



A REVIEW OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION PROJECTS

# UEFA women's football development programme

### Review of the UEFA women's football development programme

Women's football is a UEFA priority. With its women's competitions already established, the time had come to focus on the foundations of women's football and encourage its growth and development at grassroots level on a pan-European basis. In December 2010, the UEFA Executive Committee approved significant funding for women's football development through the HatTrick programme. The initial 2010/11 pilot phase was very successful and it was repeated for the 2011/12 season.

From 2012–16 under HatTrick III, the UEFA women's football development programme (WFDP) will be supporting and funding each of the 54 UEFA member associations in their quest to nurture and promote the women's game in their communities, schools, parks and playgrounds. The concept is simple – that women's football has arrived as a team sport and all girls and women can play. The key factors to develop are perception and accessibility.

This review provides an account – by individual member association – of the hard work that is being done to bring women's football into the spotlight. Some of the WFDP projects you will read about have already been completed or are in the making; some have been planned and approved for the future. Whatever the stage in the process, this review serves as genuine proof that women's football is being taken seriously and is now reaping the recognition it so rightfully deserves.



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### Albania – Football Association of Albania (FShF)

In 2012, the FShF launched a project with an all-round approach to developing grassroots women's football nationwide. Working with local schools and municipalities, the FShF hosted six football festivals in Tirana, Durrës, Elbasani, Shkodra, Korca and Fieri involving up to 500 girls aged between 10 and 12 years. To continue the momentum, the Federation are now working with the Albanian ministry of education to develop a girls' football programme for inclusion in the school curriculum, allowing talented girls to progress and participate at a higher level in clubs and leagues.

A nationwide poster campaign has also been launched with the Albanian women's national team coach and captain, using a translation of the German Football Association (DFB) slogan ***I play football, and you?*** that is becoming increasingly recognised and popular across Europe.

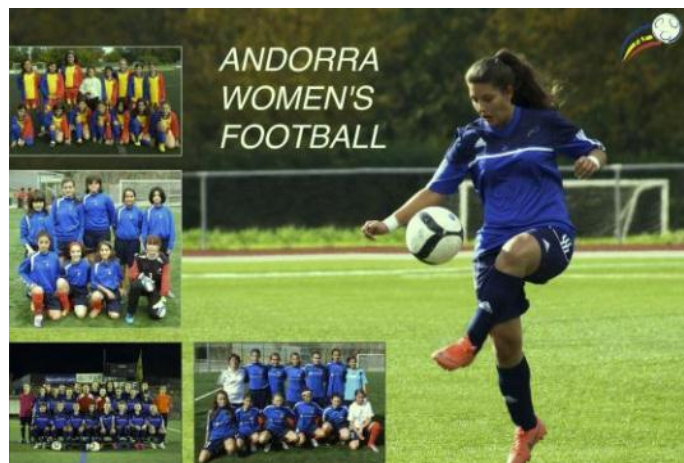
#### Albania: did you know?

- The FShF had no female registered players in 2009. In 2012 it had 251!
- In 2012, the FShF launched its first women's Under-19 national Team. An Under-17 team is planned for the future.



### Andorra – Andorran Football Federation (FAF)

The FAF joined the WFDP pilot phase in 2011/12 with its **global plan for women's football development**. This is a long-term and challenging project approaching women's football from a variety of different angles, which aims to create a women's youth team as well as a women's youth league and, finally, to develop a training programme for women's coaches and instructors. The FAF only began work on the project in September 2012, but good progress is being made. The anticipation is that Andorra will soon become another success story for women playing football.



#### Andorra: did you know?

- The FAF introduced women's football as part of its overall management strategy in 2004.
- In 2012 there were 69 registered female players.
- There are mixed youth leagues for U6s, U7s, U8s, U9s, U10s and U11s and, in some cases, girls' football is also part of the school curriculum – so progress is well under way at grassroots level.



### Armenia – Football Federation of Armenia (HFF)

Armenia has made remarkable progress in women's football over the last five years. In December 2011, the HFF began a grassroots campaign for women's football. It is still on-going today, evolving with each new phase of development and raising the profile of the women's game. Girls' teams have since been established in Yerevan and they train regularly with professional coaches and instructors. The HFF is also working closely with the ministry of sport, conducting seminars for coaches, ensuring they understand the strategy and importance behind the development of women's football in Armenia.

Certainly, the key to the association's success is providing the opportunity for girls to play football through schools, outreach programmes and competitive tournaments. It sounds simple enough, but it is easy to forget the enormous investment in terms of organisation, coordination and logistics. Not only do such events raise interest and participation, they also underline important social values such as equal opportunities, teamwork and respect – and in some cases have helped reduce local tensions caused by social and economic hardship.



#### Armenia: did you know?

- Women's football became an HFF priority in 1999.
- Currently, there are 419 registered female players. The goal is to reach 1,000 in the coming years.
- In some primary schools, football is part of the school curriculum and the girls play 45 minutes per week.

### Austria – Austrian Football Association (ÖFB)

Austria, already a leading country for women's football, joined the WFDP in September 2011, channelling the UEFA funding towards the creation of a national centre for women's football. The ÖFB centre is now fully operational, focusing not only on development of top-level women's football but also the un-interrupted training of talented young players aged 14–19 years. The centre works in cooperation with other regional associations and the Austrian Bundesliga, and also operates as the training ground for the Austrian women's national team and youth teams (WU17 and WU19). It is considered the centre of expertise for women's football and the provider of Austria's competitive women's national teams of the future – establishing a structure for the best possible development of all female players.

#### Austria: did you know?

- The ÖFB introduced its first Women's League in 2005.
- In 2012 there were 37,000 registered female players.
- The ÖFB runs a national schools project in conjunction with the ministry for education, promoting the women's game at the grassroots level, raising interest and encouraging integration.
- There is a wide range of mixed youth leagues for all ages.

### Azerbaijan – Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA)

The AFFA believes that the future of football starts with grassroots and youth football. In September 2011, the association launched an adventurous project to establish an **Azerbaijan women's U15 league**. As a fully operational league is a timely challenge, the association adopted a long-term approach to the project. The AFFA firstly tackled the basics, defining regulations, matchdays and venues. The venues were then inspected to ensure a safe playing environment for the girls, who were provided with the appropriate kit and introduced to licenced coaches and instructors – their mentors for the future. Talented players could then progress into the national WU17 and WU19 teams. This channel of development is an exciting and encouraging path for players, but at the same time it provides a wealth of opportunity for the AFFA in terms of international participation and growth.



#### Azerbaijan: did you know?

- Women's Football has now been integrated into the curriculum at seven schools in Baku.
- Azerbaijan had 552 registered female players in 2012 and there are WU15 and WU17 youth leagues.
- The above picture captures the Azerbaijan youth teams' visit to UEFA HQ in August 2011.

### Belarus – Football Federation of Belarus (BFF)

The BFF selected a project that would allow it to spot the best young talent and strengthen the profile of the women's game in the country – **the girls' championship of the Republic of Belarus**. The competition is played in two age categories and players from across Belarus are involved either through clubs, schools, youth clubs or youth sports schools (the republican centre of Olympic preparation, for example). The BFF's main objectives are to nurture new players for its WU17 and WU19 teams, to increase the number of registered female players and to develop its player base for international competitions.



#### Belarus: did you know?

- The number of registered women players has increased from just 100 in 2008 to 1010 in 2012.
- The BFF began working on women's football in 1992 – and has since established successful women's youth teams at WU17 and WU15 level.

### Belgium – The Royal Belgian Football Association (URBSFA-KBVB)

The Belgian FA is a strong supporter of the women's game and is always looking for new and improved ideas. Together with the Royal Dutch Football Association (KNVB), it came up with a unique proposal – **the BeNe League**. The first of its kind, this cross-border league is a joint venture between two neighbouring associations who have cooperated to achieve the financing and competition structure, and who have together come up with a great marketing plan to raise the profile of the league and encourage women to get involved.

The BeNe League consists of 16 teams. During the first part of the season, eight Belgian and eight Dutch teams play a national competition. Each team plays 14 matches. The top four teams from each country then enter the BeNe League A, and the runners up the BeNe League B. The winners of League A are the BeNe League champions. The highest-placed Belgian and Dutch teams automatically qualify for the UEFA Women's Champions League. This joint approach is both innovative and challenging – and the WFDP is proud to have been a contributor to its creation and ultimate success.

#### Belgium: did you know?

- In 2012 URBSFA had a total of 18,410 registered women players and 245 clubs with 33 senior women's teams.
- The national association introduced women's football in 1971.
- There is a women's national team as well as WU19 and WU15 youth teams.

### Bosnia and Herzegovina – Bosnia and Herzegovina Football Federation (NFSBiH)

The NFSBiH joined the WFDP pilot phase in 2011/12 with a project called **Say YES to women's football**. The two-day event aimed to involve as many girls as possible nationwide, no matter if they were registered or unregistered players. The central idea was to create a support network that united players, clubs and officials in women's football. Day one was a technical seminar for coaches of women's football, and day two was a women's football festival including a mini-tournament for WU19 and WU17 teams and a variety of workshops and training sessions for WU15 players. In total, 400 girls, 20 coaches, 20 assistant coaches and nine event organisers took part.



In 2012, there were 555 registered female players, 12 senior teams and 12 clubs

The next phase for Bosnia and Herzegovina is a **united women's premier league**. This is a long-term project which will unite the (currently separate) league system and stabilise clubs and female players. The federation will provide match venues, transportation for the visiting teams and match officials. It will also cover the cost of registering players and clubs. Providing these additional resources will encourage growth and participation. It is also hoped that a united league will overcome issues such as discrimination and foster more positive attitudes of tolerance and acceptance for race and religion.



### Bulgaria – Bulgarian Football Union (BFS)

The BFS joined the WFDP in May 2012. Priority number one was to increase the number of qualified women's football coaches essential to maintaining high-quality training and instruction. The next step, now currently under way, is to establish eight regional centres dedicated to women's football. They will operate on a cooperation model between the BFS, municipalities and local schools for the well-being and inclusion of young girls in football. The BFS sees the main challenge as a change in perception. With this in mind, it has launched a communications campaign designed to show parents, children, teachers and football officials that women's football offers a wide range of social benefits and is a useful tool for integrating women into sport and promoting equal rights and acceptance. The long-term view of this project is an overall increase in women playing football, leading to an experienced and talented player network as well as the creation of regional tournaments at WU17 and WU19 level. Further down the line, the BFS foresees stronger competition for women of all ages and, it is hoped, the creation of domestic championships and international involvement.



#### Bulgaria: did you know?

- The BFS has launched a new women's football logo – see across!
- The BFS holds bi-annual women's mini-tournaments for WU17 and WU19 teams in Sandanski, Blagoevgrad, Sofia and Teteven.
- The final of the annual Bulgarian women's cup is held in the national stadium.
- There were 394 registered women players in Bulgaria in 2012.

### Croatia – Croatian Football Federation (HNS)

The new president of the HNS, Davor Šuker, is a fan of women's football and is driving the federation to produce marked results. In October 2012 in Osijek, the HNS launched its first WFDP project – a two-day **festival for women's football**. Over 600 girls from local schools attended, and Davor Šuker himself joined in as the fun during a celebrity match to celebrate the event. Such events can encourage younger girls' passion for football, strengthening their confidence as part of a team and, at the same time, breaking down gender prejudices and traditional barriers.

The next push to raise the standard is the creation of five regional centres specifically for women's football in Zagreb, Osijek, Rijeka, Split and Varazdin. The vision is that all girls and women will have the opportunity to play football in Croatia, spreading the concept of equality and inclusion. These centres will work with pre-schools and primary schools as well as local communities, clubs and regional football federations in order to host development seminars, fun football schools, festivals and competitions.



#### Croatia: did you know?

- Croatia introduced women's football in 1971.
- The HNS president, Davor Šuker, has made women's football a top priority at the HNS.
- There is a women's national team and youth teams at WU17 and WU19 level.
- There are mixed youth leagues for the U9 to U12 age groups, which is fantastic for integration at a young age.

### Cyprus – Cyprus Football Association (KOP)

The KOP opted for a grassroots project for girls – with the aim of changing the perception of grassroots football so it is perceived as being for boys **and girls**. The overall project is multi-faceted, but the association started with the creation of a youth league prioritising the lower age groups of 9–12 and 12–15 years. Working with schools in Nicosia, Limassol and Larnaca/Famagusta, four to five teams were set up in each region and a tournament was launched, with matches played after school and at weekends.

The KOP has also targeted coach and referee development for women's football to make sure the players have the best potential training and instruction for the future. The association has led coaching courses for physical education teachers, providing the correct materials and equipment, with successful graduates obtaining a UEFA C licence. The KOP already has 17 fully trained women referees, a figure that it would like to increase by applying enhanced incentives. Refereeing carries high expectations and is usually a role that is taken on in addition to a profession or family commitments, hence the incentives must reflect the substantial investment.

To date Cyprus has an impressive 1200 registered female players. The KOP also supports a national women's team and youth teams at WU13 and WU19 level.

### Czech Republic – Football Association of the Czech Republic (FAČR)

In October 2011, the FAČR initiated the **Spotlight on women's and girls' football** project, beginning the hard work that is still on-going today. Through the creation of an exclusive website, the association promoted women's football as a FAČR priority, underlining its seriousness and creating new interest. It also staged a series of one-day football camps for talented girls in the WU13 and WU15 age groups, and this was followed by the creation of an indoor winter league also at WU13 and WU15 level.

The first project was about communications and invigorating the women's game by focusing on the youth element. The association remains loyal to this theory and the next stage of the development plan is to create a new generation of women players by applying the same methods. The focus will be on increasing the number of trained coaches and instructors and hosting a wide range of children's camps for even younger ages, such as WU9s and WU11s. In the long run, educating and working with children is the best way to ensure that future generations see women's football as the norm.

#### Czech Republic: did you know?

- The Czechs played their first women's football match in 1936 in Brno.
- The first Czech women's team, SK Slavia Praha, was formed in 1966.
- In 2012 there were 16,900 registered female players (an increase of 39% over the past five years).

### Denmark – Danish Football Union (DBU)

Denmark is a tremendously strong force for women's football. The DBU introduced it in 1974 and by 2012 there were 77,889 registered female players, 1,434 senior teams, more than 248 youth teams and a national league with five divisions. Spectator numbers are high and the top matches are already shown on television.

Always looking for new ways to improve, and by applying the WFDP funding, the DBU devised a **modern marketing plan** to promote its top women's league, **the 3F League**. The key objectives were to attract more sponsors, increase local and regional visibility of the top women's league and better use social media platforms – all with a view to increasing overall spectator levels and securing a weekly spot on the television for a women's league match. In the long term, the DBU would also like to increase nationwide media coverage so that women's football has a daily media presence, as well as confirming television agreements that can contribute financially towards the development of women's football. The DBU is a role model association for the women's game and its achievements to date are remarkable.



### England – The Football Association (The FA)

Football is the top team sport for women in England. In fact women's football is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest team sport in its own right after men's football and cricket. There were 89,640 female players in weekly club football in 2012, the vast majority of whom were under 18 years of age. The FA has a women's national team, as well as national teams in the WU23, WU19, WU17 and WU15 age groups, all playing at a competitive level. They also support the England Deaf Women's Team. There is a wide range of youth leagues for all ages, including mixed leagues up to age 14.

Even with these impressive statistics, the core objective of The FA remains to increase participation in girls' football. Under the WFDP pilot phase in 2011/12, The FA hosted **girls' football festivals** with a particular emphasis on goalkeeping (an area that needs better influence and a greater emphasis on girls' participation). The festivals ran between March and October 2012 and were widely promoted by well-known England & FA Women's Super League players. The events were organised at a range of facilities from indoor sports halls to town centres to parks and 3G football pitches. The festivals included an inflatable pitch, a skills and drills area and a series of coaching zones, supported by interactive goalkeeping activities to test skills such as speed and reaction. Overall, the project included 45 events nationwide and was attended by 6,975 girls between the ages of 5-17 years. The FA will continue its WFDP activities in 2012/13, its aim being to further develop the FA Women's Super League from eight to a maximum of 20 clubs in two divisions, introducing promotion and relegation and raising the standard and scope of the game. The FA would also like to strengthen opportunities for young elite players by launching a new FA Women's Super League Reserves competition.



### Estonia – Estonian Football Association (EJL)

In July 2011, the EJL began a project to raise the profile of the women's game in Estonia. It staged weekly training sessions in Tallinn and Tartu for talented WU15s, WU17s and WU19s, plus six three-day **development camps** nationwide and numerous **club assistance programmes** where the national association visited clubs to advise on training, player development and coach consultation. Also seen as vital by the EJL was its move to engage an expert in women's football to support all these events and to develop high-quality systems and regulations for the women's game.

The second phase of the development programme is now under way. It involves highlighting the women's game both within the football family and in the public domain. In cooperation with clubs, the EJL is producing promotional materials and visiting schools along with national team players, coaches and grassroots managers. The aim is to promote local clubs and educate the teachers on the women's game, thereby encouraging pupils to get involved. The reputation of women's football has to evolve so that girls perceive it as a popular game in which they are welcome to participate.

#### Estonia: did you know?

- In 2012, there were 752 registered female players.
- There are national youth teams at WU15, WU17, WU19 and WU21 level.
- Youth tournaments are organised on a regular basis and youth leagues exist for a wide range of ages.

### Faroe Islands – Faroe Islands Football Association (FSF)

The FSF began its approach to women's football from two different angles. Firstly, there are very few women in the Faroe Islands with a football background and education. A key priority was to train female coaches so more girls would play over a longer time frame – and under the best possible instruction and guidance.

The FSF then focused on player development through education and training. The country is divided into three main regions. From each region, seven clubs were targeted and approximately 16 players from those clubs selected to partake in weekly training sessions with a professional coach appointed by the FSF. In each region, a local trainer joined forces with the coach to assist in instructing the young players. In addition, the players from each region came together over six weekends to play against each other and practise in a competitive environment.

The next step under WFDP 2012/13 is a series of **public relations days for girls' football**. These events will take place from March to October 2013, targeting grassroots players aged between five to eight years from kindergartens and schools. The FSF will coordinate with local clubs to host these festivals, which will either take place at a clubhouse or a local mini-pitch.

#### Faroe Islands: did you know?

- Female players make up 28% of all footballers in the Faroe Islands.
- The FSF has a women's national league with two divisions and 17 clubs. There are 24 senior teams and 82 registered youth teams. There were 1,222 registered female players in 2012.

### Finland – Football Association of Finland (SPL-FBF)

In 2011, Finland launched the **Player manager and talent 2013** project, which involved developing the country's most talented players to the highest international level through a mentoring system with former top internationals. The preparation of younger players is vital in order for them to gain experience playing in a competitive environment and as part of a professional team. This allows them to feel comfortable participating in established competitions such as the UEFA European Women's Championship (Women's EURO) or the UEFA European Women's Under-19 Championship. In addition, the Finnish FA focused on the best players from the national youth teams (15–19 years old), providing a more tailored development pathway for the future.



Impressive: Finland had 26,776 registered female players in 2012

The Finnish FA has a successful women's national team and youth teams at WU16, WU17 and WU19 level

Continuing under the WFDP in 2012/13, the Finnish FA is again pushing forward with specialised education and training by hosting coaching seminars with local clubs and expanding the already successful **school sports tournament** into other communities further afield. Regional women's tournaments for ages 14–16 years have been played for many years. These will continue as normal, but also expand to incorporate educational content for players and coaches as well as guidance for parents and families.

### France – French Football Federation (FFF)

Women's football is already very popular in France with a wide fan base and regular coverage on television. France's top women's club – Olympique Lyonnais – won the UEFA Women's Champions League in May 2012, playing in front of 50,000 spectators in Munich.

With a view to targeting interest within younger age groups, the FFF joined the WFDP in February 2012 by establishing a national competition for the WU13 age group. This grassroots theme will continue with a superbly named project – ***Le football des princesses*** – a joint cooperation between the FFF, the ministry of education and the national union of sport in schools (UNSS). This shared initiative involves hosting a variety of sporting events at schools to promote women's football with the help of the French women's national team and its four founding pillars – emotion, solidarity, respect and the fans. There will also be a marketing campaign and, in due course, an international forum for women's football. A milestone set by the FFF is to reach 100,000 registered female players. In 2012 there were 58,350, which is already over half way. With the right promotion and dedication, its goal is certainly within its grasp in the not-too-distant future.



### Georgia – Georgian Football Federation (GFF)

In November and December 2011, the GFF hosted a nationwide competition called ***School ball for girls*** – a joint football tournament supported by the GFF, regional football federations and the ministry for education. A total of 64 girls' teams (aged 12–14 years) took part from Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi, Zugdidi, Kobuleti, Lagodekhi, Khashuri and Lanchkhuti. Each city hosted a qualification round, the winning team of each going through to the final round. The tournament was widely promoted by the GFF as well as sports media, radio and television. A remarkable 770 girls participated – showing that passion for women's football in Georgia is alive and a new generation of female players is waiting to emerge. The success of ***School ball for girls*** is such that it remains a key priority for the GFF, who will continue to host the tournament and refine the regulations.

The first Georgian women's league was launched in 2004. It ran for six years in the form of a mini-tournament but was eventually disbanded because of budget restrictions and limited player numbers. This renewed interest in women's football has led the GFF and the Georgian women's football association to believe that a new and improved women's league should be launched in 2013. This is a work in progress that clearly signifies a positive change in the perception of women's football in Georgia.



### Germany – German Football Association (DFB)

Germany is the leading country for women's football. The DFB is a crusader and a creator for women who want to play, coach or simply enjoy the game. Germany are winners in both national and club football – recent honours won by German sides include the UEFA Women's EURO in 2009 and the Women's Champions League in 2011. The DFB has a very positive message, which can serve as invaluable advice for countries who would like to improve football for women:

- Women's football is an expression of modern times. In some cases, it can liberate the role of women in society and tackle fundamental problems such as gender prejudice and discrimination.
- Grassroots development is imperative. Supporting the game at the base and empowering young girls to be part of the game is the turning point towards inclusive football.
- Professional coaches and managers are essential – these are the people who spot and nurture talent, and who define a strategy and vision for the future.
- There is an emerging market for women's football that should be recognised and that has huge potential for growth.

The DFB is also part of the WFDP and will soon launch a new competition for veteran women players (35+). The experience of these veteran players is also an invaluable source for the DFB in terms of mentoring and training the next generation.

#### Germany: did you know?

- The number-one women's team sport in Germany is football.
- In 2012 there were 13,364 female teams registered.
- More than 40% of German society supports and identifies with the German women's national team.
- The DFB created the "I play football, and you?" slogan, which many other associations are now adopting Europe-wide.



The German women's national team celebrating their win at the UEFA Women's EURO 2009

### Greece – Hellenic Football Federation (EPO)

Greece entered the WFDP in 2011 with a simple but effective project – to introduce women's football to Greek society. In actual fact, 42 women's clubs were already registered nationwide, but the knowledge and perception of the women's game needed help. To maximise exposure, the EPO joined forces with the regional football unions, municipalities, education authorities and schools to host events and football festivals for girls aged 6–18. The aim was to increase the level of awareness and interest – with a special focus on parents and teachers, altering their perspective of women's football to one of stronger support and encouragement.

The EPO will continue along similar lines into the next phase of the programme. There is still much work to do on raising the profile of the women's game, although good progress has been made up to now – 16 new women's clubs have recently been registered and will be financially assisted by the federation. The EPO have also reintroduced the Women's Greek Cup after a period of ten years as well as launched a new logo representing the women's game (see below). A series of events have been organised and jointly hosted by the men's and women's national teams of Greece to further raise the visibility and stature of women's football.



### Hungary – Hungarian Football Federation (MLSZ)

In September 2011, the MLSZ launched the **Bozsik youth programme** – a tournament that united primary schools nationwide through girls playing football. If a school was unable to create an individual team, then joint teams representing several schools were encouraged. Each team trained together twice a week and participated in eight local tournaments. County teams were created from the winners and a final tournament organised with eight teams. Approximately 7,300 girls participated, which was a fantastic result for the MLSZ and highlighted the women's game across the country.

Hungary will continue working on the **Bozsik youth programme** into the next phase of the WFDP. The concept is integration, and all men's clubs in the first and second divisions will be encouraged to support women's football – the aim being that all counties will eventually have a representative women's team. Also, girls aged between 7 and 11 years will train alongside boys under the supervision and guidance of the same coaches, promoting inclusion and acceptance at a younger age. Girls aged 12–15 years will be able to play football at school and at their local clubs alongside the boys. During the next three years, the MLSZ will focus on developing women's football and involving more girls at grassroots level. Looking further ahead, the long-term goal is the implementation of a regional WU17 championship.

#### Hungary: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 4,978 registered female players and 72 women's teams.
- There is a women's league with three divisions. There are 10 teams in the top division.
- There are 23 qualified female referees who also referee the men's game up to second division.
- Women's football is included in the school curriculum and there are strong links between schools and clubs.

### Iceland – Football Association of Iceland (KSÍ)

**Leaders and volunteers in women's football** was launched by the KSÍ to kick-start the women's game in Iceland in October 2011. The approach was certainly from an educational point of view, consisting of a series of leadership and volunteer seminars for women nationwide. Volunteers were trained with clubs at league level – and the leadership seminars targeted players, coaches, trainers and managers and emphasised the importance of women in prominent positions to lead the development of the women's game. The events were free of charge to attend and held in both urban and rural areas to promote participation and interest. The national associations of Germany and Denmark kindly provided the prototype for the events, having tried and tested this same method with excellent results.

**Football friends** is the next development project, which is now under way. The aim is to reach out to schools, promoting women's football using the players of the Iceland women's national team as role models. This will be accompanied by a media and television campaign to highlight women's football and generate new interest and participation at local clubs and schools. The KSÍ aims to retain and nurture the girls that start training with them during this project, because it is looking for the players of the future. It also hopes to expand access to women's football outside towns and cities to include more remote areas.

#### Iceland: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 6,030 registered female players, the majority of whom were under 18 years of age.
- There are 67 women's clubs and they have an excellent relationship with the national association.
- The national women's team is well established and there are national youth teams for WU16, WU17, WU19 and WU23.
- There is regular TV coverage of women's football and the media perception is very good.

### Israel – Israel Football Association (IFA)

In 2011 the IFA began **I am a kicker** – a grassroots project to bring more girls into the game by working with local authorities, schools and clubs. Teams from the IFA travelled across the country to host fun activities for girls aged 8–13 years, ensuring that their first experience with a football would be one to remember. The IFA also launched junior leagues for the 11–13 and 14–16 age groups, creating a positive competitive environment in which the girls could practise and learn. Also a crucial area of development, the IFA approached experienced women players to take the necessary steps into coaching, because new players need new coaches.



The association's next WFDP project for 2012/13 is called **You own the field** and it once again focuses on raising the profile of the game and increasing numbers of players and coaches. Israel will host the final round of the European Women's Under-19 Championship in 2015 and the IFA is currently working towards this important event.

Its next milestone is to reach 1,000 registered female players (there are currently 867). Progress is excellent – 19 new women's teams were registered last season.

Across is the new women's football logo launched by the IFA in 2012.



### Italy – Italian Football Federation (FIGC)

The FIGC is one of the four national associations that first began the WFDP pilot phase in 2011 with the launch of a **coach education programme**, which was held in conjunction with the European Women's Under-19 Championship final round in Italy. The main goal was to get qualified coaches talking about women's football from a strategic point of view. It is now an annual event all about knowledge exchange and technical development.

Under the WFDP umbrella in 2012, the FIGC began a **women's under-15 promotional programme**, a tournament designed to promote women's football, talent spot for youth national teams and increase the number of women players nationwide. The preliminary phase took place in Turin, Pieve d'Alpago, Perugia and Soverato – a total of 400 participants in 20 regional teams played in four qualifying groups. Turin even held an official opening ceremony in which 200 girls aged 8–14 years took part. The final round of the tournament took place in Siena with eight teams – the top two from each group from the preliminary round. In total, 130 girls played plus 30 coaches and officials. To conclude, from the full 20 participating teams, the most talented 36 players were selected and took part in a week-long training course with the coaches of the WU17 national team.

The FIGC will continue its work in the field of grassroots football and youth development. The next steps will be further tournaments and **women's football days** – with an aim to educate and attract as many young women into football as possible. Italy already has an impressive 22,743 registered female players and the FIGC's focus remains firmly on increasing exposure of the women's game and spreading the message of inclusion and fair play.

### Kazakhstan – Football Federation of Kazakhstan (KFF)

The KFF introduced women's football in 1987 but has struggled to retain the women players it needs to drive the game forward in Kazakhstan. With this in mind, it joined the WFDP in 2011 with a project to increase the number of female grassroots players and improve the overall organisation and perception of the women's game both internally – within the KFF – and externally in schools, clubs and the media.

There were 469 registered female players in Kazakhstan before joining the WFDP. That number has now risen to 1255 of which 627 play for WU15! The KFF organises annual WU19, WU17, WU15 and WU14 competitions as well as an U12 mixed team competition consisting of 7-8 teams. In addition, **School Spartakiade** is organised for school girls on an annual basis to attract them to the women's game and 260 girls took part in 2012. Kazakhstan Universities have their own league competition; **Universiade**. Year on year more girls are taking up women's football – the most talented are selected and enrolled into specialised sport schools with a view to becoming professional football players.

### Latvia – Latvian Football Federation (LFF)

The LFF philosophy for football is to promote inclusion and healthy living through sport. Women should be encouraged to play and access should be easy. In 2011 the LFF launched **We play football – come and join us!** The project ran in coordination with schools nationwide and was based mainly on raising awareness and educating both teachers and pupils on the benefits of girls playing football. Each month, two schools were selected for a visit where the girls were taught the rules of the game and joined in training exercises along with the players and coaches of the Latvian women's national and youth teams. The teachers and pupils also received a starter box, which contained footballs, bibs and cones as well as a booklet of nearby training centres and clubs that girls could join. The LFF will also continue to stage the **Golden shoe** school tournament as well as hosting girls' football festivals and regular training camps.

#### Latvia: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 562 registered female players.
- There is already a women's national team as well as youth teams at WU17 and WU19 level.
- There are good links between clubs and schools and youth leagues for WU15 and WU18 players.

### Liechtenstein – Liechtenstein Football Association (LFV)

In September 2011, the LFV joined the WFDP with the launch of an extensive public relations campaign – **Mädchen am Ball** ("Girls on the ball") – to promote the women's game across the country. Eye-catching and fun posters were displayed on a total of 30 billboards over two months. The posters were aimed at teenage girls, introducing them to women's football and encouraging them to get involved either at their local club or school. The same images were also displayed on public transport in the capital city.

To support the campaign, the LFV also hosted a grassroots day specifically aimed at training and coaching girls. To promote the event, the LFV distributed flyers at local primary schools and ran an entertaining radio advert played out by two girls who had attended the previous event and, as a result, were now players for their local club. The event saw a 50% increase in participation from the previous year – 85 girls attended, which was a genuine success. In addition the LFV has repeated a five-a-side tournament, which is played several times during the season and is aimed at the youngest age groups to nurture their interest and training.



### Lithuania – Lithuanian Football Federation (LFF)

In September 2011, the LFF launched **Women for football** as an overarching brand to represent its approach to improving women's football in Lithuania – through grassroots, professional development and referee education. **A girl and her football** was the first element, aimed at presenting football in an attractive way for girls using various authentic and specifically designed merchandise and equipment. There was a series of family events for mothers and daughters, as well as a promotional campaign including television and media coverage, a branded website and promotional leaflets and flyers in schools and youth clubs.

The next step was to establish professional women's football and encourage the creation of official registered clubs. At the same time, the LFF created a referee recruitment education system specifically for women with a view to increasing the number of female officials.

The federation will continue with the WFDP in 2012/13, deciding to focus this time on the brand element specifically: **Women for football**. This concept has proved successful up to now and has the potential to become a popular and widely recognised brand for women's football in Lithuania.



#### Lithuania: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 556 registered female players, 20 senior teams and seven clubs.
- There is a women's national team as well as youth teams at WU17 and WU19 level.
- There are now 36 qualified female referees, who also referee men's matches up to the highest level.

### Luxembourg –Luxembourg Football Federation (FLF)

The FLF joined the WFDP in 2011. Analysing the statistics, it was clear that many girls simply stopped playing football between the ages of 10 and 14 years. There are many possible reasons for this, such as family, school work, peer pressure or location - so the FLF decided to focus on this particular age group by providing as many opportunities and as much encouragement as possible. The first stage was to increase awareness and promote girls' football in schools, clubs and local communities. The medium-term view is to establish a women's U14 championship and the long-term aim is the creation of championships for other age categories such as the WU15s and WU17s. Progress is well under way.

#### **Luxembourg: did you know?**

- In 2012 there were 1,056 registered female players.
- There is already a national team plus 45 senior teams.
- Mixed football is played up to age 14 and there are very popular leagues for WU7s to WU13s.

### FYROM – Football Federation of Macedonia (FFM)

In 2011, the FFM took a huge step forward by opening 12 football schools for girls across the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This initially attracted an additional 310 registered female players aged between 10 and 16 years – and the numbers continue to rise today. To complement the schools, the FFM also launched coaching courses (UEFA C licence), and today these new coaches train and guide the girls on an everyday basis as well as running educational seminars and summer tournaments between local schools at the weekends.

Going into the next phase there are two priorities for the FFM – grassroots/youth development and participation in international competitions to improve the results of the national team. This is a long-term project, which will address a variety of issues by creating more opportunities for girls to play, raising media awareness and training additional coaches specialised in the women's game. With a strengthened perception and structure for women's football, the FFM can then advance towards developing a top-level women's league.



#### **FYROM: did you know?**

- In 2012 there were 850 registered female players.
- The FFM widely supports girls' football as an after-school activity and as a result, links are forming between schools and clubs nationwide.
- WU16 city tournaments have been introduced in Prilep, Ohrid, Struga and Bitola.



### Malta – Malta Football Association (MFA)



The MFA joined WFDP in 2011 and its mission remains the same today – to raise the profile of the women's game in Malta. To begin, the association launched an extensive branding and public relations campaign with the slogan: ***Get into football and gain confidence beyond the field.*** The response to the concept has been fantastic.

The MFA has set out five key challenges that it believes need to be overcome for women's football to flourish:

- Raise the profile and change perceptions.
- Increase the number of girls playing football.
- Improve the level of the game by implementing appropriate changes in the national league structure.
- Retain, fortify and increase the number of women's teams by applying better administrative and financial incentives.
- Encourage and train skilled female coaches, referees and administrators.

The MFA is making steps to achieve all of the above in the coming years. Among their long term goals are to increase the number of girls playing football from 5% to 10% of the female population, to establish a WU13 girls' football festival, and to create six new U16 girls' teams and four new women's teams by 2016. These are adventurous targets but they are fully in line with the future vision of women's football in Malta, which has now become a priority for the association.

Recently the MFA opened a new girls' academy, led by women's football head coach Pierre Brincat and his team of assistants. The most promising girls from all regions of Malta are given the opportunity to assemble at the centre for weekly training. Currently, 50 girls attend aged between 9 and 15 years attend the sessions.

In 2011 prior to the WFDP the MFA had 1,300 registered female players. In 2013 there are now 1550 – a number which is steadily set to grow.

### Moldova – Football Association of Moldova (FMF)

The FMF made women's football development a key priority for 2012, looking at important issues such as increased grassroots opportunities and improved player pathways for talented girls as well as more coaching courses and administrative encouragement for women. Its efforts have so far resulted in the registration of 450 new female players, the training of 57 female coaches and the creation of 10 senior teams and 11 junior teams.

Moldova also hosted a total of 11 Open Fun Football Schools in 2012 – these included 22 leaders, 132 coaches, 132 assistants, ten instructors and 2,112 children, of whom an amazing 1,485 were girls. At least 50% of the coaches and officials who took part in the schools were women.

From 4–6 September 2012, the FMF joined forces with the British embassy in Chisinau and the Spirit of Soccer NGO to host an event called **Football – ambassadors of peace**. The programme involved a two-day workshop for female coaches held at the FMF training centre in Vadul-lui-Voda and culminated with a football festival for girls selected from the women's U14 teams nationwide, including regions as far reaching as Transnistria and Gagauzia. In total, 140 girls took part.



The football festival for girls on 6 September 2012, in which 140 girls under 14 years of age took part

### Montenegro – Football Federation of Montenegro (FSCG)



The FSCG is a role model association, having introduced women's football virtually from scratch in 2010. Since then, remarkable progress has been made under the WFDP programme with the hosting a variety of **open days for girls** and promotional projects such as **Pink football**.

In 2011, the FSCG started work on raising the profile of the women's game through a wide range of activities in primary schools and by hosting mini tournaments for girls. The association also organised a variety of open days for girls in cities such as Herceg Novi, Podgorica, Niksic Pljevlja, Bar-Ulcinj and Mojkovac. The first **Montenegro trophy** tournament was held in May and June 2011 and four clubs participated. Recognising the growth potential, the FSCG invested in new equipment for women (tracksuits, kits, balls and other equipment) and supported all costs associated with women's matches, clubs and officials for the 2010/11 season.

As a result, in 2012 the first women's football league – ŽFL – was launched, with six clubs participating. Since then, a further three new women's clubs have been registered and interest continues to grow across Montenegro. The FSCG also ran a series of WU15 tournaments for youth selection and has formed national women's teams at senior and WU17 level. Today, the FSCG has 289 registered female players and 11 clubs have women's teams.

### Netherlands – Royal Dutch Football Association (KNVB)

The Netherlands is already one of the most advanced countries when it comes to promoting women's football. In 2011 the KNVB joined the WFDP with the project **Scoring together**, focused on branding and visibility as well as grassroots, player and coaching development. One element of the project is to brand women's football as the leading team sport in the Netherlands. A nationwide PR campaign was launched in schools, local clubs and communities to promote women's football from the grassroots to the top level. The Dutch women's national team and other well-known faces supported the campaign as role models. Not only does this generate renewed interest from players and clubs – but it also draws in potential sponsors who are in a position to financially support women's football.

The KNVB continues to invest in women's football with the goal of driving the game to the next level in the coming years. It is focused on the quality of the women's game – more professional competitions, a strengthened club structure and a licensing programme as well as increased numbers of women coaches and referees.

#### Netherlands: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 127,488 registered female players (76,938 girls and 50,550 adult women).
- The KNVB supports a women's national team, as well as youth teams at WU15, WU17 and WU19 level.
- **Football Class** is a programme for talented girls aged 12-16 allowing them to train 2-4 times per week at school in addition to their club. The programme is now operational in 13 locations.
- Mixed leagues play ranging from U6-U19. There are regular competitions and at the end of the season there are a range of youth tournaments.
- The KNVB has introduced a club development programme called **Meisje Centraal** – encouraging clubs to create a platform for girls and women's teams and integrate the women's game into their daily activities.
- The KNVB were also co-founders of an exciting joint venture, the cross-border BeNe League.

### Northern Ireland – Irish Football Association (IFA)



Launched in 2011, the **SCORE** pilot project was aimed at assisting clubs to establish contacts with their local schools through the provision of a SCORE coach. The clubs nominated suitable persons to undertake coach education, selecting enthusiastic and motivated individuals who could act as ambassadors within their local area.

Each **SCORE** coach received a financial contribution towards the cost of the coach education course. Following completion, each SCORE coach provided 12 coaching sessions at their local primary and post-primary schools, as well as at junior clubs. In total, 2,379 girls attended the coaching sessions. The feedback from the teachers was excellent, praising the coaches for their professionalism and motivation. A most impressive result was the number of girls emerging from the programme who joined local clubs as a direct consequence. For example, Moneyslane Football Club gained an outstanding 17 new players following a six-week coaching block. The women's clubs involved in the project were also given the opportunity to deliver a number of holiday camps during the Easter and summer holidays. A total of 213 players attended the Easter camps, of which 121 (57%) were new to girls' football. In 2012 the IFA had a total of 1,098 registered female players, 48 senior teams and 73 clubs.



### Norway – Football Association of Norway (NFF)

Women's football in Norway is already well established. In 2011 *it is fun being a goalkeeper* was introduced by the NFF because too few of the clubs at the grassroots level had their own goalkeepers for the girls' teams. Not only did this project aim to attract new female goalkeepers from 12–17 years, but it was also designed to recruit and educate goalkeeping coaches at both the grassroots and elite level. The project has three steps:

- First: attract new interest and more players. The NFF focused on promoting the role of the goalkeeper so that girls perceived the position as great fun but also of vital importance to the team as a whole.
- Second: increase the level of goalkeeping coaches. Proper instruction and guidance are crucial to development. New and improved technical instruction in goalkeeping will integrate the goalkeeper and enhance the overall well-being of the team.
- Third (long-term): develop four to five goalkeepers to elite international level. The NFF's future vision is a specialised goalkeeping coach for each women's club at the top level.

In January 2013 all 18 districts in Norway had joined the project and hundreds of young girls are now gathering for goalkeeper training sessions nationwide. Coaching courses are organised at least twice per year in each district. The NFF will continue with this project for the next phase of the WFDP in 2012/13.

In December 2012, the NFF launched **Triple S – skills, strength and speed** beginning with a test of physical standards (speed, strength and endurance) for 21 selected players born inbetween 1994-1998. The project coordinators visit all the players and cooperate with the club and school coaches to ensure quality in the daily training schedule. The project coordinators also cooperate with the national team coaches for WU16, WU17 and WU19. The players report back weekly to the project coordinators and their progress is tracked.

#### Norway: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 110,000 registered female players and 27,550 clubs with women's teams.
- The NFF provides financial support, equipment and training for women's teams.
- There is a women's league with seven divisions and the highlights are televised.
- A club licensing system has been fully implemented.

### Poland – Polish Football Federation (PZPN)



The PZPN started work as part of the WFDP in 2012. They began with the creation of four regional centres dedicated to women's football, designed to increase player numbers while providing regular training sessions for clubs, teams and professional coaching. These centres will raise the popularity of the women's game and encourage more girls to play. They will also provide an excellent location to host school tournaments and, in the future, regional competitions for women's football.

Under the 2012/13 phase of the WFDP, the PZPN will focus on the development and education of coaches and instructors. Its future milestones are an additional 2,000 registered female players in the WU15 category and 100 new school teams. Both projects are currently under way and the hope is that Poland will soon reap the rewards of its hard work and dedication in the field of women's football. In 2012 there were 4,500 registered female players, 142 senior teams and 135 clubs.

The PZPN also supports a women's national team as well as youth teams for at WU15-WU17 and WU19 level. Youth leagues are played at WU10, WU11, WU13 and WU16 level.

### Portugal – Portuguese Football Federation (FPF)

The FPF is one of the first four national associations that joined the WFDP for the pilot phase in 2011 – starting with a **women's football festival**, which took place on 15/16 April 2011 alongside the final of the Portuguese women's cup. Girls from local clubs and schools took part in both the WU12 and WU15 age groups. There were two seven-a-side football teams in each age group, and all of Portugal's 20 districts were represented. The grass and artificial pitches at the national stadium were used for the games and the final was played in the national stadium itself. Following this event, the FPF staged a **national youth tournament** and continues today to host a wide range of events that grow and nurture the grassroots of women's football in Portugal.

#### Portugal: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 1,743 registered female players and 40 senior teams.
- Portugal already supports a wide range of women's competitions – a women's national championship, a women's cup, a women's promotional football championship as well as a number of regional tournaments.
- The FPF has a women's national team and youth teams at WU17 and WU19 level.
- There are 153 qualified female referees in Portugal – and they referee men's matches up to the third division.

### Republic of Ireland – Football Association of Ireland (FAI)

The FAI was another of the first four national associations to join the WFDP in the pilot phase in 2011 and is a true success story. The Republic of Ireland is already a country adept at organising women's football – the grassroots aspect of the women's game is catered for with successful programmes such as **Little booters** and **Soccer sisters** (up to age 12). Beyond that, there are FAI winter training camps as well as an emerging talent programme. In 2011 the FAI decided to channel the WFDP funding to create a **national women's league**, which it felt would complete the structure of the women's game and allow emerging players (from the talent programme) to advance into league matches and, subsequently, international competitions. The league was successfully launched and is thriving.

The FAI will continue with an expansion plan for the girls' emerging talent programme. The current league centres focus on the WU14, WU16 and WU18 age groups, but the age limit has now been lowered to include the WU12s – a crucial age group in the development of young female players. The Association has also increased its scholarship programme, which is designed to keep talented players aged 17–19 resident in Ireland where they can continue their football education and also attend college. Under the 2012/13 phase of the WFDP, the FAI is introducing a new programme for its Elite Female Players which incorporates a Strength & Conditioning element – this is a new area of focus for the association. The FAI is currently working on all these projects.



- In 2012 there were 23,085 registered female players, 361 senior teams and 284 clubs.
- There is a successful women's national team and youth teams for the WU15-17 and WU19 age groups.
- Mixed youth leagues are run for the U6s to the U18s.
- Girls' football is included in the school curriculum and links between clubs and schools are excellent.
- Women's football is portrayed very well by the Irish media, who are supportive.

### Romania – Romanian Football Federation (FRF)

The FRF joined the WFDP in 2011, launching the project ***Sport camps for induction to women's football*** designed to encourage young girls to practise football during the summer holiday. The camps were widely promoted in schools and the student selections were made by the FRF. In total, three camps were held organised by a team of seven adults and 30 students. The theory addressed the status of women's football in Romania and at European level, followed by the basic rules of the game and a session on team sports and fair play. The practical sessions were outdoor exercises and games, which culminated in a specific training session and introduction to the game. To conclude, ten girls were selected from each camp to compete in a two-day football tournament.



Coming up in 2013 – the next phase for Romania is the development of grassroots football, aiming to promote women's football at national level. The focus will be on player development through a wide range of events, tournaments and training sessions. The principle is to get as many girls playing as possible under the correct supervision and guidance. The FRF is also planning to launch a website specific to women's football, helping girls understand the options available to them and where to find their nearest training centre, club or team. Romania currently has 550 registered female players, 19 clubs and 19 senior teams. There is a women's national team and youth teams at the WU17 and WU19 level.

### Russia – Russian Football Union (FUR)

In 2012 Russia celebrated a century of football and for the last 25 years women have been considered a strong part of their football family. The FUR staged a series of events dedicated to the 25-Year Anniversary for Women's Football in Russia; a mini tournament for children as well as an international conference and gala night held on 31st March 2013. The principle aim was to unite as many Russian experts in the field of women's football as possible, recognising their contribution and rewarding the outstanding work they have accomplished to date. These events also significantly helped to regenerate women's football in Russia by presenting the leading foreign federations' experience in the field of women's football as well as promoting the Development Programme for Women's Football in Russia for 2020 - inspiring and motivating more fruitful work. These events were attended by: President of the Football Union of Russia Nikolay Tolstykh, the Senior Manager of the FIFA Development Programmes Europe Eva Pasquier, UEFA Executive Committee member and the Chairman of the Woman's Football Committee Karen Espelund, famous players, coaches, officials of the Soviet and Russian Women's Football and also honored guests from the Football Associations of Germany, England and Azerbaijan, who made special presentations.



#### Russia: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 29,500 registered female players, 75 clubs and 68 teams.
- There is a women's national team and youth teams at WU15-17 and WU19 level.
- There are youth leagues for U11(mixed), WU13, WU15, WU17 and WU19.
- There are 25 qualified female referees – refereeing men's matches up to the third division.



## San Marino – San Marino Football Federation (FSGC)

Women's football is at the start in San Marino. In May 2012, the FSGC launched a new project under the WFDP – **AGATA 1** – which is dedicated to improving many areas of women's football and, in particular, raising the profile of the women's game and increasing the number of young players. This is a work in progress but the aim is to instigate positive media coverage, website articles, publications and conferences specific to women's football. The FSGC will also host a wide range of mini-tournaments and events with schools and local clubs to attract more girls to the game at a younger age. The vision in five years is to have implemented new teams and regional competitions with a view to competing internationally in the future. In 2012, the FSGC had 95 registered female players and three teams.

## Scotland – The Scottish Football Association (SFA)

Women's football is climbing in popularity in Scotland. In 2012, there were 4,595 registered female players, 248 clubs and 60 senior women's teams. The Scottish FA joined the WFDP with a project on the **promotion of role models and ambassadors**. Members of the Scottish women's national team were selected as ambassadors to raise the profile and support the women's game. Workshops were first organised to ensure the ambassadors had the correct preliminary training and then a series of school visits and grassroots festivals was arranged to promote the national team activities. The ambassadors were also linked to development officers at clubs so that they could work together to generate more interest and attract new players.



Great media coverage generated by a Girls Football Festival hosted by the Scottish FA

The next phase for Scotland under the WFDP (2012–16) is the implementation of **elite women's club licensing**. The philosophy is that strong clubs lead to strong leagues, which in turn have a positive impact on the performance of the national teams. This project is in its very early stages but, ultimately, the Scottish FA would like to develop a very strong product to attract both commercial investors and the media with a view to boosting the long-term funding and growth of women's football.



### Serbia – Football Association of Serbia (FSS)

In 2011 under the WFDP, the FSS launched ***The beauty of the game*** – its first sustainable project to address women's football with a view to modernising the game in Serbia and changing perceptions. The FSS facilitated the creation of new school football teams and organised new tournaments and football festivals for girls and boys. It also offered free registration for new teams and provided equipment and logistical support for all the events. Nationwide, five regional football associations and 213 schools took part along with 77 event organisers and 227 physical education teachers. A total of 7,887 students between the ages of 7 and 14 years participated, of which 40% were girls. The project was very well received by the Serbian media which significantly helped to raise the profile of women's football and promote integration. ***The beauty of the game*** will continue into the next phase of the WFDP in 2012/13.



- In 2012 there were 1,200 registered female players, 27 senior teams and 27 clubs.
- There is a women's national team and youth teams at WU17 and WU19 level.
- There is a women's league with two divisions and 12 teams are in the top division.
- An U12 mixed youth league plays regularly.
- Girls' football is included in the school curriculum and links between clubs and schools are good.

### Slovakia – Slovak Football Association (SFZ)

In early 2011, the SFZ was one of the first four national associations to join the pilot phase of the WFDP. The primary objectives were to raise the number of registered players, restructure the women's national competitions and strengthen the management of women's football at regional level. Firstly, a new women's football coordinator was brought into the SFZ, responsible for the strategy and overall development of the women's game in Slovakia. To complement this new leadership, the association also established a women's football committee consisting of a chairman, a committee secretary and four members.

The events that followed included a ***major indoor championship*** attended by all the Slovak women's clubs as well as a series of ***four regional football camps***. Approximately 150 girls took part, the majority of them new to football. The girls were coached by the clubs who have since seen a marked rise in their membership. The best players from each of the camps were selected and went on to play in a two-day regional tournament as well as friendly matches with youth teams from the Czech Republic. In 2012, the SFZ organised a series of ***small school tournaments*** which strengthened the bonds between the schools and clubs and increased player numbers yet again. One of the new teams in this tournament was very successful, eventually finishing in second place in the regional school cup.

The SFZ has also restructured its league system to allow a much broader regional participation in the second division. The main reason for this was to give better opportunities to teams with budget restrictions, as well as to include teams based in smaller towns and villages who would not normally be able to join the national league. There are currently 1,300 registered female players in Slovakia, 48 teams and 32 clubs. The SFZ supports a national women's team plus youth teams at WU17 and WU19 level.

### Slovenia – Football Association of Slovenia (NZS)

Slovenia joined the WFDP in 2011 with a pilot project to structure talent development for girls. With a series of **scouting festival days** branded on the popular slogan ***I play football, and you?*** the NZS aimed to attract talented players as well as athletes with footballing potential to increase their registered player pool and, in the long run, improve the performance of their WU17 and WU19 youth teams. Three events were held in total, co-organised by the NZS and regional football associations, clubs and schools. Each event was widely promoted in the media and supported by a public relations campaign of posters, flyers and online communication. As an additional benefit during these events, the NZS used promising young trainers and coaches who were fully qualified but needed to gain valuable practical experience on the pitch.

#### Slovenia: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 2,680 registered female players.
- There is a national women's team and youth teams at WU17 and WU19 level.
- There are WU12 and WU17 youth leagues.
- The NZS supports women's teams financially and also helps with providing equipment and training.

### Spain – Royal Spanish Football Federation (RFEF)

There are an impressive 27,609 registered female players in Spain – and approximately half of them are under 18 years of age and growing up with football. There are 138 senior women's teams as well as women's national and youth teams at WU16/17 and WU19 level. With player numbers at a satisfactory level and popularity growing, the RFEF joined the WWFDP with a project to **increase numbers of professional female coaches and referees**.

In 2012, the RFEF organised a series of regional coaching courses offering a 50% grant for participants – a total of 152 women took part. Refereeing courses were offered on a complimentary basis by the federation and the required sporting equipment was also provided – a total of 239 women took part. These activities were coordinated nationwide by the RFEF and 16 of its regional federations



### Sweden – Swedish Football Association (SvFF)

Football is the number-one team sport for women in Sweden. There are an amazing 159,305 registered female players and 3,207 clubs. The SvFF is the host national association for the final round of the UEFA Women's EURO in July 2013, when it will welcome the strongest women's national teams from all over Europe. The SvFF joined the WFDP in 2011 with an **elite player education plan** for female players aged 17–20, the principle of which was to recruit the most talented players and apply the best possible training and education from an elite perspective. The Swedish association also wanted to develop and improve the cooperation between the elite club coaches and the talent instructors in each district. The action plan was broken down into various segments, for example:

- development of methods and roles (attacking, defending, transition) for national teams at WU15–WU20 level;
- the development of the squad list for the 17–20 age group;
- a series of football camps in nine different districts supported by elite coaches and the Swedish national team to guide and nurture new players;
- one camp dedicated to training the most talented goalkeepers;
- development of a mentor system – turning experienced and former players into mentors for upcoming players who need to gain experience and an understanding of competitive football.

This player education plan will continue into the next phase of WFDP and remain focused on elite development for the age group 17–20 years.



*Swedish WU19-team celebrating their victory at the UEFA European Women's Under-19 Championship in 2012*

### Switzerland – Swiss Football Association (SFV-ASF)

In 2012, the Swiss FA joined the WFDP launching two simultaneous projects – **Footura** to nurture new talent and **club and youth development quality seals** to define quality criteria for youth development in clubs.

Footura is a programme to support talent promotion for top-level female players aged 16 to 20 years, either through individual testing at the Magglingen football centre or specific training with a club. In the long term it will focus on female players graduating from the Huttwil football academy, leading to the creation of successful national team players and, ultimately, high-performance national teams.

The sister project - club and youth development quality seals - aims to define the quality criteria for youth development as well as optimise the work being done in clubs to develop women's football. The process began with the introduction of club and youth development licensing in the highest playing categories. In the long term, this will serve to represent a seal of excellence and guarantee the best possible training and development.

The Swiss FA has also hosted a series of junior summer camps nationwide for boys and girls. Currently in Switzerland there are 22,500 registered female players. The Swiss FA also supports a women's national team and youth teams at WU16–17 and WU19–20 level.



### Turkey – Turkish Football Federation (TFF)

In February 2012 the TFF launched its **football training centres for girls** project under the WFDP, aiming to attract more girls in the 12–15 age group into football. Since starting, nine football centres have been established in cooperation with nine of the top women's clubs. A total of 32 girls – 16 girls aged 12–13 and 16 girls aged 14–15 – were trained in each centre over the course of one month attending two training sessions per week. Talented girls were then linked to the club's youth teams and a youth championship was subsequently launched in October 2012.

The TFF provided the clubs with training equipment (balls, bibs, cones, field markers, kit and ball nets) and also selected UEFA A and B licensed coaches to appropriately staff the centres (and supported these financial costs). The coaches focused on educational games, basic coordination and technique, dribbling, tackling, passing and shooting in eight-a-side games. In total, 1,152 girls were trained over a four-month period. This very successful project will continue into 2012/13 and the TFF would like to increase the number of training centres to 40 in the future.



Clubs supporting phase one of the project were: Ataşehir Belediye Sport, Camlica Spor, FOMGET, Gazi Üniversitesi MNT, Konak Belediye Spor, Adana Idman Yurdu Spor, MP Antalya Spor, Trabzon Idman Ocağı Spor and Krd. Ereğli Spor

#### Turkey: did you know?

- In 2012 there were 63,513 registered female players (61,227 are under the age of 18).
- There is a national women's team and youth teams at WU15–17 and WU19 level.
- There are youth leagues for WU13s, WU15s and WU17s.
- There are 50 qualified female referees and they referee the men's game up to the second division.

### Ukraine – Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU)

The FFU joined the WFDP in September 2011 with a project to **increase grassroots football for girls and raise the profile of the women's game nationwide** – particularly in the more rural areas of Ukraine where the women's game is sparse and access is limited. Working with local communities and schools, the FFU will establish girls' football competitions in the 25 regions of Ukraine, in three age categories (ages 12–15). Also, together with the amateur football association of Ukraine, it will host regular football festivals to enable girls to learn more about the game and join in actual training sessions. The FFU has also launched a communications campaign to promote women's football, working with the local and national media, regional football federations and top women's football clubs.

It is early days for women's football in the Ukraine but they now have an impressive 732 registered female players. There are eight clubs and 30 senior women's teams – also a national women's team as well as youth teams for WU15–17 and WU19. Youth leagues have been established for the WU14s, WU15s, WU16s and WU17s.

#### Ukraine: did you know?

- The FFU will host a WU17 development tournament in 2013
- The federation will also reintroduce the Women's Championship League as well as launch a new Ukraine Super Cup women's competition.
- Also for women's football as of 2013, the FFU will fund and support female referees and observers to increase the number of female officials.



### Wales – Football Association of Wales (FAW)

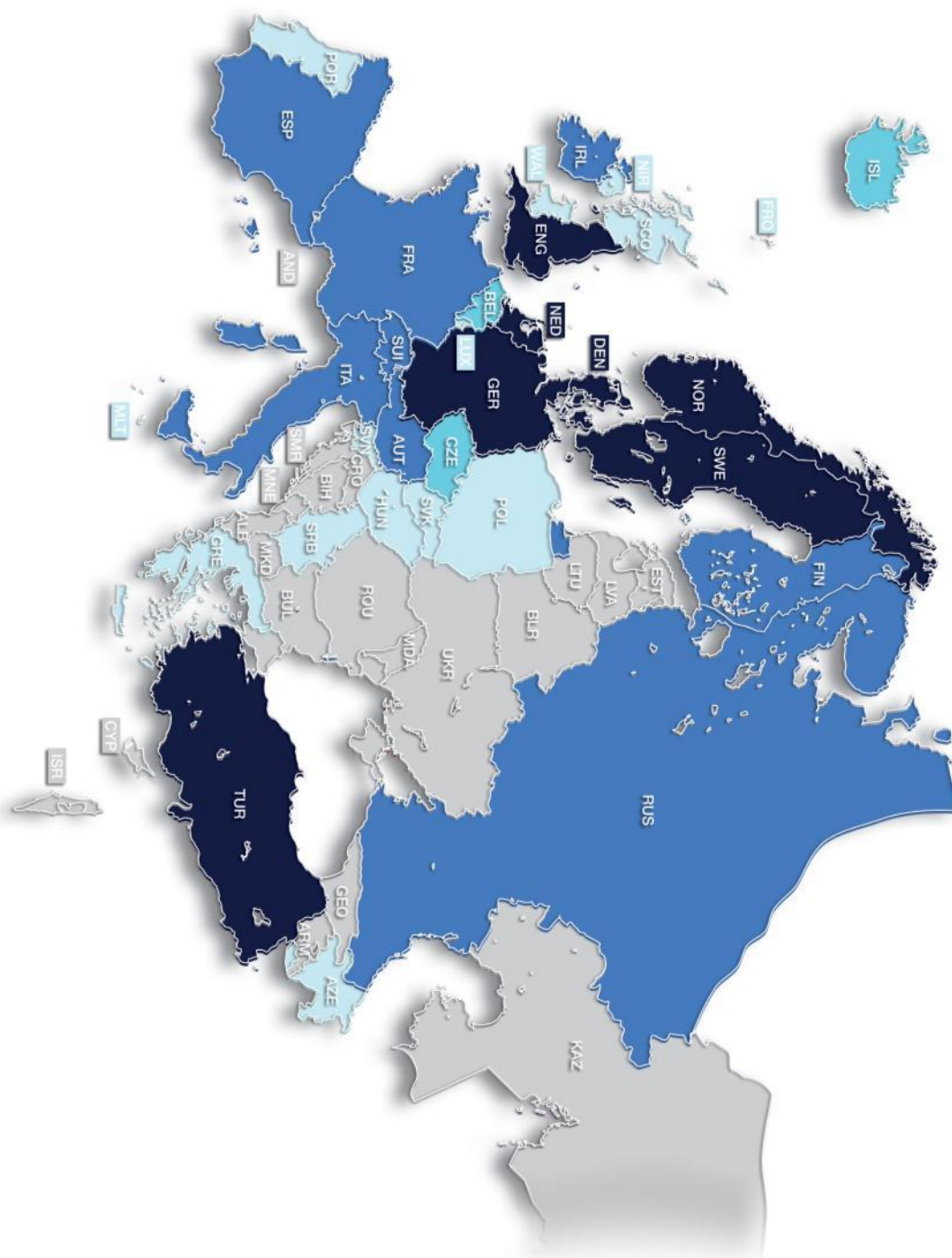
In December 2011, the FAW launched a project entitled ***Pro Wales women's top football 2016*** with the support of the WFDP. There are a variety of aims, but all are based on common factors such as education, knowledge exchange and communications. The specific aims include:

- raising the standard, professionalism and awareness of domestic and international women's top football in Wales by recruiting key professionals and using modern-day working tools to spread a high-quality approach based on recommended best practices to clubs;
- creating strong links between the women's national team and women's premier league clubs by involving women's football specialists in key areas such as coaching and talent promotion;
- training and recruiting new female professionals for all areas of women's elite football (for example, physiotherapists, sports scientists, video analysts, club secretaries, coaches, referees and media officers);
- building new pathways for individuals to be involved in varied women's elite football roles and sharing best practices across Wales and in particular with the Welsh women's premier league.

The FAW considers women's football to be young in Wales, so this project is considered long-term and will span over three to five years. The association has already employed a number of football specialists to work with the Welsh women's premier league and in conjunction with the women's national team manager to raise coaching standards and improve links between domestic and international football. This enhanced cooperation has succeeded in identifying new talent for clubs and national teams, as well as improved the quality of day-to-day coaching sessions in specific areas such as physical programming and goalkeeper training. The FAW will continue to focus on this project, advocating that only a strong framework supporting women's football can succeed in raising the game to its full potential.

#### **Wales: did you know?**

- In 2012 there were 4,848 registered female players, 150 clubs and 90 senior teams.
- There is a national women's team and youth teams at WU15-17 and WU19 level.
- There are youth leagues for WU15s and WU17s.
- The links between the clubs and the schools are very good.



Total number of registered players  
2012-2013

60000 or more	7x
20000 to 60000	8x
5000 to 20000	3x
1000 to 5000	14x
1000 or less	21x





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