



Statistical Kit

Preliminary Draw for the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil™

Overview of the Participating Member Associations

Status as at 28/06/2011



Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Afghanistan (AFG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	2006	
Preliminary entries	2: 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	4: 0 – 0 – 4	
Best goalscorer	1: Obaidullah KARIMI - 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Obaidullah Karimi's 15th minute strike in a 2-1 defeat to Syria on 26 October 2007 was Afghanistan's first ever goal in a FIFA World Cup preliminary competition.

Played their debut FIFA World Cup qualifying match on 19 November 2003, losing 11-0 to Turkmenistan in Ashgabat.

The only qualifier Afghanistan have played at home was the 2-0 defeat by Turkmenistan on 23 November 2003 in Kabul.

Australia (AUS)		FIFA Affiliation: 1963
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	12: 1966-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	105: 60-26-19	
Best goalscorer	18: Archie THOMPSON - 2001, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1974, 2006, 2010	

During the South Africa 2010 preliminaries, Australia recorded the longest run of consecutive clean sheets of any participating team. The Socceroos played seven straight games without letting in a goal between 10 September 2008 and 17 June 2006, going 748 minutes without conceding.

The only team to have scored more than 20 goals in two separate FIFA World Cup qualifiers (22-0 against Tonga on 9 April 2001 and 31-0 against American Samoa on 11 April 2001), Australia are also the only national side to have won two FIFA World Cup preliminary matches after a penalty shoot-out, against Canada in 1993 and Uruguay in 2005.

In FIFA World Cup qualifying Australia have played against teams from all six FIFA confederations.

* **Moved from the Oceania Football Confederation to the Asian Football Confederation in 2006.**

Bahrain (BHR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1968
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	8: 1978-1986, (1990), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	74: 26 – 22 – 26	
Best goalscorer	8: Aala HUBAIL - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In both 2006 and 2010, Bahrain failed to qualify for the FIFA World Cup finals after losing the intercontinental play-off each time. They missed out on a berth in Germany after drawing 1-1 away to Trinidad and Tobago and then losing 1-0 at home. Subsequently in the 2010 preliminaries, they tied 0-0 at home to New Zealand before going down 1-0 in the return leg in Wellington.

With 36 matches played, Bahrain contested more qualifiers in the last two preliminary events than any other Asian side. In their six previous qualifying campaigns they had played 38.

Although they took part in the preliminary tournament for Argentina 1978, Bahrain did not play a qualifier on home soil until 1985, drawing 3-3 with Yemen PDR. They had to wait until 1997 for their first victory in the competition, a 1-0 win over Jordan.

* **Withdrew from the 1990 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Bangladesh (BAN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1976
First entry	1986	
Preliminary entries	7: 1986-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	36: 7 – 3 – 26	
Best goalscorer	3: Mohammad HOSSAIN JOARDER – 1993; Mohammed ALFAZ - 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Eliminated by Tajikistan at the first hurdle in the 2006 and 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying tournaments.

A total of seven victories in 36 FIFA World Cup preliminary competition matches includes two wins against both Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Bangladesh have played just eight qualifiers on home soil, earning three victories, the last of which was a 3-1 success over Thailand in 1989. Since that result they have played only two home qualifiers, both against Tajikistan, losing 2-0 in 2003 and drawing 1-1 in 2007.

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Cambodia (CAM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1954
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	3: 1998, 2002, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	14: 0 – 2 – 12	
Best goalscorer	2 Chea MAKARA – 2000; Hok SOCHETRA - 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Cambodia have never scored more than one goal in a FIFA World Cup qualifier.

The only matches in which Cambodia have avoided defeat out of 14 encounters were both 1-1 home draws, against Indonesia (27 April 1997) and Maldives (15 April 2001).

The team have conceded at least three goals in nine of the twelve defeats, their worst performance coming in an 8-0 thrashing at the hands of Indonesia on 6 April 1997 in a FIFA World Cup qualifier.

China PR (CHN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1931
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries	9: 1958, 1982-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	82: 53 – 11 – 18	
Best goalscorer	13: HAO Haidong - 1993, 1996, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 2002	

China PR enjoyed an unbeaten home run in FIFA World Cup qualifying that lasted over ten years, a series that followed and ended with matches against Qatar. After the 3-2 home reverse against Qatar on 31 October 1997, from 12 November that same year China PR strung together 12 consecutive victories and a draw on native soil, before again losing at home to Qatar 1-0 on 7 June 2008.

The Asian team with the best win percentage in FIFA World Cup preliminary tournaments thanks to 53 victories out of 82 matches for total of 64.6%.

Over 23 years separated China PR's first FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign from their next one. After the qualifying tournament for Sweden 1958, when they were eliminated on goal difference following a play-off with Indonesia on 23 June 1957, the Chinese made their return to the tournament in December 1980 against Hong Kong.

Chinese Taipei (TPE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1954
First entry	1954	
Preliminary entries*	9: (1954, 1958), 1978-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	48: 3 – 1 – 32	
Best goalscorer	14 players with 1 goal	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Having exited the last tournament after losing twice to Uzbekistan in October 2007, Chinese Taipei extended their run of consecutive defeats in FIFA World Cup qualifying to eight matches.

They are the Asian team with the most porous defence, with a record of 176 conceded goals.

First participated in FIFA World Cup qualifying in 1977. Between then and 1993 played only two of 20 matches against an Asian team, namely Indonesia. The remaining encounters involved teams from the OFC plus Israel. The only victory in this period was a 2-0 win against Indonesia on 28 June 1981.

** Withdrew from the 1954 & 1958 qualifiers without playing a single match. Known as Taiwan before 1982.*

Hong Kong (HKG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1954
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries	10: 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	63: 19 – 12 – 32	
Best goalscorer	10: LAU Wing Yip - 1976, 1985	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Won 8-1 against Timor-Leste on 28 October 2007 to equal their record for goals scored in a single match, set in an 8-0 win over Brunei Darussalam on 23 February 1985.

Lost the first penalty shoot-out to decide an AFC qualifier. The match, played on New Year's Eve 1980, was won 5-4 by China PR following a 0-0 stalemate after extra time.

In their first FIFA World Cup preliminary campaign, at the 1974 event, Hong Kong won their first three matches 1-0. In each of those games, against Malaysia, Japan and Vietnam, the match-winner was scored in the second half.

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



India (IND)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	6: (1950, 1954, 1974), 1986, (1990), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	31: 8 – 9 – 14	
Best goalscorer	4: Jo Paul ANCHERI - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Eliminated from the South Africa 2010 preliminary tournament after just two matches. The previous lowest number of qualifiers played was three for France 1998.

The withdrawal of Burma, Israel and Philippines handed India qualification for the FIFA World Cup 1950 only for the country to decline participation due to FIFA's refusal to allow bare-footed players.

India's debut in FIFA World Cup qualifying did not come until 1985, when they were defeated 2-1 in their maiden match by Indonesia in Jakarta on 21 March.

*** Qualified for 1950 by default (opponents withdrew) but declined to participate following FIFA's decision to forbid playing with bare feet. Entry 1954 not accepted. Withdrew from the qualifiers 1974 & 1990 without playing a single match.**

Indonesia (IDN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	11+1: (1938, 1950), 1958, (1962), 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	63: 18 – 15 – 30	
Best goalscorer	5: Ilham JAYA - 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1938	

In the 2010 tournament Indonesia were eliminated after playing just two matches against Syria, losing 4-1 at home and 7-1 away. They had never previously been knocked out of a FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign so early and having played so few games.

The first Asian team to play in a FIFA World Cup in 1938 under the name Dutch East Indies. Made their first appearance in a FIFA World Cup qualifier on 12 May 1957 beating China PR 2-0.

Indonesia recorded their best performance in a FIFA World Cup preliminary competition in 1986. The four wins in the first four matches of the campaign were repeated during 2002 qualifying.

*** Entered in 1938 still under the name of Dutch East Indies and as only Asian representative (after Japan who were locked in war with China and therefore pulled out) was qualified for the final competition without playing a single match. The first actual preliminary competition played by Indonesia was 1958 as the association had withdrawn from the qualifiers for 1950 without playing a single match (again for 1962).**

Iran (IRN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	8: 1974, 1978, (1982, 1986), 1990-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	94: 56 – 24 – 14	
Best goalscorer	35: Ali DAEI - 1993, 1996, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1978, 1988, 2006	

Iran will play their 100th qualifying match during this preliminary competition. They currently stand at 94. Iran drew the most matches in the 2010 preliminary tournament, no fewer than eight of their 14 encounters.

Not counting Australia, who played all but one of their previous qualification campaigns in the Oceanian Zone, Iran are the most successful attacking team in AFC qualifiers with 201 goals scored.

Ali Daei is the leading all-time FIFA World Cup preliminary competition scorer with 35 goals (seven in 1994, nine in 1998, ten in 2002 and nine in 2006).

*** Withdrew from the 1982 qualifiers without playing a single match. Excluded from the 1986 competition.**

Iraq (IRQ)		FIFA Affiliation: 1950
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	9: 1974, (1978), 1982-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	69: 35 – 16 – 18	
Best goalscorer	15: Ahmed RADHI - 1985, 1989, 1993, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1986	

In the 2010 campaign Iraq played their 'home' matches in Damascus (one fixture) and Dubai (three). Their last qualifier played on native soil dates back to 29 September 2001, when they downed Bahrain 1-0.

Hold the Asian record for having scored in 27 consecutive matches between 1989 and 2001. That prolific spell is also the second-longest scoring sequence overall in FIFA World Cup qualification, bettered only by Germany's 36-match run achieved between 1934 and 1985.

Drew 0-0 with Pakistan on 28 October 2007, the first time a FIFA World Cup qualifier involving Iraq has ended goalless since a 0-0 tie with Syria on 15 November 1985.

*** Withdrew from the 1978 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Japan (JPN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1929
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	12+1: (1938), 1954, 1962, 1970-1998, (2002), 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	88: 47 – 20 – 21	
Best goalscorer	27: Kazu MIURA - 1993, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	4: 1998 - 2010	

Japan will play their 100th qualifying match during this preliminary competition. They currently stand at 88.

In the 2010 Asian zone preliminary tournament, just as in the 2006 event, Japan were the first team to qualify for the finals. The Blue Samurai's 1-0 victory over Uzbekistan in Tashkent on 6 June 2009, which sealed their passage to South Africa, was followed a couple of hours later by the qualifications of Australia and then Korea Republic, on the back of their results away to Qatar and United Arab Emirates respectively.

Kazu Miura is the only player to have scored ten goals or more in two different FIFA World Cup preliminary competitions (13 in 1994 and 14 in 1998).

Japan scored the first ever goal in a FIFA World Cup qualifier featuring two Asian teams. Ken Naganuma broke the early deadlock against Korea Republic in Tokyo on 7 March 1954 but ended up on the losing side in a 5-1 defeat.

*** Withdrew from the 1938 qualifiers without playing a single match. Co-hosts 2002 with Korea Republic.**

Jordan (JOR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1956
First entry	1986	
Preliminary entries	7: 1986-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	42: 15 – 8 – 19	
Best goalscorer	5: Badran AL SHAGRAN - 2000, 2003; Esam ABU TOUK - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Jordan won the only match in the 2010 preliminary tournament that was decided by a penalty shoot-out, triumphing 6-5 from the spot in their first-round, second-leg tie against Kyrgyzstan in Asian Zone qualifying. The match had ended 2-0 to Jordan at the end of regulation time, the same score they had lost by in the first leg, and was followed by 30 goalless minutes of extra time.

Jordan are one of only two teams, the other being Burkina Faso, with a goal difference of zero in FIFA World Cup qualifying. They have scored and conceded 54 goals, whereas Burkina Faso have netted 66 goals and shipped the same number.

Played Iraq in their first three FIFA World Cup preliminary campaigns (1986, 1990 and 1994) recording a draw and five losses.

Korea DPR (PRK)		FIFA Affiliation: 1958
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	8: 1966, (1970), 1974, (1978), 1982-1994, 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	69: 32-17-20	
Best goalscorer	8: HONG Yong Jo - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 1966, 2010	

Six of the country's 16 qualifiers in the 2010 event ended in draws, five of them goalless. Two of those 0-0 stalemates were against Korea Republic, the others involved Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkmenistan.

Despite making their FIFA World Cup qualification debut on 21 November 1965, their first preliminary match on home soil was a 0-0 draw with Japan in Pyongyang on 30 April 1985.

Qualified for the FIFA World Cup 1966 by beating Australia 6-1 and 3-1 in two qualifying matches staged in Phnom Penh.

***Disqualified 1970 for refusing to play their assigned opponent (Israel). Was admitted in place of India for the 1974 qualifiers. Withdrew from the 1978 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Korea Republic (KOR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1954	
Preliminary entries*	12+1: 1954, (1958), 1962, (1966), 1970-1998, (2002), 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	103: 62-30-11	
Best goalscorer	10: HA Seok Ju - 1993, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	8: 1986 - 2010	

In the 2010 preliminary campaign Korea Republic were the only Asian side to finish the tournament unbeaten. In 14 matches the Koreans amassed seven victories and as many draws.

Leaving aside Australia (affiliated to AFC since January 2006), Korea Republic hold many AFC records for FIFA World Cup qualifiers including most number of games (103), most wins (62), lowest loss percentage (10.7%, 11 losses out of 103), lowest goals against match average (0.6, 65 in 103), longest unbeaten run (28 matches between 6 April 1985 and 22 October 1993) and the most number of consecutive wins (12 from 6 April 1985 to 7 June 1989).

The next goal scored by Korea Republic will be their 200th in FIFA World Cup qualifying. The Taeguk Warriors boast the second-best attack in the AFC Zone (not counting Australia) with 199 goals, two short of Iran.

*** Entry 1958 not accepted. Withdrew from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match. Qualified automatically for 2002 (co-hosts with Japan).**

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Kuwait (KUW)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	10: 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	77: 41-11-25	
Best goalscorer	13: Jasem AL HUWAIDI - 1993, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1982	

Kuwait endured their joint-worst FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign in the 2010 tournament, emulating their debut performance in the 1974 edition by picking up just one win and one draw in six matches.

The first Asian team (not counting Australia) to score ten goals away from home in a FIFA World Cup preliminary in a 10-1 win over Macau in Kuala Lumpur on 3 May 1993.

Qualified for the FIFA World Cup 1982, their only finals participation, following a 2-0 win over Saudi Arabia in Kuwait City on 7 December 1981.

Kyrgyzstan (KGZ)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries*	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	21: 8-2-11	
Best goalscorer	3: Sergei KUTSOV - 1996; Sergey - CHIKISHEV 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Kyrgyzstan were knocked out of the 2010 tournament after playing just two matches. In each of their three previous campaigns they had contested at least five qualifiers.

The first team to lose a FIFA World Cup qualifier after a penalty shoot-out despite scoring five times against their opponent Jordan on 28 October 2007.

Recorded their best win (6-0 against Maldives) and worst defeat (7-0 against Iran) in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition for France 1998.

Laos (LAO)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	2: 2002, 2006	
Matches played: W – D – L	14: 1-2-11	
Best goalscorer	6 players with 1 goal	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Despite being eliminated after just two games against Sri Lanka in the 2006 tournament, Laos subsequently progressed to the second stage of Asian Zone qualifying as the best losers in the preliminary round. Laos had managed to draw one of their two matches, whereas the other five losing sides had all failed to win a single point.

The only victory achieved by Laos from a total of 14 qualifiers was the 2-0 win over Philippines, played on 19 May 2001 in Vientiane.

Nine of Laos' eleven preliminary defeats were by a margin of at least five goals. On two occasions, both during the 2002 tournament, they shipped more than ten goals, losing 12-0 to Oman on their tournament debut and 11-0 in Syria.

Lebanon (LIB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1936
First entry	1986	
Preliminary entries*	5: (1986), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	32: 11-9-12	
Best goalscorer	9: Roda ANTAR - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Lebanon have lost their last six FIFA World Cup qualifiers, all of which were played in the third-round group stage of the 2010 preliminary tournament.

The team participating in the FIFA World Cup 2010 qualifiers with the longest gap between the date of FIFA affiliation and their first FIFA World Cup preliminary match, 58 years between 1935 and 1993. The record for this unusual accolade is held by Philippines with 68 years elapsing between FIFA affiliation in 1928 and their first qualifier in 1996.

Scored the most number of goals in games against Pakistan, registering 6-0 and 8-1 wins, during the FIFA World Cup 2002 preliminary campaign.

* *Withdrawn from the 1986 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Macau (MAC)		FIFA Affiliation: 1978
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries	7: 1982, 1986, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	31: 3-1-27	
Best goalscorer	2: Kin Seng CHAN - 2007; Alberto CARVALHAL - 1985; Daniel PINTO - 1985, 1993	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Macau were the first Asian side eliminated from the 2010 tournament, crashing out as early as 15 October 2007 after two first-round defeats by Thailand (6-1 and 7-1).

Hold the Asian record for the most number of consecutive games with at least one goal against for a total of 27 matches between 20 February 1985 and 15 October 2007. That series is still ongoing.

From their 31 qualifiers played, Macau have accumulated three wins, 27 defeats and a single draw played on 23 March 1997, which ended 1-1 against Nepal.

Malaysia (MAS)		FIFA Affiliation: 1954
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries	10: 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	47: 14-12-21	
Best goalscorer	7: Dollah SALLEH - 1985, 1989	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Failed to win a single match in the 2006 and 2010 FIFA World Cup preliminary competitions, drawing just one and losing the other seven.

Eliminated from the FIFA World Cup 2010 preliminary tournament after just two matches following games against Bahrain (4-1 and 0-0). Always played at least 3 games in eight previous qualifying campaigns since 1982.

Malaysia are one of four teams in the history of the preliminary competition to have won a match despite conceding four goals. It happened on 1 March 1977 when they outfought Thailand 6-4. The other teams are Yugoslavia (6-4 against Romania in 1977), Turkey (6-4 against Wales in 1997) and Saudi Arabia (5-4 against Syria in 1989).

Maldives Republic (MDV)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	1990	
Preliminary entries*	4: (1990), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	22: 5-2-15	
Best goalscorer	7: Ali ASHFAQ - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Maldives played fewer games in the 2010 tournament than in any other FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign, bowing out with a victory (2-0) and a defeat (3-0) against Yemen.

The 17-0 defeat in their debut FIFA World Cup qualifier against Iran on 2 June 1997 is the fourth largest losing margin in the history of preliminary competitions.

Lost four FIFA World Cup qualifiers by conceding at least 10 goals but also recorded a 12-0 win against Mongolia on 3 December 2003.

*** Withdrew from the 1990 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Mongolia (MGL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	10: 0-1-9	
Best goalscorer	1: Lumbengarav DONOROV - 2007; Odkhuu SELENGE - 2007; B. BUMAN-UCHRAL - 2000; Bayarзориг DAVAA - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the first round of the 2010 tournament Mongolia were paired against a side that went on to qualify for the finals, namely Korea DPR. The same situation also occurred in the 2002 event, when they faced Saudi Arabia in their first-stage group.

Eliminated from the FIFA World Cup 2006 and 2010 qualifying competitions by Maldives and Korea DPR after just two matches.

Lost nine out of ten FIFA World Cup preliminary matches and drew 2-2 in the remaining one against Bangladesh on 19 February 2001 thanks to a 94th minute equaliser from Buman-Uchral.

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Myanmar (MYA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	1: (1950, 1994, 2002, 2006), 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	2: 0-0-2	
Best goalscorer	13 players with 2 goals	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Made their FIFA World Cup qualifying debut on 21 October 2007 losing 7-0 to China PR. They also lost the return match 4-0.

Originally registered under the name Burma for the FIFA World Cup 1950 preliminary competition, only to withdraw, as was the case in 1994 and 2002. Their debut qualifying appearance was, therefore, postponed until the 2010 tournament.

Myanmar are one of six sides to have played the fewest matches in FIFA World Cup qualifying, with just two.

*** Entered 1950 under the name of Burma. Withdrew from the qualifiers 1950, 1994 & 2002 without playing a single match. Excluded from the 2006 qualifiers.**

Nepal (NEP)		FIFA Affiliation: 1972
First entry	1986	
Preliminary entries*	5: 1986, 1990, 1998, 2002, (2006), 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	24: 2-2-20	
Best goalscorer	7: Nirajan RAYAMAJHI - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Nepal are one of four teams that have failed to score in ten consecutive FIFA World Cup qualifiers. The others are Malta (whose goal drought, like Nepal's, is ongoing), Moldova and San Marino. Only Azerbaijan have played more consecutive qualifiers without finding the net, 15 in total.

Played their first FIFA World Cup home qualifier for 22 years in Kathmandu on 28 October 2007, losing 2-0 to Oman. The previous preliminary match in the capital was a 0-0 draw with Malaysia on 16 March 1985.

Nepal's only two victories in 22 qualifiers both came against Macau in 2001 (4-1 and 6-1). One of their two draws in the competition was also against Macau, while the other was against Malaysia.

*** Withdrew from the 2006 competition without playing any games.**

Oman (OMA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1980
First entry	1986	
Preliminary entries*	6: (1986), 1990-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	46: 19-12-15	
Best goalscorer	11: Hani AL DHABIT – 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament Oman went head-to-head with Japan, just as they did in the 2006 and 1998 editions.

The FIFA World Cup 2002 qualifying competition was their most successful with a record six wins notched up in a record 14 appearances.

In eight days between 30 April and 7 May 2001, Oman won three matches, scoring 26 goals in the process, against Laos (12-0 and 7-0) and Philippines (7-0).

***Withdrew from the 1986 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Pakistan (PAK)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1990	
Preliminary entries	6: 1990-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	26: 0-2-24	
Best goalscorer	3: Ghohar ZAMAN - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In their 26th and to date last FIFA World Cup qualifier, played on 28 October 2007 in Damascus, Pakistan kept their first clean sheet, drawing 0-0 with Iraq after losing 7-0 at home in the first leg.

The Asian team with the worst losing streak consisting of 18 consecutive defeats between 6 January 1989 and 15 May 2001.

Pakistan have yet to win a match and tied only two out of 26 encounters. Scored three times in a match just once in the draw with Sri Lanka on 17 May 2001.

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Palestine (PLE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries*	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	18: 4-2-12	
Best goalscorer	4: Emad ABOU EL KAIR - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 event, Palestine lost the home leg of their double-header against Singapore 4-0 and then forfeited the away leg 3-0, having failed to travel in time due to exit visa restrictions imposed in Israel. Played most of their FIFA World Cup qualifiers (seven out of 18 in total) at Doha in Qatar.

Palestine have won four of their FIFA World Cup preliminaries with the biggest margin coming in an 8-0 victory over Chinese Taipei on 18 February 2004. The other three successes were all 1-0 wins against Malaysia and Hong Kong.

** The modern Palestine, an Arab state, has no connection with the Palestine (then a British mandate) delegations that played in the qualifying games for 1934 & 1938 under the name of Hitachduth Eretz Yisraelit Lakadur Regel.*

Philippines (PHI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1930
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	2: (1950, 1966, 1974), 1998, 2002	
Matches played: W – D – L	49: 0-1-8	
Best goalscorer	1: 1 Jimmy DONA – 2002; Yanti BARSALES - 2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Philippines registered for the 1950 & 1974 FIFA World Cup qualifying tournaments but withdrew both times, while their entry for the 1966 event was rejected by FIFA. As a result they did not make their tournament debut until the 1998 campaign, losing all three of their group matches against India, Qatar & Sri Lanka with no goals scored and a total of ten conceded.

Their only positive result in nine matches played was the 1-1 draw with Laos on 26 May 2001. That was the Azkals' last FIFA World Cup qualifier played to date and the first one staged in the Philippines, in Manila.

The first of Philippines's two goals scored in FIFA World Cup qualifying was netted by Yanti Barsales on 4 May 2001, during the 5-1 defeat by Syria. The other was netted by Jimmy Dona three weeks later in the 1-1 stalemate with Laos.

** Withdrew from the 1950 & 1974 qualifiers without playing a single match. Entry 1966 not accepted.*

Qatar (QAT)		FIFA Affiliation: 1972
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries	9: 1978-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	78: 36-16-26	
Best goalscorer	15: Mohamed AL ENAZI - 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Qatar and Australia squared up four times during the 2010 preliminary tournament, as did Japan and Bahrain, the two Koreas, and Iran and United Arab Emirates. The Qataris came off worse in their encounters with the Soccerroos, recording three defeats and a draw with just one goal scored and ten conceded.

In the 2010 campaign Qatar suffered their two heaviest defeats in FIFA World Cup qualifying, losing 4-0 both to Australia in October 2008 and to Uzbekistan in March 2009.

Qatar should have made their FIFA World Cup qualifying debut in Doha against United Arab Emirates on 11 March 1977. The last-minute withdrawal of the latter from the competition merely postponed Qatar's date with destiny until two days later when Bahrain were beaten 2-0 in Doha.

Saudi Arabia (KSA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1956
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries	9: 1978-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	92: 53-22-17	
Best goalscorer	16: Sami AL JABER - 1993, 1996, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	4: 1994 - 2006	

Saudi Arabia will play their 100th qualifying match during this preliminary competition. They currently stand at 92.

Saudi Arabia drew their last four matches in the 2010 qualifying campaign, earning three scoreless draws against Korea Republic, Korea DPR and Bahrain before grinding out another stalemate with Bahrain, 2-2 the scoreline.

Saudi Arabia have secured qualification for the FIFA World Cup finals three times on home soil. A 1-0 victory over Qatar in Taif, a 4-1 win against Thailand in Riyadh and a 3-0 success over Uzbekistan, again in Riyadh, ensured participation at France 1998, Korea/Japan 2002 and Germany 2006, respectively. The 4-3 win over Iran in Doha in 1994 was the only time Saudi Arabia have qualified for the FIFA World Cup finals following a match held on neutral territory.

The only non-Asian team to have faced Saudi Arabia in FIFA World Cup qualifying is New Zealand, back in 1981. After drawing the first leg 2-2 in Auckland, the Saudis were subsequently thrashed 5-0 in the return leg. That was Saudi Arabia's biggest home defeat in their history, on a par with their loss to Mexico in the FIFA Confederations Cup 1997.

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Singapore (SIN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries	9: 1978-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	52: 15-8-29	
Best goalscorer	5 players with 4 goals	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Three matches involving Singapore in the 2010 campaign were decided by adjudication. The one decision that went their way was the result of the home meeting with Palestine on 28 October 2007, which was cancelled when their opponents failed to show up. By contrast the Singaporeans forfeited the other two matches against Uzbekistan and Saudi Arabia due to having fielded an ineligible player, Qiu Li. That was despite having won the games 1-0 and 2-0 respectively on the field of play.

Played all their FIFA World Cup 1978 preliminaries in Singapore recording two wins, a draw and a loss. However it was Hong Kong that qualified for the next round.

Singapore's biggest FIFA World Cup qualifying win and defeat both had a scoreline of 7-0. The record success came in the 1990 tournament against Nepal and the loss in the 2006 competition at the hands of Oman.

Sri Lanka (SRI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	5: (1974, 1978), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	27: 3-5-19	
Best goalscorer	4: Kasun JAYASURIYA - 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament Sri Lanka were eliminated after two matches against Qatar, losing 1-0 at home in the first leg and 5-0 in the return match in Doha. It was the second time that Sri Lanka had failed to score in a FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament. The previous time was in the 1994 event when they conceded eight defeats without getting on the scoreboard.

Registered under the name Ceylon for the FIFA World Cup 1974 and 1978 qualifying competitions, the team was withdrawn on both occasions without kicking a ball. Sri Lanka's debut match was a 4-0 defeat to the United Arab Emirates in Kyoto on 8 April 1993.

The team has only won three games, against Philippines (3-0), Pakistan (3-1) and Laos (3-0), from a total of 27 matches.

***Entered 1974 under the name of Ceylon. Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1974 & 1978 without playing a single match (in 1978 because its government refused permission to pay the entry fee).**

Syria (SYR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1946
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries	12: (1950), 1958, (1966), 1974, (1978), 1982-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	62: 27-15-20	
Best goalscorer	17: Bayazir AL SAID - 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament Syria recorded four straight wins, doing the double over Afghanistan and then Indonesia. It was the second time they had achieved the feat in FIFA World Cup qualifying, following the 2002 event when they recorded back-to-back wins over Philippines and then Laos.

Played one match in the FIFA World Cup 1950 qualifying competition as part of the Europe/Near East zone but withdrew following a 7-0 defeat to Turkey in Ankara.

The only team, together with Australia, to have won four FIFA World Cup qualifiers by at least 11 clear goals.

***Entered for 1962 & 1966 as United Arab Republic (UAR) after having formed a joint association with Egypt. Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1966 without playing a single match, and from those for 1950 after playing one match. Withdrew 1978 after playing four games, stating that their student-based team's college commitments prevented them from entering a credible team.**

Tajikistan (TJK)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	20: 10-4-6	
Best goalscorer	4: Takhirdjon MOUMINOV - 1996, 2000; Arsen AVAKOV - 1996; Shukhrat DZHABOROV - 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 qualifying competition, for the second consecutive edition, Tajikistan opened their campaign away to Bangladesh. In the 2006 event they kicked off with a 2-0 win, whereas in the last edition they were held 1-1.

The 16-0 victory over Guam secured on 26 November 2000 is the fifth highest winning margin in FIFA World Cup preliminary competition history.

The best performing Asian debutant in FIFA World Cup 1998 qualifying. However an opening 4-0 win over Vietnam was not enough to secure passage to the next round.

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Thailand (THA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1925
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries	10: 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	65: 18-12-35	
Best goalscorer	15: Kiatisuk SENAMUANG - 1993, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament Thailand scored seven goals in a FIFA World Cup qualifier for the first time, thrashing Macau 7-1. That result is Thailand's biggest winning margin in the qualifying competition, on a par with their 6-0 defeat of Pakistan ahead of Korea/Japan 2002.

The first ever team to lose a FIFA World Cup qualifier despite scoring four goals in a 6-4 reverse against Malaysia on 1 March 1977.

Lost all four games without scoring a goal in their debut FIFA World Cup preliminary competition in Seoul in 1973. The opening match against Vietnam was in the balance until seven minutes from time when an own goal handed a 1-0 victory to their neighbours.

Timor-Leste (TLS)		FIFA Affiliation: 2005
First entry	2010	
Preliminary entries	1: 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	2: 0-0-2	
Best goalscorer	3: Emilio DA SILVA - 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Timor-Leste made their tournament debut at 'home' in Gianyar, Indonesia.

The only debutant in the AFC zone for FIFA World Cup 2010 qualifying.

All three goals scored by Timor-Leste in the first round double-header against Hong Kong were netted by Emilio Da Silva.

Turkmenistan (TKM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	30: 13-3-14	
Best goalscorer	6: Begench KULIEV - 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 edition Turkmenistan drew 0-0 for the first time in FIFA World Cup qualifying, earning a goalless stalemate in Hong Kong before doing it again at home to Korea DPR.

Their best performance in FIFA World Cup qualifying is four wins achieved in 2002. The feat was repeated in 2006 with four consecutive victories.

The 11-0 victory over Afghanistan in 2003 was one of the ten biggest wins in the history of the Asian Zone preliminary competition.

United Arab Emirates (UAE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1974
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	7: (1978), 1986-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	71: 31-16-24	
Best goalscorer	15: ADNAN AL TALYANI - 1985, 1989, 1993, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1990	

On 2 February 2008 against Kuwait in Abu Dhabi, Mohamed Al Shehhi netted UAE's 100th FIFA World Cup qualifying goal.

Out of the AFC teams which have qualified for a FIFA World Cup finals and played against each other in FIFA World Cup qualifying, the only ones which United Arab Emirates have failed to beat are Iran (4 defeats and 2 draws), Japan (1 defeat and 3 draws) and Korea Republic (4 defeats and 1 draw).

United Arab Emirates secured qualification for their only FIFA World Cup finals just minutes from the end of the 1990 campaign. With five minutes to go on the final matchday, UAE were drawing 1-1 with already-qualified Korea Republic while China PR were on the verge of qualifying thanks to their 1-0 lead in Qatar. Two Qatari strikes in the 86th and 88th turned the tables and sent UAE through to Italy 1990.

* *Withdrew from the 1978 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Team preliminary competition facts: AFC



Uzbekistan (UZB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	58: 27-13-18	
Best goalscorer	14: Maksim SHATSKIKH - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Uzbekistan boasted the best attack in the 2010 Asian Zone qualifying tournament with 33 goals scored. Won 14 out of 29 home games scoring at least three goals in the process. The biggest winning margin came in the most recent, a 9-0 victory over Chinese Taipei on 13 October 2007.

The first goal scored by Islam Innomov in the 2-0 win against Chinese Taipei on 28 October 2007 was Uzbekistan's 100th in FIFA World Cup preliminaries.

Vietnam (VIE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1954	
Preliminary entries*	6: (1954), 1974, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	31: 6-2-23	
Best goalscorer	6: Hong Son NGUYEN - 1993, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The 2010 campaign was the first FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament in which Vietnam failed to score, having lost to United Arab Emirates 1-0 at home and 5-0 away.

Played against fellow FIFA World Cup qualifier debutants Thailand and Hong Kong in two out of three preliminary matches for the 1974 finals. A 1-0 win over the former was followed by defeat to the latter thanks to the same scoreline.

Lost ten and drawn just one, 0-0 against Lebanon on 17 November 2004, out of 11 away games. Scored only one away goal, in the 2-1 defeat in Turkmenistan on 11 May 1997.

* *Vietnam's entry was not accepted in 1954. South Vietnam was re-annexed by the North on 30.4.1975. South Vietnam entered 1974 & 1978 independently.*

Yemen (YEM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1980
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries*	7: 1986-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	38: 10-9-19	
Best goalscorer	7: Ali AL NONO - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the two-match series with Thailand that resulted in their exit from the 2010 tournament, Yemen had two players sent off in added time. They were Ali Al Omqi in the 92nd minute of the 1-1 first-leg draw and Ahmed Al Wadi in the 91st minute of the return leg, which Yemen lost 1-0.

Their most frequent opponents in FIFA World Cup preliminary competition are Syria, Thailand and United Arab Emirates with 4 matches against each. Always lost against Syria without scoring a goal.

Lost all eight games in FIFA World Cup qualifiers for the 1986 and 1990 finals.

* *Yemen (North) and Yemen PDR (South) entered 1986 & 1990 independently.*



Team preliminary competition facts:
CAF



Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Algeria (ALG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	11: (1966), 1970-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	73: 32-21-20	
Best goalscorer	9: Rabah MADJER - 1980, 1984, 1988	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1982, 1986, 2010	

Algeria took maximum points from their home qualifiers on the road to South Africa 2010, winning six out of six fixtures. Ahead of the 1982 and 1986 finals, Algeria had also achieved a 100 per cent record on native soil.

The first goal scored by Algeria in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament was a penalty converted by Boualem Amirouche 29 minutes into his side's 2-1 home defeat by Tunisia on 17 November 1968 in Algiers.

The only preliminary campaign Algeria completed without losing a match was the 1986 edition, when they recorded five wins and a draw to clinch a berth in the finals in Mexico.

**Withdrawn from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Angola (ANG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1980
First entry	1986	
Preliminary entries	7: 1986-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	53: 23-18-12	
Best goalscorer	14: AKWA - 1996, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 2006	

Of the five African teams that qualified for Germany 2006, Angola were the first to be eliminated from the 2010 preliminary tournament, having failed to progress past the second-round group stage.

Angola have not lost at home for 17 qualifying matches and almost 20 years. Their last and only defeat in 26 home qualifiers was a 2-1 reverse against Cameroon in Luanda on 25 June 1989.

Angola's biggest winning margin in the history of the preliminary tournament was their 7-1 rout of Swaziland in Luanda on 23 April 2000.

Benin (BEN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	6: 1974, 1986, 1994, 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	36: 10-5-21	
Best goalscorer	8: Razak OMOTOYOSSI - 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Seven of Benin's ten victories in their 36 qualifiers played to date came on the road to South Africa 2010.

Benin first took part in the 1974 preliminary tournament under the name of Dahomey. They were eliminated in a two-match series against Ghana, losing 5-0 at home and 5-1 away.

The record for the longest losing streak in African Zone qualifying is held by Benin, who ran up nine consecutive defeats between 1972 and 1993.

** Entered 1974 under the name of Dahomey.*

Botswana (BOT)		FIFA Affiliation: 1978
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	4: 1994, 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	24: 5-4-15	
Best goalscorer	8: Diphetogo SELOLWANE - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 preliminary tournament Botswana strung together a three-match unbeaten run for the first time in the competition. The Zebras won away in Mozambique and achieved two home draws against Madagascar and Côte d'Ivoire.

Botswana have not won a qualifier at home since 9 October 2004, when they edged past Kenya 2-1. Following that result the Botswanans have accrued two draws and three defeats on home soil, and their only two victories since then have both come on the road.

Twelve of the 24 qualifiers Botswana have played came during the 2006 preliminary tournament.

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Burkina Faso (BFA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	6: 1978, 1990, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	45: 18-7-20	
Best goalscorer	18: Moumouni DAGANO - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

With 12 goals to his name, Moumouni Dagano was the top scorer in African Zone qualifying for South Africa 2010.

Burkina Faso first took part in the 1978 edition under the name of Upper Volta. Their debut match finished in a 1-1 draw with Mauritania and both goals were penalties.

The only team with an overall goal difference of zero in African Zone qualifying are Burkina Faso, who have scored 66 goals and conceded the same number.

* **Entered 1978 under the name of Upper Volta. Withdrew from the 1994 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Burundi (BDI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1972	
Preliminary entries*	3: 1994, (1998, 2002), 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	14: 5-2-7	
Best goalscorer	2: Claude NAHIMANA - 2007; Henry MBAZUMUTIMA- 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations		

The goal netted by Tunisia's Radhi Jaidi in the 1-0 home defeat on 15 June 2008 brought to an end Burundi's run of five successive clean sheets in home qualifiers.

Burundi withdrew from the 1998 preliminary tournament due to the country's civil war, having already progressed to the Final Round thanks to 1-0 home and away victories over Sierra Leone.

All five of Burundi's victories in FIFA World Cup qualification have been by one-goal margins, with four 1-0 wins and one 2-1 scoreline.

* **After playing two games they withdrew from the 1998 qualifying due to the civil war and also withdrew 2002 before the preliminary draw.**

Cameroon (CMR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	11: (1966), 1970-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	71: 44-15-12	
Best goalscorer	16: Samuel ETOO - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	6: 1982, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2010	

En route to South Africa 2010, Rigobert Song scored Cameroon's 100th preliminary goal on 31 May 2008, netting the opener in the 2-0 home win over Cape Verde.

With five wins and one draw on home soil in their last bid for qualification, Cameroon extended their unbeaten home record in the competition to 33 matches (27 wins, 6 draws). The last time the Lions were tamed in their own backyard was on 31 October 1976, when Congo plundered a 2-1 win in Yaounde.

At the climax of the 2006 preliminary tournament, Cameroon missed out on a fifth successive qualification for the FIFA World Cup finals when Pierre Wome missed a penalty in the 95th minute in his side's decisive match against Egypt, which ended 1-1. The draw enabled Côte d'Ivoire to leapfrog Cameroon and qualify in first position, following their 3-1 win in Sudan that same day.

* **Withdrew from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Cape Verde Islands (CPV)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries*	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	20: 7-3-10	
Best goalscorer	5: Arlindo GOMES - 2003; Carlos MORAIS - 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Cape Verde's first clean sheet in an away qualifier came during the 2010 preliminary tournament, when they downed Mauritius 1-0 in Curepipe.

With a win over Tanzania and two over Mauritius in qualification for South Africa 2010, Cape Verde equalled their record for consecutive victories at senior national level.

Cape Verde Islands have only achieved one 0-0 draw in 20 preliminary encounters. They achieved this result in their debut qualifier against Algeria in Mindelo on 9 April 2000.

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Central African Republic (CTA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	1: (1978, 1982), 2002, (2006, 2010)	
Matches played: W – D – L	2: 0-0-2	
Best goalscorer	1: Luciano DJIM - 2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In African Zone qualifying for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, just as in the 1978 and 2006 preliminary tournaments, Central African Republic withdrew from the competition without having played a single match.

Although this is Central African Republic's sixth FIFA World Cup preliminary campaign, they played only two matches in the 2002 tournament. In the first-round knockout stage *Les Fauves* lost their two-match series against Zimbabwe 1-0 at home and 3-1 away.

In the 1982 qualifying tournament Central African Republic were excluded by FIFA for not paying the entry fee.

*** Withdrew from the 1978 qualifiers without playing a single match. Excluded from 1982 for not paying the entry fee. Withdrew from the 2006 qualifiers before playing their pre-preliminary game against Burkina Faso. Withdrew from the 2010 preliminary competition without playing a single match.**

Chad (CHA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	10: 3-1-6	
Best goalscorer	3: Francis OUMAR - 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Chad came fourth in Group 10 during the second round of the 2010 qualification tournament. Of all the teams that finished last in their respective second-round groups, Chad picked up the most points together with Namibia, obtaining six with two wins and four defeats.

Chad were eliminated after two preliminary play-off matches in their first two FIFA World Cup qualifying campaigns: by Liberia in 2002 and Angola in 2006.

In every one of their four home qualifiers played in the history in the preliminary tournament, all of which took place in N'Djamena, Chad have conceded at least one goal.

Comoros (COM)		FIFA Affiliation: 2005
First entry	2010	
Preliminary entries	1: 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	2: 0-0-2	
Best goalscorer	1: Daoud MIDTADI - 2007; Ibor BAKAR - 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

With only two games played, Comoros are one of six teams to have contested the fewest matches in FIFA World Cup qualifying.

Comoros were the only African side to have made their debut in the 2010 preliminary tournament.

Daoud Midtati scored Comoros' first ever qualifying goal six minutes into his side's match in Madagascar on 14 October 2007, which ended in a 6-2 victory to the home side.

Congo (CGO)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries	7: (1966), 1974, 1978, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	46: 15-8-23	
Best goalscorer	4: Armel MAMOUNA-OSSILA - 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament, Congo were eliminated at the second-round group stage due to their goal difference being one worse than that of Sudan. The strike that proved decisive was scored 16 minutes from the end of the pair's direct showdown in Sudan, when Faisal Agab netted the second goal in the home side's 2-0 win.

Under the name of French Congo, the country submitted an entry to the 1966 FIFA World Cup preliminary competition but it was not accepted.

Congo took part in the 1974 preliminary tournament as reigning African champions, having won the CAF Africa Cup of Nations five months earlier. Nevertheless they were eliminated in the first stage by Nigeria, losing 2-1 away and drawing 1-1 at home, in August 1972.

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Congo DR (COD)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1970	
Preliminary entries*	8: (1970), 1974, (1978), 1982, 1990-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	61: 28-13-20	
Best goalscorer	10: Shabani NONDA - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1974	

Dieumerci Mbokani netted Congo DR's 100th qualifying goal in the 5-1 victory over Djibouti on 22 June 2008.

Congo DR have scored more goals than any other team in the African Zone in a single game, winning 9-1 at home to Djibouti on 23 April 2000.

In just under three months between 9 December 1973 and 14 March 1974, Congo DR (then known as Zaïre) first secured qualification to the FIFA World Cup by beating Morocco 3-0 in Kinshasa, before going on to clinch the continental title in Cairo with a 2-0 win over Zambia.

** The successor of the former Zaïre under which name the country had entered the qualifiers for 1970-1982 & 1990-1998 (entry 1970 not accepted). Withdrew from the 1978 second qualifying round to which they had qualified after the Central African Republic withdrew. Became the Democratic Republic of Congo (Congo DR) in 1997.*

Cote d'Ivoire (CIV)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	9: 1974, 1978, 1986-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	63: 33-20-10	
Best goalscorer	15: Didier DROGBA 2- 003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 2006, 2010	

In the 2010 preliminaries, Côte d'Ivoire went through the tournament unbeaten for the first time in nine campaigns, recording eight wins and four draws in their 12 matches.

With 29 goals from 12 games, The Elephants were the most prolific scorers in 2010 African Zone qualifying. During the same tournament they also passed the milestone of 100 goals scored in the competition, Salomon Kalou notching the historic strike on 29 March 2009 with the fourth goal in the 5-0 win over Malawi.

Côte d'Ivoire have played 30 of their 32 home qualifiers in Abidjan. They obtained a win and a draw in the only two qualifiers which they have contested in Bouake, although they conceded two goals on each occasion.

Djibouti (DJI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries*	2: 2002, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	9: 1-1-7	
Best goalscorer	1: Ahmed Hassan DAHER - 2007; Hussein YASSIN - 2007; Moussa HIRIR - 2007; Hared ROBLEH - 2000; Mahad KHAIREH - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In total Djibouti have played nine matches in qualification for the FIFA World Cup. In their opening match of the 2010 preliminary campaign, Djibouti achieved their first and only victory to date, beating Somalia 1-0 courtesy of Hussein Yassin's goal six minutes from the end.

This is Djibouti's third participation in the qualifying tournament. After making their debut in the 2002 edition, they did not take part in the 2006 tournament.

During the 9-1 defeat away to Congo DR played on 23 April 2000, two Djibouti players were sent off in the first half with the score at 4-1.

Egypt (EGY)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	12: 1934, (1938), 1954, (1958-1966), 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	78: 41-18-19	
Best goalscorer	10: Amr ZAKI - 2003, 2007; Hossam HASSAN - 1988, 1992, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 1934, 1990	

Egypt failed to qualify for South Africa 2010 after losing 1-0 to Algeria in a tiebreaking play-off held on neutral territory in Omdurman, Sudan.

Despite being African champions since 2006 having won the last three editions of the CAF African Cup of Nations, Egypt have not qualified for the FIFA World Cup since 1990.

On 16 March 1934, Egypt became the first African side to play a FIFA World Cup qualifier, beating the British Mandate of Palestine 7-1 in Cairo.

*** Entered for 1962 & 1966 as United Arab Republic (UAR) after having formed a joint association with Syria. Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1938 & 1958-1966.**

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Equatorial Guinea (EQG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries*	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	10: 2-0-8	
Best goalscorer	7 players with 1 goal	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

After two successive eliminations in the 2002 and 2006 preliminaries with only two matches played in each campaign, Equatorial Guinea contested six matches in the 2010 edition, recording one win and five defeats.

Nzalang Nacional have never drawn in ten qualifiers, recording two wins and eight defeats in their three participations.

The side's only two qualifying victories both came on home soil, 1-0 against Togo in 2003 and 2-0 against Sierra Leone in 2008.

Eritrea (ERI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries*	2: 2002-2006, (2010)	
Matches played: W – D – L	4: 0-2-2	
Best goalscorer	-	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

After taking part in the 2002 and 2006 editions, Eritrea withdrew from the 2010 preliminary tournament without having played a match.

Eritrea are one of three national sides which are yet to score a goal during the preliminary tournament, together with Guam and Myanmar.

Eritrea have always drawn 0-0 in the two home qualifiers which they have played in Asmara, first with Nigeria on 9 April 2000 and subsequently with Sudan on 16 November 2003.

* *Withdrew from the 2010 qualifiers without playing a single match*

Ethiopia (ETH)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	9: (1958), 1962, (1966), 1970-1986, 1994, 2002, 2006, (2010)	
Matches played: W – D – L	31: 6-8-17	
Best goalscorer	3: Tariku INGDAWERK - 1972	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 campaign, which they did not complete due to being disqualified, Ethiopia managed to win their first ever away qualifier on 13 June 2008 in Nouakchott, where they overcame Mauritania 1-0.

Ethiopia were disqualified from the 2010 preliminary tournament after having played four matches (winning two and losing two) due to internal disputes within the Ethiopian Football Federation.

In their first ever preliminary tournament back in 1962, Ethiopia decided to play both of their home and away matches in Israel for security reasons. The African team lost both qualifiers by one goal (1-0 and 3-2).

* *Entry 1958 not accepted. Withdrew from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match. Disqualified from the 2010 qualifiers after playing four games.*

Gabon (GAB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1966
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	6: (1966, 1974), 1990-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	43: 17-7-19	
Best goalscorer	5: Guy Roger NZAMBA -1988, 1992; Theodore ZUE - 1996, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Ninety minutes from the end of the 2010 preliminary tournament, Gabon still had a chance of making it to the finals in South Africa, heading into their last game just one point behind Cameroon. However on the last matchday of the third and decisive round, Gabon lost 1-0 in Togo while Cameroon won 2-0 in Morocco.

Gabon's biggest haul of victories in a single preliminary tournament came during the 2010 edition. Their 12 qualifiers yielded no fewer than seven of the 17 wins that Gabon have earned in the history of the competition.

Having withdrawn from the 1966 and 1974 FIFA World Cup preliminary tournaments, Gabon eventually made their debut on 7 January 1989 with a 1-0 away loss in Nigeria.

* *Withdrew from the 1966 & 1974 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Gambia (GAM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1968
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries*	6: 1982, 1986, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	16: 5-4-7	
Best goalscorer	2: Mustapha JARJUE - 2007; Njogu DEMBA - 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament Gambia were the highest-ranked runners-up to be eliminated at the second-round stage, thus missing out on qualification for the third and decisive round.

Gambia are yet to win an away match in qualification for the FIFA World Cup. On their travels they have picked up two draws and five losses from seven matches.

Three of Gambia's five victories in their 15 qualifiers played since 1980 to date came against Liberia.

* *Withdrew from the 1994 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Ghana (GHA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1958
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	11: 1962, (1966), 1970-1978, (1982), 1986 -2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	67: 32-17-18	
Best goalscorer	8: Matthew AMOAH - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 2006, 2010	

Following their 2-0 victory over Sudan in Accra on 6 September 2009, Ghana became the first African side to book their passage to the finals of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, besides South Africa who had already qualified as hosts.

Until the 2006 edition, Ghana were the only nation to have claimed a FIFA world title (the U-17 World Championship in 1991 and 1995) without managing to qualify for the FIFA World Cup finals via the preliminary competition.

Ghana are two strikes away from reaching the milestone of 100 goals scored in qualification for the FIFA World Cup.

* *Withdrew from the 1966 & 1982 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Guinea (GUI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1962
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	9: (1966, 1970), 1974-1998, (2002), 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	64: 31-10-23	
Best goalscorer	12: Pascal FEINDOUNO - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Mamadou Bah bagged Guinea's 100th FIFA World Cup qualifying goal in the 2-1 defeat by Burkina Faso on 11 October 2009. Although it was a home qualifier, Guinea played the match in Accra, Ghana, for security reasons.

Guinea were involved in the highest-scoring draw (4-4) ever recorded in the African Zone preliminary competition, a result which has only been achieved three times in the competition as a whole. They achieved this result at the end of a thrilling encounter away to Uganda on 8 April 2004. Guinea were 2-0 ahead after 55 minutes but found themselves 3-2 behind in minute 78. They edged back in front to make it 4-3 with two minutes to go, only for Uganda to score the equalising goal in the 89th minute.

In the 2002 preliminary tournament Guinea were disqualified by FIFA due to government interference after having played five matches, at which point they remained unbeaten with three wins and two draws.

* *Withdrew from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match. Entry 1970 not accepted. Excluded from the 2002 qualifiers after playing five games.*

Guinea-Bissau (GNB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	8: 1-2-5	
Best goalscorer	2: Pereira TAVARES - 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 qualifying tournament Guinea Bissau failed to score for the second time in four campaigns (the first time was in the 2002 tournament). The *Djurtus* lost 1-0 in Sierra Leone and drew the return leg 0-0 at home.

The only match that Guinea Bissau have won in the preliminary tournament was their debut qualifier, a 3-2 home victory over Guinea on 1 June 1996.

Guinea Bissau have never played more than two games in any of their FIFA World Cup qualifying campaigns.

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Kenya (KEN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries	10: 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	56: 18-12-26	
Best goalscorer	12: Dennis OLIECH - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 preliminary tournament Kenya played 12 matches, equalling their record for the most fixtures played in a single edition, which they first achieved ahead of Germany 2006.

Kenya have successfully wiped out a two-goal deficit on four occasions during the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament. On three of these occasions they scored twice to secure 2-2 draws with Mauritius and Zambia in the 1974 tournament. During the 1986 edition they achieved a 3-3 result in Ethiopia after the home side had taken a 2-0 lead. On 6 April 1997 they were down 3-1 in their home qualifier against Burkina Faso when they scored three goals in the last 15 minutes, resulting in a 4-3 victory for them.

Kenya have won only two of their 22 away qualifiers in the competition, although they scored at least three goals in both of those successes. On 10 December 1972 they won 3-1 in Mauritius, and on 16 August 1997 they ran out 4-2 winners in Burkina Faso.

Lesotho (LES)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	5: 1974, 1982, (1986, 1990), 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	14: 0-3-11	
Best goalscorer	6 players with 1 goal	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In qualification for South Africa 2010 Lesotho contested the most matches they have played in a single preliminary tournament, no fewer than six, all of which they lost. In their previous four participations the Crocodiles had been eliminated after two matches.

The only team to have won an away qualifier in Lesotho are South Africa, who escaped with a 2-0 victory on 9 April 2000, while Zambia, Guinea and Botswana all claimed draws. In the 2010 tournament Lesotho played their three home matches in Mangaung/Bloemfontein in South Africa.

Lesotho are yet to win in 14 matches played in qualification for the FIFA World Cup, having registered three draws and 11 defeats to date.

** Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1986 after refusing to play Madagascar and for 1990 without playing a single match.*

Liberia (LBR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	8: (1966), 1982-1990, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	49: 13-10-26	
Best goalscorer	6: George WEAH - 1988, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Following their three draws and three defeats in the 2010 tournament, Liberia have not won in the competition for 15 matches, the all-time longest winless streak in African Zone qualifying. The Lone Stars' last success dates back to 6 June 2004 when they overcame Gambia 3-0 in Monrovia.

Liberia are the only side to have scored three goals away to Ghana in a FIFA World Cup qualifier, having clinched a 3-1 win on 28 January 2001.

Liberia withdrew from the 1994 preliminaries due to the ongoing civil war after having played only one match, which ended in a 4-2 defeat away to Zaire.

** Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1966 without playing a single match, and from those for 1994 after playing one match.*

Libya (LBY)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	6: (1966), 1970, 1978, (1982), 1986, (1990), 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	43: 16-9-18	
Best goalscorer	5: Ahmed MASLI - 2000, 2003; Ahmed OSMAN - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 preliminary tournament Libya were eliminated in the second round on goal difference, having finished on equal points with Ghana and Gabon. The Libyans were just eight minutes away from qualifying for the next round when a goal by Gabon's Zita Mbanangoye on 82 minutes consigned them to a 1-0 defeat on the final matchday.

Libya withdrew from the 1982 and 1990 FIFA World Cup preliminary competitions, having already progressed to the second stage.

Together with Congo DR's 9-1 home win over Djibouti, Libya's 8-0 thrashing of visitors São Tomé e Príncipe was the largest margin of victory ever achieved in the history of the African Zone preliminary competition.

** Withdrew from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match. Withdrew after qualifying for the second round for 1982 & 1990. In 1982, Egypt and Libya were in dispute when Libya withdrew after refusing to play a rearranged second round tie against Egypt in Italy. Excluded from 1994.*

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Madagascar (MAD)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	7: (1974), 1982, 1986, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	31: 10-7-14	
Best goalscorer	5: Harry RANDRIANAIVO - 1992, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Madagascar scored more than three goals in a single qualifier for the first time ever during their opening match in Round One of the 2010 campaign, a 6-2 home win over Comoros in Antananarivo.

Madagascar have never beaten or scored against a team that has gone on to qualify for the finals. In the 2002 tournament they lost twice to Tunisia (1-0 away and 2-0 at home), whereas ahead of South Africa 2010 they played Côte d'Ivoire, drawing 0-0 at home and losing away 3-0.

Madagascar competed in the last African Zone preliminary qualifier to be decided on penalties, which they lost on 21 April 1985 away to Egypt.

***Withdrew from the 1974 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Malawi (MWI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1968
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	8: 1978-1990, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	51: 12-13-26	
Best goalscorer	6: Chiukepo MSOWOYA - 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 preliminary tournament Malawi reached the third and decisive round for the first time: The Flames finished third in the group won by Côte d'Ivoire, behind Burkina Faso and ahead of Guinea.

Apart from their debut campaign at the 1978 FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament, which ended in elimination after two defeats against Zambia, in all of their previous campaigns Malawi have faced one of the African sides which went on to qualify for the final phase: Cameroon in 1982, Morocco in 1986, Egypt in 1990, South Africa in 1998 and 2002, Tunisia in 2006 and Côte d'Ivoire in 2010.

Malawi have kept a clean sheet in three of their 26 FIFA World Cup qualifiers away from home: a 1-0 win in Mauritius on 15 July 1984, a 0-0 draw in Kenya on 22 April 2000 and a 3-0 win in Djibouti on 5 September 2008.

*** Withdrew from the 1994 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Mali (MLI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	3: (1966, 1994, 1998), 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	26: 11-5-10	
Best goalscorer	10: Frederic KANOUTE - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the third and decisive round of the 2010 preliminary tournament, Mali came third in their group with nine points, while Ghana claimed top spot on 13 points. The Malians' chances of qualifying for South Africa were destroyed by two late goals that cost them four points. The first was Mohamed Aoudou's equaliser in the 87th minute of the 1-1 draw with Benin, whereas the second was struck on 83 minutes by Ghana's Anthony Annan, who salvaged a 2-2 draw for his side.

Mali have never drawn 0-0 in any of their 26 FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

They have a positive record at home with nine wins, two draws and two defeats, having suffered a 2-1 reverse against Togo on 27 March 2005. The visitors snatched victory in the closing minutes of the match thanks to a goal by Cherif Toure Mamam. The other defeat was a 2-0 reverse against Ghana on 7 June 2009, with the goals scored in the second half by Kwadwo Asamoah and Matthew Amoah.

*** Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1966, 1994 & 1998 without playing a single match.**

Mauritius (MRI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	7: 1974, 1986, (1990), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	16: 1-2-13	
Best goalscorer	2: Wesley MARQUETTE - 2007; Daniel IMBERT - 1972	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The team's only point in six matches during the 2010 tournament was earned away from home, in a 1-1 draw in Tanzania. Mauritius lost all five of their other games.

Mauritius have never kept a clean sheet in any of the sixteen FIFA World Cup qualifiers which they have contested.

Having exited the competition after two matches in all five of their previous campaigns, Mauritius came closest to reaching the second stage during the 2006 edition. Following a 3-0 away defeat to Uganda, they were 3-0 ahead after 90 minutes in the return match, but were eliminated thanks to an extra-time goal by Uganda's David Obua, who scored just seven minutes before the impending penalty shoot-out. That remains the Mauritians' only preliminary victory.

*** Entry 1990 not accepted.**

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Morocco (MAR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	12: 1962, (1966), 1970-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	98: 46-32-20	
Best goalscorer	6: Youssef HADJI - 2003, 2007; Ahmed FARAS - 1968, 1972	
FIFA World Cup participations	4: 1970, 1986, 1994, 1998	

Morocco will play their 100th qualifying match during this preliminary competition. They currently stand at 98.

In their last six games in the third round of 2010 qualifying, Morocco recorded three draws and three defeats. It is the Moroccans' longest winless streak in the history of the preliminary competition.

Morocco's second match of the 2014 tournament will be their 100th FIFA World Cup qualifier. The Atlas Lions are the first African team to reach this milestone.

Morocco hold the record in African Zone qualifying for the most consecutive minutes played without conceding a goal, 763 between 1981 and 1985.

* *Withdrew from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match. Morocco were the first African team to qualify for the 1970 FWC finals by means of an internal African elimination round (Egypt qualified 1934 after playing against the team representing Palestine at the time a British mandate).*

Mozambique (MOZ)		FIFA Affiliation: 1980
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries*	6: 1982, (1990), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	24: 5-5-14	
Best goalscorer	5: DARIO - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Twelve of Mozambique's 24 qualifiers since 1980 were played in the last tournament, ahead of South Africa 2010, during which the Mambas managed to qualify for the third and decisive round.

Mozambique have ended up on the losing end of a seven-goal encounter in three of their 12 FIFA World Cup qualifying matches, losing 5-2 against Zaire in the 1982 edition, 6-1 against Senegal in the 1984 edition and 4-3 against Guinea in the 2006 edition.

In their debut match, a 5-2 away defeat by Zaire in Kinshasa on 13 July 1980, Mozambique conceded two penalty goals.

* *Entry 1990 not accepted.*

Namibia (NAM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	31: 5-6-20	
Best goalscorer	4: Razundara TJIKUZU - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Of the 12 teams that finished bottom of their respective groups in the second round of 2010 FIFA World Cup African Zone qualifying, Namibia together with Chad obtained the most points (six) and scored the most goals (seven).

Together with Congo DR's 9-1 win over Djibouti, Namibia's 8-2 defeat away to Egypt on 13 July 2001 is the highest scoring match in the history of the African Zone preliminary tournament.

Namibia have lost twelve African Zone qualifiers by a margin of at least three goals, more than any other team on the continent.

Niger (NIG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	5: 1978-1982, (1986), 1994, (1998), 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	20: 6-3-11	
Best goalscorer	2: Issoufou ALHASSANE - 2007; Moussa KAMFIDENI - 1976, 1980; Moussa YAHAYA - 1992	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The 3-1 home victory over Uganda on 7 September 2008 was Niger's first victory by two clear goals in FIFA World Cup qualification. Their previous five had all been by single-goal margins.

Eleven of Niger's 20 qualifiers have finished 0-0 at half-time.

Niger have not drawn a qualifying match since 1992, when they were held 0-0 at home by Côte d'Ivoire. Since then the *Mena* have picked up three wins and eight defeats.

* *Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1986 & 1998 without playing a single match.*

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Nigeria (NGA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	12: 1962, (1966), 1970, (1974), 1978-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	88: 48-24-16	
Best goalscorer	10: Obafemi MARTINS - 2003, 2007; Rasheed YEKINI - 1984, 1992	
FIFA World Cup participations	4: 1994, 1998, 2002, 2010	

Two sides went through the 2010 African Zone qualifying campaign unbeaten, namely Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria. The latter finished the tournament with a record of nine victories and three draws.

Nigeria have not lost at home in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament since 10 October 1981, when they were beaten 2-0 by Algeria in Lagos. Since then, Nigeria have picked up 27 wins (including 21 consecutive victories) and two draws from their home qualifiers.

Along with Tunisia, Nigeria have scored more goals in FIFA World Cup qualification than any other side, 151 in total. Furthermore Nigeria became the first African side to hit a century of goals in the competition following their 3-0 home win over Sudan on 7 January 2001. The historic 100th goal was claimed by Victor Agali in minute 67.

***Withdrew from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match. Disqualified from 1974 when the association was dissolved after losing in the third round against Ghana.**

Rwanda (RWA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1978
First entry	1990	
Preliminary entries*	4: (1990), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	27: 6-6-15	
Best goalscorer	6: Abedi SAID - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament Rwanda achieved their first away victories in FIFA World Cup qualification. They won 2-1 in Ethiopia (a result which did not count towards the group standings due to the Ethiopians' subsequent withdrawal from the competition), and 1-0 in Mauritania.

Despite entering the 1990 FIFA World Cup preliminary competition, Rwanda withdrew without playing a match. It was not until 1996 that they made their tournament debut, conceding a 3-1 home defeat by Tunisia.

The only preliminary tournament in which Rwanda did not play against a team that ultimately qualified for the FIFA World Cup finals was the 2002 edition, when they took on Côte d'Ivoire. By contrast they faced Tunisia in 1998, Angola in 2006 and Algeria in 2010.

*** Withdrew from the 1990 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

São Tomé e Príncipe (STP)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries*	2: (1994), 2002-2006, (2010)	
Matches played: W – D – L	4: 1-0-3	
Best goalscorer	1: Amilcar RAMOS - 2002; Celso PONTES - 2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The side made their tournament debut in 2000, prevailing 2-0 over Sierra Leone in their maiden match.

Sao Tome e Principe have never played more than two games in the two preliminary tournaments in which they have taken part (2002 and 2006).

Their 8-0 defeat away to Libya in the 2006 tournament is, together with Congo DR's 9-1 drubbing of Djibouti in 2002, the most emphatic defeat in the history of the African Zone qualifying competition.

*** Withdrew from the 1994 & 2010 preliminary competition without playing a single match.**

Senegal (SEN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	10: (1966), 1970-1986, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	47: 18-15-14	
Best goalscorer	14: El Hadji DIOUF - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 2002	

Of all the teams that were eliminated in the second round of the 2010 tournament, Senegal lost the fewest matches together with Gambia. Their only loss in six qualifiers was a 3-2 reverse against Algeria.

In half of their 22 home qualifiers played, Senegal have kept clean sheets. Furthermore in this competition they are unbeaten on home soil since 1993, when they lost 3-1 to Morocco. Since then the Teranga Lions have picked up ten wins and four draws, all in Dakar.

Three of Senegal's first qualifying matches, which were all played against Morocco, were officiated by Spanish referees: Jose Maria Ortiz de Mendibil, Gaspar Pintado and Antonio Camacho Jimenez.

*** Withdrew from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Seychelles (SEY)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	10: 0-2-8	
Best goalscorer	3: Philip ZIALOR - 2000, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In 2010 Seychelles were eliminated at the second-round group stage, having lost all six of their matches with four goals scored and 17 conceded.

Seychelles have no victories from their ten matches played in FIFA World Cup qualifying. They have managed two draws, both of which finished 1-1. The first was in their maiden match in the preliminary tournament, at home to Namibia in 2000, whereas the second was away to Zambia in 2003.

Seychelles have scored in half of their ten qualifiers played. On four occasions they have scored once, managing to draw two matches. The only qualifier in which they scored two goals ended in defeat, 3-2 at home to Burkina Faso.

Sierra Leone (SLE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	8: 1974-1986, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	37: 8-7-22	
Best goalscorer	6 players with 2 goals	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Sierra Leone won more matches in the 2010 tournament than in any other edition, picking up three victories in their eight games. The most they had achieved previously was two wins, in the 1998 and 2002 editions.

Sierra Leone were eliminated twice in the 1998 preliminary tournament. Having initially been knocked out in the first stage after home and away defeats by Burundi, they were reinstated by FIFA because Burundi withdrew before the second stage began. Sierra Leone finished the second stage in second place behind Morocco with two victories, a draw and two defeats, but it was not enough to earn them a place in the final phase.

Sierra Leone have lost 15 of the 18 away matches they have played in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament. Their only success was a 2-0 win in Ghana on 17 August 1997. The other two were draws, both scoreless, recorded in the 2010 tournament against Guinea Bissau and South Africa.

** Withdrew from the 1994 qualifiers without playing a single match. In 1998 Sierra Leone got a second chance after Burundi had eliminated them when FIFA ruled that Sierra Leone would replace Burundi, who had been excluded due to civil war. Sierra Leone thus became the first team to be eliminated twice from the same qualifying competition.*

Somalia (SOM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1962
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries	4: 1982, 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	7: 0-2-5	
Best goalscorer	4: Hassan MUSTAF - 2000, 2003; Omar ABDULKADIR - 2000, 2003; Omar OSMAN - 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Due to the internal situation in Somalia, the national team played the first round of the 2010 qualifying tournament as a single-leg tie in Djibouti. They lost 1-0 and were therefore eliminated after playing only one match.

Somalia's first and second FIFA World Cup qualifying campaigns were separated by an interval of almost 20 years. Having played their last match in the 1982 preliminary tournament on 27 July 1980, they returned to the competition on 19 April 2000 against Cameroon.

To date Somalia have only ever played one qualifier on home soil, a 1-1 draw against Niger in Mogadishu. In the 2002 and 2006 preliminary tournaments, Somalia played both matches of their two-game series away to their opponents, respectively Cameroon and Ghana.

South Africa (RSA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	4+1: (1966), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	36 - 22-5-9	
Best goalscorer	7: Shaun BARTLETT - 1996, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1998, 2002, 2010	

Despite having automatically qualified as hosts of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, South Africa still took part in the preliminary tournament, which also doubled as the qualifying competition for the finals of the CAF African Cup of Nations 2010. However the South Africans failed to qualify for the continental showpiece. Of the 22 FIFA World Cup qualifying victories recorded by South Africa, 15 were by a single-goal margin, specifically nine 1-0 wins and six 2-1 wins.

South Africa hold the record for the most consecutive victories in African Zone qualifying, with nine wins between 1997 and 2001.

** Excluded from 1966 and banned for violating the anti-discrimination charter. Readmitted 1992 after the government had repealed apartheid. Qualified automatically as hosts in 2010.*

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Sudan (SUD)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	10: (1958-1966), 1970, 1974, (1978), 1982-1990, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	56: 15-15-26	
Best goalscorer	7 *Haytham KAMAL 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Of all the teams admitted to the third-round group stage in the 2010 preliminary tournament, Sudan went on to pick up the fewest points, just one courtesy of a 1-1 home draw with Mali.

Sudan won the first ever African Zone preliminary qualifier to be decided in extra time, beating Zambia 4-2 in Khartoum in November 1968.

Sudan withdrew from the 1958 edition of the tournament, having already progressed from the first stage thanks to a 1-0 home win and a 1-1 away draw in their two-game series with Syria.

*** Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1958 after playing two games and from 1962-1966, 1978 & 1994 without playing a single match.**

Swaziland (SWZ)		FIFA Affiliation: 1978
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	13: 2-3-8	
Best goalscorer	3: Siza DLAMINI - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament Swaziland finally got back to winning ways with a 2-1 home victory over Togo in Lobamba on 8 June 2008. That result came almost 16 years after their first win in the tournament, a 1-0 success over Zaire recorded on 25 October 1992, also in Lobamba.

The five goals scored by Swaziland thus far in FIFA World Cup preliminary tournaments have all been scored after the 55-minute mark.

In their five participations in FIFA World Cup qualifying, Swaziland have never played more than four matches. They set that record in the 2010 edition, having played three in 1994 and two in all of their other campaigns.

Tanzania (TAN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	8: 1974, (1978), 1982, 1986, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	25: 4-10-11	
Best goalscorer	3: Jerson TEGETE - 2007; Peter TINO - 1980, 1984; Thuen ALI - 1980	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 edition Tanzania were the only team to drop points against Mauritius, drawing 1-1 at home in their opening match of the first-round group stage.

Tanzania achieved their biggest winning margin in FIFA World Cup qualification back in 1980, when they trounced Kenya 5-0 in Dar Es Salaam.

Tanzania withdrew from the first stage of the USA 94 preliminary competition with two of their six group games still to play, away against Madagascar and Namibia. They had already obtained a 2-0 home win over Namibia, a draw and two defeats.

*** Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1978 without playing a single match, and from those for 1994 after playing four matches.**

Togo (TOG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	8: 1974-1982, (1986, 1990), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	53: 19-12-22	
Best goalscorer	16: Emmanuel ADEBAYOR - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 2006	

During the 2010 tournament, Togo lost their qualifier in Gabon not once but twice, both times by the score of 3-0. After losing on the pitch, Togo were handed a 3-0 defeat by FIFA as a result of fielding Abdul Mamah, who was ineligible for the match due to suspension.

Togo clinched their first ever qualification for the final phase of the FIFA World Cup at Germany 2006 with a 3-2 win away to Congo in Brazzaville on 8 October 2005, having coming from 2-1 behind in the last 30 minutes thanks to a brace from Mohamed Kader.

On their preliminary tournament debut in 1972, Togo were paired against Zaire, who went on to qualify for the finals in Germany. After drawing 0-0 at home, Togo lost 4-0 in Kinshasa.

*** Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1986 & 1990 without playing a single match.**

Team preliminary competition facts: CAF



Tunisia (TUN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	12: 1962, (1966), 1970-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	88: 47-23-18	
Best goalscorer	9: Zoubeir BEYA - 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	4: 1978, 1998, 2002, 2006	

With just ten minutes to go to the end of the 2010 preliminary tournament, Tunisia were on the brink of qualifying for South Africa. However their dreams of a fourth successive FIFA World Cup appearance were dashed by late strikes from Obafemi Martins, who earned Nigeria a 3-2 win in Kenya, and Dario, whose 83rd-minute effort consigned them to a single-goal defeat in Mozambique.

Tunisia won the first ever FIFA World Cup qualifying match to be decided in a penalty shoot-out, beating Morocco on 9 January 1977.

Tunisia hold two records in African Zone qualifying. The first is for the longest unbeaten streak, stretching 25 matches between 1982 and 2004, while the second is for the most consecutive matches in which they have scored, 25 between 1997 and 2008.

* *Withdrew from the 1966 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Uganda (UGA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	7: 1978, (1982), 1986, 1990, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	28: 9-4-15	
Best goalscorer	4: David OBUA - 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Uganda's first away draw in FIFA World Cup qualification came during the 2010 edition: 0-0 in Luanda against Angola. They lost all of their other 13 away qualifiers, scoring eight goals and conceding 37.

In the 1978 preliminary tournament they qualified for the second stage due to Tanzania's withdrawal.

The Cranes' first four FIFA World Cup qualifiers were all against Zambia in the 1978 and 1986 editions.

* *Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1982 & 1994 without playing a single match.*

Zambia (ZAM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries	11: 1970-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	84: 40-16-28	
Best goalscorer	9: KALUSHA BWALYA - 1984, 1988, 1992, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Zambia scored 124 goals in 74 matches during their first ten FIFA World Cup qualifying campaigns, an average of 1.67 per game. By contrast during the 2010 edition they only managed four in ten, averaging 0.4 per game.

Together with Morocco, Zambia hold the all-time tournament record for having played in the most number of FIFA World Cup qualifiers which have gone to extra time, three in total.

Zambia's most emphatic away victory in the preliminary tournament was their 5-0 thrashing of Liberia in Monrovia on 1 October 2005. However, the match was played behind closed doors due to security concerns linked to the Liberian presidential elections.

Zimbabwe (ZIM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1965
First entry	1970	
Preliminary entries*	9: 1970, 1982-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	57: 21-14-22	
Best goalscorer	11: Peter NDLOVU - 1992, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In their six matches played during the 2010 tournament, Zimbabwe recorded three 0-0 draws, more than any other team in the South Africa 2010 preliminaries. In their previous 51 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, they had achieved only four.

Zimbabwe were the last African side to contest a FIFA World Cup qualifying match against an opponent from a different confederation. On 1 December 1969 in Maputo, Mozambique, they lost 3-1 to Australia.

Under the name of Rhodesia, Zimbabwe took part in the Mexico 1970 preliminary competition, where they were required to play three games in eight days against Australia at a neutral venue. After securing two draws (1-1 and 0-0), they lost the play-off decider which meant that Australia progressed to the next stage against Israel.

* *Entered 1970 under the name of Rhodesia. 1980 the country became independent as the Republic of Zimbabwe.*



Team Preliminary competition facts
CONCACAF



Team preliminary competition facts: CONCACAF



Anguilla (AIA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1996
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	6: 0-1-5	
Best goalscorer	1: Kenneth HUGHES - 2000; Richard O CONNOR - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Anguilla's 12-0 reverse away to El Salvador in the 2010 preliminary tournament, played out on 6 February 2008, was the second heaviest defeat experienced by any side in the history of CONCACAF qualifying, surpassed only by Montserrat's 13-0 thrashing at the hands of Bermuda in 2004. It was also the second heaviest defeat in the entire 2010 preliminary tournament, after American Samoa's 15-0 loss to Vanuatu in the Oceanian qualifying section.

Of the three home matches contested by Anguilla in FIFA World Cup™ qualifying, only one was actually played on native soil. That was their maiden home qualifier on 5 March 2000, which ended in a 3-1 defeat by Bahamas. The other two matches were staged in Santo Domingo (2006 preliminaries) and Washington DC (2010).

The only two goals scored by Anguilla in six qualifying matches date back to the 3-1 and 2-1 defeats by Bahamas in 2000. Since their last strike, netted by Richard O'Connor, the Anguillians have gone four matches without finding the net.

Antigua and Barbuda (ATG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1972
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries	8: 1974, 1986-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	26: 6-4-16	
Best goalscorer	8: Derrick EDWARDS - 1988, 1992, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the first round of the 2010 tournament, Antigua and Barbuda beat Aruba 3-0 in Oranjestad to register their second away victory in FIFA World Cup™ qualification, 24 years since first achieving the feat. Back in 1984 they had managed to record a 2-1 win in Haiti.

Antigua and Barbuda are the only side to have conceded three extra-time goals in the history of the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition. Having taken a 1-0 lead in their first-round return match away to Netherlands Antilles in 1988, Antigua and Barbuda were subsequently eliminated after shipping three goals between minutes 104 and 120.

The national side marked their debut appearance in the competition on 10 November 1972 with an 11-1 defeat by Trinidad and Tobago.

Aruba (ARU)		FIFA Affiliation: 1988
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	10: 1-1-8	
Best goalscorer	3: Wander GROSS - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The 2010 event was the first FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign in which Aruba failed to score a single goal. In their two-match series against Antigua and Barbuda, the Arubans succumbed 3-0 at home and 1-0 away.

Of all the ten qualifiers contested by Aruba, only one produced less than three goals. That was their last match played in the 2010 tournament, which they lost 1-0 away to Antigua and Barbuda.

Lesley Felomina is the only Aruba player to have scored two goals in a FIFA World Cup qualifier. The midfielder's brace helped his side secure a 4-2 win over Puerto Rico on 11 March 2000.

Bahamas (BAH)		FIFA Affiliation: 1968
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries*	3: (1998), 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	10: 2-3-5	
Best goalscorer	2: Anton HAVEN - 2000; Kevin DAVIES - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the last qualification tournament Bahamas played both of their first-round matches in Nassau. However due to inadequate stadium capacity they had to play both legs of their second-round tie in Jamaica.

Following their withdrawal from the 1998 FIFA World Cup preliminary competition, Bahamas were one of 25 national sides making their debut in the 2002 edition.

Of their ten matches played in FIFA World Cup qualifying, Bahamas have won only two. In their first two qualifiers, played in 2000, they beat Anguilla 3-1 and 2-1.

* *Withdrew from the 1998 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Team preliminary competition facts: CONCACAF



Barbados (BRB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1968
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	6: 1978, (1986), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	27: 8-4-15	
Best goalscorer	6: Jerry ALEXANDER - 2000; Llewellyn RILEY - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Barbados exited the 2010 tournament at the hands of USA, losing 8-0 away and 1-0 at home. In all they have faced the Stars and Stripes on four occasions and always in the preliminary competition, losing each time and conceding a total of 20 goals without reply.

In their first five qualifiers contested between 1976 and 1992, Barbados faced Trinidad and Tobago on each occasion, registering one win and four defeats.

In 27 qualifiers, Barbados have never played out a 0-0 draw.

* *Withdrew from the 1986 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Belize (BLZ)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	1990	
Preliminary entries*	4: (1990), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	12: 1-2-9	
Best goalscorer	2: Deon McCAULEY - 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

On 6 February 2008 Belize made history by notching their first FIFA World Cup qualifying victory, overcoming St. Kitts and Nevis 3-1 in Guatemala City.

Of the 35 goals conceded by Belize in their eight qualifying matches, 22 were scored in the second half.

Only on two occasions have Belize been able to play a qualifying match on home territory. The first was their maiden FIFA World Cup qualifier on 2 June 1996, when the Jaguars lost 2-1 to Panama in Belize City. The second was on 16 April 2000, when they beat visitors El Salvador 3-1 in Orange Walk Town.

* *Entry 1990 not accepted.*

Bermuda (BER)		FIFA Affiliation: 1962
First entry	1970	
Preliminary entries*	5: 1970, 1994, (1998), 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	26: 10-7-9	
Best goalscorer	11: John NUSUM - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Bermuda's Tyrell Burgess netted the first goal of the 2010 CONCACAF Zone qualifying campaign. On 3 February 2008 Burgess gave his side the lead in minute 18 of the 1-1 draw with Cayman Islands.

In their debut appearance at the tournament, a meeting with Canada in Toronto on 6 October 1968, Bermuda conceded their first goal after three minutes when Tibor Vigh converted a penalty for the home side. The match ended 4-0 to Canada.

The 13-0 away defeat of Montserrat on 29 February 2004 remains the biggest margin of victory ever recorded in the history of the CONCACAF Zone preliminary tournament.

* *Withdrew from the 1998 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

British Virgin Islands (VGB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1996
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	6: 0-2-4	
Best goalscorer	2: Anadale WILLIAMS - 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

After four losses in as many FIFA World Cup qualifiers, during the 2010 event British Virgin Islands avoided defeat for the first time in the competition. They drew 1-1 and 2-2 in their two-match series against Bahamas, but were nevertheless eliminated in the first round.

All four goals scored in the preliminaries by British Virgin Islands were netted in the second half and always after minute 61.

The side's first two qualifiers both ended in losses to Bermuda in 2000 and also featured early sendings-off. Bermuda's Kentoine Jennings was given his marching orders after 10 minutes in the first leg, while in the return leg in Bermuda, Wendell Nicholls (British Virgin Islands) was shown the red card after 14 minutes.

Team preliminary competition facts: CONCACAF



Canada (CAN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1913
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	12: 1958, (1962), 1970-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	95: 36-29-30	
Best goalscorer	12: Alex BUNBURY - 1992, 1993, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1986	

Canada will play their 100th qualifying match during this preliminary competition. They currently stand at 95.

To date Canada have played 95 FIFA World Cup qualifiers and may reach number 100 during the 2014 tournament. If they do so, the North Americans will become the eighth CONCACAF side to reach this milestone.

On 13 June 2004 in Kingston, Kevin McKenna scored Canada's 100th FIFA World Cup qualifying goal. McKenna had only been on the field for five minutes when he netted the team's third goal against Belize in the 75th minute. The Canucks went on to win the match 4-0. To date, Canada have scored a total of 109 goals in FIFA World Cup preliminary matches.

The Canucks made their FIFA World Cup qualifying debut on 22 June 1957 when they beat the USA 5-1. It was also the first match played by the senior national side in 30 years, following their 4-1 win over New Zealand on 23 July 1927.

* *Withdrew from the 1962 qualifiers.*

Cayman Islands (CAY)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	8: 0-2-6	
Best goalscorer	1: Allean GRANT - 2008; Marshall FORBES - 2008; Thomas ELLIOT - 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 event, after having played all of their first six FIFA World Cup qualifiers against Cuba, Cayman Islands faced new opponents in the form of Bermuda, who went on to eliminate them over two matches.

The first of Cayman Islands' three goals in this competition was scored on 22 February 2004, an equaliser by Thomas Elliot in minute 72 during a home match which Cuba eventually won 2-1.

In five of the eight matches played by Cayman Islands in the qualification tournament, the half-time result was always 1-0 to the opposing team.

Costa Rica (CRC)		FIFA Affiliation: 1927
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	14: (1938, 1954), 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	140: 68-34-38	
Best goalscorer	21: Paulo WANCHOPE - 1996, 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1990, 2002, 2006	

Costa Rica are one of four teams, the others being Bahrain, El Salvador and Uruguay, to have played the most matches in the 2010 qualifying tournament, with 20.

Along with Hungary and Bulgaria, Costa Rica share the all-time record for consecutive draws in FIFA World Cup qualifying matches, having achieved five draws in succession between 1 December 1976 and 10 August 1980. Four of these matches were drawn 1-1.

Costa Rica have played 140 qualifiers in total, the second highest number of any national side behind Mexico (141). Costa Rica have scored a total of 243 goals in the tournament and are one of only sixteen national sides to have crossed the 200-goal mark.

* *Withdrew from the 1938 qualifiers without playing a single match. Entry 1954 not accepted.*

Cuba (CUB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1929
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	10+1: 1934, (1938), 1950, (1954), 1966, (1970), 1978, 1982, 1990, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	60: 20-17-23	
Best goalscorer	11: Lester MORE - 1996, 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1938	

On 16 June 2008 in a 4-3 victory over Antigua and Barbuda in St. John's, Cuba scored four away goals for the first time in a FIFA World Cup qualifier.

Cuba scored the first ever goal by a CONCACAF team in the FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament. Their captain Mario netted the historic strike on 28 January 1934, converting a penalty after 20 minutes of his side's 3-1 win over Haiti in Port-au-Prince.

Cuba participated in their only FIFA World Cup finals in 1938, without having played a single qualifier due to the withdrawal of the other six teams in their preliminary group.

* *Qualified for 1938 by default (opponents withdrew). Entries 1954/70 not accepted. Withdrew from the 1994 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Team preliminary competition facts: CONCACAF



Curaçao (CUW)		FIFA Affiliation: 1932
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	14: 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	48: 10-14-24	
Best goalscorer	3: Edwin Miliano LORAN - 1960; Reymundo ROVINA - 1988	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

During the South Africa 2010 preliminaries, when they were competing under the name of Netherlands Antilles, the side conceded only one goal in four matches. That was an own goal by Eugene Martha 12 minutes from the end of the return-leg tie against Haiti, which knocked them out of the competition.

After participating in 13 preliminary campaigns as Netherlands Antilles, Curacao are entering the 2014 event with the same name they used on their debut in the 1958 edition, when they registered a victory and two defeats.

Curacao have played all 16 of their home qualifying matches in the city of Willemstad.

*** Entered 1958 under the name of Curaçao then changed to Netherlands Antilles and back to Curacao in 2011.**

Dominica (DMA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	12: 2-3-7	
Best goalscorer	3: Vincent CASIMIR - 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 qualifying tournament Dominica were eliminated after playing just two matches by Barbados, just as they were in the 2000 tournament by Haiti. In each of their other two participations in 1996 and 2004, Dominica played at least four matches.

Dominica's only two victories in 12 qualifying matches were both achieved on their travels, 3-1 away to Antigua and Barbuda in 1996 and another 3-1 result in Bahamas in 2004.

In the 2004 qualifying tournament Dominica were eliminated by Mexico, conceding 18 goals over two legs (10-0 and 8-0).

Dominican Republic (DOM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1958
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries	6: 1978, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	19: 6-3-10	
Best goalscorer	4: Dinardo Alexis B. RODRIGUEZ - 1992, 1996; Omar ZAPATA - 1996, 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Dominican Republic were knocked out of the 2010 tournament by Puerto Rico after playing just one game. They lost 1-0 after extra time in Bayamon to a penalty goal.

Dominican Republic made their FIFA World Cup preliminary debut on 2 April 1976 in Santo Domingo, eventually losing 3-0 to Haiti. They conceded their first goal after only 90 seconds thanks to a strike by Auguste.

The side have exited in three consecutive qualifying tournaments (1998, 2002 and 2006) at the hands of Trinidad and Tobago. In their three two-legged encounters against the Soca Warriors, Dominican Republic lost all six matches, scoring just one goal and conceding 22.

El Salvador (SLV)		FIFA Affiliation: 1938
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	11: (1938), 1970-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	118: 53-23-42	
Best goalscorer	18: Raul DIAZ - 1992, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 1970, 1982	

Rudis Corrales was the leading scorer in CONCACAF Zone qualifying for South Africa 2010, with eight goals to his name.

El Salvador hold the record for the highest number of consecutive clean sheets in the North, Central American and Caribbean Zone qualifying tournament, a run of eight matches from 6 November 1981 to 27 February 1985.

El Salvador are also the only side to have won two qualifiers after extra time, both of which were played during the qualifying tournament for the 1970 FIFA World Cup. On 27 June 1969 they overcame Honduras 3-2 after extra-time, before clinching their ticket to Mexico '70 on 8 August with a 1-0 extra-time win over Haiti.

*** Withdrew from the 1938 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Team preliminary competition facts: CONCACAF



Grenada (GRN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1978
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries*	5: 1982, (1986), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	15: 5-2-8	
Best goalscorer	8: Ricky CHARLES - 1996, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 event, before being eliminated over two legs by Costa Rica (drawing 2-2 at home and losing 3-0 away), Grenada thrashed US Virgin Islands 10-0. It was the Grenadians' second largest margin of victory in their history, eclipsed only by their 14-1 defeat of Anguilla in qualification for the Shell Caribbean Cup 1998.

Grenada have faced six different national sides in their 15 FIFA World Cup qualifiers but no fewer than four of their five victories came against Guyana. The other success was against British Virgin Islands in the last campaign, ahead of South Africa 2010.

Grenada were the only CONCACAF team making their debut during the qualifying tournament for the 1982 FIFA World Cup.

* *Withdrew from the 1986 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Guatemala (GUA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1946
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	13: 1958-1962, (1966), 1970-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	100: 35-28-37	
Best goalscorer	24: Carlos RUIZ - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The last match played by Guatemala in the 2010 tournament, a 2-0 reverse away to USA in Commerce City on 19 November 2008, was the 100th match played by *Los Chapines* in FIFA World Cup qualification.

The highest scoreline for a drawn match in a FIFA World Cup qualifier is 4-4. In total, there have been three 4-4 draws in the competition and one of them was a CONCACAF preliminary qualifier played on 28 August 1960 between Guatemala and Costa Rica.

Of Guatemala's 42 home matches in the competition, 38 have been played in Guatemala City. The remaining four encounters were played in Mazatenango (twice), San Marcos and Quetzaltenango, and Guatemala avoided defeat in each of these matches, recording two wins and two draws.

* *Entry 1966 not accepted.*

Guyana (GUY)		FIFA Affiliation: 1970
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	8: 1978-1998, (2002), 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	20: 3-2-15	
Best goalscorer	4: Clyde WATSON - 1980	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament, for the sixth consecutive time, Guyana were eliminated after just two matches. It was also the fourth time that the Golden Jaguars had been knocked out of the competition by Suriname, who had also dumped them out of the 1978, 1986 and 1994 events.

Guyana have not won a FIFA World Cup qualifier for more than 31 years, the last time being a 3-2 away success over Grenada on 13 April 1980. Since then they have recorded 14 defeats and two draws.

Guyana have taken part in every edition of the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament since the 1978 edition, with the exception of the 2002 edition when the Guyana Football Association was suspended from all international activity.

* *Suspended from the 2002 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Haiti (HAI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1934
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries	12: 1934, 1954, 1970-1986, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	76: 32-15-29	
Best goalscorer	18: Emmanuel SANON - 1972, 1976	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1974	

On 15 June 2008, in their 69th FIFA World Cup qualifier, Haiti drew 0-0 for the first time in the competition's history. That result, which came at home against Netherlands Antilles, was subsequently repeated four months later against El Salvador, also in Port-au-Prince.

On 14 December 1973, having played and won 2-1 the day before, Haiti qualified for the FIFA World Cup finals for the first time ever when second-placed rivals Mexico lost 4-0 to Trinidad and Tobago in the final group round.

Haiti were one of four CONCACAF representatives, together with Cuba, Mexico and the USA, which took part in the first FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament in 1934. They clocked up two defeats and a draw, eventually being eliminated by Cuba.

Team preliminary competition facts: CONCACAF



Honduras (HON)		FIFA Affiliation: 1946
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	12: 1962-1974, (1978), 1982-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	116: 57-28-31	
Best goalscorer	25: Carlos PAVON - 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 1982, 2010	

During the 2010 tournament Honduras reached two important milestones in qualification for the FIFA World Cup. Besides playing their 100th game on 14 June 2008 in Bayamon, a 2-2 draw with Puerto Rico, the Central Americans also claimed their 200th goal courtesy of veteran forward Carlos Pavon's lone strike in the 1-0 home victory over El Salvador on 10 June 2009

The 11-3 victory over St Vincent and Grenadines on 17 November 1996 was the highest scoring match in the history of the CONCACAF qualifying tournament, and the seventh highest scoring match in any World Cup qualifier

In the last preliminary campaign just as in the 1982 event, Honduras booked their passage to the FIFA World Cup™ by getting a result against El Salvador. On 16 November 1981, a 0-0 stalemate was enough to take the Central Americans to their first finals, whereas a 1-0 win in San Salvador on 14 October 2009 rubber-stamped their ticket to South Africa.

* *Withdrew from the 1978 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Jamaica (JAM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1962
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	9: 1966-1970, (1974), 1978, (1986), 1990-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	80: 32-20-28	
Best goalscorer	8: Deon BURTON - 1996, 2000, 2008; Marlon KING - 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1998	

In the five games that they played in Kingston in the 2010 tournament (including the 'away' match against Bahamas), Jamaica did not concede a single goal, scoring 18 times and recording five victories.

In the 1998 edition of the tournament, Jamaica became only the third team to record four 0-0 draws during a FIFA World Cup preliminary campaign, following in the footsteps of Korea Republic in 1978 and El Salvador in 1982. The Reggae Boyz picked up scoreless draws against Honduras, USA, Canada and Mexico.

Jamaica had two players sent off in their first ever qualifying match, a 2-0 home win over Cuba on 16 January 1965, when Frank Brown and Oscar Black were both shown the red card in the 83rd minute.

* *Withdrew from the 1974 and was suspended from the 1986 qualifiers both times without playing a single match.*

Mexico (MEX)		FIFA Affiliation: 1929
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	14+2: 1934, (1938), 1950-1966, (1970), 1974-1982, (1986, 1990), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	141: 92-28-21	
Best goalscorer	23: Jared BORGETTI - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	14: 1930, 1950, 1954-1970, 1978, 1986, 1994-2010	

Mexico hold the record for the most different players to score in the 2010 preliminary tournament. No fewer than 19 members of *El Tricolor* squad netted the 36 goals that fired them to South Africa.

Mexico hold a number of FIFA World Cup qualifying records. They have played the most qualifiers of any senior international side (141), obtained the most wins (92) and scored the most goals (376).

Among CONCACAF sides, Mexico have the highest percentage rate of victories (65%, with 92 wins from 141 matches), the lowest rate of defeats (15%, 21 defeats from 123 matches), the highest average number of goals scored per match (2.7) and the lowest average number of goals conceded per match (0.7), the longest run of consecutive matches in which they have scored (20), the longest unbeaten run of matches (20) and the longest run of consecutive victories (13).

Mexico's 4-2 defeat by USA, a FIFA World Cup qualifier played in Rome on 24 May 1934, was the first qualifier outside the home continent of two teams from the same confederation.

* *Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition), first qualifying competition in 1934. Withdrew from the 1938 qualifiers without playing a single match. Disqualified from the 1990 qualifiers as a result of a two-year ban FIFA imposed for falsifying age at a youth championship. Qualified automatically for 1970 & 1986 (hosts).*

Montserrat (MSR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1996
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	5: 0-0-5	
Best goalscorer	1: Vladimir FARRELL - 2008; Wayne DYER - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the last qualifying tournament ahead of South Africa 2010, Montserrat contested only one match, a 7-1 defeat by Suriname played out in Trinidad. Since making their tournament debut in 2000, Montserrat have recorded five defeats in as many qualifiers.

Montserrat's 3-1 'home' defeat by Dominican Republic, which was held on 19 March 2000 in Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago), was watched by an audience of 50 spectators.

In every one of their five FIFA World Cup qualifiers, Montserrat have always conceded at least one goal in the last five minutes of the first half.

Team preliminary competition facts: CONCACAF



Nicaragua (NCA)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1950</i>
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	12: 0-1-11	
Best goalscorer	2: Emilio PALACIOS - 2004	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

In the 2010 tournament Nicaragua were eliminated after just two matches against Netherlands Antilles, the sixth different team they have faced in their five qualifying campaigns.

Nicaragua have conceded at least one goal in all twelve of the qualifying games they have played.

Although the Nicaragua Football Association has been affiliated to FIFA since 1950, the national side did not participate in their first FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament until 1994.

Panama (PAN)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1938</i>
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries	9: 1978-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	58: 14-10-35	
Best goalscorer	11: Julio DELY -1996, 2000, 2004	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

In the two-match series they contested in the 2010 tournament against El Salvador, Panama had three players sent off: one in their 1-0 first-leg home victory and two in the 3-1 second-leg defeat.

Of 29 away qualifiers played, Panama have drawn only one, a 1-1 stalemate with Costa Rica on 17 July 1988. In addition to that result, Panama have picked up four wins and 24 defeats on their travels.

Of the 58 qualifiers contested by Panama, no fewer than 18 were played in qualification for Germany 2006. Having entered the competition in the second round of Stage 1, they overcame St. Lucia before finishing runners-up in the Stage 2 group won by USA. Subsequently in the third and final stage, *Los Canales* finished bottom of the six-team group league, with only two draws and eight defeats from ten matches.

Puerto Rico (PUR)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1960</i>
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries	7: 1974, 1986-2002, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	17: 2-3-12	
Best goalscorer	2: Petter VILLEGAS - 2008; Raphel ORTIZ - 2000; Marcos LUGRIS - 1992, 1996	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

Puerto Rico's 1-0 win over Dominican Republic on 26 March 2008 was the first CONCACAF Zone qualifying match to go into extra time for almost eight years, since Barbados-Cuba on 21 May 2000.

The only two victories that Puerto Rico have recorded in 17 qualifiers both came against Dominican Republic, a 2-1 away win in 1992 and a 1-0 extra-time success in 2008.

On their tournament debut in 1972, Puerto Rico were eliminated after two matches against Haiti, who went on to qualify for Germany 1974. The Puerto Ricans then waited all of 12 years before making their return to the qualifying competition, again losing after two matches but against El Salvador. Their last absence was the 2006 preliminary tournament.

St. Kitts & Nevis (SKN)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1992</i>
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	20: 8-3-9	
Best goalscorer	7: Ian LAKE - 2004; Keith GUMBS - 1996, 2000, 2004	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

In the 2010 preliminaries St. Kitts and Nevis were eliminated after just two matches for the first time in the competition, exiting at the hands of Belize.

In their first ever FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament, the preliminary event for France 1998, St. Kitts and Nevis were eliminated without losing a match, having chalked up two wins (against St. Lucia) and two draws (with St. Vincent and the Grenadines).

During their maiden FIFA World Cup qualifier against St. Lucia in the 1998 event, St. Kitts and Nevis took five minutes to score their first goal, courtesy of Dwight Allers Kelley.

Team preliminary competition facts: CONCACAF



St. Lucia (LCA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1988
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	14: 5-0-9	
Best goalscorer	5: Earl JEAN - 1992, 1996, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 6-0 defeat by Guatemala on 14 June 2008, St. Lucia conceded two goals in added time at the end of the second half, in the 91st and 93rd minutes. Only one other CONCACAF team shipped two injury-time goals on the road to South Africa, namely Belize during their 7-0 reverse at the hands of Mexico.

Of the 18 goals scored by St Lucia in their fourteen qualifiers, nine came in a victory over British Virgin Islands on 28 March 2004.

St Lucia have never drawn a qualifying match, having recorded five victories and nine defeats.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines (VIN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1988
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	42: 12-4-26	
Best goalscorer	10: Rodney JACK - 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

After playing at least eight games in each of their four FIFA World Cup qualifying campaigns between the 1994 and 2006 editions, St. Vincent and the Grenadines contested just two in the 2010 edition, falling at the first hurdle against Canada.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines are the only CONCACAF side to have twice conceded more than ten goals in a qualifying match. On 6 December 1992 they were defeated 11-0 by Mexico, and on 17 November 1996 they lost 11-3 to Honduras.

In their 42 FIFA World Cup qualifiers played to date, St. Vincent/Grenadines have faced 14 different sides but are yet to meet USA. Honduras, Mexico and St. Kitts and Nevis have already played Vincy Heat six times each.

Suriname (SUR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1929
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	12: (1938), 1962-1986, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	57: 17-13-27	
Best goalscorer	6: Roy GEORGE - 1976, 1980	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

By opening their 2010 campaign with three straight victories, one against Montserrat and two against Guyana, Suriname set a national record for the most consecutive wins in a FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament.

Suriname played 14 of their 57 qualifying matches under the name of Dutch Guyana, during which time they notched up five wins, two draws and seven defeats.

The side have hit at least six goals in five of their 17 victories: 6-1 against Trinidad and Tobago in the 1966 edition, 6-0 against Netherlands Antilles in the 1970 edition, 6-0 against Antigua and Barbuda in the 1974 edition, 8-1 against Aruba in the 2006 edition and 7-1 against Montserrat in 2010 edition.

* *Entered in 1938, 1962-1974 under the former name Dutch Guyana. Withdrew 1938.*

Trinidad and Tobago (TRI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries	12: 1966-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	115: 46-25-44	
Best goalscorer	20: Stern JOHN - 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 2006	

The 3-1 victory away to Cuba on 20 August 2008 was Trinidad and Tobago's 100th FIFA World Cup qualifier. The Soca Warriors' current total stands at 115, placing them sixth among CONCACAF sides in terms of the number of qualifiers played.

Taking into account their last three qualifying tournaments, Trinidad and Tobago have played the most games of any CONCACAF team: 60 in total. In 2002 they played 22 games, the same number of matches as Honduras. In 2006 they played 20 matches, the same number as Uruguay, whereas in the 2010 campaign they contested 18 qualifiers.

On 10 November 1972, Trinidad and Tobago became the first CONCACAF team to score ten goals in a qualifying match when they beat Antigua and Barbuda 11-1 in Port of Spain.

Team preliminary competition facts: CONCACAF



Turks and Caicos Islands (TCA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	6: 1-0-5	
Best goalscorer	1: David LOWERY - 2008; Gavin GLINTON - 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

On 6 February 2008 against St. Lucia, David Lowery bagged Turks and Caicos Islands' first goal in FIFA World Cup qualifying. In the four matches spanning their two previous campaigns, the islanders had failed to get on the scoreboard.

That same match on 6 February was an historic one in other ways for Turks and Caicos Islands, since it was also their first (and to date only) victory in the history of the qualifying tournament, following on the back of four defeats. Furthermore it was the senior national side's first FIFA-recognised match played on native soil, on the island of Providenciales.

In the interval between their last match of the 2002 FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament (a 6-0 defeat by St Kitts and Nevis on 21 March 2000) and their opening match in the preliminary tournament for Germany 2006 (a 5-0 loss to Haiti on 18 February 2004), Turks and Caicos Islands played only one international match, a 3-0 defeat by Cayman Islands on 27 September 2000. This meant that, prior to the Germany 2006 preliminary campaign, the national side had been inactive for almost three-and-a-half years.

US Virgin Islands (TCA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	5: 0-0-5	
Best goalscorer	1: Joaquim SANTOS - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 preliminaries, US Virgin Islands were eliminated after just one match, played away to Grenada in St. Georges. The tie finished 10-0 to the home side, who were already 3-0 up inside nine minutes.

The only goal that US Virgin Islands have recorded in four qualifying matches was claimed by Joaquim Santos, who scored in the 72nd minute during his side's 5-1 loss to St Vincent and the Grenadines on 19 March 2000.

Of the five defeats registered by US Virgin Islands, the lowest margin of defeat was four goals (5-1 against St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2000, and 4-0 against St. Kitts and Nevis in 2004), and the biggest margin was ten goals (10-0 against Grenada in 2008).

USA (USA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1914
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries	16+1: 1934, 1950-1990, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	122: 59-30-33	
Best goalscorer	12: Landon DONOVAN - 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	9: 1930-1934, 1950, 1990-2010	

The United States bagged more goals than any other nation in the 2010 FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament, not counting the play-offs. Bob Bradley's men found the net a total of 42 times in 18 qualifiers.

The fifty-six preliminary matches on home soil were played in twenty-five different venues. Foxboro/Boston and Washington DC hosted seven of the games while sixteen of the venues only hosted one.

The most frequently contested fixture in the history of the tournament is USA-Mexico, which has taken place on no less than 25 occasions. The first meeting was held in Rome on 1934 and ended in a 4-2 victory to the United States. The USA have come up against Mexico in 13 of the 18 FIFA World Cup qualifying tournaments in the CONCACAF Zone.

** Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition). Submitted their 1934 entry too late and had to first play-off against Central American qualifiers Mexico before going into the first round. 1938 FIFA pitted the Dutch East Indies against the USA in a pre-finals play-off but this time the Americans, victorious against Mexico under similar circumstances in 1934, declined. Qualified automatically for 1994 (hosts)*



Team Preliminary competition facts
CONMEBOL



Team preliminary competition facts: CONMEBOL



Argentina (ARG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1912
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	11+4: (1934, 1938, 1950), 1958-1974, (1978, 1982), 1986, (1990), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	102: 59-24-19	
Best goalscorer	19: Hernan CRESPO - 1996, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	15: 1930, 1934, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010	

Argentina's fourth-place finish in the 2010 South Africa preliminary tournament was their worst placing in the competition since 1998, the year in which CONMEBOL adopted the single group format. Argentina clinched top spot in the 1998 and 2002 instalments, and were runners-up to Brazil on goal difference in 2006.

Of all the CONMEBOL sides, Argentina boast the longest series of matches in which they have got on the score sheet at least once: 25 games beginning 16 November 1997, when they drew with Colombia 1-1 at home, and continuing up to 2 June 2004, when they lost 3-1 away to Brazil.

La Albiceleste have registered more qualifying victories than any other South American national team, with 59 from 102 games. Of all the participants in the 2014 preliminary competition, Argentina are also the closest to reaching the tournament milestone of 200 goals, having netted 181 times. The only side to have scored more are the hosts Brazil, who remain on 199 goals.

*** Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition). Qualified by default in 1934 (withdrawal Chile, Peru) and withdrew from the 1938 & 1950 qualifiers without playing a single match. Qualified automatically for 1978 (host) & 1982, 1990 (defending champions).**

Bolivia (BOL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1926
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	14+1: (1950, 1954), 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	116: 33-21-62	
Best goalscorer	16: Joaquin BOTERO - 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1930, 1950, 1994	

On the road to South Africa 2010, Bolivia thrashed Argentina 6-1 in La Paz. It was the joint-heaviest defeat inflicted on the two-time world champions, who have also lost three other matches by a five-goal margin.

Bolivia are the only CONMEBOL team to have lost in the qualifying phase against a European team. In 1977 they were beaten 6-0 and 3-2 by Hungary in an intercontinental play-off. In 1973 Chile drew 0-0 with the Soviet Union and won the second leg by default after the Soviets refused to contest the match for political reasons. In 1989, Colombia secured a win and a draw against Israel.

La Verde were the first national team to inflict defeat on both Brazil and Argentina in CONMEBOL qualifying, beating Brazil 2-0 in La Paz on 27 July 1993 and Argentina 2-0 also in Bolivia's capital city on 6 October 1957.

*** Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition). Qualified with Chile from their group in 1950 when Argentina withdrew - Bolivia and Chile did play two matches but these were not classified as official FWC qualifiers. Entry 1954 not accepted. Bolivia's first straight qualification was the one for 1994.**

Chile (CHI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1913
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	13+2: (1934), (1950), 1954, 1958, (1962), 1966-1990, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	112: 44-26-42	
Best goalscorer	18: Marcelo SALAS - 1996, 2000, 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	8: 1930, 1950, 1962, 1966, 1974, 1982, 1998, 2010	

Chile notched ten victories in the 2010 preliminaries, more than they had managed in both of the previous campaigns combined. *La Roja* recorded just three successes in 2002 and five in 2006, failing to claim a finals berth in both outings.

Chile have qualified twice for the FIFA World Cup finals thanks to the withdrawal of their opponents: Argentina in 1950 and the Soviet Union in 1974, when the Soviets refused to play the deciding return qualifier in Chile after the two sides had drawn the first leg 0-0 in Moscow.

All 52 of Chile's home matches in qualification for the FIFA World Cup™ have been played in Santiago. The first 50 were staged at the Estadio Nacional, which in summer 2008 was renamed in memory of sports journalist Julio Martinez Pradanos. Due to renovation work on the stadium, the last two matches were played at the Estadio Monumental David Arellano.

*** Played in inaugural FWC 1930 (no preliminary competition). Withdrew from the 1934 qualifiers. Qualified from their group in 1950 with Bolivia, following Argentina's withdrawal. Chile & Bolivia did play two matches, but these were not classified as official FWC qualifiers. Qualified automatically for 1962 (hosts). In 1974 after a draw in their first play-off match against Chile, the Soviet Union refused to travel to Chile for the return fixture for political reasons, and so in accordance with the regulations Chile were awarded victory. Suspended from the 1994 FWC following goalkeeper Rojas' feigning an injury in their away game against Brazil in the previous preliminary competition.**

Team preliminary competition facts: CONMEBOL



Colombia (COL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1936
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	14: (1938), 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	118: 41-37-40	
Best goalscorer	9: Faustino ASPRILLA - 1993, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	4: 1962, 1990, 1994, 1998	

In the 2010 preliminary competition, Colombia recorded their lowest points tally since the South American tournament adopted the 10-team group format. *Los Cafeteros* picked up just 23 points, compared to 27 in 2002 and 24 in 2006. In all three campaigns, the Colombians failed to make the finals.

Colombia only needed to score two goals to secure qualification for their first ever FIFA World Cup finals in 1962. In a two-game series against Peru, they won 1-0 at home and drew 1-1 in Lima.

Los Cafeteros have twice gone through the group phase without tasting defeat. In 1974 they secured one win and three draws but were nevertheless eliminated on goal difference by Uruguay. In 1994 they qualified for the finals with four wins and two draws, including two victories over the 1990 runners-up Argentina (2-1 at home and 5-0 away).

* *Withdrew from the 1938 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Ecuador (ECU)		FIFA Affiliation: 1926
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	13: (1950), 1962-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	109: 34-27-48	
Best goalscorer	16: Agustin DELGADO - 1996, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 2002, 2006	

During the 2010 preliminary tournament, in 15 of their 18 matches Ecuador reached the half-time interval without letting in a goal. Of their 26 goals conceded during that campaign, 22 were shipped in the second period of play.

An Ecuadorian holds the record for the most appearances in FIFA World Cup qualifying matches. Ivan Hurtado has played in 73 qualifiers from the 1994 to the 2010 edition.

In the last three preliminary tournaments with the 10-team group format, Ecuador did not manage to score more than 23 goals. *La Tri* achieved that tally in 2002 and 2006, whereas in the 2010 edition they scored one goal fewer.

* *Withdrew from the 1950 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Paraguay (PAR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1925
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	15+1: (1950), 1954-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	120: 56-24-40	
Best goalscorer	14: Jose CARDOZO - 1996, 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	8: 1930, 1950, 1958, 1986, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010	

With 33 points from 18 matches, the 2010 campaign represents Paraguay's best showing in the preliminary competition since 1998, when the CONMEBOL zone tournament switched to a single league format.

Of all the South American sides, Paraguay have played the most FIFA World Cup qualifying matches: 120.

Paraguay won the first ever FIFA World Cup qualifier played in South America, beating Chile 4-0 in Asuncion on 14 February 1954. The historic first goal was scored by Manuel Lugo on the 30-minute mark.

* *Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition). Qualified with Uruguay from their group in 1950 when Ecuador and Peru withdrew. Paraguay and Uruguay did play one match, but this was not an official FWC qualifier.*

Peru (PER)		FIFA Affiliation: 1924
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	14: (1934, 1950, 1954), 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	113: 31-28-54	
Best goalscorer	9: Roberto PALACIOS - 1993, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	4: 1930, 1970, 1978, 1982	

In 2010 Peru recorded their worst placing of all time since the single-group format was introduced in the 1998 qualifying tournament, finishing last with just 13 points from 18 matches. Furthermore during that campaign the Peruvian Football Association was suspended for 26 days at the end of 2008, due to government interference.

Having already participated in the 1930 FIFA World Cup it was not until 13 April 1957 that Peru actually played their first ever qualifying match drawing 1-1 in Lima against future world champions Brazil. Peru's goal was scored by Alberto Terry.

On 12 October 2005, Tacna became the first city other than Lima to host a FIFA World Cup home qualifier in Peru, following a series of 46 consecutive matches contested in the Peruvian capital. On that occasion, Peru beat Bolivia 4-1. For the next nine matches, in qualification for the 2010 finals, *La Blanquirojo* reverted to playing in the capital.

* *Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition). Withdrew from the 1934, 1950 & 1954 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Team preliminary competition facts: CONMEBOL



Uruguay (URU)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	14+2: (1950, 1954), 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	118: 52-33-33	
Best goalscorer	13: Diego FORLAN - 2003, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	11: 1930, 1950, 1954, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1986, 1990, 2002, 2010	

Of all the sides that qualified for South Africa 2010, Uruguay needed the most games to seal their place in the finals, no fewer than 20 including the home-and-away play-off against Costa Rica.

Uruguay were the first team to lose a FIFA World Cup qualifying play-off on penalties, missing out against Australia in November 2005.

Having won two world crowns in 1930 and 1950, Uruguay first contested a preliminary tournament in the 1958 edition. However *Los Charrúas* failed to make the finals as a result of a shock 5-0 drubbing away to Paraguay in July 1957.

** Played in inaugural FWC (no preliminary competition). Stayed away in 1934 & 1938 despite being defending champions. Qualified with Paraguay from their group in 1950 when Ecuador and Peru withdrew. Uruguay and Paraguay did play one match, but this was not an official FWC qualifier. Qualified automatically for 1954 (defending champions).*

Venezuela (VEN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	11: (1958), 1966, 1970, (1974), 1978-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	106: 18-14-74	
Best goalscorer	10: Ruberth MORAN - 2000, 2003	
FIFA World Cup participations		

In their last group match in qualification for South Africa, Venezuela managed to avoid defeat away to Brazil for the first time in nine attempts, drawing 0-0 in Campo Grande.

Venezuela are the only team among the ten South American sides never to have secured qualification for the FIFA World Cup finals.

Venezuela hold the record for the longest run of defeats in South American qualifying matches, with 12 losses from 30 June 1985 to 5 September 1993. They also hold the CONMEBOL qualifying record for the longest run of games without keeping a clean sheet: 48 matches from 29 March 1981 to 3 June 2001.

** Withdrew from 1958 & 1974 qualifiers without playing a single match.*



Team Preliminary competition facts:
OFC



Team preliminary competition facts: OFC



American Samoa (ASA)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1998</i>
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	12: 0-0-12	
Best goalscorer	1: Natia NATIA - 2004; Ramin OTT - 2007	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

American Samoa went head-to-head with Samoa in the preliminary tournaments ahead of South Africa 2010, Germany 2006 and Korea/Japan 2002. They are the only national side American Samoa have faced in all three of their previous qualifying campaigns.

American Samoa have conceded the most goals (129 in 12 matches) of any national side affiliated to the OFC. Not only did they suffer the heaviest margin of defeat ever recorded in a FIFA World Cup qualifying match, losing 31-0 to Australia in 2001, they have also conceded ten or more goals in six of their twelve qualifying matches.

American Samoa have conceded 48% of their goals in the first half and 52% in the second half, a distribution that is normal/common in international football. Incredibly, however, in six of their 12 qualifying matches, they have conceded a goal in the 24th minute.

Cook Islands (COK)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1994</i>
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	13: 0-0-13	
Best goalscorer	2: Teariki MATEARIKI - 2007	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

After managing to net at least one goal in all three of their preliminary campaigns before the 2010 edition, on the road to South Africa Cook Islands failed to score for the first time.

Cook Islands are one of 12 teams to have lost every FIFA World Cup qualifying match that they have played (13 in total). Nevertheless, out of all of these teams they have played the most number of matches (13).

Within the OFC Confederation, Cook Islands hold the record for the longest streak of FIFA World Cup qualifying defeats: 13 consecutive losses stretching from 11 November 1996 to 3 September 2007.

Fiji (FIJ)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1964</i>
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries	7: 1982, 1990-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	42: 18-7-17	
Best goalscorer	12: Osea VAKATALESAU - 2007	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

The highest number of qualifiers played by Fiji in a FIFA World Cup™ preliminary tournament is 12, during the 2010 edition. The Fijians picked up six wins, two draws and four defeats, including the 16-0 win over Tuvalu, who are not affiliated to FIFA. The previous highest total of qualifying matches played by Fiji was nine, in the 2006 edition.

On 17 October 2007, Fiji hosted New Zealand in the city of Lautoka, their first home appearance in the FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament for over ten years, having previously contested 19 consecutive qualifiers away or on neutral territory. Fiji's previous home match in the tournament dates back to 15 June 1997, a qualifier against Papua New Guinea played out in Suva, the capital of Fiji.

With the exception of New Zealand, Fiji are the only OFC side to have defeated Australia in a FIFA World Cup qualifying match. That success came on 26 November 1988 in Nadi, when a goal by Madigi in the 66th minute helped Fiji secure a 1-0 victory.

New Caledonia (NCL)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 2004</i>
First entry	2006	
Preliminary entries	2: 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	15: 8-4-3	
Best goalscorer	11: Michel HMAE - 2004, 2007	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

In qualification for South Africa 2010, New Caledonia succumbed to only two defeats in 11 matches. Both came against New Zealand, 3-1 at home and 3-0 away.

During the 2006 FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign, when New Caledonia made their debut appearance in the tournament, the side were eliminated as early as the first round group stage. This was despite finishing their group with the best goal difference: + 14 in total, with 16 goals scored and two conceded.

New Caledonia were one of two national sides making their debut appearance at the 2006 qualifying tournament, the other being Afghanistan.

Team preliminary competition facts: OFC



New Zealand (NZL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1970	
Preliminary entries	11: 1970-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	70: 36-13-21	
Best goalscorer	19: Vaughan COVENY - 1996, 2001, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 1982, 2010	

Out of all of the teams to qualify for South Africa 2010 New Zealand, together with the Netherlands, contested the fewest games with only eight matches played.

New Zealand's first qualifying match against one of the current OFC sides came twelve years after their first ever FIFA World Cup qualifier. Their debut against Israel on 28 September 1969 was followed down the years by matches against Australia, Indonesia, Iraq and Chinese Taipei before an encounter with Fiji on 3 May 1981.

New Zealand's first appearance in the finals of the FIFA World Cup was in 1982, when they were the last team to qualify having played 15 matches. The last and decisive qualifier was played on 10 January 1982 in Singapore, a 2-1 victory over China PR.

Papua New Guinea (PNG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1966
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries*	2: 1998, 2006, (2010)	
Matches played: W – D – L	10: 4-2-4	
Best goalscorer	6: Reginald DAVANI - 2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Papua New Guinea's last qualifier dates back to 19 May 2004, when they beat Samoa 4-1. The Papuans did not take part in the 2010 preliminary tournament as they did not enter the Pacific Games 2007, which constituted the first round of Oceanian Zone qualifying for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Of the four victories recorded by Papua New Guinea in the history of the qualification tournament, their most prestigious is undoubtedly the 1-0 win over New Zealand. The game, played on 31 May 1997 in Port Moresby, was settled by a goal from Francis Niakuam ten minutes from time.

During the first round of this edition's Oceanian Zone preliminary tournament, at the Pacific Games, the Papuans will be guided by Australian tactician Frank Farina. The former international striker previously coached his home nation in the qualification tournament for Korea/Japan 2002, losing the intercontinental play-off to Uruguay, and at the FIFA Confederations Cup.

* *Withdrew from the 2010 preliminary competition without playing a single match.*

Samoa (SAM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries*	4: (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	15: 5-0-10	
Best goalscorer	4: Junior MICHAEL - 2001, 2004, 2007; Richmond FAAISUASO - 2001	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Samoa's last eight qualifiers, in the 2006 and 2010 preliminary tournaments, were all played at the Toleafoa JS Blatter Complex in Apia.

Samoa have never drawn any of their previous 14 qualifiers, having notched up five wins and nine defeats.

Under the name of Western Samoa they won their first FIFA World Cup qualifying match on 13 November 1996, beating Cook Islands 2-1 in Nuku'alofa thanks to two goals inside the first 20 minutes: Tapunuu in minute 10 and Michael on the 20-minute mark.

* *Withdrew from the 1994 qualifiers without playing a single match. Known as Western Samoa until 1997.*

Solomon Islands (SOL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1988
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	33: 15-6-12	
Best goalscorer	16: Commins MENAPI - 2001, 2004, 2007	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Solomon Islands' 12-1 thrashing of American Samoa on 25 August 2007, in qualification for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, is the senior national side's biggest margin of victory in official matches.

Solomon Islands have never lost any of their opening matches in the FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament, winning three and drawing two in their five appearances in the competition.

Five of Solomon Islands' six draws in this competition have finished with a 1-1 scoreline, and three of these stalemates were played out against Tahiti. Their only 2-2 draw was against Australia in Adelaide on 6 June 2004.

Team preliminary competition facts: OFC



Tahiti (TAH)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1990</i>
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	24: 8-5-11	
Best goalscorer	4: Felix TAGAWA - 2001; Naea BENNETT - 2001	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

Tahiti conceded the very first goal scored during the 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament. It came on 25 August 2007 in the match against New Caledonia, when Pierre Wajoka converted a penalty after 9 minutes.

Only two of Tahiti's 24 qualifying matches have been played at home, both of them in Papeete more than 18 years ago. The first ended in a 3-0 defeat to Australia on 11 September 1992, the second a 4-2 victory over Solomon Islands on 9 October 1992.

The last 0-0 draw between two OFC teams in FIFA World Cup qualifying dates back to 29 May 2004 and was played between Tahiti and Fiji in Adelaide, Australia.

Tonga (TGA)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1994</i>
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	16: 6-0-10	
Best goalscorer	4: Lokoua TAUFHEMA - 2001	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

On the road to South Africa 2010, Tonga's only win was a 4-0 success against American Samoa. That result brought the Tongans' total haul of FIFA World Cup qualifying wins to six, equally divided between three sides, namely Samoa, Cook Islands and American Samoa, whom Tonga have each beaten twice.

Tonga are one of 18 teams never to have drawn any of their qualifying games, despite also having played the most matches: 16 in total, with a record of six victories and ten defeats.

For two days, Australia's 22-0 victory over Tonga on 9 April 2001 held the record for the biggest winning margin in a FIFA World Cup qualifier. On 11 April, the Socceroos went one better by thrashing American Samoa 31-0, setting a new record which stands to this day.

Vanuatu (VAN)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1988</i>
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	31: 10-3-18	
Best goalscorer	9: Etienne MERMER - 2004, 2007; Seule SOROMON - 2007	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	-	

In the 2010 tournament Vanuatu picked up five wins, as many as they had managed in their four previous qualifying campaigns combined. The Vanuatans' previous best haul of victories was four, at the 2006 tournament.

Vanuatu failed to win a game in their first two FIFA World Cup qualifying tournaments. They lost all four of their matches in their debut campaign, the preliminary tournament for the 1994 FIFA World Cup, while in the 1998 campaign they notched up a draw and three defeats. Their first victory in the competition came in the 2002 event when they overcame Cook Islands 8-1 on 6 June 2001.

Vanuatu's 15-0 win over American Samoa on 29 August 2007 is currently the sixth biggest margin of victory in the history of the FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament.



Team Preliminary competition facts:
UEFA



Team preliminary competition facts



Albania (ALB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1932
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	10: 1966, (1970), 1974, 1982-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	84: 11-11-62	
Best goalscorer	7: Erion BOGDANI - 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary tournament, Albania managed to keep back-to-back clean sheets for the first time in the competition. They did so not just once but twice, at home against Sweden (0-0) and Malta (3-0) in September 2008, and then away with successive 0-0 draws in Portugal and Malta.

Albania were the only European team making their debut in the preliminary tournament for the 1966 FIFA World Cup.

Albania mounted their best ever preliminary campaign in the 2006 event. In their previous eight campaigns, they had only ever won one game at most, and always at home. On the road to Germany 2006, Albania notched up four wins and secured their first ever away victory in the tournament by beating Kazakhstan in Almaty on 13 October 2004, thanks to a 61st-minute goal from Alban Bushaj.

* *Entry 1970 not accepted.*

Andorra (AND)		FIFA Affiliation: 1996
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	3: 2002-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	32: 1-2-29	
Best goalscorer	3: Ildefons LIMA - 2000, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Together with San Marino, Andorra are the only European team to have lost all ten of their matches in the 2010 qualifying tournament. In total the Andorrans have lost their last 12 qualifiers since drawing 0-0 with Finland in September 2005.

Andorra lost the only qualifier in which they scored two goals, a 3-2 home defeat to Cyprus on 2 September 2000.

Andorra's only victory in 32 qualifiers was secured in Andorra La Vella on 13 October 2004, when Marc Bernaus scored in the 60th minute to earn the home side a 1-0 win over FYR Macedonia.

Armenia (ARM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	42: 4-12-26	
Best goalscorer	4: Artur PETROSYAN - 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 edition Armenia achieved their lowest points tally of any FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign, picking up just four courtesy of a victory over Belgium and a draw with Estonia.

In their first three away qualifiers during the 1998 preliminary tournament, Armenia achieved successive 1-1 draws against Northern Ireland, Albania and Ukraine.

Two of the four wins which Armenia have recorded in the tournament were by a 3-0 scoreline, on 6 September 1997 at home to Albania and 12 October 2005 away to Andorra.

Austria (AUT)		FIFA Affiliation: 1907
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	16: 1934, 1938, (1950), 1954-1958, 1966-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	103: 50-23-30	
Best goalscorer	15: Toni POLSTER - 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	7: 1934, 1954-1958, 1978-1982, 1990, 1998	

On 5 September 2009 Austria marked their 100th FIFA World Cup qualifier with a 3-1 win over Faroe Islands.

Austria qualified for the final phase of the 1938 FIFA World Cup by beating Latvia 2-1 in Vienna. However, since Austria was annexed by Germany during that year, the national team did not attend the tournament in France.

Austria's longest FIFA World Cup qualifying drought spanned four unsuccessful preliminary campaigns from 1962 to 1974. They may yet equal that record, however, having failed to qualify in their last three attempts since reaching the finals in 1998.

* *Qualified for 1938, but had to pull out following the annexation by Germany. Withdrew from the 1950 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Team preliminary competition facts



Azerbaijan (AZE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	38: 3-7-28	
Best goalscorer	2: Elvin MAMMADOV - 2008; Vagif JAVADOV - 2008; Vadim VASILYEV - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

After 18 straight defeats on the road with just two goals scored, Azerbaijan won their first away FIFA World Cup qualifier on 10 October 2009, when overcoming Liechtenstein 2-0 in Vaduz.

Azerbaijan hold the record for the most consecutive matches without scoring in the history of the qualifying tournament, no fewer than 15 between September 2004 and August 2009. Elvin Mammadov finally ended the drought after 1434 minutes by netting in the 2-1 defeat at home to Finland.

Azerbaijan won their debut home qualifier in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition, beating Switzerland 1-0 in Baku on 31 August 1996 thanks to a goal from Vidadi Rzaev on 26 minutes.

Belarus (BLR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1992	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	40: 11-9-20	
Best goalscorer	5: Timofei KALACHEV - 2008; Roman VASILYUK - 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The most goals scored by Belarus in a single FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament is 19, in the 2010 campaign. Their previous best return was 12, which they achieved in the 2002 and 2006 editions.

Belarus are one of only three national sides to have put three goals past Italy in a FIFA World Cup qualifier. They achieved this feat on 13 October 2004 in Parma, despite losing to the future world champions in a 4-3 goal fest. The feat had previously been achieved by Portugal, who won 3-0 at home in 1957, and Denmark, who won 3-1 at home in 1981.

In all four of their previous qualifying campaigns, Belarus have gone head-to-head with at least one fellow former Soviet republic, namely Estonia and Latvia in the 1998 tournament, Armenia and Ukraine in the 2002 edition, Moldova in the 2006 edition and Ukraine again along with Kazakhstan in the 2010 instalment.

Belgium (BEL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17: 1934, 1938, (1950), 1954-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	113: 60-22-31	
Best goalscorer	14: Marc WILMOTS - 1992, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	11: 1930-1938, 1954, 1970, 1982-2002	

The 5-0 drubbing by Spain on 5 September 2009 was Belgium's all-time heaviest defeat in FIFA World Cup qualifying. It was also the senior national side's biggest loss in any competition for over 25 years, since they succumbed to France by the same scoreline in the finals of the UEFA European Championship 1984.

Together with France-Republic of Ireland, Belgium against the Netherlands is the most frequently contested European fixture in the history of the preliminary tournament. The match has been played no less than 12 times, with Belgium claiming two wins to the Netherlands' seven. The first of these games was played in Antwerp on 29 April 1934 and was refereed by Sir Stanley Rous, who would later become President of FIFA.

The last two times that Belgium qualified for the final phase of the FIFA World Cup (the 1998 and 2002 editions) was via the play-offs. In the 1998 edition they edged out Republic of Ireland, and in the 2002 edition they beat Czech Republic.

** Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition). Withdrew from the 1950 qualifiers without playing a single match. Having been eliminated in the 1958 preliminary competition, Belgium declined a second chance to qualify by playing Israel.*

Team preliminary competition facts



Bosnia-Herzegovina (BIH)		FIFA Affiliation: 1996
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	38: 15-7-16	
Best goalscorer	9: Edin DZEKO - 2008; Elvir BOLIC - 1996, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Ahead of South Africa 2010, Bosnia-Herzegovina finished second in their qualifying group behind the future world champions Spain, before being eliminated in the play-offs by Portugal following 1-0 defeats in both legs. Nevertheless during that same campaign the Bosnians also achieved the biggest margin of victory in their history, thrashing Estonia 7-0 in September 2008.

Bosnia-Herzegovina's debut home qualifier in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament was contested in Bologna, Italy, on 8 October 1996. The match ended in a 4-1 victory to their opponents Croatia. Since that game, they have always played their home qualifiers in Bosnia-Herzegovina, contesting eight matches in Sarajevo and ten in Zenica.

Bosnia-Herzegovina were part of European Zone Group 1 in the France 1998 preliminary competition, the only group ever to have featured three teams from the former Yugoslavia. Besides Bosnia-Herzegovina, Group 1 also contained Croatia and Slovenia.

Bulgaria (BUL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1924
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries	17: 1934, 1938, 1954-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	109: 53-22-34	
Best goalscorer	17: Dimitar BERBATOV - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	7: 1962-1974, 1986, 1994-1998	

The 2-2 draw with Montenegro in Podgorica on 11 October 2008 was Bulgaria's 100th FIFA World Cup qualifier. They were the ninth European side to reach this milestone.

In the 1962 and 1966 preliminary competitions, Bulgaria qualified for the final phase by winning play-off deciders, both of which were held in Italy during the month of December. On 16 December 1961 they overcame France 1-0 in Milan, and on 29 December 1965 they beat Belgium 2-1 in Florence.

The Bulgarians' first qualifying victory came 23 years after they made their tournament bow with a 5-1 home defeat by Hungary in March 1934. After picking up seven defeats and two draws, on 22 May 1957 Bulgaria triumphed 2-1 over Norway in Oslo, with Georgi Dimitrov netting the match-winner 16 minutes from the end.

Croatia (CRO)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	38: 23-12-3	
Best goalscorer	7: Bosko BALABAN - 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1998-2006	

After three consecutive qualifications since making their debut in the 1998 preliminaries, Croatia failed to reach the finals for the first time in 2010, when finishing third in their group behind England and Ukraine.

Croatia qualified for the finals of France 1998 during their debut appearance in the preliminary tournament. The last national side to achieve this feat was Zaire back in 1974.

Of their 38 qualifiers played, Croatia have lost just three. Since the 3-1 reverse away to Denmark in 1997, the only other side to have beaten them are England, who did so twice in the 2010 preliminary tournament.

Cyprus (CYP)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	13: (1958), 1962-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	94: 11-10-73	
Best goalscorer	14: Michael KONSTANTINOOU - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Cyprus will play their 100th qualifying match during this preliminary competition. They currently stand at 94. In the 2010 preliminaries Cyprus twice squandered a two-goal cushion. Having reached the interval 2-0 up at home to Montenegro, they conceded two second-half goals in minutes 65 and 77 to draw 2-2. Worse was to come in the last group match away to reigning world champions Italy. Despite leading 2-0 up until the last 12 minutes, Cyprus allowed Alberto Gilardino to plunder a hat-trick that sealed a 3-2 victory for the hosts.

Cyprus conceded the highest number of goals in a European Zone qualifier when they lost 12-0 away to Germany FR in 1969.

Cyprus achieved their first away victory in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament by winning 2-0 in the Faroe Islands in 1992, thereby ending a run of 23 straight defeats.

* **Withdrew from the 1958 qualifiers without playing a single match.**

Team preliminary competition facts



Czech Republic (CZE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1907/94
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17: 1934, 1938, 1954-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	117: 66-23-28	
Best goalscorer	13: Milan BAROS - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	9: 1934-1938, 1954-1962, 1970, 1982, 1990, 2006	

Despite not conceding a goal in seven of their ten qualifiers during the 2010 preliminary tournament, Czech Republic only finished third in their group behind Slovakia and Slovenia.

In the 1994 qualifying tournament the national team played most of their matches under the name RCS (Representation of Czechs and Slovaks) following the dissolution of Czechoslovakia.

Czech Republic have scored at least three goals in 27 of the 57 home qualifiers they have played.

** First entered as Czech Republic in 1998. One of the two successors of the former Czechoslovakia who had entered in 1934, 1938 & 1954-1994. For 1994, Czechoslovakia had entered and begun playing as one country. After the split into Czech Republic & Slovakia (on 1.1.1993), the politically separated countries still fielded a joint team, the RCS (Representation of Czechs and Slovaks), for the remaining qualifying matches.*

Denmark (DEN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries	13: 1958, 1966-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	100: 47-23-30	
Best goalscorer	10: Jon Dahl TOMASSON - 2000, 2004; Soren LARSEN - 2004, 2008; Preben ELKJAER LARSEN - 1980, 1984	
FIFA World Cup participations	4: 1986, 2002-2006, 2010	

The 1-0 reverse against Hungary on 14 October 2009, which was Denmark's 100th FIFA World Cup qualifier, ended the Danes' record 32-match unbeaten home run in this competition (24 victories and eight draws). Prior to that their last home defeat was back in 9 September 1981, when they were beaten 2-1 by Yugoslavia. The nine previous defeats they had suffered on native soil all came in their first 17 qualifiers, which were contested between 1957 and 1981.

Since the 1986 edition, Denmark have qualified for the FIFA World Cup on four occasions. On the other three occasions, they finished only a whisker away from reaching the final tournament. In the 1990 and 2006 editions they missed out by one point, while in the 1994 edition they ended the campaign with the same number of points and the same goal difference as the Republic of Ireland, but were eliminated because they had scored fewer goals.

In their first five qualifiers played between 1956 and 1964, Denmark encountered only British and Irish teams. The Danes faced England and the Republic of Ireland twice each, losing every match, before registering their first victory in the history of the preliminary competition with a 1-0 win over Wales in 1964.

England (ENG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1905
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	14+2: 1950-1962, (1966, 1970), 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	92: 62-19-11	
Best goalscorer	10: Michael OWEN - 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	13: 1950-1970, 1982-1990, 1998-2010	

England will play their 100th qualifying match during this preliminary competition. They currently stand at 92.

England found the net 34 times during the 2010 UEFA zone qualifying tournament, topping the goal-scoring charts ahead of Spain on 28.

England made their debut appearance at the 1950 edition of the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament, and subsequently qualified for the final phase at the first attempt. They previously had the chance to participate in France 1938, when they were offered Austria's place after the latter's withdrawal from the competition. However, the FA declined the invitation.

Over a period of 43 years stretching from 25 October 1961 to 7 October 2000, England played all of their FIFA World Cup home qualifiers at Wembley stadium in London. Nevertheless, their only two home defeats in the competition also came at Wembley stadium, a 1-0 loss against Italy in 1997 and another 1-0 defeat in 2000, this time against Germany. In the twelve matches that they have played in Manchester, Liverpool, Wolverhampton, Newcastle and Highbury stadium in London, England are unbeaten with eleven wins and a draw.

** Was offered Austria's place in 1938 (who had qualified but had disappeared as a political entity), but rejected. First entered in 1950. Qualified automatically for 1966 (hosts) and 1970 (defending champions). Withdrew FIFA membership in 1920, re-entered in 1924, pulled out again in 1928 & re-admitted in 1946.*

Team preliminary competition facts



Estonia (EST)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923/92
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries	7: 1934, 1938, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	56: 11-8-37	
Best goalscorer	11: Andres OPER - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations		

The 0-0 stalemate with Turkey in Tallinn on 15 October 2008 was Estonia's first home draw in FIFA World Cup qualifying. Their two previous draws in the competition had come on the road, in Malta in 1992 and against Scotland in 1997, a match that was played on neutral territory in Monte Carlo.

Estonia played the first match ever in the history of the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament on 11 June 1933, when they lost 6-2 to Sweden in Stockholm.

The eastern Europeans took part in the preliminary matches for the 1934 and 1938 FIFA World Cups. Following the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Estonian national team was reformed and took part in the preliminary tournament for the 1994 FIFA World Cup. Having beaten Finland 1-0 in 1937, Estonia had to wait 59 years for their next win in a qualifying match, a 1-0 victory over Belarus in 1996.

Faroe Islands (FRO)		FIFA Affiliation: 1924
First entry	1988	
Preliminary entries	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	50: 5-3-42	
Best goalscorer	4: Uni ARGE - 1992, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations		

The Faroe Islanders' five victories in 50 qualifying matches were earned against three different opponents, namely Malta in 1997, Luxembourg in 2000 and 2001, plus Lithuania in the last tournament.

Faroe Islands have failed to keep a clean sheet in 38 of their 50 FIFA World Cup qualifiers. The only team that has failed score away against the Faroe Islands is Luxembourg, during the sides' double meeting in 2001 which ended 2-0 in Luxembourg and 1-0 in Toftir.

Faroe Islands have never achieved a 0-0 draw in any of their 50 FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

Finland (FIN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1908
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	17: 1938, 1950-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	111: 28-17-66	
Best goalscorer	10: Mikael FORSSELL - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations		

With just two defeats from their ten matches played, Finland mounted their best FIFA World Cup campaign in the 2010 tournament. The only team to beat the *Huuhkajat* were Russia, who did the double over them. Beside those losses, the Finns also notched five wins and three draws, two of which came against Germany. Finland are one of two sides which, despite having played over 100 qualifying matches, have never participated in the final phase of a FIFA World Cup. Finland have contested 111 qualifiers in total, three less than Luxembourg who also never qualified.

On 15 August 1957, Finland suffered one of the two heaviest home defeats ever recorded in the history of the European Zone preliminary tournament, a 10-0 drubbing by the Soviet Union in Helsinki. The other was the 11-1 defeat of Liechtenstein by FYR Macedonia in 1996.

* *First qualifying competition in 1938.*

Team preliminary competition facts



France (FRA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1908
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	15+3: 1934, (1938), 1950-1994, (1998, 2002), 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	91: 52-19-20	
Best goalscorer	12: Michel PLATINI - 1976, 1980, 1984	
FIFA World Cup participations	13: 1930-1938, 1954-1958, 1966, 1978-1986, 1998-2010	

If they are drawn into a group of six teams France could play their 100th qualifying match at the end of their 2014 campaign. They currently stand at 91.

On 6 September 2008 France slipped to a 3-1 defeat against Austria in Vienna. In FIFA World Cup qualification *Les Bleus* had previously not lost a match by two goals since 9 September 1992, when they went down 2-0 in Bulgaria, and had not shipped three goals in a defeat since Israel snatched a shock 3-2 away win on 13 October 1993.

France have kept a clean sheet in 28 of their 44 home qualifying matches. They conceded no goals in any of their five home matches during the 2006 preliminary tournament.

On neutral territory, France have played and lost two qualification play-offs, both of which took place in Italy. On 11 December 1949 they were beaten 3-2 in Florence by Yugoslavia in the first ever FIFA World Cup qualifier to be decided in extra time. On 16 December 1961 they lost 1-0 to Bulgaria in Milan.

*** Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition). Having been eliminated in the 1950 qualifiers, France declined to fill Scotland's spot which had qualified but withdrawn. Qualified automatically for 1938 & 1998 (hosts) and 2002 (defending champions).**

FYR Macedonia (MKD)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	40: 9-9-22	
Best goalscorer	6: Goran PANDEV - 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The 2010 qualifying tournament was the first FIFA World Cup preliminary campaign in which FYR Macedonia failed to pick up a single point on foreign soil. The Macedonians lost all four of their away group matches against Iceland, the Netherlands, Scotland and Norway.

FYR Macedonia hold the international record for the most goals scored in one match by a side making their debut in the FIFA World Cup preliminary campaign. This feat was achieved with an 11-1 home win over Liechtenstein on 9 November 1996.

In the last two preliminary events, FYR Macedonia's group opponents included the Netherlands, against whom they drew twice in the 2006 edition and lost twice in the 2010 campaign.

Georgia (GEO)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4-1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	38: 8-9-21	
Best goalscorer	7: Alexander IASHVILI - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The 2010 preliminary event was the first one in which Georgia were not grouped alongside a fellow former Soviet republic. In their three previous appearances in the tournament they were matched against Moldova in 1998, Lithuania in 2002, and Kazakhstan and Ukraine in 2006.

Georgia have played 13 of their 18 home fixtures in Tbilisi, although their first victory in the competition came in Batumi on 7 June 1997, when they claimed a 2-0 win over Moldova. That record does not include the 2-1 'home' defeat by Republic of Ireland in September 2008, which was played in Mainz, Germany for security reasons owing to the political situation in Ossetia.

In three of their four previous participations, Georgia's group opponents included Italy. Since the 1998 qualifying tournament, the only campaign in which the Georgians have not faced *Gli Azzurri* was the 2006 event.

Team preliminary competition facts



Germany (GER)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	12+5: 1934, 1938, 1954, (1958), 1962-1970, (1974, 1978), 1982-1990, (1994), 2002, (2006), 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	74: 55-17-2	
Best goalscorer	13: Karl-Heinz RUMMENIGGE - 1980, 1984	
FIFA World Cup participations	17: 1934-1938, 1954-2010	

Michael Ballack's opening strike in the 4-0 home victory over Liechtenstein on 28 March 2009 was Germany's 200th goal in qualification for the FIFA World Cup. The 100th was bagged by Karl Heinz Rummenigge in the 8-0 goalfest at home to Albania in 1981.

Germany hold a number of international records in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament: the highest percentage rate of victories (74% – 55 wins in 74 matches), the lowest rate of defeats (2.7% - two losses in 74 matches), the longest winning streak (16 wins from 10 May 1969 to 30 April 1985) and the highest number of consecutive matches in which they have scored a goal (36, from 11 March 1934 to 25 September 1985).

Germany are unbeaten on their travels in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition. In 36 away matches, plus one match played on neutral territory, they have clocked up 27 victories and ten draws. Their only two defeats in the competition came at home in 1985, when they were edged out 0-1 by Portugal, and in 2001 when they lost 5-1 to England.

** Qualified automatically for 1958, 1978, 1994 (title-holders), 1974 & 2006 (hosts). From 1954 to 1990, Federal Republic of Germany (FRG or West Germany) continued the record of the pre-war Germany with the German Democratic Republic (GDR or East Germany) entering independently from 1958-1990. The reunified Germany continues the record of Federal Republic of Germany while that of the German Democratic Republic closed in late 1990. In 1954, the Saar zone - for a short time autonomous - entered the qualifying competition.*

Greece (GRE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1927
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17: (1934), 1938, 1954-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	104: 40-22-42	
Best goalscorer	10: Theofanis GEKAS - 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 1994, 2010	

Theofanis Gekas is one of three players to have scored four times in a qualifier during the 2010 tournament. The Greek marksman grabbed a quartet of goals in the 5-2 home victory over Latvia, which took place on 10 October 2009. Similar hauls had previously been netted by Czech Republic's Milan Baros and Polish striker Euzebiusz Smolarek, both against San Marino. Gekas was also the top scorer in the 2010 European Zone qualifying tournament with 10 strikes.

The 2004 continental champions failed to qualify for the 2006 FIFA World Cup. This situation, whereby the reigning UEFA European Championship winners failed to qualify for the next FIFA World Cup, had previously occurred on two occasions: in 1978 with Czechoslovakia and in 1994 with Denmark.

Greece's two qualifications to the FIFA World Cup finals bear a number of striking similarities. In both campaigns the Greeks sealed their finals berth more or less on the same day (17 November 1993 and 18 November 2009), with a 1-0 win against an eastern European side (Russia 16 years ago and Ukraine this time around) and with the respective scorers notching their third goal in the national shirt. The match-winning forwards in question were Nikos Machlas in 1993 and Dimitrios Salpingidis ahead of South Africa 2010.

** Withdrew from the 1934 qualifiers after playing one match.*

Hungary (HUN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1907
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17: 1934, 1938, 1954-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	102: 49-23-30	
Best goalscorer	10: Ferenc BENE - 1964, 1968, 1971	
FIFA World Cup participations	9: 1934-1938, 1954-1966, 1978-1986	

In the 2010 preliminaries Hungary notched more victories on the road than they did at home. Their five wins in total included three away successes in Malta, Albania and Denmark, all of which finished 1-0. On 25 March 1938, Hungary became the first team to score ten goals in a FIFA World Cup qualifier thanks to an 11-1 home win over Greece.

On 29 April 1934, Hungary were involved in two matches on the same day: a Central European International Cup match against Czechoslovakia in Prague, which ended in a 2-2 draw, and a FIFA World Cup qualifier against Bulgaria in Budapest, which ended in a 4-1 victory to the home side. The latter match featured only four players who had competed in Hungary's 4-1 win in Sofia earlier in the competition.

** Qualified for 1954 without having to play a single match.*

Team preliminary competition facts



Iceland (ISL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1947
First entry	1954	
Preliminary entries*	11: (1954), 1958, 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	84: 16-15-53	
Best goalscorer	11: Eidur GUDJOHNSEN - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

With three goals to his name in the 2010 preliminaries, Eidur Gudjohnsen is the second Icelandic player to have scored in three different qualifying tournaments (2002, 2006 and 2010), following in the footsteps of Tryggvi Gudmundsson (1998, 2002 and 2006). Gudjohnsen is Iceland's all-time leading marksman in the event, with 11 goals.

Iceland lost all of their first ten FIFA World Cup qualifiers, which were played between 1957 and 1973. In each of these games, they conceded at least four goals: four goals in four of the games, five goals in three of the games and eight goals in the remaining three.

Iceland enjoyed their best ever qualifying campaign at the USA 94 preliminary tournament. They finished third in their group of five teams with a record of three wins, two draws and three defeats. That was also the only edition of the tournament in which Iceland finished with a positive goal difference, +1 with seven goals scored and six conceded.

* **Entry 1954 not accepted.**

Ireland Republic (IRL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	18: 1934, 1938, 1950-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	119: 47-36-36	
Best goalscorer	12: Robbie KEANE - 2000, 2001, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1990-1994, 2002	

With seven draws in 12 encounters during the 2010 campaign, Republic of Ireland established a new record among European sides for the most draws in a single FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament. The previous record of six was held jointly by Wales, Switzerland, Israel and Montenegro.

Together with Luxembourg and Portugal, Republic of Ireland have competed in all 18 FIFA World Cup preliminary tournaments. They have contested more qualifiers (119) than any other European side in the tournament's history.

Together with Korea Republic, the Republic of Ireland hold the record for the longest run of consecutive qualifiers without conceding a goal, eleven matches stretching from 8 March 1989 to 31 March 1993.

* **Entered in 1934 & 1938 still under the name of Irish Free State.**

Israel (ISR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1929
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	18: 1934-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	102: 33-29-40	
Best goalscorer	8: Eliahu OHANA -1985, 1988, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1970	

The 7-0 rout of Luxembourg on 9 September 2009 was Israel's second biggest win in their history (bettered only by an 8-0 victory over San Marino in qualification for the UEFA European Championship 2000). It was also their 100th FIFA World Cup qualifier.

Israel competed in the Asian Zone qualifying tournament in the 1970, 1974 and 1978 editions, and the Oceanian Zone qualifying tournament in the 1986 and 1990 editions.

The 1-0 reverse against Latvia on 5 September 2009 brought to an end Israel's unbeaten home run in FIFA World Cup qualifying, which lasted 15 matches stretching back almost 16 years.

* **A Jewish delegation from Palestine (then a British mandate) played at the qualifying games for 1934 & 1938. It was the first Jewish national team, and as such the forerunner of Israel. Was re-located from Asia's to Europe's group in 1954.**

Italy (ITA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1905
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	14+4: 1934, (1938, 1950), 1954-1982, (1986, 1990), 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	87: 61-19-7	
Best goalscorer	14: Gigi RIVA - 1968, 1971	
FIFA World Cup participations	17: 1934-1954, 1962-2010	

The 1-1 stalemate against Republic of Ireland in Bari on 1 April 2009 brought to an end the Italians' run of 12 successive home victories in qualification for the FIFA World Cup.

Italy have conceded the lowest average goals per match of any European team in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament (0.58, 51 goals in 87 matches). They have lost none of their 44 home qualifiers, recording 39 wins, 5 draws and keeping a clean sheet on 29 occasions.

Italy have qualified for the finals of the FIFA World Cup via the preliminary competition on 14 occasions, more than any other national side.

* **As hosts only qualified automatically since 1938, Italy had to compete in the 1934 qualifiers. Qualified automatically for 1990 (hosts) as well as for 1938, 1950 & 1986 (defending champions).**

Team preliminary competition facts



Kazakhstan (KAZ)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	40: 11-6-23	
Best goalscorer	6: Ruslan BALTIYEV - 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2010 tournament Kazakhstan achieved their first FIFA World Cup qualifying victory as a member of the UEFA Confederation, overpowering Andorra 3-0 in Almaty on 20 August 2008.

Kazakhstan competed in the 1998 and 2002 editions of the preliminary tournament under the banner of the Asian Football Confederation. In those campaigns they notched up a total of nine wins, five draws and four defeats, scoring 42 goals and conceding 23.

The varying degrees of difficulty between Asian and European Zone qualifying is evidenced by Kazakhstan's goal average per game in the respective tournaments, which plummeted after they switched confederations. In the AFC it was 2.3 (42 goals in 18 qualifiers), compared to 0.7 in the UEFA group round (17 goals in 22 qualifiers).

Latvia (LVA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923/92
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries	6: 1938, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	55: 15-12-28	
Best goalscorer	8: Maris VERPAKOVSKIS - 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Between March and September 2009, Latvia won three consecutive FIFA World Cup qualifiers for the first time, doing the double over Luxembourg before taking three points against Israel in Tel Aviv.

On 12 August 1992, Latvia played in the first derby match in a FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament between two former Soviet republics. The match ended in a 2-1 defeat by opponents Lithuania.

After having played three qualifiers in 1937, the last a 2-1 away defeat by Austria on 5 October, Latvia returned to the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament almost 55 years later on 12 August 1992, when they lost 2-1 to Lithuania in Riga.

Liechtenstein (LIE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1976
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries*	4: (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	40: 2-4-34	
Best goalscorer	5: Mario FRICK - 1996, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations		

Mario Frick, scorer of one of his country's two goals in the 2010 campaign, is the only Liechtenstein player to have hit the target in more than one FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament. His five strikes were netted in three different editions: 1998 (one goal), 2006 (three) and the one against Finland in the 2010 instalment.

After having lost all 18 of their qualifiers in the 1998 and 2002 editions of the tournament, Liechtenstein recorded two victories and two draws in the Germany 2006 preliminary competition.

Although they have twice beaten Luxembourg and drawn with Slovakia, Liechtenstein's most remarkable achievement to date is a draw with European vice-champions Portugal on 9 October 2004. The losing finalists of EURO 2004 were leading by two goals at half-time but Liechtenstein clawed back the deficit to end the match at 2:2.

* *Withdrew from the 1994 qualifiers before the preliminary draw.*

Lithuania (LTU)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923/92
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	7: 1934, 1938, 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	53: 13-11-29	
Best goalscorer	6: Edgaras JANKAUSKAS -1996, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations		

Lithuania were one of eight European sides that did not draw a single match in the 2010 preliminaries. The last seven of their ten qualifiers were all decided by the odd goal, with Lithuania winning two and losing five.

Lithuania claimed the first ever win by a former Soviet republic in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament, winning 2-1 away in Latvia on 12 August 1992.

Lithuania played and lost a total of three qualifiers in the 1934 and 1938 competitions. They returned to the tournament 54-and-a-half years later on 28 April 1992, when they drew 2-2 with Northern Ireland in Belfast.

Team preliminary competition facts



Luxembourg (LUX)		FIFA Affiliation: 1910
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	18: 1934, 1938, 1950-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	114: 3-4-107	
Best goalscorer	4: Ady SCHMIT -1960, 1964; Robert LANGERS -1984, 1988, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

After 54 attempts Luxembourg earned their first away victory in FIFA World Cup qualifying on 10 September 2008, when they prevailed 2-1 over Switzerland in Zurich.

Luxembourg hold a number of international records in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament: they have recorded more defeats (107) and conceded more goals (381) than any other national team. They have registered the two longest losing streaks in the tournament: a run of 33 defeats dating back to 8 September 1993, which ended in September 2009 with the 2-1 win in Switzerland, and an earlier series of 32 consecutive losses. The Red Lions also set another tournament record by failing to keep a clean sheet in 75 matches from 10 December 1972 until 15 October 2008, when they eked out a scoreless draw at home to Moldova.

The first of Luxembourg's three victories in the tournament was a 4-2 home win against Portugal on 8 October 1961, when Eusebio claimed a goal for the visitors on his debut appearance.

Malta (MLT)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	10: 1974-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	82: 1-9-72	
Best goalscorer	5: Carmel BUSUTTIL - 1984, 1988, 1992	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Malta were the only European side that failed to score a single goal in the 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament.

Malta were the only European team making their debut in the preliminary tournament for the 1974 FIFA World Cup.

Malta have conceded at least three goals in 30 of their 36 away qualifiers. The most goals they have conceded in a preliminary match was nine, against Austria and German Democratic Republic in 1977.

Moldova (MDA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries*	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	38: 2-8-28	
Best goalscorer	3: Serghei CLESCENCO -1996, 2000; Serghei ROGACIOV - 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

All 19 of Moldova's home FIFA World Cup qualifiers were played in Chisnau, apart from one which was staged in Tiraspol on 6 September 2008 and which culminated in a 2-1 defeat by visitors Israel.

Moldova made their debut in the 1998 edition of the preliminary competition, losing all eight of their matches.

Moldova's only two qualifying victories came at home against former Soviet republics and both ended with a 2-0 scoreline: the first was against Azerbaijan on 1 September 2001, the second on 3 September 2005 against Belarus.

Montenegro (MNE)		FIFA Affiliation: (1931)/2007
First entry	2010	
Preliminary entries*	1: 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	10: 1-6-3	
Best goalscorer	3: Mirko VUCINIC - 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Montenegro's first historic goal in FIFA World Cup qualifying was netted by Mirko Vucinic in the 2-2 draw with Bulgaria on 6 September 2008. Their first and only victory came on 10 October 2009, 2-1 against Georgia in Podgorica.

The last team to make their bow in the UEFA Zone qualifying tournament were Montenegro, who were the only debutants in the 2010 edition, having been affiliated to FIFA since 2007.

The only side that managed to do the double over Montenegro in the group stage of the 2010 qualifying tournament were the then-reigning world champions Italy. Besides beating Georgia, the Brave Falcons clocked up six draws and three defeats, including one at the hands of Bulgaria.

** Montenegro was declared independent from Serbia in 2006. Affiliated to FIFA in 2007, played their first international match in June 2007.*

Team preliminary competition facts



Netherlands (NED)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	16: 1934, 1938, 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	105: 67-22-16	
Best goalscorer	13: Ruud VAN NISTELROOIJ - 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	9: 1934-1938, 1974-1978, 1990-1998, 2006-2010	

Having conceded just two goals in eight games, the Netherlands concluded their 2010 preliminary campaign with the meanest defence in the UEFA zone tournament. The only two players to score against the Dutch were Macedonian striker Goran Pandev and Icelandic centre-back Kristjan Sigurdsson.

The Netherlands hold a number of UEFA records for World Cup qualifiers. They have scored the most goals (241) and, together with Sweden, achieved the most victories overall (67).

The Netherlands are one of three national sides which have failed to qualify for a FIFA World Cup after having clinched a runners-up spot in the previous edition. They were losing finalists in 1978 and failed to progress to the 1982 tournament, following in the footsteps of Sweden (1958, 1962) and Czechoslovakia (1962, 1966).

Northern Ireland (NIR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1911
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	16: 1950-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	112: 36-30-46	
Best goalscorer	8: David HEALY - 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1958, 1982-1986	

The 4-0 victory over San Marino on 15 October 2008 was Northern Ireland's biggest winning margin in the history of the qualifying tournament.

Northern Ireland's goalkeeping legend Pat Jennings is one of only four footballers who have played in six FIFA World Cup preliminary tournaments and the only one who went on to play in a final competition (1982 and 1986). The goalkeeper was involved in 33 qualifiers from the 1966 to the 1986 editions of the tournament. The other players are Panama's Victor Medieta, who took part in 16 matches from the 1982 to the 2002 editions, plus Russell Latapy and Dwight Yorke of Trinidad and Tobago, who made 39 and 44 appearances respectively from the 1990 to the 2010 events.

Northern Ireland have recorded more 0-0 draws than any other European side in the history of the preliminary tournament, 15 in total.

Norway (NOR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1908
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	16: 1938, 1954-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	106: 37-26-43	
Best goalscorer	8: John CAREW - 2000, 2004; Kjetil REKDAL - 1992, 1996	
FIFA World Cup participations	3: 1938, 1994-1998	

Having finished second behind the Netherlands in Group 9 during the last campaign, Norway were the lowest-ranked group runners-up in European Zone qualifying and therefore did not make the play-offs for a berth in South Africa.

Of the 53 home qualifiers that Norway have contested in the preliminary tournament, 51 have been held in Oslo. Norway have always won the qualifiers they have played in other Norwegian cities, scoring four goals each time: they beat Luxembourg 4-2 in Trondheim in 1965, and Iceland 4-1 in Stavanger in 1972.

Norway lost all four of their qualifiers for the 1962 FIFA World Cup, when their opponents were the Soviet Union and Turkey.

Poland (POL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	16: (1934), 1938, (1954), 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	96: 49-16-31	
Best goalscorer	14: Wlodek LUBANSKI - 1964, 1968, 1971, 1976	
FIFA World Cup participations	7: 1938, 1974-1986, 2002-2006	

Poland will play their 100th qualifying match during this preliminary competition. They currently stand at 96.

Poland's 10-0 thrashing of San Marino on 1 April 2009 was the biggest winning margin recorded by any team in the 2010 UEFA Zone qualifying event.

In the 1934 FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament, Poland only played the home match in their home-and-away series with Czechoslovakia, losing 2-1. The return match was not played because the Polish government refused to grant the team visas to go to Prague.

Poland have always qualified for the final phase when they have been sorted into the same group as Wales. It happened in the 1974, 2002 and 2006 editions.

*** Withdrew from the 1934 qualifiers after playing one match and from those for 1954 without playing at all.**

Team preliminary competition facts



Portugal (POR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	18: 1934-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	117: 59-30-28	
Best goalscorer	19: PAULETA - 2000, 2004	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	5: 1966, 1986, 2002-2010	

Between 11 October 2008 and 28 October 2009 Portugal ground out three consecutive 0-0 stalemates, first away to Sweden and then in home games against Albania and the Swedes once more. They are only the sixth team to have recorded three successive goalless draws in the history of the preliminary tournament, after Tunisia ahead of Mexico 1970, Guatemala (1982), Denmark and Spain (1994) and Saudi Arabia (2010).

On 9 October 2008, the Portuguese conceded three goals on the way to a home qualifying defeat for the first time in 15 years. Their opponents were Denmark, whose 3-2 smash-and-grab at the Jose Alvalade stadium in Lisbon came 20 games after Italy's 3-1 victory in Porto in 1993.

In their last three campaigns, Portugal have not lost a single away match during the preliminary tournament group stage, recording four wins and two draws on their travels. Four years ago the Iberians earned three wins and three draws on foreign soil, whereas ahead of Korea/Japan 2002 they came away with three wins and a draw.

** Eliminated in the 1950 qualifiers, Portugal declined an offer of Turkey's vacancy (Turkey had qualified and then withdrawn).*

Romania (ROU)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	15+1: 1934, (1938), 1954, 1958, (1962), 1966-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	106: 58-21-27	
Best goalscorer	15: Gheorghe HAGI - 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	7: 1930-1938, 1970, 1990-1998	

In the 2010 preliminaries Romania suffered two of their heaviest defeats in the history of FIFA World Cup qualifying. Their all-time worst result in the competition came on 10 October 2009 in Serbia, where the *Tricolorii* were overrun 5-0. Before then, on 6 September 2008, Lithuania had inflicted the Romanians' heaviest home reverse by the scoreline of 3-0.

In the 1994 and 1998 FIFA World Cup preliminary tournaments, Romania scored an impressive total of 66 goals in 20 matches.

Romania qualified for the 1934 FWC thanks to a fortuitous 2-1 win over Yugoslavia in their decisive final match, held in Bucharest on 29 April 1934. Although Romanian keeper Adalbert Pullock conceded only one goal during the game, the visitors struck the woodwork no less than eight times.

** Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition). Qualified 1938 without playing any matches due to the withdrawal of Egypt. Withdrew from the 1962 qualifiers without playing a single match.*

Russia (RUS)		FIFA Affiliation: 1912/92
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	14: 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	105: 66-22-17	
Best goalscorer	9: Vladimir BESCHASTNYKH - 1996, 2000	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>	9:	

After 50 consecutive home matches without defeat in FIFA World Cup qualifying, Russia were finally beaten in their own backyard on 10 October 2009, when Germany edged a 1-0 win.

Russia played their first ever qualifier under the name of Russia on 14 October 1992, when they beat Iceland 1-0 in Moscow.

In the 1974 preliminaries Soviet Union were effectively disqualified after refusing to play the return leg of the UEFA/CONMEBOL play-off in Chile. The home side were awarded a 3-0 victory after the first leg had finished 0-0.

**Entered 1958-1990 as USSR. Disqualified in 1974 for refusing to play the return leg of the play-off against Chile (political reasons). Entered the qualifiers for 1994 year-end of 1990. Disintegrated over 1990 & 1991 as its republics seceded one after another. Political end late December 1991, the Russian Federation proclaimed on 17.4.1992. First qualifying match played by Russia on 14 October 1992 vs Iceland.*

San Marino (SMR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1988
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries*	5: 1994-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	46: 0-2-44	
Best goalscorer	5: Andy SELVA - 2000, 2004, 2008	
<i>FIFA World Cup participations</i>		

In the 2010 preliminary tournament San Marino conceded 47 goals, more than any other side.

San Marino are the only European side never to have won a FIFA World Cup qualifying match.

Davide Gualtieri scored the fastest goal in the history of the tournament just nine seconds into San Marino's 7-1 defeat by England, which was played in Bologna on 17 November 1993.

Team preliminary competition facts



Scotland (SCO)		FIFA Affiliation: 1910
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	16: 1950-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	105: 54-23-28	
Best goalscorer	9: Kevin GALLACHER - 1992, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	8: 1954-1958, 1974-1990, 1998	

On 11 October 2008 in Glasgow, Scotland played out a 0-0 draw with Norway in their 100th FIFA World Cup qualifier.

Despite securing qualification via the preliminary tournament, Scotland declined to participate in the final phase of the 1950 FIFA World Cup.

Scotland have played 14 of their 105 FIFA World Cup qualifiers against fellow representatives from Great Britain. The last of these derby matches was played on 10 September 1985 in Cardiff, where Scotland drew 1-1 with Wales. The British side which they have not encountered for the longest time in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament are England: the sides' last meeting was on 3 April 1954 when Scotland fell to a 4-2 home defeat in Glasgow.

* **Qualified for 1950, but declined to attend.**

Serbia (SRB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17: 1934-1990, (1994), 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	108: 65-26-17	
Best goalscorer	17: Savo MILOSEVIC - 1996, 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	11: 1930, 1950-1962, 1974, 1982, 1990, 1998, 2006-2010	

With a total of 231 goals scored in the history of the UEFA zone preliminary tournament, including 22 in the 2010 edition, Serbia are the third most prolific European nation in this competition behind the Netherlands (241) and Czech Republic/Czechoslovakia (234).

Under the name of Yugoslavia, Serbia played and won the debut FIFA World Cup qualifier decided in extra time, a 3-2 win over France on 11 December 1949 in Florence.

Serbia finished the 2006 European Zone preliminary campaign with the best defence in the tournament, having conceded a solitary goal in 10 matches. The goal was scored by Spain's Raul on 7 September 2005, during a 1-1 draw played out in Madrid.

* **Serbia was called Yugoslavia before February 2003 then Serbia and Montenegro until 2006. Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition), first qualifying competition in 1934. Reached the semi-finals 1930, but declined to play the match for third place (opponents USA). Yugoslavia played in 1930 - and at the qualifiers for 1934 & 1938 - as the Kingdom of Serbia and Montenegro. The country became a federal republic in 1946, and played as such up to the FWC in 1990. Excluded from 1994 due to the war in the area. In 2006, Serbia was declared independent from Montenegro.**

Slovakia (SVK)		FIFA Affiliation: 1907/94
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	44: 23-10-11	
Best goalscorer	8: Szilard NEMETH - 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 2010	

Slovakia's passage to South Africa was confirmed on the last matchday on 14 October 2009, when an own goal by left-back Seweryn Gancarczyk handed the Slovaks a decisive 1-0 victory in Poland.

Slovakia reached the second stage play-offs in the 2006 preliminary event, their third qualifying campaign. They had to beat Spain to secure a ticket to the finals but lost 5-1 away and drew the return match 1-1 at home.

Slovakia have won two of their eight previous meetings with neighbours Czech Republic. Both victories came in qualifiers for the FIFA World Cup™, a 2-1 success in 1997 in Bratislava and a similar result in 2009 in Prague.

Team preliminary competition facts



Slovenia (SVN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	42: 16-12-14	
Best goalscorer	6: Milenko ACIMOVIC - 2000, 2004; Zlatko ZAHOVIC - 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 2002, 2010	

During both of their successful FIFA World Cup qualifying bids, Slovenia have crossed paths with Russia. In the 2010 play-offs they won 1-0 at home after going down 2-1 in Moscow, whereas in the 2002 preliminary tournament group stage, the Slovenians drew 1-1 on the road and ran out 2-1 winners on home turf.

Slovenia experienced vastly differing fortunes in their first two preliminary campaigns. Having recorded no wins, one draw and seven defeats in the 1998 tournament, they remained unbeaten with six wins and six draws in the 2002 tournament, and qualified for the FIFA World Cup finals by overcoming Romania in the play-offs.

On both occasions that Slovenia have qualified for the FIFA World Cup™, they have done so via the play-offs. Before taking on Russia ahead of South Africa 2010, the Slovenians clinched a spot at Korea/Japan 2002 finals by outsmarting Romania 2-1 in Ljubljana and grinding out a 1-1 draw in Bucharest.

Spain (ESP)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	16+1: 1934, (1938), 1950-1978, (1982), 1986-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	99: 66-22-11	
Best goalscorer	10: Fernando HIERRO - 1992, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	13: 1934, 1950, 1962-1966, 1978-2010	

The first game of the world champions will be their 100th World Cup qualifying match.

The Iberians finished the 2010 preliminary tournament unbeaten for the fourth time in a row, establishing a record of 45 consecutive qualifiers without defeat. Spain's last reverse before embarking on this series, which is still running, dates back to 31 March 1993 when they went down 1-0 to Denmark in Copenhagen.

Spaniard Isidro Langara was joint top scorer in the preliminary tournament for the 1934 FIFA World Cup, together with Mexico's Dionisio Mejia. The forward scored seven of Spain's eleven goals in the tournament, including five in his side's 9-0 home win over Portugal.

The only European team to have chalked up ten consecutive victories in a preliminary tournament is Spain, during the 2010 edition. Just one other nation has matched this feat and that was Mexico, who won ten games on the bounce during the 2006 CONCACAF Zone tournament. Nevertheless *La Roja's* accomplishment is all the more remarkable considering that they won every one of their matches on the road to the main event, whereas *El Tri* played a total of 18 qualifiers in their 2006 campaign.

* Entry 1938 not accepted due to the political circumstances, which made it unlikely, that they would be able to play all their matches. Qualified automatically for 1982 (hosts).

Sweden (SWE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17+1: 1934-1954, (1958), 1962-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	107: 67-17-23	
Best goalscorer	15: Henrik LARSSON - 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004	
FIFA World Cup participations	11: 1934-1950, 1958, 1970-1978, 1990-1994, 2002-2006	

On 11 October 2008 Sweden contested their 100th FIFA World Cup qualifier, drawing 0-0 with Portugal in Solna.

Sweden were the first side to qualify for the final phase of a FIFA World Cup, having completed their preliminary campaign on 29 June 1933 with victories over Estonia and Lithuania.

Sweden were the first Olympic champions to qualify for the final phase of a FIFA World Cup via the preliminary tournament. After clinching gold in London during the Men's Olympic Football Tournament in 1948, they booked their passage to Brazil 1950 with a 3-1 aggregate victory over Ireland in a two-match play-off.

* Qualified automatically for 1958 (hosts).

Switzerland (SUI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17+1: 1934-1950, (1954), 1958-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	110: 46-30-34	
Best goalscorer	17: Alexander FREI - 2000, 2004, 2008; Kubilay TURKYILMAZ - 1988, 1992, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	9: 1934-1954, 1962-1966, 1994, 2006-2010	

Of all the European teams which qualified directly for the South Africa finals, Switzerland achieved the lowest points tally together with Denmark. Both sides topped their respective groups with 21 points thanks to six wins, three draws and a defeat.

Switzerland booked their passage into the 1934 FIFA World Cup finals thanks to a victory awarded by default against Romania, who had fielded an ineligible player, Hungarian-born Luliu Baratty.

Despite having faced Germany/Germany FR 50 times at "A" international level, Switzerland have never gone head-to-head with their northern neighbours in FIFA World Cup qualifying.

* Qualified automatically for 1954 (hosts).

Team preliminary competition facts



Turkey (TUR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	15: (1934), 1950, 1954, (1958), 1962-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	108: 38-20-50	
Best goalscorer	16: Hakan SUKUR - 1992, 1996, 2000	
FIFA World Cup participations	2: 1954, 2002	

Away from home in the 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament, Turkey mustered just one victory in five attempts, beating Armenia 2-0 in Yerevan. In the previous two campaigns they had won a total of nine of their 13 matches played on foreign soil: five out of six in the 2002 edition and four out of seven in the 2006 edition.

Turkey are the only team to have qualified for the finals of a FIFA World Cup by drawing lots. This happened at the end of their play-off decider against Spain, a 2-2 stalemate played out in Rome on 17 March 1954.

Turkey withdrew from the 1950 FIFA World Cup finals despite having secured a place after only one qualifying match. The match ended in a 7-0 home victory over Syria, who then withdrew before the return match was played. Turkey automatically progressed to the final round where they were due to face Austria, but the latter team also withdrew from the tournament.

** Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1934 & 1958 without playing a single match. Qualified for 1950, but declined to attend.*

Ukraine (UKR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4: 1998-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	48: 23-17-8	
Best goalscorer	26: Andriy SHEVCHENKO - 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 2006	

With six goals plundered in the 2010 tournament, Andriy Shevchenko consolidated his position as the all-time leading goalscorer in the European Zone qualifying competition, increasing his total haul to 26. Shevchenko netted four goals in the 1998 event, ten in the 2002 event and six in the 2006 campaign.

Ukraine have achieved the highest percentage rate of draws of any European team in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament (35.4%, 17 in 48 matches)

Ukraine were the first former Soviet republic to qualify for the final phase of the 2006 FIFA World Cup. In their two previous tournaments they were eliminated in the play-offs, by Croatia in 1998 and by Germany in the 2002 edition.

Wales (WAL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1910
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	16: 1950-2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	100: 30-20-50	
Best goalscorer	11: Ian RUSH - 1984, 1992	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1958	

In the 2010 preliminaries Wales accrued as many points on the road as they did at home, earning two wins on native soil against Azerbaijan and Liechtenstein and the same number away against the same sides.

Wales were one of eight European sides that did not draw a single match in the 2010 tournament.

In the first match of their decisive play-off in the 1958 edition, which they won 2-0 against Israel in Tel Aviv, Wales fielded two pairs of brothers: Ivor and Len Allchurch, and John and Mel Charles.

In no fewer than five of their FIFA World Cup preliminary campaigns, Wales have failed to win a match. In the 1950 and 1954 editions they faced the other three British sides and emerged with a draw and two losses from each campaign, in the 1962 campaign they achieved a draw and a defeat against Spain, in 1970 they notched up four losses and finally in 1990 they could only manage two draws from six games.

** When no opponents could be found for Israel in the 1958 Asian qualifiers, FIFA decided that Israel would have to meet one of the originally eliminated teams, to be decided by lottery. Wales won the draw after Belgium declined, and qualified by beating Israel twice. It was the first (and so far the only) time that a country played at a FWC after having been eliminated in the regular qualifiers.*

Team preliminary competition facts for former finalist associations which are now defunct

German DR (GDR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952-1990
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	9: 1958-1990	
Matches played: W – D – L	47: 22-8-17	
Best goalscorer	14: Joachim STREICH - 1971, 1976, 1980	
FIFA World Cup participations	1: 1974	

** From 1954 to 1990, Federal Republic of Germany (FRG or West Germany) continued the record of the pre-war Germany with the German Democratic Republic (GDR or East Germany) entering independently from 1958-1990. The reunified Germany continues the record of Federal Republic of Germany while that of the German Democratic Republic closed in late 1990.*