



Association of legal entities "Association 'Kazakhstan Football Federation'"

Strategy for the development of Kazakhstan football until 2034

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Chapter 1. Analysis of the causes of the current situation in Kazakhstan football

Before moving on to goals and strategy, it is necessary to understand the situation and the root causes of the current situation in Kazakhstan football. This must be done *NOT* in order to find the guilty persons - that is a pointless exercise, as it wastes energy and effort instead of focusing on constructive ideas and actions. Understanding the root causes allows to more correctly determine what needs to be the focus, where to start, what is critical in relation to the goals. The root cause analysis also allowed us to get in touch with wider community of participants in our football ecosystem, to hear them, to understand how they see the situation and ways out of it.

First, a few facts and figures. The Kazakhstan men's national team today is in 120th place in the FIFA ranking. For comparison, a country with a similar population and level of GDP per capita, Romania, is in 44th place, and Uzbekistan is in 84th place. About 20 Kazakh footballers play outside the country, most of them in Belarus and Russia (compared to Ukraine (202 footballers), Russia (192), Belarus (45) and Uzbekistan (32)). Kazakhstan's youth team finished 4th in the group at the 2021 UEFA qualifying tournament, 1 point ahead of the Faroes Islands with a population of 50,000.

According to the results of the study, the popularity of the Kazakhstan Premier League (KPL) is on par with the English Premier League among Kazakhstan fans (21% and 20% respectively); while the Champions League (32%) and the Europa League (27%) are the most popular in Kazakhstan. In the KPL Championship (the highest division of the Professional Football League of Kazakhstan), foreign players make up 32% of the players, approximately on par with Russia (while in Ukraine - 22%, in Uzbekistan - 10%). The average age of players in PFLK is 27 years (compared to the top divisions of Russia and Uzbekistan (26.3 years), Ukraine (25.6), Belarus (24.9), and Denmark (24 years)).

In grassroots football, the situation is as follows. In Kazakhstan, today, 1% of women play football (4% in Europe), 10% of adults in general (14% in Europe). 22% of Kazakhstani children play football (27% in Europe). In addition, over the past 5 years, interest in football has significantly decreased among young people aged 18-24, as well as among the generation of their parents aged 45-54; while respondents call the game boring (56%), and rate the quality of the game as low (20%). Pride in the national team has fallen by almost 2 times compared to 2016 among the fans. This trend of results is observed in the context of large annual government financial injections into football.

Of the positive aspects, we can note the work on the introduction of the Football Lesson in schools, which makes it possible to instil interest in football in children from early school age.

What are the reasons for the current trend? There are several main ones that affect almost all aspects of football in the country:

1. In Kazakhstan, **the national style of play model is not widely used in working with national teams**, based on certain philosophy, principles, and game model. Country's own, based on national characteristics, style of play has become the basis for the transformation of teams in many countries. A single style of play, philosophy and game model allow to combine the efforts of many coaches working with youth in the country, to make the transition from one age group to the next smoother, to link the first team with the pyramid of training young football players.
2. **Small coverage by the system of training and licensing of coaches, lack of linking of licensed courses to the national style of play, philosophy and model of the game.** Today's licensing is not a necessary element to operate the grassroots football system, and higher levels of licenses are not available to many due to the cost and number of sessions per year. The licensing system is not based on the national style of play model, with deep and detailed methodological materials for coaching at different levels of the football pyramid, from children's football to the national team.

3. **Football is 90% financed by the state**, while resources are mainly allocated on a calendar basis, without being tied to any results, performance indicators, or other metrics. In such a situation, there is no motivation to invest in the development of youth, to work for the long haul, improve the quality of management, work with fans, and build a football business.
4. **Football in Kazakhstan is experiencing a shortage of managerial, sports, analytical, and organizational talents (personnel)** due to a lack of programs for the development and training of professional owners and managers of clubs, sports and technical directors, football coaches, coaches-analysts, commercial directors, organizers of competitions (event management).
5. **The football infrastructure is not integrated into the day-to-day life of the neighbourhoods, its location and quality do not contribute to the involvement** of an increasing number of participants, and there is a significant gap between the opportunities for competitive activities in the Training Centers and in grassroots football.
6. **There is no program for the development of grassroots football, including women.** Grassroots football is the basis for the successful development of professional football and allows to nurture a generation of fans. There is a huge stereotype in the country that football is a game for men. The development of women's football in many countries of the world began with the breaking of this stereotype.

Because of the above reasons, the most important results of the entire football ecosystem, namely the results of national teams and clubs in the international arena; the attractiveness of our football as an entertainment product; financial stability and self-sufficiency of the sector; and the willingness of people to get involved in the game by becoming players, fans, and consumers of the football spectacle – are all below average, while the potential and opportunities for improvement are substantial.

It is very important to note that there is no need to look for those responsible for the current situation; football is an ecosystem consisting of a large number of regions, participants, restrictions, traditions, principles and habits, different goals, as well as mechanisms of influence and motivation. And even if everyone in their place tries to do a good job and generate results, the football system as a whole does not produce expected outcomes. Even if they want to change the situation, individual participants in the ecosystem cannot transform it sufficiently. That is why Strategy-2034 relies on a systematic approach that allows to simultaneously influence several key components of the football ecosystem in Kazakhstan, thereby creating a critical mass of aligned actions over a sufficiently long time to not only see the result, but also make the changes irreversible. And it is the KFF that should become a catalyst for such comprehensive actions, and a source of energy, competencies, and constancy of the course of reforms that will be needed for a real transformation in the long run. And the benchmark for all participants in the process will be uniting, ambitious, long-term goals: it is time for Kazakh football to reach a new much higher, level.

Chapter 2. Strategic goals of Kazakhstani football until 2034

The way out of the current situation is possible only with a paradigm shift in the thinking and expectations of our entire football family. Kazakhstan is a large, rich country with strong sports traditions. In the international football community, we have already proven that we are able to compete with the leading teams: the Kazakhstan futsal team is constantly fighting for top positions at the World and European Championships. We have all the prerequisites to set the highest goals. We just have to expect more from ourselves: after all, we know from experience that the ambitiousness of the goals largely determines the result achieved.

Strategic objectives:

1. Provision of highly qualified personnel in all spheres of football activity: coaches, referees, managers and others.

No reforms are possible without improving competencies, introducing new ideas, and developing new leaders. A constant flow of well-trained and open to change coaches, managers, organizers will make the transformation process irreversible.

2. Building a system for training world-class Kazakhstani football players.

Almost all models of successful transformation of football ecosystems in different countries are based on a change in the approach to finding and educating talented young people. The education of a whole generation of young talents requires substantial and structural changes in the football economy of the whole country, the development of mass football, the synchronization of all participants in the process, the development of a whole galaxy of talented coaches, the introduction of a holistic national model of the game and the image of a "successful player".

3. Transformation of professional football in Kazakhstan aimed at creating a football business industry in the country

One of the key reasons for the current dynamics in Kazakhstan football is the structure of ownership and financing of professional clubs, and a certain orientation (not necessarily intentional) of the regulations of professional leagues. Consistent and progressive changes in the structure of football will release new resources and direct them to the development of talented young people.

4. Improvement of sports results of Kazakhstan football in the international arena.

Only an ambitious sports goal of this scale makes it necessary to mobilize all talents, ideas, and resources. It will be the final measure of the success of all reforms in Kazakhstan football, and will lay a new level of expectations for future generations of football players and fans.

All goals, despite the different timing of reaching them, are interconnected, and the achievement of earlier goals underlies the achievement of long-term ones. Each of the five big goals has milestones that can be used to track how close we are to the expected outcome. All milestones will be discussed separately when outlining the Strategy-2034 roadmap in a separate section below.

The goals of the Strategy-2034 may seem unrealistic if we focus on historical facts and the current state of affairs. However, only long-term goals of this magnitude can really shake up the football community, unite all participants in the process, and force us to progressively implement successful models, think outside the box, and bet on young people. And, if we frankly assess these goals, despite their seeming unattainability, each of them individually is quite realistic, and precedents have already been set before us by such countries as Iceland, Croatia, Denmark, and Poland in Europe; South Korea and Japan in Asia; Canada, USA, and Costa Rica in America. All of them, armed with successful experience, and without trying to reinvent the wheel, focused on a strategic, progressive approach to the reforms of national football; and the results of the best players and clubs from these countries, the progress of their national teams have become a reward for patience, discipline, innovation, and professionalism.

Of course, the question immediately arises: what levers make it possible to make a qualitative transition and achieve such lofty goals? What are the key differentiators between realizability of Strategy-2034 and other approaches to the transformation of Kazakhstan football?

Chapter 3. Roadmaps for Strategy-2034: clear and measurable path to each goal

3.1. Roadmaps

1. Roadmap and indicators for achieving goal No. 1 Provision of highly qualified personnel in all areas of football activity: coaches, referees, managers.

Strategy-2034 lays the foundation for reform by creating a pool of well-trained professionals across all areas of the football ecosystem. It is talented, enterprising, well-trained specialists that are a necessary condition for reforms. The federation is obliged to give every coach, club manager, staff of the federations and other football public organizations the opportunity to learn, grow professionally, and fulfill themselves in the forefront/context of the planned reforms. And the unifying factor of the new talent training system will be the national style of play – the philosophy, principles, and model of the game.

Roadmap and Metrics to Achieve Goal No. 1

Strategic task	Milestones	Milestones	Milestones	Goal
	2025	2030	2032	2034
<i>Actualization of the national philosophy, principles, and model of football</i>	The national model of the game is integrated into the system of training coaches	The national model of the game is the basis of the system of training coaches	The national model of the game is the basis for the victories of national teams at international tournaments	Kazakhstan's model of the game was recognized by experts at the 2034 World Cup
	The national model is used successfully in several regions across the levels, and in all youth teams	The national model of the game is used in the preparation of all national teams, including the first one		
<i>Creation of football training centers at the KFF</i>	The Sports Personnel Training Center and the Sports Managers Training Center operate with a full set of programs and are able to train up to 500 coaches and 50 managers per year	The centers are able to train up to 1,000 trainers and 100 managers per year	Opening of programs for training specialists from other countries	The Sports Personnel Training Center and the Sports Managers Training Center are the most popular training structures in Central Asia, a benchmark for other Federations
	Programs of the Sports Training Center: Children's coach Coach Children's and Youth Sports School	All levels of professional development programs and an international internship program with partners of the		The Sports training Center has full self-financing

	Academy Coach Goalkeeping Coach Coach-analyst Scout	Sports Training Center and the Sports Management Center abroad have been launched		
	Programs of the Sports Managers Training Center: Director of the club Sports Director, Technical Director of the club Commercial Director of the club Football and finance Organizer of competitions and work with fans Career development program in football for players completing their careers International Internship program			The training center for sports managers has profitability
	Launching a professional development system in addition to mandatory courses to maintain a coaching license			

The formation of a talent pool in all areas of football is in itself a great achievement, the most important goal of the Strategy-2034. And the achievement of this goal as soon as possible is also necessary to create the necessary conditions for the successful achievement of all other goals.

2. Roadmap and indicators for achieving goal No.2 Building a system for training world-class Kazakhstan football players

The development of a whole generation of talented players and a large pool of young talented coaches is an absolutely necessary condition for the success of both the reforms of the entire football economy of the country and the sports results of the national teams in the international arena.

Strategic task	Milestones	Milestones	Milestones	Goal
	2025	2030	2032	2034
<i>Development of mass football (including women's)</i>	The number of all players in the country is at least 1,175 million people	The number of all players in the country is at least 2 million people	The number of all players in the country is at least 2.2 million people	The number of all players in the country is at least 2.5 million people
	Development of programs to attract Kazakhstan people to the camp of fans of local clubs and national teams	The number of fans of Kazakhstan football (fans of clubs and/or national teams) is at least 3.5 million people	The number of fans of Kazakhstan football (fans of clubs and/or national teams) is at least 4.5 million people	The number of fans of Kazakhstan football (fans of clubs and/or national teams) is at least 5 million people
	Launch of a new format for all national grassroots tournaments under the age of U14	Launch of a new format for all national grassroots tournaments under the age of U12	Launch of a new format for all national grassroots tournaments under the age of U9	The country has a full-fledged pyramid of grassroots football and competitions in every age category, from children to adults, from the championships of districts and cities to the nationwide grassroots Cup of Kazakhstan
	The number of girls/women playing is at least 100,000	The number of girls/women playing is not less than 200,000	The number of girls/women playing is at least 250,000	The number of girls/women playing is at least 300,000
<i>Assistance in infrastructure development</i>		60% of children in Kazakhstan have an open-access football field (and with artificial turf) within a 20-minute walk from home	70% of children in Kazakhstan have an open-access football field (and with artificial turf) within a 20-minute walk from home	80% of children in Kazakhstan have an open-access football field (and with artificial turf) within a 20-minute walk from home
	Construction of 7 stadiums with a capacity of 8000 people has been initiated	At least 5 stadiums with a capacity of 8000 people have been built and are functioning in Kazakhstan		
	At least 7 full-size football arenas have been built and are functioning in Kazakhstan	At least 12 full-size football arenas have been built and are functioning in Kazakhstan	At least 15 full-size football arenas have been built and are functioning in Kazakhstan	At least 20 full-size football arenas have been built and are functioning in Kazakhstan, 1 in each town, in 3 cities
<i>Implementation of the national philosophy, principles and model of the game</i>	A national system of scouting and analysis of young talents has been created and is functioning			

<i>in the process of training and development of players</i>	The national model is used successfully in several regions across the levels, and in all youth teams	The national model of the game is used in the training of all national teams, including the first one		Kazakhstan's talent development model is rated as the "most modern" in Central Asia by world football experts
	At least 30% of coaches working with young football players of Academies and Training Centers, and 50% of coaches working with National teams, have been trained at the Training Center for Coaches at the KFF	At least 60% of coaches working with young football players of Academies and Training Centers, and 80% of coaches working with National teams, have been trained at the Training Center for Coaches at the KFF	At least 70% of coaches working with young football players of Academies and Training Centers, and 90% of coaches working with National teams, have been trained at the Training Center for Coaches at the KFF	At least 80% of coaches working with young football players of Academies and Training Centers, and 100% of coaches working with National teams, have been trained at the Training Center for Coaches at the KFF
<i>Development of elite youth football</i>	2 regional training centers for young pupils have been opened	There are at least 4 youth Academies in the country under the football clubs of the Professional Football League of Kazakhstan and the 1st league	There are at least 8 youth academies at football clubs in the country	There are at least 10 youth academies at football clubs in the country
		The National Training Center for National Teams has been opened and is fully functioning		
		The youth national teams clearly have a single style of play that corresponds to the Model of the first national team's game	The youth national teams clearly have a single style of play that corresponds to the national model	All national teams clearly have a single style of play, corresponding to the Model of the game of the first national team (National model)
		At least +10 U21 youth teams participate in the professional leagues of Kazakhstan (2nd and, if possible, 1st leagues) relative to 2022	At least +12 U21 youth teams participate in the professional leagues of Kazakhstan (2nd and, if possible, 1st	At least +16 U21 youth teams participate in the professional leagues of Kazakhstan (2nd and, if possible, 1st

			leagues) relative to 2022	leagues) relative to 2022
		50% or more of the graduates of the National Center for the Preparation of Youth Teams at the KFF are professional football players under contract in one of the professional clubs of the Professional Football League of Kazakhstan upon reaching the age of 18	70% or more of the graduates of the National Center for the Preparation of Youth Teams at the KFF are professional football players under contract in one of the professional clubs of the Professional Football League of Kazakhstan upon reaching the age of 18	80% or more of the graduates of the National Center for the Preparation of Youth Teams at the KFF are professional football players under contract in one of the professional clubs of the Professional Football League of Kazakhstan upon reaching the age of 18
	At least 5% of playing minutes in the Kazakhstan Premier League, and at least 20% of playing minutes in the 1st league, belong to players under 23 years of age	At least 10% of playing minutes in the Kazakhstan Premier League, and at least 25% of playing minutes in the 1st league, belong to players under 23 years of age	At least 20% of playing minutes in the Kazakhstan Premier League, and at least 35% of playing minutes in the 1st league, belong to players under 23 years of age	At least 25% of playing minutes in the Kazakhstan Premier League, and at least 40% of playing minutes in the 1st league, belong to players under 23 years of age
	The U20 and U21 teams play for entry to the World and European Championships, respectively, occupy places not lower than the 3rd one	The quality and model of the game of the U20 and U21 national teams at the tournaments for entering the World and European Championships are highly noted by international experts	Participation in the last round of the U20 and U21 national teams for entry to the World and European Championships, respectively	The reaching the final of the European Championship 2033 by the U21 team
<i>Promotion of Kazakhstan football players in the world</i>	Development of a list of target leagues and clubs with a similar game model for the development of direct relationships and assistance in the employment of Kazakhstan young football players (for viewing and/or signing direct contracts at least at the level of the 2nd team)	At least 3 Kazakhstan football players under the age of 23 have been playing abroad for the last 3 years, in countries with a higher league rating	At least 7 Kazakhstani football players under the age of 23 play abroad in countries with higher league ratings	At least 10 Kazakhstan football players under the age of 23 are playing abroad in countries with a higher league rating, and at least 1 of them is in the top 5 championships
		At least 3 Kazakhstan football players play in the top 10	At least 1 Kazakhstan football player plays in the top 5	At least 3 Kazakhstan football players of all ages play in the top 5

		championships in Europe	championship in Europe	championships in Europe
		More than 30 Kazakhstan football players play in foreign championships of countries with a higher rating than Kazakhstan	More than 40 Kazakhstan football players play in foreign championships of countries with a higher rating than Kazakhstan	More than 50 Kazakhstan football players play in foreign championships of countries with a higher rating than Kazakhstan

Educating a whole generation of world-class players is a very ambitious goal. The training of players can be successful only if there is a very strong and extensive coaching school. That is why it is very important to launch a training center for trainers. And the rapid success in creating a deep coaching pool depends not only on the education of a new generation, but also on the future results of all Kazakhstan national teams.

3. Roadmap and indicators for achieving goal No. 3 Transformation of professional football in Kazakhstan aimed at creating a football business industry in the country

Important objectives of the Strategy for the development of Kazakhstan football until 2034 are structural reforms in approaches to the financing of professional football, the structure of ownership of clubs, the orientation of the regulations of professional leagues, and the creation of the football business industry. These changes are necessary in order to return interest and attractiveness to Kazakhstan football among fans, to develop local talents among both coaches and players, as well as to improve the results of Kazakhstan clubs and national teams. As mentioned above, the main changes will occur in relation to:

- Improving the quality of management of professional clubs, introducing a management standard, integrating the standard into the licensing system of professional clubs for their admission to competitions;
- Changes in the focus of the use of public funds (from the financing of the payroll to the financing of academies and the system of training talented Kazakhstan young people), to the development and building of trust in Kazakhstan coaches, as well as to support the development of women's professional football (expansion and promotion of the women's Premier League and the launch of the first league);
- Building a new model of cooperation with sponsors and partners, which will ensure an increase in the quality of professional football and the level of interest from both fans and sponsors.
- The last step will be a well-prepared, step-by-step privatization of Kazakhstan professional clubs and the withdrawal of the state from financing the budgets of professional teams.

Roadmap and Metrics to Achieve Goal No. 3

Strategic task	Milestones	Milestones	Milestones	Goal
	2025	2030	2032	2034
<i>Implementation of the Club Management</i>	Implementation of a new club management standard			

<i>Standard</i>	in club licensing systems to participate in the Kazakhstan Premier League and the 1st League (different standards for each league)			
	At least 20% of clubs operate in full compliance with the minimum standard of club management	50% of clubs operate at least below the established minimum standard of club management	75% of clubs operate at least below the established minimum standard of club management	90% of clubs operate at least below the established minimum standard of club management
<i>Preparation of a pool of professional managers and leaders to carry out reforms</i>	Training before the start of the 2025 season at least 50% of club managers, sports directors, and coaches-analysts at the Training Center for Coaches and the Training Center for Sports Managers	Training before the start of the 2030 season at least 60% of club managers, sports directors, and coaches-analysts at the Training Center for Coaches and the Training Center for Sports Managers	Training before the start of the 2032 season at least 70% of club managers, sports directors, and coaches-analysts at the Training Center for Coaches and the Training Center for Sports Managers	At least 80% of club managers, sports and technical directors, coaches, analysts, organizers and club employees have completed the programs of the Training Center for Coaches and the Training Center for Sports Managers
	Expanding the programs of the Sports Personnel Training Center and the Sports Managers Training Center to all other football professions and launching teams on them	50% of all club employees are graduates of the programs of the Sports Personnel Training Center and the Sports Managers Training Center	60% of all club employees are graduates of the programs of the Sports Personnel Training Center and the Sports Managers Training Center	75% of all club employees are graduates of the programs of the Sports Personnel Training Center and the Sports Managers Training Center
<i>Transfer of funding for the training of young Kazakhstan players and coaches for the professional clubs</i>		The share of state funding does not exceed 60% of the budgets of all professional clubs	The share of state funding does not exceed 35% of the budgets of all professional clubs	The share of state funding is not more than 25% of the budgets of all professional clubs
		At least 40% of public funds is used for the development of academies and the training of young coaches and players	At least 65% of public funds is used for the development of club academies and the training of young players	At least 80% of public funds is used for the development of club academies and the education of young coaches and players

	1st edition of the program "Golden Coaching Fund of Kazakhstan football"	Increasing the number of local coaches who are head coaches of professional clubs and national teams to at least 40%	Increasing the number of local coaches at the head of teams of professional clubs and national teams to 70%	Increasing the number of local coaches at the head of teams of professional clubs and national teams to 80%
<i>Changing the rules of the leagues to encourage more active use of young Kazakhstan players</i>		The share of minutes played by foreign players (including football players from the Commonwealth countries) in the Kazakhstan Premier League is no more than 60%, and in the 1st league no more than 10%	The share of minutes played by foreign players (including football players from the Commonwealth countries) in the Kazakhstan Premier League is no more than 40%, and in the 1st league no more than 10%	The share of minutes played by foreign players (including football players from the Commonwealth countries) in the Kazakhstan Premier League is no more than 35%, and in the 1st league no more than 7.5%
			Kazakhstan Premier League and the 1st League have an average age of football players no higher than 26 and 24 years, respectively.	Kazakhstan Premier League and the 1st League have an average age of football players no higher than 25 and 23 years, respectively.
	New formats of the National Cup league have been introduced			
<i>Development of professional women's football</i>		Expansion of the highest professional women's League (8 teams)	Expansion of the Professional Women's Football League (10 teams)	Expansion of the Professional Women's Football League (12 teams)
		Launch of the 1st Semi-professional Women's League (8 teams)	Expansion of the 1st Semi-professional Women's League (2 groups of 6 teams)	Expansion of the 1st Semi-professional Women's League (2 groups of 8 teams)
<i>Privatisation of clubs</i>		Presence of three private clubs in the Premier League	At least >70% of professional clubs are privately owned	At least 80% of professional clubs are privately owned
		All private club owners have passed the mandatory "Owner of a Football club" program	All private owners of clubs have passed the mandatory program "Owner of a football club" of the Sports Managers Training Center	All private owners of clubs have passed the mandatory program "Owner of a football club" of the Sports Managers Training Center

<i>Creation of the football business industry in the country</i>	At least 20% of fans rate the style of football in Kazakhstan's leagues as attractive and not boring, and the rivalry on the field as honest and uncompromising	At least 40% of fans rate the style of football in Kazakhstan's leagues as attractive and not boring, and the rivalry on the field as honest and uncompromising	At least 45% of fans rate the style of football in Kazakhstan's leagues as attractive and not boring, and the rivalry on the field as honest and uncompromising	At least 50% of fans rate the style of football in Kazakhstan's leagues as attractive and not boring, and the rivalry on the field as honest and uncompromising
	Local fans rate local clubs "at the average level" (at least 3 out of 5, or 5 out of 10) in terms of the quality of work with fans	Local fans rate local clubs "above average" (at least 3.5 out of 5, or 6 out of 10) in terms of the quality of work with fans	Local fans rate local clubs "above average" (at least 3.8 out of 5, or 6.6 out of 10) in terms of the quality of work with fans	Local fans rate local clubs "above average" (at least 4 out of 5, or 7 out of 10) in terms of the quality of work with fans
	The average attendance of stadiums at Kazakhstan Premier League matches is at least 6,500	The average attendance of stadiums at Kazakhstan Premier League matches is at least 7,500	The average attendance of stadiums at Kazakhstan Premier League matches is at least 8,500	The average attendance of stadiums at Kazakhstan Premier League matches is at least 10,000
	A commercial strategy has been developed based on increasing the audience interested in professional football	Kazakh football has become part of the sports entertainment industry with a pool of rights to broadcast matches worth at least \$10 million a year	Kazakh football has become part of the sports entertainment industry with a pool of rights to broadcast matches worth at least \$20 million a year	Kazakh football has become part of the sports entertainment industry with a pool of rights to broadcast matches worth at least \$25 million a year
	More than 50% of clubs have a business plan to break even	More than 50% of clubs are profitable for owners	More than 60% of clubs are profitable for owners	More than 75% of clubs are profitable for owners

The reform of Kazakhstan professional football is not a matter of one or two years. It will take purposeful, difficult, careful work in order to systematically transfer the existing system to a new state of balance, while including market levers and the private sector in the work. And the first reforms in the public financing model will help to launch and fuel the implementation of the most difficult goal, the impact of which will be felt for decades to come: the training of a generation of world-class talents.

4. Roadmap and indicators for achieving Goal No. 4 Improvement of sports results in the international arena.

Roadmap and Metrics to Achieve Goal No. 4

Strategic task	Milestones	Milestones	Milestones	Goal
	2025	2030	2032	2034
<i>Achieving international results</i>	The rating of the national team is above 100 places	The rating of the national team is above 70th place		The rating of the national team is above 40 places
	At least 25% of respondents are proud of their country's football results	At least 40% of respondents are proud of their country's football results		At least 50% of respondents are proud of their country's football results

3.2. Project implementation program to achieve the set goals

1. Project "The national philosophy of the game of football is the key to sporting achievements"

The start of the project is 2022.

The project aims at or influences the achievement of the following strategic goals:

Name of the strategic goal	Name of the strategic task
No. 1 Provision of highly qualified personnel in all spheres of football activity: coaches, referees, managers.	Actualization of the national philosophy, principles, and model of football
	Implementation of the national philosophy, principles and model of the game in the process of training and development of players
	Development of elite youth football
No. 4 Improvement of sports results in the international arena.	Achieving international results

Related projects/project programs:

- The program of projects "Development of elite youth football".
- The project "Institute of National Teams".

2. Project program "Training of football personnel"

Старт реализации проекта – 2023 год.

Программа проектов направлена или влияет на достижение следующих стратегических целей:

Name of the strategic goal	Name of the strategic task
No. 1 Provision of highly qualified personnel in all spheres of football activity: coaches, referees, managers.	Creation of football training centers at the KFF
No. 2 To build a system of training world-class Kazakhstan football players	Development of elite youth football
No. 3 Transformation of Kazakhstani professional football in Kazakhstan, aimed at creating an industry of football business in the country.	Preparation of a pool of professional managers and leaders to carry out reforms

Related projects/project programs:

- Project "National philosophy of the game of football is the key to sporting achievements".
- program of projects "Development of elite youth football".
- Project "Professional Football 2.0".

3. Program of projects "Football is a sport of equal opportunities"

The start of the implementation of the project program is 2022.

The project program aims at or influences the achievement of the following strategic goals:

Name of the strategic goal	Name of the strategic task
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No. 2 To build a system of training world-class Kazakhstan football players	Development of mass football (including women's)
	Assistance in infrastructure development
	Development of elite youth football

Related projects/project programs:

- Program of projects "Development of elite youth football".

4. Project program "Development of elite youth football"

The start of the implementation of the project program is 2023.

The project program aims at or influences the achievement of the following strategic goals:

Name of the strategic goal	Name of the strategic task
No. 2 To build a system of training world-class Kazakhstan football players	Development of elite youth football
	Promotion of Kazakhstani football players in the world
No. 3 Transformation of Kazakhstan professional football in Kazakhstan, aimed at creating an industry of football business in the country.	Changing the rules of the leagues to encourage more active use of young Kazakhstan players

Related projects/project programs:

- Project "National philosophy of the game of football is the key to sporting achievements"
- Project program "Training of football personnel"
- Project "Professional Football 2.0"

5. Project "Institute of National Teams"

The start of the project is 2023.

The project aims at or influences the achievement of the following strategic goals:

Name of the strategic goal	Name of the strategic task
No. 1 Provision of highly qualified personnel in all spheres of football activity: coaches, referees, managers.	Actualization of the national philosophy, principles, and model of football
	Implementation of the national philosophy, principles and model of the game in the process of training and development of players
No. 4 Improvement of sports results in the international arena.	Achieving international results

Related projects/project programs:

- The project "National philosophy of the game of football is the key to sporting achievements".
- The program of projects "Development of elite youth football".

6. Project "Improvement of the management system of professional football"

The start of the project is 2023.

The project aims at or influences the achievement of the following strategic goals:

Name of the strategic goal	Name of the strategic task
No. 3 Transformation of Kazakhstan professional football in Kazakhstan, aimed at creating an industry of football business in the country.	Implementation of the Club Management Standard
	Preparation of a pool of professional managers and leaders to carry out reforms

Related projects/project programs:

- The program of projects "Training of football personnel".

7. Project "Professional football 2.0"

The start of the project is 2025.

The project aims at or influences the achievement of the following strategic goals:

Name of the strategic goal	Name of the strategic task
No. 2 To build a system of training world-class Kazakhstan football players	Promotion of Kazakhstan football players on the world stage
No. 3 Transformation of Kazakhstan professional football in Kazakhstan, aimed at creating an industry of football business in the country.	Transfer of funding for the training of young Kazakhstan players and coaches for professional clubs
	Changing the rules of the leagues to encourage more active use of young Kazakhstan players
	Development of professional women's football
	Privatisation of clubs
	Creation of the football business industry in the country

Related projects/project programs:

- The project "Improvement of the management system of professional football".

Chapter 4. Key levers for achieving the goals

Strategy-2034 draws on several key sources of energy and content for upcoming reforms. Firstly, training, education, and synchronization of efforts of hundreds, and later – thousands, of coaches and managers; secondly, restructuring and creation of a sound market motivation for all participants in the football ecosystem; thirdly, the introduction and upholding of high standards of management of all football organizations; fourthly, the creation of new, more dynamic and meaningful models of cooperation between football ecosystem participants; and, lastly, time - i.e. patience and consistency to see the results of the work in the future. Each of these change levers is discussed in more detail below.

1. *The system of training and development of talented coaches and managers*

Any changes and reforms, whether in business or in sports, always require new competencies and approaches. And in such large and far-reaching sector as football, success is largely determined by the talent of thousands of key people in thousands of localities: coaches, managers of football schools and clubs, organizers of competitions, leaders of local federations. Our country's tradition is to find and criticize shortcomings, lack of professionalism, weaknesses. Strategy-2034 does not look at how empty the glass of Kazakhstan football is, but on the contrary – what a big reserve there is for the development of football in the presence of a high-quality, structured, accessible, and scalable system of training and development of football coaches, managers, organizers. It is in the constant development of thousands of professionals in key positions in Kazakhstani football that Strategy-2034 sees the first and most important lever for launching and sustaining change.

2. *Healthy structure of the football sector and motivation of all participants*

The second important driver of positive change lies in reforms related to the financing, ownership, and management structure of Kazakhstan's professional clubs and leagues. For the sake of maintaining socially significant sports institutions in large cities – such as are football clubs – the state for many years has been both the owner and financier of 90% of the football sector. By launching the process of change, first in the field of financing, and then in the club ownership structure, and finally in the field of league regulations (with the right focus on development), Kazakhstan football will be able to motivate all participants more properly in the process, and attract new talents and resources to club management from private sector. Moreover, large-scale (not piecemeal) privatization of professional football will start the flywheel of the football business industry, which in turn will make football assets more attractive for private investment.

3. *Quality and efficiency of management of all football organizations*

The football industry consists of and is managed by various organizations: private football schools, professional clubs, regional and city federations, KFF. The successful functioning of all these organizations depends primarily on the quality of their management; only structures headed by a strong management team are able to achieve their goals. And the quality of management, in turn, depends on the existing competencies of the team, the desire to improve these competencies, as well as the motivation to improve them. That is why, in addition to building a development and training system (and programs for different types of managers), Strategy-2034 also sees a great opportunity to help the leaders of football organizations by creating management standards (school, club, local federation) and motivation mechanisms for them to comply with these standards. By creating, on the one hand, opportunities for learning and development, and, on the other hand, raising expectations regarding compliance with the standards of management entrusted to the participants of football organizations

(especially organizations with the state membership), Strategy-2034 aims to provide an opportunity to realize the personal potential to each football manager, and the result will be an improvement in the performance of the entire football ecosystem.

4. *New models of cooperation to achieve a common result*

Another lever to launch and sustain change will be the introduction of new models of cooperation between different members in the football sector. Here KFF will act as a catalyst and give an example of how new formats of interactions will give new ideas and energy to the reform process. These formats will be piloted and implemented at the very beginning with the help of the Federation, and then smoothly transferred to the locations, increasing the influence and significance of the regions. Private schools-Children and Youth Sports Schools-local federation, local professional club-KFF, UEFA-KFF-local federations, annual national football conference and other formats of regular, properly structured meetings with clear goals and results will be the new standard: colleagues will be able to share their experience, approaches to work, and successes.

5. *Time: focus on fundamental, irreversible, long-term changes.*

To succeed, we will have to sacrifice one established tradition: the desire for everything to happen quickly and the victories to materialize in no more than 3 years. It simply does not happen this way. To achieve high goals, systematic and purposeful work will be required: it will take time. The planning horizon of the Strategy-2034 is 12 years: why so long? why can't everything be done quickly, in 3-4 years, and we celebrate victories in 2026?

Sports are centuries old. Football in Kazakhstan is more than 100 years old, and there are still centuries of development and prosperity ahead. It is also well known that in football, especially in international football, at the national team level, it is generations of players that develop, grow, and win, not individual stars: the England of the 60s, the Netherlands of the 70s, the Germany and Argentina of the 80s, the Brazil of the 50s and 90s, the Spain of the 2000s, the Germany and France of the 2010s, and Denmark at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century - all these countries are united by their ability to plan strategically, to prepare entire generations of top-class football players, and to create for them support and conditions for achieving extraordinary results.

Some countries have managed to establish a development conveyor belt, creating high-class players year after years (Brazil, Germany, France), yet some are less successful. Some countries bring up generation after generation of top footballers due to huge numbers of grassroots football participants (Brazil), others due to a very high level of development system for thousands of coaches and execution discipline (Germany), yet others due to a centralized and unique program for the development of elite youth (France). But, everyone strives to raise not just a star, or two, or three, but entire generations of players who are able to achieve the highest results as a team. After all, football is a team game. Football is merciless to the stars who grow up playing while not surrounded by enough talented compatriots: recall Messi, Beckham, Cruyff - they have not achieved the highest results on the world stage with their national teams primarily due to lower quality of supporting cast.

And, despite these simple facts, namely that football is eternal and that generations of players achieve results, the work on the development of football by national federations often takes place with the horizon of only 2-3, maximum 4x years, until the next World Cup or Euro; Kazakhstan is no exception. And time after time, short-term strategies fail, results don't improve, and the whole process starts all over again. And, vice versa, when Federations plan the work and carry it out over a sufficiently long horizon, 10 years or more, results follow. For example, Japan Football Federation developed its strategy in 2005 with the horizon of the

upcoming 10 years (2005-2015) and achieved outstanding success in the international arena; and, the current strategy to bring football out of stagnation in China covers the period from 2016 to 2050 - a planning horizon of 35 years!

Strategy-2034 takes it as an axiom that there are no quick wins in football. Only work on the development and education of a whole generation of high-class players and teams will produce results; only a whole *generation* of world-class players has a chance to make it to the 2034 World Cup. And only persistent, purposeful work for 8-10 years will allow Kazakhstan to take its rightful place in the arena of world football.

What does it mean to raise a generation? This, of course, primarily means the creation of a talent development system. Such a system consists of several mandatory, interconnected elements that cannot be created quickly, and the result of the work from which does not emerge immediately. It is necessary to increase the level of children's involvement in football from an early age, create a national style of play, philosophy and game model and begin to apply it everywhere in the training process, modernize schools for training and developing a large number of coaches based on the national style of play and game model, build an integrated management system for youth and Olympic teams, create national training centers for football players and help clubs develop football centers, create academies, introduce motivational mechanisms in professional leagues to increasingly involve in league games young Kazakh players under 23 years old.

Of course, this is a lot of work for not one, not two, and not three years. It will take 6-10 years to see the results of this work; first, at the level of youth and Olympic teams, and then at the level of the country's first team.

A longer planning horizon is also relevant when considering the second big goal of Strategy-2034 – reducing the role of the state in financing football and privatizing clubs. This process also cannot take place all at once, by simply distributing club ownership into private hands; we will create chaos, abandoned teams, and another crisis shortly thereafter. In order for the state to exit the role of the main financier of football in Kazakhstan smoothly, and with the immediate benefit to the entire football ecosystem, it will first be necessary to change the approach to state financing of clubs: re-balance state support towards the development of club academies and youth, introduce mechanisms to improve the quality of use of allocated funds by clubs, educate and train a large pool of professional football managers, systematize the work of clubs, prepare mechanisms for their gradual privatization, create a commercial football industry – all this must be done in order to increase the attractiveness of clubs and attract private capital to Kazakhstani football in a measured and sustainable way.

The first stage of changes of this magnitude will require 3 to 5 years, and the emergence of a new stable balance of relationships in the football sector after privatization, and the achievement of a stable financial model of clubs, will require even more time. That is why, in order to complete privatization and achieve a new balance, it is also necessary to plan work with a horizon of at least 5-7 years.

It becomes obvious that in order to achieve all the key goals, we will need not only new approaches and diligence, professionalism and wisdom of all participants in the transformation process. Kazakhstan football will *need time* to fully realize the potential that is inherent in the sports traditions of our country. With time and support of all participants in the process, we will be able to more coherently and progressively focus on following the Strategy-2034 roadmap, fulfilling short- and medium-term priorities on the way to big goals.

In addition to the ambitious goals and levers to achieve them, it is also important to describe the differences in management approaches that the Kazakhstan Football Federation will apply to manage the reform process.

Chapter 5. KFF governance and management principles during reform implementation

The success of the reforms will depend primarily on the professionalism and managerial experience of the President of the KFF and the team of leaders heading the operating work of the federation. Transformation in any field is *more* a science than an art, and its implementation can be systematized and derisked. To do this, it is necessary to correctly select and put together those principles and management technologies that will be required in a particular setting of KFF. What are they?

1. **Constant dialogue with all stakeholders to identify the exact reality and priorities, generate ideas and identify options for solutions.** The football industry of a country is an ecosystem consisting of various structures and participants, their goals, relationships between them, as well as their motivation mechanisms, constraints and resources. Each participant has his own unique view of the same reality, priorities, and solutions. That is why the principle of dialogue with all stakeholders, especially at an early stage in the development of solutions, will be the basis of the reform process.
2. **Working with reality, regardless of its complexity.** Analysis of the situation based on a deep dialogue with all participants in the process often reveals a much more complex picture of reality than was initially imagined. The success of the reforms will be driven by the openness and readiness of the KFF team to deal with the most complex situations and trends, without downplaying their severity, and without distorting reality in order to make simpler decisions.
3. **Systematic, thoughtful decisions (if necessary, will to make unpopular decisions).** As already noted, the football industry of any country is an ecosystem. And this means that any significant decision will not only directly affect the area to which the decision is applicable, but also affect other areas of the football industry, sometimes with unexpected consequences (and often not always immediately noticeable). This is why an important principle for the implementation of reforms will be the thoughtfulness and consistency of the decisions, the analysis of their possible impact on all elements of the ecosystem, and the constant monitoring of the emergence of unexpected consequences. It is also important to note that not all changes will always be supported by all participants in the process, and therefore the KFF team will be ready for decisive action when necessary, despite the lack of consensus.
4. **Preparing people and processes before launching changes.** In the process of reforms, traditionally, there is a desire to move faster, to do more, to show results. And often, a detailed elaboration of implementation plans, development of processes and details, preparation of participants for the launch of changes are sacrificed. When implementing the reforms envisaged by the Strategy-2034, these mistakes will not be made. A lot of work will be devoted to the change implementation plan: what should be done, in what order, by whom, when, who needs to be trained before the process starts - all these questions will have answers before any changes begin.
5. **Focus on results, taking into account mistakes and lessons learned.** Achieving the result of the reforms will be the main focus, and mistakes will become a source of new knowledge and ideas; try to change something, make mistakes, analyse and learn from it, and try to do it again – will become the standard approach.
6. **Main transformation management technologies.** When working on the implementation of reforms, the KFF team will rely on several key management technologies designed specifically for large-scale transformations.
 - a. *Building a new culture of interactions.* To carry out any transformation, it is necessary to create a culture of interactions where all participants in the transformation process

will be focused on common goals, information moves in all directions quickly and without distortion, participants in the process are open to new things (sometimes this new is unknown), and there is a constant dialogue about what we see, what we learn, and what we need to do differently.

- b. Project office and transformational projects portfolio.* In the first years, the reform process will be managed by the transformational office at the KFF, which will bring together the most talented managers, football experts, and advisers. And all the work to implement the transformation will take place in the form of separate, but integrated into a single sequence, projects with their own goals, teams, resources and schedule.
- c. Process approach.* Another management technology that will be actively used where appropriate will be the process approach. It involves a detailed step-by-step outline of a this or other process at the most detailed level. This approach will be an important technological element in several transformational projects.
- d. Development of competencies for all participants in the process.* The last, and perhaps the most important technology, will be the development of competencies among all participants and project teams before and during the reform process. Micro-trainings, workshops conducted by international experts, internships abroad, training courses will be launched in the spring of 2022. And the new knowledge, skills, and experience acquired by the participants in the reforms will be immediately applied to achieve all the goals of the Strategy-2034.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

Football is not an ordinary sport. Its popularity is so high that what is happening on and around the football field has the ability to both inspire millions when the home team wins and deeply upset same millions when home team loses. The famous Liverpool manager Bill Shankly once said: "Some people think that football is a matter of life and death. They are wrong: football is much more important than that." Football results are a reflection of the health of the country, its ability to win not only in sports, but also in other areas. Football gives hope, joy, emotions, and sometimes the meaning of life. Strategy-2034 aims to bring all those feelings to Kazakh people, and KFF will lead the way!