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Not to be confused with Serie C Football league. The Campeonato Brasileiro Série C is the third tier of the Brazilian football league system. Unlike the first and second divisions, the Série C is not played in a double round robin system, arguably because many participating teams lack the financial conditions to travel long distances. Thus, the tournament is organized in regional groups and the table prevents teams from distant states from playing each other in the initial rounds.

Beginning in 2009, the Série C was reduced from 64 teams to 20 and the new Campeonato Brasileiro Série D is the qualifier for Brazilian league football. In its current format the first phase was then played in a single round, with 19 matches. The top eight teams qualify for a knockout stage and the four semi-finalists are promoted to the Campeonato Brasileiro Série B. The four lowest-placed teams are relegated to the Campeonato Brasileiro Série D.

Format history [edit]

Until 2008, any professional team could apply, but only 64 teams would take part in the tournament. The teams that had been relegated from the Série B in the previous year were joined by teams qualified for each federation state. Qualification rules varied, some federations used the state tournaments as qualification tournaments, others organized exclusive qualification tournaments to the Série C.

From 2009 onwards, the qualifiers were played in four groups of five teams each. In 2011, the final round was played in two groups of four. From 2012, the competition was played in two groups of ten teams in the first phase, increasing the number of dates. This format was maintained until 2024, when the competition's Technical Council decided to make a change in the second phase