of these associations only if, in addition to having the relevant nationality, he/she fulfils at least one of the following conditions: (a) He/she was born on the territory of the relevant association; (b) His/her biological mother or biological father was born on the territory of the relevant association; (c) His/her grandmother or grandfather was born on the territory of the relevant association; (d) He/she has lived continuously on the territory of the relevant association for at least two years.
2. Regardless of par. 1 above, associations sharing a common nationality may make an agreement under which item (d) of par. 1 of this article is deleted completely or amended to specify a longer time limit. Such agreements shall be lodged with and approved by the Council.

Article 7. Acquisition of a new nationality

Any player who refers to art. 5 par. 1 to assume a new nationality and who has not played international football in accordance with art. 5 par. 2 shall be eligible to play for the new representative team only if he/she fulfils one of the following conditions: (a) The player was born on the territory of the relevant association; (b) His/her biological mother or biological father was born on the territory of the relevant association; (c) His/her grandmother or grandfather was born on the territory of the relevant association; (d) He/she has lived continuously for at least five years after reaching the age of 18 on the territory of the relevant association.

Article 8. Change of association

1. If a player has more than one nationality, or if a player acquires a new nationality, or if a player is eligible to play for several representative teams due to nationality, he/she may, only once, request to change the association for which he/she is eligible to play international matches to the association of another country of which he/she holds nationality, subject to the following conditions: (a) He/she has not played a match (either in full or in part) in an official competition at “A” international level for his/her current association, and at the time of his/her first full or partial appearance in an international match in an official competition for his/her current association, he/she already had the nationality of the representative team for which he/she wishes to play. (b) He/she is not permitted to play for his/her new association

in any competition in which he/she has already played for his/her previous association.

2. If a player who has been fielded by his/her association in an international match in accordance with art. 5 par. 2 permanently loses the nationality of that country without his/her consent or against his/her will due to a decision by a government authority, he/she may request permission to play for another association whose nationality he/she already has or has acquired.
3. Any player who has the right to change associations in accordance with par. 1 and 2 above shall submit a written, substantiated request to the FIFA general secretariat. The Players' Status Committee shall decide on the request. The procedure will be in accordance with the Rules Governing the Procedures of the Players' Status Committee and the Dispute Resolution Chamber. Once the player has filed his/her request, he/she is not eligible to play for any representative team until his/her request has been processed

Table 3: FIFA Rules and Regulations on Eligibility to play for representative teams

Looking at the rules and regulations on eligibility to play for FIFA members, the general principle in Article 5.1. states that “any person holding a permanent nationality that is not dependent on residence in a certain country is eligible to play for the representative teams of the association of that country”, with Article 5.2. adding the part that states that “any player who already participated in a match in an official competition of any category of any type of football for one association may not play an international match for a representative team of another association”. In other words, friendly games do not count, as they are not official and will not lead to an athlete’s exclusion of competing for another nation. However, the exception to this article will be explained in Article 8.

As I have shown earlier in this chapter, some nationalities cover more FIFA member states, permitting a player to play for more than one representative FIFA member. This counts for the following nationalities and FIFA membership countries connected to that nationality:

Nationality	FIFA membership countries
American	United States, American Samoa, Guam, US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico
British	England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Gibraltar, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands
Chinese	China, Hong Kong, Macau
Danish	Denmark, Faroe Islands
French	France, Guadeloupe, New Caledonia, Réunion, Tahiti
Dutch	The Netherlands, Aruba, Curacao
New Zealander	New Zealand, Cook Islands

Table 4: List of nationalities that cover more than one national team

Having one of the nationalities above does not simply mean that athletes could pick and choose for which team they would like to play. Therefore, Article 6 in Table 3 deals with these cases. As is shown, Article 6.1. states that a player must either be born in a country, have biological ties to the country or have lived in the country for a certain period of time, making the eligibility to represent certain FIFA membership countries exclusive. Article 6.2. gives the FIFA membership countries the possibility to make an agreement on the approval of tighten the time limit to a longer period or completely ignore this item, making it impossible for athletes without ancestry to represent another FIFA membership country within the same nationality.

Article 7 is the first article that focusses on the acquisition of a new nationality and the possibility to represent a new FIFA membership country. This was also the article that got revised by the FIFA in 2004 and 2008 and led to an extended number of years of residence to apply for a “new” nation to represent. Again, *jus sanguinis* is mostly leading here, next to the possibility to play for a certain nation after living there for at least five years after reaching the age of 18.

Since Article 8 influences both Article 6 and 7 within the FIFA Statutes on the eligibility of playing for a FIFA membership country (6 and 7 simply acknowledge the possibility of switching allegiance for players who are either eligible to represent more than

one association on account of his/her nationality or players who have acquired another nationality), this article is the one that has been observed most in discussing switching allegiance in international football. It states that only players who have: (1) more than one nationality, (2) acquired a new nationality (referring to Article 7) or (3) been eligible to represent more than one association due to their nationality (referring to Article 6) can switch allegiance. Article 8.1. explains that athletes who fall under these rules may only ones make such a request to change their national team association if he/she has not played a match in an official (non-friendly) senior international match. At the time of his/her first appearance in an international match, the athlete must already have the nationality of the representative team the athlete wishes to play for. In other words, it cannot occur that a player that has been capped at an official senior international level match switches allegiance. Senior friendlies, however, do not impact this process. Furthermore, Article 8.2. takes into account those players who, for some reason, lost their nationality, and could, therefore, not participate any longer in international football. This can happen when an athlete has the citizenship of a country that, for instance, breaks apart. This happened for instance after the fall of Yugoslavia, when a lot of players formerly representing the country, had to switch allegiance to either Serbia & Montenegro (later again divided into Serbia and Montenegro, where after Serbia got again divided into Serbia and Kosovo), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia, Macedonia (later re-named into North Macedonia) or Croatia.

3.2.1 FIFA eligibility rules into perspective: the IAAF as an example

As has been stated above, the FIFA needed to include their eligibility rules into their statutes in order to make sure they can keep track of who is representing which nation in international football. They can act independently from any other sports federation in the world when creating or changing these rules and regulations, including the IOC. Therefore, the IOC, as the umbrella organization of all sports federations in the world, gave away their power to the independent sports federations when handling switching allegiance in international sports. With more people on the move worldwide, the FIFA is the only well-known sports federation which is subjective to a more globalizing world, and, therefore, has to constantly look into their eligibility rules in order to make sure they are up to today's appropriate norms and values of the international society.

When comparing the FIFA eligibility rules with those of other sports federations, one could notice that almost all of them, like Blatter already made clear, experience the

representation of the country in international sports by athletes without any clear connection to the country as problematic. The IAAF, for instance, is a famous example of a sports federation who drastically changed their eligibility rules (Schulting, forthcoming). Under pressure from mostly European and African athletic associations, they changed their eligibility rules since ‘it has become abundantly clear with regular multiple transfers of athletes, especially from Africa that the present rules are no longer fit for purpose. Athletics, which at its highest levels of competition is a championship sport based upon national teams, is particularly vulnerable in this respect. Furthermore, the present rules do not offer the protections necessary to the individual athletes involved and are open to abuse (IAAF, 2017).’ This quote, taken from IAAF President Sebastian Coe during the 208th council meeting of the IAAF, underlines the “fear” of sports federations towards recent developments in international sports concerning a “muscle drain” in international sports, set up by richer countries who attract talent from abroad and are, therefore, represented by athletes without any connection to the country they are participating for. In 2017, The IAAF, therefore, completely froze changing nationality in international athletics (IAAF, 2017). Formerly, the rules of the IAAF were quite similar like the ones from FIFA, with athletes having the possibility to represent a country after getting the official citizenship and a certain number of years of residence (IAAF, 2006). Today, only athletes who can prove they, or (one of) their (grand)parents, were born in a foreign country have the possibility to switch allegiance (IAAF, 2017). The IAAF never blamed any countries specifically for this “muscle drain”. However, Coe did mention the emigration of athletes from African countries: ‘The present situation is wrong. What we have is a wholesale market for African talent open to the highest bidder. Our present rules are being manipulated to the detriment of athletics’ credibility. Lots of the individual athletes concerned, many of whom are transferred at a young age do not understand that they are forfeiting their nationality. This must end and a new way forward found which respects the athletes’ rights and the sport’s dignity (IAAF, 2017).’ Still, it became clear that the IAAF targeted the representation of countries by foreign-born athletes without any relation to the country they nowadays represent by using examples of African athletes who are now competing for Bahrain, Qatar and Turkey (Schulting, forthcoming).

In other words, the IAAF wanted to get rid of “thin” citizenship within their sport and, therefore, tackled the citizenship-for-sale phenomenon, leading to athletes receiving citizenship via the *jus talentii* principle explained in chapter 2. In doing so, they decided to freeze all transfers immediately, making this no longer possible. The FIFA, although acknowledging this development, holds on to their rules stating an athlete without ancestral

ties to a certain country, does have the possibility to participate for another nation after living in a country for a certain period of time.

3.3 AFC and the Asian Cup

In this thesis, I will take the 2019 Asian Cup as a case study in researching the representation of its competitors by foreign-born athletes and to what extent these differences can be explained through their different citizenship regimes. Therefore, I will briefly elaborate on the tournament of the Asian Cup and its organizer: the AFC.

The AFC is, after the CONMEBOL, the second oldest football federation in the world. It was founded on May 8, 1954, by fourteen founding members and has grown to a total of 47 members in 2019 (AFC, 2019). These members are, due to the big size of the continent, divided into five sub-confederations:

AFC sub-confederation	Associations within sub-confederation
West Asian Football Federation (WAFF)	Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen
Central Asian Football Association (CAFA)	Afghanistan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
South Asian Football Federation (SAFF)	Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
East Asian Football Federation (EAFF)	China, Chinese Taipei, DPR Korea, Guam, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea Republic, Macau, Mongolia, Northern Mariana Islands
Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Football Federation (AFF)	Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam

Table 5: AFC Regional Federations and associated members

Although the sub-confederations all organize their own tournaments, the most prestigious tournament, next to the FIFA World Cup, is the Asian Cup. Within this tournament, 24 out of the 47 members qualify via a qualification round for the final tournament, which is organized every four years, first held in 1956 with the Korean Republic as its first winner. Also, in 1975,

the first edition of the Asian Cup for women was created. In Table 6, an overview of the previous editions of the Asian Cup is presented, as well the former winners of the tournament:

Edition	Year	Host	Winner
1	1956	Hong Kong	Korea Republic
2	1960	Korea Republic	Korea Republic
3	1964	Israel	Israel
4	1968	Iran	Iran
5	1972	Thailand	Iran
6	1976	Iran	Iran
7	1980	Kuwait	Kuwait
8	1984	Singapore	Saudi Arabia
9	1988	Qatar	Saudi Arabia
10	1992	Japan	Japan
11	1996	United Arab Emirates	Saudi Arabia
12	2000	Lebanon	Japan
13	2004	China	Japan
14	2007	Indonesia Malaysia Thailand Vietnam	Iraq
15	2011	Qatar	Japan
16	2015	Australia	Australia
17	2019	United Arab Emirates	Qatar
18 (future)	2023	China	-

Table 6: Asian Cup editions and winners

While some countries won the tournament (for men) more than once (Japan 4x, Saudi Arabia 3x, Iran 3x, Korea Republic 2x), some never even made it through the qualification round (Afghanistan, Bhutan, Brunei, Guam, Laos, Macau, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Northern Mariana Islands, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste). As explained earlier, Israel,

while a founding member of the AFC and former winner of the tournament in 1964, is not a member of the AFC any more. Australia, on the other hand, decided to join the AFC in 2006 for sporting reasons and won the tournament in 2015, while also hosting the event that year. Another remarkable fact is that the Asian Cup takes place every four consecutive years, with an interruption in between 2004 and 2007. Considering the organization of the Olympic Games in China in the summer of 2008, the AFC decided to hold the continental tournament a year earlier, in order to maximize the strength of all participating team without overlapping with the Olympic Games. This time, for this and last time in the history of the AFC, the tournament was hosted in multiple countries at the same time. This decision almost turned out to be a disaster, considering the difficulties of Thailand to improve its facilities in time. Although Thailand did manage to prepare their two stadiums in time, no matches were played after the 2007 Asian Cup Quarter-finals, with the apotheosis of the tournament taking place in the other host nations.

The best AFC member to ever perform in a FIFA World Cup is the Korea Republic. In 2002, they became fourth at the first ever FIFA World Cup to be organized in Asia, with the Korea Republic and Japan organizing the tournament together. The FIFA Women's World Cup, however, was organized twice in Asia, as China served as its host in 1991 (first FIFA Women's World Cup ever) and 2007. In 2011, the women's team of Japan won the first world football title ever for the AFC and remained one of the best in the world ever since.

In 2022, Qatar will host the FIFA World Cup as the third AFC member, and first Middle Eastern country to ever organize the event. However, their bid remained not without controversies. Therefore, I will elaborate on Qatar hosting the FIFA World Cup during the fifth chapter, and the second case study of my thesis.

3.3.1. 2019 Asian Cup

The 2019 Asian cup took place from January 5 to February 1, 2019, in the United Arab Emirates. Approximately five years earlier, the Gulf state was chosen as a host by the AFC Executive committee, after only Iran was left as an opponent to organize the tournament. It was the second time the country hosted the tournament. For the first time, 24 teams competed in the tournament, after the expansion of the 16-team format that was used in previous editions of the event. Qualification for the tournament took place from 2015 to 2018 and resulted in the formation of the 24 countries presented in Table 1. As is shown, these were divided into six groups of four competitors, playing only once against one another each, with

the number one and two (and the four best numbers three) of the group going to the knock-out stage of the tournament. Out of these countries, Yemen, the Philippines and Kyrgyzstan qualified for the first times for an Asian Cup.

In the group stage of the tournament, Korea Republic, Japan and the surprisingly strong Qatar were the most successful countries, winning all of their three games. In terms of the case countries of this thesis, both the Philippines and Lebanon did not survive the group stage. As the Philippines lost all of their matches, Lebanon was able to win one, reaching third place in their group. However, this was insufficient to qualify to the next round. Next to Qatar, also Vietnam qualified for the knock-out stage, ending up as one of the best numbers three in the group stage of the tournament.

Round of 16		
Thailand	1 – 2	China
Iran	2 – 0	Oman
Jordan	1 – 1 (Vietnam won by penalties)	Vietnam
Japan	1 – 0	Saudi Arabia
Korea Republic	2 – 1 (Korea Republic won by extra time)	Bahrain
Qatar	1 – 0	Iraq
United Arab Emirates	3 – 2 (United Arab Emirates won by extra time)	Kyrgyzstan
Australia	0 – 0 (Australia won by penalties)	Uzbekistan
Quarter-finals		
China	0 – 3	Iran
Vietnam	0 – 1	Japan
Korea Republic	0 – 1	Qatar
United Arab Emirates	1 – 0	Australia
Semi-finals		
Iran	0 – 3	Japan

Qatar	4 – 0	United Arab Emirates
Final		
Japan	1 – 3	Qatar

Table 7: Knock-out stages 2019 Asian Cup

After some thrilling games, with multiple ending ones up in extra time or penalty shoot-outs, Qatar eventually won the tournament for the first time within its history, beating Japan in the Zayed Sports City Stadium in Abu Dhabi. Vietnam, as one of the other case countries of this thesis, ended up in the Quarter-finals, losing to later finalist Japan. Logically, both countries had a very successful tournament.

Although almost 37.000 people came to see the final, the match was far from sold-out, with the Zayed Sports City Stadium's maximum capacity of over 43.000 people. The only time the stadium did sell out its tickets was during the group stage when China faced up the host country in Abu Dhabi. Attendances of the matches differed a lot, questioning the popularity of the event. Although this is a problem which is seen at almost every edition of the event, most matches were still visited by thousands of people, making the tournament profitable to organize. The only time the 2019 Asian Cup hit rock bottom was during the match between Korea DPR and Qatar, with an attendance of only 452 spectators. In comparison, the second less popular match was still visited by at least 1.839 people.

3.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained the organization of the FIFA and what kind of rules the overarching institute of international football has created to regulate who is allowed to represent which nation. After explaining the construction of the FIFA (including all the continental federations), the main focus of this chapter was to create an overview of these rules and to what extent they allow football players to switch allegiance and in what context. As the FIFA, from the beginning on, forbid to simultaneously participate for different nations, the governing body of international football changed their rules over time. While citizenship by itself started as the only requirement of representing a nation, switching allegiance became more complex. As from the beginning of 2004, the FIFA tried to make eligibility in football more exclusive for those who had a "clear connection" with the country they wish to represent, taking into account family relations and residency as new requirements. The FIFA,

therefore, tries to regulate (not put a hold) *jus talentii*, and put an emphasis on the players' backgrounds, not allowing instant switches of national associations.

Besides, what is also important is the distinction between youth and senior international matches, making it possible for players to switch allegiance at a later stage of their career. This, for instance, forms a difference between the FIFA and other sports federations like the IAAF. Not only does the IAAF not take into consideration a flexible decisiveness of deciding which nation to represent, they completely froze the action of switching allegiance. Here, the federation explicitly aims to make a policy against *jus talentii* and tries to keep citizenship as “thick” as possible concerning the athlete participating for his or her country of origin.

With the knowledge of the FIFA and how citizenship is being explained in international football, I continue my thesis by looking at foreign-born football players in four different national football associations who are all part of the AFC and were qualified for the 2019 Asian Cup. Here, I will look at how switching allegiance takes place as an outcome of the FIFA rules and regulations. In doing so, I will research how and to what extent their appearance could be explained through the different citizenship regimes of the four case countries and how the representation of these countries by foreign-born athletes could be explained within both the FIFA and citizenship regime perspective.

Chapter 4



- The Philippines –

Capital	Manila
Population size (rounded to the nearest thousand)	100.081.000
Majority religion	Christianity
Geographical region in Asia	Southeast Asia
Former colonial ruler/protector	Spain (later US)
National football association	Philippine Football Federation (PFF)
Number of foreign-born players in tournament squad 2019 Asian Cup	19

4.1. Introduction

The Philippines is an island country in the Southeast of Asia in the western Pacific Ocean. Its territory includes circa 7.100 islands, with Manila as its capital. Although the Philippines is the twelfth most populated country in the world, many Philippines live and work abroad, making it one of the biggest diasporas in the world, with approximately ten million descendants from the Philippines living abroad (Hernandez, Cullinane & Borzala, 2019). Considering a large number of these Philippine emigrants living outside of the country, a special ‘Commission on Filipinos Overseas’ (CFO) has been installed by the government in 1980 and is responsible for the promoting and upholding the interest of Philippine emigrants in other countries. Therefore, it strives to strengthen the ties with Philippine communities outside of the country. These overseas migrants send in billions of dollars to their country of origin via remittances, forming nearly 10% of the country’s GDP in 2013 (Commission on Filipinos Overseas, 2013). Other important income resources of the Philippines are mostly

coming from the agricultural, forestry and fishing sector, as well as mineral resources such as gold, iron ore, lead, zinc, chromite and copper. Among the fifty UN countries on the Asian continent, the Philippines belongs to the bottom half in terms of GDP per capita, with citizens earning about 3.000 dollars per year on average (World Bank, 2019).

The country is largely influenced by the United States when introduced to a various number of sports in the early 20th century. Basketball could, therefore, be considered as the country's most popular sport, as well as tennis, golf, windsurfing and diving (Hernandez et al, 2019). The country's most famous sportsmen and sportswomen, however, excel in international martial arts like boxing, wushu and taekwondo. Despite a lot of talent within fighting sports, the country never won a gold medal at the Olympic Games.

The Philippines national men's and women's football teams are nicknamed "the Azkals" and are governed by the Philippine Football Federation (PFF). Furthermore, the country's highest-level football club competitions are the Philippine Premier League and the PFF Women's league. Philippine football, although popular, never evolved as a very successful sport within the international field. For instance, both the national men and women football teams never qualified for a FIFA World Cup, with the men's team only qualifying for the AFC Asian Cup in 2019. The women's team, however, qualified for the continental cup multiple times, becoming sixth in 2018 during the AFC Women's Asian Cup in Jordan.

In this chapter, I will elaborate on the representation of the Philippines at 2019 Asian Cup by looking at their foreign-born athletes in their squad, and to what extent their appearance can be explained through the citizenship regime of the Philippines. I will tackle this question according to my research design and will, therefore, start with a brief explanation of the statistical results of the countries of origin of the players and their average age. Last, I will go through the eight mentioned criteria step-by-step, ending up in a sub-conclusion for this case country.

4.2. Analysis citizenship regime and naturalization policies of the Philippines on foreign-born athletes

In this paragraph, I will first explain the outcomes of the statistic results of the countries of origin of the players and their average age in order to place the characteristics of the Philippines into perspective within their citizenship regime and their naturalization policies of foreign-born athletes. Second, all eight criteria concerning the Philippines's policies for foreign-born athletes will be explained.

4.2.1. Countries of origin players Philippine squad 2019 Asian Cup

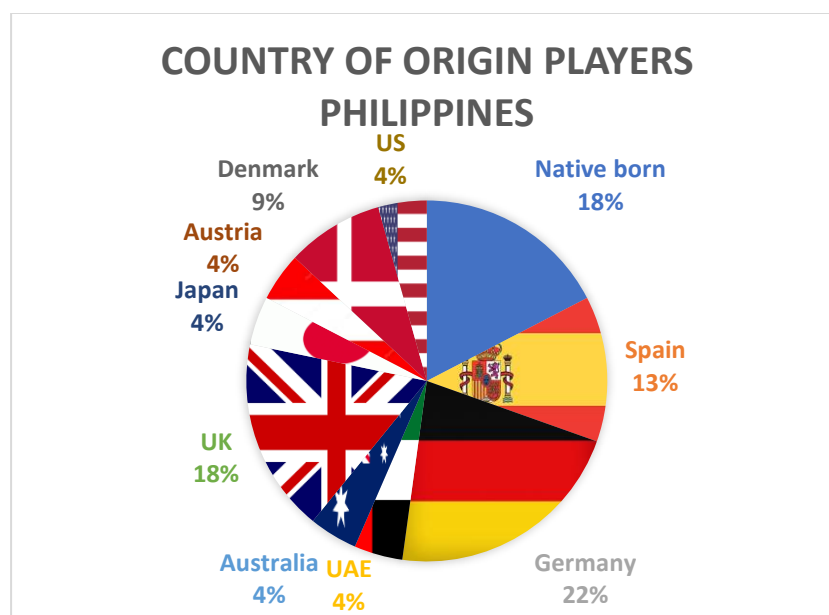


Figure 1: Country of Origin Philippine Squad 2019 Asian Cup

Looking at Figure 1, only 18% of the Philippine team is born in the country itself. In other words, no less than 19 players of the 2019 Asian Cup Squad of the Philippines were born outside of the Philippines and could have, most likely, represented other nations as well. Looking at the countries of origin, three players were born in Spain and one was born in the United States. With these countries having colonial ties with the Philippines, it could be interesting to look into these athletes specifically to see how they ended up representing the Philippines and if they, according to Philippine citizenship law, had any special provision, making it easier for them to participate in the national team of the Philippines. The largest group of foreign-born athletes consists of German-born football players, now representing the Philippines. Without any specific linguistic, religious or geographical connection between the Philippines and Germany, this statistic should not be for granted and could be more investigated within the eight criteria. Last, there is no sign of a clear geographical area of the world the athletes are coming from. It appears that the foreign-born athletes are not coming from nearby Asian countries, with only three of the foreign-born athletes coming from other AFC members

4.2.2. Average age foreign-born players Philippine Squad 2019 Asian Cup

Looking at Table 13 (Appendix B), the foreign-born players have an average age of 22. When looking at the official tournaments in the world and the FIFA eligibility rules, football players under the age of 23 are still able to represent junior teams in international tournaments, which do not count within the decisive decision for players to represent a national football team. It seems that most players within the Philippine squad participated for the Philippines after they have participated for youth teams of either the country they are born in, the Philippines or another country they are possibly able to represent. Therefore, the average age of 22 is not extremely low, considering a possible “muscle drain” from the Philippines since players were able to make a decision after they already played for (multiple) national youth teams. Out of the nineteen foreign-born players within the 2019 Asian Cup squad, six were 21 or younger, including two teenagers. The first, Manuel Ott, decided to choose for the Philippines at a very young age, representing the Philippines national team under 19 and under 23. Having a German father and a Filipino mother, Ott gained a Philippine passport via his maternal tie (see paragraph 4.2.3.1.) to represent the national senior team. Also, due to his passport and his mother’s ancestry, he was allowed to represent Germany at a younger age, yet did not decide to do so, or was not selected by the German football association to do so. The other player who made his official senior debut for the Philippines as a teenager is Phil Younghusband. Originally born in the United Kingdom, Younghusband shares the same story as Ott, finding himself able to represent the Philippines due to his mother’s citizenship. Like Ott, he represented the Philippines at FIFA youth tournaments and never played for the country he was born in. A remarkable fact is that the PFF was alerted to Younghusband’s eligibility by a man who found out about Younghusband’s ancestry via the popular videogame Football Manager, noticing the possibility for Younghusband to represent his mother’s country (Thompson, 2005). After the PFF contacted Phil Younghusband, as well as his brother, James, they decided to start an international football career in the Philippines.

4.2.3. Eight criteria analysis citizenship regime and naturalization policies on foreign-born athletes in the Philippines

Now, I will continue by explaining the citizenship regime and naturalization policies on foreign-born athletes in the Philippines and in order to explain the representation of the country by mostly foreign-born athletes.

4.2.3.1 Citizenship law characteristics

The Philippine law on citizenship has been constituted on January 17, 1973, for the last time. However, the process of naturalization has not changed since 1939. Therefore, these laws should be taken into account when researching the citizenship regime of the Philippines today ('Citizenship Republic of the Philippines', 2018).

1. Citizenship by birth (date of constitution January 17, 1973)
(1) Philippine law provides that a person is a Philippine citizen by birth if:
3.5 A person was born on or after the date of this constitution and at least one parent was a Philippine citizen on the date of birth
3.6 A person was born before the date of the constitution and has a father who was a Philippine citizen or has a mother who was a Philippine citizen and the person has formally elected Philippine citizenship upon reaching the age of eighteen.
2. Citizenship by naturalization (date of constitution June 17, 1939)
(1) Philippine law provides that persons having the following qualifications may become a citizen of the Philippines by naturalization:
a. He/she must be not less than twenty-one years of age on the day of the hearing of the petition
b. He/she must have resided in the Philippines for a continuous period of not less than ten years
c. He/she must be of good moral character and believe in the principles underlying the Philippine Constitution, and must have conducted himself in a proper and irreproachable manner during the entire period of his/her

residence in the Philippines in his/her relation with the constituted government as well as with the community in which he is living
d. He/she must own real estate in the Philippines worth not less than five thousand pesos, Philippine currency, or must have some known lucrative trade, profession, or lawful occupation
e. He/she must have enrolled his/her minor children of school age, in any of the public school or private schools recognized by the Office of Private Education of the Philippines, where the Philippine history, government and civics are taught or prescribed as part of the school curriculum, during the entire period of the residence in the Philippines required of him/her prior to the hearing of his/her petition for naturalization as Philippine citizen

Table 8: Philippine citizenship law

Looking at Table 8, one can notice that the Philippines strongly holds on to the *jus sanguinis* principle. A person born in the Philippines, however, does not become a Philippine citizen. *Jus soli* is, therefore, not included in Philippine law. In short, having a Philippine father or mother is enough to become a citizen of the Philippines. In addition to that, Philippine citizens born abroad of one or two Filipino parents, the Philippine government only requires a notarized report of birth executed by a parent and filed with the Department of Foreign Affairs ('Citizenship Republic of the Philippines', 2018). In terms of their naturalization policy, five requirements are selected by the Philippines to access Philippine citizenship. Solely looking at the first two criteria of both laws (1a, 2b and 2a and 2b) already explains that an athlete not born to Filipino parent(s) should be at least 21 years of age and should have resided in the Philippines for the last ten years. As Table 13 and paragraph 4.2.2. already explained, most athletes within the Philippine squad were above 21. Therefore, if the athlete would lack Filipino blood, it would most likely fill in this requirement. The second one, however, is much more difficult, yet not impossible. Football players could stay abroad in a county to play there for a big part of their career. Still, the average age number of 22 is too low to make it likely that most of them also fill in this second requirement. Whether there were players who did found themselves ended up playing for the Philippines via this route, will be explained in paragraph 4.2.3.8.

4.2.3.2. Special provisions for athletes?

What could also have been the case, next to citizenship by birth and citizenship by naturalization, is a special provision for athletes. However, within the Philippine law, there is no such law that provides special treatment for athletes or any other forms of people with special abilities or skills that can contribute to the country of the Philippines. In doing so, also football players should gain citizenship via the normal route. The lack of special provisions for athletes concerning the acquisition of Filipino citizenship is not uncommon in the Philippines. Antolihao wrote about foreign-born athletes in the Philippines in the late 1970s and states that the Philippine Basketball Association limited its foreign players in the national league. Therefore, as Antolihao explained, lots of (mostly) American basketball players falsified documents to prove their Filipino ancestry (Antolihao, 2015). This was not accepted and, once more, the association stated that basketball teams in the Philippines should consist of mostly Filipino nationals and could only have limited foreign “imports” (Antolihao, 2015).

Although the national football league of the Philippines does not have such a “nationals first rule”, the principle of not having special treatment for athletes wanting to become Filipino citizens remains the same, simply because sports association do not stand above the law. This also answers the question raised up when questioning the athletes from former colonizers (Spain or the United States). Looking at Figure 1, the four athletes coming from these countries do not enjoy a special treatment either. Also, for them, they should either have a Filipino background or become a Filipino by naturalization in order to play for the national team of the Philippines.

4.2.3.3. Strategies used for attracting foreign-born athletes

The Philippines’ appearance on the 2019 Asian Cup sparked the interest of many journalists after seeing the 23 names of the Philippine final squad for the tournament. As this research has shown, 19 out of those 23 were indeed foreign-born. The country had the highest number of foreign-born athletes of the tournament and international media started questioning where all those athletes “suddenly” came from (‘The Philippines’ street dogs’, 2019).

However, already in 2012, the FIFA interviewed the earlier mentioned Younghusband brothers for their YouTube channel. Here, the brothers explain how they ended up in the Philippine squad, stating they were called by the PFF after a man found them on the popular videogame Football Manager, and alerted the PFF that players with Filipino blood were

playing in the youth academy of Chelsea FC on the highest youth level in England. After not making it to the first team of their club, they received a call from their mothers' country, asking if they were interested to play in the Philippines ('Former Chelsea brothers shine in the Philippines', 2012). 'Apparently, a kid from the Philippines discovered that Phil and I were eligible and contacted the Philippine Football Federation. The PFF contacted Chelsea and to ask if we could set up a meeting. Here, we discussed whether we could represent the Philippines. We went home and told our mom and made the decision there. She was really excited', as James Younghusband told FIFATV. The brothers were one of the first foreign-born players to represent the Philippines. Already in 2012, the brothers spoke about the need to not attracting more foreign-born players, but instead, try to improve local football academies. 'If we get more people on board, especially the government, then we can get the facilities we need to make this work.'

Since this interview, the Philippines have improved their FIFA World Ranking and qualified for the Asian Cup for the first time in history. In 2013, the Younghusband brothers were interviewed again, after setting up their Younghusband Foundation. This initiative was still in line with what they said earlier: 'We want a future with a Philippine team with no players like us, but players raised up here' ('Brothers help Chelsea in Asia', 2013). Two years later, when the Philippines drastically improved their FIFA World Ranking (The Philippines raised from the 191st position to the 134th in just a few years), the UK magazine VICE Sports picked up the Younghusband story and went to the Philippines. Here, they discovered a team mostly consisting of foreign-born players. 'Of course, there are a few that will question some of the squad players not being full-blooded Filipino, but whether it is a half, a quarter, three-quarters: we consider ourselves Filipino, and we are honored to represent the country', as the Australian-born player Iain Ramsay told VICE Sports (Kerr, 2015). German-born player Stephan Schröck agrees with his teammate, stating that 'this generation can make a lot of things possible and can make football very popular in the country.'

On the contrary of what the Younghusband brothers told *FIFATV* in 2012, their move as one of the first foreign-born players to represent the Philippines did not result into less, but more foreign-born players needing to make Philippine football great. Before the 2019 Asian Cup took place, Scott Cooper, a British football advisor of the Philippines national team, tried to explain the increase of foreign-born players for the last couple of years. 'In Thailand, I was working with local young players that made it to the national team. Here, I am already identifying some young players that can do the same. However, in order to make Filipino football grow, we need to bring in sponsorship. This only comes from success and

that really depends on the performances of the national team in tournaments like the Asian Cup’ (‘Philippines’ street dogs’, 2018). In other words, Cooper admits that the country was in need of foreign-born talent to represent the country to be successful. His goal, as well as that of the ambitious Younghusband brothers, is to improve local football development. Dan Palami, the general manager of the Philippines national football team says that ‘attracting foreign-born players as a strategy worked very well’ (‘Philippines’ street dogs’, 2018). Furthermore, he adds, ‘I wait for the day when our local program will be on par with our foreign-born players. Then, we will have a bigger base to choose from.’ Cooper agrees, by telling ‘it works a little bit as a football club does. We try to incorporate everybody’s cultural heritage into one group. Much like any football club is doing. We are special and we are unique in that sense and when you got something unique rather than to transform it back to something else, better to use that uniqueness and that is what we try to do.’

The remarks of the Younghusband brothers, Cooper and Palami all share the same narrative which shows the circle strategy of the PFF: (1) players with Filipino blood are found abroad via networking, (2) these players are eligible to play for the Philippines according to national citizenship law and FIFA eligibility rules, (3) these players form a better team than local players gaining fast success in international football and (4) should, therefore, attract more local talents, as well as more eligible players from outside of the Philippines having Filipino blood.



Figure 2: Philippine strategy foreign-born players up to 2019 Asian Cup

As is shown in Figure 2, the attraction of local-born players is left out, simply because this is not implemented in the national team yet. Although the Younghusband brothers wanted the team to consist of local players, this, apparently, is not yet realized and the brothers were actually the start of such a strategy.

The circle shown in Figure 2 seems to develop a strategy that includes a lot of networking around the world, looking for migrants who share the same ancestry. With the help of players who are already settled in the Philippines, the PFF tries to convince other players to join their national team as well. As Palami said, they wish to choose from both local-born and foreign-born players. The likelihood of such a form of migration is not a football, nor a sports issue, but is comparable with social network-theories of migrants in general. Like Massey explained, migrant networks are ‘sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination countries through ties of kinship, friendship and shared community origin. In doing so, they increase the likelihood of international migration (Massey et al, 2005). Like the Australian-Filipino player Ramsey said, ‘whether it is a half, a quarter, three-quarters: we consider ourselves Filipino’, this reflects such a social networking-theory with the established foreign-born Filipino players, attracting new foreign-born Filipino players, not only by performing but also by sharing their community origin. This is, especially in the Philippines, in line with the governmental policies considering keeping ties with Filipino’s abroad and the installation of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

4.2.3.4. Alternative form of citizenship for athletes?

There seems no reason to state the players with Filipino blood have been given a different form of citizenship than the full citizenship of any other Filipino citizen. Within the database set up for this thesis, no players were found to not have Filipino blood (apart from one player whose ancestry was unknown). Therefore, no conclusion can be given in terms of a certain civic stratification among athletes in the Philippines than stating the athletes get the same citizenship as anyone else. Also, Antilihao stated that the American basketball players in the late 1970s gained full Filipino citizenship before the falsification affair, however immediately lost it after it remained clear they did not have ancestral ties with the Philippines (Antilihao, 2015).

4.2.3.5. Mandatory change of athlete's name?

Looking at the names of all the foreign-born players of the Philippine squad, almost all of them seem to have a non-Filipino name. However, looking at their profile, their full name often shows a maternal name, next to European paternal name. The players, however, represented the Philippine national team with their European name on the back of their shirt during the 2019 Asian Cup ('Philippine Squad Asian Cup 2019', 2019). Therefore, the team does not "hide" its diverse formation and the requirement of having a Filipino name is not taken into account.

4.2.3.6. Mandatory movement of the athlete to "new" country?

There is no need for foreign-born players to mandatory live in the Philippines on the condition that they gained citizenship by birth. If naturalized, a player should live at least ten years in the Philippines already to access citizenship by Philippine law (Table 8), instead of the required five years required by the FIFA. After being eligible to represent the Philippines, athletes are still not required to stay in the country. However, most foreign-born players have chosen to make the Philippines their home and play for a Philippine football team. Looking at the "role model concept" of the Philippine strategy to improve their football team, it would not be very beneficial for the players to never be in the Philippines, contributing to Philippine football and the strategy will not work out. While some players earn their money in other Asian competitions, only two foreign-born players remained playing in their country of origin. Considering their preference for common facilities and staff, their decision not to move the Philippines is accepted by the PFF (Philippine Squad Asian Cup 2019', 2019).

4.2.3.7. Preference of attraction of athletes with specific geographical, religious or linguistic backgrounds?

Looking at Figure 1, the foreign-born players of the 2019 Asian Cup squad of the Philippines do not show any specific common background that relates to a certain preference of the PFF to attract players for a move from particular areas of the world. What is quite remarkable, however, is the high number of German-born players in the Filipino squad. Looking at the German-born Philippine players, all of them have a mother with Filipino citizenship and, therefore, accessed the national team via their mother's ancestry. When asking the earlier

mentioned player Stephan Schröck, he states that ‘playing for the Philippines is my way of saying thank you to my mum’, referring to his maternal ties with the country. Although Germany and the Philippines do not share a mutual history, a lot of Filipinos came to Germany in the second half of the 20th century to start working in the medical and marine-based industries (Butalid-Echaves, 1999). Also, a number of Filipino women are married to German men through international marriage agencies (Hardillo-Werning & Lou, 2007). As a result of the female-dominated migration of nurses and “mail-order brides”, the Filipino community is heavily gender-imbalanced, with nearly 3.5 women for every man (Hardillo-Werning & Lou, 2007).

4.2.3.8. Level of “thickness” of citizenship

As already explained in paragraph 4.2.3.4., no players (apart from one player who was identified, but whose background remained unknown) of the 2019 Asian Cup squad of the Philippines gained citizenship by naturalization. Looking at Figure 3, this research shows that almost all of the nineteen foreign-born Filipino players acquired their Filipino citizenship because of their mothers’ ancestry.

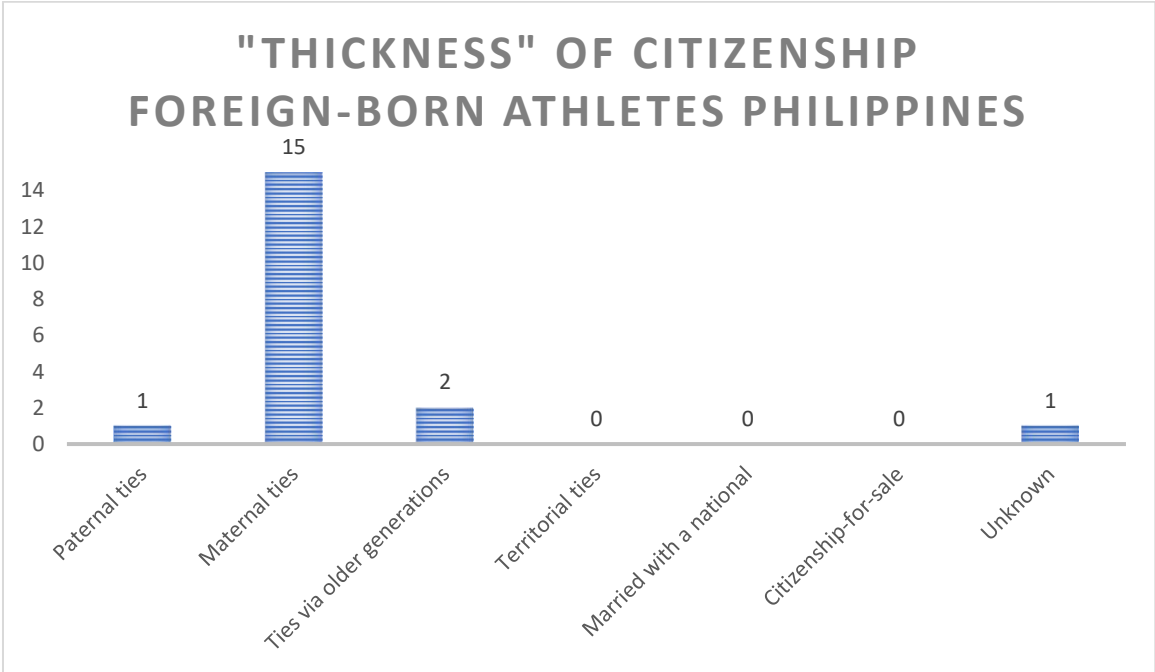


Figure 3: "Thickness" of citizenship foreign-born athletes of the Philippines

According to Philippine law, they are allowed to quickly access citizenship. Also, according to FIFA eligibility rules, they were allowed to represent youth teams of other nations but could have accessed the national team because they filled in the requirement of having at least one parent who was born in the country of the “new” association.

There is no sign of citizenship-for-sale considering the lack of players within the 2019 Philippine squad who accessed citizenship by naturalization. Although all foreign-born athletes in Philippine football seem to have ancestral ties, the basketball team, however, does have players who are naturalized (Antilihao, 2015). The earlier mentioned Philippine basketball association now allows a maximum of two naturalized players for each national team (men’s and women’s). Also in the Philippine basketball teams, a lot of (mostly American-born) foreign-born players represent the national teams in international tournaments.

4.3. Conclusion

Looking at the 2019 Asian Cup squad Philippines as the first case study of this thesis, the first thing that comes to mind is the diversity of the team. Not only did the Philippines send in a formation that contained more foreign-born players than any country at the 2019 Asian Cup, but there also was no direct geographical, religious or linguistic link between these countries of origin. Still, and leading within this case, there was a major overlapping characteristic that explained a lot already when researching all nineteen foreign-born players: they all had an ancestral connection with the country they represented at the 2019 Asian Cup through their parents or older generations who acquired the official citizenship of the Philippines.

Therefore, the rules of the FIFA and the citizenship law of the Philippines opened a gap for these players to switch their allegiance in a legal way, resulting in them representing their ancestral roots instead of the country they were born in. Although the Philippines does have a clear naturalization policy and the possibilities of becoming a Filipino citizen are there, the football players had an easier way of accessing the citizenship through the *jus sanguinis* principle and did not need a naturalization law, nor did they access citizenship through a special provision in the law.

In terms of strategies, the PFF tries to network around the world without a region of preference to convince players with Filipino roots to play for the Philippines. Since they are eligible, they are selected and could play for the Philippines very quickly, allowing them to play with local-born players. In the eyes of the PFF, they intended to create a basis, from

where local-born players could be trained and should, on the longer term, be able to solely represent the national team in international tournaments. However, soon after starting this strategy, it became clear that the only way of attracting foreign-born athletes was by gaining small success with the Philippines national team first. Therefore, the PFF oversaw that the basis to choose from, in the longer term, could not only be by training local-born players but also remain scouting for foreign-born players will be most profitable, making it likely for the Philippines' national football team to remain diverse in the near future. An important aspect here is to not only make use of their own network but of the network of the foreign-born players as well, attracting new eligible players for the Philippines.

Although the *jus sanguinis* principle seems to be key for the Philippines' citizenship regime, the concepts of "picking winners" or "citizenship-for-exchange" are still applicable to the Philippines. However, one could not really speak of "citizenship-for-sale" since the citizenship of all foreign-born players (with the exception of one unknown case) was rather "thick", with their connection to the country being very clear via their family ties. Still, *jus talentii* is being relevant, with the players being part of some sort of return migration leading to a "muscle circulation" of talented players who rapidly became citizens of the Philippines. However, considering that the citizenship regime of the Philippines used its power to simplify the access of citizenship for descendants, the fact that the country is being represented by players whose names do not sound very Filipino, is not as abnormal as it might seem to be, characterizing the "picking winners" strategy of the Philippine citizenship regime.

Chapter 5



- Qatar -

Capital	Doha
Population size (rounded to the nearest thousand)	2.642.000
Majority religion	Islam
Geographical region in Asia	Middle East
Former colonial ruler/protector	UK
National football association	Qatar Football Association (QFA)
Number of foreign-born players in tournament squad 2019 Asian Cup	5

5.1. Introduction

The emirate of Qatar is an Arabic peninsula in the Persian Gulf with a small size of only 11.500 square kilometers. Out of the 2,6 million people who live in the country, 2,3 million are residing in Doha, the capital of Qatar. Just above ten percent of the inhabitants of the country have Qatari citizenship, making the non-Qatari population the vast majority of the population of Qatar (World Factbook, 2018). This majority of non-Qatari contained 87 different nationalities in 2018, with Indians, Nepalese, Bengalese and Filipino's as the biggest groups of foreign-born people living in Gulf State (Souza, 2018). Although Qatar was lucky to have a lot of oil resources, the wealth coming from it could not have been built up without the arrival of these large groups of foreign laborers building up the Qatari industry and infrastructure as it is like today (Reiche, 2014).

When Qatar defeated the United Arab Emirates in the 2019 Asian Cup Semi-finals, the Gulf country finally seemed to put some positivity towards their election of the 2022

FIFA World Cup. Not only was their bid to host such an enormous event controversial because of its lack of football history, as the country has never competed in a World Cup. It also appeared that the election was “bought”, and the Qatari bid was the result of a campaign contaminated with bribery (Laughland, 2017). Furthermore, the almost science-fiction look-a-like stadiums which were presented during their bid seemed to be realized by a gigantic working force. As Qatar does not have the labor capacity to meet such requirements, the country started recruiting construction workers from abroad. Once the construction of the stadiums began with labor migrants starting to create this Qatari dream, reports from NGO’s like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International were already publicized and on its way to international media, criticizing that the Qatari way of treating its labor migrants was inhuman and foreign laborers had to work under pitiful conditions lacking physical, social and political rights (“Amnesty report demands more from Qatar over World Cup stadium workers’ rights, 2019).

An important event that happened during the 2019 Asian Cup, was the commotion over the eligibility of Sudanese-born Almoez Ali and Iraqi-born Bassam Al-Rawi that was already mentioned at the beginning of this thesis. On January 30, 2019, after the United Arab Emirates lost its semi-final to Qatar, the Emirati football association officially handed in a formal appeal to the AFC, questioning the eligibility of the two athletes (Panja, 2019). In the appeal, they stated that the two were not allowed to represent Qatar at the 2019 Asian cup lacking the requirement of the FIFA eligibility rules and regulations on the basis of Article 7d (see Table 3). In doing so, they claimed Ali and Al-Rawi did not live in Qatar for the required five years after the age of eighteen, and could, therefore, not have been part of the Qatari squad for the tournament (Panja, 2019). In other words, the United Arab Emirates tried to “claim” a place in the final of the 2019 Asian Cup by asking for the disqualification of Qatar on the basis of selecting players who were not allowed to play for the national team of Qatar. On February 1, the AFC officially released a press statement saying the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee had dismissed the appeal of the Emirati football association and Qatar was allowed to play the final against Japan for the tournament cup (AFC, 2019).

In this chapter, I will closely look at the representation of the Qatari national football team at the 2019 Asian Cup by investigating the foreign-born athletes of their squad, and how the formation of the team relates to the citizenship regime of the Gulf State. Like the previous chapter, I will first go through the results of the statistics of this thesis and will continue with the eight criteria after, before coming to the sub-conclusion of this chapter.

5.2. Analysis citizenship regime and naturalization policies of Qatar on foreign-born athletes

In this paragraph, I will first explain the outcomes of the statistic results of the countries of origin of the players and their average age in order to place the characteristics of Qatar into perspective within their citizenship regime and their naturalization policies of foreign-born athletes. Second, all eight criteria concerning the Qatari naturalization policies for foreign-born athletes will be explained. Like the previous chapter, the statistic of “thickness of citizenship” of the Qatari athletes will be shown at the similar criterium.

5.2.1. Countries of Origin Players Qatari Squad 2019 Asian Cup

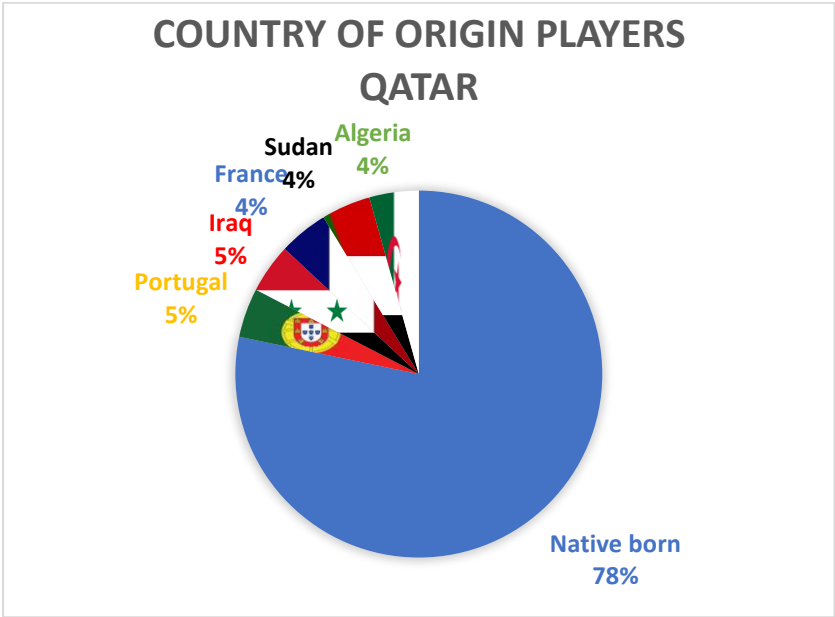


Figure 4: Country of origin players Qatari squad 2019 Asian Cup

From the five foreign-born players in the Qatari squad, all of them come from a different country. From these countries, three of them have an Arabic background. This statistic, therefore, could be interested when discussing the criterium that investigates the preferences of a certain background of athletes competing for Qatar (paragraph 5.2.3.7.). In addition to that, Qatar has one of the biggest sports academies in the world called the *Aspire Academy*. This academy has the goal of improving Qatari sports and has a scouting network residing all over the world (Schulting, forthcoming). Although the academy claims that within their

institute, ‘none of the scholarships play for Qatar’ and the *Aspire Academy* ‘wants them to play for their own country’, a lot of athletes represent Qatar at a later stage of their career after enjoying the luxury Qatari sports facilities during their youth (Samuel, 2009; Schulting, forthcoming). Furthermore, no direct clues could be identified from this statistic which has directly led to any indication yet.

5.2.2. Average age foreign-born players Qatari Squad 2019 Asian Cup

Like the Philippines, the Qatari foreign-born players have an average age of 22. Again, this is within the FIFA eligibility rule margin and players could still choose to represent another nation (if possible, according to their passport) on the condition that they do not play an official international senior match representing a country.

Looking at the foreign-born athletes within the squad who were young when making their official (decisive) debut for Qatar, the earlier mentioned Bassam Al-Rawi and Almoez Ali played their first official match at respectively nineteen and twenty years of age. Both Al-Rawi and Ali enjoyed their football education at Aspire but became a topic of interest after the United Arab Emirates claimed that the players were not eligible to play for Qatar because of their lack of residence for the required five years (see Table 3, Article 7). After an investigation by the AFC, it turned out both players indeed lived in Qatar for the required five years, and no further action was taken (AFC, 2019). Still, it remained clear that Aspire tries to seek for talent for the national team outside of Qatar at a very young age, before handing them over to the QFA when it turns out they are talented enough to represent the national team at a later phase of their career.

5.2.3. Eight criteria analysis citizenship regime and naturalization policies on foreign-born athletes in Qatar

Now, I will continue with explaining the citizenship regime and naturalization policies on foreign-born athletes in Qatar in order to explain the representation of the country by which was represented by more than a fifth of its squad by foreign-born athletes.

5.2.3.1. Citizenship law characteristics

As mentioned earlier, the non-Qatari are forming the vast majority in the country of Qatar. This development is the result of the arrival of labor migrants to Qatar after the period of economic growth which was realized by the country’s oil industry. Since the rules and regulations on acquiring a Qatari passport are very strict, only a tenth of the country’s population has the national citizenship. Logically, this strictness is visible within the Qatari citizenship law (‘Law No. 38 of 2005 on the acquisition of Qatari nationality 38/2005’, 2005):

1. Citizenship by birth
(1) A person shall be recognized as a Qatari citizen by law if:
a. The person is born in Qatar and has a father with Qatari citizenship
b. The person is born outside of Qatar and has a father with Qatari citizenship
3. Citizenship by naturalization
(1) An alien can only be naturalized as a Qatari citizen by decree of the Emir if:
a. The person has made Qatar his place of residence for a minimum period of 25 consecutive years, with less than two months absence allowance per a calendar year.
b. The person has a lawful income in Qatar
c. The person has functional knowledge of the Arabic language
d. The person has a good repute and character, and has no criminal record
(2) All of the above can be ignored by the Emir of Qatar at any time when providing citizenship to those who have shown Qatar an exceptional service and possess particular skills and abilities and, therefore, can make an exceptional contribution to the country of Qatar.
(3) A woman who marries a (naturalized) Qatari shall be provided Qatari citizenship if she agrees to stay with her Qatari husband for the upcoming five years, starting at the date of naturalization.
(4) Children of naturalized Qatari shall be given the Qatari citizenship at the same date of the naturalization of the father.

Table 9: Qatari citizenship law

Like the Philippines, a parental ancestry could lead to Qatari citizenship and the *jus sanguinis* principle is leading. A difference with the previous case country is that maternal ancestry is not taken into account and solely the citizenship of the father could lead to citizenship. A non-Qatari has a long way to go to become a Qatari, with the residency requirement of 25 consecutive years as its biggest barrier. What is remarkable in the naturalization part of the law, is the fact that the Qatari Emir, could ignore the other laws and immediately give a person citizenship on the condition that the person has shown Qatar “an exceptional service”. It remains unclear if the Emir can naturalize both men and women. Although the King of Bahrain, having the same power as the Emir of Qatar, used his power to naturalize female track and field athletes, the Emir never naturalized a female athlete (Schulting, forthcoming).

5.2.3.2. Special provisions for athletes?

As shown above, the Qatari law permits the Emir to give citizenship to people ‘who possess particular skills and abilities and can make an exceptional contribution to the country’ (see Table 9). Speaking in terms of special provisions for talented migrants to acquire citizenship, this is a major example of such. Although athletes are not mentioned specifically, they can be seen as one of the target groups of this provision with them owning these “particular skills”. In order to understand how the naturalization of athletes via this special provision works, the Qatari sports associations rather remain silent about this topic ‘to not disturb the athletes with international media attention (Campbell, 2010). As Campbell rightfully explained: ‘In the case of Qatar, where citizenship might be understood to be by blood, naturalizing transnational athlete migrants contradicts citizen criteria.’ So how does it work then? In 2018, Reiche & Tinaz succeeded in getting some answers from naturalized athletes on how they enrolled in Qatari citizenship via the special provision in the law (Reiche & Tinaz, 2018). When interviewing a Syrian-born former player of the Qatari national handball team, the athlete said he moved to Qatar at the age of 17. After he got picked up by Qatari sports officials in Syria, the athlete finally made it to the national team of Qatar via, what he called, a “mission passport”. After the national handball team won against Germany in the 2015 Handball World Championship in Doha, the Emir personally came into the locker room after the game and congratulated all athletes, with a lot of them being foreign-born. The player was called a few months after the victory and was told he could apply for the full Qatari citizenship if he agreed on giving up his Syrian nationality. The athlete agreed and became a Qatari citizen, benefitting from the privileges of Qatari citizenship (Reiche & Tinaz, 2018). In

addition to that, the player remarked that also European players were agreed to become dual citizens, something that is not included in the Qatari law. Therefore, the Emir seems to fully avoid the law and can simply choose who becomes a citizen and to what extent he will profit from it. Especially the “mission passport” the athlete was talking about should be further investigated in paragraph 5.2.3.4.

5.2.3.3. Strategies used for attracting foreign-born athletes

With the influencing *Aspire Academy* as its tool to attract foreign-born athletes, the institute states that its athletes are not trained in favor of Qatari glory in international sports and underaged athletes are not naturalized, the opposite is true (Schulting, forthcoming; Reiche, 2016; Campbell, 2010). When asking the Qatari Olympic Committee in 2018 what their policy intentions are in terms of naturalizing foreign-born athletes performing track & field events, the committee simply answers with: ‘Qatar is just doing what everybody else is doing’, referring to naturalized athletes in other countries. This mysteriousness seems to relate to the controversy of naturalizing foreign-born athletes on the one hand and having strict rules and regulations to access Qatari citizenship for non-talented migrants on the other. Something that remains rather remarkable is the given fact that Qatar even has its own basketball competition for Filipino migrants working in Qatar. Although they might be good enough to play in Qatari basketball competitions, they are not allowed to do so (Reiche, 2016).

Campbell investigated the process of naturalization for athletes in Qatar and saw that these “plastic Qatari’s” were used to improve their share in the world of international sports and, as a result, merge in the global market (Campbell, 2010). To become a bigger player in the international field, Qatar used its network to organize tournaments like the FIFA World Cup in 2022 to create an Arabic counter-message against Western dominance in international sports. Therefore, Campbell states that Qatar experiences the transnational labor market in sports as part of a prestigious network within the cultural and commercial sector (Campbell, 2010). Organizing big sports events should, therefore, be beneficial for national pride and identity.

In 2018, the report of Reiche & Tinaz on the naturalization policies of Qatari athletes did not only include an interview with a naturalized athlete, but they also succeeded in receiving some information from the former technical director of Qatar’s National Olympic Committee. Here, the former director admitted that Qatar uses a “two-way strategy” for naturalizing and attracting foreign-born athletes: ‘We identify athletes or athletes offer

themselves to compete for Qatar because they receive zero support at home (Reiche & Tinaz, 2018). In other words, next to the attraction of foreign-born athletes by scouting them via Qatar’s sports network and offer them a place in the luxury *Aspire Academy*, Qatar also offers itself as a sport institute nation where athletes can apply for, when not meeting their training requirements at home in order to perform at their very best.

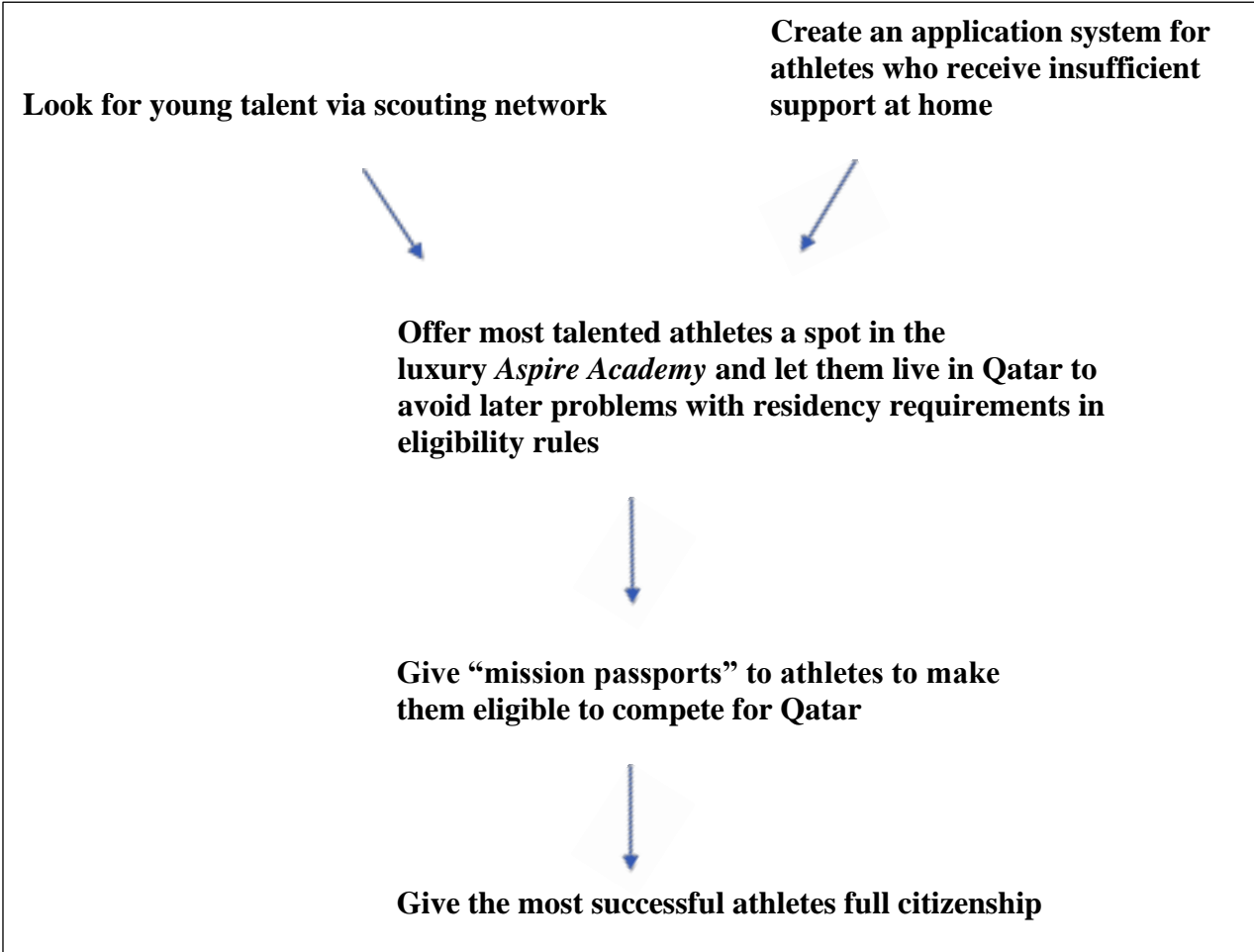


Figure 5: Qatari strategy foreign-born players up to 2019 Asian Cup

What is not taken into account in the Qatari strategy (see Figure 5), is the fact that athletes also have a network, which attracts athletes from their home country to also participate for Qatar in the near future. The attraction aspect of foreign-born athletes “promoting” the representation of Qatar instead of athlete’s home countries is up for further research. What is known, however, is the attraction of athletes when sharing the same coach. This, for instance, was the case with Kenyan long-distance runners performing under a coach, who was also working for Qatar, with the Kenyan runners later representing Qatar (Schulting, forthcoming).

5.2.3.4. Alternative form of citizenship for athletes?

In paragraph 5.2.3.2. something remarkable was happening when the foreign handball player could suddenly represent Qatar under a “mission passport” before gaining full citizenship by the Emir after showing the country an “exceptional service”. This “mission passport” seems to be a form of limited citizenship that is made for athletes to let them compete for the country without making them full citizens who could benefit from the Qatari citizenship and represent the citizenship in an appropriate manner including tradition or religion-related aspects. What is known about this type of citizenship, is that the Qatari women’s football team struggles with an administrative issue in 2014, when foreign-born players (forming the majority of the team) had problems with their foreign passports and could not travel with the rest of the team to join them for an international tournament (Reiche & Tinaz, 2018). The problem was that the Qatari passports of the players were not taken to the airport in time, making it clear the female athletes did not carry a Qatari passport themselves. In other words, if everything went according to plan, the athletes only carried their passports at the airport gates, to hand them in again after arriving at the destination. Here, the Qatari athletes suffer a form of civic exclusion when speaking in terms of civic stratification (Lockwood, 1996; Morris, 2006). While having some form of citizenship and were allowed to represent the country in performing sports, their Qatari legal and bureaucratic rights were absent. For the five foreign-born players in the Qatari squad for the 2019 Asian Cup, it remains unknown if they gained these particular “mission passports” or full citizenship. Only if the Emir would think they have performed very exceptionally, they could expand their citizenship. Considering they won the tournament this might have been the case.

5.2.3.5. Mandatory change of athlete’s name?

From the five foreign-born players of the Qatari squad, no one changed their name after they were eligible to play for the national team. With almost all of them having an Islamic name, this would not have been necessary in order to “keep them representable” (Schulting, forthcoming). In Qatar (not in all occasions) foreign-born athletes often had to change their names, especially when they were Christian, to be able to represent the country (Schulting, forthcoming; Reiche, 2016; Campbell, 2010). From this Qatari team, only the Brazilian-born football player Ró-Ró (full name Pedro Miguel Carvalho Deus Correia) had a non-Muslim name. He, however, did not have to change it.

5.2.3.6. Mandatory movement of the athlete to “new” country?

With the exception of one (local-born) player, all athletes representing Qatar at the 2019 Asian Cup earned their money in Qatar. Considering the luxury training facilities, it is fair to say the players are not very likely to leave the country if they seem to be not good enough for the higher-level European competitions in international football. Furthermore, the Q-league, the national football competition of Qatar, consists of rich clubs who are able to buy football stars from clubs in Europe, Asia and South-America to play for them, making the competition level sufficient enough for the players to make a notable football career. In other sports, Qatari foreign-born players train and live abroad and could not mandatory move to Qatar in order to perform and train at their very best (Schulting, forthcoming; Reiche & Tinaz, 2018).

5.2.3.7. Preference of attraction of athletes with specific geographical, religious or backgrounds?

As the Al Thani family is ruling over Qatar as the leaders of a minority Islamic elite group, festivities are taken place in Qatar to celebrate their Qatari ancestry (Amara, 2007). With only ten percent of the total population of the country, this elite group are the only holders of full citizenship in the country. As a consequence of this stiffness towards foreigners, an extreme emphasis on the traditional value of the national identity and the cultural connectivity among the Qatari is visible. When giving citizenship to foreign-born athletes representing the country, the Qatari government contradicts itself. The act of easily giving passports to athletes is not problematic. However, the act of giving passport only to particular migrants, while holding on to strict, complex and everlasting requirements within the common Qatari naturalization policy, makes the phenomenon controversial. Therefore, the Qatari tend to let themselves be represented preferably by people with an Arabic background in order to make the appearance of foreign-born players more “representational”, looking less controversial when showing up with people from different ethnic backgrounds. This is also visible within the 2019 Asian Cup squad with only Ró-Ró being the sole non-Arabic player in the squad. The earlier mentioned foreign-born player Al-Rawi, a Muslim whose father played for the Iraqi national team, is one of the Arabic players who were able to represent Qatar. Although formerly being a full-blooded Iraqi citizen, Al-Rawi scored against his country of origin at the 2019 Asian Cup and celebrated heavily after scoring his goal. This was not being appreciated

very well by the Iraqi fans. Al-Rawi responded: ‘I am born in Iraq, have an Iraqi family and I am proud of my background. However, I started playing in Qatar and went to school here after joining the *Aspire Academy*. Qatar has always supported me, and I will never forget that. I have the right to celebrate after scoring a goal like the Qatari people can celebrate. At the same time, I am thankful and share the love for Iraq’ (‘Ophef over Qatar als finalist Azië Cup’, 2019). Again, the Qatari strategy of recruiting players from Arabic countries for their *Aspire Academy* becomes visible in Al-Rawi’s story.

5.2.3.8. Level of “thickness” of citizenship

Looking at Figure 6, one can see four out of the five foreign-born athletes of the Qatari squad not having any relationship with the country what so ever. One player lived his whole life in Qatar, still being born outside of the country. The other four fall under the citizenship-for-sale category and should have been part of a naturalization process filling in the FIFA and Qatari requirements. However, looking at Table 9, the latter could have been arranged by the Emir himself.

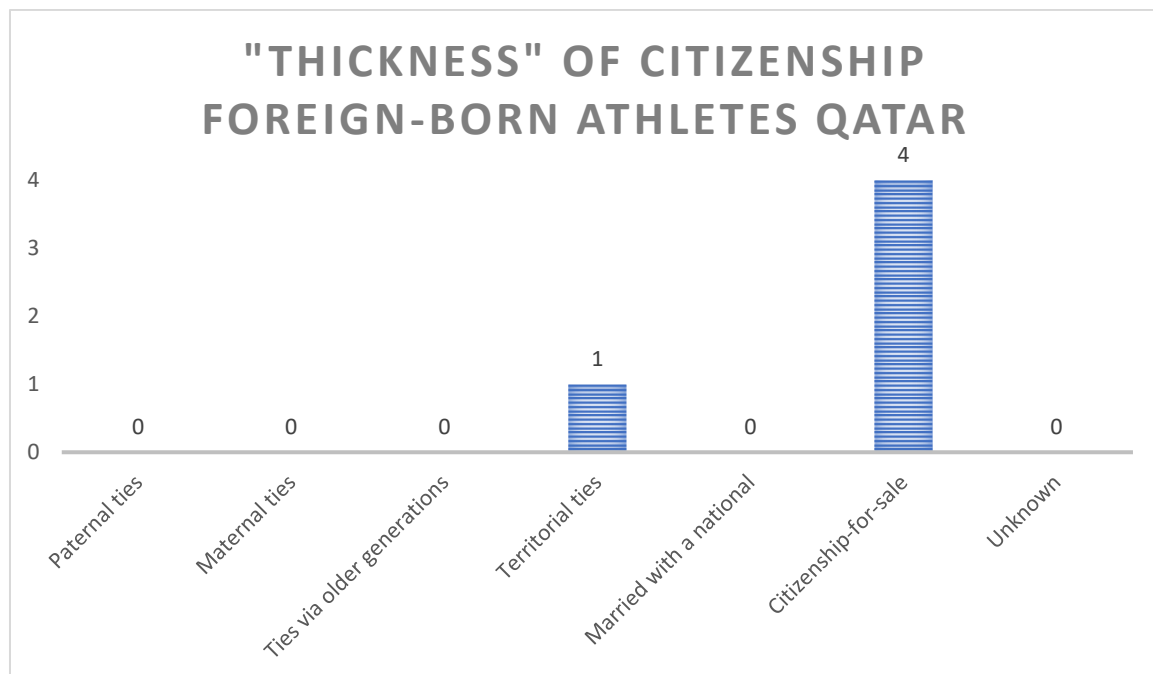


Figure 6: “Thickness” of citizenship foreign-born athletes Qatar

Qatar, as being the organizer of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, does not only want to organize but also participate. The negative side of their “2022” bid, however, overshadowed the image of Qatar. With the pitiful circumstances the foreign laborers have to build Qatar’s future stadiums, organizations like Amnesty International showed the world how “forced labor” was reintroduced (Amnesty International, 2018). Also, laborers were forced to hand in their passports, leading to an “exit visa system”, making it impossible for the foreign laborers to leave Qatar. Letting stadium be built by those without citizenship rights, to let their fellow migrants later play in it, who do have citizenship as a result of their talent, is controversial. Still, in a country where migrants form almost ninety percent of the total population, the representation by foreigners should not be abnormal. However, making a distinction between talented and non-talented migrants, making exceptions for the talented in a complex citizenship regime, makes it, in the end, abnormal.

Conclusion

As being the 2022 FIFA World Cup, it is obvious to think that Qatar does not only want to organize the tournament but also want to compete. Therefore, international media have often accused the small Gulf state of “buying” foreign-born players without any relationship to the country than just their representation on international sports events itself. Furthermore, the country’s organization of the tournament became the topic of human rights violations, putting a very negative image on Qatar as a (football) nation.

The accusation of the Qatari national football team, this time, was about the two players who were indeed foreign-born, however, turned out to be eligible according to both FIFA and national rules on citizenship and eligibility. What is remarkable about the foreign-born players of the Qatari squad is not quantity, but the background of the athletes. With “only” five players not born in Qatar, the accusation of the Gulf state being solely represented by foreign-born players without any relationship to the country turned out not to be true. However, what is characteristic for the Qatari squad is the strategy of attracting players coming from Arabic countries or players with an Arabic background and letting them enjoy a sports education program at the national-funded *Aspire Academy*. Here, players are being brought in at a very young age. While *Aspire* states that they do not intend to naturalize these foreign-born players, it is clear that, at some point, the talented ones are offered the possibility to choose to represent Qatar after living in the country for a couple of years, making them eligible to represent the country at senior level. What is important here, is that the national

law is meant to block any form of alienation of the Qatari citizenship, with foreigners lacking possibilities to access the Qatari citizenship at short notice. This, however, is being avoided by special provisions in the Qatari citizenship regime, with the Emir having the power of giving citizenship to those who can contribute to the wealth and prosperity of the country. This power, however, is only being used after great success has been shown by the athlete. For athletes representing Qatar, most of them access only a “mission passport”, meaning they suffer some sort of civic exclusion, with only being Qatari citizens at international airports, but not within the country itself. What is also remarkable about the Qatari foreign-born athletes, is that in case an athlete has a non-Arab background, a change of the name has to take place.

In the Qatari case study, the concept of *jus sanguinis* is being challenged, with a country wanting to guard its own citizenship at almost any costs, but not while making it impossible for them to succeed in gaining international success in sports. Here, *jus talentii* is almost an actual form of citizenship with gaps in the law, providing semi or full citizenship to the ones that can make the country big. The athletes could gain security and prosperity, making use of the advantages of Qatari citizenship (if they succeed sufficiently). Here the citizenship-for-exchange did turn out to be citizenship-for-sale, with athletes lacking any relation to the country they nowadays represent. The power of the Qatari citizenship regime, with the Emir of Qatar as its key figure, leads to fast-tracked naturalizations. With a country consisting of a great majority of migrants, the process of being represented by them should not be abnormal. However, the abnormality of this process is that the country holds on to very strict naturalization requirements, making it almost impossible for the non-talented migrants to access the Qatari citizenship, however, let itself be represented by talented migrants, making a distinction between two categories of newcomers. In order to make the reputation of the representation by non-Qatari migrants visibly better, the QFA prefers to only attract Arab athletes. However, if not, changing the name would make it more suitable and less contrasting with the national identity of the Gulf State. Still, the Qatari citizenship regime is under fire, wanting to secure the citizenship for successful athletes within a country that is artificially divided into two unequal groups of inhabitants. With having only little Qatari citizens and a majority of non-Qatari inhabitants at the same time, the citizenship regime approaches the 2022 FIFA World Cup with multiple issues at stake, making it uneasy for the country to prove itself to the outside world, yet does not seem to suffer from it by itself, nor by the Qatari citizens.

Chapter 6



- Vietnam -

Capital	Hanoi
Population size (rounded to the nearest thousand)	94.569.000
Majority religion	Buddhism
Geographical region in Asia	Southeast Asia
Former colonial ruler/protector	France
National football association	Vietnam Football Federation (VFF)
Number of foreign-born players in tournament squad 2019 Asian Cup	1

6.1. Introduction

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam is country located at the eastern portion of Southeast Asia. With a population of almost a hundred million people, Vietnam to the worlds' fifteen most populated countries. After the Vietnamese War, a new socialist republic was brought to life with a single-party system as its political basis. While the Communist Party has all power, the country seeks for political and economic reformations, making Vietnam more accessible for international diplomacy and investors. The Vietnamese economic growth in the first years of the 21st century became so successful, the country eventually entered the World Trade Organization in 2007 (Hickey et al, 2019).

With martial arts being very popular in Vietnam, football only recently became the country's most popular sport. Next to the great performance of their national team at the 2019 Asian Cup reaching the quarter-finals, the quality of football players performing in the

national V-League improved rapidly, with European and South-American football stars playing for Vietnamese clubs. Especially within the last couple of years, the Vietnamese national football teams are performing very well, with its youth teams reaching finals of AFC youth tournaments and the qualification of the under-20 squad for the 2017 FIFA under-20 World Cup for the first time. Their senior national team, however, never participated at a FIFA World Cup. Although South-Vietnam, while still existing, became fourth twice at the Asian Cup, both South- and North-Vietnam never competed in a World Cup.

Differently from the other two cases, I will focus on the representation of Vietnam at the 2019 Asian Cup, however, I will elaborate on the lack of foreign-born athletes instead of their appearance in their squad and how the lack of foreign-born players in the Vietnamese team is related to their citizenship regime. Like the other two, I will first go through the countries of origin of the foreign-born players in the Vietnamese squad and their average age. However, this will only be focused on the sole foreign-born player in the squad. In order to understand the representation of Vietnam (almost) without foreign-born players, I will, therefore, not use the statistics as much as in the other chapters when analyzing the eight criteria, simply because they do not reflect a lot of information.

6.2. Analysis citizenship regime and naturalization policies of Vietnam on foreign-born athletes

Like the former two case studies, this paragraph will first explain the outcomes of the statistic results of the countries of origin of the players and their naturalization policies of their foreign-born athletes. However, as can be seen in Table 1, Figure 7 and Figure 8, this case study only relates to one foreign-born player. Therefore, I will elaborate on this player for both figures at once.

6.2.1. Countries of origin players Vietnamese squad 2019 Asian Cup and average age foreign-born players Vietnamese squad 2019 Asian Cup



Figure 7: Country of Origin Vietnam 2019 Asian Cup squad

The only player in the Vietnamese squad who was not born in the country is Lev Shonovich Dang or, as they know him in Vietnam, Dang Van Lam. Van Lam was born and raised in Moscow. He is born to a Vietnamese father, who was able to boost his career as a professional ballet dancer by taking the possibility to go to Russia. Here he married Van Lam's Russian mother, which made him eligible to compete for both Russia and Vietnam. Together with Mac Hong Quan, a local-born player with his roots in the Czech Republic, he was selected to participate in the Vietnamese under-19 football squad. At 22 years of age, Van Lam made his decisive decision to compete for his fathers' country. 'The first time when I came to Vietnam it was not easy because life in Russia and Vietnam is different and there is some difference in mentality. But I love this country the same as Russia and I am trying to learn and do everything to have a good life in Vietnam right now', as Van Lam explained his experiences after making his decision to choose a life in Vietnam instead of Russia ('Dang Van Lam; Vietnam's keeper the talented son of artists', 2018).

6.2.2. Eight criteria analysis citizenship regime and naturalization policies on foreign-born athletes in Vietnam

I will continue with explaining the citizenship regime and naturalization policies on foreign-born athletes in Vietnam in order to explain lack of representation by foreign-born athletes in the country, with only one player in the Vietnamese squad coming from abroad.

6.2.2.1. Citizenship law characteristics

Looking at the citizenship law of Vietnam, an interesting aspect that is worth looking at is how citizenship is characterized by a socialist one-party state. Furthermore, as could be seen in the second part of “Citizenship by naturalization” in Table 10, Vietnam has special laws providing people with Vietnamese roots an easier pathway of acquiring citizenship (‘The conditions for the foreigners to apply Vietnamese citizenship’, 2019):

<p>1. Citizenship by birth</p> <p>(1) A person is determined to have Vietnamese citizenship by birth if:</p>
<p>a. The person is born to parents, both of whom are Vietnamese citizens, regardless of whether the person was born inside or outside the Vietnamese territory</p>
<p>b. The person is born to parents, one of whom is a Vietnamese citizen and the other is a foreign national, regardless of whether the child was born inside or outside the Vietnamese territory</p>
<p>2. Citizenship by naturalization</p> <p>(1) Foreign nationals who are residing in Vietnam and apply for the Vietnamese nationality, may be granted Vietnamese nationality if they fully meet the following conditions:</p>
<p>a. Having full capacity for civil acts as prescribed by Vietnamese laws</p>
<p>b. Abiding by the constitution and laws of Vietnam, respecting the traditions, customs and practices of the Vietnamese people</p>
<p>c. Knowing the Vietnamese language sufficiently enough to integrate themselves into the social community of Vietnam</p>
<p>d. Having resided in Vietnam for five years or more</p>

e. Being capable of ensuring their living in Vietnam
f. Must renounce foreign nationality
g. Must adopt a Vietnamese name, clearly stated in the decision of the citizenship application
(2) Foreign nationals may be granted Vietnamese citizenship without having to fully meet the conditions prescribed in points c, d and e, if they fall into one of the following cases:
a. Being spouses, offspring or parents of Vietnamese citizens
b. Having made meritorious contributions to the cause of building and defending the Vietnamese fatherland
c. Being helpful to the State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Table 10: Vietnamese citizenship law

Like the other two cases, Vietnam does not involve the *jus soli* principle into their citizenship laws and rather chooses to emphasize *jus sanguinis*. As is seen in the first part of Table 10, having at least one parent with Vietnamese citizenship is sufficient to access citizenship. In terms of the process of acquiring citizenship via naturalization, the requirements seem to be less strict than in the Philippines and Qatar when looking at, for instance, the residency requirement. With only five years of residency, this aspect is much easier to overcome than the similar requirement for residents in the Philippines or Qatar who want to naturalize themselves. Furthermore, what is remarkable about Vietnamese citizenship in comparison with the others, are the special provisions mentioned in the second part of the naturalization sector of the Vietnamese citizenship law. These provisions are specified for a certain group of people who want to access the Vietnamese citizenship without meeting the *jus sanguinis* requirements. Here, (a) family relations (apart from having parents with Vietnamese citizenship) are taken into account, as well as two special regulations focused on people who (b) ‘made a meritorious contribution’ or are (c) ‘helpful’ to the State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Mentioning the words “building” and “defending” in part 2.2b, point to especially military men and women who, in the past, stood on the side of the Vietnamese socialist party when needed.

6.2.2.2. Special provisions for athletes?

Although athletes are not mentioned specifically in the Vietnamese citizenship law. Is it not unlikely to assume that the 2.2b and 2.2c part of the Vietnamese citizenship law could be used to naturalize athletes in some sort of “fast track”. However, within the Vietnamese squad of the 2019 Asian Cup, this was not the case. In the next paragraph (6.2.2.3) I will, therefore, elaborate on the lack of foreign-born athletes in 2019, and see whether this was part of a lack of use of this special provision, or something else was going on.

6.2.2.3. Strategies used for attracting foreign-born athletes

Although the 2019 Asian Cup squad only consisted of one foreign-born player (although one also had Czech roots), this would suggest a lack of strategy for naturalizing players since there are almost none. However, looking at recent developments in Vietnamese football, naturalizing foreign-born football players turned out not a silent topic. On the contrary, according to Vietnamese media (also available in English), the Vietnamese Football Federation wants to evaluate the possibility of attracting foreign-born talent to continue the line of improvement showed at the 2019 Asian Cup (‘Foreign-born players welcomed to contribute to Vietnamese football’, 2019). Here, the strategy of attraction foreign-born players looks a bit like the one mentioned earlier in the Philippines, with the emphasis on players who have their roots in Vietnam. According to the VFF Secretary-General Le Hoai Anh, ‘the federation is always ready to create the best conditions and welcome other overseas Vietnamese players returning home to contribute to the national teams, as long as they fully meet the professional requirements of the coaching staff and legal conditions to play for the Vietnam national teams in accordance with FIFA’s rules’ (‘Foreign-born players welcomed to contribute to Vietnamese football’, 2019). Also, the Korean head coach of the national team, Park Hang-Seo, agreed in scouting and meeting several overseas Vietnamese players who are on a list synthesized by the VFF’s professional department (‘Foreign-born players welcomed to contribute to Vietnamese football’, 2019). ‘As the person responsible for the team's expertise, I cannot select a player who does not want to play for the national teams, and also cannot choose that player solely because he is playing in Europe. So, I need to directly observe the overseas Vietnamese players to get the most accurate assessment of their abilities’, Park states. Le Hoai Anh adds: ‘From the opinions of Park, the VFF will gradually make contact and support within the allowable scope to help such overseas Vietnamese

players to quickly and smoothly play for Vietnam’ (‘Foreign-born players welcomed to contribute to Vietnamese football’, 2019). Basically, Vietnam seems on to hold on to a (for them) new strategy that is doing everything completely by the book and seeks for players who grew up overseas and are eligible to play for the Vietnam national team. Here, it seems like the Philippines have done the same, but started this process years before. Vietnam, being the better football team in comparison to the Philippines, seems to react to strategies of fellow AFC members in the same sub-confederation in innovating their naturalization strategy of football players. The Philippine aspect of ‘recruiting foreign-born players to become role models for local-born players and improve the domestic quality of football players’ does not yet seem to be developed in their policy.



Figure 8: Vietnamese strategy foreign-born players after 2019 Asian Cup

This “new” strategy of Vietnam is developed very recently. However, looking at the history of Vietnamese football, it seems that reacting to similar strategies from other AFC members is not the sole reason for adopting a new strategy. When looking at the formation of the Vietnamese national football team since the 2007 Asian Cup, 28 players could be identified who were foreign-born and played at least one international senior game for Vietnam (own calculations). However, the number of international games played by the foreign-born players was never very high (most only played for the team once or twice and were never selected

again). Although the VFF does not give a lot of information on naturalization strategies in this period, what is clear is that all of these 28 players did not have any relation with the country of Vietnam. Therefore, I will elaborate on this former group of foreign-born Vietnamese athletes in the paragraphs 6.2.2.7. and 6.2.2.8.

6.2.2.4. Alternative form of citizenship for athletes?

Looking at the citizenship law, in combination with the comments of the VFF policymakers, there is no direct assumption that foreign-born athletes in Vietnam get a different type of citizenship than natives. Since 2011, football clubs in the V-league are not allowed to have more than four foreign-born players. Therefore, teams are willing to contract naturalized foreign-born players who do not affect the foreign-born player quota. Here, players had to have the same citizenship as natives to be counted as non-foreign-born players in the V-league system ('V-league lures foreign players', 2010).

6.2.2.5. Mandatory change of athlete's name?

As is seen in Table 10, naturalized Vietnamese people have to acquire a Vietnamese name next to their Vietnamese citizenship. This, logically, also counts for athletes. For Lev Shonovich Dang, having a Vietnamese father, the action of changing his name to Dang Van Lam was not a big step to take considering he already carried this name officially (Dang Van Lam: Vietnam's keeper the talented son of artists, 2018). However, looking at the 28 foreign-born athletes who gained citizenship by naturalization, all of them had to change their names. The former-Brazilian football player Fabio dos Santos, for instance, became Phan Van Santos and the former-Nigerian Eyerapo Maxwell became Dinh Hoang Max (Vietnamese Library of Law, 2007; Vietnamese Library of Law, 2009).

6.2.2.6. Mandatory movement of the athlete to "new" country?

All players of the 2019 Asian Cup squad, including Van Lam, played in the Vietnamese V-league. However, it is not necessary to play in the V-league to compete in the national team considering the fact that lots of Vietnamese football players from the past have played in neighboring countries like (Thailand most likely). As the V-league limited the number of foreign-born players in the Vietnamese teams of the national league, most teams consist of a

mix between a majority of local-born players, foreign-born players and, sometimes, naturalized players. In order to keep participating for the Vietnamese national team, however, is not mandatory, nor is it very likely to become mandatory, considering the new strategy of Vietnam attracting foreign-born players with Vietnamese roots. Here, they did not take movement into account, improving the changes of players agreeing to compete for the Vietnamese national team without having to leave their spouse and friends behind in the country they grew up in.

6.2.2.7. Preference of attraction of athletes with specific geographical, religious, or linguistic backgrounds

Since the Vietnamese strategy concentrates on foreign-born players with Vietnamese parents or older generational roots in Vietnam, one should take into consideration countries with a large Vietnamese overseas population. Although there are some initiatives, Vietnam, unlike the Philippines, does not have a strong committee that connects the Vietnamese overseas with each other in an official institute. What is true, however, is that Vietnamese communities overseas seem to easily settle to the country they are living in, not by connecting with locals, by being extremely loyal and trustworthy to each other. As Lee & Zhou researched Chinese and Vietnamese migrants in the US, they concluded that an effective “in-group” social network, led to economic success combined with ‘deliberate preservation of the immigrant community’s values and tight solidarity’ (Lee & Zhou, 2016). This is called ‘segmented assimilation’ and might explain why the Vietnamese overseas players could be interested to play for the nation they are still closely connected to. The US, for instance, could be a great place for the VFF to go seek for talent. Also, France (as a former colonizer) has a big Vietnamese community, as well as Germany, Australia, Japan and the Czech Republic. Also, in Southeast Asian countries like Cambodia, Taiwan and Malaysia, great communities of Vietnamese descendants reside.

Although the overseas Vietnamese football players are likely to be found in specific geographic territories, the preference of naturalization of athletes from a specific linguistic, religious or geographical background does not really fill in the aspect of this criterium considering they will access citizenship via the *jus sanguinis* principle instead of being naturalized. Looking at the 28 former players of the Vietnamese national team who were really naturalized, three geographical preferences could be identified: (1) Countries in the region (Thailand), (2) South-American countries (Brazil and Argentina) and (3) African

countries. The last two are forming the bigger categories among the former Vietnamese naturalized football players. The second category consists of players from great South-American football nations. It is known that players from these countries often try to seek for international success abroad considering the enormous competition in their home country as was seen in the example of Douglas Franco Teixeira given in the first chapter of this thesis. In the case of African football players, something else is going on, which is related to the former strategy that was used by the VFF. In 2018, the French television station of France24 made a research item on the VFF football academy campuses in Vietnam. Here, they experienced how former French footballer Guillaume Graechen works as a campus manager with young Vietnamese football players to become the next football stars of the country. 'Running an academy, it is always about money and marketing, we have a different work method. We work with one generation of players for seven years straight', Graechen proudly explains (France24, 2018). The young footballers here all left their families to live and train at the campus. What becomes clear is that no new generations of foreign-born players are visible among the youngsters, except for one player who is the only foreign-born player at the academy. Although the academy had more foreign-born players before, the young player is the last of his "seven-year generation" to live at the academy. He explains that while coming from a poor country, he had the chance of making something of his life after being spotted by Graechen: 'If I have a problem, I can go to the doctor immediately. Here, I have three meals a day and all the facilities I need to be successful' (France24, 2018). In other words, the perspective of players coming from poorer nations (from for instance Africa) could be given at the Vietnamese academy. However, almost all of them are disappeared from the academies, after Vietnam decided to focus on foreign-born footballers with Vietnamese roots instead of scouting for talent and naturalize them if they are good enough and willing to play for the

Vietnamese national team. The latter, therefore, is more related to the Qatari strategy mentioned in Table 5 of this thesis.

6.2.2.8. Level of “thickness” of citizenship

Van Lam, as being the only foreign-born athlete in the 2019 Asian Cup squad of Vietnam, has a paternal connection with the country he nowadays represents. Therefore, Figure 9 is, de facto, only related to Van Lam.

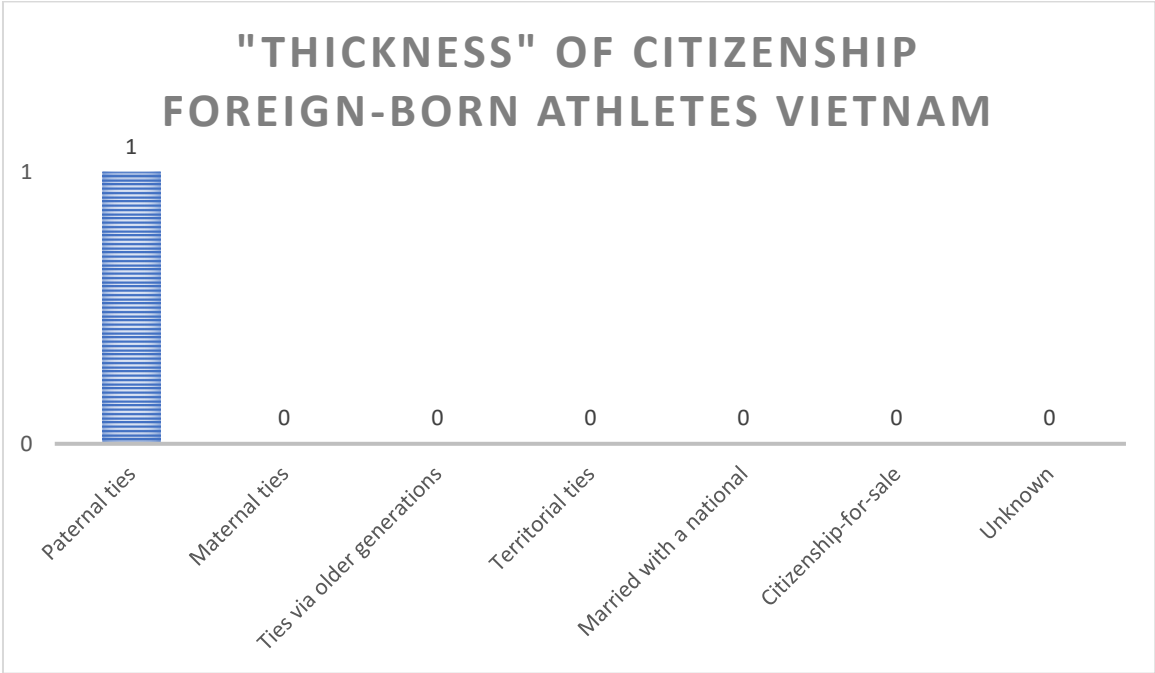


Figure 9: Thickness” of citizenship foreign-born athlete Vietnam

With the knowledge on the naturalization history of foreign-born players in Vietnam mentioned in paragraph 6.2.2.3., 6.2.2.5. and 6.2.2.7, the concept of “thickness” rather changed over time from athletes with “thinner” citizenship towards athletes with more ties to the country of Vietnam, and the Vietnamese representation of its national football team thus becoming “thicker”.

What remains is the image of who these former “thin” cases of athletes representing Vietnam exactly were, apart from a possible education at the VFF academies in the country. Coming back to the question of 6.2.2.2. whether the special provision of the citizenship law for “helpful” people to Vietnam was ever used for athletes, it seems that this construction was indeed used for these “thinner” cases. Kesley Alves, a former-Brazilian football player explained that after being in the country for several years, he was recognized by the

Vietnamese authorities as a Vietnamese citizen and eligible to participate for the country: 'I have been waiting for this thing for several months. After the last football season, I submitted an application to be naturalized in Vietnam. I wish to contribute to the national squad. I can speak Vietnamese, read Vietnamese newspapers and I can understand Vietnamese very well', Kesley explained ('Huynh Kesley Alves and love for Vietnam', 2009). As explained earlier, the outcome of these foreigners participating in Vietnamese football was, most of the time, not very positive. Players like Kesley were only used once by the VFF to only play a single match for the national team and were never selected again. Although there is not a clear reason for why this structurally happened, Le Minh Tshamala (formerly known as the Congolese Tshamala Kabanga) gives a rather alternative explanation. 'Many foreign-born players cannot adapt very well to the Vietnamese culture and society, besides playing football. Therefore, many foreign-born players get together and choose to do foolish things such as visiting controversial night clubs, bars and use a lot of easily accessible drugs. Most Vietnamese clubs only conduct very poor health checks, if there are even test procedures. Sometimes, the club finds a case of drug addiction, or even players who are HIV positive, but remains silent out of fearing a bad reputation', Tshamala explains ('Many foreign-born players use drugs', 2010). As a consequence, players are often sent away to never participate in Vietnamese football anymore. As Kesley claimed to be integrated into the Vietnamese society very well, Tshamala claims the opposite of many other foreign-born players. The VFF, however, tried to give a positive image to the naturalized foreign-born players by showing how these players do charity work, visit local orphanages and help in centers for people with disabilities (Tri Thuc Tre, 2015).

Conclusion

As explained in this chapter, the case country of Vietnam differs from the two previous ones considering the formation of the squad and the foreign-born players that are part of it. In fact, only one player of the 2019 Asian Cup squad of Vietnam turned out to be not born in the country he is representing in international football. However, what became clear, is that the absence of foreign-born players in the Vietnamese squad was not directly a reflection of the citizenship regime, with multiple parts of the Vietnamese citizenship law providing opportunities for foreigners to naturalize themselves to become a Vietnamese citizen. Although also this country holds on to the *jus sanguinis* principle and people are dependent of having a parent with Vietnamese citizenship, people having offspring or those who are

“helpful” to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam could access the Vietnamese citizenship in an accessible legal procedure.

While the example of Van Lam did not demonstrate how the Vietnamese citizenship regime and football are precisely intertwined, explanations given by the VFF delegates clarify that Vietnam is on its way to chase a policy strategy for athletes that is similar to the Philippines. However, in Vietnam, the VFF does not necessarily intend to include local-born players into this process, but rather stick to the current plan of observing as many eligible overseas players as possible. What was identified, is that there has been a switch in terms of the strategy, which was previously aimed at naturalizing players from various regions in the world. Like Qatar, also Vietnam has football academies where foreign-born players (mostly Latin-American and African) could enjoy physical and financial security in better conditions than in their countries of origin. Here, players were previously naturalized under a *jus talentii* principle. However, the VFF let go of this strategy and now strives to seek players who match the FIFA and Vietnamese criteria to quickly become Vietnamese representatives of the national football team. As a result of this new strategy, the Vietnamese team is likely to become “thicker” in terms of the citizenship of their foreign-born players, with more overseas Vietnamese players acquiring Vietnamese citizenship via some sort of return migration procedure and the former “citizenship-for-sale” players being left out. In other words, the “muscle drain” from before seemed to have been abolished, with a “muscle circulation” being accepted with football players coming back from overseas Vietnamese communities to Vietnam. In addition to that, it is likely to assume that the VFF, similar to the PFF, strives to make use of the network of foreign-born players to extend the chances of “picking” their overseas Vietnamese talents.

Chapter 7



- Lebanon –

Capital	Beirut
Population size (rounded to the nearest thousand)	6.007.000
Majority religion	Islam/Christianity
Geographical region in Asia	Middle East
Former colonial ruler/protector	France
National football association	Lebanon Football Association (LFA)
Number of foreign-born players in tournament squad 2019 Asian Cup	9

7.1 Introduction

Lebanon is a small country located on the eastern side of the Mediterranean Sea between Israel and Syria. With the official language being Arabic, the country only has a small majority of Muslims, with Christians forming a big minority, making the country very balanced in terms of religious populations. Therefore, the country holds on to the so-called “national pact”, making sure the most important political functions in the country are equally divided among the most influencing ethnic-religious groups with the president always being a Christian and the prime minister being a Muslim. Both reside in Beirut, the capital and largest city of Lebanon. One of the most remarkable things about the country of Lebanon is the Lebanese diaspora that eventually led to more Lebanese descendants living outside Lebanon (at least eight million people), than inside the country (little over six million people) (Kechichian, 2015).

In terms of sports, Lebanon carries no less than six resorts, which can be considered as a lot in such a small country. Furthermore, the most popular sports are Basketball, Football and Rugby League (not to confuse with Rugby Union). The national football association of Lebanon, the LFA, is responsible for both the men's and women's national football team, as well of youth teams representing Lebanon in international football. Since the FIFA World Cup of 1950, the Lebanese national men's football team tries to qualify for the tournament but did not succeed so far. While the women's national football team never succeeded to participate in either the FIFA World Cup or the Asian Cup, the men's team were able to qualify for the continental tournament in 2000 and 2019. The first qualification, however, was automatically implemented with Lebanon organizing the 2000 edition of the Asian Cup. Therefore, the 2019 qualification of the Lebanese men's national football team for the Asian Cup was, de facto, the first "real" qualification for a continental cup.

In this last case study, I will first look into the statistics of the countries of origin of the Lebanese foreign-born players and their average age, before moving on to the analysis of the citizenship regime of Lebanon and their naturalization policies. Here, I will try to connect the Lebanese policies for naturalization and their citizenship regime with their representation at the 2019 Asian Cup, before coming to the sub-conclusion of this chapter.

7.2. Analysis citizenship regime and naturalization policies Lebanon on foreign-born athletes

For this last case study, I will first elaborate on the outcomes of the statistic results of the countries of origin of the Lebanese squad for the 2019 Asian Cup and look at the average age of their foreign-born athletes. Second and last, I will analyze the naturalization policies Lebanon and overall citizenship regime in relation to their national football team before coming to the last case study conclusion.

7.2.1. Countries of origin players Lebanese squad 2019 Asian Cup

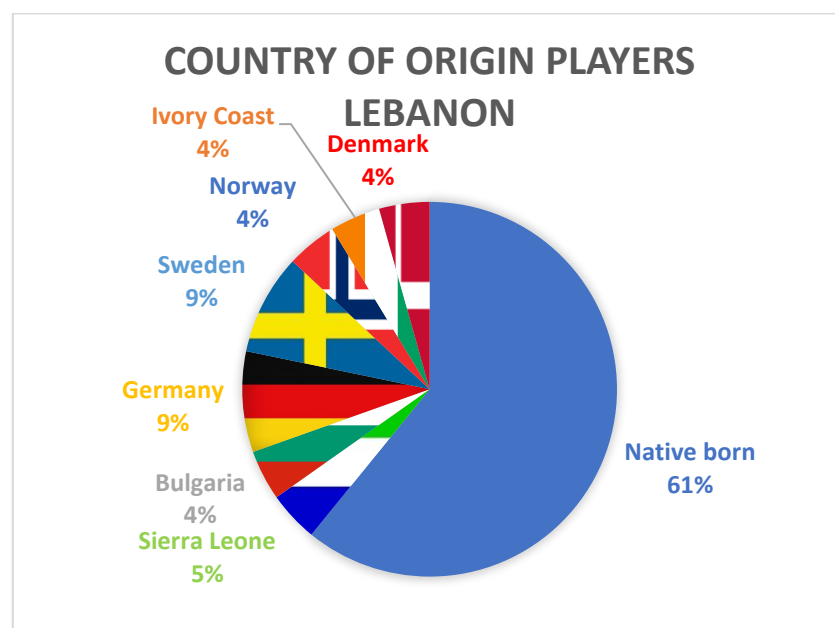


Figure 10: Countries of origin Lebanese squad 2019 Asian Cup

Figure 10 shows that just over sixty percent of the Lebanese squad at the 2019 Asian Cup was local-born. Apart from the Philippines, Lebanon had one of the highest numbers of foreign-born athletes in their tournament squad (see Table 1). The foreign-born players were either born in Europe or in Africa, with most of them coming from northern European regions. The question that immediately pops up here, is whether the geographical distribution of the Lebanese diaspora, for at least some part, explains this statistic. Looking at this distribution, the countries carrying most people of Lebanese descent (Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and the United States) sometimes have hundreds of thousands of people from Lebanese descent. However, these countries do not show up in Figure 10 (Sabbagh, 2009). Still, more than one hundred thousand reside in the Scandinavian countries, which do show up in the statistic (Denmark, Norway and Sweden). Also, Sierra Leone (with one player being born in this country) has over 40,000 people of Lebanese descent residing in the country (Sabbagh, 2009).

7.2.2. Average age foreign-born players Lebanese Squad 2019 Asian Cup

The average age of the foreign-born players within the Lebanese squad is 23, the highest of all case countries (although some non-case study countries have a higher average age among their foreign-born players). What could be concluded from this, is that all players had the possibility of playing for youth teams of the country they were born in, considering the fact

that the FIFA eligibility rules allow players to represent multiple national teams at youth levels. These players, therefore, all made their official senior debut for Lebanon after the period of competing for youth teams. This would suggest that Lebanon or the LFA did not intend any “binding strategies” to make sure there was no way back for players with the possibility of playing for the country they were born in. Looking at the foreign-born players in the squad, almost all of them competed for national youth teams of these countries. Besides, most of these players (especially the ones coming from Scandinavian or African countries) had a great possibility to continue competing for the senior national team of the country they were born in, however, chose to represent Lebanon instead. Mehdi Khalil, The Lebanese goalkeeper at the 2019 Asian Cup, for instance, played for all national youth teams of Sierra Leone and was selected for the Sierra Leone senior squad in 2013. Khalil, however, made the decision to make use of the possibility to acquire the Lebanese citizenship via both of parents’ roots and started playing in Lebanon in the national competition, as well as for the national team (‘Khalil: wurde gern in der zukunft im’, 2015).

7.2.3. Eight criteria analysis citizenship regime and naturalization policies of Lebanon on foreign-born athletes

Now, I will continue explaining the citizenship regime and naturalization policies on foreign-born athletes in Lebanon in order to explain the relatively high number of foreign-born representatives in the Lebanese national football team at the 2019 Asian Cup.

7.2.3.1. Citizenship law characteristics

As mentioned, Lebanon has more descendants living abroad than people living inside of the country owning the Lebanese citizenship. Therefore, the Lebanese citizenship law differs a little from the other three and has a special third sector which is, therefore, relevant to mention, especially for players who do not have a Lebanese father (see citizenship law by birth in Table 11) (‘Decree No 15 on Lebanese Nationality’, 1925):

<p>1. Citizenship by birth</p> <p>(1) A person acquires Lebanese citizenship if:</p>
<p>a. The person is the child of a married couple of whom the father is a Lebanese citizen</p>
<p>b. The person is the child of a Lebanese father not married to the mother and the link of paternity has been declared</p>
<p>2. Citizenship by naturalization</p> <p>(1) A person may acquire the Lebanese citizenship by virtue of an order issued by the Head of State after fulfilling the following and submitting a request in this regard:</p>
<p>a. A foreigner who proves having been living in the Lebanese territories for five consecutive years</p>
<p>b. A foreigner who marries a Lebanese woman and has been living in the Lebanese territories for one consecutive year as of the date of this marriage</p>
<p>c. A foreigner who offers to Lebanon highly significant services. However, he/she shall be granted the nationality under an order for independent reasons</p>
<p>(2) The spouse of a foreigner, who has become a Lebanese citizen, as well as the children of full age of such a foreigner, may, if they so request, acquire the Lebanese citizenship, without satisfying the residence condition, whether by virtue of the regulation giving this citizenship to the husband, the father or the mother or in a special regulation. Likewise, the minor children of a father acquiring the Lebanese citizenship, or a mother acquiring the said citizenship and who remained alive after the death of the father, shall become Lebanese unless they reject this citizenship within the year following their majority</p>
<p>4. Citizenship by descent</p>
<p>(1) Every person who meets one of the two eligibility requirements has the right to reclaim his/her Lebanese nationality:</p>
<p>a. Records at the Ministry of the Interior and Municipalities, and the records of emigration clearly indicate that the person has direct paternal predecessors that were present in the Republic of Lebanon</p>
<p>b. The above-mentioned ancestral paternal predecessors were naturalized as Lebanese citizens according to the law of naturalization and have neglected to claim or reclaim his/her citizenship.</p>

Like the other countries in this thesis, also Lebanon wields the *jus sanguinis* principle. Like the other Arabic case country in this thesis, the paternal bloodline is the one that counts in terms of citizenship acquisition. Although the citizenship by naturalization law of Lebanon does not seem strict when only looking at the residency criterium (five years is by far not as long as 25, as was seen in Qatar), there is a remarkable (and problematic) gap in the citizenship law that is highly criticized by human rights organizations (Le Borgne, 2019). For children that are born to only a Lebanese mother, the possibility of acquiring the Lebanese citizenship is only there if their father is married to their mother and switches his allegiance to Lebanon and often has to give up his original passport. A lot of foreign men born to Lebanese women refuse to do so for the latter (the Lebanese Ministry of Justice only makes a few exceptions for people having dual nationality). As a consequence, children without a father being a Lebanese citizen do not acquire the Lebanese citizenship, although they are residents of the country. Although this is arranged for children with a foreign-born (naturalized) Lebanese father and a foreign-born mother (see Table 11, Citizenship by naturalization part 2), having a Lebanese mother is insufficient to access citizenship.

Looking at the nine foreign-born players in the Lebanese squad, indeed almost all of them (one ancestry remained unknown) had a paternal link with Lebanon (see Figure 13). What is also different from the other case countries in terms of citizenship regulations, is the special part of “citizenship by descent” that is included in their citizenship act. Here, again, only paternal ties to the countries (which can go back to many previous generations) can lead to citizenship.

7.2.3.2. Special provisions for athletes?

Looking at Table 11, section c of the first part of the “citizenship by naturalization” law of Lebanon states that ‘a foreigner who offers to Lebanon highly significant services. However, he/she shall be granted the nationality under an order for independent reasons.’ This would indicate that Lebanon could give citizenship to foreigners with special qualities like athletes who could provide these “significant services”. However, out of the nine foreign-born players in the 2019 Asian Cup squad, none of them was naturalized and acquired the citizenship by either the first or the third part of the Lebanese citizenship law. Also, by looking at previous foreign-born Lebanese football players, there is no indication that this *jus talentii* section of

the law was used to naturalize foreign-born players, but rather turned to “citizenship by descent” when the player did not have a Lebanese father, but did have paternal ties to the country from older generations. In paragraph 7.2.3.8., I will elaborate on the “thickness” of the 2019 Asian Cup squad of Lebanon and to what extent they became Lebanese citizens by either “citizenship by birth” or “citizenship by descent”.

7.2.3.3. Strategies used for attracting foreign-born athletes

The two highlights of the Lebanese national men’s team were the two appearances on the Asian Cup. In 2000, when the country hosted the tournament, the LFA already sought for the possibility to attract foreign-born players by making use of the Lebanese diaspora. With great football nations like Brazil and Argentina carrying hundreds of thousands of people of Lebanese descent, the LFA started looking for the possibility to look beyond its own borders (Nassif, 2012). Although their names did not sound very Lebanese, five Brazilians with Lebanese origins were found to be eligible to play for Lebanon due to their paternal ties (older generations) with the country: Luis Fernandez, Marcilio Silva, Newton De Oliveira, Gilberto dos Santos and Jadir Morgenstern. All appeared at the 2000 Asian Cup for Lebanon and were part of the first Lebanese strategy to search for talent abroad.



Figure 11: Lebanese strategy foreign-born players 2000 Asian Cup

After the tournament, the five Brazilian-born players competed for Lebanon at several occasions but did not become frequent international players for the Lebanese national team. Not only the LFA decided to actively seek for talent abroad in response to competing in an important tournament. Also, the national basketball federation started a strategy campaign to encourage foreign-born talents with Lebanese origins to choose to compete for Lebanon at the basketball world championships in 2002, 2006 and 2010 (Nassif, 2012).

In theory, Lebanese sports associations like the LFA could profit from the diaspora considering talents of Lebanese descent competing in big football competitions in Europe and South-America. However, Nassif, who researched the Lebanese sports regime, stated that the potential number of talented players of Lebanese descent is great, but unrealistic to be maximized (Nassif, 2012). According to him, national associations like the LFA could profit from the experience of foreign-born players who could motivate and train local-born players like the Philippines does (see Figure 2). However, players should, therefore, make a move to Lebanon to actively be part of the football community, with the biggest and most influencing players earning a luxurious salary abroad, making it unable for Lebanese clubs, nor the LFA to convince them (Nassif, 2012).

Still, when players play abroad and could not be part of the football community in Lebanon, they are, however, able to compete for Lebanon when meeting the eligibility requirements. One player who made such a move is Omar Bugiel. Being German-born and rejected by a German professional football club, Bugiel played on lower football levels in Europe (which is still higher than the highest Lebanese level of football). Bugiel did not have any chance of competing for the German national squad and followed the example of the five Brazilians in 2000, competing for Lebanon as a foreign-born player in the Asian Cup nineteen years later. 'I was minding my own business when I got this call. It was the national team manager of Lebanon. I am not really sure how he got my number to be honest, but he asked me if I would be interested in playing for the national team and that was that. It was completely out of the blue', as Bugiel stated when being interviewed about his approach by the LFA (Wilcox, 2019).

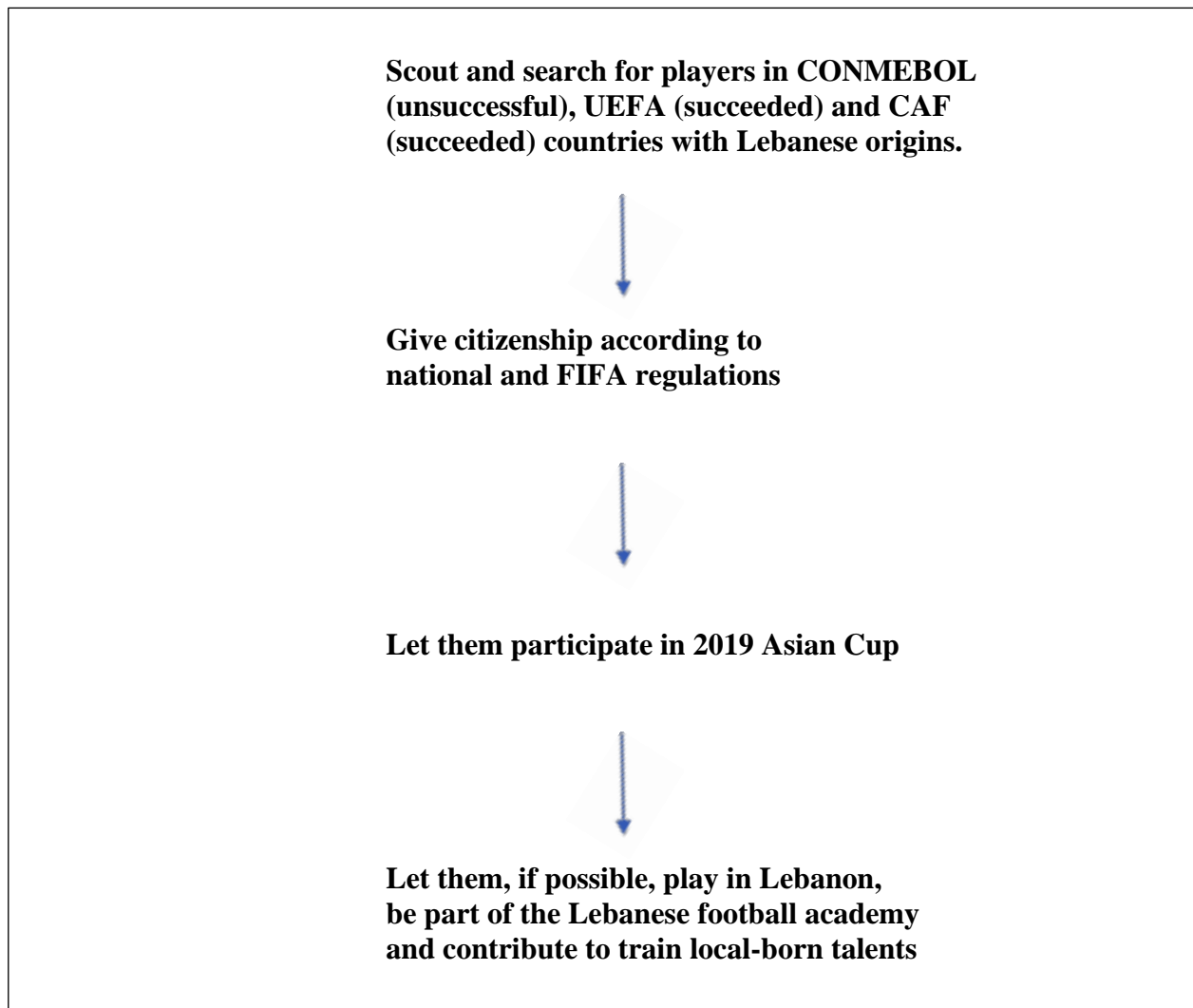


Figure 12: Lebanese strategy foreign-born players 2019 Asian Cup

In the Lebanese 2019 Asian Cup squad, most of the foreign-born players indeed started playing for Lebanese football clubs. However, they did not come from Latin-American countries anymore, but from Europe and Africa (see Figure 12). Sometimes, like the earlier mentioned Khalil, they had the chance of playing for the national senior team of the country they were born in. However, most of them were considered to be not good enough and decided to play for Lebanon instead. In other occasions, the same happened for other players, however, like Bugiel, they decided not become role models in Lebanon but stayed playing (for a higher salary) in Europe. Still, as Nassif stated, the best players with foreign-born players with Lebanese roots could not be convinced to compete for Lebanon, simply because they could earn more income and reach more success within the country they are born in (Nassif, 2012). In doing so, players like Miguel Layun (Mexico), Cláudio Ibrahim “Branco”

Leal (Brazil) and Faryd Mondragón (Colombia) shined at various FIFA World Cups and could have potentially played for Lebanon, however, did not choose to do so.

7.2.3.4. Alternative form of citizenship for athletes?

Looking at the case of Bugiel, he clarified that the process of acquiring citizenship went pretty fast. As already mentioned, he got a call from the LFA with the message that he was eligible to play for the country and if he was willing to do so. ‘I flew out of Beirut about a week after the call and got my passport sorted so I could play for them in the Asia Cup qualifying game. Next thing I knew I was travelling for my first match against Malaysia’, Bugiel adds in an interview taken by Greg Wilcox. Taking into account the fact that Bugiel got a passport at such pace and is able to speak out loud about it, makes it likely that Bugiel is a full citizen and does not travel via some sort of “mission passport” as was the case with the Qatari athletes.

7.2.3.5. Mandatory movement of the athlete to “new” country?

Although the Brazilians with Lebanese origins mentioned in paragraph 7.2.3.3. did not seem to have a Lebanese name, the official names stated on the tournament document of the 2000 Asian Cup remained the same and were not changed into more representational ones as was mandatory in Qatar and Vietnam (‘Asian Cup 2000 Lebanon’, 2000). Also, there is no naturalization law claiming this needs to happen. As Brazilians often use a “football name” on the back of their shirt (containing at least some part of their original name), the former European and African players used their full original name at the 2019 Asian Cup.

7.2.3.6. Mandatory movement of the athlete to “new” country?

As was mentioned in paragraph 7.2.3.3. the LFA tries to maximize its potential attraction of “diaspora players”. However, as was concluded by Nassif, the LFA does not have the financial measurements, nor the experience and status to attract the best players with Lebanese descent to play for the country. What is part of the current strategy, however, is to not only attract those who do want to play for Lebanon to represent their national team, but also to come to Lebanon to play in the national league in order to bring over their experience to local-born players (see Figure 12). However, a mandatory movement is not likely to be implemented for foreign-born Lebanese players who want to represent the national team. One

of the 2019 Asian Cup Lebanese foreign-born players who plays abroad is George Melki. Together with his brother, Robert, who also got selected for the 2019 Asian Cup, he was born and raised in Sweden and remained playing in this country. ‘Lebanon is not like the other nations because we do not have players who play in Europe or other strong teams in Asia with most of the players in Lebanon or if they are in Europe they are in lower leagues, not the top ones’, Melki states in an interview with Scott McIntyre (McIntyre, 2019). While playing in a lower Swedish division, he still earns more than in Lebanon. ‘I am not saying that the players in Lebanon are bad or that the league is bad but it is not the same as Europe or an Asian country such as Saudi Arabia that can bring good players with big money so for Lebanon, it is difficult to improve’ Melki adds (McIntyre, 2019). Here, Melki confirms what Nassif already stated about Lebanese football stated in 2012. The lack of financial attraction makes it impossible for players, if they are already willing to participate for Lebanon, to also play in the national division. Joan Oumari, a Lebanese player who was born and raised in Germany even states that the foreign-born players can usually only communicate with their teammates in English. ‘Both of my parents are from Lebanon and every summer we went there when we were young and enjoyed time with our family but still, I can speak only a little bit of Arabic because I grew up in Germany’, as Oumari explains himself (McIntyre, 2019). Also Oumari plays for a club in a richer national league than the Lebanese one. ‘Now I am playing in the UAE so I want to improve my language skills, but they speak a different kind of Arabic to that in Lebanon so I am doing my best to understand it’, he concludes (McIntyre, 2019).

7.2.3.7. Preference of attraction of athletes with specific geographical, religious or linguistic backgrounds?

Looking at the 2000 and 2019 Asian Cup squads, one squad was characterized by players from with Lebanese descent from Brazil, while the other contained players from various countries from Europe and Africa. Although it seems that the LFA tried to also attract players from CONMEBOL countries, they did not succeed to do so. Finding “diaspora players” in Europe and Africa, however, was successful. For this thesis, no indication could be found whether the LFA specifically searched for only players in these continents, neither could any reason be found why there are not players from CONMEBOL countries in the 2019 Asian Cup squad. The only fact that could be explained is that within the 2000 Asian Cup squad, a scouting network in Brazil was intensified, leading to five Brazilian players from Lebanese origins competing for Lebanon at the 2000 Asian Cup (Nassif, 2012).

7.2.3.8. Level of “thickness” of citizenship

In paragraph 7.2.3.2., it was already revealed that none of the Lebanese foreign-born participants of the 2019 Asian Cup was naturalized. While this research could not trace the reason of changing allegiance for one player, the other eight either had a Lebanese father or could become Lebanese citizens via the “citizenship by descent” law (see Table 11).

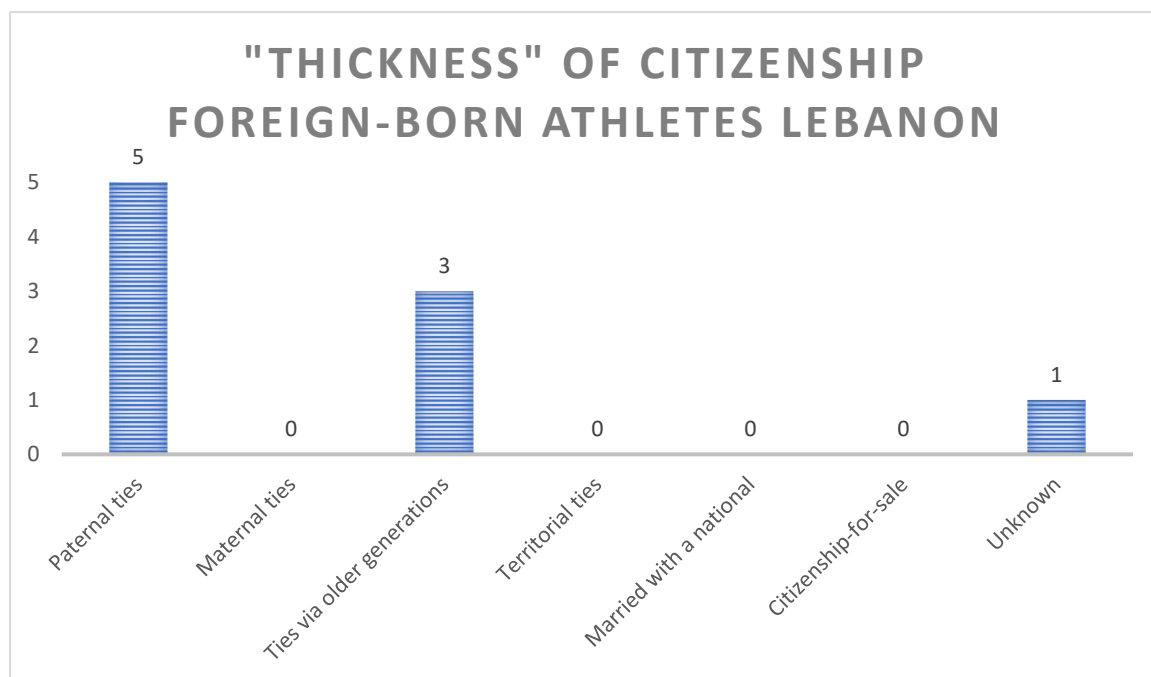


Figure 13: “Thickness” of citizenship foreign-born athletes Lebanon

As is shown in Figure 13, all players seem to have a rather “thick” form of citizenship and all have close ties with the country they represented at the 2019 Asian Cup. For the 2000 squad, the category stating “ties via older generations” would fill up the total number of all foreign-born players in the squad, with the ex-Brazilians not having Lebanese parents, but were able to access the Lebanese citizenship through the Lebanese citizenship of grandparents or even older generations that were registered as Lebanese citizens in records at the Lebanese Ministry of the Interior and Municipalities.

Looking at the composition of the Lebanese squad consisting of many foreign-born players, Buriel states that ‘there are Lebanese around the world, and it is a massive thing for everyone, for the players born there and the rest of the squad. For me, every time I go there, I cannot wait to get to play for the national team because it is in my blood’ (Wilcox, 2019). Bugiel, thus emphasizes that his bloodline is something that connects him with his teammates and the fact that he is foreign-born does not make him “thinner” in terms of being a Lebanese

representative for the national football team. Melki agrees: ‘For me, this is a normal situation because we have a lot of Lebanese in my city in Sweden and a lot of my friends also have this background so both my brother and I are used to it but equally we are proud to represent Lebanon. Although we also have Syrian roots, my grandfather is Lebanese and two of my father’s sisters were born in Lebanon’ (McIntyre, 2019).

Conclusion

Although the Lebanese team did not include as many foreign-born athletes as the Philippines, this case study showed a more diverse squad than the Qatari and Vietnamese ones. In this chapter, the concept of diaspora played a big role in understanding the relationship between the Lebanese citizenship regime and the representation of the Lebanese football team by a relatively high number of foreign-born athletes.

Like the other case studies, also Lebanon uses the *jus sanguinis* principle in their citizenship law. However, the country was the only one in this thesis that included a third aspect in their citizenship law specifically aiming at the Lebanese descent of people all around the world. Although countries like Vietnam did mention some advantageous criteria within their citizenship law, making it easier for overseas Vietnamese people to become Vietnam citizens, Lebanon puts an emphasis on this criterium by explicitly mentioning eligibility requirements of recordings of descent, giving people the opportunity to claim the Lebanese citizenship themselves. As a result, all Lebanese foreign-born football players taken into account in this research (also including the Brazilians of the 2000 Asian Cup squad), found their way to citizenship via either “citizenship by birth” or “citizenship by descent”, which are both related to *jus sanguinis*.

Although the LFA did not succeed in finding new eligible foreign-born players from big Lebanese communities in Latin-America, they did find players in Europe and Africa for their 2019 squad in order to let them “return” to Lebanon. All of these players seemed to have accessed the full Lebanese citizenship quite easily, which makes the Lebanese citizenship regime extremely open for people with Lebanese roots all around the world without making a distinction between talented and non-talented migrants. Therefore, fast-tracked “citizenship-for-exchange” to football players with a “thick” relation to Lebanon is not very abnormal, with the Lebanese citizenship regime lacking any “mission passport” construction like the Qatari case showed. In doing so, *jus talentii* is not really visible, with all foreign-born players not falling into a “citizenship-for-sale” category. Still, the law allows the government to give

foreigners citizenship who offer “highly significant services” to Lebanon. This was, however, not applicable to all individual athletes taken up in this research. What is problematic, however, is the attraction of the most talented athletes, who are not very likely to join the Lebanese national team, and rather stay playing for more lucrative contracts in their home country. Although the citizenship regime allows it, a “money issue” is blocking the opportunity for the Lebanese team to maximize its potential in attracting eligible foreign-born players.

Conclusion

In this final part of my thesis, I will form an overall conclusion of my research. Here, I will clarify interpretations of the different cases and compare them. An overview of the outcomes of all the criteria that were used in this research can be found in Table 12 (Appendix C). Before comparing all four case studies, I will present a short summary and will move on with both the theoretical implications and the social relevance of this thesis. Last, I will put an emphasis on the limitations of my research and possible further research on citizenship and naturalization policies in international sports.

a. Summary and case comparison

This thesis has shown how citizenship is transformed into a concept describing the status of a person recognized under the custom or law deciding who holds membership of a sovereign state or nation. When applying this conception of citizenship to international sports, I tried to investigate what the differences are between the 2019 Asian Cup competing countries in terms of their representation by foreign-born athletes, and to what extent these differences can be explained through their different citizenship regimes. In doing so, I found different types of citizenship regimes within the same continent and tried to picture the usage of citizenship within different countries when applying the concept to the representation of foreign-born football players in four different countries, which all fell under the same continental federation. Therefore, for this research, I first went through 24 teams each consisting of 23 players and looked at the countries of origin of all 552 players who were selected for the 2019 Asian Cup, taking the foreign-born players who were present at this continental tournament as the main case of my research. Besides this criterium, I also took into account the geographical region, the population size, the majority religion and the (possible) former colonial ruler of the countries to make a decision on finding four appropriate, yet different countries to make the scope of this research as widely as possible. Not only did I make use of quantitative characteristics looking at the countries of origin of the foreign-born players and their average age, but I also looked at the relationship between the athlete and the country, taking into consideration the “thickness” of citizenship of the athletes representing the nation. Furthermore, I continued my research by looking at eight different criteria, characterizing the citizenship regime of each case country. Here, I looked at official documents concerning

citizenship rules and regulations and made use of interviews of both 2019 Asian Cup foreign-born football players, but also interviews with representatives of the national football associations, as they are the policymakers for switching allegiance in international football.

In order to investigate in which legal framework differences in foreign-born representatives in the 2019 Asian Cup competing countries could exist, I first looked at the rules of the FIFA and how the concept of citizenship is interwoven in international football. Without this aspect, a relation with citizenship regimes could not be verified since switching allegiance in international football also takes place within the sphere of influence of the FIFA, besides the migratory aspect of changing citizenship. Here it was useful to see that not only the FIFA but also other sports federations independently from each other seek to make policies deciding who can represent which nation and under which conditions. The FIFA, although not as strict as other federations like the IAAF, tried to cope with what they conceived as undesirable when looking at athletes representing nations without any clear relation between the two. Changing the rules had to lead to cutting across the phenomenon of *jus talentii*: the attraction and naturalization of athletes without any clear relation to the country they nowadays represent in international sports. What makes the FIFA eligibility rules different from other federations, is the distinction between youth and senior-level competition, making it possible for individuals to make decisive choices at a later stage of their career. However, as was shown in some case studies, even then, countries are able to let young talented migrant athletes seek for shelter within new borders, giving them hopes and opportunities that go beyond the ones possible in their countries of origin.

All citizenship regimes of the case countries in this thesis hold on to the *jus sanguinis* principle, making it possible to hand over citizenship via a paternal, and sometimes maternal relationship. Therefore, *jus soli* was not taken into account in this thesis which was only focused at foreign-born athletes (in that case, *jus soli* could have been actively used within in the citizenship regime of the country, however, the focus of this thesis was only aimed at athletes born outside of the country they nowadays represent). What could be concluded from all four case studies is that citizenship is, as Sassen already explained, more than a concept legally transcribes to either *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli* and relates to many forms and principles through which citizenship and naturalization policies are perceived.

	Philippines	Qatar	Vietnam	Lebanon
Citizenship law characteristics	Citizenship can be acquired via both paternal and maternal ties. Naturalization possible, however, the person should have resided in the country for a period of at least ten years.	Very strict citizenship law, making it almost impossible for foreigners to acquire Qatari citizenship (residency requirement of 25 years). Only a paternal relation to Qatar could lead to citizenship acquisition.	Citizenship acquisition possible via both paternal and maternal ties. Naturalization policies in Vietnam are set up to make it easier for spouses, offspring and parents of Vietnamese citizens to easier receive citizenship.	Although citizenship could only be accessed via a paternal relation, the Lebanese citizenship law offers the possibility to let Lebanese descendants (relating to many previous generations) access the Lebanese citizenship.
Special provisions for athletes?	No provisions are indicated in the law concerning athletes or other skilled migrants.	Yes. The Emir of Qatar can provide citizenship at any time to those who have shown Qatar an “exceptional” service and possess skills and abilities that can make an “exceptional” contribution to the country.	Yes. The naturalization policy takes into account an easier naturalization for foreigner who are “helpful” to the State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.	Yes. A foreigner who offers Lebanon “highly significant services” can access the Lebanese citizenship. However, this was not applicable to the 2019 Asian Cup foreign-born players of Lebanon.
Strategies used for attracting foreign-born athletes	The attraction of foreign-born players focuses on players who are already eligible to participate according to national and FIFA rules. They are	Two-sided strategy focused on (1) a scouting network and (2) an application system for athletes who receive insufficient support in their country of origin.	Oversea Vietnamese foreign-born players who are eligible are being observed and scouted. If talented, they are contacted and given	Formerly, Lebanon scouted and searched form players in South-American countries making use of the own advantageous citizenship law for Lebanese

	selected to provide more international football success and train local-born players. The success coming from this strategy should lead to more foreign-born players joining the national team.	The talented ones earn a spot in the <i>Aspire Academy</i> and are given residency in Qatar to avoid later eligibility problems with residency requirements. Next, “mission passports” are given to make athletes eligible to represent Qatar. Only the most successful ones receive Qatari citizenship.	citizenship. This, however, is a recent policy that was not yet implemented before the 2019 Asian Cup. Before, Vietnam did try to compete with foreign-born players without any relation to the country but withdrew from this strategy.	descendants in this continent and let them participate international tournaments. Now, the same strategy is used, however, turned out to be unsuccessful in South-America, moving the focus to Europe and Africa to seek for eligible players. Also, they should contribute to train local-born talents.
Alternative form of citizenship for athletes?	No signs were leading to football players given an alternative form of citizenship.	Yes, so called “mission passports” are being given to athletes to let them compete for Qatar in international sports. Athletes, therefore, lack the advantages of the Qatari citizenship.	No trace could be identified to assume that Vietnam makes use of an alternative form of citizenship for athletes.	No. Athletes are given a full Lebanese citizenship immediately.
Mandatory change of athlete’s name?	No. The foreign-born football players play with their original name on the back of their shirts.	Yes, if the name is not Arabic-related to keep them “representable”. In some cases, exceptions are made for unknown reasons.	Yes. Naturalized athletes lacking a Vietnamese name, should change their name to a Vietnamese one when acquiring citizenship.	No. South-American players who represented Lebanon before were allowed to keep their original names.
Mandatory movement of an athlete to	No. However, most players have chosen to make the Philippines their new home. This	Talented athletes that do not participate at senior level have to live in Qatar to later be	No. The national V-league even limited the number of foreign-born players within	No. Only if the player has no Lebanese (grand)parents and acquired

<p>“new” country?</p>	<p>relates to the “role model concept” of the strategy of the country.</p>	<p>eligible to represent Qatar. However, senior foreign-born athletes have to possibility to live and train abroad.</p>	<p>national football clubs.</p>	<p>citizenship via the “citizenship by descent” part of the Lebanese law, then he must live in Lebanon for two years to make him eligible according to FIFA rules.</p>
<p>Preference of attraction of athletes with specific geographical, religious or linguistic backgrounds?</p>	<p>No signs were leading to a particular preference. However, the relatively high number of German-born players in the squad could be traced through the large number of Filipino workers in Germany.</p>	<p>Yes, the QFA and other Qatari sports association prefer athletes from Arabic countries who are more “representable” for Qatar. However, this does not mean Qatar is not being represented by non-Arabic foreign-born athletes.</p>	<p>No. Although the new strategy assumes that oversea players are found in countries with big Vietnamese communities (US, France, Germany & Australia). Formerly, players were naturalized from South-American and African countries.</p>	<p>Previously, Lebanon attracted players from Brazil, looking at players with Lebanese roots. Although this region is still part of the strategy, Lebanon sought for more opportunities in Europe and Africa, scouting players with Lebanese descent.</p>
<p>Level of “Thickness” of citizenship</p>	<p>The level of “thickness” is “thick” in a sense that athletes were acquiring citizenship via the <i>just sanguinis</i> principle and did not have to go through naturalization procedures. All of them (with the exception of one unknown case) had a clear relation with</p>	<p>Very “thin”. With the exception of one athlete who lived in Qatar since he was a small child, all others did not have any relation to Qatar whatsoever and can all be categorized as “citizenship-for-sale” athletes.</p>	<p>The one foreign-born athlete in the Vietnamese squad had a “thick” relation with Vietnam. Formerly, the level of foreign-born athletes coming from South-American and African countries was much “thinner”. With the new strategy coming up, it is assumed that the</p>	<p>Since most of the players either had a directly paternal tie or grandparents with Lebanese citizenship, the level of “thickness” of citizenship can be determined as “thick”. For one player, it remains unknown what his relationship with the country is.</p>

	the country of the Philippines.		level of “thickness” of the foreign-born athletes will remain “thick”.	
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Table 12: Overview outcomes analysis citizenship regime and naturalization policies the Philippines, Qatar, Vietnam and Lebanon

Looking at the differences and similarities of the four citizenship regimes (Table 12) and the representation (or lack of representation) by foreign-born athletes at the 2019 Asian Cup, *jus sanguinis*, or more specifically, the bloodline of an athlete is decisive in the process of switching allegiance in international football with all four countries putting an emphasis on the citizenship of the parents. In Qatar and Lebanon, however, only the citizenship of the father leads to the acquisition of citizenship. In these countries, stricter requirements could be explained through the religious, more conservative societal environment in the country, reflected in the citizenship law, making the paternal bloodline the decisive criterium within the process of accessing citizenship at short notice. In all countries, alternatively accessing citizenship via naturalization is possible, although the requirement of residency makes it almost impossible for foreigners to become Qatari citizens. Here, the special provision, thus *jus talentii*, can be beneficial to the country and has been used to “create” Qatari athletes. This strict citizenship requirement, as has been explained, is part of the artificial distinction within the country of Qatar, keeping the Qatari citizenship as exclusive as possible, with only the elite minority profiting from all citizenship benefits. While both Vietnam and Lebanon do have special requirements for skilled migrants to easier access citizenship, they did not make use of it (although Vietnam did make use of it in the past) to create a “citizenship-for-exchange” environment for athletes without any (ancestral) ties to the country. What could be concluded from this, is that the foreign-born athletes in both Vietnam and Lebanon, as well as in the Philippines, became citizens without the need to naturalize them. In other words, only looking at the possibilities within the national citizenship laws of these countries make it more attractive for these countries to reach out for athletes who part of communities abroad related to the country of their ancestors. Qatar, however, being a small country, does not have such a possibility and, therefore, “needs” to strengthen itself via an alternative route.

The strategies that are used by the countries show a lot of similarities, with all of them wanting to improve the quality of their future football team. The Philippines, Vietnam and Lebanon all aim to reach out for foreign-born football players who are eligible to play for

the team through their roots, having a father (or a mother in case of the Philippines and Vietnam) with the appropriate citizenship. In the case of Lebanon, even older generations can contribute to the process of acquiring citizenship. In the Philippines and Lebanon, foreign-born players are likely to also earn their money in these case countries and contribute to training local-born football players, serving as the new role models within the national football environment. In Vietnam, this process has just started and was not implemented before the start of the 2019 Asian Cup. Qatar, however, really depends on *jus talentii* and tries to attract foreign-born players without any ties to the country to be trained in Qatar at a very young age with the intention of letting them compete for the country at a later stage of their career (although they refuse to say so). Again, the Philippines, Vietnam and Lebanon seek players with “roots”, instead of attracting players without any relation to the country they are going to represent in international tournaments. In doing so, a certain “muscle drain”, as can be seen in Qatar, could be rather explained as a “muscle circulation”, with football players “returning” to the country of origin of their (grand)parents, making a circulation in the migratory pathway within their family history.

Also, Qatar is the only country who does not provide full citizenship to athletes. Here, athletes can only access the full Qatari citizenship when they become really successful. How successful this standard is, is up to the Emir. Otherwise, so-called “mission passports” are created to let athletes participate for Qatar, but not be an official Qatari. In other countries, no indications of such “mission passports” were found. However, what is interesting about these Qatari “mission passports”, is the repeating distinction that the Qatari make within their citizenship regime by adding another layer of citizenship within their citizenship hierarchy. Although these athletes officially access the Qatari nationality, they lack the advantages of Qatari citizenship when not having the same rights as full Qatari citizenship. This form of civic stratification, therefore, is new, and unique for the Qatar citizenship regime and its relation to skilled migrants.

In terms of name changes, both Qatar and Vietnam permit athletes to change their names when representing the country on an international level. In Vietnam, this has been implemented in the citizenship law. This country seems to put an emphasis on the national unification within their citizenship regime, with the non-religious Socialist one-party state of Vietnam being reflected upon this citizenship criterium. Unification, therefore, seems to be a key concept in this country, making all citizens, including the naturalized athletes, representatives of the state. In the Philippines and Lebanon, the citizenship regime seems to adapt to the influential atmosphere of the countries of origin of its “returnees”. Whether the

athletes had a Filipino or Lebanese name, this did not seem to matter in terms of their representation of the country. In Qatar, the action of changing a foreign-born athlete's name seems to be mandatory when the name is not Arabic, making it not sound "representative". Again, the conservative atmosphere of Qatar is related to this implementation in their citizenship regime. In such a strict citizenship regime as in Qatar, the act of changing a name within the process of making foreign-born athletes more "representative" is important when keeping up to this principle. In other words, if Qatar would decide not to prohibit foreign names in their national football team, the citizenship regime and its elitist treatments for the minority of Qatari citizens would not be reflected, thus making their team look non-Qatari. In doing so, the national pride and possible success of the football team would not be related to the national identity of the Qatari people, making not them, but the non-Qatari the country's role models.

In none of the countries was it mandatory for athletes to move to the "new" country as a result of them switching allegiance. In Qatar, however, young talents are given residency and should live in Qatar to be trained and educated there. At the same time, this makes it possible for them to fill in the residency requirement of the FIFA at a later stage of their career. Here, the eligibility rules of the FIFA are challenged, with the underlying aspect of its regulations being dodged by Qatar. As the FIFA wanted to get rid of athletes who participate for a country without having any ties to it, being afraid the richer countries will "shop" from poorer ones, they tightened the eligibility rules with the residency requirement as its main weapon against this development. However, as Qatar already allures children at very young ages (especially in the Arab regions) to live their dream in the high-class facilities at the *Aspire Academy*, the requirement can easily be dodged, claiming their national players being part of the country for a longer period of time, making them eligible to represent Qatar under the FIFA regulations. While in none of the countries was it mandatory for athletes to move to the "new" country as a result of them switching allegiance, Qatar, however, gives young talents residency, letting them live in Qatar to be trained and educated at the *Aspire Academy*. At the same time, this makes it possible for them to fill in the residency requirement of the FIFA at a later stage of their career.

In the Philippines, Vietnam and Lebanon, no specific preferences were found that indicated that they were specifically attracting athletes from certain geographical, religious or linguistic parts of the world. Logically, what was identified, was their attraction of athletes from countries with a large overseas community of either Filipino, Vietnamese or Lebanese descent. In Qatar, the attraction of Arabic athletes is preferred, with them being more

“representative”. Again, the distinction between either a clear “muscle drain” (Qatar) and a “muscle circulation” (the Philippines, Vietnam and Lebanon) can be made, with Qatar preferring to attract young football talents in the Arab world but does not seem to avoid recruiting new talent from beyond.

The “thickness” of the citizenship of the foreign-born athletes, overall, was rather thick, with the exception of Qatar. In the other Asian countries, all athletes had close ties to the country they nowadays represent in international football. The Qatari players (with the exception of one) all showed no relationship to Gulf country and could, therefore, be seen as migrant athletes falling under “citizenship-for-sale” phenomenon. Also, in this final criterium, the circle of the research question of this thesis is completed, explaining the differences between the four 2019 Asian Cup competing countries in terms of their representation by foreign-born athletes and to what extent these differences can be explained through their different citizenship regimes. While looking from this “thickness” aspect and reflect this criterium back to the other seven criteria, one could notice that the “thickness” already explains the major pathways through which the athletes accessed the possibility of representing either the Philippines, Qatar, Vietnam or Lebanon. As Qatar differs more from the other three, this country is also represented by foreign-born athletes with the “thinnest” citizenship, with most of them lacking a clear connection to the country they represented at the 2019 Asian Cup. While the other case countries seemed to have a citizenship regime which was constructed appropriately for people with ancestral ties to return to the country of their (grand)parents, Qatar did not have such a possibility, leading to the usage of special provisions in the law for skilled migrants to access citizenship at short notice. Two major remarks can be made upon this difference. The first conclusion is that the other countries do not lack such special provisions (with the Philippines as an exception), however, there was no need for them to use these provisions anymore (Vietnam) or was never used (Lebanon). The second major remark that should be noted when answering the research question is the fact that Qatar does not do anything illegal according to national and FIFA rules and regulations on citizenship. However, the citizenship of the athletes can be presented as “thin”, with the athletes lacking a clear relation to the country they represent. In order to make use of special provisions for athletes in citizenship law, and make these athletes eligible at the same time, Qatar feels the need to attract youngsters from, especially Arab countries to live and stay in Qatar during their youth, filling up the residency requirement of the FIFA. In doing so, the country tries to limit its foreign-born players from non-Arab countries, making the team more

“representable” within its own strict citizenship regime, yet not directly related to the country of Qatar itself.

b. Theoretical implications

Looking back on this research, four non-Western case countries were investigated when looking at the appearance of foreign-born players in their national squads at the 2019 Asian Cup and to what extent the “thickness” of the citizenship of the athletes could be related to citizenship laws and regulations in these countries. Here, a subject was tackled that investigated an under-researched topic of the most extreme, yet least researched cases within international sports migration. Besides, it explained on which basis Western criticism of naturalization in international sports was justified, with their establishment in international sports being challenged by countries who seek for improvement, making use of foreign-born athletes. With Qatar being highly dependent on migrants and the case other countries having widespread communities all over the world, the criticism seemed to be countered by these two comments. However, as this thesis has shown, underlying thoughts about the usage of “citizenship-for-exchange” in international sports shows how these assumptions, although partly true, are very simplistic and derogate the essential criteria in certain citizenship regimes have led to such developments in which foreign-born athletes are representing countries in international sports tournaments.

In all cases, citizenship regimes used their powers to create an environment in where talented migrants could benefit from the security and prosperity of getting the citizenship of a foreign country while giving back their skills and abilities. This “citizenship-for-exchange” thus took place in all case country. However, the total set in which the citizenship regime made characterizes and fills in this development differed per country, leading to a particular national form of Shachar’s “picking winners”. Therefore, *jus talentii* seemed to be more relevant in the case of Qatar, than on the other three, with Qatar being the only country who, nowadays, naturalizes foreign-born athletes without any connection to the country under special provisions empowered by the citizenship regime of the Emir. The other ones are being characterized more by some sort of “muscle circulation”, looking at *jus talentii* as being a construction used to attracting talents who are, according to national citizenship law and FIFA rules and regulations, directly eligible to compete for the nation. Although Vietnam had a similar way of coping with *jus talentii* as Qatar, the country only recently decided to look for a “citizenship-for-exchange” policy that focuses more on their global migrant network of

Vietnamese overseas communities. Therefore, the “thickness” of the citizenship of the Filipino, Vietnamese and Lebanese players could be seen as much “thicker” than the players who became eligible to compete for Qatar after living at the *Aspire Academy* for some years, to later become citizens under “mission passports” or, if successful, full citizens.

Going more in-depth on these mysterious “mission passports”, one could see that the earlier mentioned concept of civic stratification in a country like Qatar was challenged with a new aspect of skilled migrants experiencing a form of civic exclusion. In a society with a clear distinction in citizenship with the Qatari and non-Qatari even living apart from each other, they are officially joined by a group of naturalized skilled Qatari who do not have the same rights as the full citizenship Qatari, making a national adjustment to Lockwood’s civic stratification concept.

The fact that the foreign-born athletes in Qatar have a “thin” connection (“citizenship-for-sale”) with the country does, by its own, not necessarily have to be conceived as problematic. As Kostakopoulou & Schrauwen already stated that the aspect of providing security and prosperity to migrants can be experienced as beneficial, this thesis has shown how pulling in skilled migrants by providing security and prosperity leads to a distinction between talented and non-talented migrants. Here a “double standard” was identified in Qatar, blocking the possibilities and life improvement of migrant laborers in favor of their national citizenship, while making exceptions for talented newcomers, who should be able to make a contribution to the national prestige. The eight criteria used in this thesis have shown how this observation practically took place and is forming the skull of the Qatari citizenship regime. While also Vietnam and Lebanon included a special provision for skilled migrants in their citizenship law, these were not directly related to a head of state, nor did these citizenship regimes make their citizenship as exclusive as in Qatar. In a country which is represented by foreign-born athletes in international sports tournaments, the citizenship law is formed to keep the Qatari society artificially divided into two groups, making it controversial to give citizenship to non-Qatari citizens, while holding on to such strict regulations. As Campbell previously showed how the Qatari society is strictly divided into a Qatari elite minority enjoying the wealth and luxury of the state that has been built up by non-Qatari, the country faces a problem when being represented in international sports. Therefore, this thesis has shown how Qatar makes it possible to let the country be represented by non-Qatari, while at the same time “protecting” its image by preferring Arabic representatives while changing the names of the non-Arab ones. Reflecting this observation to the question to what extent the differences in this research on foreign-born athletes can be explained through different

citizenship regimes, no similar policies occurred in the other case countries, with their citizenship regimes opening up the possibility for naturalization of non-national talents (*jus talentii*) without any connection to the country, however, preferred to be represented by foreign-born athletes with at least some sort of relationship with the country they nowadays represent and aim to compete under a “global”, yet nationalized team of both local-born players and talented foreign-born migrant athletes.

c. Social relevance

The continuously changing environment of the global world of sports has led to a situation wherein the representation of the nation by nations is no longer a self-evident truth, as athletes switch allegiance and become citizens of countries they are not born in, and, sometimes, do not have any relationship with (*jus talentii*). This thesis tried to contribute to research on the development of sports policy-making and citizenship in creating a broader picture of non-Western citizenship and naturalization policies in international sports. The citizenship regimes of the Philippines, Qatar, Vietnam and Lebanon were all identified as useful case examples to better understand the relationship between sports and naturalization policies. In case of Qatar, this even led to a clarification of how sports policies reflect a bigger, more societal picture of how talents are distinguished from non-talents, making sure the strictly divided society could continue while being represented by foreigners in international sport. In the other case countries, however, talented migrants often found themselves related to the countries they nowadays represent and were, sometimes, even given the position as role models for the current sports society. In doing so, countries like the Philippines and Lebanon already tried to integrate its foreign-born sports icons into the current society as appropriate as possible, “pulling” them towards new possibilities in the country of their (grand)parent(s). In the case of Vietnam, “thin” athletes were attracted in the past but did not give the expected satisfaction to Vietnamese football. This country, therefore, tries to go down the same path as the Philippines and Lebanon, in looking into the possibilities of attracting “skilled” migrants with Vietnamese roots, making them part of the strategy of “muscle circulation”.

In the case of Qatar, the country clearly feels the need to not only organize the 2022 FIFA World Cup but also wants to compete with the bigger teams. Therefore, the rich Gulf country wants to be represented by foreign-born athletes without losing its “representativeness”. Although this thesis has shown how the country works with the contradiction of keeping up the strict citizenship regime on the one hand, while being

represented by foreigners on the other, Qatar does not seem suffer much under the foreign critics and continues its foreign athlete policy towards the FIFA World Cup of 2022 by claiming they do not break any eligibility rules and regulations. All in all, Qatar indeed cannot be accused of doing something illegal. Therefore, both the AFC and the FIFA, being the overruling governmental organizations, do not seem to succeed in their intention of fighting inappropriate forms of attracting foreign-born youngsters. When looking at the FIFA rules on eligibility, no rules are included that state that Qatar and the *Aspire Academy* are doing something illegal when taken away young and talented children from their homes outside of Qatar. Therefore, the FIFA should overlook to what extent such movements should be either controlled or prohibited and if the current residency criterium in its eligibility rules is still a sufficient remedy in sports policymaking. According to this thesis, the shortcomings of it are visible. Again, this thesis did not intend to justify those who represent a nation without relation but showed how a distinction is being made between talented and non-talented migrants in the international world of sports. Here, on some occasions, young children are lured into a dream they do not understand yet with life decisive choices being taken at an age too soon. Although the FIFA intends to underline this problem, the current policy does no longer work. Still, this does not mean the majority of the countries seek to make use of the possibilities of avoiding FIFA eligibility regulations. Like the Philippines, Lebanon and potentially Vietnam have shown, offering chances for football players in the countries of their (grand)parent(s) is a chance of a lifetime. Although also here, the “citizenship-for-exchange” principle takes place, such a decision is made at a later stage of the athlete’s life, making sure no decisive pathways are being taken before the age of maturity.

d. Limitations and further research

What has not been implemented in this research are countries that hold on to the *jus soli* principle and to what extent the implementation of this form of citizenship policy affects the representation of the country in international sports. Therefore, countries like the US, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Pakistan could be used in a similar case study design in order to investigate how their citizenship regime explain possible differences and similarities between them, and the majority of the countries that do not make use of this citizenship law. Furthermore, and not taken into account in this research, are the players who are born in a country, holding two nationalities. This process also involves the concept of “loyalty”, with them deciding to either compete for the country they are born in, or the country of their

(grand)parents. Although this looks rather similar to the decision the foreign-born players of the Philippines, Vietnam and Lebanon had to make, the foreign-born players in this research, as was seen, competed at the 2019 Asian Cup when they lacked the possibility to compete for their country “at home”. Does this make a difference when having a different passport already? Furthermore these types of players already know, if talented enough, they have to make this decision at some point in their life, while other talented migrant football players only received a call at a later stage of career being informed about their possibility of competing for a nation they only heard stories about from either their parents or grandparents.

Another limitation of this thesis was the lack of personal contact with athletes. Therefore, further research could go even more in-depth on personal stories, making the picture of “citizenship-for-exchange” clearer. For this thesis, athletes were hard to reach. With mainly the Qatari athletes being shielded from influences from abroad. Commenting on their switch of allegiance, therefore, is not very likely to happen. Furthermore, linguistic boundaries lacked the improvement of accessing certain aspects of interaction with these athletes. What could be interesting for future research, for instance, is the living situation of athletes who dropped out of the *Aspire Academy*. Did they continue living in Qatar? If so, are they still (limited) Qatari citizens or did they leave the country for good?

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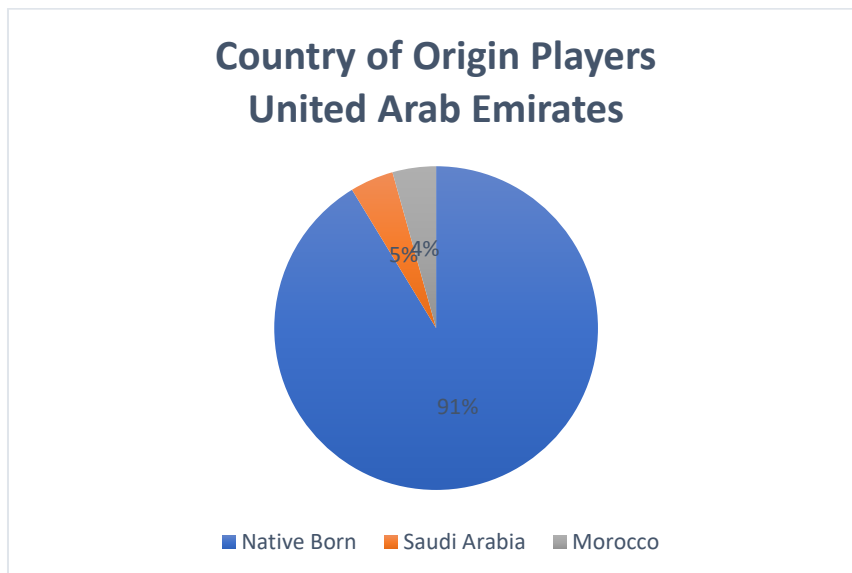
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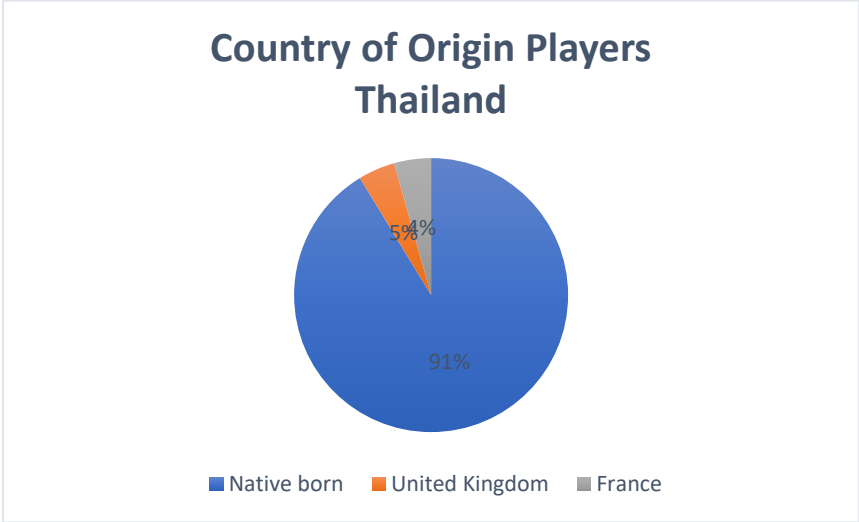
Appendix A: Countries of Origin 2019 Asian Cup competing countries

In order to make a selection of case countries, I used the database of the 2019 Asian Cup to take a look at all 554 players competing for their countries in this football tournament (“2019 Asian Cup Teams”, 2018). Within this database, all relevant information concerning their country of origin and career history could be found. For all 24 competing countries, I present the following statistics (sorted on the official 2019 Asian Cup draw), looking at the countries of origin of their players:

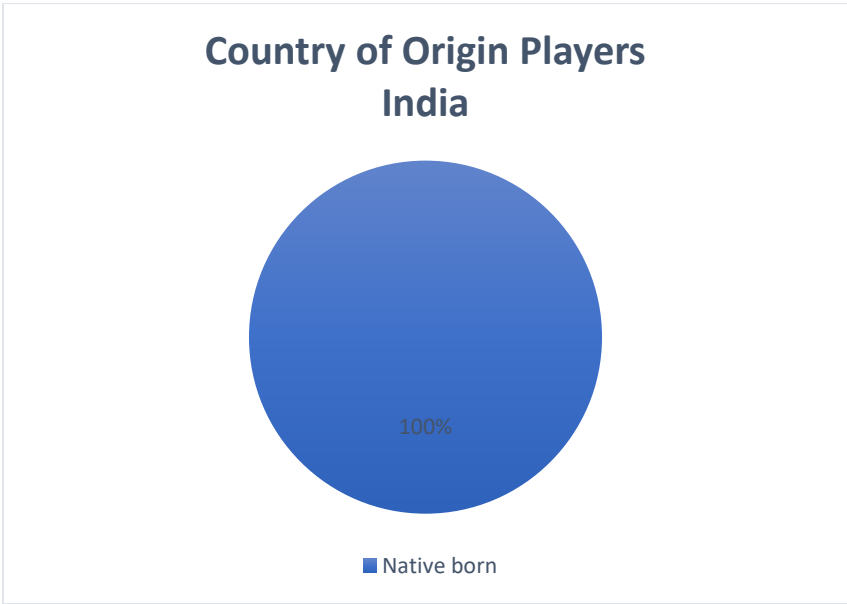
Group A: United Arab Emirates



Group A: Thailand



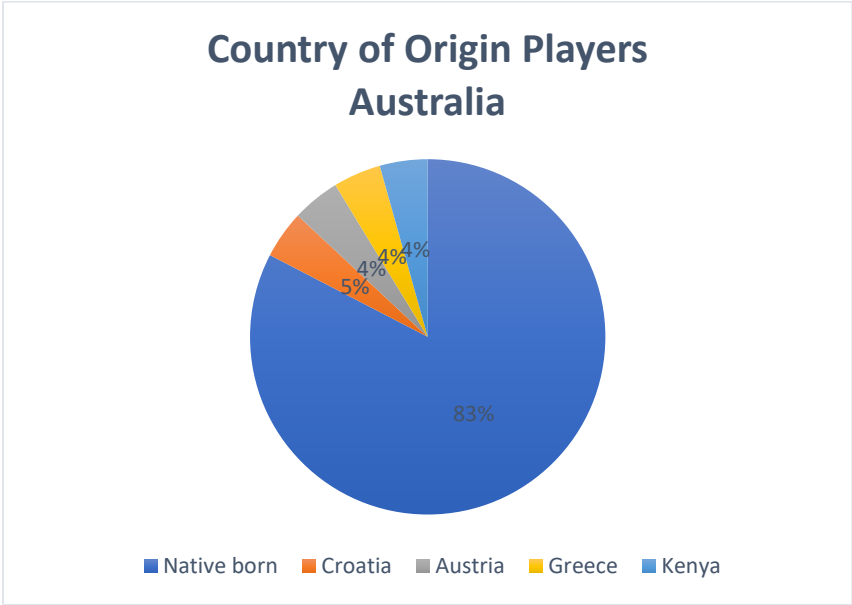
Group A: India



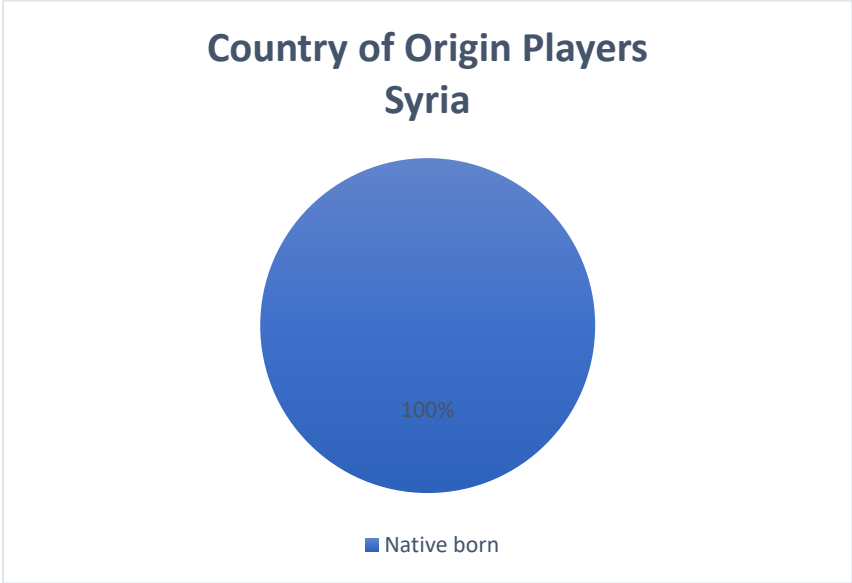
Group A: Bahrain



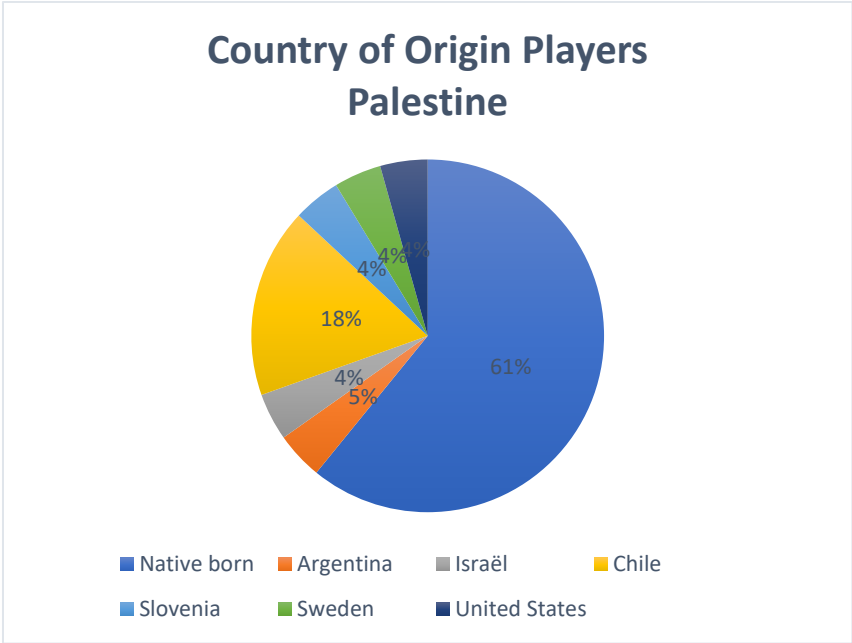
Group B: Australia



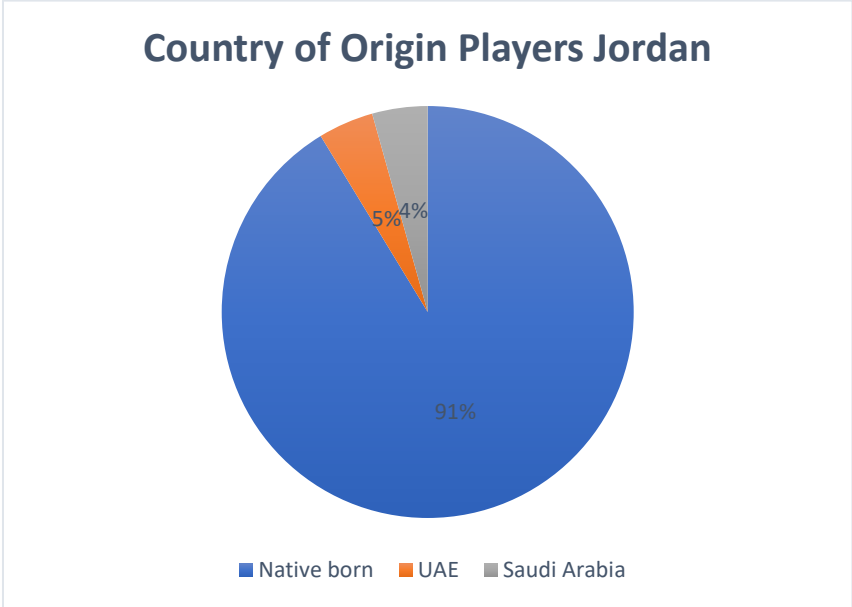
Group B: Syria



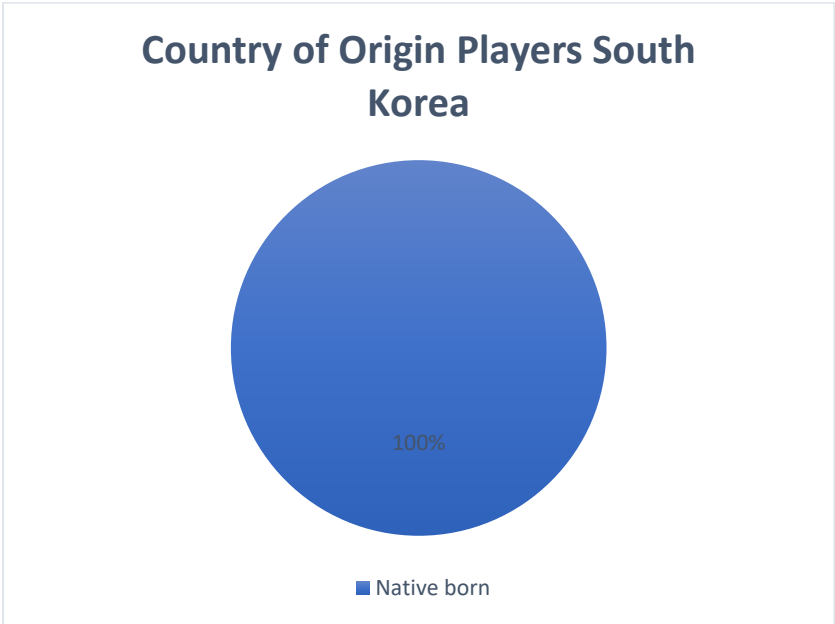
Group B: Palestine



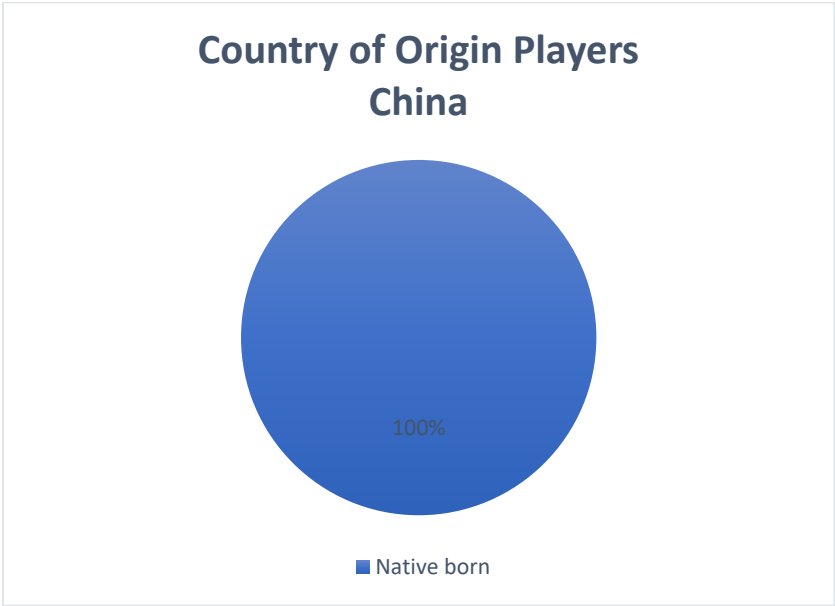
Group B: Jordan



Group C: South Korea



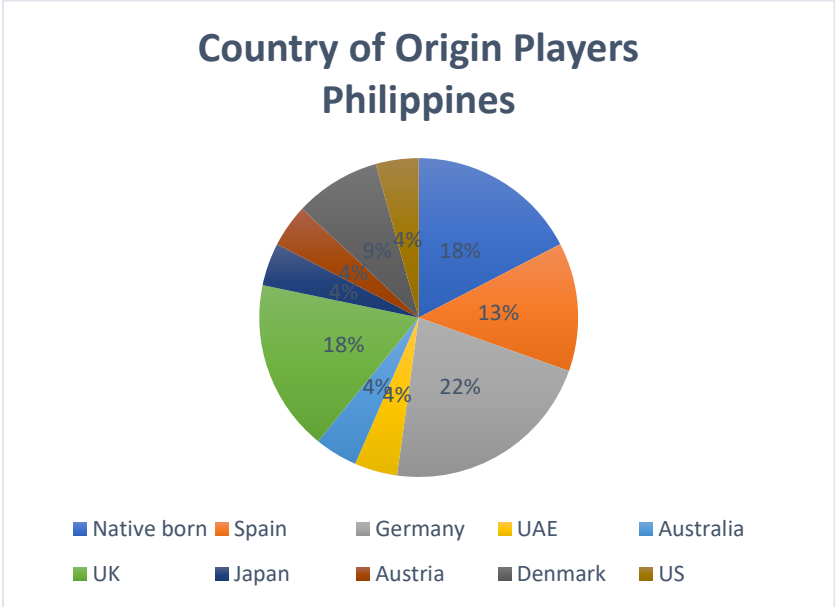
Group C: China



Group C: Kyrgyzstan



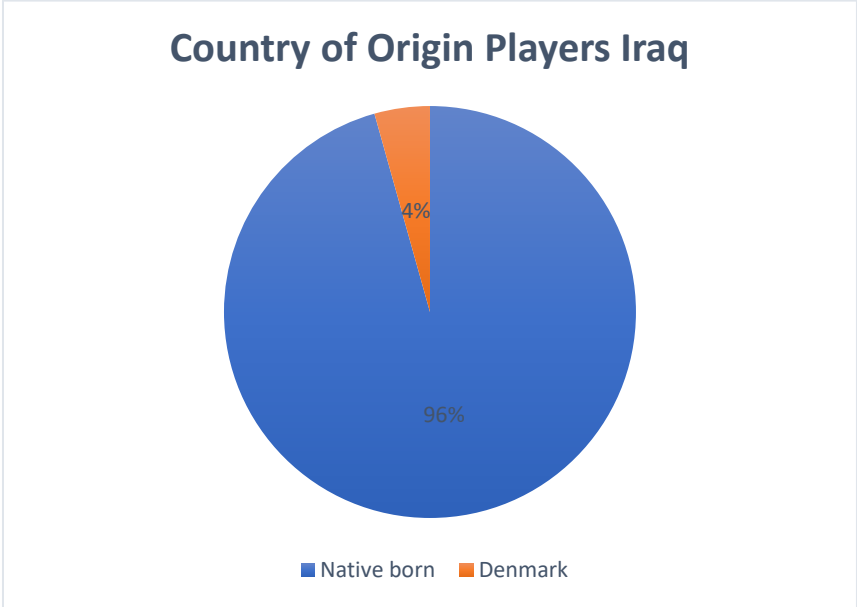
Group C: Philippines



Group D: Iran



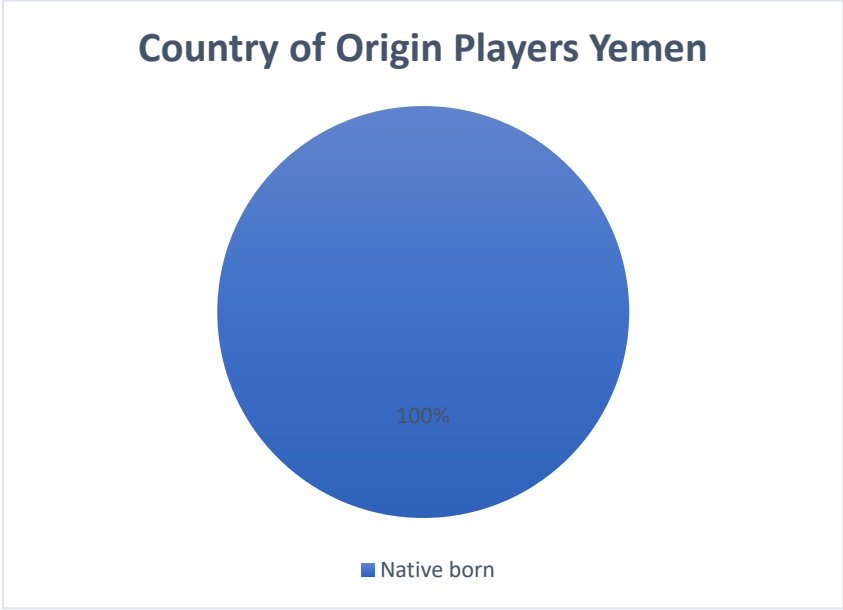
Group D: Iraq



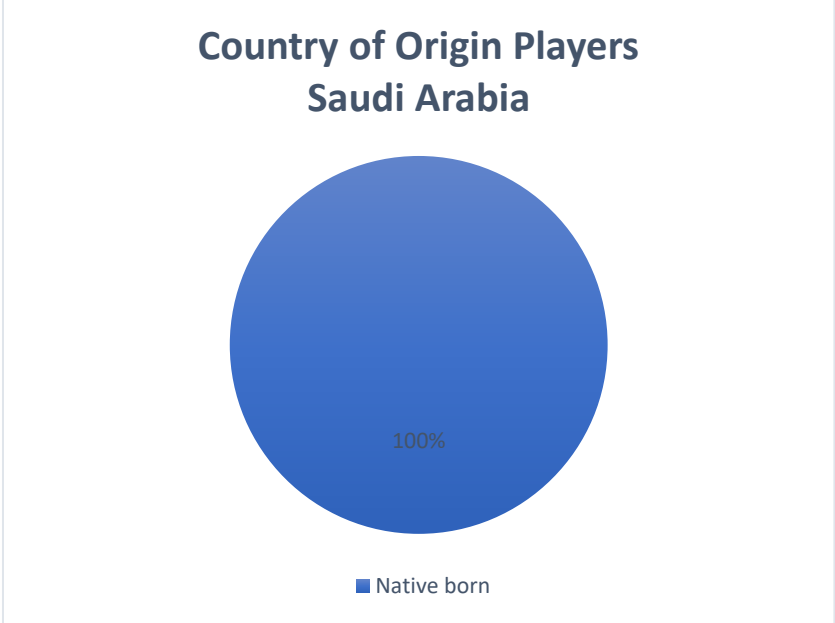
Group D: Vietnam



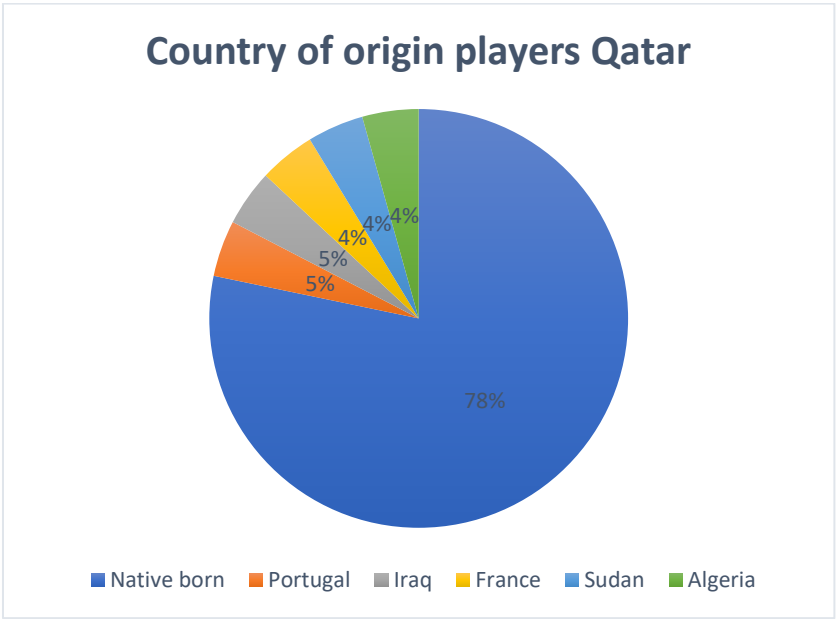
Group D: Yemen



Group E: Saudi Arabia



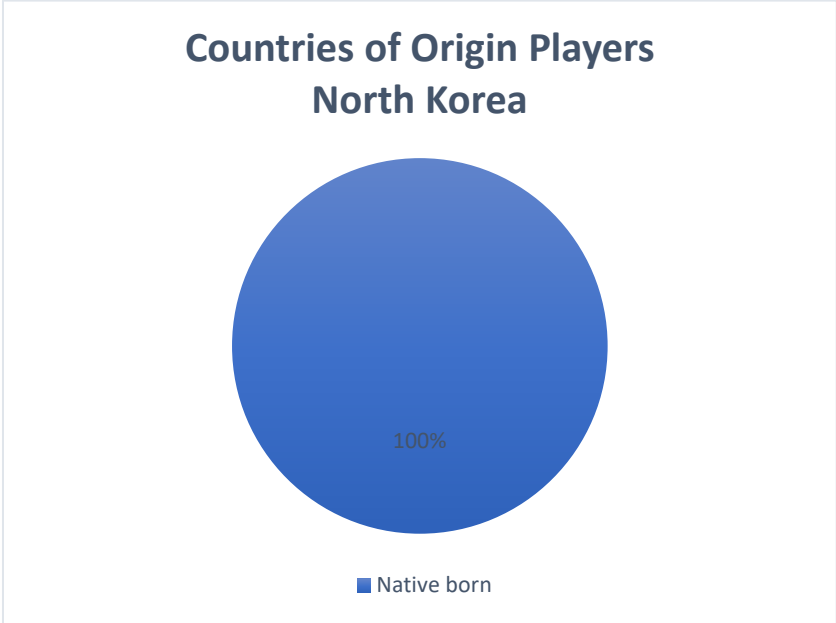
Group E: Qatar



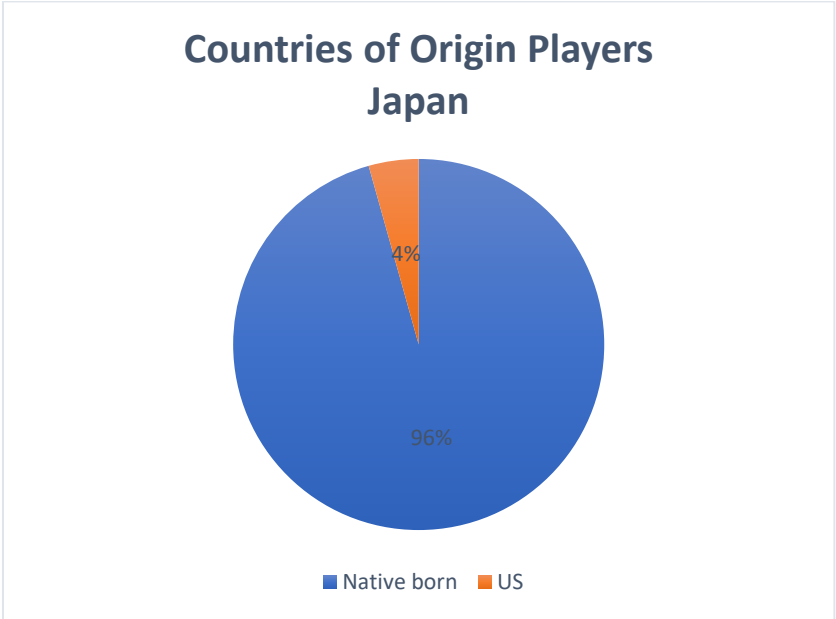
Group E: Lebanon



Group E: North Korea



Group F: Japan



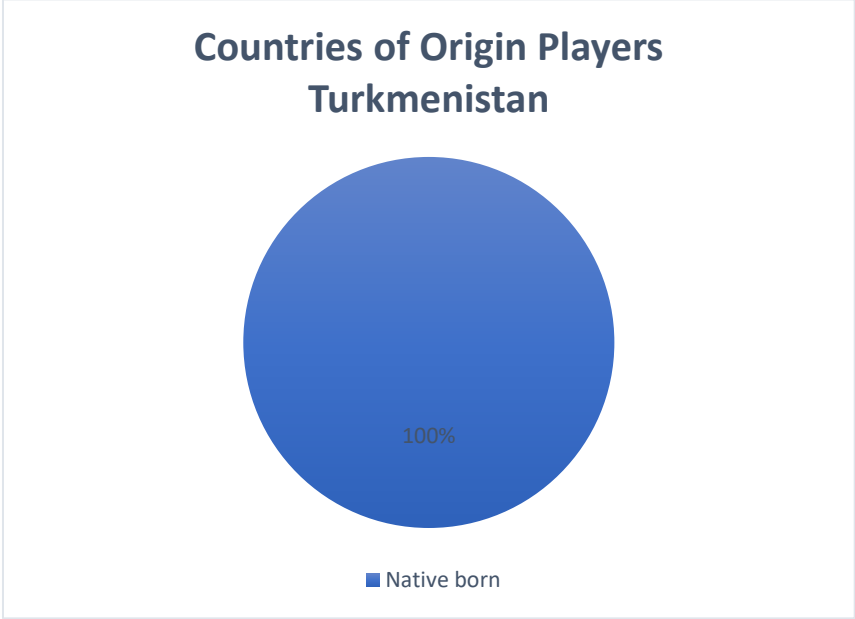
Group F: Uzbekistan



Group F: Oman



Group F: Turkmenistan



Appendix B: Average ages foreign-born players 2019 Asian Cup competing countries

Group number 2019 Asian Cup	Country	Number of foreign-born players in tournament squad	Average Age foreign- born players at the time of first (non-friendly) international senior game (in years)
A	United Arab Emirates	2	25
A	Thailand	2	24
A	India	0	-
A	Bahrain	0	-
B	Australia	4	24
B	Syria	0	-
B	Palestine	9	26
B	Jordan	2	23
C	Korea Republic	0	-
C	China	0	-
C	Kyrgyzstan	2	27
C	Philippines	19	22
D	Iran	1	24
D	Iraq	1	25
D	Vietnam	1	22
D	Yemen	0	-
E	Saudi Arabia	0	-
E	Qatar	5	22
E	Lebanon	9	23
E	DPR Korea	0	-
F	Japan	1	26
F	Uzbekistan	1	27
F	Oman	0	-
F	Turkmenistan	0	-

Table 13: Average ages foreign-born players 2019 Asian Cup competing countries