



UEFA Women's Football Development Programme Free-Kicks

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

Women's Football Development Programme & Free-Kicks

The growth and development of women's football is a leading priority for UEFA.

In 2010, the European governing body launched its highly successful Women's Football Development Programme (WFDP) and funded an extensive and widespread series of projects across Europe to drive growth and sustainability in the women's game. The initial aim was to provide opportunities within communities for all girls and women who wanted to play football; but the European football family has come much further than that.

Women's football is now thriving in Europe. All of UEFA's 54 member associations are part of the WFDP and using the development funding to its full potential. Tangible differences can be seen not only in the basic number of girls and women playing, but also in the number of female match officials on the pitch and women in the boardroom.

The WFDP has catered to the needs of the individual associations, carefully tailoring development projects to make maximum progress with the resources available in the existing environment. For example, there have been many grassroots projects encouraging young girls to play football. Other national associations have focused on youth competitions or have introduced leagues at grassroots and elite level. For countries where fewer girls and women play football, public relations and communications campaigns have been crucial to changing perceptions and promoting integration.

WFDP funding is provided based on the strategic process outlined below.

In addition to funding projects, the WFDP is now offering UEFA member associations a series of 'Free-Kicks' – knowledge-sharing schemes, practical courses and advisory programmes – in six key areas.



01

Off-field development

GOAL: To provide guidance and best practice experience to improve the existing development strategies for women's football within the national associations.

Women's football consultancy and expertise appointments are based on requests submitted and needs identified by the national associations. Three focal points have been defined for development consultancy and must be considered before a consultant is appointed. Support is, however, tailored to the needs of each individual national association.

- **Women's football development planning for a global strategy**
 - Strategic consultancy helps the national associations develop a global long-term plan for all key domains of the women's game, including grassroots, elite development, promotion and coaching.
- **Women's football club and league development**
 - Club and league consultancy focuses on the critical areas needed to foster the growth and sporting quality of women's football by providing expert advice on competition formatting, league structures and club licensing.
- **Women's grassroots development**
 - Grassroots consultancy focuses on the provision of a strategy to optimise development at the base of the women's football pyramid, building on the existing UEFA Grassroots Charter.

When a national association is accepted for Free-Kick 1, it enters into a commitment with UEFA and embarks on the following process:

1. The national association's general secretary and head of the women's football department sign an agreement detailing the focal point for women's football development consultancy.
2. UEFA appoints a consultant, who carries out a site visit to the national association. During this visit, the national association is required to make available the key staff members that will be involved in implementing and following up on the project. The general secretary is required to attend at least some of the meetings on-site.
3. The UEFA consultant then drafts a site visit report to be shared with the national association, including key recommendations based on the outcomes of site visit meetings and discussions, and short, medium and long-term goals.
4. A follow-up site visit takes place six months later to monitor progress. At this site visit, the national association presents a progress report based on the key recommendations.
5. The UEFA consultant and the national association submit a joint final report 12 months after the initial site visit. The consultant may return for a third site visit if required.



GUIDANCE AND BEST PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

02

On-field development

GOAL: To provide national associations with technical support specific to women's football.

UEFA can provide technical experts with UEFA Pro licences to support and guide national associations in the improvement of their high-performance programmes for female players. The following are offered to national associations' technical departments in the form of one-on-one consultancies or as classroom sessions with guest speakers:

- Elite youth player pathway programmes to optimise opportunities for talented players in the country
- Expertise and best practice experience in setting up academies at national or regional level
- Medical and physical expertise on differences in training regimes for men and women
- Specific sessions requested by the association (e.g. grassroots coaching, national C diploma coach development and recruitment)

When a national association is accepted for Free-Kick 2, it enters into a commitment with UEFA and embarks on the following process:

1. The national association's general secretary and head of the women's football department sign an agreement detailing the focal point for women's football development consultancy.
2. UEFA appoints a consultant, who carries out a site visit to the national association. During this visit, the national association is required to make available the key staff members that will be involved in implementing and following up on the project. The technical director is required to attend at least some of the meetings on-site.
3. The UEFA consultant, then drafts a site visit report to be shared with the national association. Depending on the nature of the visit, this report may feature key recommendations based on the outcomes of site visit meetings and discussions.
4. UEFA may request a progress report and the consultant may return for a follow-up visit as required.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT SPECIFIC TO WOMEN'S FOOTBALL



03

National association exchanges



GOAL: To provide an opportunity for associations that wish to work together to share knowledge and gain first-hand experience of women's football structures and activities from one another.

National association exchanges are based on a common desire for two associations to learn from and support each other on women's football matters, with each visiting the other. National associations inform UEFA of their focal points for women's football and are then paired up to exchange ideas and experience.

Pairs of national associations can decide between themselves on the programme and topics of their exchange. However, areas recommended to be covered include:

- the structure of each national association and the position of women's football within this structure;
- grassroots women's football;
- league structures and clubs;
- elite development;
- promotion;
- coaching.

When a national association is for Free-Kick 3, it enters into a commitment with UEFA and another national association, with which it embarks on the following process:

1. The two national associations' general secretaries and heads of their women's football departments draft an agreement explaining the area(s) of women's football on which the exchange is to take place.
2. Each association organises an informative, well-structured and constructive two-day session to provide information to the other and discuss the points raised.
3. The associations submit two joint reports to UEFA, one after each of the exchange sessions.

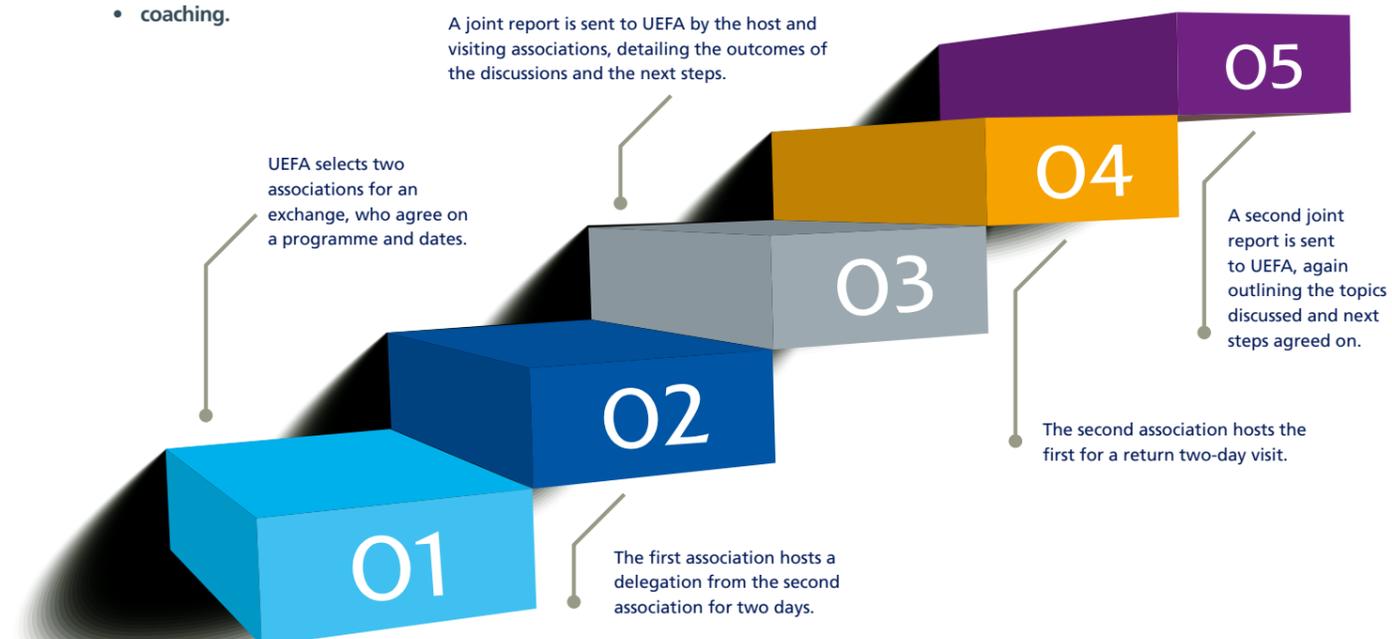
A joint report is sent to UEFA by the host and visiting associations, detailing the outcomes of the discussions and the next steps.

UEFA selects two associations for an exchange, who agree on a programme and dates.

The first association hosts a delegation from the second association for two days.

The second association hosts the first for a return two-day visit.

A second joint report is sent to UEFA, again outlining the topics discussed and next steps agreed on.



Promotion

GOAL: To support national associations in their promotion of women's football at all levels.

Support in the promotion of women's football is based on requests submitted and needs identified by the national associations. UEFA can guide and provide opportunities for national associations in their promotional activities, from grassroots projects to those involving domestic leagues and national teams. Three focal points have been defined for promotional support consultancy.

- **UEFA women's football development ambassadors**
 - UEFA ambassadors visit tournaments, camps, grassroots days and other events.
 - Such ambassador visits should be publicised via all appropriate national association media channels.

- **Women's football marketing expertise**

- Expertise is available to help national associations develop long-term marketing plans for women's football. These may be for their flagship women's competitions, women's national teams or women's football as a whole.
- Consultancy services focus on four critical areas – brand, promotion, the role of stakeholders and return on investment.

- **Communications and media support**

- UEFA can provide specific women's football communications advice and knowledge-sharing opportunities.
- UEFA can also promote women's football events, tournaments and news using text, photo and video on its websites (UEFA.com and UEFA.org) and social media channels and in printed publications.

When a national association is accepted for Free-Kick 4, it enters into a commitment with UEFA and embarks on the following process:

1. The national association's general secretary and head of the marketing department draft an agreement outlining the commitment required from both UEFA and the association.
2. The association submits regular follow-up reports to UEFA indicating key outcomes, lessons learned and next steps.

BOOSTING WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

Laura Georges

French international and UEFA women's football development ambassador

05



Coaching

GOAL: To increase the number of UEFA-qualified coaches.

UEFA has two schemes designed to help national associations attract and support more women coaches.

- A scholarship scheme to support women coaches seeking to obtain the UEFA A or UEFA Pro diplomas (available from January 2016).
- The UEFA B diploma course, which can take one of two forms:
 - A UEFA instructor is appointed to lead part of the UEFA B diploma course during a women's development tournament (40 hours out of the 120 hours necessary to obtain the UEFA B diploma).
 - Funding is provided to cover some of the costs of a UEFA B diploma course organised by the national association.

When a national association is accepted for Free-Kick 5, it enters into a commitment with UEFA and embarks on the following process:

1. The national association's technical director or coach education director drafts a letter outlining the coaching services requested.
2. UEFA sends the association the guidelines for either the UEFA B diploma course or the scholarship scheme, depending on which of the two best provides the services requested.
3. UEFA may request a progress report or conduct a follow-up visit as required.

Refereeing

GOAL: To encourage talented women referees to progress further.

UEFA can help national associations to develop female referees in three key ways:

- UEFA referee instructors can give lectures or lead workshops on specific refereeing topics.
- UEFA referee instructors can hold advancement courses on women's refereeing once talented referees have been identified within the regions of a national association.
- Refereeing experts can assist national associations with the implementation of global development and recruitment plans for women's refereeing.

When a national association is accepted for Free-Kick 6, it enters into a commitment with UEFA and embarks on the following process:

1. The head of the national association's refereeing department drafts a letter outlining the refereeing services requested. UEFA sends the association a viable proposal based on the request.
2. UEFA may request a progress report or conduct a follow-up visit as required.

ADVANCING
WOMEN REFEREES





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