



UEFA GROW

# WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE



# UEFA'S WOMEN'S FOOTBALL STRATEGY 2019-24

**Vision:** A celebrated sport globally, where every women and girl can find a safe place to play.

**Mission:** To champion, innovate and accelerate women's football for all!

## Introduction

Women's football offers our game the most potential for growth. It is our priority at UEFA to help each one of you maximise the opportunities for its development.

UEFA GROW image research carried out in collaboration with a leading market research provider found that increased awareness and interest in women's football had a direct and positive impact on the image of the national association as a whole.

Whether you have a dedicated women's football marketing team or are a communications manager looking to start promoting the women's game, this communications guide will provide you with creative ideas and practical tips to help you achieve your goals.

Designed as a reference document for busy professionals, it enables you to **find the support and creativity you need to produce effective communication campaigns.**



# CONTENTS

## **Section A**

Getting started

## **Section B**

Putting together your women's football communications plans

## **Section C**

Identifying your communication assets

## **Section D**

Let's get creative/key messages

## **Section E**

Campaign ideas and how to use this guide (explanation of the 3 stages)

### **Campaign ideas**

Women's national/elite team promotion

Women's football development and participation

Women in football

## **Section F**

Measuring and evaluating

Next Steps

Appendices



# GETTING STARTED

## SECTION A

**The development and promotion of women's football should form part of every national association's strategic plan.**

This business tool should in turn be supported by a communications strategy to help promote your NAs work which in turn includes strategic objectives related to women's football that aim to raise its profile.

While the women's football communications strategy sets out the top-line communications objectives for the organisation, separate communications plans linked to specific objectives are practical tools essential for devising women's football campaigns that will produce measurable results.



# SECTION B

## PUTTING TOGETHER YOUR WOMEN'S FOOTBALL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



Here are some quick tips to structure your communications plan:

- **Identify your strategic communication objectives:** These can range from increasing participation to changing the perception of women's football. Set out a maximum of three objectives per plan and keep them linked to the organisation's overall objectives. See appendix for more information on this.
- **Define a strategic approach:** Once the objectives have been set, you need to identify how you are going to achieve them, whether by working with third-party opinion-formers such as the media and influencers or by developing an ambassador programme to promote positive messages. The activation themes highlighted later in the document will help you choose the strategic approach most relevant to your objectives. Choose between three and five strategic approaches per plan.
- **Profile your target audience:** Are you looking to educate your existing audience or target a new female segment? Research who you want to target and tailor your campaign to reach them.
- **Develop your key messages:** These are the things you want your audience to hear and remember. Keep them short and specific, and choose three to five key messages that are relevant to your plan's objectives and timelines. We have put together six generic key messages for you to choose from later in the document but remember that it is important to regularly review them to ensure they are still relevant and reflect your objectives.
- **Choose your tactics:** Do you want to change operational practices in relation to your women's national/elite team coverage or introduce campaign-led communications for your development programmes? Choose between three and five activation themes as part of your communications plan. You can find a number of practical campaigns to inspire you in the Campaign ideas section of this document.
- **Select communication channels:** Allocate the appropriate communication channel to the activity – do you want to start publicising your messages on Facebook or have a women's national/elite team player take over your Instagram account? Maximise your impact by using the right tool to activate your campaign. We have allocated communication channels to each proposed campaign to help you make your choices.
- **Create a style guide:** Before starting out, you should put together a style guide. This is a document that provides guidelines for the way your brand should be presented both visually and editorially. It ensures that all contributors produce content in a clear and cohesive way and ensures brand consistency with everything from design to photography and writing. See appendix for more information on this.
- **Devise a timeline:** Create a realistic timeline, setting out your tasks, who is responsible for what and achievable deadlines.
- **Establish KPIs to measure success:** In order to measure and assess the success of your strategic communications campaign, we suggest establishing two types of key criteria:
  - activity-based criteria: these will help you assess whether you have successfully delivered all the key actions outlined in your communications plan
  - specific outcome-based criteria: success will be measured against the campaign's ability to deliver a set of specific, pre-determined outcomes (e.g. percentage increases in interest levels/TV viewing figures/social media followers, etc.)
- **Measure impact:** Monitoring and evaluation strengthen the impact of your campaign, showing you whether you are on track and being effective, which can influence the way you communicate going forward. We suggest simple tools in the Measuring and evaluating section of this document that can support both the delivery of your communications plan and that of your association's strategic plan.

# SECTION C

## IDENTIFYING YOUR COMMUNICATION ASSETS

As a UEFA member association, you have access to communication assets that will help you build your narrative and deliver it to your audience. These include:

- match photography and video footage (current and archive), and the UEFA digital library;
- national team/elite players and technical staff (interviews/personal social reach);
- statistics (match and player);
- branded templates and marketing assets (national association/UEFA).

Communication channels with an engaged audience are already in place. Each one should be used to convey your message:

- national association website;
- national association social media channels (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn);
- media relations (PR/media database).



# LET'S GET CREATIVE



# SECTION D

## KEY MESSAGES

Key messages are a crucial component of any communications activity and can be used on all your channels. They don't need to be used word-for-word but form the basis of what you say, be it through powerful imagery or in an interview. Remember: the more your audience hears, reads or is immersed in your key messages, the stronger the impact of your campaign.



**We have devised six women's football key messages that you can use in your communications activity:**

Women's football is for everyone, regardless of ability, age or background

**Women's football is skilful, dynamic and entertaining**

Our national/elite team players inspire and empower the next generation of women and girls to take up the sport

**Women's football is about fun, friendship and fitness**

Women's football has a positive social impact on women and girls

**Women's football is open and accessible.**

# CAMPAIGN IDEAS



# SECTION E

As each association is at a different stage of promoting women's football and communicating with a female audience, we have split our campaign ideas into three stages, outlined to the right. You can use the ideas most suited to your current level of activity.



Limited previous women's football communication activities



Basic women's football communication activities



Established women's football communication activities

# WOMEN'S NATIONAL/ELITE TEAM PROMOTION

Women's national/elite team players are uniquely positioned to positively influence the game at all levels, from elite competitions to grassroots. Friendly and accessible, they can act as vehicles to convey inspirational messages linked to women's football.

## WOMEN'S NATIONAL/ELITE TEAM NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Stage 1

News announcements concerning your women's national/elite team are a necessity and can be made more engaging by creating stories around routine events such as squad announcements, matchdays and team training. Follow this step-by-step guide to make the most out of what you have:

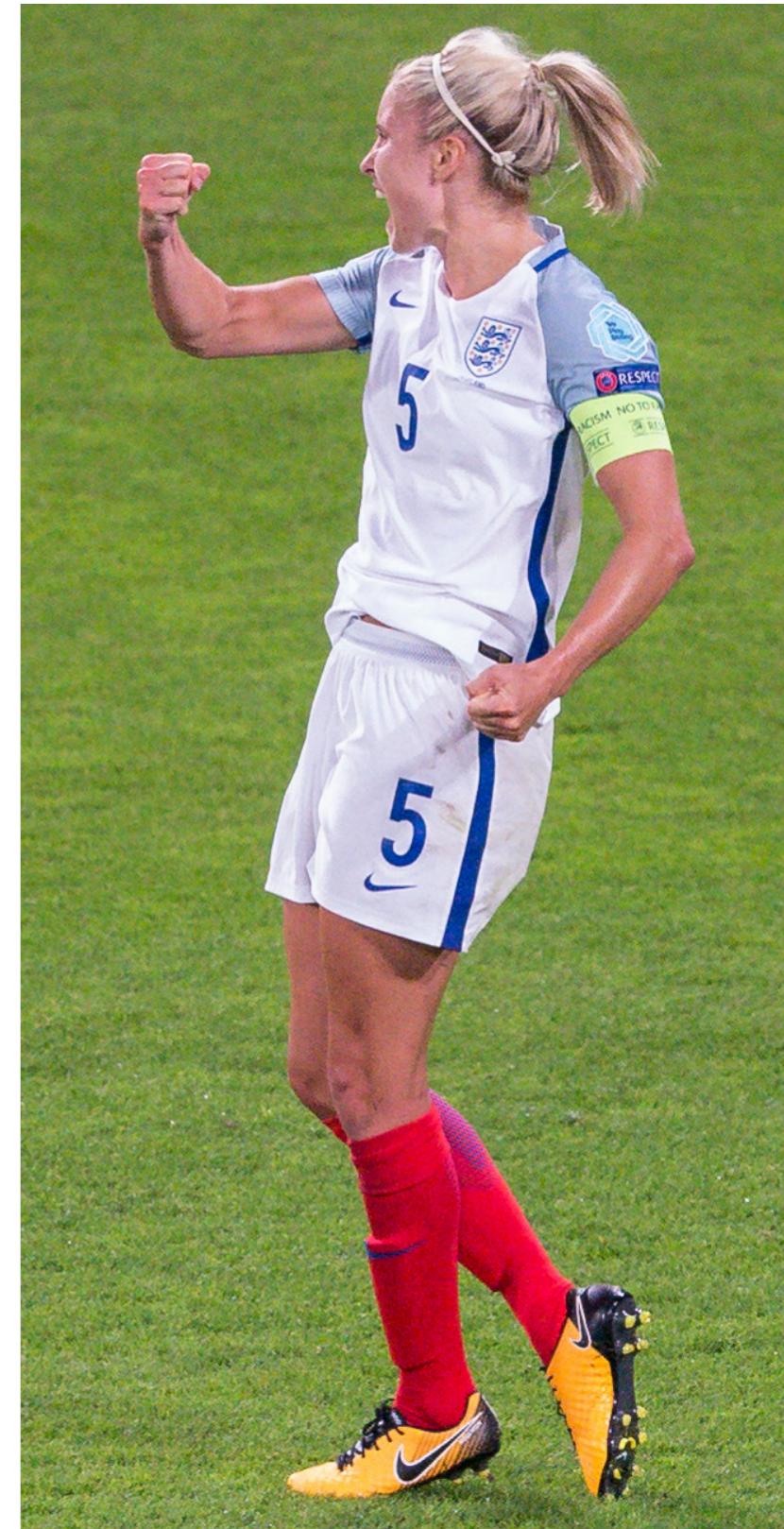
- **Dedicated webpage:** The women's national/elite team should have a dedicated page on the association website that includes news, interviews, behind-the-scenes photography and factual information.
- **Player profiling:** Introduce your players to your audience online. This can be done through a squad tab on your website that gives background information on each player or content for individual posts on your social media channels (photography and video).
- **Squad announcements:**
- Announce your squad by issuing a press release to your media and influencer database. The announcement should include a quote from the team coach.

- Write a news story for the website that can be supported by social media posts that direct your audience to it through a dedicated link.
- Design a graphic representation of your squad for your social media channels as an engaging way to present the news.
- If your squad announcement takes place in a press conference setting, leverage the assets you have available to make it as engaging as possible, e.g. use social media to maximise its impact, build up to it with player profiling and interviews with the coach, live-stream the press conference and answer questions on Twitter and Facebook.
- **Matchdays:** Use social media to give fans a unique matchday experience. Everyone wants to feel the tension on the bus to the game and see the dressing room set-up, the players coming out of the tunnel and the post-match reactions of everyone involved.
- **Behind the scenes:** A unique asset of women's football is the possibility for fans to see what it is like to be a national/elite team player. Show your fans how the players prepare physically and mentally, what they do in their spare time and how they celebrate wins and manage defeats. You can do this by producing content that you post on your social media channels or publish as an image gallery on your website.

### Case study: [the Lionesses](#)

- **Audience:** fans, football family

SHOW YOUR FANS HOW THE PLAYERS PREPARE PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY.



## PLAYER PROFILING

### Stage 2

**The idea:** Young female athletes look for role models because a figure that shares their goals is inspiring and powerful. As we look to grow participation, raising the profile of women's national/elite team players as inspirational figures becomes a communications priority.

**Why do it?** Women's football offers unrivalled access to the game – players tend to be committed to growing its participation, increasing match attendances and improving its reputation, and are subsequently more open to being actively involved in promoting it.

- **Who do I choose?** Choosing the right players to profile is a key element of this form of communication. They should:
  - understand the role of digital marketing, social media and media relations;
  - appreciate the importance of openness and authenticity;
  - have a high level of professionalism – they are representing you!
  - have a natural presence and display leadership qualities;
  - have a well-established online presence and a highly engaged network;
  - have a passion for building and growing relationships;
  - ideally, have strong written and spoken communication skills.

**Young female athletes look for role models because a figure that shares their goals is inspiring and powerful.**

### HOW DO I ACTIVATE?

- **Select five key players** (e.g. captain, goalkeeper, defender, midfielder and striker).
- **Host a workshop** to present your communications plan, informing the players of your objectives, key messages and expectations. The players need to feel engaged, valued and comfortable with what is asked of them.
- **Offer them media training** and practical support with their personal use of social media.
- **National association social media channels:** Ensure player profiling is part of your monthly social media content calendar. Entries can include:
  - behind-the-scenes videos at training/pre- and post-match;
  - personal player profiling, e.g. The Girl behind the Gloves for the goalkeeper, asking her how she became a goalkeeper, how it feels to play for her country, how she prepares mentally for a game, what she does in her spare time, etc.;
  - official announcements concerning matches, competitions, etc.
- **Amplify the message:** Using your social currency to form effective social partnerships is an effective way to strengthen your message and extend your reach. Examples include partner endorsements, online media partnerships and amplification through partner social media channels.

#### Case studies:

[FC Barcelona Women and Stanley Black & Decker](#)

[Together #WePlayStrong 'Press Play'](#)

**Player social media channels:** Authentic and engaging, players should include football content that is aligned to the association's official key messages, showing, for example, that women's football is skilful, and that playing with your team-mates is fun and brings benefits to girls and women alike, e.g. [Eugenie Le Sommer - Olympique](#)

[Lyonnais, Verena Aschauer - FFC Frankfurt, Mandy Islacker - Bayern Munich](#)

- **Digital marketing and communications:** Campaign-led marketing is a great way for national associations and players to work together.
- UEFA member associations have access to [Together #WePlayStrong](#) assets to help them launch a campaign to increase player participation.



- Smaller campaigns such as 'Why Do I Play?', 'What's on my Playlist?', 'Keepy uppy/crossbar challenge', etc. are also good ways of engaging with your audience.
- Consider asking a player to write a blog for the women's page of the website. The content can then be shared across social media channels to increase reach.
- **Media relations:** Traditional media relations remains an important component of any communications activity and acts as a vehicle to get your women's national/elite team players out of the sports pages and in front of a new audience. England captain Steph Houghton has been interviewed in a [leading lifestyle publication](#) about being a woman in leadership, in a [national daily](#) newspaper about her diet and fitness regime and in the [money](#) pages of a leading business newspaper.
- **Community events:** Nothing beats bringing players out into the community, whether at grassroots events to inspire players or in schools to educate children. All these activities can then be documented across digital, social and traditional media, thereby adding to an already rich narrative.
- **Audience:** fans, players, girls and women

## WORKING WITH SPONSORS

### Stage 2

**The idea:** Sponsorship, as part of an organisation's commercial strategy, is key to the development of women's football. Brand perceptions are shifting and national associations should make the most of this opportunity to increase revenues and meet the need for young girls to be active. Women's football provides interesting content for sponsors. Finding partners who do not see women's football as an 'add-on' but as an opportunity in its own right is the first step towards making women's football a stand-alone proposition, even as part of a grouped sponsorship package.

**Why do it?** Whether your sponsors are unbundled or not, educating and informing your partners about the benefits of being involved in women's football is a priority.

### HOW DO WE DO IT?

- Organise a sponsor workshop and present shared values, key messages and creative activation ideas (Facebook streaming of matches/live player commentaries, 'kids go free', etc.).
- Introduce players to sponsors as potential brand ambassadors in order to showcase the rich storytelling, accessibility and openness of the game.
- Invite sponsors and their families to matches to showcase the players' on-pitch skills.
- Prepare compelling data that demonstrates the growth of the game (e.g. the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup reached record peaks of 750 million viewers throughout the tournament period), the benefits of reaching out to a new audience (e.g. 87% of consumer purchasing decisions are made by women) and plans for the development of the game in your association.

### Case studies:

- Mastercard – [UEFA Women's Champions League final activation](#)
- SSE – [Scottish FA and the SSE-sponsored girls' soccer centres](#)
- Eniola Aluko – [Under Armour](#)
- **Audience:** commercial partners



**Nothing beats bringing players out into the community, whether at grassroots events to inspire players or in schools to educate children.**

## CREATING A BRAND AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL

### Stage 3

**The idea:** As role models and spokespeople for the women's game, women's national/elite team players need to be connected to their audience. Creating a brand gives them a sense of identity and ensures they communicate shared values and narratives in a unified voice. A brand also creates an emotional bond with fans by giving them something concrete to own and support.

### HOW TO DO IT

- **Branding** your women's national/elite team is about more than simply giving them a logo: it involves defining who they are, what they stand for and how they will interact with their audience.
- **Branding** the women's national/elite team should be a collaborative project involving the technical, marketing and communications departments.
- **The manager/coach** can advise on the team's vision and values.
- **Marketing staff** should then take a lead on the following:
  - positioning and personality
  - creation of a visual identity
  - production of toolkits and brand assets
  - coordination with commercial and broadcast partners

\*A women's national/elite team brand can be created as part of an overarching review of your brand portfolio. Please email [Manuel.Ruess@uefa.ch](mailto:Manuel.Ruess@uefa.ch) for more information on UEFA GROW's brand pillar, which offers assistance on rebranding projects.

- **The communications team** should be responsible for devising the supporting communications plan, which would include the following elements:
  - creating the narrative behind the rebrand

# A clear brand story that conveys the brand values and the uniqueness of Liechtenstein as a nation.



uniqueness of Liechtenstein as a nation. As part of this rebranding process, the LFV also launched a dedicated visual identity for women's football.

**Audience:** fans, football family, general public, female audience



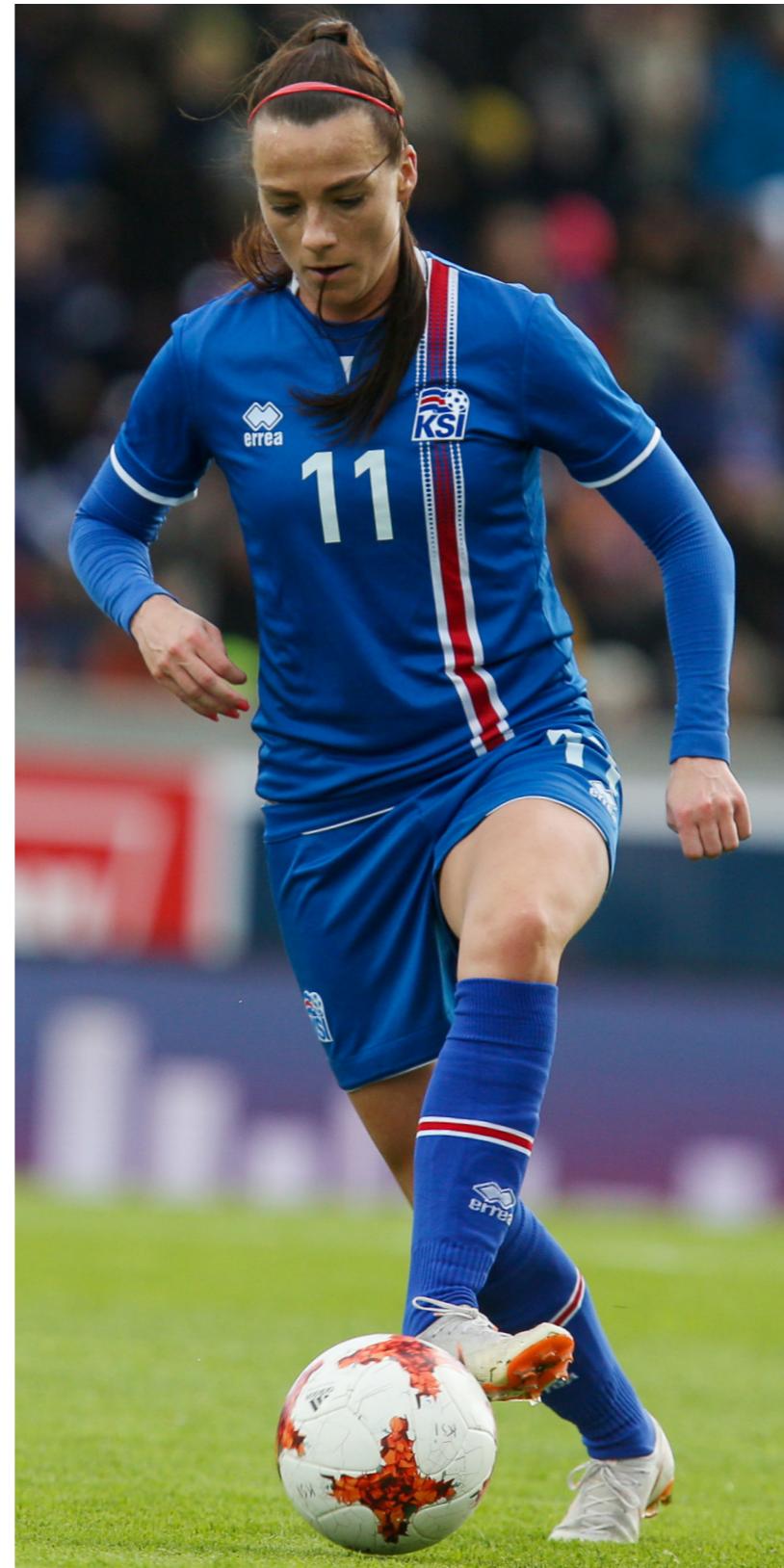
## CROSS-PROMOTION WITH THE MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM

### Stages 1, 2 and 3

- **Why do it?** Women's football needs support to grow its perception, popularity and reach. Using communication platforms and techniques that have previously been used exclusively for the men's national team will act as a catalyst.
- **How can we do it?** Demonstrating that women's football is as much a priority as men's and that their similarities outweigh their differences should remain at the heart of all communication.

### HOW CAN WE ACTIVATE THIS?

- **Combine team activities**
- Endorsing your women's national/elite team by giving them the same experiences and positioning them alongside your men's national team will help to change perceptions and build awareness.
- The [Football Association of Iceland](#) (KSI) partnered with sports brand Erreà in 2016 to produce a kit to be worn by all of its national teams. With the men's team qualifying for UEFA EURO 2016 in France and the women's team for UEFA Women's EURO 2017 in The Netherlands, the national team kits were subject to unprecedented international exposure. In 2018, the KSI relaunched the kit with a view of it being worn by all of its national teams until 2020.
- FC Barcelona first started cross-promoting its teams in 2016, when they posed together for their annual [calendar](#). In summer 2018, they toured and trained in the US together, a first for any football club.
- Everton FC became the first English professional club to use its women's team to front a [kit launch](#).
- Manchester United FC sponsors [Kohler](#) have matching shirt sleeve branding rights for both the men's and women's teams.



- **Merge your social media accounts:** In January 2018, Manchester City FC launched their Same City, Same Passion campaign to critical acclaim. They kick-started it with the release of a [video](#) on social media that highlighted football's unchanging foundations – skill, shared experiences and passion. They then merged their social media accounts to provide supporters with 24/7 access to all club news and exclusive behind-the-scenes content in one place. Twitter accounts remained separate for matchday updates, ensuring fans never missed a minute. As a result, Manchester City FC's fans are engaging with women's football without having made a conscious choice to do so.
- **Use players together:** When Germany [presented its bid](#) to host UEFA EURO 2024, its campaign involved both male and female ambassadors. Former men's international Philipp Lahm and women's international Célia Šašić were integral from start to finish.
- Using male and female players together for important announcements, whether for men's or women's football, shows the games are integrated and equal priorities for the association.
- Audience: fans, football community, women and girls



# WOMEN'S FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION

**Women's football development exists in many forms. Whether at grassroots, amateur, domestic league, cup competition or women's national/elite team level, it provides you with rich content to inspire and motivate girls and women to be part of the game.**

## USING YOUR CALENDAR AS A HOOK FOR COMMUNICATIONS

### Stage 1

**The idea:** there are a number of days in the calendar that can be used to focus communication on women's football. Although dates can vary from country to country, they can be used as an opportunity to reflect on the progress made, to call for change and to celebrate the achievements of both the women's game and women in football. Examples include:

- International Women's Day – 8 March
- Mother's Day – March and May
- World/National Daughter's Day – September
- UEFA Grassroots Week – September

## HOW CAN WE ACTIVATE THIS?

- **Digital communications takeover:** Flood your channels with women's football content for the day: your website's homepage could showcase sports news, development stories and insightful interviews, your Instagram account could be taken over by your star player and your YouTube channel could show the best goals and women's national/elite team achievements throughout the day.

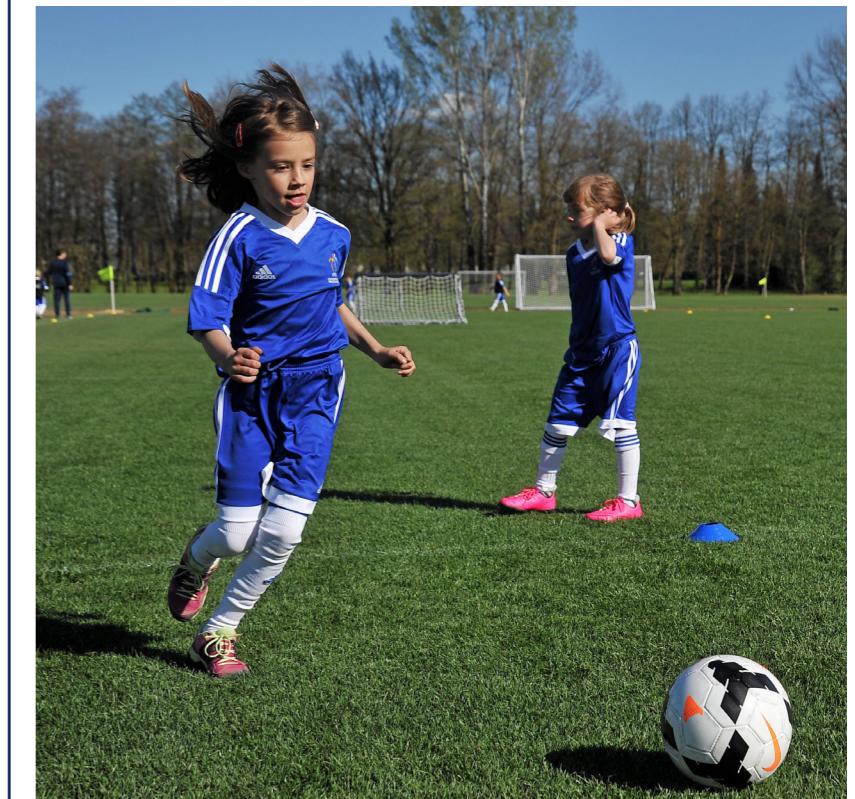
- **Organise a tournament:** Organise an internal tournament for female staff to raise awareness of the women's game among association staff.
- **Girls' football festivals:** Encourage leagues and clubs to host girls' football festivals across the country to create powerful development messages and actively encourage girls to participate.
- **Media relations:** Proactively generate media coverage by setting up interviews with your president/general secretary to talk about women's football development and the importance of the game for your association.
- **Ambassador activation:** Activate your male and female ambassadors to post messages endorsing women's football using official hashtags, e.g. #IWD, #Internationalwomensday, #WomensDay #PressforProgress, #MothersDay, #HappyMothersDay, #NationalDaughtersDay, #Daughters, #UEFAgrassroots.
- **Workshop:** Host a workshop for clubs and help them write their own communications plans, offer practical support, answer questions and create a women's football network to reinforce the movement and messaging across the board.
- **Showcase clubs:** Use your own platforms to showcase stories and content from clubs across the country. Clubs can submit content and ideas or invite the media team to gather content.
- **Groups:** Set up a closed Facebook group or a WhatsApp group where you can introduce activation ideas (e.g. International Women's Day/competitions), offer support and create a conversation to promote the game together.
- Audience: clubs, leagues, families, fans, local residents

Video for International Women's Day 2018 from FC Nordsjælland in Denmark - [We Love Women's Football](#)

## CLUB COLLABORATION

### Stage 1

- **The idea:** For communications activities to translate into tangible participation results, they need to involve stakeholders who actively recruit new players.
- **Why do it?** Clubs need support with their own communications activities at local level to target potential players and fans and to retain engagement with those already involved.
- **How can we help?** With limited resources and time, communications are often bottom of the priority list. National associations can support clubs in the following way:
- **Toolkit:** Produce a practical guide to help clubs communicate effectively on limited budgets. This should include social, digital and traditional media activities.



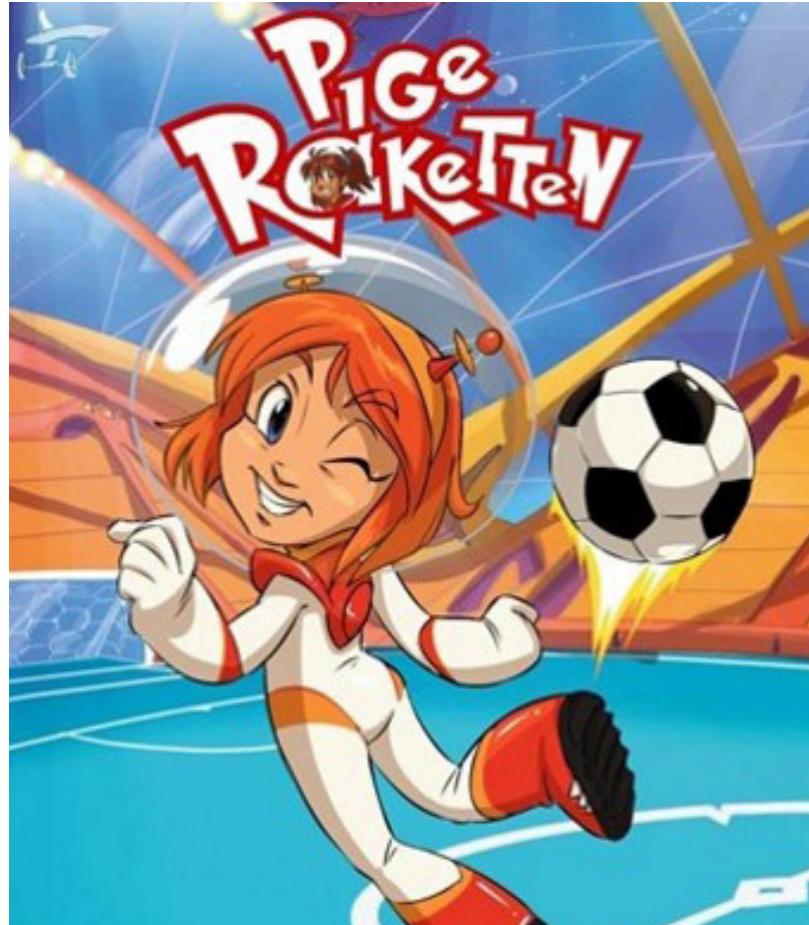
## HOST A GIRLS' PARTICIPATION EVENT

### Stage 1

- **The idea:** Grassroots events specifically for girls not only help to increase participation but are a great way of promoting the game and changing its image.
- **Why do it?** From a communications perspective, these events demonstrate that you are committed to the development of women's football and enable you to create engaging content that raises awareness and encourages action.

### HOW TO DO IT:

- **Be creative:** Making girls' grassroots events a bit different will generate interest not only from potential participants but from the media too.



**Holding the same event in multiple cities** amplifies the promotional message.

**The Danish Football Association's** Girl Rocket events, aimed at increasing the participation of girls between the ages of 5 and 11, were designed to integrate storytelling into football culture. Girls fly through space, visit planets and complete rocket cards while being guided by astronauts. These events generate unique and visually appealing content that supports the promotion of women's football.

- **Be socially inclusive:** **The Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan** hosted a number of 3x3 tournaments that saw participation increase by a third thanks to each team having at least one non-registered player. A number of players invited from local orphanages were given the opportunity to take part in the activities that included 10-minute matches, penalty shoot-outs and football tennis. CSR activities are an important component of a national association's activity and media are always keen to see how these are being implemented on the ground.
- **Multiple cities:** The Football Association of Slovenia hosts three festival days in Koper, Kranj and Lendava. Designed to promote the women's game, the events involve small-sided games, drills, skills and mentoring by women's national team players. Holding the same event in multiple cities amplifies the promotional message.



- **Influencer event:** Collaborating with singer, influencer and #WePlayStrong ambassador Iuliana Beregoi on a [Girls Camp Football Festival](#) aimed at teenage girls saw the Football Association of Moldova welcome close to 1,000 participants for a fun-filled day of football activities that aimed to change perceptions, increase participation and promote a healthy lifestyle.
- All grassroots activities should be promoted using standard communication tactics, including:
  - press release and media interviews at the time of the announcement;
  - news story on the association website;
  - social media promotion and live reporting.
- Audience: football community, parents

## ANNUAL MEDIA CUP

### Stage 2

- **The idea:** Getting sports journalists to endorse women's football and dispel the myths associated with it is an important step in changing the perception of the game.
- **Why do it?** Sports journalists will have had more access to women's football than ever before, but for them to really understand it, they need to play it. Setting up an annual media cup will enable you to:
  - connect with key sports journalists and deliver your messages/news;
  - showcase the skills and talent of female players;
  - generate publicity in a fun and engaging manner.

### HOW TO DO IT:

- Select a team made up of current or retired women's national team players (and include a member of the administration if possible).
- Choose a female coach for the media team.
- Select a female referee and assistant referees.
- Select girls as mascots for the opening ceremony.
- Invite photographers and broadcasters to cover the event.
- Ensure your president and general secretary are present to maximise the association's endorsement.
- After the game, take the opportunity to present your development projects and answer any questions from journalists.
- Document the event on social media channels.
- Audience: journalists, sports fans, women's football fans

## WORKING WITH INFLUENCERS

### Stage 2

- **The idea:** Influencer marketing has now become mainstream and is a valuable way for organisations to distribute their content and spread awareness. It shapes followers' opinions and decisions by representing the organisation through authentic content.

### HOW TO DO IT:

- Carefully select influencers who share the same brand values. For example, [Rita Ora teamed up with UEFA's Together #WePlayStrong](#) campaign to support its messaging on how women's football can help build confidence and friendships.
- Choose influencers who have high engagement levels with your key target audience. [The English FA worked with international girl band Little Mix](#) on a campaign to support England's Lionesses at UEFA Women's EURO 2017 and, through this unique partnership, created a viral movement that engaged with young girls.
- The influencer you choose will depend on the audience segment you are looking to target. While it is clear that choosing female icons from popular culture will influence teenage girls, male and female influencers from the football community can also be effective:

[Deyna Castellanos](#) (Instagram, 1.2m followers) is a university student and future journalist. She promoted women's football at the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia – audience: youth, female

[Lisa Zimouche](#) (Instagram, 1.7m followers) is a French freestyler and Puma ambassador who is bringing women's football into the mainstream – audience: youth

[Alan Shearer](#) (Instagram/Twitter, 1m followers) backed UEFA's #ItAllStartsHere campaign to motivate fathers to encourage their daughters to play football – audience: male

CAREFULLY SELECT INFLUENCERS WHO SHARE THE SAME BRAND VALUES.

- Micro-influencers, with a social media audience of between 10,000 and 500,000, are niche and highly connected, making them an effective resource for promoting women's football. Here are three examples:

**Laure Bouleau** (YouTube 1.7m and Instagram, 450,000 followers), former France national team player turned TV presenter, taking the audience behind the scenes

**Naomi Accardi** (Instagram, 11,400 followers) is a freelance writer for Season zine who empowers women in football by giving them a voice – audience: male and female

**Alex Scott** (Instagram/Twitter, 400,000 followers), former England national team player and TV presenter, is bringing women's football into the mainstream – audience: male and female

- Work with your influencer on a specific campaign so that you can focus the messaging and measure its impact.
- You need to give your influencer free rein to produce original content, but make sure the terms of the deal are clear and include:
  - number of posts
  - hashtags used
  - photos v video
  - key messages



## WEEKLY/MONTHLY INSTAZINE

### Stage 3

- **The idea:** An Instazine is a small digital magazine that can only be read by scrolling through Instagram on a smartphone. Delivered in nine squares per issue, it features magazine content direct to your feed.
- **Why do it?** If you are not sure about merging your social media feeds, this can be a great way of introducing women's football content in one powerful burst or can be a feature on your dedicated Instagram feed that your audience will look forward to.
- **How to do it:** Just like a lifestyle magazine, your Instazine should include regular features and could be split in the following way:
  - Square 1 -> Front cover: feature story image and headlines
  - Square 2 -> Editor's intro: video introduction from the magazine editor or women's football representative
  - Square 3 -> On the pitch: round-up of grassroots activities from around the association

- Square 4 -> Interview: Q&A with a player, coach, referee, freestyler, etc.
- Square 5 -> Feature story: choose a topic for a piece that can appear across 10 scrolling squares (you can include a corporate message but content should remain fun and engaging. Examples can include: changing perception in women's football, societal benefits of women's football)
- Square 6 -> Skills: demonstrate and teach your audience how to master a skill on the pitch
- Square 7 -> She's my team-mate: engaging storytelling by boys about the girls they play with, which could lead to men endorsing women players
- Square 8 -> My view: submissions from players who can send in photos and videos about their lives as female players
- Square 9 -> Competition: offer your audience a chance to win tickets, match balls/partner activation
- Audience: women



# WOMEN IN FOOTBALL

**Women's football is not reserved for women on the pitch, it also encompasses any women involved in the game at a wider level. A major part of your women's football strategy will focus on helping women to achieve professional success across a wide range of roles. Showing that this is possible will encourage women to become part of the football family and positively impact the national association's reputation.**

## RAISING AWARENESS

### Stage 1

- **The idea:** Raise the profile of the women in your organisation among influential media outlets to show that they are skilled, experienced and respected decision-makers.
- **Why do it?** Positioning women as spokespeople for your organisation is an effective way of challenging perceptions. Whether they are in leadership, technical or administrative positions, they will convey your corporate key messages to an interested audience.
- **How to do it?**
  - Tokenism is an issue that women in football have had to deal with in the past. Your spokesperson should have a genuine role of influence within the organisation.
  - Provide media training for your spokesperson to ensure they are prepared for any difficult questions and comfortable with key messaging.
  - Find a 'hook' for the media, whether it is the announcement of the first woman on the executive committee, the qualification of the women's national team for a major competition or a traditional 'male' role being given to a woman.

- Draft a press release with quotes from the spokesperson and the president, and issue it to key media. Proactively sell the possibility of one-on-one interviews or feature pieces to sports and lifestyle publications.
- Media outlets often have features such as 'The 50 best women in sport'. Ensure you know when these annual articles appear and that women in football are represented.
- Produce content for your website, such as video interviews, Q&As or behind-the-scenes footage that showcases the women in your administration.
- Participate in leadership events that will generate third-party media coverage.
- Ensure women in your administration are visible in the association's day-to-day communications (e.g. quoted in corporate press releases, included in official photographs, present at events).
- Example: [Laura Georges, French Football Federation](#)
- Audience: men (sports), women (lifestyle)



## USING QUOTES

### Stage 1

- **The idea:** Social media platforms are flooded with inspirational quotes that, used correctly, can be a simple and efficient tactic to boost social media engagement.
- **Why do it?** Fans look for content that is informative, positive, hopeful and entertaining, and producing it is a means of fostering positive relationships and integrating women's football into your feed.
- **How to do it?**
  - Choose a day of the week for posting your quote, e.g. #WordyWednesday, #LaCitationDuSamedi, #MondayMotivation, #ThrowbackThursday, #FactFriday.
  - Draft a series of quotes that focus on a variety of areas and assign them to the most relevant women in football, whether the women's national team captain or a grassroots coach. These can include:
    - motivational quotes
    - industry trends
    - leadership issues
    - statistics
    - humour
    - insights
    - player testimonials
    - education/information
  - Ensure the quoted person agrees to its dissemination and work together on maximising engagement.
  - Work with your design team to ensure the quotes are produced on an engaging and easy-to-read background.
  - Audience: existing social media audience

## 'A DAY IN THE LIFE OF'

### Stage 2

- **The idea:** People are fascinated by other people's lives and this is proved by the popularity of 'A day in the life of' features, whether online or printed in newspapers or lifestyle magazines.
- **Why do it?** Producing a series of personal 'A day in the life of' pieces will provide a fascinating insight into the lives of women in football. Whether you reveal the general secretary's daily routine or the rigorous training of your most senior female referee, it will educate and entertain your audience.
- **How to do it?**
  - Choose subjects with very different roles to ensure your content remains fresh and surprising.
  - It is always important to mention when the day starts and ends.
  - Highlight your subject's daily routine (home, nutrition, exercise, family).
  - Make sure you incorporate a quick overview of how they got into football.
  - Break down a typical day: are they office-based, are they at the training ground, etc.
  - Reveal what they do to relax and unwind in the evenings.
  - Once the content is ready, you can either release the series on your website/social media or pitch it to publications you know run these features.

### Case studies:

- Footballer [Barbora Votikova](#), Mansfield Town FC CEO [Carolyn Radford](#), FC Barcelona's [Lieke Martens](#)
- Audience: football and new female audience via lifestyle publications

## PITCHING A DOCUMENTARY

### Stage 3

- **The idea:** Pitch a women's football documentary to a leading national broadcaster and showcase the lives of those playing, working in and supporting women's football.
- **Why do it?** Appearing on national television provides you with a unique opportunity to educate a non-converted audience through a compelling story.
- **How to do it?**
  - Find a 'hook' for your documentary that is both topical and timely – broadcasters are looking for content that has never been seen or heard before.
  - Team up with a film-maker to work on the pitch together so that you present a comprehensive proposal that outlines the creative pitch and its execution.
  - Make sure you are pitching the idea to the right broadcaster – understand its audience and output.
  - Use existing relationships with broadcasters to understand the process of getting a documentary commissioned and financed.
  - Document the pitching and production process with behind-the-scenes footage and interviews so that you have enough content for your own media channels.
  - The documentary provides you with a great opportunity to promote women's football before and after the screening:
  - Invite journalists to an exclusive pre-screening
  - Manage a media relations campaign around the release

- Promote the documentary online and on social media channels
- Release your own 'Making of' documentary
- Case study: [When Football Banned Women](#)
- Audience: men and women

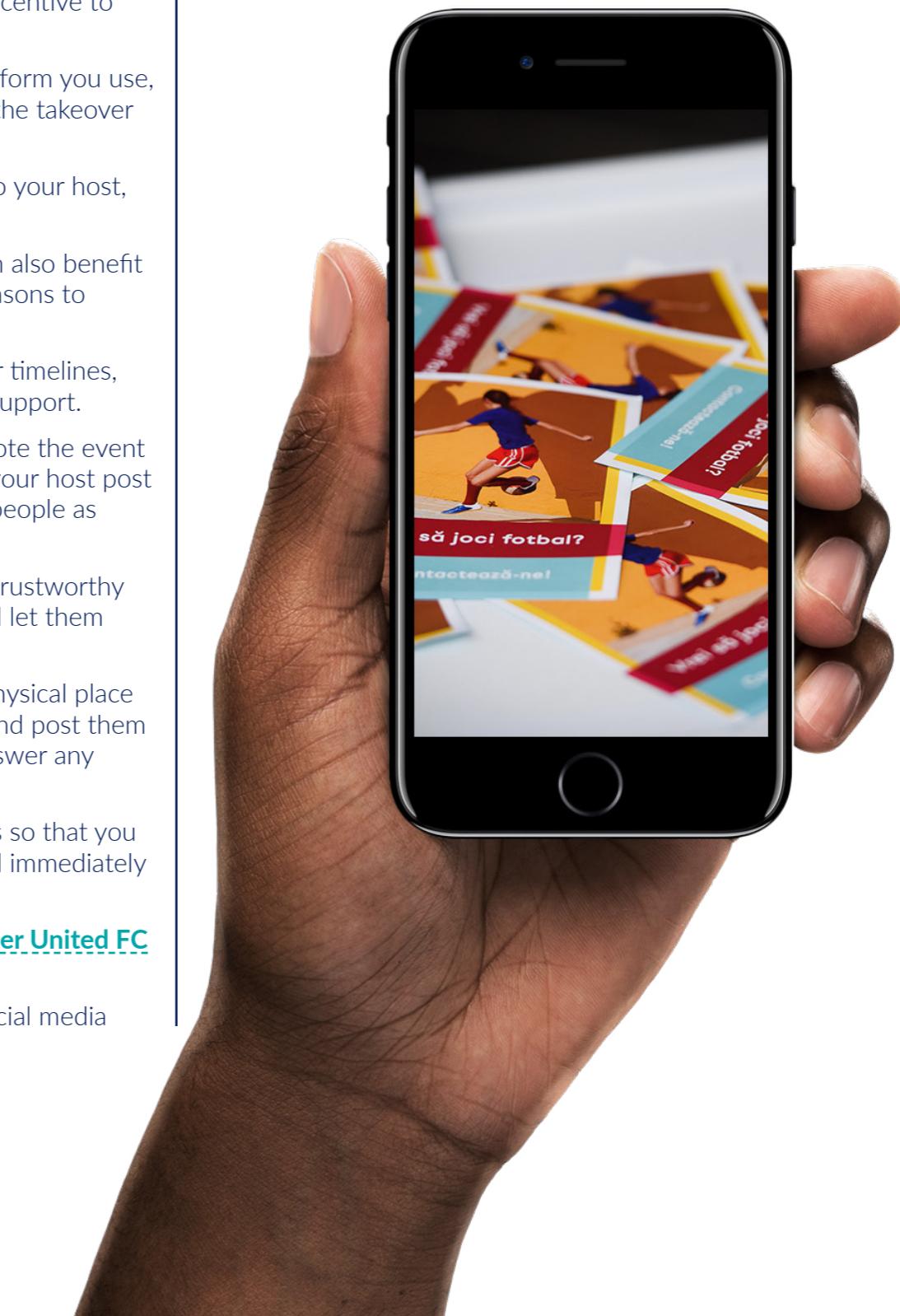


## SOCIAL MEDIA TAKEOVER

### Stage 3

- **The idea:** Invite a woman in football, whether it is a player with an established following or a woman in administration, for a social media takeover and challenge perceptions by demonstrating their football knowledge and expertise.
- **Why do it?** Social media takeovers are proven to:
  - reach new audiences: both parties have their own audiences so teaming up can potentially expose both accounts to new followers;
  - increase engagement: produce original content that your audience will react to;
  - build your brand: hosting a takeover with an individual who shares your brand values can help humanise your voice on social media;
  - drive web traffic: capitalise on the attention that a takeover generates and push people from social media to your website.
- **How to do it?** There are a number of simple steps to follow when setting up a social media takeover:
  - **Set a goal:** Choose a couple of goals from the list above and make sure whoever is taking over your account is briefed and aware of what is expected of them.
  - **Choose a format:**
    - A Q&A session is the most effective use of a Twitter takeover and a great tactic for increasing engagement and gaining new followers. Create a new hashtag for the takeover and encourage followers to submit their questions using it. Have your host quote each tweet and use the hashtag along with the answer.
    - Instagram takeover: Showcasing someone else's perspective is a great way to communicate your messages. You can use it to populate your account with women's football content and gain new followers in the process.

- Facebook takeover: Host a takeover on Facebook Live and have your host answer questions from fans in real time. Since the takeover is happening through live video, your audience will have plenty of incentive to tune in and engage.
- Give-away: No matter what format or platform you use, consider having prizes to give away after the takeover to incentivise people to participate.
- **Extra tips:** Before you hand over access to your host, here are a few things to keep in mind:
  - Make it mutually beneficial: If the host can also benefit from the takeover, they will have more reasons to participate.
  - Set clear expectations: Communicate your timelines, guidelines and goals and be available for support.
  - Promote it on every account: Cross-promote the event on your social media platforms and have your host post it on their own account to push as many people as possible to your profile.
  - Let go: Authenticity is key! If your host is trustworthy and has been properly briefed, you should let them manage their posts.
  - Monitor closely: Try and be in the same physical place as your host, take photos of their arrival and post them to drum up excitement. Be on hand to answer any questions.
  - Stay secure: Retain access to your handles so that you can monitor what your host is posting and immediately delete any offensive content.
  - Case studies: [Jesse Lingard for Manchester United FC](#) and [Samuel Umtiti for FC Barcelona](#)
  - Audience: existing national association social media audience, host's social media audience



# MEASURING AND EVALUATING



# SECTION F

## MEASURING AND EVALUATING

In your communications plan, you will have defined the KPIs to measure your success. Both activity and outcome-based results can be measured by using a number of different tools.

Here are some suggestions to help get you started.

**Google Analytics:** This free web analytics service allows you to gather and review in-depth information about the visitors to your site. It provides valuable insights, including automatic collection of data, customised reports and visitor analysis, which can help you shape the success of your campaigns.

**SurveyMonkey:** This tool allows you to launch any kind of online survey, whether for in-depth market research, a quick poll or fan feedback. It is easy to use and allows you to tailor your surveys to your defined target audience. Conducting polls at both the beginning and the end of your campaigns will help you track your progress.

### SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS:

What are your top-performing tweets? What time of day do your Instagram posts get the most engagement? Is your Facebook campaign reaching a new audience? It is important to be able to answer these questions and there are a number of tools to help you measure your efforts. After an initial trial period, small costs may be incurred, depending on the level of data analytics required.

**Sprout Social:** This is a social media analytics tool to measure performance on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, all within a single platform. Having all of your analytics in one place makes it easier to track and compare your efforts across multiple profiles and platforms.

**Iconosquare:** This analytics tool is used specifically for Instagram. One of the standout features that separates Iconosquare from others is that, in addition to analysis of your normal photos and videos, it gives you insights into Instagram stories. There are also options that enable you to get influencer analytics.

### CORPORATE REPUTATION

Raising the profile of women's football as part of your overarching communications strategy can be a key component in improving corporate reputation. Keep track of your campaigns, produce monthly reports and communicate internally on your achievements to keep the benefits at the forefront of people's minds. You can use the results of your UEFA GROW image research to track awareness of and interest in women's football.



# NEXT STEPS



You are now equipped with the rationale for communicating on women's football, practical campaigns you can implement and ways in which to measure your effectiveness. Start by creating your communications plan and work your way up the levels until you have fully integrated women's football into your national association's overall communications activity.

#### **Getting support**

The UEFA GROW team is available to support you. You can email any questions to Monika Mkhitaryan, UEFA NAs communications manager ([Monika.Mkhitaryan@uefa.ch](mailto:Monika.Mkhitaryan@uefa.ch)).

**Start by creating your communications plan and work your way up the levels until you have**  
fully integrated women's football into your national association's overall communications activity.



# WOMEN'S FOOTBALL STATISTICS

## UEFA GROW NATIONAL ASSOCIATION RESEARCH

### Benchmark Report - July 2018

On average across Europe:

- 4% of women and 26% of children currently play football (gender split not known for children).
- 14% of women have played football at some point in their life.
- 11% of men and women are interested in their women's national team.



- 9% of men and women are interested in their women's domestic league.
- 37% of men and 33% of women see women's football as a sport growing in popularity and appeal.
- 26% of men and 27% of women see women's football as an indication of positive social development.

### The Impact of Women's Football on National Association Image – May 2018

- Those that follow women's football are significantly more likely to give the NA a positive image. Increasing the number of followers should lead to a big improvement in image.
- Rather low levels of current engagement in women's football (across all markets) show that there is great potential for the NAs to improve their image by going down this route.
- There's a small gap between those who are interested in women's football (11% are interested in the women's national team, and 9% in women's domestic leagues) and those who follow (7%).
- WEURO 2017 broke records with a 250m TV audience.

### Global Interest in Women's Sports is on the Rise (Nielsen, 2018)

On average across Europe:

- The global potential fan base for women's football is 105 million people in the eight markets.
- 45% of the general population in the eight markets would consider attending live women's sports events.
- 46% say they would watch more if more women's sports was accessible on free TV.
- In France, 28% are interested in streaming women's sports events, and of those 81% would be willing to pay up to €10 to do so.
- See page 13 for interest in OTT and online streaming.

- The case study on WWE on page 17 is interesting, others re golf and surfing.
- The Women's World Cup has 34% interest, compared to 45% interest in the men's version.
- A fifth of the population is more influenced by sponsors of women's sports than of men's.
- 46% of people in the eight markets regard women's sports as competitive, while 35% say it is skilled and 32% view it as being of high quality.
- 37% increase in annual number of women's sports sponsorship deals announced between 2013 and 2017.
- 49% increase in average monetary size of deal between 2013 and 2017.

Women's football communications objectives – case study from the Georgian Football Federation (GFF)

### Strategic Communications Objectives

1. For more women and girls to want to play football
2. Remove those cultural barriers that are preventing more women and girls from being able to play football in Georgia
3. For more schools in Georgia to provide girls football



# CASE STUDY FROM GEORGIA

## DEFINING A STRATEGIC APPROACH

### The GFF will implement the following strategy:

- Work with third-party opinion formers, including the media, and key influencers to counter negative perceptions around women's football, by reframing the conversation within the context of a 'new, modern Georgia' and promoting the wider social/health benefits associated with women playing sport and in particular, football.
- Lobby the government, directly and through third-party organisations, to showcase the ways in which growing women's football not only helps build confidence and enfranchise young women, but also delivers on its own goals, of building a healthy, happy and active Georgian society.
- Work with members of the Georgian women's team to raise their public and media profiles, positioning them as positive role-models to young girls.
- Develop a wider ambassador programme, which identifies those individuals, whose influence carries weight among women and girls and uses their profile, brand and reach to promote positive messages, which will help reposition women's football in the minds of more women and girls and inspire greater numbers to want to start/carry on playing football.
- Generate content for use across GFF's own digital channels and amplify through paid social, influencers and third party media organisations.
- Actively look for opportunities to promote women's football and incorporate members of the Georgian Women's team into its on-going tactical communications activity and major set-piece PR events.

### Establishing KPIs to Measure Success

The GFF has established two key criteria through which it will measure and assess the success of this strategic communications campaign.

The first of these is activity based. This will assess whether the national association has successfully delivered all the key actions outlined within its tactical activity plan, relating to this strategic priority.

Secondly, measurement will be based on specific outcomes. As a result of this on-going campaign, has the Federation been successful in raising awareness amongst target groups, enhancing perception, generating interest or changing beliefs and behaviour?

This will be assessed based on market research, which will be conducted at the start of the project, two years into the campaign and again at the conclusion of the four-year organisational plan.

The specific outcomes, which will be measured, are as follows:

- Increase the overall level of interest in women's football from 4% and, in doing so, make football the most followed women's sport among women in Georgia.
- For awareness in the Georgian national women's team to increase by 50% and interest levels to rise by 100%, both in the adult population and among football fans.



# STYLE GUIDELINES

## WHAT IS A STYLE GUIDE?

A style guide enables you to shape your brand content both visually and editorially in a way that ensures consistency across all outputs, and makes you more recognisable to your target audiences. It also makes it easier for anyone coming into your organisation to easily understand your content style and what your brand should look, feel and sound like. It is the definitive document for all content style decisions.



### Why is it important?

Your style guide is essentially a reflection of your brand personality. Without this, messaging can potentially be incorrect, or branding/content inconsistent. Mixed styles and messaging can be confusing for your followers or audiences and can dilute what you're trying to get across.

### What should you consider and include in your style guide?

#### Voice (active versus passive and first person versus second/third)

- What adjectives should always come to mind when someone thinks about your brand?
- What adjectives should never come to mind when someone thinks about your brand?
- Are you modern or traditional?
- Are you more all-inclusive or exclusive?
- Can you be funny?

#### Tone (casual, formal)

- What adjectives should always define how you sound?
- What adjectives should never define how you sound?
- How will you scale your tone across different pieces of content?

#### Grammar conventions (regional dialects, spelling, punctuation, words to avoid, and abbreviations)

#### Image/video guidelines (selection, sizing, examples, length of videos)

It's also usually a good idea to include examples of the above, demonstrating both what 'we would say/do

this' and 'we wouldn't say/ do this` – examples provide more clarity as different words mean different things to different people. Elements of your style guide may change depending on platform/target audience too.

You can find the Style Guide for Together #WePlayStrong [here](#).





---

UEFA  
Route de Genève 46  
CH-1260 Nyon 2  
Switzerland  
Telephone: +41 848 00 27 27  
Telefax: +41 848 01 27 27  
[UEFA.com](http://UEFA.com)