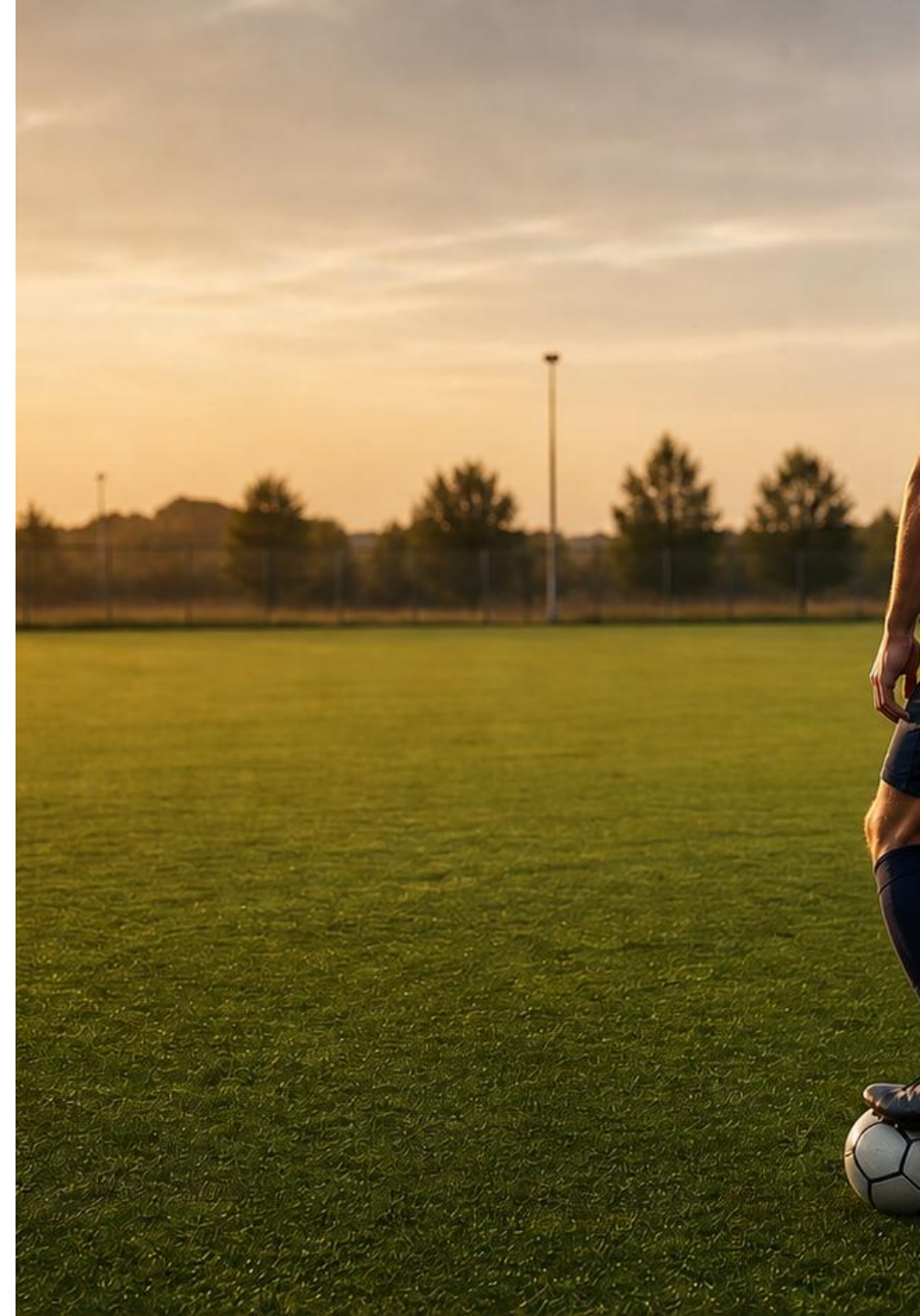


Are more versatile football players more valuable?

What football can teach us about better task diversification and specialisation



A useful signal is not always the cause

Versatility can tell us something important about a player. The harder question is whether changing role creates extra value on its own.

WHAT WE SEE

Versatile players often look more valuable.

WHAT DRIVES IT

Young players were already improving before the role change.

Confusing the two can lead clubs to overpay the flexible player.

| We tracked value across 14 European leagues

Match-level positions linked to yearly market values, 2013–2025

15,907

PLAYERS

56,508

PLAYER-SEASONS

2,103

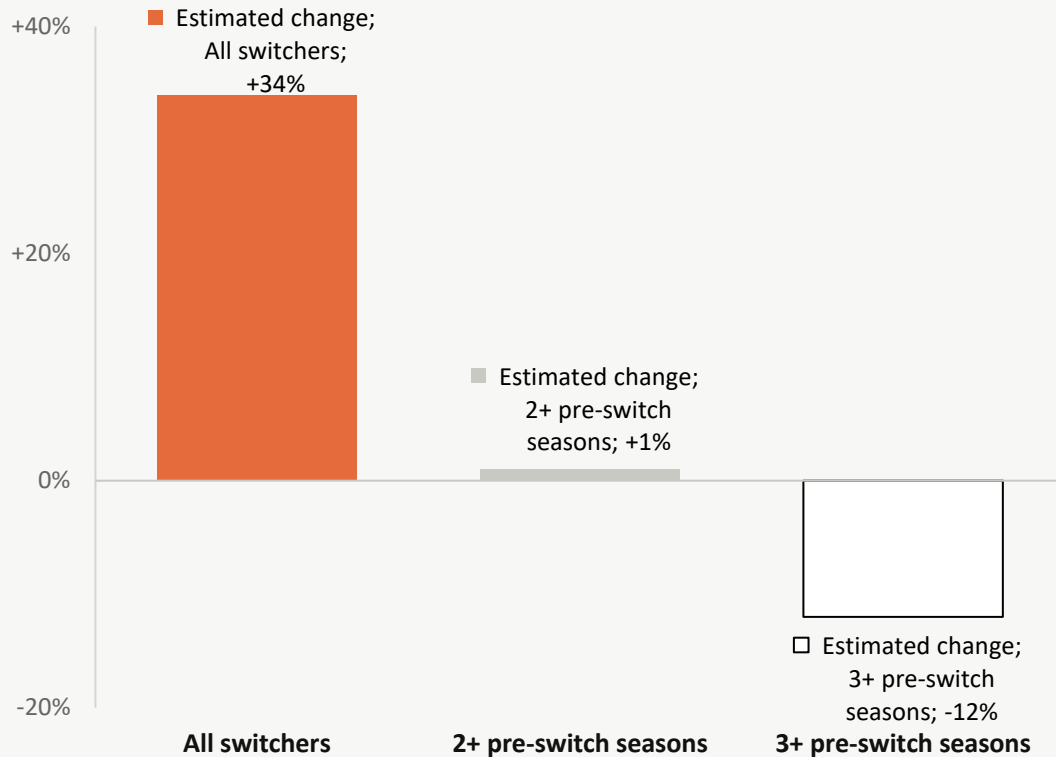
POSITION SWITCHERS

The scale lets us compare each player's path before and after a switch, not just versatile players with specialists.

Source: linked Transfermarkt market values and match line-ups.

The apparent gain fades with better comparisons

Estimated change in market value



BETTER HISTORY, CLEARER ANSWER

The role change itself does not explain the rise.

When players have enough history before the switch, the estimated gain falls to almost zero or turns negative.

Use versatility as a clue, not a price tag.

POLICY

Back development pathways, not one visible trait.

Bars convert the study's log estimates to percentages and round to whole numbers. The +1% estimate is not statistically different from zero.

| Start with the trend before the change

That single habit improves valuation, programme design and the story you tell decision-makers.



CLUBS & INVESTORS

Separate the role label from the player's value path.



SPORT & POLICY TEAMS

Test whether programmes caused better outcomes.



HOW WE HELP

Link data, measure impact and explain the choice in plain language.

Research that turns hard questions into better choices.