



LISTENING

In order to do this task, you should follow these steps:

1. Listen to the podcast.
2. Do the exercises below.
3. Have a look at the vocabulary support and read the podcast transcript to help you understand the text.
4. The answers to the exercises will be available on the website next week.

• **QUESTIONS**

Read the following questions and choose the correct answers:

- 1) How many national teams took part in the first World Cup that Michel Platini watched?
a) 40
b) 32
c) 16
- 2) In the 1974 World Cup, the nations which took part in it were from...
a) Europe, South America, the North and Central American qualifying region, Africa and Oceania/ Asia
b) Europe, South America, Africa and Oceania/ Asia
c) Europe, South America and Africa
- 3) How many participating nations were there at the last World Cup in 2010?
a) 13
b) 32
c) 22
- 4) Which World Cup was more representative of the global game?
a) The World Cup in 1974
b) The World Cup in 2010
c) None of them were representative.

5) Michel Platini's plan consists of...

- a) Reducing the number of participating teams
- b) Increasing the number of participating teams**
- c) Increasing the number of matches so that the quality of the tournament is diluted.

• VOCABULARY SUPPORT

- **CONCACAF**: The North and Central American qualifying region
- **the global game**: football (the beautiful game)
- **meaningless**: without any meaning; games with nothing to play for
- **with this in mind**: taking this into account
- **the Euro-centric ways of the 1970s**: In the 1970s European football dominated the World Cup and held lots of power within the game.
- **dilute the quality**: to weaken the quality; take away its strength

• PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

Plans for the World Cup

In a recent interview, UEFA president, Michel Platini, raised the issue of increasing the number of teams playing in the World Cup from 32 to 40 and so on this week's main listening report we wonder if this idea is such a good one.

In the first ever World Cup, I watched back in 1974, only 16 nations took part: 9 from Europe, 4 from South America and one each from **CONCACAF**, Africa and Oceania/Asia. At the last World Cup in South Africa, in 2010, there were 32 participating nations with 13 teams from Europe, 5 from South America, 6 from Africa, 4 from Asia, 3 from CONCACAF and one from Oceania. Definitely much more representative of **the global game** but some complain that the competition is too large with too many **meaningless** games.

The problem now is that none of the continental federations are going to give up their World Cup spots and, **with this in mind**, UEFA president, Michel Platini, has suggested that the tournament could include 40 countries rather than 32 so that no region would lose any of its current number of places.

This raises questions about what kind of tournament the World Cup wants to be. Of course, regions need to be fairly represented (we cannot return to **the Euro-centric ways of the 1970s**, for instance) but I am not sure that simply increasing the numbers of participating countries is the answer as we will then have even more matches which will probably **dilute the quality** of the tournament. It is, after all, a competition to find the best team in the world.