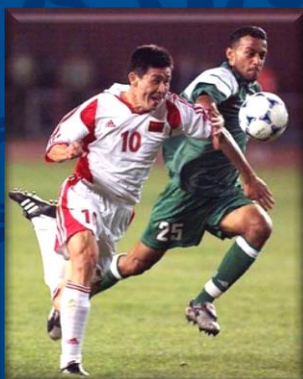
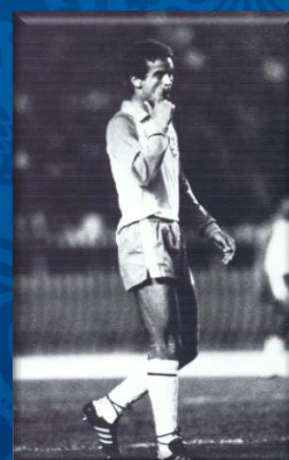




FIFA WORLD CUP
RUSSIA 2018

Preliminary Draw for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™

Overview of the Participating Member Associations



Last update: 14 July 2015

Contents

Team preliminary competition facts	3
Asian Zone – AFC	3
African Zone - CAF	20
North, Central American and Caribbean Zone – CONCACAF.....	41
South American Zone – CONMEBOL.....	54
Oceanian Zone – OFC	59
European Zone – UEFA.....	63

Photos on cover (top row, from left to right)

FIFA World Cup 1998 Preliminary Competition: Peter CARGILL of Jamaica (left), Ronald CERRITOS of El Salvador (right)

Photo by Alexander Hassenstein/Bongarts/Getty Images

FIFA World Cup 1986 Preliminary Competition: Mats MAGNUSSON of Sweden cheers after the final whistle - his team draws against Germany FR

Photo ©FIFA Archive

FIFA World Cup 2010 Preliminary Competition: Ali DAEI of Iran

Photo by Gunnar Berning/Bongarts/Getty Images

Second row, from left to right

FIFA World Cup 1966 Preliminary Competition: Italy – Scotland 3:0, Ezio PASCUTTI of Italy (left)

Photo by Foto-net/FIFA Archive

FIFA World Cup 2002 Preliminary Competition: China PR – United Arab Emirates 3:0, HAO Haidong of China PR, MOHAMMAD QASSIM of United Arab Emirates

Photo by Bongarts/Getty Images

Team preliminary competition facts

Does not include figures of the FWC2018 preliminaries!

Asian Zone – AFC

Teams enrolled in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition: 46 / Slots: 4.5

Afghanistan (AFG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	2006	
Preliminary entries	3 2006, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	6 0 – 1 – 5	
Total goals scored / goals against	2 / 21	
Best goalscorers	1 KARIMI Obaidullah 1 -2010	
	1 AREZOU Mohammad 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Afghanistan's best result was in the qualifiers for Brazil 2014, a 1-1 draw with Palestine on 3 July 2011.

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.

Australia (AUS)		FIFA Affiliation: 1963
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	13 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	119 68-30-21	
Total goals scored / goals against	311 / 95	
Best goalscorer	20 THOMPSON Archie 16-2002, 2-2006, 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1974, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 2006	

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).

Together with Jordan, Australia are also the only national side to have won two FIFA World Cup preliminary matches in 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 confederations.

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

Bahrain (BHR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1968
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	9 1978-1986, (1990), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	80 28 – 25 – 27	
Total goals scored / goals against	95 / 84	
Best goalscorer	8 HUBAIL Aala 5-2006, 3-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 preliminary competition, Bahrain recorded the most emphatic victory with a 10-0 win over Indonesia on 29 February 2012.

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 drew 0-0 at home to New Zealand before going down 1-0 in the return leg in Wellington.

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	8 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	40 9 – 4 – 27	
Total goals scored / goals against	31 / 90	
Best goalscorers	3 HOSSAIN JOARDER Mohammad 3-1994 ALFAZ Mohammed 1-1998, 2-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Lost only one game in the 2014 qualifiers, a 4-0 defeat against Lebanon.

Have recorded a total of nine victories in 40 FIFA World Cup preliminary competition matches, including two wins against both Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Bangladesh have played just ten qualifiers on home soil, earning five victories.

Bhutan (BHU)		FIFA Affiliation: 2000
First entry	2010	
Preliminary entries*	0 (2010)	
Matches played: W – D – L	0 – 0 – 0	
Total goals scored / goals against	0 / 0	
Best goalscorers	-	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Taking part in their first-ever FWC preliminary competition after withdrawing from the 2010 edition.

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

Brunei Darussalam (BRU)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1972</i>
First entry	1986	
Preliminary entries	2	
Matches played: W – D – L	12 0 – 0 – 12	
Total goals scored / goals against	2 / 57	
Best goalscorers	1 RAHIM Ahmad 1-1986 1 ZAINUDIN Kassim 1-1986	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

Brunei Darussalam have yet to win a match; they have lost all of their 12 encounters to date.

Scored two goals so far; one in a 5-1 defeat to Hong Kong on 6 April 1985, and the other in a 2-1 defeat to Macau one week later.

Cambodia (CAM)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1954</i>
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	4 1998, 2002, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	16 1 – 2 – 13	
Total goals scored / goals against	11 / 62	
Best goalscorer	3 NASA Samel 1-2010, 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Cambodia achieved their first victory in FIFA World Cup qualifying on 29 June 2011 against Laos. The only other matches in which Cambodia have avoided defeat out of 16 encounters were both 1-1 home draws, against Indonesia (27 April 1997) and Maldives (15 April 2001).

Conceded at least three goals in ten of their 13 defeats, their worst performance coming in an 8-0 thrashing at the hands of Indonesia on 6 April 1997.

China PR (CHN)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1931</i>
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries	10 1958, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	90 58 – 11 – 21	
Total goals scored / goals against	195 / 63	
Best goalscorer	13 HAO Haidong 2-1994, 6-1998, 2-2002, 3-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 2002	
Best rank	Group stage in 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 rate in FIFA World Cup preliminary tournaments thanks to 58 victories in 90 matches (a win rate of 64.4%).

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*	10 (1954, 1958), 1978, 1882, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014		
Matches played: W – D – L	50 5 – 4 – 41		
Total goals scored / goals against	28 / 180		
Best goalscorers	3	CHEN Jui Te 3-2006	
	3	DUH DENG CHYAN 3-1982	
	3	HUANG Wei Yi 3-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Chinese Taipei ended a run of nine consecutive defeats in FIFA World Cup qualifying by defeating Malaysia 3-2 on 3 July 2011.

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.

GUAM (GUM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1996	
First entry	2002		
Preliminary entries	1	2002	
Matches played: W – D – L	2	0 – 0 – 2	
Total goals scored / goals against	0 / 35		
Best goalscorer	-		
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Guam have only ever played two qualifiers, losing both of them in the 2002 event against Iran (19-0) and Tajikistan (16-0), two of the three heaviest losses in the Asian qualifying tournament.

Withdrew from the 2006 and 2010 qualifiers without playing a match and did not enrol for the 2014 qualifiers.

Yet to score in a preliminary competition.

Hong Kong (HKG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1954	
First entry	1974		
Preliminary entries	11	1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	65 19 – 12 – 34		
Total goals scored / goals against	78 / 123		
Best goalscorer	10	LAU Wing Yip 2-1978, 8-1986	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

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.

India (IND)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	7 (1950, 1954, 1974), 1986, (1990), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	33 8 – 10 – 15	
Total goals scored / goals against	36 / 69	
Best goalscorer	4 ANCHERI Jo 4-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Eliminated from the South Africa 2010 and the Brazil 2014 preliminary tournaments 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 1950 FIFA World Cup 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*	12+1 (1938, 1950), 1958, (1962), 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	71 19 – 16 – 36	
Total goals scored / goals against	87 / 143	
Best goalscorer	5 JAYA Ilham 5-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1938	
Best rank	First round in 1938	

Disqualified

With 30 goals, Indonesia conceded the highest number of goals in the 2014 Asian qualifying tournament.

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.

* 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*	9 1974, 1978, (1982, 1986), 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	110 66 – 28 – 16	
Total goals scored / goals against	231 / 76	
Best goalscorer	35 DAEI ALI 7-1994, 9-1998, 10-2002, 9-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1978, 1988, 2006, 2014	
Best rank	Group stage in 1978, 1988, 2006, 2014	

With 100,000 spectators, Iran v. Qatar on 12 June 2012 recorded the highest crowd in the 2014 preliminary competition.

Iran hold the Asian record for the most emphatic victory with a 19-0 win against Guam on 24 November 2000.

Iran boast the second highest number of consecutive clean sheets in the Asian Zone qualifiers with 60 matches, just two less than Korea Republic.

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 231 goals scored.

Ali Daei is the leading all-time FIFA World Cup preliminary competition scorer with 35 goals.

Iran qualified for the 2014 FIFA World Cup™ with the oldest team at an average age of 26 years and 7 months.

* 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*	10 1974, (1978), 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	85 42 – 19 – 24	
Total goals scored / goals against	177 / 85	
Best goalscorer	15 RADHI AHMED 1-1986, 6-1990, 7-1994, 1-1998	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1986	
Best rank	Group stage in 1986	

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.

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

Japan (JPN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1929
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	13+1 (1938), 1954, 1962, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, (2002), 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	102 55 – 23 – 24	
Total goals scored / goals against	203 / 78	
Best goalscorer	27 Kazu MIURA 13-1994, 14-1998	
FIFA World Cup participations	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 2002, 2010	

As in 2006 and 2010, Japan were the first team to qualify for the 2014 FIFA World Cup. When Brazil lined up against Japan at the FIFA Confederations Cup on 15 June 2013, they were the only two teams to have already qualified for 2014.

Japan played their 100th qualifying match during the 2014 preliminary competition.

Together with Iran and Jordan, Japan scored the most goals – 30 – in the 2014 Asian preliminary competition.

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 deadlock early on 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 in 2002 with Korea Republic.

Jordan (JOR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1956
First entry	1986	
Preliminary entries	8 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	62 23 – 13 – 26	
Total goals scored / goals against	84 / 85	
Best goalscorer	11 MAHMOUD Hassan 4-2010, 7-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Jordan played 20 matches in the 2014 qualifiers, the highest number in the Asian zone.

Jordan are the only national side, together with Australia, to have won two FIFA World Cup preliminary matches in a penalty shoot-out, against Kyrgyzstan in 2007 and Uzbekistan in 2013.

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*	9 1966, (1970), 1974, (1978), 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	75 34-18-23	
Total goals scored / goals against	102 / 69	
Best goalscorer	8 HONG Yong Jo 4-2006, 4-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	2 1966, 2010	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1966	

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*	13+1 1954, (1958), 1962, (1966), 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, (2002), 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	117 70-33-14	
Total goals scored / goals against	226 / 76	
Best goalscorer	12 PARK Chuyoung 2-2006, 4-2010, 6-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	9 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Fourth place in 2002	

Korea Republic were the only 2014 Asian finalists that had also qualified for the five previous FIFA World Cups (1994-2010) Leaving aside Australia (affiliated to the AFC since January 2006), Korea Republic hold many AFC records for FIFA World Cup qualifiers including: highest number of games (117), most wins (70), most draws (33), longest unbeaten run (28 matches between 6 April 1985 and 22 October 1993) and the most consecutive wins (12 from 6 April 1985 to 7 June 1989).

The *Taeguk Warriors* boast the second-best attack in the AFC Zone (not counting Australia) with 226 goals, five 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).

Kuwait (KUW)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	11 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	85 45-13-27	
Total goals scored / goals against	148 / 82	
Best goalscorer	13 AL HUWAIDI Jasem 5-1994, 5-1998, 3-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1982	
Best rank	Group stage in 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 1982 FIFA World Cup, 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*	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	23 8-2-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	28 / 41	
Best goalscorer	3 KUTSOV Sergey 3-1998 CHIKISHEV Sergey 3-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Kyrgyzstan were knocked out of the 2010 and 2014 tournaments 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	3 2002, 2006, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	18 2-2-14	
Total goals scored / goals against	17 / 95	
Best goalscorer	4 PHAPHOUVANIN Visay 1-2006, 3-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 two victories achieved by Laos in a total of 18 qualifiers was a 2-0 win over the Philippines on 19 May 2001 and a 6-2 win after extra time against Cambodia on 3 July 2011.

Eleven of Laos' 14 preliminary defeats have been 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*	6 (1986), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	48 16-12-20	
Total goals scored / goals against	75 / 71	
Best goalscorer	11 ANTAR Roda 5-2002, 3-2006, 1-2010, 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

The team 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.

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

Macau (MAC)		FIFA Affiliation: 1978
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries	8 1982, 1986, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	33 3-1-29	
Total goals scored / goals against	14 / 161	
Best goalscorer	2 CARVALHAL Alberto 2-1986 2 CHAN Kin Seng 2-2010 2 PINTO Daniel 1-1986, 1-1994	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

Hold the Asian record for the longest run of games in which they have conceded at least one goal – 29 matches between 20 February 1985 and 3 July 2011. That run is still ongoing.

In the 33 qualifiers they have played, Macau have accumulated three wins, 29 defeats and a single draw, a 1-1 draw with Nepal on 23 March 1997.

Malaysia (MAS)		FIFA Affiliation: 1954	
First entry	1974		
Preliminary entries	11	1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	51	15-13-23	
Total goals scored / goals against	66 / 81		
Best goalscorer	7	SALLEH Dollah 2-1986, 5-1990	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Eliminated from the 2010 FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament after just two matches following games against Bahrain (4-1 and 0-0). Have always played at least three games in their eight previous qualifying campaigns, starting in 1982. Eliminated from the 2014 campaign after recording only one win.

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 (MDV)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986	
First entry	1990		
Preliminary entries*	5	(1990), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2020, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	24	5-2-17	
Total goals scored / goals against	28 / 100		
Best goalscorer	7	ASHFAQ Ali 6-2006, 1-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Maldives played fewer games (2) in the 2010 and 2014 tournaments than in any other FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign.

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 ten 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	4	2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	12	1-1-10	
Total goals scored / goals against	5 / 46		
Best goalscorer	1	Five players with one goal	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Won their first-ever qualifying match in the 2014 preliminary competition by beating Myanmar on 29 June 2011.

Eliminated from the FIFA World Cup 2006, 2010 and 2014 qualifying competitions by Maldives, Korea DPR and Myanmar after just two matches.

Myanmar (MYA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	2 (1950, 1994, 2002, 2006), 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	6 1-0-5	
Total goals scored / goals against	2 / 17	
Best goalscorer	1	NAING Mai Aih 1-2014
	1	SOE Paing 1-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 qualifiers, Myanmar celebrated their first-ever victory, winning 2-0 against Mongolia on 3 July 2011.

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

* 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*	6 1986, 1990, 1998, 2002, (2006), 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	28 4-3-21	
Total goals scored / goals against	23 / 98	
Best goalscorer	7	RAYAMAJHI Nirajan 7-2002
	<i>Knocked out</i>	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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.

* Withdrew from the 2006 competition without playing any games.

Oman (OMA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1980
First entry	1986	
Preliminary entries*	7 (1986), 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	62 25-17-20	
Total goals scored / goals against	104 / 63	
Best goalscorer	11	AL DHABAT Hani 11-2002
	11	AL MUKHAINI Yaqoob 11-2002
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 qualifiers, Oman went head-to-head with Japan, just as they did in the 2010, 2006 and 1998 editions.

The 2014 FIFA World Cup qualifying competition was their most successful, with a record six wins and five draws notched up in a record 16 appearances.

In eight days between 30 April and 7 May 2001, Oman won three matches and scored 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	7 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	28 0-3-25	
Total goals scored / goals against	11 / 115	
Best goalscorer	3 ZAMAN Ghohar 3-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

In their 26th FIFA World Cup qualifier, played in Damascus on 28 October 2007, 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 have drawn only three out of 28 encounters. Scored three times in a match just once in the draw with Sri Lanka on 17 May 2001.

Palestine (PLE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries*	4 (1934 & 1938), 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	22 6-4-12	
Total goals scored / goals against	24 / 31	
Best goalscorer	4 ABOU EL KAIR Emad 4-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 event, Palestine won the first leg and drew the second against Afghanistan to get through to round two, where they lost 1-0 to Thailand in the first leg and drew 2-2 in the second.

Palestine have won six of their FIFA World Cup preliminaries, with the biggest margin coming in an 8-0 victory over Chinese Taipei on 18 February 2004.

* A team from Palestine (then a British mandate) played in qualifying games for 1934 & 1938.

Philippines (PHI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1930
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	3 (1950, 1966, 1974), 1998, 2002, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	13 1-2-10	
Total goals scored / goals against	8 / 45	
Best goalscorer	2 YOUNGHUSBAND Philip 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Achieved their first victory in the 2014 qualifiers, winning 4-0 against Sri Lanka on 3 July 2011.

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.

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

Qatar (QAT)		FIFA Affiliation: 1972
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries	10 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	94 41-21-32	
Total goals scored / goals against	144 / 102	
Best goalscorer	15 AL ENAZI Mohamed 8-1998, 7-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Qatar and Iran squared up four times during the 2014 preliminary tournament, with three draws and a loss for the Qataris.

Qatar should have made their FIFA World Cup qualifying debut in Doha against the 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	10 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	100 56-25-19	
Total goals scored / goals against	187 / 79	
Best goalscorer	16 AL JABER Sami 2-1994, 3-1998, 8-2002, 3-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1994 - 2006	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 1994	

Saudi Arabia played their 100th qualifying match during the 2014 preliminary competition.

Saudi Arabia boast the second longest unbeaten run in the Asian preliminary competition with 20 matches (after Korea Republic with 28 matches) from 28 October 1989 to 3 October 1997.

Saudi Arabia have secured qualification for the FIFA World Cup finals on home soil three times. 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.

Singapore (SIN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries	10 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	60 16-9-35	
Total goals scored / goals against	65 / 112	
Best goalscorer	7 DURIC Aleksandar 4-2010, 3-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Singapore played their 60th match in the 2014 qualifying campaign.

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, despite having won the games 1-0 and 2-0 respectively.

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

Sri Lanka (SRI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	6 (1974, 1978), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	29 3-6-20	
Total goals scored / goals against	20 / 72	
Best goalscorer	4 JAYASURIYA Kasun 3-2002, 1-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

In the 2014 tournament, Sri Lanka were eliminated after two matches against the Philippines, with a 1-1 draw at home in the first leg and 4-0 defeat in the return match in Manila. It was the second time that Sri Lanka had been eliminated after just two games in a FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament, the previous time in the 2010 event when they lost twice to Qatar without scoring.

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 29 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, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, (2014)	
Matches played: W – D – L	64 27-15-22	
Total goals scored / goals against	137 / 75	
Best goalscorer	17 AL SAIED Bayazid 6-1998, 11-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Syria were disqualified from the 2014 preliminary competition, losing in the 2nd round knockout phase by forfeit due to fielding an ineligible player.

Played one match in the 1950 FIFA World Cup 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 goals.

**Entered for 1962 & 1966 as the 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. Disqualified from the 2014 preliminaries due to having fielded an ineligible player.*

Tajikistan (TJK)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994	
First entry	1998		
Preliminary entries	5	1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	28	12-5-11	
Total goals scored / goals against	54 / 35		
Best goalscorer	5	KHAKIMOV Numordzhon 1-2006, 4-2010	
	5	KHAMIDOV Sukhrob 4-2002, 1-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Tajikistan were reinstated in the third round of the 2014 preliminary competition as a replacement for Syria, who had been disqualified due to having fielded an ineligible player. As a result, Tajikistan won both matches against Syria by forfeit 3-0.

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 1998 FIFA World Cup qualifying. However, an opening 4-0 win over Vietnam was not enough to secure passage to the next round.

Thailand (THA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1925	
First entry	1974		
Preliminary entries	11	1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	73	20-14-39	
Total goals scored / goals against	96 / 126		
Best goalscorer	15	SENAMUANG Kiatisuk 2-1994, 11-2002, 2-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

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	2	2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	4	0-0-4	
Total goals scored / goals against	4 / 18		
Best goalscorer	3	DA SILVA Emilio 3-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Timor-Leste are still waiting for their first point in a qualifying match.

The only debutant in the AFC zone for 2010 FIFA World Cup 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	5	1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	32	13-4-15	
Total goals scored / goals against	54 / 48		
Best goalscorer	6	KULIYEV Begench 6-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

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*	8	(1978), 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	79	33-17-29	
Total goals scored / goals against	126 / 94		
Best goalscorer	15	ADNAN AL TALYANI 3-1986, 4-1990, 6-1994, 2-1998	
FIFA World Cup participations	1	1990	
Best rank		Group stage in 1990	

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

Of the AFC teams that have qualified for a FIFA World Cup and played against each other in FIFA World Cup qualifying, the only ones which the United Arab Emirates have failed to beat are Iran (4 defeats and 2 draws), Japan (1 defeat and 3 draws) and Korea Republic (6 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 minutes turned the tables and sent UAE through to Italy 1990.

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

Uzbekistan (UZB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994	
First entry	1998		
Preliminary entries	5	1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	76	38-18-20	
Total goals scored / goals against	151 / 81		
Best goalscorer	15	SHATSKIKH Maksim 1-2002, 5-2006, 8-2010, 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Uzbekistan boasted the most victories – 11 – in the 2014 Asian Zone qualifying tournament as well as the second highest number of consecutive matches without a defeat – 8 – following Iran with 10 matches.

The biggest winning margin came in the 2010 preliminary competition, 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*	7 (1954), 1974, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	35 9-2-24	
Total goals scored / goals against	36 / 73	
Best goalscorer	7 LE Cong Vinh 7-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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.

* 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*	8 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	40 10-10-20	
Total goals scored / goals against	47 / 62	
Best goalscorer	7 AL NONO Ali 4-2002, 2-2006, 1-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Did not score a single goal in the 2014 preliminary competition.

Their most frequent opponents in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition are Iraq, Syria, Thailand and United Arab Emirates with 4 matches against each. Lost every match 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.

African Zone - CAF

Teams enrolled in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition: 54 / Slots: 5

Algeria (ALG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	12 (1966), 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	81 38-21-22	
Total goals scored / goals against	111 / 79	
Best goalscorer	9 Rabah MADJER 3-1982, 3-1986, 3-1990	
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1982, 1986, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 2014	

Algeria needed just eight matches to qualify for Brazil 2014, although it was touch and go in the play-offs, as they lost the first match 3-2 in Burkina Faso before prevailing 1-0 in the return leg.

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	8 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	59 24-22-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	78 / 53	
Best goalscorer	14 AKWA 3-1998, 6-2002, 5-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 2006	
Best rank	Group stage in 2006	

Angola have not lost at home for 20 qualifying matches and almost 24 years. Their last and only defeat in 29 home qualifiers was a 2-1 reverse against Cameroon in Luanda on 25 June 1989.

Angola failed to qualify for Brazil, their four draws, one win and one defeat resulting in a third-place finish in their group.

Benin (BEN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	7 1974, 1986, 1994, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	42 12-7-23	
Total goals scored / goals against	44 / 86	
Best goalscorer	11 Razak OMOTOYOSSI 8-2010, 3-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Seven of Benin's ten victories in their 39 qualifiers played to date came on the road to South Africa 2010, two on the road to Brazil 2014.

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	5 1994, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	30 7-5-18	
Total goals scored / goals against	46 / 48	
Best goalscorer	8 Diphetogo SELOLWANE 6-2006, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Botswana's 3-0 win over Ethiopia on 8 June 2013 was their first home victory in a World Cup qualifier since 9 October 2004.

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.

Burkina Faso (BFA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	7 1978, 1990, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	53 23-7-23	
Total goals scored / goals against	76 / 73	
Best goalscorer	18 Moumouni DAGANO 2-2002, 5-2006, 12-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Burkina Faso only just failed to qualify for the 2014 World Cup, finishing ahead of Congo, Gabon and Niger in the group but losing out to Algeria in the play-offs, where they won 3-2 at home, but their narrow 1-0 defeat in Blida meant that they went out on the away goals rule.

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.

* 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*	4 1994, (1998, 2002), 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	16 5-3-8	
Total goals scored / goals against	12 / 20	
Best goalscorer	2 Claude NAHIMANA 2-2010, Henry MBAZUMUTIMA 2-2010, Yamin NDIKUMANA 1-2010, 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 campaign Burundi failed to proceed to the group stage after a defeat and a draw against Lesotho

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*	12 (1966), 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	79 49-17-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	134 / 57	
Best goalscorer	18 Samuel ETOO 3-2002, 4-2006, 9-2010, 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	7 1982, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1990	

With four wins on home soil in the 2014 qualification, Cameroon extended their unbeaten home record in the competition to 37 matches (31 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.

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.

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*	4 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	26 10-3-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	28 / 33	
Best goalscorer	5 Arlindo GOMES 5-2006 Carlos MORAIS 5-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

With three wins and as many defeats, Cape Verde Islands ended their 2014 qualification campaign in second place, behind Tunisia.

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

Cape Verde Islands have only achieved one 0-0 draw in 26 preliminary encounters. They achieved this result in their debut qualifier against Algeria in Mindelo on 9 April 2000.

Central African Republic (CTA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	2 (1978, 1982), 2002, (2006, 2010), 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	8 1-0-7	
Total goals scored / goals against	6 / 16	
Best goalscorer	2 Foxi KETHEVOAMA 2-2014 Nicaise OZINGONI 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

The Central African Republic achieved their only World Cup qualifier win to date in their home match against Botswana for Brazil 2014 (2-0).

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.

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	4 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	12 4-1-7	
Total goals scored / goals against	12 / 17	
Best goalscorer	3 Francis OUMAR 3-2003	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Chad's 2014 qualification campaign failed to get off the ground, the team losing their first round play-off against Tanzania – albeit by a narrow margin, succumbing 2-1 at home before winning the away leg 1-0.

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 five 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)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 2005</i>
First entry	2010	
Preliminary entries	2 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	4 0-0-4	
Total goals scored / goals against	3 / 15	
Best goalscorer	1 Daoud MIDTADI 1-2010 Ibor BAKAR 1-2010 Mohamed YOUSSEUF 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

With only four games played, Comoros are one of the teams to have contested the fewest matches in FIFA World Cup qualifying together with Bhutan and Guam. Only Yemen played less matches (2).

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)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1964</i>
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries	8 (1966), 1974, 1978, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	54 19-11-24	
Total goals scored / goals against	59 / 67	
Best goalscorer	4 Armel MAMOUNA-OSSILA 4-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Congo came extremely close to reaching the last qualifying round, but trailed group winners Burkina Faso by just one point at the end.

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.

Congo DR (COD)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964	
First entry	1970		
Preliminary entries*	9 (1970), 1974, (1978), 1982, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014		
Matches played: W – D – L	69 31-16-22		
Total goals scored / goals against	112 / 77		
Best goalscorer	10 Shabani NONDA 2-2002, 4-2006, 4-2010		
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1974		
Best rank	Group stage in 1974		

Dieumerici 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 Zaire) 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 Zaire 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*	10 1974, 1978, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014		
Matches played: W – D – L	71 38-23-10		
Total goals scored / goals against	134 / 62		
Best goalscorer	18 Didier DROGBA 9-2006, 6-2002, 3-2014		
FIFA World Cup participations	3 2006, 2010, 2014		
Best rank	Group stage in 2006, 2010, 2014		

Côte d'Ivoire needed the fewest matches to qualify for Brazil 2014 – only eight.

In the 2010 and 2014 preliminaries, Côte d'Ivoire went through the tournament unbeaten, recording 13 wins and seven draws in their 20 matches.

Côte d'Ivoire have played 34 of their 36 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*	3 2002, 2010, 2014		
Matches played: W – D – L	11 1-1-9		
Total goals scored / goals against	5 / 48		
Best goalscorer	1 Ahmed Hassan DAHER 2007 Hussein YASSIN 2007 Moussa HIRIR 2007 Hared ROBLEH 2000 Mahad KHAIREH 2000		
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

In total Djibouti have played eleven 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 fourth 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*	13 1934, (1938), 1954, (1958, 1962, 1966), 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	86 48-18-20	
Total goals scored / goals against	155 / 85	
Best goalscorer	10 Mohamed ABOUTRIKA 2-2006, 5-2010, 6-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	2 1934, 1990	
Best rank	Group stage/First round in 1934, 1990	

Egypt were the only African team not to drop a point in the group phase qualifiers for Brazil 2014, but they were well beaten by Ghana in the play-offs, suffering a disastrous 6-1 defeat in the away leg before winning 2-1 at home.

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.

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.

Equatorial Guinea (EQG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries*	4 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	18 3-2-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	16 / 34	
Best goalscorer	6 JUVENAL 1-2010, 5-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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. In the 2014 preliminaries they played eight matches but managed to win only one against Madagascar in round one play-offs.

The side's only three qualifying victories came on home soil, 1-0 against Togo in 2003, 2-0 against Sierra Leone in 2008 and 2-0 against Madagascar in 2011.

Eritrea (ERI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries*	3 2002, 2006, (2010), 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	6 0-3-3	
Total goals scored / goals against	2 / 11	
Best goalscorer	1 Abraham TEDROS, Tesfalem TEKLE 2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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

Tesfalem TEKLE scored the first goal for Eritrea in the history of the preliminary competition when he netted against Rwanda on 11 November 2011.

* Withdrew from the 2010 qualifiers without playing a single match

Ethiopia (ETH)		FIFA Affiliation: 1952
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	10 (1958), 1962, (1966), 1970, 1974, 1987, 1982, 1986, 1994, 2002, 2006, (2010), 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	41 11-10-20	
Total goals scored / goals against	48 / 64	
Best goalscorer	6 Salahdin AHMED 1-2010, 5-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Ethiopia played more matches (ten) than any other African side in the preliminary competition of the 2014 World Cup, but still lost out to Nigeria in the play-offs.

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*	7 (1966, 1974), 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	49 19-8-22	
Total goals scored / goals against	54 / 57	
Best goalscorer	5 Guy Roger NZAMBA 1-1990, 4-1994 Theodore ZUE 1-1998, 4-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Gabon were unbeaten at home in their three group matches in qualifiers for Brazil 2014, but suffered defeats away to Burkina Faso, Congo and Niger.

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.*

Gambia (GAM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1968
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries*	7 1982, 1986, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	22 6-5-11	
Total goals scored / goals against	18 / 33	
Best goalscorer	4 Mustapha JARJUE 2-2010, 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 eight losses from ten matches.

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.

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

Ghana (GHA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1958
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	12 1962, (1966), 1970, 1974, 1978, (1982), 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	75 38-17-20	
Best goalscorer	10 Asamoah GYAN 4-2006, 6-2014	
Total goals scored / goals against	123 / 61	
FIFA World Cup participations	3 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 2006	

Ghana was with an average of 22 years and 9 months the youngest team to qualify for the 2014 FIFA World Cup

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.

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

Guinea (GUI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1962
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	10 (1966, 1970), 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, (2002), 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	70 34-11-25	
Total goals scored / goals against	112 / 86	
Best goalscorer	12 Pascal FEINDOUNO 4-2002, 3-2006, 5-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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	5	1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	10	1-3-6	
Total goals scored / goals against	6 / 15		
Best goalscorer	2	Pereira TAVARES 2-1998	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

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

In the 2014 qualifying tournament Guinea Bissau drew 1-1 on home soil and lost 1-0 in Togo and failed to advance to the round 2.

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.

Kenya (KEN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960	
First entry	1974		
Preliminary entries	11	1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	64	21-15-28	
Total goals scored / goals against	71 / 87		
Best goalscorer	15	Dennis OLIECH 6-2006, 6-2010, 3-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

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. In 2014 edition they only played eight matches.

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 three of their 26 away qualifiers in the competition, although they scored at least three goals in all of those successes. On 10 December 1972 they won 3-1 in Mauritius, on 16 August 1997 they ran out 4-2 winners in Burkina Faso and on 11 November 2011 they won 3-0 against Seychelles.

Lesotho (LES)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964	
First entry	1974		
Preliminary entries*	6	1974, 1982, (1986, 1990), 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	22	2-6-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	13 / 50		
Best goalscorer	13 players with 1 goal		
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Lesotho's 3-1 win over Sudan on 8 September 2013 was only their second victory in 22 World Cup qualifiers.

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 two teams to have won an away qualifier in Lesotho are South Africa, who escaped with a 2-0 victory on 9 April 2000 and Ghana, who won 0-2 on 16 June 2013. In the 2010 tournament Lesotho played their three home matches in Mangaung/Bloemfontein in South Africa.

* 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*	9	(1966), 1982, 1986, 1990, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	55	14-11-30	
Total goals scored / goals against	37 / 82		
Best goalscorer	6	George WEAH 2-1990, 2-1998, 2-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

The 1-0 win against Uganda on 24 March 2013 ended a winless streak of 17 matches in World Cup qualifiers.

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.

* Withdrew from the qualifiers for 1966 without playing a single match, and from those for 1994 due to the ongoing civil war after playing one match.

Libya (LBY)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964	
First entry	1966		
Preliminary entries*	7	(1966), 1970, 1978, (1982), 1986, (1990), 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	49	18-12-19	
Total goals scored / goals against	55 / 52		
Best goalscorer	5	Ahmed MASLI 2-2002, 4-2006 Ahmed OSMAN 3-2006, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

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. In the 2014 preliminary tournament they won two matches against Cameroon in Sfax (Tunisia) and Togo on home soil in Tripoli.

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.

Madagascar (MAD)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	8 (1974), 1982, 1986, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	33 11-7-15	
Total goals scored / goals against	38 / 44	
Best goalscorer	5 Harry RANDRIANAIVO 2-1994, 3-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 campaign Madagascar failed to qualify for the second round after a 0-2 loss in Equatorial Guinea and a 2-1 win on home soil.

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*	9 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	57 13-17-27	
Total goals scored / goals against	56 / 82	
Best goalscorer	6 Chiukepo MSOWOYA 6-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Aged just 16 years and five months, Gabadhini Mhango was the youngest goalscorer in the 2014 World Cup preliminary competition.

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, Côte d'Ivoire in 2010 and Nigeria in 2014.

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

Mali (MLI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964	
First entry	1966		
Preliminary entries*	4	(1966, 1994, 1998), 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	32	13-7-12	
Total goals scored / goals against	46 / 41		
Best goalscorer	10	Frederic KANOUTE 2-2006, 8-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Mali have never drawn 0-0 in any of their 32 FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

They have a positive record at home with ten wins, four 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.*

Mauritania (MTN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1970	
First entry	1978		
Preliminary entries*	5	1978, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010	
Matches played: W – D – L	14	1-2-11	
Total goals scored / goals against	7 / 33		
Best goalscorer	2	Ahmed TEGUEDI 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Mauritania did not enrol for 2014 preliminary competition.

The only win in any World Cup qualifier dates back to 14 November 2003 when Mauritania won 2-1 against Zimbabwe in Nouakchott.

Mauritius (MRI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964	
First entry	1974		
Preliminary entries*	7	1974, 1986, (1990), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, (2014)	
Matches played: W – D – L	16	1-2-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	12 / 44		
Best goalscorer	2	Wesley MARQUETTE 2-1974 Daniel IMBERT 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Mauritius withdrew from the 2014 FIFA World Cup qualifiers without playing a single match

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.*

Morocco (MAR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	13 1962, (1966), 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	104 48-35-21	
Total goals scored / goals against	140 / 79	
Best goalscorer	6 Ahmed FARAS 1-1970, 5-1974 Youssef HADJI 4-2006, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1970, 1986, 1994, 1998	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 1986	

Morocco are the only African team to have played over 100 World Cup qualifiers (104).

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, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	32 7-8-17	
Total goals scored / goals against	29 / 49	
Best goalscorer	5 DARIO 3-2006, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Mozambique have ended up on the losing end of a seven-goal encounter in four of their 18 FIFA World Cup qualifying matches, losing 5-2 against Zaire in the 1982 edition, 6-1 against Senegal in the 1984 edition, 4-3 against Guinea in the 2006 edition and 6-1 against Guinea in the 2014 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	6 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	39 8-8-23	
Total goals scored / goals against	34 / 79	
Best goalscorer	4 Razundara TJIKUZU 4-2002 Rudolf BESTER 2-2010, 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Not once in their six 2014 World Cup qualifiers did Namibia concede more than a single goal. Unfortunately, they also failed to score more than one in any of them.

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*	6 1978, 1982, (1986), 1994, (1998), 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	26 7-4-15	
Total goals scored / goals against	21 / 45	
Best goalscorer	2 Issoufou ALHASSANE 2-2010 Moussa KAMFIDENI 1-1978, 1-1982 Moussa YAHAYA 2-1994 Daouda KAMILLOU 1-2010, 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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.

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

Nigeria (NGA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	12 1962, (1966), 1970, (1974), 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	96 53-27-16	
Total goals scored / goals against	162 / 74	
Best goalscorer	10 Obafemi MARTINS 8-2006, 2-2010 Rasheed YEKINI 2-1986, 8-1994	
FIFA World Cup participations	5 1994, 1998, 2002, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 1994, 1998, 2014	

As in 2010, Nigeria were unbeaten in qualifying for the 2014 World Cup, needing to find the net just 11 times en route to Brazil.

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 30 wins (including 21 consecutive victories) and three draws from their home qualifiers.

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*	5 (1990), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	35 7-9-19	
Total goals scored / goals against	30 / 51	
Best goalscorer	6 Abedi SAID 2-2006, 3-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 and in 2014.

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

São Tomé e Príncipe (STP)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries*	3 (1994), 2002, 2006, (2010), 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	6 1-1-4	
Total goals scored / goals against	3 / 19	
Best goalscorer	1 Amilcar RAMOS 2002 Celso PONTES 2002 Orgando DOS SANTOS 2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 three preliminary tournaments in which they have taken part (2002, 2006 and 2014).

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*	11	(1966), 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	55	21-19-15	
Total goals scored / goals against	75 / 51		
Best goalscorer	14	El Hadji DIOUF 8-2002, 4-2006, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	1	2002	
Best rank	Quarter-final in 2002		

Senegal remained unbeaten in the six matches of Round 2 in the 2014 preliminary competition. They lost only 3-1 against Côte d'Ivoire in play-offs, followed by a 1-1 draw.

Senegal is unbeaten on home soil in the preliminary competition since 1993, when they lost 3-1 to Morocco. Since then the Teranga Lions have picked up 12 wins and six draws.

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

Seychelles (SEY)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986	
First entry	2002		
Preliminary entries	4	2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	12	0-2-10	
	6 / 33		
Best goalscorer	3	Philip ZIALOR 1-2002, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

In 2014 Seychelles were eliminated in Round One play-offs against Kenya without scoring a single goal.

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 12 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.

Sierra Leone (SLE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960	
First entry	1974		
Preliminary entries*	9	1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	43	10-9-24	
Total goals scored / goals against	37 / 67		
Best goalscorer	3	Sheriff SUMA 1-2010, 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	-		

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 17 of the 21 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 three were draws, recorded in the 2010 tournament against Guinea Bissau and South Africa and in the 2014 competition against Equatorial Guinea.

* *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	5 1982, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	9 0-3-6	
Total goals scored / goals against	1 / 20	
Best goalscorer	None (own goal)	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

At the tender age of 14 years and one month, Abdinur Mohamud was the youngest player to take part in qualification for the 2014 World Cup.

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.

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.

South Africa (RSA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	5+1 (1966), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	42 25-7-10	
Total goals scored / goals against	55 / 34	
Best goalscorer	7 Shaun BARTLETT 2-1998, 4-2002, 1-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	3 1998, 2002, 2010	
Best rank	Group stage in 1998, 2002, 2010	

The host of the 2010 FIFA World Cup failed to qualify for Brazil 2014. South Africa ended up second in Group A just behind Ethiopia.

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.

* 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.

Sudan (SUD)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	11 (1958, 1962, 1966), 1970, 1974, (1978), 1982, 1986, 1990, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	62 15-17-30	
Total goals scored / goals against	56 / 98	
Best goalscorer	7 Haytham KAMAL 5-2006, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Of all the teams admitted to the Round Two group stage in the 2014 preliminary tournament, Sudan went on to pick up the fewest points, just two (together with Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Equatorial Guinea).

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.

South Sudan (SSD)		FIFA Affiliation: 2012
First entry	2018	
Preliminary entries	-	
Matches played: W – D – L	-	
Total goals scored / goals against	-	
Best goalscorer	-	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

The 2018 preliminary competition will be South Sudan's first qualifying tournament for a FIFA World Cup.

Swaziland (SWZ)		FIFA Affiliation: 1978
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	6 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	15 2-3-10	
Total goals scored / goals against	7 / 36	
Best goalscorer	3 Siza DLAMINI 1-2002, 1-2006, 1-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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.

In the 2014 campaign they lost twice against Congo DR in round one play-offs.

In their six 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*	9 1974, (1978), 1982, 1986, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	33 7-10-16	
Total goals scored / goals against	34 / 45	
Best goalscorer	3 Jerson TEGETE 3-2010 Peter TINO 2-1982, 1-1986 Thuen ALI 3-1982	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

In the 2014 edition Tanzania were the only team to lose against Gambia in group C in the second round.

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*	9 1974, 1978, 1982, (1986, 1990), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	61 21-14-26	
Total goals scored / goals against	68 / 82	
Best goalscorer	16 Emmanuel ADEBAYOR 11-2006, 5-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 2006	
Best rank	Group stage in 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.

In 2014 Togo achieved only two wins in eight matches and failed to qualify for the round three play-offs.

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.

Tunisia (TUN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	13 1962, (1966), 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	96 51-26-19	
Total goals scored / goals against	165 / 78	
Best goalscorer	9 Zoubeir BEYA 3-1998, 6-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1978, 1998, 2002, 2006	
Best rank	Group stage in 1978, 1998, 2002, 2006	

With 4 wins and two losses in 2014 Tunisia qualified easily for the round three play-offs where they were eliminated against Cameroon.

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*	8 1978, (1982), 1986, 1990, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	34 11-6-17	
Total goals scored / goals against	34 / 55	
Best goalscorer	4 David OBUA 4-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 qualifiers Uganda ended up second in group J just behind Senegal.

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	12 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	90 43-18-29	
Total goals scored / goals against	139 / 82	
Best goalscorer	9 KALUSHA BWALYA 1-1986, 2-1990, 5-1994, 1-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Zambia finished the 2014 qualifiers in group D second behind Ghana. They managed to beat Ghana 1:0 on home soil on 9 June 2012.

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*	10 1970, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	63 21-16-26	
Total goals scored / goals against	63 / 80	
Best goalscorer	11 Peter NDLOVU 2-1994, 5-2005, 4-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	-	

Suspended

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.

North, Central American and Caribbean Zone – CONCACAF

Teams enrolled in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition: 35 / Slots: 3.5

Anguilla (AIA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1996
First preliminary entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	4 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	8 0-1-7	
Total goals scored / goals against	2 / 33	
Best goalscorer	1	HUGHES Kenneth 1-2002
	1	O CONNOR Richard 1-2002
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

Of the four home matches contested by Anguilla in FIFA World Cup™ qualifying, only one was actually played on home soil: their maiden home qualifier on 5 March 2000, which ended in a 3-1 defeat by the Bahamas. The other three matches were staged in Santo Domingo (2006 and 2014 preliminaries) and Washington DC (2010).

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

Anguilla have yet to achieve a victory in a World Cup preliminary match.

Antigua and Barbuda (ATG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1972
First preliminary entry	1974	
Preliminary entries	9 1974, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	38 11-5-22	
Total goals scored / goals against	60 / 87	
Best goalscorer	10	BYERS Peter 10-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Antigua and Barbuda scored the most goals, 32, in the 2014 preliminary competition of the CONCACAF Zone.

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 preliminary entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	12 2-1-9	
Total goals scored / goals against	18 / 37	
Best goalscorers	3	ESCALONA Maurice 2-2006, 1-2014
	3	GROSS Wander 3-2002
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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.

In the 2014 event, they won the first play-off leg against St. Lucia 4-2, the second leg finishing after extra time with the same score but in favour of St. Lucia, which Aruba went on to lose 5-4 in a penalty shoot-out.

Of all the 12 qualifiers contested by Aruba, only one produced less than three goals. That was their match played in the 2010 tournament, which they lost 1-0 away to Antigua and Barbuda.

Bahamas (BAH)		FIFA Affiliation: 1968
First preliminary entry	1998	
Preliminary entries*	4 (1998), 2002, 2006, 2010, (2014)	
Matches played: W – D – L	12 4-3-5	
Total goals scored / goals against	20 / 35	
Best goalscorer	6	ST. FLEUR Lesly 1-2010, 5-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

Bahamas withdrew from the 2014 preliminary competition despite winning both first-round matches against the Turks and Caicos Islands.

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.

* Withdrew from the 1998 qualifiers without playing a single match and from the 2014 qualifiers after playing two matches.

Barbados (BRB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1968
First entry	1978	
Preliminary entries*	7 1978, (1986), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	33 8-4-21	
Total goals scored / goals against	29 / 69	
Best goalscorer	6	ALEXANDER Jerry 6-2002
	6	RILEY Llewellyn 6-2002
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

Barbados lost all of their six matches in the 2014 qualifying competition.

In 33 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 preliminary entry	1990	
Preliminary entries*	5 (1990*), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	20 5-3-12	
Total goals scored / goals against	25 / 48	
Best goalscorer	13 McCAULAY Deon 2-2010, 11-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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.

With 11 goals, Deon McCaulay was the top goalscorer in the 2014 CONCACAF qualifying competition.

* Entry 1990 not accepted.

Bermuda (BER)		FIFA Affiliation: 1962
First entry	1970	
Preliminary entries*	6 1970, 1994, (1998*), 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	32 13-8-11	
Total goals scored / goals against	68 / 45	
Best goalscorer	11 NUSUM John 2-2002, 7-2006, 2-2010, 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

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 the 18th minute 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	4 2002-2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	8 0-2-6	
Total goals scored / goals against	5 / 31	
Best goalscorer	2 WILLIAMS Anadale 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

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.

The most recent goal scored in the preliminaries by British Virgin Islands was scored in the 2nd minute, while all four previous goals 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.

Canada (CAN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1913
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	13 1958, (1962), 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	107 43-32-32	
Total goals scored / goals against	146 / 127	
Best goalscorer	12 BUNBURY Alex 7-1994, 5-1998	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1986	
Best rank	Group stage in 1986	

In Kingston on 13 June 2004, 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 146 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.

During the Brazil 2014 preliminaries, Canada had the longest run of consecutive clean sheets of any participating team. They played eight straight games without letting in a goal between 6 September 2011 and 7 September 2012, going 825 minutes without conceding.

* Withdrew from the 1962 qualifiers.

Cayman Islands (CAY)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	14 0-3-11	
Total goals scored / goals against	5 / 34	
Best goalscorer	2 EBANKS Mark 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

Cayman Islands are still waiting for their first victory in the qualification tournament.

The first of Cayman Islands' five 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 half of the 14 matches played by Cayman Islands in the qualification tournament, the half-time result was 1-0 to the opposing team.

Costa Rica (CRC)		FIFA Affiliation: 1927
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	15 (1938, 1954), 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	156 76-38-42	
Total goals scored / goals against	270 / 165	
Best goalscorer	21 WANCHOPE Paulo 6-1998, 7-2002, 8-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1990, 2002, 2006, 2014	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 2014	

Costa Rica and Uruguay are in second place behind Colombia with for the most draws in FIFA World Cup qualifying matches, having both drawn 38 games.

Costa Rica have played 156 qualifiers in total, the second highest number of any national side behind Mexico (159).

Costa Rica have scored a total of 270 goals in the tournament and are one of only six sides to have broken the 250-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*	11+1 1934, (1938*), 1950, (1954*), 1966, (1970*), 1978, 1982, 1990, (1994*), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	66 20-18-28	
Total goals scored / goals against	84 / 101	
Best goalscorer	11 MORE Lester 3-1998, 2-2002, 6-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1938	
<i>Best rank</i>	<i>Quarter-finals in 1938</i>	

Knocked out

Apart from a 1-1 draw against Panama, Cuba lost all of their 2014 qualifying matches.

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.

Curaçao (CUW)		FIFA Affiliation: 1932
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	15 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	54 12-15-27	
Total goals scored / goals against	48 / 110	
Best goalscorer	7 SIBERIE Richmar 1-2006, 6-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

After participating in 13 preliminary campaigns as Netherlands Antilles, Curacao entered the 2014 event with the same name that they used on their debut in the 1958 edition.

* 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	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	16 2-3-11	
Total goals scored / goals against	12 / 46	
Best goalscorer	3 CASIMIR Vincent 3-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

In the 2010 qualifying tournament, Dominica were eliminated by Barbados after just two matches, just as they were in the 2000 tournament by Haiti. In each of their other participations in 1996, 2004 and 2014, Dominica played at least four matches.

Dominica's only two victories in 16 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	7 1978, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	27 10-5-12	
Total goals scored / goals against	41 / 45	
Best goalscorer	5 OZUNA Erick 5-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

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.

Dominican Republic made their FIFA World Cup preliminary debut in Santo Domingo on 2 April 1976, 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*	12 (1938), 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	130 60-25-45	
Total goals scored / goals against	221 / 152	
Best goalscorer	18 DIAZ Raul 2-1994, 9-1998, 7-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	2 1970, 1982	
Best rank	Group stage in 1970, 1982	

El Salvador share a record with Canada for the longest run of matches without conceding a goal 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.

Grenada (GRN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1978
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries*	6 1982, (1986*), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	21 6-3-12	
Total goals scored / goals against	46 / 47	
Best goalscorer	8 CHARLES Ricky 2-1998, 2-2006, 4-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

No fewer than four of their six victories came against Guyana. The other successes were against British Virgin Islands in 2008 and against Belize in the last campaign, ahead of Brazil 2014.

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 preliminary entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	14 1958, 1962, (1966), 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	112 44-29-39	
Total goals scored / goals against	173 / 139	
Best goalscorer	30 RUIZ Carlos 8-2002, 10-2006, 6-2010, 6-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 CONCACAF Zone preliminary competition, Guatemala set a new record by scoring in 12 consecutive matches.

The highest scoreline for a drawn match in a FIFA World Cup qualifier is 4-4. In total, there have been five 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 47 home matches in the competition, 43 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*	9 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, (2002), 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	32 7-4-21	
Total goals scored / goals against	30 / 75	
Best goalscorer	4 WATSON Clyde 4-1982	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

In the 2014 event, Guyana finally won their first FIFA World Cup qualifier in more than 31 years, the last time being a 3-2 away win over Grenada on 13 April 1980. Since then they have recorded 14 defeats and two draws.

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 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	13 1934, 1954, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	82 36-16-30	
Total goals scored / goals against	144 / 115	
Best goalscorer	18 SANON Emmanuel 10-1974, 8-1978	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1974	
Best rank	Group stage in 1974	

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.

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.

Honduras (HON)		FIFA Affiliation: 1946
First entry	1962	
Preliminary entries*	13 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, (1978), 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	132 64-33-35	
Total goals scored / goals against	236 / 145	
Best goalscorer	25 PAVON Carlos 2-1998, 15-2002, 1-2006, 7-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	3 1982, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Group stage in 1982, 2010, 2014	

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.

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

Jamaica (JAM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1962
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	10 1966, 1970, (1974), 1978, (1986), 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	96 35-26-35	
Total goals scored / goals against	109 / 119	
Best goalscorer	9 SHELTON Luton 7-2010, 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1998	
Best rank	Group stage in 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.

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*	15+2 1934, (1938), 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, (1970), 1974, 1978, 1982, (1986, 1990), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	159 102-33-24	
Total goals scored / goals against	407 / 118	
Best goalscorer	23 BORGETTI Jared 6-2002, 14-2006, 3-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	15 1930, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, -1970, 1978, 1986, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1970, 1986	

Mexico hold a number of FIFA World Cup qualifying records. They have played the most qualifiers of any senior international side (159), obtained the most wins (102) and scored the most goals (407).

Among CONCACAF sides, Mexico have the highest percentage rate of victories (64%, with 102 wins from 159 matches), the lowest rate of defeats (15%, 24 defeats from 159 matches), the highest average number of goals scored per match (2.6) and the lowest average number of goals conceded per match (0.7), the second 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 the 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	4 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	7 0-0-7	
Total goals scored / goals against	5 / 41	
Best goalscorer	3 HODGSON Jay Lee 3-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

Montserrat played two matches in the Brazil 2014 qualifiers. Since making their tournament debut in 2000, Montserrat have recorded seven defeats in as many qualifiers.

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

In every one of their seven FIFA World Cup qualifiers, Montserrat have conceded at least three goals.

Nicaragua (NCA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1950
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	6 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	16 2-1-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	10 / 39	
Best goalscorer	2 LEGUIAS Raul 2-2014 four players with 2 goals each	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 preliminary competition, Nicaragua scored their first-ever goal in a qualifier.

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)		FIFA Affiliation: 1938	
First entry	1978		
Preliminary entries	10	1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	78	21-17-40	
Total goals scored / goals against	88 / 142		
Best goalscorer	12	TEJADA Luis 4-2006, 1-2010, 7-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Of the 78 qualifiers contested by Panama, no fewer than 20 were played in qualification for Brazil 2014.

Puerto Rico (PUR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1960	
First entry	1974		
Preliminary entries	8	1974, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	23	4-6-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	21 / 53		
Best goalscorer	4	RAMOS Hector 4-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Knocked out

In the 2014 preliminaries, Puerto Rico only lost to Canada, and apart from that they won two and drew three of their matches.

The only four victories that Puerto Rico have recorded in 23 qualifiers came against Dominican Republic, in 1992 and 2008, and St. Lucia in 2014.

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 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)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992	
First entry	1998		
Preliminary entries	5	1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	26	9-7-10	
Total goals scored / goals against	49 / 44		
Best goalscorer	10	LAKE Ian 7-2006, 3-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Knocked out

In their six 2014 preliminary matches, St. Kitts & Nevis only lost to Canada, and apart from that they won one game against St. Lucia and drew the remaining four matches.

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.

St. Lucia (LCA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1988
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	6 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	22 6-1-15	
Total goals scored / goals against	28 / 57	
Best goalscorer	5 JEAN Earl 2-1994, 1-1998, 2-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

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.

Of the 28 goals scored by St Lucia in their 22 qualifiers, nine came in a victory over British Virgin Islands on 28 March 2004.

St Lucia have only once drawn a qualifying match, having recorded six victories and 15 defeats.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines (VIN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1988
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	6 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	48 13-6-29	
Total goals scored / goals against	62 / 128	
Best goalscorer	10 JACK Rodney 1-1994, 4-1998, 4-2002, 1-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 and six in the 2014 edition.

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.

Suriname (SUR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1929
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	13 (1938), 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	63 19-14-30	
Total goals scored / goals against	90 / 107	
Best goalscorer	6 GEORGE Roy 5-1978, 1-1982	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

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.

Have scored at least six goals in five of their 19 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 the 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	13 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	121 50-25-46	
Total goals scored / goals against	181 / 155	
Best goalscorer	20 JOHN Stern 3-1998, 3-2002, 12-2006, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 2006	
Best rank	Group stage in 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 121, placing them sixth among CONCACAF sides in terms of the number of qualifiers played.

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.

Trinidad and Tobago hold the CONCACAF record for the most defeats (46).

Turks and Caicos Islands (TCA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	4 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	8 1-0-7	
Total goals scored / goals against	2 / 34	
Best goalscorer	1 LOWERY David 1-2010 1 GLINTON Gavin 1-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

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 home soil, on the island of Providenciales.

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 (VIR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	4 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	13 2-0-11	
Total goals scored / goals against	7 / 76	
Best goalscorer	2 KLOPP Reid 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Knocked out

In the 2014 qualifiers, US Virgin Islands achieved their first-ever preliminary victories, 2-0 and 2-1 against the British Virgin Islands.

The oldest goalscorer in the 2014 qualifying competition was Keithroy Cornelius of the US Virgin Islands, who found the back of the net against Curaçao at the age of 43 years and six months.

At the age of 43 years and seven months, Terrence Jones became the oldest player in the 2014 preliminary competition.

USA (USA)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1914</i>
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries	17+1 1934, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	138 70-32-36	
Total goals scored / goals against	229 / 165	
Best goalscorer	13	DONOVAN Landon 7-2006, 5-2010, 1-2014
	13	DEMPSEY Clint 5-2010, 8-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	10 1930, 1934, 1950, 1990, 1994, 1998, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Semi-finals in 1930	

USA are the CONCACAF team that have taken part in the most preliminary competitions.

The most frequently contested fixture in the history of the tournament is USA-Mexico, which has taken place on no fewer than 27 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 14 of the 17 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. In 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).*

South American Zone – CONMEBOL

Teams enrolled in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition: 10 / Slots: 4.5

Argentina (ARG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1912
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	12+4	(1934, 1938, 1950), 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, (1978, 1982), 1986, (1990), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014
Matches played: W – D – L	118	68-29-21
Total goals scored / goals against	216 / 111	
Best goalscorer	19	CRESPO Hernan 3-1998, 9-2002, 7-2006
FIFA World Cup participations	16	1930, 1934, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014
Best rank	Champions in 1978, 1986	

In the 2014 qualifiers, Argentina scored the most goals (4) from penalties, together with Ecuador, Egypt and Hungary.

Argentina are the only CONMEBOL team to qualify through the preliminary competition for the last nine FIFA World Cups.

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 68 from 118 games.

Argentina are also the only team to have scored more than 200 goals, having netted 216 times.

* 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 (hosts) & 1982, 1990 (defending champions).

Bolivia (BOL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1926
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	15+1	(1950, 1954), 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014
Matches played: W – D – L	132	35-27-70
Total goals scored / goals against	161 / 246	
Best goalscorer	16	BOTERO Joaquin 3-2002, 5-2006, 8-2010
FIFA World Cup participations	3	1930, 1950, 1994
Best rank	Group stage in 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.

Brazil (BRA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1954	
Preliminary entries*	11+8 (1934, 1938, 1950), 1954, 1958, (1962, 1966), 1970, (1974), 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, (1998), 2002, 2006, 2010, (2014)	
Matches played: W – D – L	92 56-25-11	
Goals for / goals against	199 / 59	
Best goalscorer	11	ROMARIO 1-1990, 2-1994, 8-2002)
	11	ZICO 5-1978, 5-1982, 1-1986
FIFA World Cup participations	20 1930, 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Champions in 1958, 1962, 1970, 1994, 2002	

Brazil are just one strike away from reaching a milestone of 200 goals in FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

With eight wins, Brazil hold the record for the most consecutive wins in a FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament (from 10 July 1977 to 16 June 1985).

* Played in inaugural FWC in 1930 (no preliminary competition). No qualifiers for South America in 1934 and 1938, qualified as hosts in 1950 and 2014, and as defending champions in 1962, 1966, 1974, 1998.

Chile (CHI)		FIFA Affiliation: 1913
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	14+2 (1934), (1950), 1954, 1958, (1962), 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	128 53-27-48	
Total goals scored / goals against	191 / 168	
Best goalscorer	18	SALAS Marcelo 11-1998, 4-2002, 1-2006, 2-2010
FIFA World Cup participations	9 1930, 1950, 1962, 1966, 1974, 1982, 1998, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Third place in 1962	

Chile notched ten victories in the 2010 and nine in the 2014 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 60 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.

* 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.

Colombia (COL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1936
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	15 (1938), 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	134 50-40-44	
Total goals scored / goals against	159 / 140	
Best goalscorer	10 FALCAO 1-2010, 9-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	5 1962, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2014	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 2014	

Colombia boast the highest number of consecutive clean sheets in the South American Zone qualifiers with 57 matches, which ran from their 1-0 win over Peru in 1961 until their defeat against Uruguay on 10 September 2013.

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*	14 (1950), 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	125 41-31-53	
Total goals scored / goals against	143 / 173	
Best goalscorer	16 DELGADO Agustin 2-1998, 9-2002, 5-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	3 2002, 2006, 2014	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 2006	

In the 2014 qualifiers, Ecuador scored the most goals (4) from penalties, together with Argentina, Egypt and Hungary.

An Ecuadorian holds the record for the most appearances in FIFA World Cup qualifying matches. The defender Ivan Hurtado played an incredible 73 qualifying games for his national team, the first in July 1993 and the most recent more than 16 years later in October 2009.

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



FIFA World Cup Preliminary Competition 1998: Argentina – Colombia 1:1, Ivan CORDOBA (COL), Gabriel BATISTUTA (ARG)
(Photo by Henri Szwarc/Bongarts/Getty Images)

Paraguay (PAR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1925
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	16+1 (1950), 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	136 59-27-50	
Total goals scored / goals against	182 / 164	
Best goalscorer	14 CARDOZO Jose 1-1998, 6-2002, 7-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	8 1930, 1950, 1958, 1986, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 2010	

With 12 points from 16 matches, the 2014 campaign represented Paraguay's worst 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 and Uruguay have played the most FIFA World Cup qualifying matches: 136.

Paraguay won the first-ever FIFA World Cup qualifier played in South America, beating Chile 4-0 in Asunción 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*	15 (1934, 1950, 1954), 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	129 35-31-63	
Total goals scored / goals against	135 / 185	
Best goalscorer	12 FARFAN Jefferson 7-2006, 5-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1930, 1970, 1978, 1982	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1970	

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 matches, in qualification for the 2010 and 2014 finals, *La Blanquirroja* 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.



FIFA World Cup Preliminary Competition 2002: Colombia - Paraguay 0:2; Carlos Humberto PAREDES (PAR)
(Photo by Bongarts/Getty Images)

Uruguay (URU)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	15+2 (1950, 1954), 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	136 60-38-38	
Total goals scored / goals against	186 / 144	
Best goalscorer	16 SUAREZ Luis 5-2010, 11-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	12 1930, 1950, 1954, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1986, 1990, 2002, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Champions in 1930, 1950	

Of all the sides that qualified for Brazil 2014, Uruguay (equal to Mexico) needed the most games to seal their place in the finals, no fewer than 18 including the home-and-away play-off against Jordan.

With 11 goals, Luis Suárez was the top goalscorer in the 2014 CONMEBOL qualifying competition.

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*	12 (1958), 1966, 1970, (1974), 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	122 23-19-80	
Total goals scored / goals against	101 / 279	
Best goalscorer	12 ARANGO Juan 2-2002, 4-2006, 3-2010, 3-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In their last group match in the qualification for South Africa 2010, 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 to have never 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.*

Oceania Zone – OFC

Teams enrolled in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition: 11 / Slots: 0.5

American Samoa		FIFA Affiliation: 1998
First entry	2002	
Preliminary entries	4 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	15 1-1-13	
Total goals scored / goals against	5 / 132	
Best goalscorer	2	LUANI Shalom 2-2014
	2	OTT Ramin 1-2010, 1-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 campaign, American Samoa managed to achieve their first-ever preliminary competition win with a 2-1 victory over Tonga.

American Samoa went head-to-head with Samoa in the preliminary tournaments ahead of Brazil 2014, South Africa 2010, Germany 2006 and Korea/Japan 2002. They are the only national side that American Samoa have faced in all four of their previous qualifying campaigns.

American Samoa have conceded the most goals (132 in 15 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 15 qualifying matches. In the 2014 qualifiers, however, they conceded only one goal per match.

Cook Islands (COK)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	16 0-1-15	
Total goals scored / goals against	8 / 60	
Best goalscorer	2	BEST Campbell 2-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 qualifiers, Cook Islands achieved their first draw in a preliminary campaign, after losing all of their previous matches.

Cook Islands are one of 16 teams to have never won a FIFA World Cup qualifying match.

Within the OFC confederation, Cook Islands hold the record for the longest streak of FIFA World Cup qualifying defeats: 14 consecutive losses stretching from 11 November 1996 to 22 November 2011.

Fiji (FIJ)		FIFA Affiliation: 1964
First entry	1982	
Preliminary entries	8 1982, 1990-2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	45 18-9-18	
Total goals scored / goals against	88 / 84	
Best goalscorer	11	MASINISAU Esala 1-1998, 8-2002, 2-2006
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 qualifiers, Fiji did not win a single game, whereas previously they had won at least one of their qualifying matches.

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.

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)		FIFA Affiliation: 2004
First entry	2006	
Preliminary entries	3 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	26 15-4-7	
Total goals scored / goals against	73 / 28	
Best goalscorer	11 HMAE Michel 6-2006, 5-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Germany (36 goals in ten matches, an average of 3.6), the Netherlands (34 goals in ten matches, an average of 3.4) and New Caledonia (36 goals in 11 matches, an average of 3.3) were the deadliest teams in the qualification for Brazil 2014.

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.

New Zealand (NZL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1970	
Preliminary entries	12 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	83 45-14-24	
Total goals scored / goals against	197 / 93	
Best goalscorer	19 COVENY Vaughan 4-1998, 9-2002, 6-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	2 1982, 2010	
Best rank	Group stage in 1982, 2010	

Within the Oceanian Zone, New Zealand have contested the most qualifying matches while also winning the most matches and scoring the most goals (not including Australia who have been affiliated to the Asian Zone since 2006).

New Zealand's first qualifying match against one of the current OFC sides came 12 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 in Singapore on 10 January 1982, a 2-1 victory over China PR.

Papua New Guinea (PNG)		FIFA Affiliation: 1966
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries*	3 1998, 2006, (2010), 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	13 4-3-6	
Total goals scored / goals against	24 / 23	
Best goalscorer	6 DAVANI Reginald 6-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 in Port Moresby on 31 May 1997, was settled by a goal from Francis Niakuam ten minutes from time.

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

Samoa (SAM)		FIFA Affiliation: 1986	
First entry	1994		
Preliminary entries*	5	(1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	20	7-1-12	
Total goals scored / goals against	31 / 66		
Best goalscorer	6	FAAIUASO Desmond 4-2002, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

In the 2014 preliminaries, Samoa drew for the first time in 20 qualifying matches with a 1-1 draw against Tonga.

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	6	1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	44	17-8-19	
Total goals scored / goals against	101 / 95		
Best goalscorer	16	MENAPI Commins 5-2002, 4-2006, 7-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

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 four and drawing two in their six appearances in the competition.

Six of Solomon Islands' eight 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.

Tahiti (TAH)		FIFA Affiliation: 1990	
First entry	1994		
Preliminary entries	6	1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	35	14-5-16	
Total goals scored / goals against	51 / 73		
Best goalscorer	5	TEHAU Lorenzo 5-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0		

Only five of Tahiti's 35 qualifying matches have been played at home, all of them in Papeete.

By winning the OFC Nations Cup in 2012, Tahiti qualified for the FIFA Confederations Cup for the first time.

Tonga (TGA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	5	1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014
Matches played: W – D – L	19	7-1-11
Total goals scored / goals against	22 / 74	
Best goalscorer	5	TAUFAHEMA Lokoua 4-2002, 1-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2014 qualifiers, Tonga's only win was a 2-1 success against Cook Islands. That result brought the Tongans' total haul of FIFA World Cup qualifying wins to seven.

With a 1-1 draw against Samoa in the 2014 campaign, Tonga drew for the first time in a qualifying game.

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 did even better by thrashing American Samoa 31-0, setting a new record which stands to this day.

Vanuatu (VAN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1988
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries	6	1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014
Matches played: W – D – L	34	11-3-20
Total goals scored / goals against	73 / 81	
Best goalscorer	9	MERMER Etienne 4-2006, 5-2010
	9	SOROMON Seule 9-2010
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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.

European Zone – UEFA

Teams enrolled in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition: 52+1 host / Slots: 13+1 host

Albania (ALB)		FIFA Affiliation: 1932
First entry	1966	
Preliminary entries*	11	1966, (1970), 1974, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014
Matches played: W – D – L	94	14-13-67
Total goals scored / goals against	62 / 175	
Best goalscorer	8	BOGDANI Erion 4-2006, 3-2010, 1-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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. In the Germany 2006 qualifiers, 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	4	2002, 2006, 2010, 2014
Matches played: W – D – L	42	1-2-39
Total goals scored / goals against	12 / 139	
Best goalscorer	3	LIMA Ildefonso 2-2002, 1-2010
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Together with the Faroe Islands, Liechtenstein and San Marino, Andorra are the only European team that lost all ten of their matches in the 2014 qualifying tournament. In total, the Andorrans have lost their last 22 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	5	1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014
Matches played: W – D – L	52	8-13-31
Total goals scored / goals against	42 / 96	
Best goalscorer	4	MKHITARYAN Henrikh 1-2010, 3-2014
	4	MOVSISYAN Yura 4-2014
	4	PETROSYAN Artur 1-1998, 3-2002
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

The 2014 preliminary competition was Armenia's best-ever campaign, with four victories and a total of 13 points.

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

Austria (AUT)		FIFA Affiliation: 1907
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17 1934, 1938, (1950), 1954, 1958, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	113 55-25-33	
Total goals scored / goals against	198 / 124	
Best goalscorer	15 POLSTER Toni 1-1986, 5-1990, 2-1994, 7-1998	
FIFA World Cup participations	7 1934, 1954, 1958, 1978, 1982, 1990, 1998	
Best rank	Third place in 1954	

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 equalled that record, by not qualifying for Brazil 2014, which was their fourth failed attempt in a row 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.

Azerbaijan (AZE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	48 4-13-31	
Total goals scored / goals against	19 / 85	
Best goalscorer	3 JAVADOV Vagif 2-2010, 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 by overcoming Liechtenstein 2-0 in Vaduz. In their five FIFA World Cup qualifying campaigns, they have now notched four wins in total.

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	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	48 12-10-26	
Total goals scored / goals against	55 / 76	
Best goalscorer	6 KALACHEV Timofei 5-2010, 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 five 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, Ukraine again along with Kazakhstan in the 2010 instalment, and Georgia for the qualifiers for Brazil 2014.

Belgium (BEL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	18 1934, 1938, (1950), 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	123 68-24-31	
Total goals scored / goals against	234 / 135	
Best goalscorer	14 WILMOTS Marc 5-1994, 1-1998, 8-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	12 1930, 1934, 1938, 1954, 1970, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2014	
Best rank	Fourth place in 1986	

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. After 12 years of absence, Belgium qualified for the 2014 final tournament with a remarkable result of eight wins and two defeats in ten matches.

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 fewer 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.

Before qualifying for the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil, 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.



FIFA World Cup Preliminary Competition 1974: Netherlands - Belgium 0:0, Team captains: Paul VAN HIMST (BEL, left) and Johan CRUYFF (NED, right)
Photo by Foto-net/FIFA Archive

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH)		FIFA Affiliation: 1996
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	48 23-8-17	
Total goals scored / goals against	88 / 56	
Best goalscorer	19 DZEKO Edin 9-2010, 10-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 2014	
Best rank	Group stage in 2014	

Ahead of South Africa 2010, Bosnia and 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 they also achieved the biggest margin of victory in their history, thrashing Estonia 7-0 in September 2008.

Bosnia and Herzegovina qualified comfortably for Brazil 2014 by topping their group with 25 points. They also equalled their own record by recording another victory by seven clear goals, defeating Liechtenstein 8-1 in September 2012.

Bosnia and 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 and Herzegovina, contesting eight matches in Sarajevo and 15 in Zenica.

Bosnia and 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 and Herzegovina, the group also contained Croatia and Slovenia.

Bulgaria (BUL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1924
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries	18 1934, 1938, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	119 56-26-37	
Total goals scored / goals against	195 / 158	
Best goalscorer	17 BERBATOV Dimitar 5-2002, 7-2006, 5-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	7 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1986, 1994, 1998	
Best rank	Fourth place in 1994	

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	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	50 29-15-6	
Total goals scored / goals against	89 / 42	
Best goalscorer	7 BALABAN Bosko 5-2002, 2-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1998, 2002, 2006, 2014	
Best rank	Third place in 1998	

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. They only just qualified for Brazil 2014 too by overcoming Iceland in the European play-offs, winning 2-0 in the first leg before drawing 0-0 in the return.

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.

Croatia have lost just six of their 50 qualifiers. Since the 3-1 reverse away to Denmark in 1997, the only other sides to have beaten them are England, who did so twice in the 2010 preliminary tournament, Belgium and Scotland, with the latter also doing so twice in the 2014 preliminary competition.

Cyprus (CYP)		FIFA Affiliation: 1948
First entry	1958	
Preliminary entries*	14 (1958*), 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	104 12-12-80	
Total goals scored / goals against	78 / 281	
Best goalscorer	14 CONSTANTINO Michael 6-2002, 4-2006, 4-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

Cyprus played their 100th qualifying match during the preliminary competition for the 2014 FIFA World Cup against Switzerland in June 2013.

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.

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

Czech Republic (CZE)		FIFA Affiliation: 1907/94
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	18 1934, 1938, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	127 70-26-31	
Total goals scored / goals against	247 / 106	
Best goalscorer	13 BAROS Milan 3-2002, 5-2006, 5-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	9 1934, 1938, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1970, 1982, 1990, 2006	
Best rank	Runners-up in 1934, 1962 as Czechoslovakia	

Czech Republic have not qualified for the FIFA World Cup since the 2006 edition.

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 28 of the 62 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	14 1958, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	110 51-27-32	
Total goals scored / goals against	187 / 132	
Best goalscorer	10	ELKJAER LARSEN Preben 3-1982, 7-1986
	10	LARSEN Soren 5-2006, 5-2010
	10	TOMASSON Jon Dahl 4-2002, 6-2006
FIFA World Cup participations	4 1986, 1998, 2002, 2010	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1998	

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 home 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 four occasions, they finished only a whisker away from reaching the final tournament. In the 1990, 2006 and 2014 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*	15+2 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, (1966, 1970), 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	102 68-23-11	
Total goals scored / goals against	257 / 64	
Best goalscorer	16	ROONEY Wayne 9-2010, 7-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	14 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Champions in 1966	

England played their 100th qualifying match during the 2014 FIFA World Cup preliminary competition against Ukraine in September 2013.

England found the net 31 times during the 2014 UEFA Zone qualifying tournament, which was the third highest after Germany (36) and the Netherlands (34).

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, a 1-0 loss against Italy in 1997 and another 1-0 defeat in 2000, this time against Germany. In the 12 matches that they have played in Manchester, Liverpool, Wolverhampton, Newcastle and Highbury Stadium in London, England are unbeaten with eleven wins and a draw. Since the 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament, they have played every home match at Wembley Stadium in London.

* 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.

Estonia (EST)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923/92
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries	8 1934, 1938, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	66 13-9-44	
Total goals scored / goals against	52 / 147	
Best goalscorer	12 OPER Andres 3-2002, 7-2006, 1-2010, 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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-ever match 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	6 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	60 5-4-51	
Total goals scored / goals against	30 / 168	
Best goalscorer	4 ARGE Uni 1-1994, 2-1998, 1-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

The Faroe Islanders' five victories in 60 qualifying matches were earned against three different opponents, namely Malta in 1997, Luxembourg in 2000 and 2001, plus Lithuania in 2009.

Faroe Islands have failed to keep a clean sheet in 58 of their 60 FIFA World Cup qualifiers. The only team that has failed to score away against the Faroe Islands is Luxembourg, during the sides' two meetings 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 60 FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

Finland (FIN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1908
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries	17 1938, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2020, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	117 30-19-68	
Total goals scored / goals against	124 / 270	
Best goalscorer	10 FORSELL Mikael 4-2002, 4-2006, 2-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

With just two defeats from their ten matches played, Finland enjoyed 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 three sides which, despite having played over 100 qualifying matches, have never participated in the final phase of a FIFA World Cup. Finland have contested 117 qualifiers in total. Luxembourg (124) and Cyprus (104) are the other two sides to have 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.

France (FRA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1908
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	16+3 1934, (1938), 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, (1998, 2002), 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	101 58-21-22	
Total goals scored / goals against	198 / 82	
Best goalscorer	12 PLATINI Michel 3-1978, 5-1982, 4-1986	
FIFA World Cup participations	14 1930, 1934, 1938, 1954, 1958, 1966, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Champions in 1998	

France played their 100th qualifying match in the first leg of the 2014 European play-offs against Ukraine, which they lost 2-0. Between 9 September 1992, when they went down 2-0 in Bulgaria, and 6 September 2008, when France slipped to a 3-1 defeat to Austria in Vienna, *Les Bleus* had previously not lost a match by two goals in FIFA World Cup qualifier 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 30 of their 49 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, who 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	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	50 11-10-29	
Total goals scored / goals against	56 / 87	
Best goalscorer	6 PANDEV Goran 5-2006, 1-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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. In the 2014 qualifying tournament, they picked up one away point against Scotland.

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.

Georgia (GEO)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	46 9-11-26	
Total goals scored / goals against	43 / 75	
Best goalscorer	7 IASHVILI Alexander 4-2002, 2-2006, 1-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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. In the 2014 qualifying tournament, they were again grouped alongside Belarus.

Georgia have played 21 of their 23 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 five previous participations, Georgia’s group opponents included Italy. Since the 1998 qualifying tournament, the only campaigns in which the Georgians have not faced *Gli Azzurri* were the 2006 and 2014 events.

Germany (GER)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	13+5 1934, 1938, 1954, (1958), 1962, 1966, 1970, (1974, 1978), 1982, 1986, 1990, (1994), 1998, 2002, (2006), 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	84 64-18-2	
Total goals scored / goals against	249 / 66	
Best goalscorer	13 KLOSE Miroslav 2-2002, 7-2010, 4-2014 13 RUMMENIGGE Karl-Heinz 9-1982, 4-1986	
FIFA World Cup participations	18 1934, 1938, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Champions in 1954, 1974, 1990, 2014	

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 goal fest 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 (76% – 64 wins from 84 matches), the lowest rate of defeats (2.4% – two losses in 84 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). Moreover, in the 2014 preliminary competition, the eventual world champions scored the most goals with 36.

Germany are unbeaten on their travels in the FIFA World Cup preliminary competition. In 41 away matches, plus one match played on neutral territory, they have clocked up 32 victories and ten draws. Their only two defeats in the competition came at home in 1985, when they were edged out 1-0 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, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	116 49-24-43	
Total goals scored / goals against	141 / 161	
Best goalscorer	12 GEKAS Theofanis 10-2010, 2-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	3 1994, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 2014	

In the 2010 qualifiers, Theofanis Gekas became one of three players to score four times in a qualifier. 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 ten strikes. Thanks to his two goals in the 2014 campaign, Gekas still leads Greece's list of top scorers in FIFA World Cup preliminary tournaments with 12 goals. Greece made it to Brazil through the European play-offs with a draw and a win against Romania.

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.

* Withdrew from the 1934 qualifiers after playing one match.

Hungary (HUN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1907
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17+1 1934, 1938, (1954), 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	112 54-25-33	
Total goals scored / goals against	202 / 149	
Best goalscorer	10 BENE Ferenc 1-1966, 6-1970, 3-1974	
FIFA World Cup participations	9 1934, 1938, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1978, 1982, 1986	
Best rank	Runners-up in 1938, 1954	

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.

Iceland (ISL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1947
First entry	1954	
Preliminary entries*	12 (1954), 1958, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	96 21-18-57	
Total goals scored / goals against	100 / 208	
Best goalscorer	11 GUDJOHNSEN Eidur 2-2002, 6-2006, 3-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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. In the 2014 preliminary competition, Iceland made it to the European play-offs for the first time, but were beaten by Croatia and subsequently failed to qualify. It was their best qualifying campaign so far.

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.

* Entry 1954 not accepted.

Ireland Republic (IRL)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	19 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	127 50-37-40	
Total goals scored / goals against	182 / 157	
Best goalscorer	18 KEANE Robbie - 2-2002, 4-2006, 6-2010, 6-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	3 1990, 1994, 2002	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1990	

With seven draws in 12 encounters during the 2010 campaign, the 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, the Republic of Ireland have competed in all 19 FIFA World Cup preliminary tournaments.

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*	19	1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	112	37-34-41	
Total goals scored / goals against	156 / 163		
Best goalscorer	8	OHANA Eliahu 3-1986, 2-1990, 3-1998	
FIFA World Cup participations	1	1970	
	<i>Best rank</i>	<i>Group stage in 1970</i>	

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 in the qualifying games for 1934 & 1938. It was seen as the forerunner of Israel. Was re-located from Asia to Europe Zone in 1954.

Italy (ITA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1905	
First entry	1934		
Preliminary entries*	15+4	1934, (1938, 1950), 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, (1986, 1990), 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	97	67-23-7	
Total goals scored / goals against	200 / 60		
Best goalscorer	14	RIVA Gigi 7-1970, 7-1974	
FIFA World Cup participations	18	1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
	Best rank	<i>Champions in 1934, 1938, 1982, 2006</i>	

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

Italy have conceded the lowest average goals per match of any European team in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament (0.61, 60 goals in 97 matches). They have lost none of their 49 home qualifiers, recording 43 wins and 6 draws, and keeping a clean sheet on 31 occasions.

Italy have qualified for the finals of the FIFA World Cup via the preliminary competition on 15 occasions, more than any other national side. In the 2014 qualifying tournament, Italy remained unbeaten.

* As hosts only qualified automatically from 1938, Italy had to compete in the 1934 qualifiers. Qualified automatically for 1990 (hosts) as well as for 1938, 1950 & 1986 (defending champions).

Kazakhstan (KAZ)		FIFA Affiliation: 1994
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	50 12-8-30	
Total goals scored / goals against	23 / 79	
Best goalscorer	6 BALTIYEV Ruslan 1-1998, 3-2002, 1-2006, 1-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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. Meanwhile, as a UEFA member, they have achieved three victories, the last one in the 2014 tournament against the Faroe Islands in 2013.

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 (23 goals in 32 qualifiers).

Latvia (LVA)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923/92
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries	7 1938, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	65 17-14-34	
Total goals scored / goals against	75 / 112	
Best goalscorer	9 VERPAKOVSKIS Maris 5-2006, 3-2010, 1-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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*	5 (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	50 2-6-42	
Total goals scored / goals against	22 / 146	
Best goalscorer	5 FRICK Mario 1-1998, 3-2006, 1-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 three FIFA World Cup qualifying tournaments. 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)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1923/92</i>
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	8 1934, 1938, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	63 16-13-34	
Total goals scored / goals against	52 / 91	
Best goalscorer	6 JANKAUSKAS Edgaras 3-1998, 3-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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.

Luxembourg (LUX)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1910</i>
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	19 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	124 4-7-113	
Total goals scored / goals against	61 / 407	
Best goalscorer	4 LANGERS Robert 2-1986, 1-1990, 1-1998 4 SCHMIT Ady 3-1962, 1-1966	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 (113) and conceded more goals (407) than any other national team. They have registered the two longest losing streaks in the tournament: a run of 34 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 goalless draw at home to Moldova.

The first of Luxembourg's four 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)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1960</i>
First entry	1974	
Preliminary entries*	11 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	92 2-9-81	
Total goals scored / goals against	30 / 275	
Best goalscorer	5 BUSUTTIL Carmel 1-1986, 3-1990, 1-1994	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 33 of their 41 away qualifiers. The most goals they have conceded in a preliminary match was nine, against Austria and the German Democratic Republic in 1977.

Moldova (MDA)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1994</i>
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries*	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	48 5-10-33	
Total goals scored / goals against	31 / 92	
Best goalscorer	4 SIDORENCO Eugeniu 4-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

All 24 of Moldova's home FIFA World Cup qualifiers were played in Chisinau, 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 notched up three victories in the 2014 preliminary competition, which is their best-ever result. Before that, they had only secured two victories in all of their FIFA World Cup qualifying tournaments.

Montenegro (MNE)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: (1931)/2007</i>
First entry	2010	
Preliminary entries*	2 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	20 5-9-6	
Total goals scored / goals against	27 / 31	
Best goalscorer	6 DAMJANOVIC Dejan 2-2010, 4-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

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 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.

In the 2014 qualifying tournament, Montenegro notched four victories and ended up in third place in their group, which is their best qualifying result so far.

** Montenegro was declared independent from Serbia in 2006. Affiliated to FIFA in 2007, played their first international match in June 2007.*

Netherlands (NED)		FIFA Affiliation: 1904
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	17 1934, 1938, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	115 76-23-16	
Total goals scored / goals against	275 / 81	
Best goalscorer	13	VAN NISTELROOIJ Ruud 6-2002, 7-2006
	13	VAN PERSIE Robin 1-2006, 1-2010, 11-2014
FIFA World Cup participations	10 1934, 1938, 1974, 1978, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Runners-up in 1974, 1978, 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 (275) and achieved the most victories overall (76). With 11 goals, Robin van Persie was the top scorer in the 2014 preliminary tournament alongside Luis Suárez (URU) and Deon McCaulay (BLZ).

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*	17 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	122 37-34-51	
Total goals scored / goals against	132 / 154	
Best goalscorer	9	HEALY David 4-2002, 3-2006, 1-2010, 1-2014
	3	1958, 1982, 1986
FIFA World Cup participations	3 1958, 1982, 1986	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1958, 1982	

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 the 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.



FIFA World Cup Preliminary Competition 1998: Germany – Northern Ireland 1:1; Kevin HORLOCK (NIR – left), Andreas MOELLER (GER – right)
Photo by Mark Sandten/Bongarts/Getty Images

Norway (NOR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1908
First entry	1938	
Preliminary entries*	17 1938, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	116 40-29-47	
Total goals scored / goals against	153 / 162	
Best goalscorer	8	CAREW John 5-2002, 3-2006
	8	REKDAL Kjetil 5-1994, 3-1998
FIFA World Cup participations	3 1938, 1994, 1998	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 1998	

Having finished second behind the Netherlands in Group 9 during the 2010 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 58 home qualifiers that Norway have contested in the preliminary tournament, 56 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, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	106 52-20-34	
Total goals scored / goals against	200 / 127	
Best goalscorer	15	LUBANSKI Włodzimierz 5-1966, 7-1970, 1-1974, 2-1978
	7	1938, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 2002, 2006
FIFA World Cup participations	7 1938, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 2002, 2006	
Best rank	Third place in 1974, 1982	

Poland played their 100th qualifying match during the 2014 preliminary competition against Ukraine on 22 March 2013.

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 drawn 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.

Portugal (POR)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1923</i>
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	19 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	129 67-33-29	
Total goals scored / goals against	230 / 135	
Best goalscorer	19 PAULETA 8-2002, 11-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	6 1966, 1986, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Third place in 1966	

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). For the 2014 FIFA World Cup, Portugal had to go through the European play-offs against Sweden. They won both matches with Cristiano Ronaldo scoring all of the four goals for his team.

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 the 2002, 2006 and 2010 campaigns, Portugal did not lose a single away match during the preliminary tournament, 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 spot (Turkey had qualified and then withdrawn).

Romania (ROU)		<i>FIFA Affiliation: 1923</i>
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	16+1 1934, (1938), 1954, 1958, (1962), 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	118 64-22-32	
Total goals scored / goals against	211 / 124	
Best goalscorer	15 HAGI Gheorghe 4-1986, 1-1990, 5-1994, 5-1998	
FIFA World Cup participations	7 1930, 1934, 1938, 1970, 1990, 1994, 1998	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1995	

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 in Serbia on 10 October 2009, when 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. Romania had to go through the European play-offs in the 2014 preliminary competition, but they to beat Greece.

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*	15 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990 (as Soviet Union); 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	115 73-23-19	
Total goals scored / goals against	227 / 75	
Best goalscorer	11 KERZHAKOV Aleksandr 4-2006, 2-2010, 5-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	10 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1982, 1986, 1990 (as Soviet Union); 1994, 2002, 2014	
Best rank	Fourth place in 1966 as Soviet Union	

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. In the 2014 qualifying tournament, the Russians again remained unbeaten on home soil.

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, the 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 v. Iceland.*

San Marino (SMR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1988
First entry	1994	
Preliminary entries*	6 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2020, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	56 0-2-54	
Total goals scored / goals against	9 / 259	
Best goalscorer	5 SELVA Andy 2-2002, 2-2006, 1-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	0	

In the 2010 preliminary tournament, San Marino conceded 47 goals, more than any other side. They fared even worse in the 2014 preliminary competition, conceding 54 goals in total.

San Marino are the only European side to have never 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.

Scotland (SCO)		FIFA Affiliation: 1910
First entry	1950	
Preliminary entries*	17 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	115 57-25-33	
Total goals scored / goals against	175 / 124	
Best goalscorer	9 GALLACHER Kevin 2-1994, 6-1998, 1-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	8 1954, 1958, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1998	
Best rank	Group stage in 1954, 1958, 1974-1990, 1998	

In Glasgow on 11 October 2008, 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 16 of their 115 FIFA World Cup qualifiers against fellow representatives from Great Britain. The last of these derby matches was played in Glasgow on 22 March 2013, when Scotland lost 2-1 to 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*	18 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, (1994), 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	118 69-28-21	
Total goals scored / goals against	249 / 104	
Best goalscorer	17 MILOSEVIC Savo 9-1998, 7-2002, 1-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	11 1930, 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1974, 1982, 1990, 1998, 2006, 2010	
Best rank	Fourth place in 1930 & 1962 as Yugoslavia	

With a total of 249 goals scored in the history of the UEFA zone preliminary tournament, Serbia are the third most prolific European nation in this competition alongside Germany (249) and behind the Netherlands (275) and England (257).

Under the name of Yugoslavia, Serbia played and won the first FIFA World Cup qualifier to be decided in extra time, a 3-2 win over France in Florence on 11 December 1949.

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 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 in 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	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	54 26-14-14	
Total goals scored / goals against	93 / 57	
Best goalscorer	8 NEMETH Szilard 4-2002, 4-2006	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 2010	
Best rank	Round of 16 in 2010	

Slovakia's passage to their first FIFA World Cup in 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 three of their ten previous meetings with neighbours Czech Republic. Two of the victories came in qualifiers for the FIFA World Cup™, a 2-1 success in Bratislava in 1997 and a similar result in Prague in 2009. The other victory was a friendly match in March 2015.

Slovenia (SVN)		FIFA Affiliation: 1992
First entry	1998	
Preliminary entries	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	52 21-12-19	
Total goals scored / goals against	69 / 61	
Best goalscorer	10 NOVAKOVIC Milivoje 5-2010, 5-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	2 2002, 2010	
Best rank	Group stage in 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 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*	17+1 1934, (1938), 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, (1982), 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	107 72-24-11	
Total goals scored / goals against	240 / 73	
Best goalscorer	10 HIERRO Fernando 3-1994, 4-1998, 3-2002	
FIFA World Cup participations	14 1934, 1950, 1962, 1966, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Champions in 2010	

The first game of the 2014 preliminary competition, against Georgia on 11 September 2012, was Spain's 100th World Cup qualifying match, which the then reigning world champions won 1-0. The Spaniards only needed eight matches to qualify for the 2014 FIFA World Cup, topping the only European group to contain five teams.

The Iberians finished the 2014 preliminary tournament unbeaten for the fifth time in a row, establishing a record of 53 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.

* 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*	18+1 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, (1958), 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	119 73-19-27	
Total goals scored / goals against	240 / 112	
Best goalscorer	19 IBRAHIMOVIC Zlatan 1-2002, 8-2006, 2-2010, 8-2014	
FIFA World Cup participations	11 1934, 1938, 1950, 1958, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1990, 1994, 2002, 2006	
Best rank	Runners-up in 1958	

On 11 October 2008, Sweden contested their 100th FIFA World Cup qualifier, drawing 0-0 with Portugal in Solna. Sweden have not qualified for their the FIFA World Cup since 2006, having failed to qualify from the European play-offs of the 2014 edition, when they lost both games to Portugal.

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*	18+1 1934, 1938, 1950, (1954), 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	120 54-32-34	
Total goals scored / goals against	181 / 139	
Best goalscorer	17	FREI Alexander 5-2002, 7-2006, 5-2010
	17	TURKYILMAZ Kubilay 5-1990, 1-1994, 4-1998, 7-2002
FIFA World Cup participations	10 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954, 1962, 1966, 1994, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1954	

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 remained unbeaten in the 2014 qualifying tournament. Since losing against Luxembourg in 2008, Switzerland have gone 18 matches without 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 Baratký.

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).

Turkey (TUR)		FIFA Affiliation: 1923
First entry	1934	
Preliminary entries*	16 (1934), 1950, 1954, (1958), 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	118 43-21-54	
Total goals scored / goals against	162 / 174	
Best goalscorer	16	SUKUR Hakan 3-1994, 8-1998, 5-2002
	2	1954, 2002
FIFA World Cup participations	2 1954, 2002	
Best rank	Third place in 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. Since finishing third in the 2002 final tournament, Turkey have not qualified for a FIFA World Cup.

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	5 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	60 30-20-10	
Total goals scored / goals against	95 / 43	
Best goalscorer	26 SHEVCHENKO Andriy 4-1998, 10-2002, 6-2006, 6-2010	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 2006	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 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.

In the 2014 preliminary competition, Ukraine won 9-0 against San Marino, which was the most emphatic victory in the European Zone qualifying competition. After finishing second in their group, Ukraine had to go through the European play-offs but lost to France by a single goal.

Ukraine have achieved the highest percentage rate of draws of any European team in the FIFA World Cup preliminary tournament (33.3%, 20 in 60 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*	17 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014	
Matches played: W – D – L	110 33-21-56	
Total goals scored / goals against	138 / 164	
Best goalscorer	11 RUSH Ian 3-1986, 8-1994	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1958	
Best rank	Quarter-finals in 1958	

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, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1990	
Matches played: W – D – L	47 22-8-17	
Total goals scored / goals against	87 / 65	
Best goalscorer	14 STREICH Joachim 7-1974, 4-1978, 3-1982	
FIFA World Cup participations	1 1974	
Best rank	Second round in 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.