

# UEFA



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## UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE TAKES OFF





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**Aleksander Čeferin**  
UEFA President

## FORESIGHT BREEDS SUCCESS

**S**uccess usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it. Europe's success in the World Cup – France's win was the fourth by a European nation in five tournaments, and all four semi-finalists were European – came in the middle of another eventful and fruitful year for European football on and off the pitch.

The success of France – and Croatia, Belgium and England – in Russia showcased the health of the European game at the highest level. UEFA is committed to further strengthening the game at all levels. UEFA's HatTrick programme – which has invested more than €1.8bn back into the game in crucial infrastructure and sporting assistance to national associations since 2004 – has helped Europe to stay at the forefront of the world game. In 2018, UEFA decided to increase HatTrick funding by 30% to €775m for 2020–24.

The UEFA Nations League, launched this year, will also help UEFA continue to deliver for its member associations meaningful matches, intense competition, and the world's best football. The competition has already brought fans across the continent unforgettable moments. Interest-free friendlies have been replaced by meaningful contests.

The same spirit of marrying quality and inclusivity also inspired the creation this year of a third club competition, which will commence in 2021. In 2018, our club competitions were dominated by Madrid, with Real Madrid winning a third successive UEFA Champions League title and Club Atletico de Madrid triumphing in the UEFA Europa League. Fittingly, Madrid will host the Champions League final in 2019.

Olympique Lyonnais had set the standard with their third consecutive UEFA Women's Champions League crown days before Real Madrid's similar feat. This year UEFA announced a 50% increase in funding for its women's football development programme. And 2018 showed that women's football is striving to stand on its own two feet, with the announcement this month of the first-ever UEFA sponsors dedicated to women's football, following our ground-breaking decision to unbundle the rights from the men's game.

And 2018 has also seen UEFA continue to consult and cooperate with all stakeholders, especially associations, leagues and clubs. Together we have further improved club and national team competitions and fine-tuned financial fair play. We have not neglected social fair play either, doubling our annual funding for the UEFA Foundation for Children to €6.8m.

Football, as 2018 has shown, continues to excite, unite and inspire.

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# APPLAUSE ALL ROUND FOR NEW COMPETITION

Thanks to a successful start, the UEFA Nations League has already established itself as a key component of the European football calendar by stirring strong public interest and serving up plenty of thrills and spills. While four teams will contest the finals next June, excitement levels were high for all the participants, with promotion, relegation and EURO 2020 play-off places on the line.



Switzerland secured their place in the finals in Portugal with a 5-2 win against Belgium.

Getty Images

**W**ith its innovative format and system of promotion and relegation, the Nations League threw up many questions before even kicking off. But all observers agreed on one thing: the competition would be intense and closely fought. And they were not wrong! Most of the 16 groups (spread across four leagues) kept supporters on tenterhooks right to the end, with many tight matches along the way. In League A, which comprised the continent's 12 best teams and offered the four group winners a place in the Nations League finals, only Portugal managed to seal top spot in their group before their final match. Despite Cristiano Ronaldo's absence, the 2016 European champions overcame Italy and

Poland to finish as the only unbeaten team in League A. Portugal will play the final round at home from 5 to 9 June 2019 since it was clear from the bidding process that the winner of Group A3 would host the finals. The format of the tournament in Portugal will be simple, with semi-finals, a third-place play-off and the final.

The Portuguese will find themselves up against three teams who secured qualification right at the wire and thereby confounded the pre-tournament rankings. Leading the way were the Netherlands, who saw off the two most recent world champions, France and Germany, to win Group A1. After the French had looked set to build on their victory in Russia with two wins and a draw in their first three

matches, they were outplayed by a young Dutch side (2-0) who booked their ticket to Portugal with a stoppage-time equaliser by captain Virgil van Dijk in Germany (2-2). There was a similar story in Group A4, where England qualified for the finals thanks to a late Harry Kane strike in their final match against Croatia (2-1). After a disappointing start (a defeat and a draw in their first two matches), the Three Lions secured an impressive 3-2 win in Spain and will be the only one of Europe's four 2018 World Cup semi-finalists in the final phase.

England could easily have been joined in the last four by Belgium, but despite winning their first three matches, Eden Hazard and his team-mates completely fell apart in the Group A2 'final' against Switzerland. Narrowly beaten in Belgium (1-2), the Swiss made mincemeat of the Belgian defence in the return match, recovering from 2-0 down to win 5-2. Hat-trick hero Haris Seferović embodied the attacking strength of the Swiss outfit, whose 14 goals saw them finish as League A's top scorers. Outfought by Switzerland and Belgium, Iceland were the only team to lose all four League A matches and were therefore relegated to League B for the next Nations League. They will be joined there by Germany and Poland, both still reeling from disappointing World Cup performances, and Croatia, who seemed to have lost their edge after a magnificent campaign in Russia.

## Top-flight places and EURO dreams

The four teams relegated from League A will be replaced by the four group winners from League B. While League A inevitably captured huge media coverage, the standard of play in League B was also



### Increased Nations League bonuses

UEFA has decided to increase the solidarity and bonus fees paid to the 55 member associations for taking part in the Nations League. The solidarity payments depend on the league in which each country played. League A nations will receive €2.25 million (up from €1.5m initially scheduled); those in League B €1.5m; in League C €1.125m; and in League D €0.75m. The 16 group winners also receive a bonus identical to the solidarity payment and once again depending on the league: €2.25m for the winners of the League A groups; €1.5m for those in League B, and so on. The four finalists will also receive bonuses of between €6 million for the winners – who will end up with a total of €10.5m – and €2.5m for the fourth placed team.

England's Ross Barkley up against Croatia's Luka Modrić in the match that put England through to the UEFA Nations League semi-finals.

Getty Images

extremely high, involving well-matched teams who regularly qualify for major international tournaments. League B's competitive nature was typified by Group B1, in which all three teams finished with a zero goal difference after their four matches. Three wins, each by a single-goal margin, ensured that Ukraine beat the Czech Republic and Slovakia to the twofold reward offered to the group winners in Leagues B, C and D: promotion to the league above and a place in the EURO 2020 play-offs. Scheduled for March 2020, the play-offs will see four EURO 2020 places awarded to teams that fail to qualify for the tournament through the traditional qualifying route, with participants selected according to their Nations League results. Each of the four leagues (A, B, C and D) will have its own route to the play-offs, with two single-leg semi-finals and a final, the winner of which will receive a berth at EURO 2020.

Ukraine were joined as League B group winners by Sweden, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Denmark, who topped their sections via very different routes. The Swedes recovered from a difficult start by beating Turkey 1-0 before snatching first place from Russia with a 2-0 victory on the final matchday. Bosnia and Herzegovina dominated their group, notching up a record points tally (10) for the groups containing three teams, largely thanks to a vice-like defence. The Danes, meanwhile, left it to their final match to nick top spot in Group B4 from Wales (2-1) and thereby book a seat at the top table for the next Nations League.

In League C, while Scotland, Finland, Norway and Serbia finished as group winners, the evenly matched nature of the competition was again clear for all to see, with no team winning more than four of its six matches. There were still some outstanding individual performances, however: with six goals

in six matches, Serbia's Aleksandar Mitrović was the Nations League's leading scorer, while Scotland's James Forrest (5 goals) netted a hat-trick in his side's decisive 3-2 win over Israel. In League D, a number of teams that rarely enjoy much success excelled themselves, with Georgia, Belarus, Kosovo and FYR Macedonia all topping their groups. These four will therefore play in League C in the next Nations League and one of them is guaranteed a place at EURO 2020, either through the European Qualifiers or through the play-offs for the League D group winners. History will therefore be made, since none of these four national associations has ever played in the final phase of an international competition. By rewarding both European superpowers and minnows alike, it looks as if the Nations League may well have found the magic formula to keep all European football fans on the edge of their seats. 🏆



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## ON OUR WAY TO 2020 ...

The qualifying competition for UEFA EURO 2020 – which will be only the second 24-team final tournament in the history of the European Football Championship – is set to be keenly contested and will culminate in an innovative new play-off stage.

**E**ven before the first matches kick off in March 2019, this new edition of the European Championship is already a record-breaker, since this is the first time that 55 teams have taken part in the qualifying competition. There are two reasons for that record participation level: not only are Kosovo joining the fray for the very first time, but the special nature of EURO 2020 means that, on this occasion, no host country will qualify automatically for the final tournament. Consequently, all of UEFA's member associations will be battling it out for a place at EURO 2020 – a special anniversary tournament that will

celebrate 60 years of this competition by staging matches in 12 different cities in 12 European countries from 12 June to 12 July 2020.

### **Everything to play for in all groups**

All of Europe gathered in Dublin on 2 December for the draw for the qualifying competition, which divided those 55 teams into ten groups of five or six. Those teams know exactly what they have to do, with the top two sides in each group (i.e. 20 teams in total) qualifying for the final round. The various pots for that draw were determined on

the basis of the results of the group stage of the UEFA Nations League – an extremely important set of results, given that the last four places at EURO 2020 will go to the winners of a set of four-team play-offs in March 2020, with the line-ups for those play-offs being determined on the basis of Nations League results. Put simply, the best four teams in each of the four leagues (A, B, C and D) that fail to book their place at EURO 2020 via the standard qualifying competition will be given a second chance via the play-offs. The four teams in each league will contest a mini-tournament comprising semi-finals and a



UEFA

final, and the winners of the four finals – one from each league – will receive a ticket to the final tournament.

The only way, then, of avoiding those perilous four-team play-offs is to finish first or second in your qualifying group. The four teams that will contest the final round of the Nations League (England, Portugal, Switzerland and the Netherlands) are all in five-team groups, with draws of varying degrees of difficulty. England will start as favourites in Group A, with the Czech Republic – an ever-present in the final round since 1996 – the main threat to their ambitions. Portugal are in Group B, which looks very even, with Ukraine and Serbia both having won their Nations League groups. In Group C, although the Netherlands have had the measure of Germany of late, it is difficult to regard them as real favourites, given the Germans' record in qualifiers. Indeed, Germany have qualified for the final round of the European Championship on a record 12 consecutive occasions – a run that stretches all the way back to 1972. Denmark and the Republic of Ireland will be the main threats to Switzerland in Group D. In Group E, the last of the five-team groups, Croatia will be the favourites, but the 2018 World Cup finalists will have to watch out for Wales, Hungary and Slovakia, all of whom made it at least as far as the round of 16 in

The 55 UEFA member associations gathered at the Dublin convention centre on 2 December for the EURO 2020 qualifying draw.

France in 2016. Group F is possibly the toughest of all, with three teams – Spain, Sweden and Romania – that have qualified for the final round five times or more, plus the ever-dangerous Norway. In Group G, the qualifying spots are likely to go to two of Poland, Austria, Israel and Slovenia. Reigning world champions France are favourites in Group H, where Iceland, Turkey and Albania will all be looking to repeat their achievements of 2016 by making it to the final tournament. Belgium and Russia would appear to be the teams to beat in Group I, where Scotland are the only other side to have made it to the final round (having done so in 1992 and 1996). And finally, in Group J, Bosnia and Herzegovina, who were eliminated at the play-off stage in the last two editions of the competition, will be seeking to qualify for their first ever EURO in a group that is likely to be dominated by Italy.

The qualifying process is set to be long and arduous, but the reward for the 24 qualifiers will be the opportunity to dream of appearing at Wembley – the venue for both the semi-finals and the final of EURO 2020 – and succeeding Portugal as champions of Europe. 🏆

## DRAW RESULTS

### Group A

England  
Czech Republic  
Bulgaria  
Montenegro  
Kosovo

### Group B

Portugal  
Ukraine  
Serbia  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg

### Group C

Netherlands  
Germany  
Northern Ireland  
Estonia  
Belarus

### Group D

Switzerland  
Denmark  
Republic of Ireland  
Georgia  
Gibraltar

### Group E

Croatia  
Wales  
Slovakia  
Hungary  
Azerbaijan

### Group F

Spain  
Sweden  
Norway  
Romania  
Faroe Islands  
Malta

### Group G

Poland  
Austria  
Israel  
Slovenia  
FYR Macedonia  
Latvia

### Group H

France  
Iceland  
Turkey  
Albania  
Moldova  
Andorra

### Group I

Belgium  
Russia  
Scotland  
Cyprus  
Kazakhstan  
San Marino

### Group J

Italy  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Finland  
Greece  
Armenia  
Liechtenstein



## Schedule

Matchday 1: 21-23 March 2019  
Matchday 2: 24-26 March 2019  
Matchday 3: 6-8 June 2019  
Matchday 4: 9-11 June 2019  
Matchday 5: 5-7 September 2019  
Matchday 6: 8-10 September 2019  
Matchday 7: 10-12 October 2019  
Matchday 8: 13-15 October 2019  
Matchday 9: 14-16 November 2019  
Matchday 10: 17-19 November 2019



## 'WE WANT TO SHOWCASE OUR COUNTRY'

Highlighting Ireland's unique sense of friendship and hospitality, allied to the desire for UEFA EURO 2020 to leave an indelible mark on the Irish football scene, are causes which are inspiring Football Association of Ireland (FAI) CEO **John Delaney** as Dublin prepares to serve up a party to remember in June 2020.

**"T**he concept behind UEFA EURO 2020 was to recognise UEFA's role in organising European national team football for the past 60 years, and the idea of bringing the finals to 12 European cities was absolutely brilliant," says Delaney. "In our own particular case, with Dublin as one of the 12 hosts, it gives us the opportunity to stage four games, something we would not be able to do in a traditional EURO format [where one or two countries host the final tournament]."

For the FAI CEO and his management team, it was an opportunity not to be missed.

"That's why we built the new national stadium in Dublin, in partnership with the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU), at a cost of €410 million," he explains. "That venue was built for big, world-class events, and this is the biggest national team football tournament in Europe. We couldn't but bid, and we were absolutely thrilled when our candidature was chosen, especially as it not only gives us the honour of hosting four games, but also the potential to host Republic of Ireland matches should we qualify. And that's the big prize for us – if we can qualify, Irish supporters will have their team playing in the finals in Dublin."

### **A rollercoaster ride**

Although the chance to take part in EURO 2020 will only be decided through the European Qualifiers, Delaney feels that kicking off the competition by hosting the qualifying draw at Dublin's convention centre on 2 December means that the Irish are now already recognised as a EURO host – both at home and around the world.

"We're very proud of our country, we've had great support from all the different agencies in Ireland – wearing the green jersey, as we call it," he says. "We want to showcase our country, and we've done that with the qualifying draw, with 140

Left: UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin is flanked by Shane Ross, Ireland's minister of transport, tourism and sport and John Delaney, FAI CEO, at the inauguration of the national football exhibition, on the eve of the UEFA EURO 2020 qualifying round draw in Dublin.

Right: John Delaney, together with members of the FAI-ETB (Education & Training Board) course, pictured at the opening of the FAI-ETB Centre on the Waterford IT campus, an initiative that provides educational and football development for talented young Irish footballers.

million people seeing the event live, and they know it took place in Dublin.

"On the ground, there was definitely a buzz around Dublin, because everyone came for a couple of days," he adds. "UEFA came, and they brought the stars, with the likes of Didier Deschamps, Ryan Giggs and Gareth Southgate all present. When all these great footballers and managers come to Dublin, it gets people excited. Then you have the draw itself, and the fixtures. Now we know the path, the games that we've got to play if we're to qualify for the EURO – in Dublin. That's getting everyone excited here. It promises to be a rollercoaster ride in 2019, and I think that, if we qualify, there will be a great party in Dublin."

### It's only the beginning

And that party has already started, thanks to the qualifying round draw.

"We're obviously working with Dublin city council, and in other parts of Ireland as well," says Delaney. "We've started promotions already. Street football in the form of our Street Legends campaign is really important. From the qualifying draw, the support we received was excellent, and it was terrific to see the likes of Luís Figo and our own international player Wes Hoolahan playing in the streets with the children. It was absolutely brilliant."

With this campaign, a national football exhibition embarking on a journey across the country, fan zones set to be staged in Dublin during the finals, and other initiatives, Delaney knows that Ireland is ready to extend a particularly warm, typically Irish welcome to visitors to the capital city and beyond in 2020.

"Céad míle fáilte, which means a hundred thousand welcomes," he says, in relation to Ireland's unique take on greeting visitors. "I think Irish people love welcoming people into their country, they love showcasing it. The feedback from the EURO 2020 qualifying draw was positive –



everybody was saying how warm and friendly the people are. Irish people will just look forward to welcoming people, giving them a good time so that they leave with great memories of Ireland. That's how we see it.

"Fans who come here will have a great time," he adds. "They'll be well taken care of, and they'll leave Dublin happy. I think most people who leave Dublin have a sense that they want to come back again."

Though Ireland stands to win off the field, thanks to additional tourism and new friendships, Delaney also sees the opportunities that football stars coming to Ireland in June 2020 will bring for the growth of the grassroots game.

"EURO 2020 is going to be the chance for young children from across the country to see some of Europe's best players in the flesh," he reflects. "This can't be overlooked, because when you're a young kid, you have heroes. You look up to people. This is an opportunity for all the young boys and girls growing up in Ireland to see big games, big football stars and big occasions. When big events come to Dublin, and the kids see these big football stars and big teams – and hopefully Ireland playing in the tournament – they will want to play football. I think the tournament can do nothing but good for Irish football."

### A major renovation project

This uplift will also extend to improving facilities in the country, highlighted by a major renovation project at another iconic

Dublin football venue, on which work will commence in advance of the EURO.

"In terms of upgrading stadiums, our focus is on Dalymount Park, which is the soul of Irish football," says Delaney, in reference to both the traditional home of international football in the country, and the home ground of Bohemian FC, the oldest League of Ireland football club in continuous existence. "We're hoping that work will be completed by 2022/23, to provide something that leaves a real, living legacy from hosting an international event like this."

Such developments, Delaney believes, will help to create the platform for the FAI to continue to gain the experience necessary to host international tournaments in the longer term. One such opportunity arose recently, owing to a new partnership with colleagues at the Irish Football Association (IFA) in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and the joint bid by the two Irish national associations to stage the European Under-21 Championship finals in 2023.

"We hosted the 2011 UEFA Europa League final, and we did it well," says Delaney. "Then there was the EURO 2020 qualifying draw, which went really well. The European Under-17 Championship final tournament comes here in 2019. All of this comes before the EURO, and we are hoping that we can build on the success of these events. In our case, that would be co-hosting the European Under-21 Championship with Northern Ireland. This is our hope for the future." 🌱

## Green light for new UEFA club competition

The introduction of a new UEFA club competition starting in 2021 and the earlier deployment of the video assistant referee (VAR) system were among the decisions taken at the UEFA Executive Committee's last meeting of the year in Dublin on 2/3 December.

**THE NEW COMPETITION**, under the working title of UEL2, will be launched for the 2021–24 cycle. Mirroring the existing UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League, it will feature a 32-team group stage comprising eight groups of four teams each. A round of 16, quarter-finals, semi-finals and a final will follow, while an additional knockout round will be played before the round of 16, involving group runners-up and the third-placed teams in the UEFA Europa League groups. The new competition's winners will play in the UEFA Europa League the following season.

With UEFA Champions League matches continuing to be held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, matches in the UEFA Europa League and the new competition will be played on Thursdays, with one additional kick-off time slot for a limited number of matches, in principle at 16.30CET, to be further defined. UEFA's club competition finals will all take place in the same week, on the Wednesday for the UEL2, Thursday for the UEFA Europa League and Saturday for the UEFA Champions League. This new third competition will ensure that at least 34 countries are represented in the UEFA club competition group stages, compared to 26 at present. All member associations will have access to the three club competitions, and they will keep the same overall access quota as currently.

"There will be more matches for more clubs, with more associations represented in the group stages," said the UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin. "This [new] competition was borne out of ongoing dialogue with clubs through the European Club Association."

The Executive Committee approved the format and the access list for the new competition. An increased minimum financial guarantee for all clubs in the UEFA Europa League and the new competition has also been included. The detailed revenue distribution and solidarity systems, the competition's name/brand, coefficient system and commercial strategy will be finalised in the course of 2019. As part of the 2021–24 competition cycle, the UEFA Europa League will now be similarly streamlined with the same format as the new competition, including an extra

knockout round played before the round of 16 between teams ranked second in their groups and third-placed teams in the UEFA Champions League groups.

### Video assistant referees

Following successful trials and referee training, the committee decided that video assistant referees (VARs) would be used in the UEFA Champions League from the round of 16 in February 2019, as well as at the 2019 UEFA Europa League final, the 2019 UEFA Nations League finals and the 2019 UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament. In line with a decision taken in September, VARs will also feature in the 2019/20 UEFA Champions League from the play-offs, and at the 2019 UEFA Super Cup. UEFA still plans to extend the use of VARs to UEFA EURO 2020, the 2020/21 UEFA Europa League from the group stage, and the 2021 UEFA Nations League finals.

While in Dublin, the Executive Committee appointed the hosts of various finals and final tournaments. Portugal will stage the 2018/19 UEFA Nations League finals from 5 to 9 June 2019, and England will host the next UEFA Women's EURO in July 2021. Hungary and Slovenia will play joint host to the UEFA European Under-21 Championship finals in June 2021, and Kairat Almaty will stage the 2018/19 UEFA Futsal Champions League finals from 25 to 28 April 2019. The Executive Committee's next meeting will be held in Rome on 6 February, ahead of the 43rd Ordinary UEFA Congress.



## Rome Congress elections

A series of elections will be held at the 43rd Ordinary UEFA Congress in Rome on 7 February 2019. By the deadline of 7 November, UEFA had received the following candidatures for the positions of UEFA president and European members of the FIFA Council:

**UEFA presidency (four-year term):** Aleksander Čeferin, Slovenia, standing for re-election

**FIFA vice-president (four-year term):** Sándor Csányi, Hungary, standing for re-election

**FIFA vice-president position reserved for the four British associations, i.e. England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales (four-year term):** Greg Clarke, England; David Martin, Northern Ireland

**One ordinary member position on the FIFA Council (four-year term):** Reinhard Grindel, Germany, standing for re-election

**Two ordinary members' positions on the FIFA Council (two-year term):** Fernando Gomes, Portugal; Georgios Koumas, Cyprus

By the deadline of 7 December, UEFA had received the following candidatures for seats on the **UEFA Executive Committee (eight members to be elected for four-year terms, including at least one female):** Elvedin Begić, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Kairat Boranbayev, Kazakhstan; Sándor Csányi\*, Hungary; Armand Duka, Albania; Fernando Gomes\*, Portugal; Florence Hardouin\*, France; Borislav Mihaylov\*, Bulgaria; Jesper Møller Christensen, Denmark; Andrii Paveiko, Ukraine; Luis Rubiales, Spain; Davor Šuker\*, Croatia  
\* standing for re-election

UEFA has submitted the relevant candidates' completed eligibility questionnaires to FIFA so that the FIFA Review Committee can carry out the relevant eligibility checks.

## Professional Football Strategy Council meets in Nyon



The development of women's football and the transfer system were among the items on the agenda of the PFSC meeting.

**THE PROFESSIONAL** Football Strategy Council (PFSC), chaired by the UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin, met on 14 November in Nyon to address a number of issues affecting professional football in Europe.

The council unanimously expressed its desire to strengthen the existing positive and open relationship with UEFA.

All members agreed that such unity would help to ensure the growth and sustainability of football at every level, right across the continent. In this context, all parties underlined their commitment to working together towards the development of club competitions under the leadership of UEFA.

The council discussed the UEFA Club Competitions Committee's conclusions and recommendations on the 2021–24 cycle. Views were further exchanged on the matter, including a presentation by the European Leagues.

The future of women's football was addressed for the first time within the council. The discussions reflected the huge increase in the popularity and success of the women's game across Europe and the desire to make women's football a sport that is celebrated globally and that gives every girl and woman somewhere to play. There was unanimous support for the draft strategy and a willingness among members to work to improve the game.

The council heard an explanation of the reforms to the transfer system passed by the FIFA Council last month.

## Joint declaration with the European Committee of the Regions

**HELD IN NYON** on 26 October, a meeting between UEFA first vice-president Karl-Erik Nilsson and the president of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), Karl-Heinz Lambertz, emphasised football's social and economic role in the development of European regions.

Football's contribution to European regional and local development and investment in sport in the European Union were focal points of the meeting. The talks reinforced the strong relationship between the two bodies, following UEFA's

signing earlier this year of the #Cohesion Alliance declaration, an initiative launched by the CoR and the major associations of regions and cities.

The European Committee of the Regions is an advisory body consisting of locally and regionally elected representatives from regions, counties, provinces, municipalities and cities. The CoR supports moves to strengthen European Union cohesion policies in all 28 EU member states.

"Football has a role to play in this process, because it is a



Karl-Erik Nilsson (left) signs the declaration, alongside Karl-Heinz Lambertz.

powerful element in people's lives," said Karl-Heinz Lambertz.

A month after the meeting in Brussels, the two bodies signed a joint declaration setting out their objectives following a meeting of representatives of all UEFA

member associations, members of the UEFA HatTrick Committee, and senior officials from EU institutions, including the European commissioner for education, culture, youth and sport, Tibor Navracsics.

## UEFA and ECA present letter of intent to EU

**ON 20 NOVEMBER** the UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin, and the European Club Association (ECA) chairman, Andrea Agnelli, presented a signed letter of intent to the EU commissioner for sport, Tibor Navracsics.

Building on several years of cooperation, the letter of intent outlines the willingness of UEFA and the ECA to continue working together to ensure

the sustainable development of European football. The meeting provided the opportunity for the UEFA president and the ECA chairman to highlight their proactive and collaborative efforts to tackle the challenges facing professional football.

UEFA and the ECA had recently addressed major topics of European football governance, such as

strengthening the UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations, the future of UEFA club competitions after 2020/21, modernising the transfer system, and the social dialogue process.

Both organisations outlined their strong desire to continue close cooperation in these areas in the years ahead, as well as in others such as the international match calendar after 2024.



From left to right: Andrea Agnelli, Tibor Navracsics and Aleksander Čeferin

## 2019 Women's World Cup finalists

**AFTER GETTING** the better of Switzerland in the play-offs, the Netherlands have joined England, Germany, Italy, Norway, Scotland, Spain, Sweden and hosts France as the European countries to qualify for the Women's World Cup due to take place from 7 June to 7 July next year. The draw in Paris on 8 December resulted in the following groups:

### Group A

France, Korea Republic, Norway, Nigeria

### Group B

Germany, China PR, Spain, South Africa

### Group C

Australia, Italy, Brazil, Jamaica

### Group D

England, Scotland, Argentina, Japan

### Group E

Canada, Cameroon, New Zealand, Netherlands

### Group F

USA, Thailand, Chile, Sweden

## Increased funding for women's football

**WOMEN'S FOOTBALL** is growing in popularity at both elite and grassroots levels, and to ensure this positive trend continues UEFA has taken the decision to approve a 50% increase in funding for women's football development projects across Europe.

As part of UEFA's HatTrick programme, which redistributes funds to all 55 member associations for approved development projects, the UEFA Women's Football Development Programme currently provides each member association with €100,000 a year. This figure will rise to €150,000 from 2020 – an increase of 50%.

"The potential for women's football is limitless and it is with this in mind that UEFA has taken the step to increase the funding available to the national associations to help improve the women's game across the continent," said the UEFA president,

Aleksander Čeferin. "Increasing the participation and the role of women in football has been one of my main objectives, both before and after I became UEFA president."

The announcement forms part of UEFA's pledge to the #WhatIf campaign, a social media-based initiative created by the Women in Football organisation. A not-for-profit organisation, Women in Football champions female talent in a bid to bring about a change in attitudes to professional women working in the industry. #WhatIf is a campaign that encourages businesses, celebrities and members of the public to identify one way that they can take action to contribute to empowering girls and women.

"We launched #WhatIf nearly five months ago and the support we have received from the football industry and beyond has been immense," said Ebru Köksal, chairperson of Women in Football.





Sportsfile

## Referees train in Madrid

**UEFA is introducing video assistant referees (VAR) in 2019, and Europe's referees are already preparing.**

**AT A FOUR-DAY COURSE** hosted by the Royal Spanish Football Federation in Madrid from 29 October to 1 November, a group of referees with limited experience of this new technology took part in intensive theoretical and practical sessions. They were joined on the last day by elite referees already experienced with VAR.

The training programme is designed to guarantee an efficient and smooth

implementation of the system at UEFA level, and additional courses will be taking place in the coming months.

"This project needs time, preparation and hard work," said Roberto Rosetti, UEFA chief refereeing officer. "It is an important project, not only for referees, but for European football as a whole. The objective is to prevent clear errors, and this project and this training can help referees take the right decisions."

### NOTICES

- On 5 October, **Moshe Zuares** was elected president of the Israel Football Association. He succeeds Ofer Eini.
- On 20 October, **Paul Philipp** was re-elected president of the Luxembourg Football Federation.
- On 22 October, **Gabriele Gravina** was elected president of the Italian Football Association.

## UEFA backs sustainable development project

**UEFA IS SUPPORTING** the TACKLE project, funded by the European Commission, which aims to improve the effectiveness of environmental management at football events. EURO 2020, to be staged in 12 cities across Europe, will be a focal point for the pilot project and its findings.

Four UEFA member associations – Italy, Liechtenstein, Romania and Sweden – are actively involved in the three-year pilot stage of the project, which is being led and coordinated by the Italian-based institute of management, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna.

UEFA will take part in activities that will eventually aim to disseminate information and share the results of the pilot project among its member associations. The impact of football events on the environment is far from negligible. For example, such events can generate considerable amounts of waste. TACKLE's activities will focus on the entire life cycle of a football event – from its conception to its organisation, staging and closure.

As far as national football associations are concerned, the aim in the future will be not only to guide the diffusion of best practices among their domestic football and stadium bodies, but also to help them set up their own strategies and tools to prevent and manage waste according to circular economy criteria, and improve stadiums' environmental management.

## Football and refugees: addressing key challenges

**"ACCOMMODATING** and integrating up to 1.5 million people is a challenge that is generation-defining. Europe has changed and football will echo this change in the coming decades." These words, from the foreword of UEFA's new Football and Refugees publication, reflect the determination of UEFA and its members to help alleviate this global crisis.

A compilation of good practices shared by 14 member associations at a UEFA Study Group Scheme seminar in the Republic of Ireland earlier this year, the online publication is intended to inspire everyone involved in running their own football-related initiatives to help integrate refugees into mainstream societies. At national association level, UEFA support is available through the HatTrick grassroots and football

and social responsibility programmes, as well as the UEFA football and refugees grant scheme. Also, UEFA addresses this topic at various formal levels such as the UEFA Fair Play and Social Responsibility Committee, the UEFA Development and Technical Assistance Committee and the UEFA Grassroots Panel.



UEFA

# A NEW FOOTBALL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

European football’s governing body has launched an innovative new programme to strengthen leadership and managerial skills across UEFA’s member associations. The first seminar in the UEFA Diploma in Football Leadership and Management (DFLM) programme took place at UEFA’s headquarters in Nyon on 29/30 October.

The UEFA DFLM aims to provide core leadership and managerial skills to staff in management positions within UEFA member associations who already hold the UEFA Certificate in Football Management (UEFA CFM). UEFA decided to set up this programme following feedback from its member associations indicating that UEFA CFM graduates wanted to know what they could do next to improve their leadership and managerial skills further.

The DFLM prioritises the learning of soft skills and looks to tap into the potential of the national associations, so participants can subsequently take what they have learned and undertake complex projects within their own fields. Participants apply to the programme with a specific project relating to their national association’s strategy. The project is then developed throughout the programme utilising the face-to-face seminars and e-learning modules, with the aim of it being implemented in the national association. Participants are also assigned an experienced coach to advise them on project management as well as soft skills and



UEFA honorary member Gerhard Aigner was a special guest at the inaugural seminar.



self-awareness. “I finished the CFM course, which was of great benefit to me, and I particularly liked the fact the DFLM is focused on projects, which is something I am professionally interested in,” said Tomislav Pacak, spokesman for the Croatian Football Federation (HNS) and one of the participants in the DFLM. “I am not at a stage where I want to study theory too much, but I want to meet people from other national associations, where I can gain some experience and grow my network.”

### A special guest

Gerhard Aigner, who was UEFA general secretary and CEO from 1989 to 2003, was a guest speaker at the opening seminar. He emphasised the importance for any sporting organisation of strong leaders, and underlined what participants could gain from the course. “Leadership is always an important thing, if not the most important factor in any organisation, and leadership is best described by the way a person acts,” he said.

“It is very positive to have these programmes, and it is very important that this is happening in the context of football. These meetings are important for the participants to share their views and experiences, and this is adding to their own capacity to become leaders in the future.”

UEFA already invests considerable financial resources in assisting its member associations through the HatTrick programme, which has helped them develop their sporting and administrative infrastructures at all levels.

However, with this new leadership and management programme, UEFA intends to ensure that these key skills are strengthened within the national football associations. 🌐



# EUROPEAN FOOTBALL BACKS DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

European clubs, national teams and their players joined forces with UEFA and the Fare network to promote diversity, inclusion and accessibility in football and lend their support to the fight against discrimination.

Activities were held at 94 matches in the UEFA Champions League, UEFA Europa League, UEFA Women's Champions League and UEFA Nations League as part of the #FootballPeople action weeks organised by Fare, UEFA's social responsibility partner, all across Europe from 11 to 25 October.

Europe's premium football competitions provided an excellent platform from which to send out the message that racism, discrimination and intolerance must be eradicated from the game. Players and referees lined up for mixed photos, while videos were played on giant screens at Europe's stadiums. Children wearing #EqualGame T-shirts were also at the stadiums to spread the message that discrimination must be consigned to the history books.

"We are pleased to have witnessed European football uniting at its highest club levels these past two weeks in such an impressive display of support for inclusion, diversity and accessibility in our game," said UEFA president Aleksander Čeferin.

"In particular, it has been heartening to see many European clubs making full use of their own communication and social media channels to emphasise their backing for the Fare #FootballPeople action weeks. They have created promotional content, and players have also provided their own personal messages of support. We thank everyone who has helped spread the crucial message that racism, discrimination and intolerance have no place in football."

## Shared objectives

UEFA's long-standing partnership with Fare began in 2001. The #FootballPeople action weeks are perfectly in tune with the aims of the UEFA #EqualGame campaign launched last year, which seeks to promote



During the #FootballPeople action weeks, 94 UEFA matches were played under the banner of diversity and inclusion.

the ethos that football should be open to everyone. Leading European men's and women's football stars have given their backing to the #EqualGame campaign.

"It has been inspiring to see so many across the world unite behind a message of anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion during the #FootballPeople weeks," said



Piara Powar, Fare executive director.

"The variety and number of activities in more than 60 countries shows the impact we can have together. More than 100,000 people have been involved directly in activities, and many millions more have seen the message through social media, TV and press reports." 🌐

FRIDA ANDERSSON – SWEDEN

## 'FOOTBALL IS MY LIFE'

Frida Andersson has lived and breathed football for as long as she can remember. Born in South Korea, she was adopted by a football-mad family in Sweden as a very small child – so catching the football bug was easy.

Frida, now 38, has found her own special niche in football, as sports director and beating heart of the Växjö DFF women's club – proudly helping to steer the senior team into Sweden's top league. From putting up posters to scouting for talent and finding sponsors, she devotes every hour of every day to the club.

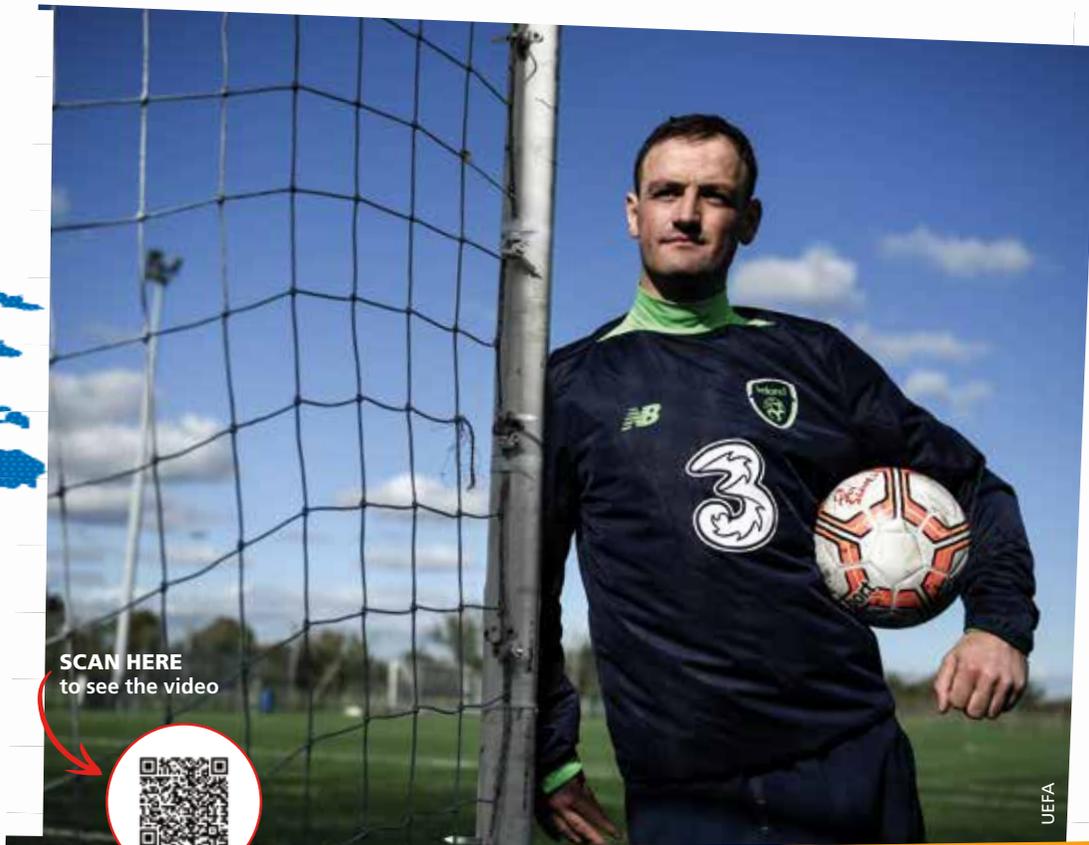
She previously managed a men's team in Sweden. "Being a woman in the sport isn't just difficult on the field, but off it too," she says about the challenges facing female leaders in the game. "Some people question your competence – you have a lot more to prove than men do." She is a role model and mentor at her club, but views her contribution with humility. "It doesn't matter if you're a sporting director or look after the kit," she reflects.

"In football, you're equally important, no matter what role you've got."



SCAN HERE  
to see the video





GARY MESSETT – REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

## 'TREAT CEREBRAL PALSY AS AN ABILITY'

Gary Messett's positive attitude has been an immense catalyst in his success as a footballer. The 31-year-old, from the town of Bray in the Republic of Ireland, was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at the age of two months.

During his childhood, Gary used football as his inspiration to move forward – "I've played ever since I could actually stand," he says. "I loved football, and it was the one thing that I wanted to be good at." Gary blossomed into an excellent player – a stalwart of the Republic of Ireland's CP team who has gone on to captain his country. His attributes have made him a role model for the team's youngsters. Away from the

pitch, his partner Hollie and two-year-old daughter Poppie bring happiness and stability. Hard work and self-belief drive him on. "The world is your oyster," he emphasises. "The opportunities out there for people with cerebral palsy are endless. You can achieve what you want to achieve if you just embrace what you have, because you are who you are, and no one else is you."



MARCO ROSE

# GIVING YOUTH A CHANCE

Marco Rose has made an impressive start to his career among the elite. In 2017/18, his first season in charge of Austrian club FC Salzburg, the German coach took the team to within a whisker of the UEFA Europa League final, as well as to the final of the Austrian Cup. This was an excellent addition to the former Bundesliga player's CV, which already included honours at the highest European youth level. In 2017, Rose guided a talented Salzburg squad to the UEFA Youth League title – and this achievement was the catalyst for his promotion the same year.

**R**ose was recently in Nyon at the UEFA Youth League coaches' forum. He looks back at his team's success and how it came about, how he has found the transition from coaching youngsters to occupying the first-team hot seat, and why a coach should be courageous enough to give youth a chance when the opportunity arises.

**Let's start by looking at how you got into coaching. You played in the Bundesliga with Hannover and Mainz 05, ending your professional career in 2010. You then started as an assistant coach with Mainz's second team, before transferring to your home-town club Lokomotive Leipzig in the German Regionalliga, where you stayed for one season in 2012/13. From there, you moved on to work as a youth coach with FC Salzburg. When was the defining moment when you knew that you wanted to go into coaching?**

I played at a high level, and I worked a lot on mentality, and I think I realised early on that I could possibly go into coaching. I can't say that I always thought I'd be a good coach at a high level. I just wanted to try it. I had to see if it was for me.

**As a player, you worked for a number of renowned coaches in Germany – Jürgen Klopp and Thomas Tuchel at Mainz, Ralf Rangnick at Hannover. Have you brought any of their influence with you into your coaching career?**

Jürgen Klopp influenced me, probably more than anyone. Not so much in terms of football, but as a person, and in my approach and personality. Thomas Tuchel is, in my opinion, an extraordinary expert, and I have used what he taught me, especially when it comes to movement on the ball. I was still young when I was with Ralf Rangnick, but he taught me the importance of honesty. He released me from Hannover because I wasn't good enough, and I always thought it was a good thing that he was open and honest with me. →

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 "For me as a professional, there have always been uncomfortable truths – but you have to talk about them in an honest way. That's the best way to deal with it."

**Honesty is the best policy, as they say.**

For me as a professional, there have always been uncomfortable truths – but you have to talk about them in an honest way. That’s the best way to deal with it, and these are things that I use in my work as a coach.

**This work brought you a particularly noteworthy success at youth level, when you led Salzburg’s youngsters to the UEFA Youth League title in Nyon in 2017. You were back in Nyon for the UEFA Youth League coaches’ forum in November. How did it feel to return to the scene of that triumph?**

Everyone loves returning to a place where they’ve had success. On the way to the forum, I passed by the stadium where I celebrated with the boys. That’s something special, and it makes you proud.

**Looking at the road to the UEFA Youth League title, how did you approach the competition?**

It was a new experience for us, and I was lucky as a coach to be part of a very well-structured club. It meant that a lot of weight was taken off my shoulders, and I could concentrate on the sporting side of things. Everything was very well organised, and we approached everything very professionally. Aside from all that, it was an adventure for us.

**Some people may have viewed Salzburg’s UEFA Youth League title in 2017 as a surprise. Is that a justified view?**

We never really saw ourselves as outsiders, because we knew we had a strong squad. I think I was lucky to have a motivated young team hungry for success who believed in themselves. They had the feeling that they could achieve something. We always approached the task ahead with confidence. It was a fascinating experience.



“I think I was lucky to have a motivated young team hungry for success who believed in themselves. They had the feeling that they could achieve something. We always approached the task ahead with confidence.”



UEFA



**So do you feel that the structures were in place for the team to achieve what it did?**

For an Austrian team to win that title isn't very usual. That being said, if you know anything at all about Salzburg, you would know that a brand-new top-of-the-range academy was built there several years ago, with the aim of producing top talent. So, in that sense, there was a clear plan.

**Did the players realise the significance of winning the Youth League?**

Well, it's a title ... It's nice, because it rewards all the work you put in and how hard the boys worked. Everyone who has won a title knows that it builds a bond with the players. You'll always be happy to see them, to remember it all and talk about it, and that's very special. It also made the whole club proud, and reverberated around Austria. The president congratulated us, because it was the first international title for an Austrian team. Yet from my point of view, I was aware that football moves on quickly, and new challenges are waiting for you where you need to prove yourself again.

**A general question about the UEFA Youth League's overall mission – how important is it for young players to gain international experience and face different playing styles?**

It is fascinating to play against top teams at an international level. It takes you further, makes you better, and that's very important. You learn about new styles, and can see how you fare against top talent from other countries.

**After the successful Youth League season, you were then appointed first-team coach at Salzburg that same year. Did the Youth League title have any bearing on your appointment?**

I'd be lying if I said that the Youth League didn't help me get there. I think, for the club, it was the final box to be ticked, and they thought, "We trust this guy now." That's how it works in football: sustained success is observed, but it helps if you have great highlight moments like the Youth League. I was lucky to have a brave sports director who said, "Right, we're going to give Rose a chance."

**How big is the difference between youth coaching and professional coaching?**

I don't think that there is that much difference. It's all the same in terms of content. You always adapt to your team, but as far as training is concerned, it's very similar. This is also because we have one fundamental idea [at Salzburg], from the youth team up to the first team. In addition, when you're working with established professional adults, you're able to communicate in a straightforward and effective way.



Amadou Haidara opens the scoring against Marseille in the second leg of the 2018 Europa League semi-final. FC Salzburg almost made it to the final.

**Would you agree that, so far, your experiences as a youth coach have stood you in good stead at senior level?**

Football is football, and people are people. One group is younger, and the other has more experience, so you have to adapt yourself a little. I definitely believe that it can help you. Without a doubt. You draw on situations you've found yourself in, hard situations, good situations that you've experienced. You then have a greater understanding of the things that happen in a team, of course. →

**How important would you say that winning is at youth level in relation to development?**

I always believed the classic approach in youth football was that coaches would lose and say, "Well, we're still developing." They would always try and find a way of justifying why they lost. You can always find a way to develop while winning games. It's also a key part of development to teach the boys how to have a winning mentality, so that they go out to win games. That's important at the youth stage. And it's also important to learn how to lose. As a coach at youth level, you need to find the right balance while you also develop. That means you shouldn't make players obsess about winning games to satisfy your own ambitions. You shouldn't want to win games because you, as a coach, want to make the next step and end up as the first-team coach. It would be wrong to do that.

**Do the stakes change when you become a first-team coach?**

With the first team, it's all about winning games. Because that's the measure of your success. I've already noticed this in my first 18 months. Unfortunately, it's irrelevant if you've played well or not ... in the end, it's the result that matters most. But I'm convinced from my [youth coaching] days that if you play well, you'll end up getting results.

**What were the expectations when you became Salzburg's first-team coach? Were there any new challenges?**

Their 2017 victory in the Youth League enabled Salzburg's young academy players to hone their skills – and Marco Rose to step up to the first team.



There were expectations, of course. You take on a new coach to aim for the top. The UEFA Champions League remains a difficult hurdle for us. We've been on the brink [of making the group stage] for some years, but haven't made it so far. Despite that, we've managed to develop something that we're proud of. You notice that more and more spectators are coming to the stadium, and that football is valued more highly in Salzburg.

**In the first season at FC Salzburg, with the first team, you went all the way to the UEFA Europa League semi-finals. You beat some big teams along the way - Lazio, Dortmund, Real Sociedad. What were the reasons for this fine run?**

At the top level, you need to make the right decisions, and you need a little bit of luck, but we all worked hard. We deserved it. If I've learned anything as a coach from this last year



and a half, then it's to play football and go out onto the pitch to win, regardless of who you're playing against. Regardless of the opposition, we'll prepare the best we can and devise a plan, and by that point the players are so confident that they will go out there to play football, work hard and, most importantly, do their best to win.

**The narrow defeat against Marseille in the semi-final was a tough experience. How did you as a coach and team cope with this blow?**

The important thing in football is that the game always goes on. You have to live with setbacks, you have to deal with them, you have to make the right choices and push on. I believe you'll always get another chance to pursue new major challenges.

**You've integrated some of your youth players into the first team. Has that contributed to the progress you've made?**

It's been easy, because the boys are good enough. It's important to have the courage, as a club, to give them a chance to play in the first team. I feel that it's a little easier to have that courage in Austria than it is in top European leagues, but it's my duty to give young players an opportunity in the first team if they're good enough – to give them the platform and trust them to take the next step to continue developing. And, of course, it's important to have open-minded coaches in that sense. So, I'm always ready to bring in new players – that's part of my role – but I have to point out that there's no such thing as a free lunch. Professional football is too hard for that.

**In the Bundesliga we've recently seen that youth coaches have made the step up to coaching the first team. Have you noticed the trend and is there a reason for this?**

The fact is that every coach learns and develops and, at some point, has to take the next step. There'll always be good, new coaches coming through. I don't know if we can speak of a trend. There are plenty of older, experienced coaches as well. It's clear that you do need certain skills as a coach to be successful nowadays. You obviously need expertise. It's important to be competent socially, and to be able to mediate. I've noticed that in the first team as well. Perhaps the most important thing is for the players to want to win for you, and to keep them all on board. I can only choose 11 of them. To handle that and to keep them happy is a large part of the job.

**As you said earlier, FC Salzburg has created a top-range academy to nurture talented young players. What do you think of the academy's progress?**

The infrastructure that was set up many years ago obviously created a different environment. When you work in that kind of environment, you have bigger goals. On top of that, we had clear ideas and a clear structure for the club, and then things developed by themselves. We don't just have Austrian players in our academy. We have good connections and scouting in Africa. So we are under way on an international scale. What's important for me, however, is that we don't forget our own home-grown talent. That's a very important issue for me. We can't forget to develop and encourage local talent.

**So is the academy achieving its aims?**

Of course, this huge academy has been built for a reason – to eventually integrate those players into FC Salzburg's team. The good thing is that, as head coach with a youth football background, I know how it works. I see the youngsters playing and, eventually, as I say, it will be my duty to give these youngsters a chance.

**To conclude, if you could give coaches one piece of advice, what would it be?**

My advice is to stay as you are, work hard and stay calm – because even though football is important, there are more important things. Like family, for example. If you're able to keep that in mind, it's easier to deal with it better, especially in the professional world when you're in the public eye. 🍷

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 "My advice is to stay as you are, work hard and stay calm – because even though football is important, there are more important things. Like family, for example."





# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

The UEFA Coaching Convention reaches the 20-year mark.

**H**ow do people celebrate birthdays? Blowing out candles, cutting a cake, chinking a few glasses with friends and family? How many interpret birthdays as a cue for looking back at achievements during all those years gone by?

But those involved in coach education could well use the 20th birthday of the UEFA Coaching Convention to reflect on two decades of progress. The wider public, on the other hand, can be forgiven for not posting birthday greetings. After all, the intricacies of coach education are pretty much a hidden world or, as Howard Wilkinson once put it, “a bit like the swan that’s gliding gracefully across the surface but pedalling like mad underneath.” The former England manager, who is still deeply involved with UEFA’s coach education programmes, has a fairly radical slant on the impact made by the UEFA Coaching Convention: “I would honestly argue that, if it wasn’t for UEFA, coaching in some parts of Europe would still be in the dark ages.”

Andy Roxburgh, the long-time UEFA technical director who played a major role in the design and implementation of the convention, recalls that it was conceived in the 1990s when: “The Executive Committee felt that coaches

were the key people in terms of raising standards and improving European football – not only at pro level but right through to the amateur and grassroots layers of the game.” The brief was to create unified minimum coaching standards, protect players from unqualified coaches, and establish coaching as a recognised profession. The level of coach education in all UEFA member associations has been raised, and the major impact is that it has smoothed the way for free movement of qualified coaches within the continent, in harmony with European legislation.

## 20 years old and still growing

To summarise two decades in a few words, the six founder member associations – Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain – who signed the convention



**“This is a profession and it’s something you have to learn. So the training process is vitally important.”**

**Didier Deschamps**  
France national team coach

in 1998, kick-started a process that reached culmination only eight years later, by which time all UEFA member associations had jumped on board. At the moment, the total stands at 54 and, even excluding the broad base of UEFA grassroots C licences, 165,773 UEFA-endorsed diplomas (from grassroots to Pro levels) have been issued.

The convention has evolved on the basis that educating coaches is a dynamic process, that past practice is not necessarily best practice, and that improvements must constantly be sought. And they have been found. To adorn the trunk of the tree formed by the UEFA grassroots C, B, A and Pro diplomas, elite youth, goalkeeping and futsal specialisms have been added as branches. Programmes have been designed to encourage female coaches to earn UEFA badges. Coach education courses have been redirected towards reality-based learning. There is greater focus on the education of educators and continuing professional development.

The convention itself has been streamlined – and will be again in 2020. And, in the hidden part of the iceberg, a lot of readers will probably be unaware that earning a UEFA Pro licence entails 360 hours of tuition, with at least 216 hours dedicated to on-the-pitch activities and work experience. Many associations go far beyond these minimum requirements.

There is no shortage of plaudits for the convention. “This is a profession and it’s something you have to learn. So the training process is vitally important,” comments Didier Deschamps, world champion as player and coach. “Coach education has to be well-structured, multi-layered and constantly adapted to the evolutions of the game,” adds the previous wearer of the world crown, Joachim Löw. “UEFA realised this many years ago with the introduction of the Coaching Convention.”

The birthday, however, is no excuse for UEFA to pat itself on the back. The national associations need to be congratulated for embracing the UEFA concept, investing resources (and the €100,000 per year contributed by UEFA) into implementing the programmes, and making them work efficiently. The convention is a great example of the marriage between UEFA and its member associations. And that happy marriage has just celebrated its 20th anniversary. 🌍

# TWELVE FINALISTS KNOWN

With most of the favourites making it through the qualifying round, next year's European Under-21 Championship finals in Italy and San Marino look set to be highly competitive.

**W**hile the usual suspects will be ready to prove themselves once again, a number of teams will be returning to the top table after a lengthy absence and others will be hoping to create an upset or two. With Italy automatically qualifying as hosts, 54 teams battled it out for the 11 remaining final-round places available through the qualifying competition. Featuring 12 teams for the first time, the tournament will be held in five Italian cities and Serravalle, San Marino, from 16 to 30 June 2019. Italy are the ideal hosts, since their five titles make them the most successful country in Under-21 European championship history. However, with memories of their most recent victory in 2004 beginning to fade, the Italians, who reached the semi-finals in 2017, will be determined to impress on home soil. The competition will be fierce because most of European football's leading nations emerged from their qualifying groups. Leading the way are the current holders, Germany, who strolled through the group stage and finished as its joint top scorers (33 in 10 matches). England, meanwhile, who boasted the joint best defence in the entire qualifying competition (conceding just four goals), also qualified at a canter and will compete in the Under-21 final phase for a record seventh consecutive time.

Their success rate at the finals is mediocre, however, with their last victory dating back to 1984.

## Recent absentees return

In contrast to England, France have recently endured a torrid time in this age category, failing to qualify for the last seven editions. However, with Martin Terrier and Moussa Dembélé sharing 12 goals between them, they finally solved the puzzle in an almost perfect qualifying campaign that saw them amass 28 points out of a possible 30 and finish 12 points ahead of the group runners-up. Like France, Belgium will make a long-awaited return to the finals, from which they have been absent since bowing out in the 2007 semi-finals. They will face Spain, the most successful team in recent tournaments (winners in 2011 and 2013, runners-up in 2017), in Italy next summer. With nine wins in ten matches, the Spaniards flew through their qualifying group and seem to have a squad more than capable of following in the footsteps of previous generations. Denmark, whose route to Italy was much less straightforward, eventually saw off Poland, who provided stiff opposition right to the wire.

Serbia, meanwhile, emerged victorious after a three-way battle with Austria and Russia thanks to a flawless away record (five

## Final round

**Group A** (16, 19 and 22 June):  
Italy, Spain, Poland, Belgium

**Group B** (17, 20 and 23 June)  
Germany, Denmark, Serbia, Austria

**Group C** (18, 21 and 24 June):  
England, France, Romania, Croatia

**Semi-finals** 27 June

**Final** 30 June

wins out of five) that saw them reach their third consecutive finals. Croatia's crucial 2-0 win over Greece ensured that they qualified for the first time since 2004. Romania, the last of the nine finalists who qualified as group winners, managed to finish ahead of Portugal thanks to a watertight defence (four goals conceded) that enabled them to end the campaign unbeaten.

## One newcomer

The Portuguese were then given a second bite at the cherry, qualifying for the play-offs as one of the four best runners-up who then battled it out for the two remaining places in Italy. However, they will be the finals' most prominent absentees after a convincing defeat at the hands of Poland (1-0, 1-3). Dawid Kownacki stole the show for the Poles by finishing as the qualifying competition's top scorer with 11 goals. In the other play-off, Austria qualified at Greece's expense (1-0, 1-0) and will be the only newcomers in Italy, since they have not taken part in any of the 21 previous editions. The 12 finalists now have two objectives in mind: to become European champions or, at the very least, reach the semi-finals – featuring the three group winners and the best runner-up – and therefore clinch one of the four European slots at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo. 🌐

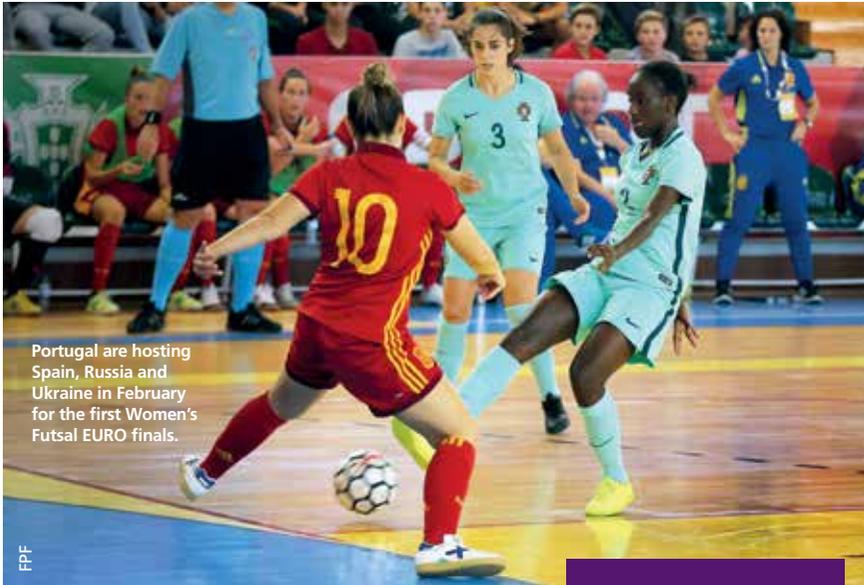


Austria eliminated Greece in the play-offs to reach the Under-21 finals for the first time ever.

Getty Images

# HISTORY-MAKERS

The first UEFA Women's Futsal EURO kicks off in February, with hosts Portugal dreaming of a unique double.



Portugal are hosting Spain, Russia and Ukraine in February for the first Women's Futsal EURO finals.

FPF

## SEMI-FINALS

15 February

Russia v Spain  
Ukraine v Portugal

“It’s amazing, it’s a dream come true,” says Portugal’s captain, Ana Azevedo, as she looks ahead to the first UEFA Women’s Futsal EURO, which takes place at the Pavilhão Multiusos de Gondomar in Porto between 15 and 17 February.

Portugal have qualified alongside Spain, Russia and Ukraine for this first final tournament and she is still pinching herself as the sport prepares to take this great leap forward. “Maybe we don’t have the notion yet of what this means to us,” she says. “We’re going to play in the inaugural Women’s Futsal EURO. That is very special for the players that are going to be there in February. It’s a matter of credibility and recognition for women’s futsal.”

It was something of a step into the unknown when UEFA’s Executive Committee voted in April 2017 to create this new competition. Only seven national associations had senior women’s national teams and 30 nations had no registered women’s futsal players at all. Fast forward 22 months and the transformation has been extraordinary. Twenty-three teams took part in qualifying and the high standard of play is already vindicating

the decision to create UEFA’s first women’s futsal competition.

UEFA was surprised to see how many associations started to organise talent detection programmes without delay and brought together a mix of good football and futsal players to make decent teams for the qualifiers.

This new competition is riding the crest of a futsal wave. At the national level, the men’s Futsal EURO has been expanded to 16 teams for the next tournament in 2022, and a new men’s Under-19 competition has also been launched (see sidebar). The rebranding of the UEFA Futsal Champions League for 2018/19 shows the strength of the game at club level.

For Azevedo and her side, there is also the added motivation of matching the feats of Portugal’s men’s team, which lifted the UEFA Futsal EURO trophy for the first time in February. Winning on home soil would make for a unique futsal double. 🏆

## Under-19 Futsal EURO kicks off

The preliminary and main round draws for the inaugural UEFA European Under-19 Futsal Championship were held in Nyon on 1 November, with 34 teams in the hat.

The preliminary round, comprising two groups of four teams, will be held from 21 to 26 January 2019, with the group winners qualifying for the main round.

**Group A:** Montenegro, Greece, Lithuania, Andorra

**Group B:** Sweden, Kosovo, Cyprus, San Marino

The main round, which will take place from 26 to 31 March 2019, will comprise seven groups of four:

**Group 1:** Kazakhstan, Poland, France, Finland

**Group 2:** Azerbaijan, Slovenia, Netherlands, preliminary round group B winner

**Group 3:** Portugal, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova

**Group 4:** Ukraine, Romania, Belgium, FYR Macedonia

**Group 5:** Spain, Hungary, Georgia, Turkey

**Group 6:** Russia, Czech Republic, Belarus, preliminary round group A winner

**Group 7:** Italy, Croatia, Slovakia, England

*(Mini-tournament hosts in bold)*

The group winners will join hosts Latvia in the final round, to be played in Riga from 8 to 14 September 2019, when two groups of four will be followed by semi-finals and the final.

# A HEAVYWEIGHT CLASH AND A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Frequent finalists Olympique Lyonnais and VfL Wolfsburg will come face to face in the last eight of this season's UEFA Women's Champions League. Following the draw in Nyon on 9 November, we also know that one team will appear in the final for the very first time.



Barcelona knocked out Glasgow City in the round of 16 and now face LSK Kvinner from Norway in the quarter-finals.

Getty Images

It has almost become an annual tradition: a clash between two European giants who, between them, have won seven of the last eight editions. After facing each other in the 2016 and 2018 finals, as well as the quarter-finals in 2017, French club Olympique Lyonnais and German side VfL Wolfsburg will meet for the fourth consecutive season.

Winners of the last three editions, Lyon confirmed their dominance of the European game in the early part of the season by seeing off the Norwegian outfit Avaldsnes Idrettslag and Dutch side AFC Ajax in the rounds of 32 and 16 respectively, scoring 20 goals and conceding none in their four matches. With the likes of Ada Hegerberg, Amel Majri, Delphine Cascarino and Eugénie Le Sommer in

their ranks, Lyon's attacking potential seems almost limitless and is a major asset in their quest for a sixth title. Although the French side have finished on top of the pile in recent seasons, Wolfsburg have never been far behind, losing narrowly on penalties in the 2016 final and after extra time in last season's showpiece. This season, the Germans seem ready to challenge the current holders once again, having also won all four of their matches so far, thanks in no small part to Pernille Harder, currently the competition's top goalscorer (6 goals).

Since the semi- and quarter-final draws were both held at the same time, we already know that the winners of the Lyon–Wolfsburg clash will face another of Europe's most successful teams, Paris Saint-Germain or Chelsea FC Women, in the last four. Having missed the 2017/18 competition, Paris, finalists in 2015 and 2017, sailed through to this season's quarter-finals with an unblemished record of four victories against the Austrian side SKN St.Pölten Frauen and Linköpings FC of Sweden. The Parisians will therefore play Chelsea, another side with a 100% record so far. Knocked out by Wolfsburg in the last three seasons, the Londoners (semi-finalists for the first time in 2018) are the only English side still in the competition after the elimination of Manchester City FC.

## A new final pairing

FC Barcelona, meanwhile, are the only remaining Spanish representatives and find themselves in the other half of the draw, along with three other clubs that have never reached the competition final: Norwegian club LSK Kvinner FK, SK Slavia Praha and FC Bayern München. A first-time finalist is therefore guaranteed to be in Budapest on 18 May. With a remarkably consistent record of five quarter-final appearances in the last six years, Barcelona could benefit from what appears to be a favourable draw by becoming the first Spanish side to reach the Women's Champions League final. To do so, the Catalans, who overturned a first-leg deficit against Kazakhstan's WFC BIJK-Kazygurt in the round of 32 (first leg: 3-1, return leg: 3-0), will need to find a way past LSK, the only newcomers to the quarter-final stage, who have only conceded once in four matches so far. The winners will contest a semi-final against either Slavia Praha, the only remaining qualifying round participant, or Bayern, who have impressed all season (4 wins, 16 goals scored, none conceded) and are aiming for their first European semi-final. ⚽



## SCHEDULE

### Quarter-finals

20/21 & 27/28 March

### Semi-finals

20/21 & 27/28 April

### Final

18 May 2019, Ferencváros Stadium, Budapest

# OUTSTANDING PROJECTS SALUTED AT UEFA GROW AWARDS

Months or even years of hard work and innovation by UEFA's member associations were rewarded at the 2018 UEFA GROW awards in Riga last October.

The goal of the awards is to celebrate the initiatives and successes of UEFA member associations, while also communicating best-practice models from all over Europe.

A record 106 applications were submitted in five categories: image, participation, engagement, revenues and women's football marketing. A jury of five industry experts selected the overall winner in each section, while also handing out a creativity and innovation award.

"I would like to congratulate all the applicants for all their endeavours and hard work," said UEFA's national associations director, Zoran Laković. "Every project shows us how far we have come in establishing best practices and developing great ideas to ensure that football continues to flourish on and off the pitch throughout Europe."

The award ceremony was part of the UEFA GROW conference hosted by the Latvian Football Federation in Riga in late October and attended by all 55 UEFA member associations.

The UEFA GROW project entitled Football Federations of the Future was also discussed at length during the conference. This initiative aims to go a step further by providing national associations with a five-year road map to sustainable success.

To achieve this goal, representatives from the 55 UEFA countries have been working with UEFA staff and sporting or non-sporting industry experts over the last six months to fashion a future for European football that will see the national associations accelerate their off-the-field performance.

## Highlight: the BFF's Dad, Mum, Me - football family! campaign

The Football Federation of Belarus (BFF) triumphed in the participation category with its initiative encouraging children and their parents to play more football together. Rather than just dropping their children off at the pitch, the aim was to get mothers and fathers involved as well. This would not only increase participation levels, but also lead to greater social cohesion. According to UEFA GROW research undertaken



for the BFF in 2016, some 63% of adults and 55% of children did not do any sport that year.

"We want people of all ages to become involved in football so that parents play alongside their children. Adults should set an example," said Vitali Krupitsa, the head of the BFF's grassroots unit. "We also want them to become active off the pitch so that they support their local teams and our national teams."

To organise the project, the BFF set up a series of footballing festivals, where families all over the country could take part. The total of 200 participants from 56 families attending in 2016 has now risen to 1,010 families and 4,000 participants in the space of just two years. As the scheme is such a success, the BFF intends to increase the number of festivals staged each year.

## Image

<b>Winner</b>	
English Football Association	– Three Lions World Cup campaign
<b>Nominees</b>	
Football Association of Norway	– NFF communications strategy
Football Association of Ireland	– Festival of Football
<b>Creativity and Innovation award</b>	
Latvian Football Federation	– New brand identity for Latvian football and the Latvian national team
<b>Special mentions by the jury</b>	
Israel Football Association	– Shield of Honour
Romanian Football Federation	– Youth council

## Participation

Winner	
Football Federation of Belarus	– Dad, Mum, Me – football family!
Nominees	
English Football Association	– SSE Wildcats Girls' Football Centres
Romanian Football Federation	– Tymbark Junior Cup
Creativity and Innovation award	
Danish Football Association	– The world's most exciting, engaging and effective digital grassroots universe
Special mentions by the jury	
Football Federation of Ukraine	– Play away, play everywhere
Football Association of Wales	– Play More Football campaign

## Engagement

Winner	
Croatian Football Federation	– Family, a digital PR strategy
Nominees	
Danish Football Association	– #thefriendlygroup
Russian Football Union	– The Team for the Nation. The Nation for the Team
Creativity and Innovation award	
Italian Football Federation	– First hackathon on Italian football
Special mentions by the jury	
Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan	– 'Why Not?' digital campaign
Turkish Football Federation	– National team kids club

## Revenues

Winner	
French Football Federation	– Sponsorship business strategy
Nominees	
Irish Football Association	– Electric Ireland partnership
Swedish Football Association	– Everyone is different; different is good
Creativity and Innovation award	
Slovak Football Association	– E-SHOP as a tool to support football development
Special mentions by the jury	
Football Association of Norway	– Norwegian sports medicine centre (Idrettens Helse Senter, IHS)

## Women's Football Marketing

Winner	
Royal Netherlands Football Association	– WEURO campaign
Nominees	
Portuguese Football Federation	– Respond On Pitch
Scottish Football Association	– Soccer centres presented by SSE
Creativity and Innovation award	
Swedish Football Association	– #InYourName
Special mentions by the jury	
Football Association of Moldova	– Împreună cu Iuliana Beregoi girls' camp festival

"This is a unique project because it focuses on a number of different areas," said Krupitsa. "We unite families on the pitch and provide them with special moments of joy. We give them the chance to be successful together and see the benefit of football as a way to foster unity."

### Highlight: the HNS's Family campaign

In the engagement category, the Croatian Football Federation (HNS) was rewarded for its campaign entitled Family. Launched ahead of the 2018 World Cup, the project aimed to create a positive atmosphere for the men's national team, while also working to improve the national association's image. In particular, the initiative sought to mimic values that Croatia's head coach was trying to instil in his players: togetherness, loyalty, respect and teamwork.

One key aspect of the campaign was building an effective strategy based on assessing how the association's social media assets were performing, while also conducting quantitative and qualitative research.

The association used linear regression on 300 Instagram posts and explored how a number of different variables, such as caption language and hashtags, affected the number of engagements on a post.

The HNS also found that both writing captions in English and using emojis increased the number of likes, whereas the previous tagline #BeProud actually reduced them.

Partly helped by Croatia's run to the World Cup final, the HNS managed to exceed its KPI target by a very wide margin. However, and perhaps more importantly, the association is now enjoying better engagement with fans which, in the long run, will benefit Croatian football on and off the pitch.

"One of the many beneficial aspects of this campaign is that it showed how Croatian football is open and inclusive to all – that everybody is welcome in our 'family'," said HNS spokesman Tomislav Pacak. "We expect that creating positive connotations in relation to the national team will help grow participation, attendance, and revenues, while having a positive impact on the image of our association and the game in general."

### Back in 2020

UEFA would like to congratulate everyone who took part in the event for their excellent projects. The associations will have plenty of time to prepare for the next UEFA GROW awards that are scheduled to take place in 2020. In the meantime, UEFA GROW will continue to offer its support to ensure consistent and sustainable growth throughout Europe. 🌐

# NEW KITS FOR A PROUD NEW ERA

The national senior and Under-21 teams of eight UEFA member associations are taking the field in new home and away kits this season thanks to UEFA's Kit Assistance Scheme. National team players and coaches joined local dignitaries and prominent guests at a series of launch events for the kits, where national pride shone in abundance.

**E**ight of UEFA's smaller member associations – Andorra, Armenia, Belarus, Cyprus, Faroe Islands, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and San Marino – are the current beneficiaries of the scheme, which supports associations without sufficient bargaining power when negotiating with kit suppliers.

The new kits were delivered by Italian sportswear company Macron, selected in a tender process in 2017, and the associations played a full role in choosing colours, designs and other features. UEFA paid Macron for the kits, which the eight associations received completely free of charge.

## Celebrating the country and football

Customisation is a new element of the latest kits, and the presentation events staged by the associations showed this innovation in style. Andorra's spectacular Casamanya mountain is embossed on its team shirt – and the kit launch was held in the village of La Massana, from where the mountain can be seen. The new Belarus shirt, featuring an ornament of Belarusian folklore on the sides, was unveiled at festivities held at the country's State Museum of Art.

Other kit launches celebrated both the country concerned and the joy of football. At the Faroe Islands' national stadium, young children wearing the kits took part in a football match. Luxembourg chose National Football Day to unveil its new kit, with a tournament involving youngsters from the Grand Duchy's clubs. San Marino's kit was launched as part of a medieval festival featuring drums, trumpets, flag throwing and archery.

Each association has welcomed the kits' mix of quality and national characteristics. Luxembourg's kit, for example, has a revered national symbol – the lion – embossed on the back. The bottom of Liechtenstein's shirt is embossed with the



The football associations of Belarus (above), the Faroe Islands (above right) and San Marino have benefited from UEFA's support to develop their national team shirts.

design of the renowned Liechtenstein Castle. "What must be emphasised," said Hugo Quaderer, Liechtenstein Football Association (LFV) president, "is the fulfilling of our association's special wishes, in particular the design of our national team kit with various aspects that are specific to Liechtenstein, without sacrificing aspirations with regard to quality."

Players from the various national teams were also pleased with the new kits. "There were a lot of positive and optimistic people at the presentation," said Aleksandr Martynovich, FC Krasnodar and Belarus captain. "I presume they are just as impressed with the new kit as we are."

Dimitris Christofi, Cyprus captain, was an

enthusiastic participant at an event staged in a beautiful seaside setting. "The new kit is really unique," he said. "It feels fantastic to be the first to wear it."

UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin emphasised that support for smaller associations through projects such as the Kit Assistance Scheme is a significant part of UEFA's overall drive to boost the standing of national team football.

"Footballers throughout Europe consider it the ultimate honour to wear their national team shirt," he reflected, "and the fans love to identify with their heroes by also donning the shirt. We are underlining our firm determination to foster national team football and promote its importance."

## Collector's item

The fans' overall response to the new kits has been extremely positive, with the Faroe Islands providing a shining example. Their



kit has been embraced by supporters, and sales of the shirt have been very encouraging both at home and abroad.

“Being able to wear a specially designed shirt for our national team is a new experience for our supporters,” said Virgar Hvidbro, Faroe Islands Football Association general secretary. “The specific design with the country map and flag embossed on the shirt gives the supporters pride, and the shirt is fast becoming a collector’s item.”

On matchnights, the popular Faroe Islands shirt is being sold at the new supporters’ shop at the Tórsvøllur national

stadium, contributing to the developing fan culture at the venue.

“The national team kit for children has been one of our most popular items, both in the supporters’ shop and online,” Hvidbro added. “Everywhere in the Faroe Islands, we now see children playing grassroots football in the new Macron shirt, and this is something we are delighted to see.”

**Back to the future**

The San Marino Football Federation (FSGC) proudly launched its new home and away kits at festivities highlighting the republic’s

beating heart and distinguished history. With a perfect mix of innovation and tradition, in which Macron’s high-tech materials were combined with the atmospheric setting of the ancient Cava dei Balestrieri amphitheatre, where archers used to compete and where the kit launch event included an archery display, the brand new San Marino jerseys were unveiled to an enthusiastic audience.

San Marino’s new, customised home shirt is sky blue, the colour worn by the republic’s sportsmen and -women at international events. Embedded in the collar is the phrase ‘L’antica terra della libertà’ (‘The ancient land of freedom’), describing San Marino and giving its players a real sense of pride to wear the shirt.

National team players, sponsors, supporters and tourists attended the launch ceremony along with the two heads of state, captains Regent Stefano Palmieri and Matteo Ciacci. The new home kit was presented to the FSGC president, Marco Tura, who spoke of a “magnificent jersey which will hopefully be remembered not only for its beauty, but also for historic results on the pitch – because we are now literally wearing San Marino on our skin.” 🌍





## UNDERSTANDING REFEREE EXPERIENCE AND ABUSE

Supported by the UEFA Research Grant Programme, Dr Tom Webb's research investigates referee working practices in France and the Netherlands, in comparison with previous research in England.

**R**esults indicate that both verbal and physical abuse are comparable in England, France and the Netherlands, although there are also distinctions between these countries.

### What was found?

To understand the experiences of referees, and in particular the abuse to which they are subjected, Webb's team created a self-reporting online survey. Distributed

through the football associations in France and the Netherlands, the survey was designed to focus on referees' experiences and perceptions of any abuse they may have encountered. The team also collected information on referee training and development needs, and on the type of support provided by local, regional and national associations and organisations. In total, the online surveys received 3,408 responses from referees in France and

1,229 responses from referees in the Netherlands, providing a significant level of detail.

Both national associations received good levels of referee satisfaction in terms of training events and personal development. Referees were also content with promotion opportunities in the Netherlands and satisfied in France.

High numbers of referees stated that they received verbal abuse (68.1% in

France and 51% in the Netherlands) and physical abuse (16% in France and 14.6% in the Netherlands). The more detailed responses in the survey reported a significant number of incidents and led to the identification of 'aggression and abuse' as a theme following analysis.

The information shows that in both France and the Netherlands, within the first five years as a referee and by the age of 24, over 45% of referees have been exposed to verbal abuse. Both physical and verbal abuse in France and the Netherlands are less frequent than that discovered in England in work published in 2017, however the detailed responses showed further issues indicating a potential normalisation of abuse within referee populations and lack of reporting of incidents.

Referees believed that abuse is considerably more likely at lower levels of the game and that there are issues with spectator behaviour towards referees. Concerns surround a number of referees who said they are considering quitting in the next 12 months, raising further questions about referee retention in football.

The research was designed as a starting point in the comparative analysis of referee working practices and support networks between different countries. Although some work has been conducted in England, little is currently known about the wider issues surrounding the retention of referees in football.

### Referees under pressure

Webb's research, which began in 2017, investigated referee working practices and environments, especially concerning referee development, support systems and the abuse encountered when officiating. The working practices of match officials and the environments in which they function are important for the effective operation and scheduling of association football matches at all levels of competition.

Football in particular has ongoing issues related to the retention of referees, and there are suggestions that the level of verbal and physical abuse is a significant contributory factor. In fact, FIFA, through the FIFA Referees Committee, recently identified that a potential global shortage of referees will become evident if abuse is not addressed.

The research also examined referee satisfaction in relation to different elements



such as the support received from the national football association, opportunities for personal development and progression, and the training and education available. Also, the work aimed to determine the level and type of abuse that referees receive, the frequency of that abuse, and whether they are considering leaving refereeing as a result.

### Scope for support

Increased understanding of referee working practices in different countries through a significant number of survey responses assists in understanding coherent trends and national/cultural differences. This research programme has demonstrated that the approach taken is achievable and it does give a significant understanding of the current landscape of refereeing in European countries.

There is scope to increase support networks for referees who report abuse. This increased support can be achieved through improved correspondence and educational information once an incident of abuse has been reported, positively affecting coping strategies and referee retention.

The importance of investigating the impact of abuse on referees needs further attention. Incidents of abuse can be linked to wider mental health and well-being issues, which will also negatively affect retention rates and the performance of the referee workforce in a given country.

Further research in other European countries would help to better understand referee working conditions and operational environments and the differences between regions, such as between Scandinavia, eastern Europe and southern Europe for example.

### Future research and focus

The online survey has uncovered some areas of strength for the national associations, such as satisfaction with training events, and lower frequencies of abuse, particularly in the Netherlands, although abusive situations and exposure to abuse still exist, proving that work and attention is still required. Even with this information, we do not know the associated implications of abuse on the individual referee, as well as on the players, coaches and spectators, and therefore underlying mental health issues may exist.

There are also concerns about the numbers of referees that are considering leaving the game. Better understanding of the reasons and issues is required in order to tackle challenges in this area, and provide educational material and interventions. Developing the research further and involving other countries will potentially enable improvements to be made regarding the retention of referees. It will also help to identify cultural comparisons as well as differences between countries, while highlighting specific areas in which referees feel their national associations can improve. This research project has shown that work conducted utilising online surveys can and does work effectively, and also that further research and engagement with associations is required in order to further develop understanding of referees.

The Referee and Match Official Research Network managed by Dr Webb at the University of Portsmouth continues to develop and evolve, with a number of research projects currently under way. 🌱

# A YEAR IN THE SERVICE OF CHILDREN

Aleksander Čeferin has now been chairman of the UEFA Foundation for Children for just over a year, having been elected to that position on 22 November 2017. During that time, the foundation has approved a string of new projects across Europe and around the world, as well as strengthening its relationships with UEFA's member associations. As 2018 draws to a close, we can look back on a year of fantastic activities supporting children's rights.

Indeed, since the UEFA president was elected chairman, a total of 82 new projects – both in Europe and elsewhere – have been added to the foundation's portfolio, with the total number of initiatives supported since the foundation was first established now standing at 180.

## European football in the service of children's rights

The foundation has also strengthened its links with Europe's football family. Indeed, the winners of the annual UEFA Foundation for Children Awards were again selected in close cooperation with UEFA's 55 member associations, with each of those associations being invited to nominate a deserving charitable organisation. In order to be eligible, nominees had to be based in one of UEFA's member countries, abide by the foundation's ethics code and comply with all relevant legal and financial obligations. All in all, 22 organisations were nominated, of which two were ineligible. With a total of €1m available for distribution to award winners, the foundation decided to divide that money equally between the remaining 20 organisations, with each receiving €50,000.

In awarding that prize money, the foundation seeks to highlight the valuable work being done by Europe's local communities and recognise the positive contribution they make to children's lives.

"Working with UEFA's member associations allows us to identify new partners and use our sport as a social tool, helping us to safeguard children's rights throughout Europe," stresses Urs Kluser, general secretary of the UEFA Foundation for Children.

All of the award-winning organisations



The foundation board, chaired by Aleksander Čeferin, has two new members: Snežana Samardžić-Marković and Vladimir Klitschko.

use football to support and safeguard children's rights. Almost half of this year's prize money went to health initiatives, with the remainder being used to support projects in other priority areas targeted by the foundation, such as access to sport, education, personal development and integration (notably as regards child refugees and children from other marginalised sections of society).

## New initiative

Besides those annual awards, the foundation's other landmark event of 2018 was the inaugural Match for Solidarity at the Stade de Genève in the spring. That charity match, organised jointly by UEFA and the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), involved the participation of 34 stars of the game and attracted a bumper crowd of 23,654, making a net profit of €684,402 – all of which went to the foundation with a view to supporting a number of designated humanitarian initiatives and development projects.

A total of six projects (in Switzerland, Greece, Argentina, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Mali) were selected for this purpose by a special committee comprising representatives of UEFA and UNOG.

Finally, in terms of legacy-related activities, the foundation has helped to build a total of 19 football pitches over the last year, benefiting children in a variety of disadvantaged communities.

## New projects for 2018/19

Following the UEFA Executive Committee's meeting on 27 September 2018, the foundation has been allocated an additional €3m for the 2018/19 financial year to support humanitarian projects. At the meeting of the foundation's Board of Trustees on 29 November, a total of 45 new projects were selected and approved (see next page).

For more information about the foundation's activities, a hard copy of its activity report can be requested by sending an email to [contact@uefafoundation.org](mailto:contact@uefafoundation.org) 

PARTNER	PROJECT	COUNTRY
<b>AMANDLA</b>	Kick it – but fair! Realising potential through sport and education	Germany
<b>OLTALOM SPORT ASSOCIATION</b>	Chance for all – Let them score	Hungary
<b>NEWCASTLE UNITED FOUNDATION</b>	Active Lives	United Kingdom
<b>EVERTON IN THE COMMUNITY</b>	Disability sport and integration Focus on mental illness	Netherlands
<b>GIOVANNI VAN BRONCKHORST FOUNDATION</b>	Access to sport is a right	Netherlands
<b>STEP UP ORPHAN OPPORTUNITY CENTRE</b>	Football for Orphans in Belskoye Ustye	Russia
<b>AYUDA EN ACCIÓN</b>	Paths to equity through sport	Spain
<b>PLAY FOR CHANGE</b>	Play for Change Sports Centre	Italy
<b>SHAKTAR SOCIAL</b>	Come On, Let's Play!	Ukraine
<b>EUROPEAN FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (EFDN)</b>	Scoring for Health	Belgium, Israel, Netherlands, Poland, Ukraine and United Kingdom
<b>WAU RY</b>	Well-being through sport	Finland
<b>GENESIS PROJECT</b>	Genesis Football for Peace Academy	Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>PLUSPORT</b>	Goal Plus Football for children with disabilities	Switzerland
<b>KLITSCHKO FOUNDATION</b>	Success Packages Sporting development in schools	Ukraine
<b>ACTIONAID HELLAS</b>	Rise Fostering stronger growth	Greece
<b>TERRE DES HOMMES ITALY</b>	Recreational and extracurricular activities through education	Israel
<b>RED DEPORTE Y COOPERACIÓN</b>	Youth empowerment through football	Spain
<b>KICKEN OHNE GRENZEN</b>	Football as a driver of social integration	Austria
<b>ROYAL EUROPA 90 KRAAINEM FC</b>	We welcome young refugees	Belgium
<b>JOINT PROJECT WITH FEDEX CARES</b>	Youth employability programme	Hungary, Ireland, Romania and United Kingdom
<b>SPORT DANS LA VILLE</b>	Job dans la Ville From sport to employment	France
<b>KICK IT OUT</b>	Game Changers	United Kingdom
<b>OCEANIAN FOOTBALL CONFEDERATION (OFC)</b>	Just Play	Various Pacific islands
<b>GROOTBOS GREEN FUTURES FOUNDATION</b>	Girl Power	South Africa
<b>IMBEWU</b>	BOPHELO KE KGWELE (The game, the life!)	South Africa
<b>FUTEBOL DÁ FORÇA</b>	Mutola Cup Girls' football competition	Mozambique
<b>PLAN INTERNATIONAL UK</b>	Information and education for girls through football	Tanzania
<b>KICK4LIFE</b>	Health and prevention through football	Lesotho
<b>STREETFOOTBALLWORLD GMBH</b>	Girl Protection Combating HIV/AIDS and FGM	Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast
<b>SIMAVI</b>	No Water Polo Gender equality through sport	Malawi
<b>MYSA KENYA</b>	Giving youth and peace a sporting chance on and off the field	Kenya
<b>RIGHT TO PLAY</b>	Tusobola Improving education through sport and play	Uganda
<b>OSCAR FOUNDATION</b>	Education with a Kick	India
<b>PLANÈTE ENFANTS &amp; DÉVELOPPEMENT</b>	Schooling for Chepang girls	Nepal
<b>ACTION FOR DEVELOPMENT</b>	Street children back to school	Afghanistan
<b>AMITIÉ FRANCO-AFGHANE (AFRANE)</b>	Support for the Afghan school system	Afghanistan
<b>INDOCHINA STARFISH FOUNDATION</b>	Football for Social Change	Cambodia
<b>SACRED SPORTS FOUNDATION INC.</b>	Math Attack Academic support after school	Saint Lucia
<b>FIGHT FOR PEACE INTERNATIONAL</b>	Unity and Peace Peace-building programme	Jamaica
<b>INTER FUTURA S.R.L.</b>	Inter Campus Sporting and educational activity centre for children with high-risk behaviours	Venezuela
<b>FABRETTO CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION</b>	Play to Learn	Nicaragua
<b>SWISS ACADEMY FOR DEVELOPMENT (SAD)</b>	Children on the Move Supporting migrant children through football	Uganda
<b>CROSS CULTURES PROJECT ASSOCIATION (CCPA)</b>	Open Fun Football Schools Playing for water	South Sudan
<b>BAAN DEK FOUNDATION</b>	Football4Good	Thailand
<b>ASIAN FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (AFDP)</b>	Kick for Hope	Jordan

# LENNART JOHANSSON SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships in honour of Lennart Johansson, a former UEFA president and current honorary president, have been set up to provide vital assistance to football's future leaders who attend UEFA education programmes.



Lennart Johansson, who served as UEFA president from 1990 to 2007, is investing in football education through his foundation.

The scholarships are available for two UEFA education programmes: the Executive Master in Sport Governance (MESGO) and the UEFA Executive Master for International Players (UEFA MIP).

MESGO is an exclusive programme for sports-sector professionals wishing to strengthen their strategic thinking in the evolving world of global sports governance, while the MIP is a tailor-made programme to give former players the tools to lay the foundations for successful administration and management careers in the game when they hang up their boots.

Eleven students in the fifth MESGO – from UEFA member associations, football clubs and European institutions – have been awarded Lennart Johansson scholarships.

The grants also aim to promote democratic values and broaden the diversity of those who attend UEFA's education programmes – especially in terms of gender, origin, cultural background and area of expertise.

The management board for the scholarships comprises one representative each from the Lennart Johansson

Foundation and the Centre de Droit et d'Economie du Sport (CDES) – UEFA's lead academic partner delivering both the MESGO and MIP programmes – and three representatives of UEFA or UEFA member associations.

Lennart Johansson is the board's honorary president, and UEFA handles the administration for both the board and the scholarships. An annual budget covers the board's operating costs and the scholarships themselves.

The former UEFA president, now 89, who was at European football's helm at a time of massive overall development of the game, including the launch of the UEFA Champions League and UEFA's evolution into a modern business organisation, is proud of this honour.

"The launch of the Lennart Johansson scholarships gives me tremendous pleasure," he said. "Education and support for football leaders is of utmost importance for the future of football. I wish to emphasise the significance that educating leaders has in safeguarding core values of

democracy and fair play. UEFA's support in this regard, and the signal this sends, cannot be overestimated."

The Lennart Johansson scholarships are fulfilling their educational purpose. Consequently, scholarship holders have also lauded the chance to further their skills and careers.

"MESGO is currently the most complete and effective accelerator for the sports leaders of the future. Such privilege implies travelling to key markets to attend sessions and gain experience first-hand, which would not be possible without the support of the Lennart Johansson scholarships," said Nuno Moura, chief marketing and revenue officer of the Portuguese Football Federation.

"Without the scholarship, I would not have been able to attend the MESGO V programme. The first session has cemented with certainty in my mind just how beneficial this programme will be to me in my current position," said Rea Walshe, corporate affairs and licensing director of the Football Association of Ireland. 🌐



General secretaries of CAF member associations gathered for a workshop organised under the UEFA Assist programme in Namibia in October.

## UEFA ASSIST'S GS ACADEMY KICKS OFF IN AFRICA

The GS (general secretaries) Academy, set up by UEFA Assist, aims to support the general secretaries of football associations around the world by providing practical assistance to help develop and strengthen the sport.

UEFA Assist was launched in 2017 with the aim of sharing knowledge and best practices in order to help UEFA's fellow football confederations develop and strengthen football within their respective territories. The programme is designed to provide practical rather than financial assistance and to offer support through development activities.

In partnership with the Confederation of African Football (CAF), UEFA Assist ran the first two editions of its GS Academy in Windhoek, Namibia, and Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, in November.

The general secretaries of national football associations are invited to attend regional workshops to help them enhance

their ability to succeed in their role. "It was important for us to come and get the best guidance and knowledge from UEFA," said the general secretary of the Kenya Football Federation, Robert Muthomi, who took part in the GS Academy in Ethiopia.

### Boosting knowledge

"I will go back to my federation and teach my staff what we have learned. We will adapt the toolkit received here and share this knowledge so that everybody understands the level we're trying to reach," Muthomi added.

In setting up UEFA Assist, research was conducted to discover which educational

programmes were needed to support the development of UEFA's fellow confederations. One of the prime requests was to boost the knowledge of the national associations' general secretaries.

Participants in the GS Academy are led through a programme highlighting the key aspects of their role as general secretaries, including governance, strategic planning, finance, people management, marketing and communications, player development and administration, and match administration.

All 56 CAF member associations will take part in the programme over the next six months. The GS Academy will also be introduced in other confederations. 

## DREAM COMES TRUE FOR WOMEN'S TEAM

XAVI BONET

 10 November 2018 was a historic day for the Andorran women's football team as, under the guidance of José Antonio Martín, their dream of playing a match in Andorra came true. The match, which will never be forgotten by the players, technical staff and officials of the Andorran Football Federation, saw Andorra face Luxembourg at an Estadi Comunal packed with supporters who had come to witness a football match of immense importance not just for women's football but for the country as a whole.

The atmosphere in the stands made for a great evening of football, as family members, friends and supporters of the women's team came to watch the players represent their country close up.

Although two late goals by Karen Marin ultimately secured a 2-0 victory for Luxembourg, the result did nothing to tarnish this night of celebration for Andorran football.



## UEFA GRASSROOTS WORKSHOP IN BAKU

FIRUZ ABDULLA

 The Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) hosted a UEFA grassroots workshop at the Baku Olympic Stadium from 29 October to 1 November.

Representatives from the football associations of Lithuania, Moldova, Wales

and Kosovo joined AFFA staff for the workshop on the topic of football in schools. UEFA grassroots consultants Mark Milton and Stuart Grieve, as well as Per Ravn Omdal, former president of the Norway Football Association, UEFA honorary member and UEFA grassroots

ambassador, shared their experiences during the workshop, which covered a variety of issues and talking points.

Besides discussions, there were practical sessions that involved the participants visiting local grassroots clubs and watching young players in action.

"We are proud to have hosted this UEFA grassroots workshop in Baku. It is an inspiration for our association and a sign of approval of the work we are doing in grassroots football and the importance we attach to it. The UEFA grassroots workshop has been an interesting event and a great experience for our association because grassroots football is an essential part of the AFFA's activities," said Jahangir Hasanzada, head of the AFFA's grassroots department.



BELGIUM

www.belgianfootball.be

## ALINE ZELER ANNOUNCES INTERNATIONAL RETIREMENT

STEFAN VAN LOOCK AND PIERRE CORNEZ



The match between Switzerland and Belgium in Bienne on 9 October was Aline Zeler's last for the Belgian Red Flames. The Belgians' two-leg play-off defeat against the Swiss (2-2 at home, 1-1 away) meant the Flames failed to qualify for the Women's World Cup to be held in France next summer.

Following the match in Bienne, Belgium's 35-year-old captain, Aline Zeler, announced her international retirement. With 109 caps, she has made more appearances for the Belgian women's national team than anyone else.

Aline made her international debut in a 2-0 friendly defeat against the Republic of Ireland on 12 March 2005, when Anne Noë was the national team coach. Highlights of her career with the national team include the three matches at Women's EURO 2017 in the Netherlands, which will remain indelibly etched in her memory.

Aline Zeler, who played in both attack and defence for the national side, scored a total of 29 goals for the Flames. "I took some time out to reflect after we were knocked out by Switzerland and decided to bring an end to my international career. The EURO 2021 qualifiers don't start until September 2019. I'll finish the

season with PSV, of course, since we're still chasing a lot of targets this year. I think the national team has come a long way and will continue to make huge strides in the future," said the former R. Standard de Liège, RSC Anderlecht and K. Sint-Truidense VV player. The Belgian national team coach, Ives



Photo News

Serneels, paid tribute to Aline Zeler: "Aline is a genuine team player. She pays close attention to discipline in general and to her own personal discipline in particular. That's why she has enjoyed such a successful career. She is an example to others both on and off the pitch and I hope she will remain our ambassador for many years to come. I have the deepest respect for Aline both as a person and as a player."

CROATIA

www.hns-cff.hr

## RAISING FUNDS FOR CHILDREN

NIKA BAHTIJAREVIĆ



On account of their high media visibility, the Croatian Football Federation (HNS) and the national team players are often approached by individuals and non-profit organisations for donations.



HNS

Luka Modrić

So, the Vatreno Srce (fiery heart) foundation was founded a decade ago to take care of all these requests. It is currently managed by the acting head coach, team captain and medical staff of the men's national team.

In 2018, the foundation chose to support two important causes: the Zagreb children's hospital and Korak u Život (A step into life), a charity that helps youngsters raised in children's homes to make the transition into the higher education system.

The foundation held a benefit event attended by all players and team staff and organised a charity call centre, with star players picking up the phones to talk to members of the public. The HNS covered

some of the overheads of the benefit, and made a donation by purchasing tickets. The event was broadcast live on television, raising awareness of the two causes even further.

In other news, last autumn, the HNS celebrated World Heart Day, with activities for staff and the public, and Grassroots Week, with activities for children. Croatia's UEFA Nations League matches provided ample opportunities for other socially responsible activities – the HNS supported the Fare #FootballPeople action weeks at domestic matches in October, while November's showdown with Spain was followed on-site by blind fans using audio-descriptive commentary.

## 140 SCHOOLS IN MOTION

MARTIN GREGOR

 The School in Motion project run by the Football Association of the Czech Republic (FAČR) arranges for youth team coaches to visit schools and present the latest trends in general physical training and lesson planning.

"We want to work with schools and physical education teachers to improve children's level of physical exercise and instil a love of physical activity and sport in them at a very early age," explained Michal Blažej from the FAČR grassroots department.

"This isn't a specialised football project. It's all about general physical education in an entertaining and enjoyable format. All the children present are constantly involved in the activities without standing around for long periods at a time," he said. "Our highly experienced grassroots youth coaches reach out to schools to share new ideas, inspiration and views on children's sporting activities with teachers."

The feedback from the 140 schools to receive visits so far has been very positive.

Not only are the teachers inspired by the lesson planning ideas but the schools also enjoy new equipment donated by the FAČR.

The happy children and teachers at the school in Prague 1 district are an example of the project's success. "We would like to thank the FAČR for the showcase lessons on behalf of the children," said one of the teachers. "The coaches did a

great job and it was inspirational and useful for all our teachers. We will definitely be using all these new ideas and sports equipment in our physical education lessons."

Schools can apply online for a visit from the FAČR coaches and educational materials can be downloaded from the dedicated website.



## CHAMPIONS IN GOOD GOVERNANCE

ADAM GRØNHOLM

 The Danish Football Association (DBU) leads the way three times over for its good governance. That honour is the result of many years of targeted work to create a more open and democratic football association.

First, in a new national study on good governance in sports associations, the DBU came out on top. It also came out with top marks in a new EU-supported study of eight national sports federations called the National Sports Governance Observer (NSGO), which confirms the extent to which Danish sport lives up to its own self-understanding of being an open and democratic movement that can serve as a role model. Third, and by no means least, Denmark has topped the

world rankings for several years.

The DBU chairman, Jesper Møller, said: "I'm proud and happy on behalf of Danish football. Corruption, closeness and anti-democratic processes harm the sport as much as doping and match-fixing. Therefore, it is important that we openly dare to discuss what values we want to stand for. Thanks must go to the clubs, employees and good business partners – both sponsors and municipalities – for their great support and help in setting high new standards in this area."

Among other measures, the DBU has:

- introduced a code of conduct with ethical guidelines for Danish football;
- introduced a players' code of conduct

with guidelines for playing for Danish football teams;

- introduced gift and travel rules;
- strengthened relations with the outside world by entering into cooperation agreements with, for example, Amnesty International, Transparency International, Parasport Denmark, Play the Game, and Pan Sports;
- implemented reforms of the political system in Danish football, including time limits on terms of office and a reduction in the number of DBU board members from 16 to 7.

The association has adapted its laws and regulations to align them with all the measures outlined above.

ENGLAND

www.thefa.com

## THE FA SUPPORTS LGBT AWARENESS WITH LANDMARK FIXTURE AT WEMBLEY STADIUM

DANNY LYNCH

 The Football Association invited Stonewall FC, Britain's most successful amateur lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) football club, to play a regular league fixture at Wembley Stadium on 30 November. The match was the first non-league fixture to be held at the stadium and was

held under the banner of the Rainbow Laces campaign, which tackles LGBT and homophobic abuse in football and other sports.

Following the release of The FA's In Pursuit of Progress plan, which is part of the association's commitment to ensuring that the diversity of those leading and

governing football better reflects those playing the game, the match is part of a wider partnership with Stonewall, the UK's leading LGBT charity. The FA, with support from Stonewall, will be working to create an inclusive environment in which LGBT people are able to thrive and perform at their best.

Paul Elliott, chair of The FA's Inclusion Advisory Board, said: "This new relationship presents an opportunity for football to help change hearts and minds beyond the stadium, as well as ensuring that everyone who makes football happen feels included. Whether players, supporters, members of the vital volunteer workforce, employees of The FA, contract staff or anyone else connected to the game, no one should be left behind. The principle behind this partnership therefore embraces the philosophy that the game is for anyone, anytime, anywhere."



ESTONIA

www.jalgpall.ee

## UEFA SUPER CUP BRINGS REWARDS

MAARJA SAULEP

 The Estonian FA (EJL) was recently honoured with two awards in connection with the 2018 UEFA Super Cup: one from the Estonian federation for the blind and the other from the city of Tallinn.

The Estonian federation for the blind rewarded the EJL for its efforts to include visually impaired and blind people in the Super Cup. Visually impaired children took part in the opening ceremony and were given the chance to meet the players of Real Madrid and Atlético de Madrid.

Before the big match, the EJL organised education seminars on blind football for audio-descriptive commentators and football coaches. And a blind football exhibition match was held at the official fan zone.

The city of Tallinn presented the association with an award to highlight its impact on tourism. According to business promotion agency Enterprise Estonia, over 10,000 people visited Tallinn because of the UEFA Super Cup, spending at least €5 million between them.

The match itself was watched by tens of millions of people and the buzz on social media reached similar numbers. All of this gave the city of Tallinn and Estonia in general a unique marketing possibility and helped to reach new markets.

"We would like to thank our partners – the city of Tallinn, the Estonian government, UEFA, various companies, the organisers and the volunteers, who all helped to make the event a success," said

Anne Rei, the EJL general secretary. "And a big thank you to all the fans for their support."

"The UEFA Super Cup has left a great legacy in Estonia. Besides the infrastructure, experience and enthusiasm that inspired people working in and around football, a lot of youngsters were encouraged to start football training," she added.



## HB TÓRSHAVN WRITE HISTORY

TERJI NIELSEN



The Faroese top division, Btrideildin, has finished for 2018, and champions HB Tórshavn wrote history when clinching the title.

HB Tórshavn got an impressive 73 out of a possible 81 points during the season. They played 27 games, won 24, drew 1 and lost 2 games all season. Their grand total of 73 points is a Faroese record for the most points in a season. The previous record was 67 points, achieved by B36

Tórshavn in 2011. Moreover, the margin between HB Tórshavn and the championship runners-up, NSÍ Runavík, was a massive 18 points, making it by far the most convincing title in recent Faroese football history. The man behind that success, HB Tórshavn's new Icelandic coach, Heimir Guðjónsson, has agreed to stay put with the Faroese champions for next season.

Over in the women's top division, the race for the title was a tighter affair, but in



the end the defending champions, EB/Streymur-Skála, regained the title ahead of HB Tórshavn and KÍ Klaksvík. EB/Streymur-Skála also won the Faroese women's cup again this season, thereby completing the championship and cup double two years running.

## INAUGURAL INNOVATION AWARDS PRESENTED

STÉPHANE LANOUÉ



The French Football Federation (FFF) presented its inaugural Innovation Awards at the Sport Innovation Summit in Paris on 30 October. The awards form part of the FFF's Ambition 2020 action plan, through which it hopes to become a pioneer among sports organisations when it comes to innovation. Its Kick-Off innovation centre and performance laboratory test and develop innovative ideas for amateur and elite football, and a number of new services have already been launched, including the digital licence and the My Coach by FFF app for coaches.

After more than 100 applications had been received from France and abroad, the winners of the very first awards were chosen from a shortlist of nine start-ups, with PocketLab, Vald Performance (Australia) and Tracktl taking the honours in the sports performance, player protection and fan experience categories respectively.

The winners of the awards, which were launched in July this year, were selected by a panel of international experts chaired by Florence Hardouin, the FFF's chief executive.



Jean-Michel Aulas, FFF executive committee member and Olympique Lyonnais president, welcomed this "excellent initiative on the part of the federation. Being world champions is hugely satisfying, but the federation is carrying out some fundamental, forward-thinking research and development work that will bring medium- and longer-term benefits for football professionals and enthusiasts."

Grégory Dupont, performance director at the national technical centre and fitness coach for the French national team, agreed. "These awards will enable us, in particular, to identify innovative start-ups that can help us achieve our research and development objectives in relation to performance, player protection

and technology. These objectives are relevant to everyone involved, from elite football to the amateur game."

### The winners

Sports performance category: PocketLab has created a virtual sports performance analysis laboratory in the form of its iPhone applications.

Player protection category: Vald Performance (Australia) has developed a monitoring system that tests hip adduction and abduction strength in order to prevent recurring groin and hip pain among athletes.

Fan experience category: Tracktl has devised an interactive music solution that enhances supporters' experience by keeping them entertained and engaged at events.

GEORGIA

www.gff.ge

## RECORD ATTENDANCE

OTAR GIORGADZE



A new record was set at the final UEFA Nations League group stage match in Tbilisi, with 52,214 people witnessing Georgia's 2-1 victory over Kazakhstan at the Dinamo Arena.

This was also one of the highest attendances at a Georgian national team game in recent times. All tickets had sold out a few hours before kick-off. The win over Kazakhstan ensured that Georgia finished top of League D Group 1,

thereby winning promotion to League C for the next competition.

The attendance at the Georgia v Kazakhstan game was the highest in Leagues B, C and D. Only League A matches attracted more than 52,000 spectators. Georgian fans are already looking forward to the possible play-off semi-final between Georgia and Belarus to be held at the Dinamo Arena in March 2020.



GIBRALTAR

www.gibraltarfa.com

## GRASSROOTS WEEK WITH SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

STEVEN GONZALEZ



The Gibraltar Football Association (GFA) held its annual grassroots festival in early October, a week later than the rest of Europe owing to the availability of facilities.

As part of UEFA's Europe-wide Grassroots Week, the Gibraltar event featured walking football, table soccer, a children's fun day attended by over 380 youngsters, a women's open futsal tournament, a corporate futsal

tournament and the ever-popular Veterans Futsal Charity Shield.

The GFA grassroots manager, Leslie Asquez, was delighted at the overall turnout and especially with the number of children.

"We included more events in our grassroots week this time around," said Asquez, "and intend to grow the event year by year. We covered the whole spectrum both in terms of age and



range of events, from table soccer for youngsters to our ladies, veterans and even pensioners who love playing walking football. And we've already started planning next year's even bigger festival."

HUNGARY

www.mlsz.hu

## BUDAPEST AWAITS FINAL

MÁRTON DINNYÉS



The UEFA Women's Champions League trophy arrived in Budapest recently as the capital city looks forward to hosting the final for the first time, at the Ferencváros Stadium on 18 May.

A large number of guests, fans and media representatives took advantage of the trophy's presence for photo opportunities alongside the two UEFA Nations League matches at the same

stadium in the space of four days in November, both of which the men's national team won confidently 2-0, first against Estonia and then Finland.

This is the first time the women's premier club competition final will have been held in a different city from that of the men's final.

In other news, over 30,000 girls have signed up for the schools section of the Bozsik programme, a long-term initiative



that gives children nationwide the chance to learn to enjoy the game and practise their skills.

## REFEREES ASSISTED BY TECHNOLOGY

EITAN DOTAN

 This is the second year that the Israel Football Association (IFA) and the referees' union has cooperated with Redwood, a company that provides video clips and statistics for the referees.

The online system developed by Redwood together with the referees provides statistical data on fouls, yellow and red cards, and all other referee decisions, as well as video footage of the events. The system is useful for all members of the referees' union – referees, assistant referees, referee observers and administrators.



"About two years ago, when I was at a UEFA conference on the subject of referees and technology, the need to analyse referee performances arose immediately. The technology will also provide an answer to the referee

themselves, and will improve the quality of their judgement," said Yariv Tepper, head of the referees' union.

"Today the system gives us the ability to enter a specific event, cut, save and analyse it, and obtain all the data we want from the game within 15 to 30 minutes of the final whistle," said international referee Ziv Adler.

Neal Ferro, business development specialist at Redwood said: "It's a system that combines statistics, referee decisions, events and video footage. Our employees undergo training and know how to classify referee decisions."

## LATVIA HOSTS UEFA GROW AWARDS

TOMS ĀRMANIS

 The Latvian Football Federation (LFF) was proud to host this year's UEFA GROW awards in Riga. Doubly so, as the association received its first award in recognition of creativity and innovation in the Image category.

The award was given for the campaign to promote the new brand identity of the Latvian national team, the #11wolves.

Since the summer, the Latvian national team has boasted a new emblem combining elements of the national flag, a shield and a football, symbolising fighting spirit, unity and pride. Yet the team also have a second symbolic logo featuring a wolf, which is the team's mascot and unites supporters through various public events and merchandising.

"Welcoming so many of the brightest minds of European football was a huge honour both for Latvia and our association," said Kaspars Gorkšs, the LFF president. "I am sure we have proved ourselves as valuable and reliable partners at European level. This wonderful gathering and the workshops provided us with a lot of new information and ideas for reinforcing football's role in our country.

"The award was a big surprise," he added, "because it's not every day we stand out among the elite of European football. And yet, that is our goal. So this is a great inspiration. We are proud that the #11wolves have captured the hearts of our fans and that this approach has gained international recognition. This is only the beginning of our journey to make Latvian football more engaging and attractive."

The LFF also had the chance to host one of the national UEFA Certificate in Football Management educational programmes in 2018. Once again, this was the first time Latvia had had such an honour, welcoming students from Latvia, Lithuania, Russia and Germany.



LIECHTENSTEIN

www.lfv.li

## NICOLAS HASLER RETAINS FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR TITLE

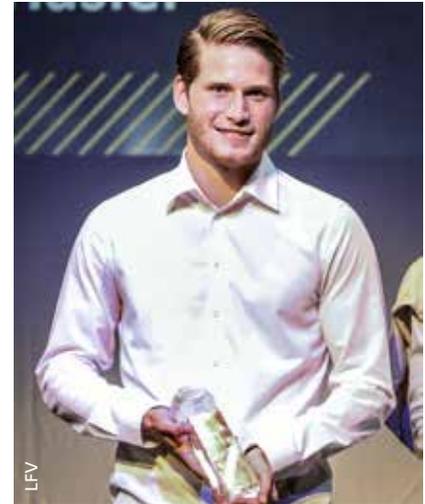
ANTON BANZER

 Liechtenstein's Footballer of the Year for 2018 is 27-year old midfielder Nicolas Hasler, who plays for US Major League club Chicago Fire. He defended his 2017 title by winning the award for the country's top player for the third time overall.

Liechtenstein's football family gathered to pay tribute to the outstanding individuals and performances of 2018 at the tenth LfV Awards on 9 October. For the second year in a row, the best player award was presented to Nicolas Hasler, who moved from the country's leading club, FC Vaduz, to US Major League

Soccer in 2017 and immediately helped his new club, Toronto FC, to the US championship and the final of the CONCACAF Champions League. Capped 57 times, Nicolas Hasler has been a full Liechtenstein international since 2010 and a mainstay of the national team for many years.

The 2018 LfV Awards also marked a special anniversary. It is 20 years since Liechtenstein previously won an international match, for the first time, beating Azerbaijan 2-1 at home in a EURO 2000 qualifier on 14 October 1998. Seven players and the coach of the 1998 team



were special guests at the LfV gala evening, where their historic victory was applauded once again.

MALTA

www.mfa.com.mt

## UNDER-19s LEAVE POSITIVE IMPRESSION IN UEFA TOURNAMENT

KEVIN AZZOPARDI

 The Malta Football Association (MFA) welcomed Belgium, France and Lithuania to its home turf in November to play the qualifying round in Group 6 of the 2018/19 European Under-19 Championship at the Centenary Stadium. The top two in the group would advance to the elite round.

As expected, France and Belgium battled it out for the top spot, with the former eventually winning the group with seven points from three matches, two ahead of the Belgians, who join them for the next phase. The Malta Under-19s gave a very good account of themselves during this mini-tournament, finishing third with four points.

Under the guidance of coach Winston Muscat, the Maltese youngsters produced a disciplined performance in the tournament's curtain-raiser against heavyweights France, losing only 1-0.

In their second match, Malta faced Belgium, who had already taken Lithuania down in a 5-0 victory. The hosts initially

took the lead thanks to an own goal by Brendan Schoonbaert after 11 minutes but he made amends by levelling the score for Belgium just before half-time.



Despite Malta holding firm in the second half, the 1-1 draw enabled the Belgians to qualify after a 2-2 draw against France in their final outing.

The tournament's final match saw the Maltese team fight back from 1-0 down, thanks to second-half goals from Alexander Satariano and Marcus Grima, ultimately beating Lithuania 2-1, taking their tally to four points, just one behind Belgium.

UEFA asks host associations to conduct a match-fixing prevention session for teams participating in mini-tournaments. Accordingly, some of the four teams' players attended a session run by Franz Tabone, the MFA integrity officer, at the tournament hotel.

"These mini-tournaments provide an ideal opportunity to explain the dangers of match-fixing to young players, their coaches and officials, while showing them what they can do if approached," said Tabone.

## CHILDREN'S DREAMS COME TRUE AT THE NATIONS LEAGUE

PRESS OFFICE

 Walking out onto the pitch hand in hand with your idol at an international match is a dream for any young football fan. And it came true for 49 youngsters aged six to 12 at two of the UEFA Nations League matches held in Chişinău.

For the Moldova v San Marino match, the Football Association of Moldova (FMF) marketing department decided to invite 22 children from the Străşeni orphanage to act as player escorts.

"We're delighted to offer the children this opportunity, and to deliver other community football projects that illustrate our belief in football as a powerful tool for social change," said Diana Bulgaru, a

marketing department specialist. "By giving them such an experience we hope the incredible atmosphere at the Nations League matches and the pride and honour that goes with the role will inspire them to follow their dreams."

"Our children were very happy to be part of this match," said Constantin Ioniţă, the orphanage director. "Some were worried, others inspired. But this was an unforgettable experience for them all. On their return to the orphanage, they were delighted to see themselves on TV during the highlights of the game."

For the Moldova v Luxembourg match, a group of 27 children from the Hirbovâţ special school, some with disabilities,

were given this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"I've always dreamed of experiencing the atmosphere of a major sporting event. That dream came true tonight and it was unforgettable to walk on to the pitch with my favourite player, Artur Ioniţa," said ten-year-old Cristian Maslo.

"Children escorting players on to the pitch is a beautiful tradition in football. We cooperated with the minister of internal affairs to arrange this for these children who face difficult challenges in their daily lives," said FMF vice-president Dragoş Hîncu. "This is a way for football to unite generations."

"We will be continuing this tradition for the EURO 2020 qualifying group stage matches held in Moldova. Even though sport can't offer a solution to all the issues these children face, we know being part of an event as spectacular as this provides them with an exciting and inspiring breath of fresh air."



## NATIONAL FOOTBALL EXHIBITION OPENS IN DUBLIN

GARETH MAHER

 To celebrate 60 years of the European Championship and the fact that four UEFA EURO 2020 matches will be played at the Dublin Arena, the Football Association of Ireland has created a national football exhibition.

The exhibition showcases the history of Irish football as part of the wider EURO 2020 project and the competition's 60th anniversary celebrations. It opened in Dublin on 2 December and will travel to seven other venues around the country.

The exhibition includes famous jerseys, old match programmes, medals, trophies, ancient artefacts and key information.

It is also a highly interactive experience suitable for the whole family, with a photo booth, video stations and quiz panels that anyone can enjoy, regardless of their football knowledge.

The exhibition is split into six different zones:

- Local – venues, legends, grassroots clubs, etc.
- National – League of Ireland/Women's League
- International – Irish senior teams
- Ireland at the EURO – Ireland's previous appearances at the EURO
- Community – Football for All, charity



links, artwork from the local Fighting Words group

- EURO – history of the UEFA European Football Championship

ROMANIA

www.frf.ro

## SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE ASSOCIATIONS MEET IN BUCHAREST

PAUL ZAHARIA



On 19 and 20 September, the Romanian Football Federation (FRF) organised a meeting for southeastern European football associations in Bucharest. The associations regularly meet to set up common actions and activities to develop and support the development of football in the region, with the ultimate aim of reducing the differences between east and west by means of new competitions (in the youth, women's football and futsal sectors, for example), public affairs and raising awareness of the social benefits of investing in sport.

The meeting was attended by the presidents and general secretaries of 14 national associations (Albania,

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Kosovo, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey), as well as guests from UEFA and the English FA. One of the main items on the agenda was the FRF initiative to create an annual regional boys' Under-15 national team competition. The proposal met with the unanimous approval of the participants, who decided that Turkey would host the inaugural event.

The UEFA GROW social return on investment (SROI) model was another item as a way of measuring the value of public investments in football for the community and convincing political and local authorities to invest in football

infrastructure. A special guest at the meeting was Paul Stănescu, Romania's deputy prime minister, who also spoke about the importance of the UEFA GROW SROI Model. "I share its conclusions because investment in football is not only justified, but it also contributes directly to overall social and economic development. Factors such as the direct economic result, the social impact, and savings in the health budget are all solid arguments in favour of the need for such public investments in football and in sport in general. There are several ongoing projects, with the most significant investment amounting to more than €100 million for the four Bucharest stadiums that are part of the UEFA EURO 2020 project".

RUSSIA

www.rfs.ru

## ALEKSANDR ALAEV AND MARINA FEDOROVA AWARDED IN DUBAI

EKATERINA GRISHENKOVA



From 6 to 10 November, the 2018 Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup took place in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, where the national team of Russia, one of the most titled teams of this prestigious tournament, along with Brazil, finished in second place. After the competition, the Beach Soccer Stars 2018 award ceremony was held, also in Dubai.

Two Russian representatives were among the winners. The general director of the Football Union of Russia and the chairman of the UEFA Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee, Aleksandr Alaev, received an award for his contribution to the development of beach soccer.

"I understand that this is not my personal prize, but it is an award for the whole Russian beach soccer family," Aleksandr Alaev said on receiving the award. "I remember the first FIFA Beach

Soccer World Cup, which was held in Rio de Janeiro in 2005. I was a player and came to Brazil to see what beach soccer



was all about. It was love at first sight. I just dreamed of starting to develop beach soccer in Russia, to organise national competitions. And I dreamed that the national team of Russia would participate in the Beach Soccer World Cup. Later we won this tournament twice and also many other titles. Our dreams came true. Beach soccer helped me in my life."

Another Russian, Marina Fedorova, was honoured as the worldwide women's player of the year. She plays for the national women's beach soccer team of Russia, with whom she won gold in the 2018 Women's Euro Beach Soccer Cup in Nazaré, Portugal, defeating Spain 2-0 in the final, and was named player of the tournament, which was organized by Beach Soccer Worldwide. In addition, she represents her country in the women's national football and futsal teams.

## THIRTY YEARS WITH UEFA AND FIFA

### PRESS OFFICE



In June 1988, the San Marino Football Federation (FSGC) received a telegram from the then general secretary of FIFA, Joseph Blatter, officially welcoming it as a full FIFA member association after its application had been overwhelmingly approved at the 46th FIFA Congress.

In 2018, the FSGC celebrated 30 years as a member of UEFA and FIFA. Since making its official international debut in the qualifiers for the 1992 European Football Championships in Sweden, San Marino has continued to go from strength to strength, despite having one of the smallest set-ups in world football. We have seen new facilities, investments

in youth football, projects to boost the women's game, and improvements in the training available to coaches, referees, club officials and other key roles, to mention just a few areas of progress.

In all this, two factors have remained constant: the unwavering encouragement and support of the two governing bodies, and the FSGC's own commitment to continuing this upward trajectory and broadening the appeal of the sport both within and outside the 61 square kilometre territory of the Republic of San Marino.

By helping to organise some major events, the FSGC has already made an auspicious start to its next 30 years on the international stage. For instance, it is

partnering the main hosts, the Italian Football Federation, for the 2019 European Under-21 Championship finals, with the San Marino Stadium taking its place alongside venues in Cesena, Bologna, Reggio Emilia, Udine and Trieste.

Next, but by no means last, are two important developments in the world of futsal: not only did San Marino field its first national futsal team at youth level this year, but it is also set to host its first international futsal event when Sweden, Kosovo and Cyprus join its team in Group B of the preliminary qualifying round of the European Under-19 Futsal Championship.

## MULTICULTURAL FOOTBALL FESTIVAL PROMOTES DIVERSITY

### MICHAEL LAMONT



More than 200 players from 23 teams across Scotland descended upon Toryglen at the end of October as the 2018 Scottish FA Multicultural Football Festival took centre stage.

The event, founded in 2013 in partnership with BEMIS Scotland thanks to support from the Scottish government's Cashback for Communities initiative, has grown year on year, with clubs from as far afield as Inverness travelling to Glasgow to take part.

Players from the age of eight to senior level were invited to take part in the event, which was open to clubs and players from all ethnic backgrounds and was keenly contested by all involved.

Well Foundation emerged victorious in the adult section after edging out United Glasgow, with SAPC Community Sports Hub claiming the honours in the youth section to deny the Bellshill outfit a brace of titles.

David McArdle, para-football and equality lead for the Scottish FA, was delighted with the impact of the festival, with plans already afoot for next year.

McArdle said: "The festival is a fantastic visual representation of the diversity of Scottish culture, and the opportunity to bring people from so many diverse

backgrounds together is one the Scottish FA is proud to be part of. The event was played with such high spirits and friendship. We are already working with our partner, BEMIS Scotland, to ensure the 2019 edition can be even bigger and further promote Scotland's diverse communities."



Scottish FA

SERBIA

www.fss.rs

## GOLDEN AUTUMN FOR NATIONAL TEAM FOOTBALL

MIRKO VRBICA



Besides the joy of knowing that the Serbian national team managed to win promotion to League B of the UEFA Nations League, all the other Serbian national teams can be satisfied with their successes this autumn.

Serbian football fans were pleased with their national Under-21 team, led by coach Goran Djorović. Two rounds before the end of the qualification campaign, the team secured its place in the European Under-21 Championship final tournament

in Italy and San Marino from 16 to 30 June. The Under-19 team also achieved success, under coach Milan Kuljić, having qualified for the elite round of their European championship.

The girls also made their mark, with the Under-19 team thrashing Liechtenstein and qualifying for their elite round and the women's Under-17s team also through to the elite round.

All in all, it was a good autumn for the national teams.



SLOVAKIA

www.futbalsfz.sk

## NEW NATIONAL TEAM COACH

PETER SURIN



After more than five years of dedication to Slovakian football, national team coach Ján Kozák stepped down in October and was replaced by Pavel Hapal.

Kozák's record was positive: 54 matches, 29 wins, 10 draws, 15 losses and qualification for the round of 16 at EURO 2016. He was the longest-serving national team coach since the country's independence and brought 32 newcomers to the national team.

"I would like to thank him for all his hard work for the good of national football. He put together a team that made Slovakian fans proud, and not just by the results they achieved," announced the president of the Slovak Football Association (SFZ), Jan Kováčik, the day after the UEFA Nations League match against the Czech Republic.

While Slovakia lost that match 2-1, the long-serving coach left not because of a string of defeats but the lack of player discipline.

"I felt I had three options," said Kozák at the press conference. "I could simply have turned a blind eye; but that just isn't my style. Secondly, I could have excluded all seven players concerned from the

squad. And my third option was to leave the national team myself."

The SFZ quickly asked former assistant coach Štefan Tarkovič to step in as the interim coach for the upcoming friendly against Sweden. Then three days later the SFZ executive committee appointed Pavel Hapal as the national team's eleventh coach.



Pavel Hapal

Previous incumbents were Jozef Vengloš, Jozef Jankech, Dušan Galis, Jozef Adamec, Ladislav Jurkemik, Ján Kocian, Vladimír Weiss, Stanislav Griga/Michal Hipp, and Ján Kozák, together with four interim coaches: Dušan Radolský, Anton Dragúň, Michal Hipp, and Štefan Tarkovič.

"It is a great honour for me," said 49-year-old Hapal. Born in what is now the Czech Republic, he is the first foreigner in the head coach's seat.

His player career spanned Sigma Olomouc, Dukla Praha, Bayer Leverkusen, CD Tenerife, Sparta Praha, SK České Budějovice and Tatraň Jakubčovice. He also coached SFC Opava, FC Zlín, Baníka Ostrava, FC Nitra, FK Mladá Boleslav, MŠK Žilina, Zaglebie Lubin, FK Senica, the Slovakian Under-21 team and Sparta Praha.

Hapal has completely changed the backroom staff and appointed Oto Brunegráf as his assistant. The two men have been working together for 11 years now, since the summer of 2007.

"Our previous work with the Slovakian Under-21 team was successful, I hope now to do the same with the national team," added Hapal.

SWEDEN

www.svenskfotboll.se

## TV GALA CONCLUDES SWEDISH SEASON

ANDREAS NILSSON

 Victor Nilsson Lindelöf (Manchester United FC) and Nilla Fischer (VfL Wolfsburg) were named Swedish players of the year at the 24th annual football gala that concluded the Swedish season.

Both had played key roles in the Swedish national teams' great success in 2018, with the men advancing to the quarter-finals in the World Cup and the women qualifying for the Women's World Cup in France this coming summer.

The gala also celebrated the efforts of the season's winning clubs: men's champions AIK, women's champions Piteå IF, women's cup winners FC Rosengård and men's cup winners Djurgårdens IF.

Zlatan Ibrahimović made an appearance to pick up his 13th Forward of the Year award and to represent his own foundation, handing over a grant to Grunden Bois, a Gothenburg-based club renowned for successfully bringing players with intellectual disabilities into the



Victor Nilsson Lindelöf and Nilla Fischer

football community. The gala at the Globe Arena was attended by 1,360 dinner guests and broadcast live on TV4 to an audience of 700,000 viewers.

SWITZERLAND

www.football.ch

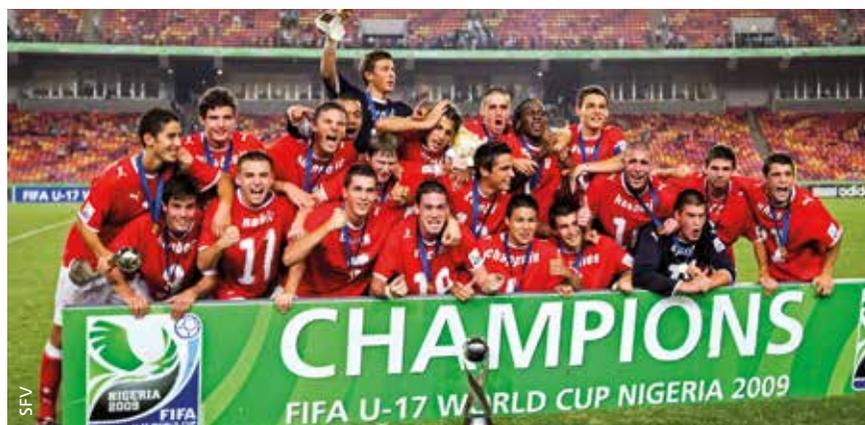
## EMULATING PAST GLORIES

PIERRE BENOIT

 As 2002 European Under-17 champions, 2009 U-17 World Cup winners and 2011 European U21 Championship runners-up, Switzerland's youth teams have enjoyed some incredible successes, none more impressive than the 2009 U-17 World Cup win in Nigeria with Dany Ryser at the helm.

A repeat of these successes could now be just around the corner, since the Swiss men's and women's U17 and U19 teams will all be competing in their respective elite rounds in 2019. Laurent Prince, Swiss Football Association (SFV) sports director, considers this "a huge success, although bringing talent through is always the main priority at this vital stage of the youth development process."

Prince is delighted with the current state of progress: "This is a great success not just for the SFV as the governing body, but also for chief selector Heinz Moser and his team. Our achievements so far this year have been very pleasing. Back in the spring, our men's U17 and women's U19 teams performed well at their respective European Championships. The progress we have made demonstrates that our development strategies, such as Footeco,



and our training centres are ticking the right boxes, cooperation with clubs is working well and lots of important cogs are running perfectly, helping us to achieve our ambitious targets.

"Nevertheless, we continue to face difficult challenges at every level. We regularly check whether we are on the right path, in terms of career planning, for example, and generally try to create conditions that enable us to offer the best possible support to our most talented players."

Switzerland also has to live with the fact that other countries, with larger pools of registered players to choose from, have different possibilities at their disposal. This is one reason why developing talent is always the main focus in Switzerland. It is also why many of the Swiss players who were part of the aforementioned successes, such as Reto Ziegler, Tranquillo

Barnetta, Philippe Senderos, Yann Sommer, Fabian Frei, Haris Seferović, Mario Gavranović and Granit Xhaka, to name just a few, went on to join some of Europe's top teams. Today, young Swiss players are once again pushing for places in the senior national team. "We have eight players born in 1995, 1996 or 1997 who are already playing at this level. Manuel Akanji (1995), Kevin Mbabu (1995), Edimilson Fernandes (1996), Nico Elvedi (1996), Denis Zakaria (1996), Albion Ajeti (1997), Brel Embolo (1997) and Djibril Sow (1997) are fantastic examples of players who have come through our youth development programme. That's why, for the Swiss youth set-up, feeding promising youngsters into the senior team is more important than succeeding at a European Championship or World Cup," says Laurent Prince.

TURKEY

www.tff.org

## AMPUTEE SILVER AT WORLD CUP

EGE ERSÖZ



Having been crowned European champions with a marvellous victory in 2017, Turkey's national amputee football team were pipped at the post by Angola at the 2018 Amputee Football World Cup in Mexico.

Regular time in the final between Turkey and Angola ran out with a goalless draw. Then both sides failed to score in extra time, and the winner of the 2018 Amputee World Cup was ultimately decided by a penalty shoot-out resulting in a last-minute flurry of goals ending 5-4 to Angola.

Turkey started the tournament with a 4-1 win against Kenya in the first match of the group stage. After a win by default on Liberia's withdrawal, Turkey completed the group stage undefeated with a 5-1 win against the USA.

Turkey kept up their winning streak in the knockout stage of the tournament by beating Ireland 4-0 in the round of 16, going on to a 5-1 victory over Russia in the quarter-finals. A win against their Mexican hosts took Turkey to the final, with only Angola to stop them lifting the cup.

The team were celebrated with a ceremony and dinner in their honour at

the Turkish Football Federation headquarters on their return home.



TFF

WALES

www.faw.cymru

## INSPIRED CHILDREN ANNOUNCE SQUAD

MELISSA PALMER



Ahead of the Wales international women's friendly against Portugal last November, the Football Association of Wales (FAW) took a diverse approach to announcing Jayne Ludlow's squad, unlike the usual 'top table' press conferences.

The Welsh squad galvanised the nation during their historic 2019 Women's World Cup qualifying campaign, in which Ludlow's players went seven games without conceding, before suffering a defeat in their final game of the campaign against the eventual Group 1 winners, England, just missing out on a World Cup spot.



To thank and incorporate the new generation of Wales fans inspired by that qualifying campaign, the FAW enlisted the help of 26 young fans from across the country to announce the Welsh squad for

the friendly against Portugal.

The names were revealed by boys and girls filmed holding a picture of their chosen players in the crowdsourced 96-second video.

The 'adorably' diverse way the Welsh squad was announced on the FAWales social platforms sparked greater interest and engagement from fans and national media outlets, who otherwise might not have been as interested in a Welsh friendly away fixture.

The Wales squad announcement video can be viewed on the FAWales YouTube page.

# 178 CLUBS SHARE SOLIDARITY PAYMENTS FOR 2018/19

UEFA has made its solidarity payments for the 2018/19 season in accordance with the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League revenue distribution system applicable for the 2018–21 competition cycle.

Under the new distribution system, the pot for payments for clubs taking part in the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League qualifying rounds is equal to 3% of the gross revenue, plus an additional €10m coming from UEFA Champions League clubs' share. Based on a forecast of €3.25bn in gross revenue in 2018/19, the solidarity share is distributed to the clubs as follows:

## UEFA Champions League

Each domestic champion that does not qualify for the UEFA Champions League or Europa League group stage receives €260,000, in addition to the amounts payable for their participation in each qualifying round. Clubs that take part in the qualifying rounds and do not qualify for the Champions League play-offs receive the following amounts for each round played:

- Preliminary round: €230,000
- First qualifying round: €280,000
- Second qualifying round: €380,000
- Third qualifying round: €480,000 (only for clubs eliminated from the champions path, as clubs eliminated from the league path qualify directly for the UEFA Europa League group stage and benefit from its distribution system as a result).

No solidarity payments are made for the play-offs, as the clubs involved benefit from

the UEFA Champions League/UEFA Europa League centralised phase distribution system.

## UEFA Europa League

All clubs taking part in the qualifying rounds receive the following amounts for each round played:

- Preliminary round: €220,000
- First qualifying round: €240,000
- Second qualifying round: €260,000
- Third qualifying round: €280,000
- Play-offs: €300,000 (eliminated clubs only)

No solidarity payment is made to the play-off winners. However, they will retain the payments received for the preliminary, first, second and third qualifying rounds as applicable.

## Savings

Any money left over after the initial UEFA Champions League/UEFA Europa League solidarity payments as a result of how the qualifiers work out will be redistributed to the participating teams in proportion to the solidarity amounts already received.



Getty Images

All figures in euros

Association	Clubs	Champions League	Europa League	Totals
<b>ALBANIA</b>	FK Kukësi	660,000	280,000	940,000
	FK Partizani		240,000	240,000
	KS Luftëtari		240,000	240,000
	KF Laçi		500,000	500,000
<b>Association total</b>				<b>1,920,000</b>
<b>ANDORRA</b>	FC Santa Coloma	490,000	260,000	750,000
	UE Engordany		460,000	460,000
	UE Sant Julià		220,000	220,000
<b>Association total</b>				<b>1,430,000</b>
<b>ARMENIA</b>	Alashkert FC	540,000	540,000	1,080,000
	FC Banants		240,000	240,000
	FC Pyunik		780,000	780,000
	FC Gandzasar-Kapan		240,000	240,000
<b>Association total</b>				<b>2,340,000</b>

Association	Clubs	Champions League	Europa League	Totals
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	SK Sturm Graz	380,000	280,000	660,000
	FC Admira		260,000	260,000
	LASK		540,000	540,000
	SK Rapid Wien		280,000	280,000
Association total				1,740,000
<b>AZERBAIJAN</b>	Qarabağ FK	1,140,000		1,140,000
	Keşla FK		240,000	240,000
	Neftçi PFK		240,000	240,000
	Gabala SC		240,000	240,000
Association total				1,860,000
<b>BELARUS</b>	FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk		500,000	500,000
	FC Dinamo Minsk		780,000	780,000
	FC Dynamo Brest		540,000	540,000
Association total				1,820,000
<b>BELGIUM</b>	KRC Genk		540,000	540,000
	KAA Gent		580,000	580,000
Association total				1,120,000
<b>BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA</b>	HŠK Zrinjski	540,000	540,000	1,080,000
	NK Široki Brijeg		240,000	240,000
	FK Sarajevo		500,000	500,000
	FK Željezničar		500,000	500,000
Association total				2,320,000
<b>BULGARIA</b>	PFC Ludogorets 1945	660,000	280,000	940,000
	PFC CSKA-Sofia		780,000	780,000
	PFC Slavia Sofia		500,000	500,000
	PFC Levski Sofia		240,000	240,000
Association total				2,460,000
<b>CROATIA</b>	NK Osijek		500,000	500,000
	HNK Hajduk Split		540,000	540,000
	HNK Rijeka		280,000	280,000
Association total				1,320,000
<b>CYPRUS</b>	APOEL FC	540,000	840,000	1,380,000
	Apollon Limassol FC		780,000	780,000
	Anorthosis Famagusta FC		240,000	240,000
	AEK Larnaca FC		540,000	540,000
Association total				2,940,000
<b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>	AC Sparta Praha		260,000	260,000
	SK Sigma Olomouc		580,000	580,000
Association total				840,000
<b>DENMARK</b>	FC Midtjylland	640,000	580,000	1,220,000
	FC København		780,000	780,000
	FC Nordsjælland		780,000	780,000
	Brøndby IF		580,000	580,000
Association total				3,360,000
<b>ENGLAND</b>	Burnley FC		840,000	840,000
Association total				840,000
<b>ESTONIA</b>	FC Flora Tallinn	540,000	260,000	800,000
	FC Levadia Tallinn		240,000	240,000
	Nõmme Kalju FC		240,000	240,000
	JK Narva Trans		240,000	240,000
Association total				1,520,000
<b>FAROE ISLANDS</b>	Vikingur	540,000	260,000	800,000
	KÍ Klaksvík		460,000	460,000
	B36 Tórshavn		720,000	720,000
	NSÍ Runavík		240,000	240,000
Association total				2,220,000
<b>FINLAND</b>	HJK Helsinki	920,000	280,000	1,200,000
	KuPS Kuopio		240,000	240,000
	FC Lahti		240,000	240,000
	FC Ilves Tampere		240,000	240,000
Association total				1,920,000
<b>FRANCE</b>	FC Girondins de Bordeaux		540,000	540,000
Association total				540,000
<b>GEORGIA</b>	FC Torpedo Kutaisi	540,000	840,000	1,380,000
	FC Dinamo Tbilisi		240,000	240,000
	FC Chikhura Sachkhere		500,000	500,000
	FC Samtredia		240,000	240,000
Association total				2,360,000
<b>GERMANY</b>	RB Leipzig		540,000	540,000
Association total				540,000

## FINANCIAL MATTERS

Association	Clubs	Champions League	Europa League	Totals
<b>GIBRALTAR</b>	Lincoln Red Imps FC	490,000	260,000	750,000
	Europa FC		220,000	220,000
	St Joseph's FC		220,000	220,000
Association total				1,190,000
<b>GREECE</b>	Asteras Tripolis FC		260,000	260,000
	Atromitos FC		260,000	260,000
	Olympiacos FC		280,000	280,000
Association total				800,000
<b>HUNGARY</b>	Újpest FC		500,000	500,000
	Ferencvárosi TC		240,000	240,000
	Budapest Honvéd FC		500,000	500,000
Association total				1,240,000
<b>ICELAND</b>	Valur Reykjavík	540,000	540,000	1,080,000
	FH Hafnarfjörður		500,000	500,000
	ÍBV Vestmannaeyjar		240,000	240,000
	Stjarnan		500,000	500,000
Association total				2,320,000
<b>ISRAEL</b>	Hapoel Beer-Sheva FC	920,000	280,000	1,200,000
	Beitar Jerusalem FC		240,000	240,000
	Maccabi Tel-Aviv FC		1,080,000	1,080,000
	Hapoel Haifa FC		540,000	540,000
Association total				3,060,000
<b>ITALY</b>	Atalanta BC		840,000	840,000
Association total				840,000
<b>KAZAKHSTAN</b>	FC Astana	1,140,000		1,140,000
	FC Irtysh Pavlodar		240,000	240,000
	FC Tobol Kostanay		500,000	500,000
	FC Kairat Almaty		780,000	780,000
Association total				2,660,000
<b>KOSOVO</b>	KF Drita	770,000	260,000	1,030,000
	FC Prishtina		460,000	460,000
Association total				1,490,000
<b>LATVIA</b>	FK Spartaks Jūrmala	540,000	540,000	1,080,000
	FK Ventspils		500,000	500,000
	Riga FC		240,000	240,000
	FK Liepāja		240,000	240,000
Association total				2,060,000
<b>LIECHTENSTEIN</b>	FC Vaduz		500,000	500,000
Association total				500,000
<b>LITHUANIA</b>	FK Sūduva	920,000	580,000	1,500,000
	FK Trakai		720,000	720,000
	FC Stumbras		240,000	240,000
	FK Žalgiris Vilnius		780,000	780,000
Association total				3,240,000
<b>LUXEMBOURG</b>	F91 Dudelange	280,000	540,000	820,000
	FC Progrès Niederkorn		780,000	780,000
	CS Fola Esch		500,000	500,000
	Racing FC Union Lëtzebuerg		240,000	240,000
Association total				2,340,000
<b>FYR MACEDONIA</b>	KF Shkëndija	1,400,000	300,000	1,700,000
	FK Vardar		240,000	240,000
	FK Rabotnicki		240,000	240,000
	FC Shkupi		240,000	240,000
Association total				2,420,000
<b>MALTA</b>	Valletta FC	540,000	260,000	800,000
	Birkirkara FC		220,000	220,000
	Gzira United FC		460,000	460,000
	Balzan FC		500,000	500,000
Association total				1,980,000
<b>MOLDOVA</b>	FC Sheriff Tiraspol	920,000	580,000	1,500,000
	FC Petrocub-Hincesti		240,000	240,000
	FC Zaria Balti		240,000	240,000
	FC Milsami Orhei		240,000	240,000
Association total				2,220,000
<b>MONTENEGRO</b>	FK Sutjeska	540,000	260,000	800,000
	FK Rudar Pljevlja		240,000	240,000
	FK Budućnost Podgorica		240,000	240,000
	OFK Titograd		240,000	240,000
Association total				1,520,000
<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	AZ Alkmaar		260,000	260,000
	Vitesse		540,000	540,000
	Feyenoord		280,000	280,000
Association total				1,080,000
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	Crusaders FC	540,000	260,000	800,000
	Coleraine FC		240,000	240,000

Association	Clubs	Champions League	Europa League	Totals
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	Cliftonville FC		240,000	240,000
	Glenavon FC		240,000	240,000
Association total				1,520,000
<b>NORWAY</b>	Rosenborg BK	660,000	280,000	940,000
	Sarpsborg 08 FF		780,000	780,000
	Molde FK		1,080,000	1,080,000
	Lillestrøm SK		260,000	260,000
Association total				3,060,000
<b>POLAND</b>	Legia Warszawa	920,000	280,000	1,200,000
	Górnik Zabrze		500,000	500,000
	KKS Lech Poznań		780,000	780,000
	Jagiellonia Białystok		540,000	540,000
Association total				3,020,000
<b>PORTUGAL</b>	Rio Ave FC		260,000	260,000
	SC Braga		280,000	280,000
Association total				540,000
<b>REPUBLIC OF IRELAND</b>	Cork City FC	540,000	280,000	820,000
	Dundalk FC		500,000	500,000
	Shamrock Rovers FC		240,000	240,000
	Derry City FC		240,000	240,000
Association total				1,800,000
<b>ROMANIA</b>	CFR 1907 Cluj	640,000	580,000	1,220,000
	FC Viitorul		500,000	500,000
	Fotbal Club FCSB		840,000	840,000
	U Craiova 1948 Club Sportiv		280,000	280,000
Association total				2,840,000
<b>RUSSIA</b>	FC Ufa		840,000	840,000
	Football Club Zenit		280,000	280,000
Association total				1,120,000
<b>SAN MARINO</b>	SP La Fiorita	490,000	260,000	750,000
	S.S. Folgore		220,000	220,000
	SP Tre Fiori		460,000	460,000
Association total				1,430,000
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	Celtic FC	1,140,000		1,140,000
	Hibernian FC		780,000	780,000
	Rangers FC		780,000	780,000
	Aberdeen FC		260,000	260,000
Association total				2,960,000
<b>SERBIA</b>	FK Partizan		1,080,000	1,080,000
	FK Spartak Subotica		780,000	780,000
	FK Radnicki Niš		500,000	500,000
Association total				2,360,000
<b>SLOVAKIA</b>	FC Spartak Trnava	1,140,000		1,140,000
	FC DAC 1904 Dunajská Streda		500,000	500,000
	AS Trenčín		1,080,000	1,080,000
	ŠK Slovan Bratislava		780,000	780,000
Association total				3,500,000
<b>SLOVENIA</b>	NK Olimpija Ljubljana	540,000	840,000	1,380,000
	NK Domžale		500,000	500,000
	NK Rudar Velenje		500,000	500,000
	NK Maribor		780,000	780,000
Association total				3,160,000
<b>SPAIN</b>	Sevilla FC		540,000	540,000
Association total				540,000
<b>SWEDEN</b>	Malmö FF	1,140,000		1,140,000
	AIK		500,000	500,000
	BK Häcken		500,000	500,000
	Djurgårdens IF		260,000	260,000
Association total				2,400,000
<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	FC Basel 1893	380,000	580,000	960,000
	FC St Gallen		260,000	260,000
	FC Luzern		280,000	280,000
Association total				1,500,000
<b>TURKEY</b>	Beşiktaş JK		540,000	540,000
	İstanbul Başakşehir		280,000	280,000
Association total				820,000
<b>UKRAINE</b>	FC Mariupol		540,000	540,000
	FC Zorya Luhansk		580,000	580,000
Association total				1,120,000
<b>WALES</b>	The New Saints FC	540,000	540,000	1,080,000
	Cefn Druids AFC		220,000	220,000
	Bala Town FC		220,000	220,000
	Connah's Quay Nomads FC		240,000	240,000
Association total				1,760,000
<b>Total</b>				<b>101,820,000</b>

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

<b>1 TUESDAY</b> Dariusz Mioduski (Poland) Davor Šuker (Croatia)	<b>2 WEDNESDAY</b> David Mujiri (Georgia)	<b>3 THURSDAY</b> Gerhard Sager (Sweden) George Pirtskhalava (Georgia) Andreas Demetriou (Cyprus)	<b>4 FRIDAY</b> Alexis Spirin (Russia) José Fontelas Gomes (Portugal)	<b>5 SATURDAY</b> David George Collins (Wales) Mette Christiansen (Norway) Peter Oskam (Netherlands)	<b>6 SUNDAY</b> Michael Zoratti (Austria) Siarhei Safaryan (Belarus) Rudolf Marxer (Liechtenstein) Sergii Lysenchuk (Ukraine)	<b>7 MONDAY</b> Andrejs Sipailo (Latvia)
<b>10 THURSDAY</b> Herbert Hübel (Austria) Emil Bozhinovski (FYR Macedonia) Zsolt Széldi (Hungary)	<b>11 FRIDAY</b> Hans-Dieter Drewitz (Germany) <b>70th</b> Olivier Brochart (France)	<b>12 SATURDAY</b> Juan N. García-Nieto Portabella (Spain)	<b>13 SUNDAY</b> Drago Kos (Slovenia) Sofoklis Pilavios (Greece) Lilach Asulin (Israel) Aušra Kancė (Lithuania) Siarhei Ilyich (Belarus) Niccolò Donna (Italy)	<b>14 MONDAY</b> Marc Keller (France) Igor Satkii (Moldova) Nodar Akhalkatsi (Georgia) Radu Traian Visan (Romania)	<b>15 TUESDAY</b> Alessandro Lulli (Italy) Phivos Vakis (Cyprus) Atanas Furnadzhiev (Bulgaria) Mitja Lainščak (Slovenia)	<b>16 WEDNESDAY</b> Kleomenis Bontiotis (Greece) <b>60th</b> Milan Karadžić (Serbia) Kenneth Reeh (Denmark) <b>50th</b> Petra Stanonik Bosnjak (France)
<b>19 SATURDAY</b> Bujar Kasmī (Albania) Ansgar Schwenken (Germany) Artur Azaryan (Armenia)	<b>20 SUNDAY</b> Lars-Åke Lagrell (Sweden) Pedro Ángel Galán Nieto (Spain) Ilir Shulku (Albania) <b>50th</b> Maciej Sawicki (Poland) <b>40th</b> Bjorn Vassallo (Malta)	<b>21 MONDAY</b> Maria Teresa Andreu Grau (Spain) Vladimir Iveta (Croatia)	<b>22 TUESDAY</b> Are Habicht (Estonia) <b>60th</b> Alan Freeland (Scotland) Lassin Isaksen (Faroe Islands) Krzysztof Malinowski (Poland) Anja Kunick (Germany) Peter Jehle (Liechtenstein)	<b>23 WEDNESDAY</b> Teuvo Holopainen (Finland) Harry Been (Netherlands) <b>70th</b>	<b>24 THURSDAY</b> Pat Quigley (Republic of Ireland) Patrick Wattebled (France) Ofer Eini (Israel) <b>60th</b> Anneli Gustafsson (Sweden) Nikolai Ivanov (Russia) Edi Šunjić (Croatia) Minke Booij (Netherlands)	<b>25 FRIDAY</b> Gevorg Hovhannisyán (Armenia) Pascal Fritz (France)
<b>28 MONDAY</b> David Attard (Malta)	<b>29 TUESDAY</b>	<b>30 WEDNESDAY</b> Gilles Leclair (France)	<b>31 THURSDAY</b> Stefan Majewski (Poland) Brian Lawlor (Wales) Alexandros Spyropoulos (Greece) Vadims Direktorenko (Latvia)			

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

<b>1 FRIDAY</b> Volker Roth (Germany) Hüseyin Coşkun (Turkey) Karen Espelund (Norway) Kyros Vassaras (Greece)	<b>2 SATURDAY</b> Trygve Børnø (Norway) Barbara Moschini (Italy) Urs Reinhard (Switzerland)	<b>3 SUNDAY</b> Steen Dahrup (Denmark) Mark Blackburne (England) Mika Paatelainen (Finland) Renata Tomášová (Slovakia) Jelena Oblaković-Babić (Serbia) <b>40th</b> Sergii Valdyko (Ukraine)	<b>4 MONDAY</b> Oleh Protasov (Ukraine)	<b>5 TUESDAY</b> Václav Kroncl (Czech Republic) Peter Rudbaek (Denmark) Chris Rawlings (England) <b>50th</b> Igor Gryshchenko (Ukraine)	<b>6 WEDNESDAY</b> Lars-Christer Olsson (Sweden) Gabriel Weiss (Slovakia) Josep Maria Bartomeu (Spain) Leonid Kaloshin (Russia)	<b>7 THURSDAY</b> Duško Grabovac (Croatia) Michael Gerlinger (Germany)
<b>10 SUNDAY</b> Götz Bender (Germany)	<b>11 MONDAY</b> Willie McDougall (Scotland) Annelie Larsson (Sweden) Fritz Stuchlik (Austria) Madeline Ekvall (Sweden)	<b>12 TUESDAY</b> Borislav Mihaylov (Bulgaria) David McDowell Zor (Slovenia) Panagiotis Chatzalexiou (Germany)	<b>13 WEDNESDAY</b> Oleksandr Bandurko (Ukraine) Christian Mutschler (Switzerland) Roman Babaev (Russia)	<b>14 THURSDAY</b> Marinus den Engelsman (Netherlands) Manuel López Fernández (Spain) Thomas Weyhing (Germany) Livio Bazzoli (Italy) Juan Carlos Miralles (Andorra) Joeri Van De Velde (Belgium)	<b>15 FRIDAY</b> Susanne Erlandsson (Sweden) Leif Sundell (Sweden) Sonia Testaguzza (Switzerland) Svitlana Shkil (Ukraine) Orkhan Huseynzade (Azerbaijan) Milenko Ačimović (Slovenia)	<b>16 SATURDAY</b> Jan Pauly (Czech Republic) Roman Sowinski (Poland)
<b>19 TUESDAY</b> Jānis Mežeckis (Latvia) Louis Peila (Switzerland)	<b>20 WEDNESDAY</b> Lars Arnesson (Sweden) Eggert Magnusson (Iceland) Edward Potok (Poland) Ion Geolgău (Romania)	<b>21 THURSDAY</b> Ralph Zloczower (Switzerland) Fernando Gomes (Portugal) Jarmo Matikainen (Finland) Eugène Westering (Netherlands)	<b>22 FRIDAY</b> Damien Garitte (Belgium) Asim Khudiyev (Azerbaijan) Vladimir Šajn (Slovenia) <b>60th</b> Ana Caetano (Portugal) Burim Sejđini (FYR Macedonia)	<b>23 SATURDAY</b> Rick Parry (England)	<b>24 SUNDAY</b> Peter Jones (England) Oleg Harlamov (Estonia) Xavier Palacin (England)	<b>25 MONDAY</b>
<b>28 THURSDAY</b> John Beattie (England) Panagiotis Papachristos (Greece) Markus Stenger (Germany)						

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### 8 TUESDAY

**Nelly Viennot** (France)  
**Alf Hansen** (Norway)  
**Jan Vork** (Denmark)  
**Bernhard Neuhold** (Austria)

### 17 THURSDAY

**Sune Hellströmer** (Sweden)  
**Jan W. Wegereef** (Netherlands)  
**Aristeidis Stavropoulos** (Greece)  
**Blaženka Logaršič** (Croatia) **50th**

### 26 SATURDAY

**Metin Kazancıoğlu** (Turkey)  
**Mirosław Ryszka** (Poland)  
**Florence Hardouin** (France)  
**Massimo Nanni** (San Marino)  
**Cyril Zimmermann** (Switzerland)  
**Saša Zagorc** (Slovenia)

### 9 WEDNESDAY

**Monika Staab** (Switzerland) **60th**  
**Velid Imamović** (Bosnia and Herzegovina)  
**Antonín Plachý** (Czech Republic)  
**Duygu Yaşar** (Turkey)

### 18 FRIDAY

**Tibor Nyilasi** (Hungary)  
**Mark Boetekees** (Netherlands)

### 27 SUNDAY

**Krister Malmsten** (Sweden)  
**Thomas Cayol** (France)

### 8 FRIDAY

**Johan van Kouterik** (Netherlands)  
**Mike Appleby** (England)

### 17 SUNDAY

**Terje Svendsen** (Norway)  
**Antonio Dario** (Italy)  
**Róbert Barczy** (Hungary)  
**Gudrun Inga Sivertsen** (Iceland)

### 26 TUESDAY

**Josep Garcia** (Andorra)  
**Per Eliasson** (Sweden)  
**Ghenadie Scurtul** (Moldova)

### 9 SATURDAY

**Fino Fini** (Italy)  
**Andreu Camps i Povill** (Spain)  
**Daniilo Filacchione** (Italy)

### 18 MONDAY

**Patrick Kelly** (Republic of Ireland) **70th**  
**Juan Luis Larrea Sarobe** (Spain)  
**Vasily Melnychuk** (Ukraine)  
**Jordi Pascual** (Andorra)  
**Petro Ivanov** (Ukraine)

### 27 WEDNESDAY

**Egidius Braun** (Germany)  
**Enrique Cerezo Torres** (Spain)  
**Allan Lind Hansen** (Denmark) **70th**  
**Peter Lundström** (Finland)

## JANUARY

### Competition

#### 29 January – 3 February

European qualifying competition for the Futsal World Cup: preliminary round

## FEBRUARY

### Meetings

**6 February, Rome**  
 Executive Committee

**7 February, Rome**  
 43rd Ordinary UEFA Congress

**22 February, Nyon**  
 UEFA Europa League: draw for the round of 16

UEFA Youth League: draws for the round of 16, quarter-finals and semi-finals

2019–21 European Women's Championship: group stage draw

### Competitions

**12/13 and 19/20 February**  
 UEFA Champions League: round of 16 (first legs)

**14 February**  
 UEFA Europa League: round of 32 (first legs)

**19/20 February**  
 UEFA Youth League: play-offs

**21 February**  
 UEFA Europa League: round of 32 (return legs)

**21–26 February**  
 European Under-19 Futsal Championship: preliminary round



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