

UEFA

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BIGGER SHOULDN'T MEAN BETTER

How a player's date of birth can impact their career.
Coaches from across Europe offer their solutions



INTERVIEW

Clarence Seedorf,
UEFA ambassador for
diversity and change

EURO 2016 LEGACY

A sustainable and socially
responsible EURO

CLUB COMPETITIONS

Ever greater
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EMBRACING DIVERSITY IN ALL ITS FORMS

It was with great pride that I witnessed national associations and clubs uniting around our No To Racism campaign once again. The campaign, which traditionally takes place during the Football People action weeks organised by UEFA's social responsibility partner the FARE network, sent out a clear message that we take a zero tolerance approach towards any kind of discrimination.

We take this issue very seriously at UEFA and believe we have an obligation to promote key values such as diversity and inclusion. I have discussed this matter with the UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin, and I can promise that the UEFA administration will work diligently to make an even bigger impact in the fight against discrimination, both on and off the pitch.

Diversity is about more than just the colour of someone's skin, of course, and we believe that people of all genders, abilities, beliefs and sexual orientations have an equal place in the

European football family. Awareness is the first step, and that is why our campaigns are so important. However, it is through education and exchanging ideas and perspectives that we can make a real difference. This is why we will be working closely with experts in this field and all our stakeholders and partners in order to create new programmes and initiatives for UEFA.

As Clarence Seedorf, our ambassador for diversity and change, says, "Diversity is a strength, not a weakness", and by promoting and working for it together, we can make European football even stronger.



Theodore Theodoridis
UEFA General Secretary





UEFA

IN THIS ISSUE

6 Clarence Seedorf

UEFA's global ambassador for diversity and change talks to the FARE network about tackling discrimination and celebrating diversity.

8 UEFA Foundation for Children

The Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan opens a House of Sports.

9 Grassroots

This year's Grassroots Award winners, as announced during UEFA Grassroots Week.

10 Sustainability

How environmentally friendly was EURO 2016? UEFA Direct finds out.

16 The Technician

The relative age effect, or how a player's date of birth can shape their career.

26 UEFA EURO 2020

UEFA unveils the logos of EURO 2020 and the 13 host cities.

28 Financial matters

Increased revenue in the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League means more money for distribution to participating clubs and solidarity.

38 Safety and security

National associations, clubs, police forces and other partners discuss liability and risks at this year's UEFA-EU Stadium and Security Conference, in Bucharest.

39 Anti-doping

UEFA steps up the fight.

40 News from member associations



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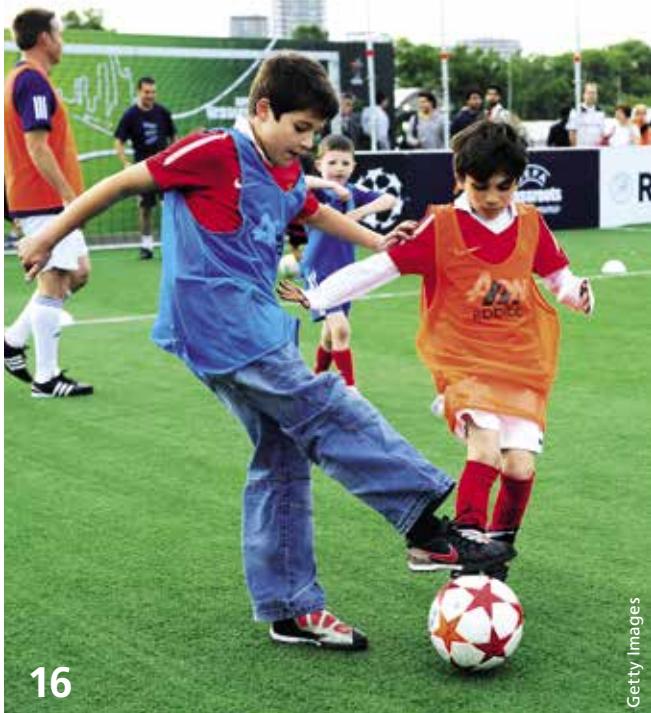
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CLARENCE SEEDORF

'DIVERSITY IS A STRENGTH, NOT A WEAKNESS'

As part of the Football People action weeks organised each October by UEFA's long-standing partner the FARE network (Football Against Racism in Europe) and to mark the launch of this season's No to Racism campaign, UEFA's global ambassador for diversity and change, Clarence Seedorf, spoke to Piara Powar, the FARE network's executive director, about the challenges and opportunities of the future.



What are the challenges of tackling discrimination and ensuring diversity in football?

My aim in everything I do, when it's linked to the issues of racism and discrimination, is to really focus on what we want to achieve. Everyone wants to see a more diverse world and football can help a lot, I think.

Inside dressing rooms and out on the pitch, we now see great diversity all over the world. Now we have to make sure that the situation off the field becomes more diverse too. That's what we should be focusing on, more than talking about racism or discrimination.

And when we punish racist or discriminatory words or behaviour, we have to make sure the offenders understand why it's wrong and why diversity is so important.

Most children don't even know what it is to be racist or to speak or act in a racist way. So we need to keep promoting diversity among youngsters especially.

So your aim is to have more leaders from diverse backgrounds off the field?

Well, what I want to see in terms of jobs is equal opportunities for everybody. Education is fundamental in this whole struggle. We need to educate the young. We need to help them to understand that diversity is positive, and society has great examples of that. Make them see how we can join forces to promote – showing how diverse companies have been successful especially because of their diversity; how teams have also won because of how diverse they were. These are the things I think we should be aiming for, and as a result, we will see more diversity among coaches and in governing bodies.

FARE has activities celebrating diversity in something like 55 countries. But how can we use international weeks like the Football People action weeks to educate people?

As I've said, the focus should be on the next generations. Teaching them that being different is OK, that diversity is a strength, not a weakness. If we keep on promoting that among youngsters and give them ways to feel

and experience it, this is a great opportunity. We have so many people from different backgrounds and we need to expose young people to that. Nobody is born a racist. But these kinds of action weeks can be fantastic platforms for engaging youngsters and raising their awareness, and giving them something that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

What are your goals and aspirations for 2020?

I would definitely like to see a world of football that is clean of corruption and characterised by diversity, with all minorities represented in important positions, from coaching to the top football management roles.

A more diverse football world means a more diverse world in general, because football mirrors society and society is in great need of this unity and this mix.

UEFA is continuing to promote diversity and hopefully the top clubs in Europe and the national teams will follow suit. People, and young people in particular, need to see a World Cup, a European Championship that oozes diversity and tolerance. That would be a great place to be four years from now.

Is Clarence Seedorf somebody who, in the future, we could see taking up a formal leadership role?

I think that in my daily life and activities I will always go down that route. And the greater the role in football given to me by its leaders, the bigger the contribution I can make. But for me it's about how we can do things together. We all have our own qualities and our own reach.

And now China is investing in professionalising its domestic football league [Seedorf is coaching Shenzhen Xiangxue Etsiti]. What are we going to do to set the right tone there in terms of diversity and tolerance? This where I am looking forward to making a contribution now. But I will always make my contribution in one way or another, so let's see what the future brings. It's not that I have a particular aim or ambition. What I want above all else is for everybody to be focused on the same thing so that we can support each other in our efforts. ☺



Piara Powar is the executive director of the FARE network, a long-standing partner of UEFA at the forefront of the campaign to tackle racism, discrimination and intolerance in football, and use the sport as a vehicle for social change.

'The focus should really be on promoting diversity, more than talking about racism or discrimination.'

HOUSE OF SPORTS OPENED IN ZAATARI



Pictures: UEFA Foundation for Children

The UEFA Foundation for Children has done much to bring joy to children's lives in Europe and beyond since its launch in April 2015 – nowhere more so than at the Zaatri refugee camp in Jordan.

Nearly 80,000 Syrian refugees, some 65% of whom are children, live at Zaatri, which is one of the largest refugee camps in the world. Close cooperation between the UEFA foundation, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Asian Football Development Project (AFDP) is instrumental in helping children at the camp. Football and other sports give them the chance to savour the passion of playing and to remain children, despite the situation in which they find themselves.

This new facility will make it easier to run sports activities at the camp and provide a nurturing environment for children and their families. The opening ceremony featured the stellar presence of former French international Christian Karembeu alongside UEFA foundation trustee and Malta Football Association president Norman Darmanin Demajo and representatives of the UNHCR, AFDP and Jordanian authorities.

"Every child deserves a nurturing environment, and the displaced children of Syria are no exception," said AFDP founder Prince Ali bin Hussein. "Today we dedicate to thousands of young refugees a healthy and vibrant space, and the necessary tools for engaging in activities that can brighten up their day and, hopefully, their future as well."

"I wholeheartedly thank the UEFA Foundation for Children," he added, "for supporting the Asian Football Development Project's efforts for social change, and for keeping the spark of hope alive among children through football since the opening of the Zaatri refugee camp in 2012."

Since September 2013, UEFA has supported football programmes at the camp in accordance with its belief that football's



power and attraction can play a key role in improving the quality of youngsters' lives.

Activities include league tournaments inside the camp, with teams organised into 'clubs', and regular training sessions supervised by trained coaches. In addition to amassing football skills, the youngsters are learning crucial values such as respect, fair play, team spirit and solidarity.

This is an important milestone within the projects at the camp. When the foundation decides to finance a project, an important goal is to ensure the continuity of the benefits for the children.

The positive value of sport

Christian Karembeu enjoyed his time with the Zaatri children. "An atmosphere and an environment is being recreated here where they can play games," he said. "Their hope is to have a better future, and I think they already have a great environment."

The UEFA foundation will now expand its activities in local host communities in Jordan, in conjunction with the Jordanian ministry of education. This initiative will be implemented in 12 schools across the country, and some 15,000 children are expected to benefit. The aim is to reinforce work with Jordanian children and child refugees through socio-educational and sports projects, in particular football.

"I am very happy to be in Zaatri to see all the work that is being done with children at the camp, and to discover the positive impact that sport has on their daily lives," said Norman Darmanin Demajo. This statement is borne out by a young girl looking forward to her next football session. "Come to the House of Sports," she says excitedly. "It's a very nice place!" ☺

2016 GRASSROOTS AWARDS

As part of its Grassroots Week in September, UEFA announced the winners of its 2016 Grassroots Awards, recognising the best projects and achievements by leaders and clubs across Europe at the base level of the game.



Since 2010 the UEFA Grassroots Awards have highlighted inspirational stories from UEFA's member associations and there have been few more inspiring than that of Yury Beletskiy, the 2016 winner in the best grassroots leader category. With the creation of his club FC Rostok, Beletskiy has given children in the small Belarusian town of Zhabinka – with no previous chance to play organised football – the opportunity to enjoy the game and socialise with other youngsters.

"Grassroots football, like youth football, is the foundation stone of the football pyramid in our country," said Football Federation of Belarus general secretary Sergei Safaryan. "It's one of the main areas of our work and we try to keep it at the centre of our attention."

The silver award was given to Swedish volunteer Matilda Brinck-Larsen, who has built a club for refugees, while the recipient of the bronze was Antonio Piccolo from Italy, who founded the club Arci Scampia 30 years ago, where football is used to teach positive values and help people from the local area to find work.

The category of best club spotlighted the work being done at RWDM Girls, a multicultural club in the Brussels municipality of Molenbeek that has offered local girls hope and emerged as a centre for identifying young talent.

"It's a club that's open for all – every girl that signs up for us has her own place, whatever the level, competitive or not," said club coordinator Ramzi Bouhlel. Football for all is also the mantra of the silver award-winning Gartcairn

Football Academy in Scotland, whose slogan is 'Those who wish to play, shall play'. The bronze award went to the Balkany Village Amateur Football Club, which has developed rapidly in one of the most distant corners of Ukraine.

The gold award in the best project category, meanwhile, was handed to 'Teamplay ohne Abseits' (team play without offside), a scheme run by the Austrian Football Association (ÖFB) and backed by the national government, which focuses on the integration of people from immigrant communities through a series of team-building workshops.

Speaking about the scheme, ÖFB sporting director Willi Ruttensteiner said: "It's not about getting an award, being happy about it and showing ourselves to the world; it's about giving many good examples and showing a lot of understanding for integration, for many skin colours, taking action against racism, and especially demonstrating respect among people.

"I think UEFA give many positive examples that we take up as well – they've started many initiatives and that has been a source of inspiration."

The project taking the silver award was 'My School, My Club', which has helped increase participation at club level in Serbia by working with the country's schools. Bronze, meanwhile, was awarded to the Football Leadership Programme of Solent University in England, which has engaged over 2,000 participants through community-based projects.

"The nominations for the 2016 UEFA Grassroots Awards were numerous and the selection process has been a thorough one," said the chairman of the UEFA Development and Technical Assistance Committee, Giancarlo Abete.

"It is encouraging to see that more and more associations are introducing grassroots awards at domestic level, to promote the grassroots game and to stimulate further development." ⚽

THE WINNERS

Best Grassroots Leader

Yury Beletskiy (Belarus)

Best Grassroots Club

RWDM Girls (Belgium)

Best Grassroots Project

'Teamplay ohne Abseits'
(Austria)



STANDARD-BEARERS FOR FOOTBALL

UEFA received international recognition for its ambitious efforts to create a more sustainable and socially responsible tournament at EURO 2016 – and a tournament with a positive legacy.

A coherent policy of social and environmental responsibility is an integral part of the organisation of major sporting events. It is not a luxury, much less a gadget but a civic responsibility, and has now become an operational requirement as much as safety, marketing or ticketing sales.”

These were the words of EURO 2016 SAS president Jacques Lambert in the summer of 2015, when UEFA set out its plans to make EURO 2016 the most socially responsible and sustainable tournament it had ever organised. This meant planning for the future by managing quantities of fuel throughout the host country,



France, making huge reductions in waste and water consumption, and attaching primary importance to issues such as health, diversity and accessibility around the stadiums.

It was an ambitious programme which aimed to reduce the environmental impact of the tournament and integrate a social dimension into it. There was a very strong focus on ensuring EURO 2016 left a positive legacy for the host cities, the stadiums, French football and UEFA. And while there remains plenty of room for improvement before EURO 2020, the overall outcome was enough to make EURO 2016 the first major football tournament to earn official recognition from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Building on the EURO 2008 and 2012 social responsibility initiatives, as well as the Respect campaign, being awarded the ISO 20121 for Sustainable Event Management Systems was a real team effort. It involved not only UEFA and

EURO 2016 SAS but partner organisations, host cities, volunteers, sponsors, fans and the 24 countries taking part.

With the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) taking place in Paris just six months earlier, political support and increased resources meant that big strides were made in reducing the tournament's ecological footprint. More than 10 tonnes of unused food, including 50,000 sandwiches, were redistributed through the Foot for Food programme, 31,000 litres less fuel was consumed at the stadiums compared with EURO 2012 (despite 20 more games), and the EURO 2016 eco-calculator and a vehicle-sharing app were just two of the innovations spread over eight distinct target areas during the tournament.

Respect Access for All

In collaboration with the Centre for Access to Football in Europe (CAFE), which supports disabled fans across the continent, new for 2016 was a French audio-commentary →

EURO 2016 left a legacy of sustainability, as illustrated by the eco-friendly Stade de Nice, with more than 4,000 solar panels, geothermal heating and rainwater collection.

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system for partially sighted and blind people at each stadium, with assistive devices for hard-of-hearing and deaf spectators. The commentators were all trained by CAFE, and the equipment was left as a legacy. There were also provisions for assistance and guide dogs, and accessible wayfinding and signage.

Respect Health

The Respect Your Health programme, led by the European Healthy Stadia Network in cooperation with the World Heart Federation, made tobacco-free stadiums a priority at EURO 2016. The aim was to protect the health and safety of spectators, volunteers and staff from the known dangers associated with second-hand smoke by enforcing a tobacco-free environment at all matches. Lightening the mood a touch, yellow and red cards carrying information about the no-tobacco policy were shown by brave volunteers to some offenders.

Respect Diversity

The Respect Diversity programme was led by the FARE network, a UEFA partner whose core mission is to tackle discrimination and encourage social integration.

Their activities focused on monitoring EURO 2016 qualifiers that were assessed as high risk and all 51 final tournament matches. A total of 60 observers were recruited, appointed and trained. Eight racism and discrimination incidents were reported, and two national associations sanctioned.

Respect Fan Culture

Fan embassies, developed jointly by UEFA and Football Supporters Europe (FSE), were an important aspect of the event, welcoming,

advising, informing and supporting visiting fans. FSE and UEFA created an app and implemented a 24-hour helpline to improve the quality of service and provide even more information to supporters, including about the stationary fan embassies which were located at a central point in each host city and managed by fan experts and volunteers.

Respect Environment – public transport and mobility

The aim here was to reduce, share and offset. The event's impact was reduced by pushing for public transport and mobility solutions such as additional trains, with public car parks closed. Transport was shared through mobility schemes such as the UEFA Fans Guide app feature for car or taxi sharing. Staff were required to travel by train for any journey under four hours, and while the teams had to fly for security reasons, they all offset their emissions, funding the purchase of renewable energy and wind farms in the French territory of New Caledonia. Meanwhile, the eco-calculator, developed with Climate Friendly, gave fans the chance to win tickets to the final by measuring their carbon footprint by the number of footballs that could be filled with carbon dioxide emissions and then offsetting it.

Respect Environment – waste management

The waste management vision applied at EURO 2016 was consistent with the concept of a circular economy: the reduce, reuse and recycle approach. As well as the highly successful Foot for Food programme in partnership with Banques Alimentaires (food banks) and the Fondaction du football,

"It is with great pride that we obtained the ISO 20121 certification for UEFA EURO 2016, something that sets a high standard for tournaments and competitions to come"

**Martin Kallen
UEFA Events SA CEO**

Left: Yellow and sometimes even red cards were shown to anyone caught smoking inside the stadiums – albeit playfully, and always with a smile!
Below: Accessibility was a priority at EURO 2016.





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the UEFA Foundation for Children benefited from the redistribution of thousands of small items such as office supplies, uniforms and rain ponchos, while training and sports material including massage tables, portable goals, warm-up huts, benches, tactical boards and bibs were donated to local clubs and stadiums.

Respect Environment – energy and water

The idea here was to promote renewable and green energy and water harvesting, and to foster optimisation. UEFA does not build the stadiums and so it could not install solar panels, for example, but it is encouraging stadiums to adapt ahead of EURO 2020, when it will have a target of using 50% of renewable energy. The latest technologies for generator consumption were employed, while LED boards were switched to grid power on non-matchdays, which produced a significant saving. There was a decrease in water use in the four new stadiums with their modern facilities, and improvements were made in the older ones thanks to rainwater collection systems, motion detectors, intelligent sprinklers and monitoring.

Respect Environment – sourcing of products and services

The aim was to promote responsible sourcing of products and services, to help buyers to consider environmental and social issues within the supply chain and to engage suppliers and licensees to follow social responsibility and sustainability guidelines. Within all of the supplier contracts, UEFA had sustainability

clauses, some very stringent. Quick wins included tickets and accreditations printed on FSC-certified paper.

There will be improvements for 2020, including better sight lines for disabled people, making fans more included as stakeholders, smart mobility for staff and VIPs featuring electric or hybrid cars, and for fans further development of the car-sharing app and combi tickets for all 13 venues. Meanwhile, for waste management the aim will be to move even further away from the linear economy, where we buy then we throw away, to a more circular economy where the end life and the reuse of material has to be considered.

There will always be work to be done, but EURO 2016 was groundbreaking in terms of its approach to conservation. In order to gain the ISO standard, a thorough auditing process was performed by SGS, a leading verification company that also audited the 2012 Olympic Games in London and the Roland-Garros tennis tournament in Paris.

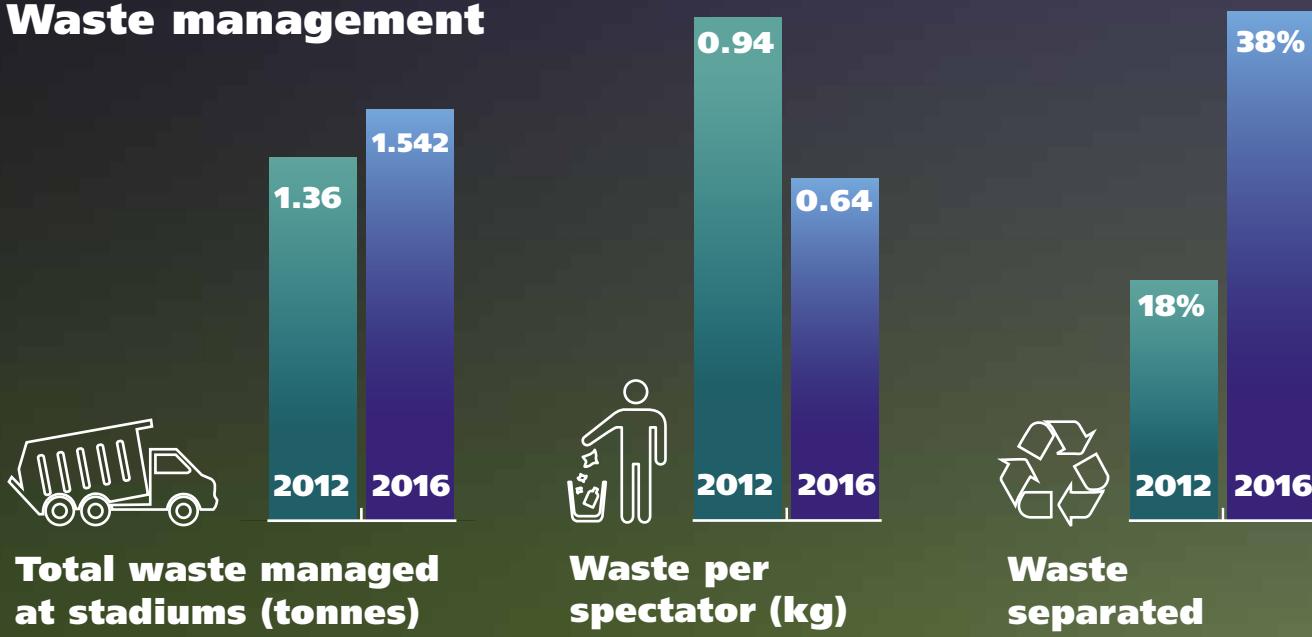
"It is with great pride that we obtained the ISO 20121 certification for UEFA EURO 2016, something that sets a high standard for tournaments and competitions to come," said UEFA Events SA CEO Martin Kallen. "Football events on such a scale have a significant economic, social and environmental impact. Therefore, it is important to establish a sustainability management system, and make it an integral part of the event. This is just the beginning. We have improved a lot, but still have room for progress." 

Reusable cups helped to significantly reduce the amount of waste generated during the tournament.

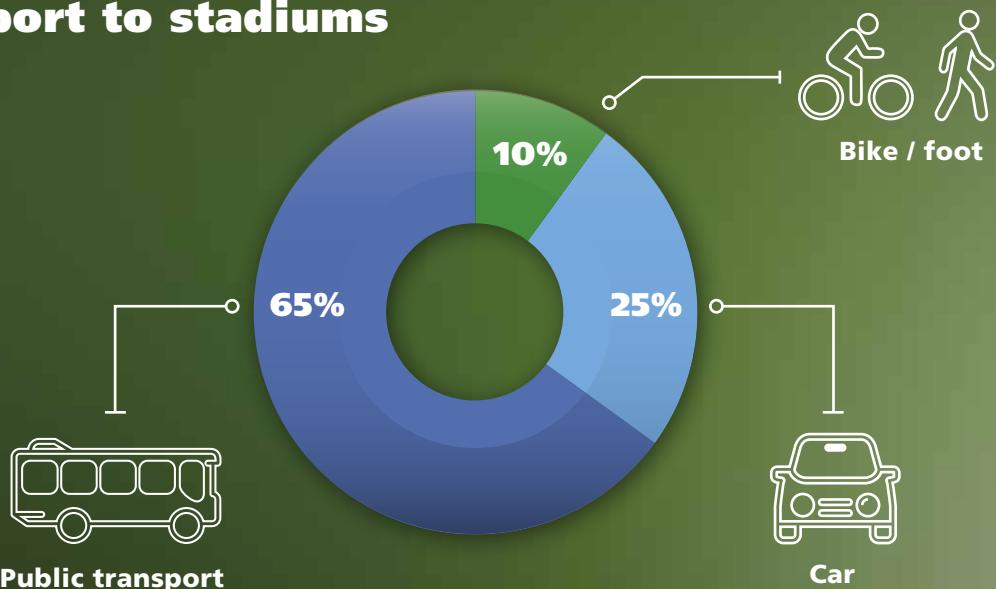
RESPECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AT UEFA EURO 2016

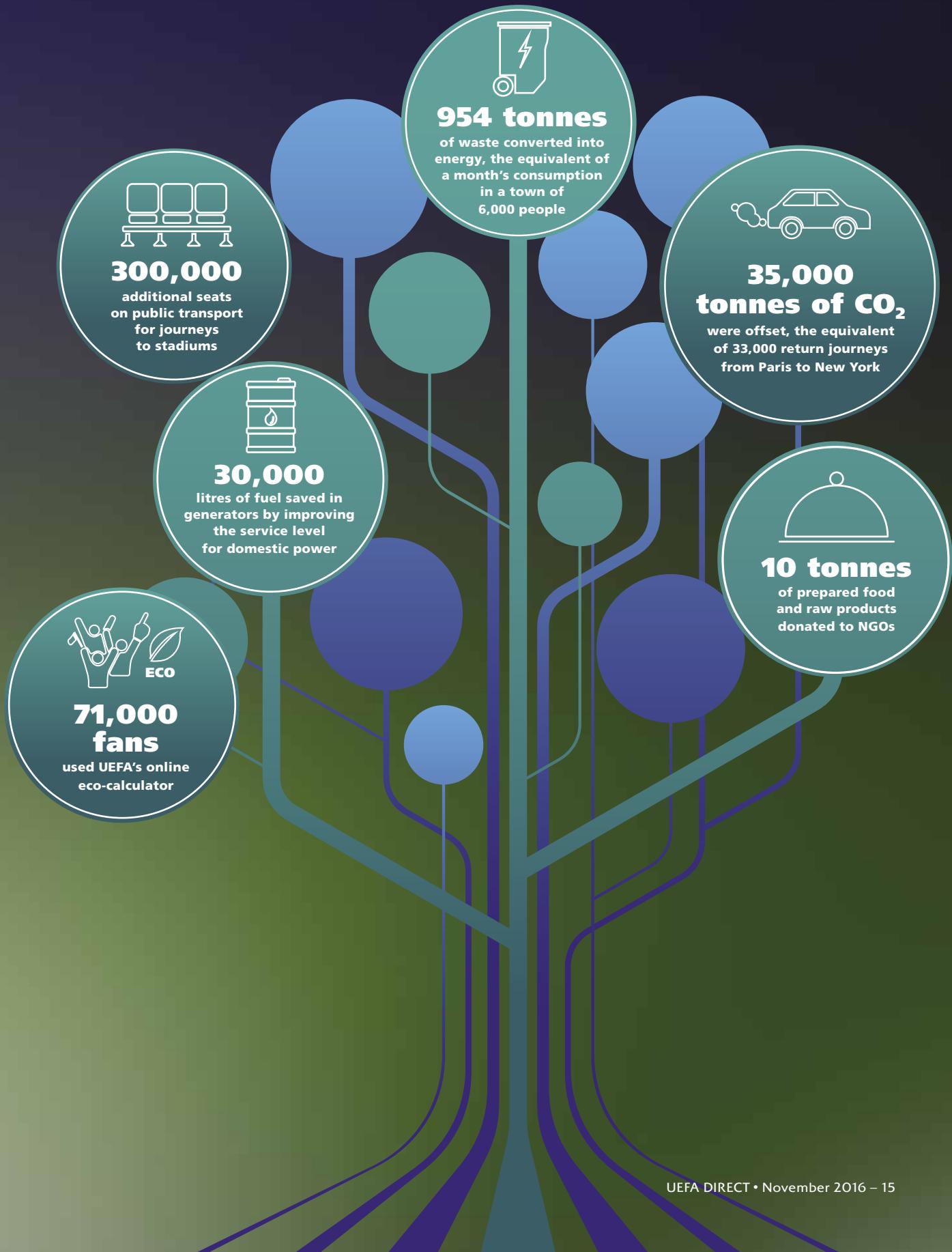
UEFA set out to make EURO 2016 its most sustainable tournament to date and, as the graphics here show, its efforts paid off.

Waste management



Transport to stadiums







HOW TO REMEDY THE RELATIVE AGE EFFECT?

Whether you were born at the beginning or the end of the year can have a huge influence on your future football career. Known as the relative age effect, this problem is now being tackled by a growing number of coaches.

Bob Browaeys remembers a slightly built, dark-haired teenager who first came to his attention nearly a decade ago. "He was small – maybe 45 kilos and one metre 60 – and he was absolutely not one of the biggest talents," says Browaeys, head of Belgium's youth national teams. "Racing Genk didn't give him a contract."

The identity of that young hopeful? Yannick Carrasco, today a highly valued 23-year-old attacking midfielder with Belgium and Club Atlético de Madrid, and a scorer in last season's UEFA Champions League final.

Carrasco was one of the lucky ones – a lightweight hopeful who overcame big odds as a beneficiary of the Royal Belgian Football Association's programme for 'future' talents. He was in the first intake in 2008, and, out of the blue, a pathway opened up for him. "He was playing for the future team and there was a scout from Monaco who saw him playing and he went there when he was 18 years old," Browaeys explains.

Many others like Carrasco – late bloomers, born in the second half of the year – are less fortunate in combating a phenomenon which presents them with an uphill struggle during the crucial formative years of their development: the relative age effect.

Studies have repeatedly shown that young players born in the early months of the year hold a significant advantage. In short, early-maturing players are usually bigger, stronger and quicker than their peers, and thus more likely to be selected by clubs or representative sides. They therefore receive more top-level training while, in the meantime, many of their smaller, younger contemporaries lose heart from competing against more physically able opponents and drift away. Browaeys offers a sobering estimate: "I am convinced we are still losing 25% of the talent because of this problem."

The statistics highlight the bias towards early-maturing players. A mere scan of the squads at this year's European Under-17 Championship final tournament in Azerbaijan in May is a good starting point. From a pool of 288 players across the 16 teams involved, only 24 (a miserly 8.33%)

were born in the last quarter of the year. By contrast, 135 – 46.88% – were born in the first quarter.

Overall, 69.45% were born in the first half of the year. Of the two finalists, Portugal had 10 players born between January and March (out of 18), and Spain even more – 12. The Spanish produce wonderful technical footballers but, as Ginés Meléndez, technical director of the Royal Spanish Football Federation, says: "It's true that those born in the first months of the year are stronger for the championships that are played in May and June."

Body of evidence grows

Two other striking statistics come from English football: 1) 75% of players in Premier League academies this season came from the first six months of their age groups (which means September–February birthdays, in the exceptional case of England); 2) at U9 and U10 level, boys born in the final quarter of the year were 5.6 times less likely to earn entry into the junior ranks of English lower-league sides than those born in the first quarter.¹ →

These stats are just the tip of the iceberg. Among the many academic studies focused on this issue are papers showing the existence of a relative age effect throughout the history of the German Bundesliga² and in Spanish league football during the period 2008–11.³ Even at FC Barcelona, where small players like Xavi Hernández, Lionel Messi and Andrés Iniesta have famously flourished, statistical evidence is there: it is just a little illustration, but 22 of the 30 La Masia graduates to have represented Barcelona during this current decade have birthdays in the first half of the year.

One man who would not be surprised by any of this is Professor Werner Helsen, UEFA training expert, sport scientist and professor in performance training and coaching at the University of Leuven in Belgium. He began researching the relative

age effect in the 1990s and says: "This is a big issue which is still underestimated and it results in a huge drop-out of potentially very talented children. In one of our studies, we compared ten big European countries over a ten-year period and we could easily see that in 2010, the relative age effect was even bigger than before."⁴

For Helsen, FIFA's decision in 1997 to switch the first month of selection from August to January, which had the effect of aligning it with the school system across most of Europe, compounded the problem as it meant that "children both at school and in the club were either advantaged or disadvantaged".⁵

The relative age effect, he adds, is about much more than physical growth. He cites a paper, due for publication in 2017, which proffers evidence of the relative age effect in chess. Cognitive maturation is a factor

and there are psychological aspects to consider too. "Early-born children who are older get different expectations from the teachers and coaches," Helsen explains. "It typically means that if you as a teacher expect more from me as a student then I as a student will do whatever I can to meet your expectations, while children born at the end of the year who don't get the same psychological support are not challenged."

A French view

When France won last season's European Under-19 Championship, their squad featured "63% players born in the first half of the year and 37% in the second". These are the words of François Blaquart, technical director of the French Football Federation, and a man quite aware of the injustices created by the relative age effect.

The physiological differences between children born at the start and the end of the year can be significant, and they can have a lasting impact on future sporting careers.



Getty Images



Felix Platte (1.90m at 18 years old) and Jay Dasilva (1.64m at 16) looked unevenly matched as they went head to head in the UEFA Youth League in September 2014, but it was Chelsea FC who went on to beat FC Schalke 4-1.

Dealing with the relative age effect at grassroots level

**By Ivan Draškić,
coach of FC Požega in Serbia**

"I work with boys aged between 10 and 14 and it's certainly noticeable at this level, especially with the 10-year-olds. The older boys have an advantage in both physical and psychological terms. This can mean, however, that they don't always look for different solutions during a game and it can stop them progressing."

A fundamental principle of football is competition and unfortunately even with this age, the competitive element is considered important by most of the people involved – players, coaches, parents, spectators. As a coach it means I am working against the expectations of others, but I still try to implement my methods.

If a boy finds himself in a situation where he feels inferior, because of his size, it does affect his confidence and this is a problem for his development. It's important to strike a balance, therefore, between what you believe a boy can become and what he is at this moment in time."

"It takes time for a player to blossom," he reflects. "There are certain ages where you can't tell. Who is the future Messi at 13 or 14? In France I've seen players we were calling the new Zidane at 16 and at 18 they were nowhere to be seen."

For Blaquart it is an 'ethical problem' when youngsters are denied the opportunity to blossom. It is a waste too. "At that age, youngsters are often playing different sports and a good footballer is often also good at tennis or handball. There are players who, because football doesn't choose them, leave for other sports where they can reach a high level."

One solution on Blaquart's part has been to extend the French Football Federation's talent detection programme until the age of 17. "We estimate that, between 13 and 17, youngsters are in a development stage in which the physiological differences can be as wide as four years for boys of the same age," he explains.

The French federation requires its talent spotters to select a number of players in the July–December category; it is a form of positive discrimination and the final search for talents among a pool of 17-year-olds is focused exclusively on those born in the

second half of the year. "We exclude those born between January and July because we feel they've already had the opportunity to show what they can do, so we have a repeat test for boys from the end of the year," says Blaquart, who notes that the France team who won the European Under-17 Championship in 2015 featured "four players from this final test. They'd been overlooked by the system, which makes it satisfying."

Physical gifts are secondary

Blaquart suggests other responses to the problem. He would prefer less competitive football at club level for players aged from 13 to 16, suggesting coaches inevitably favour "players who are more ready athletically". In his view, the physical gifts are secondary. "Until 16 we look for footballers; the athlete can be developed between 16 and 20." Additionally, he argues for more mature players to be promoted to the age category above. This happened with France's victorious European U19 Championship side from last season – the generation of 1997 – which included two players, Kylian Mbappé and Christ-Emmanuel Maouassa, born in 1998. →

How to measure biological maturity

Peak Height Velocity (PHV) refers to the moment when children go through their main adolescent growth spurt. For many young male footballers this begins during the Under-14 age category though early maturing players can reach puberty at U12/U13 and late maturing players at U16/U17. To measure a child's maturity timing (early/on-time/late) and predict their biological age and time of entering PHV, there are different methods used.

The widely employed Khamis Roche method takes into account a child's height (seated and standing) and weight and the average stature of their two parents to calculate adult height as well as timing of maturity. This allows coaches to gauge a player's current % of final maturity which is vital for bio-banding – grouping them according to their biological age. The test has been found to be very reliable with a mean average error from childhood to adulthood of 2.2cm and can be administered by internal staff to a large group of players.

Another non-invasive test is the Mirwald maturity offset method which is calculated by using body measurements (standing height, weight, seated height) and plotting against the Mirwald algorithms.

Professor Werner Helsen points to a third non-invasive method, proposed by Moore, for use in youth football (including age x height equation for boys). Clubs seeking more information on this should email werner.helsen@uefa.ch.

A wrist X-ray is the most accurate method of assessing biological maturity in players under 18. The X-ray is assessed by an expert who can observe sizing and calcification of the bone joints to reasonably predict the child's biological age (particularly helpful when a player's date of birth is unknown).

"Clubs don't do this," he adds, "because they prefer to win trophies." This leads, he argues, to a levelling-down of talent.

Benefits of bio-banding

This wish to challenge players who are dominant figures in their own age group is echoed across the English Channel by James Bunce, head of sports science for the Premier League. His solution is bio-banding, which involves measuring boys to predict their final height and then grouping them according to their level of physical maturity. Bunce uses the Khamis-Roche method – which factors in a youngster's sitting height and his parents' heights to estimate their adult stature. "You can still get a five foot five player and a five foot nine player but they've a much more level playing field in terms of maturity," he says.

"Bio-banding is a benefit for the early-maturing guys – bio-banding says, for this game we are stripping away the advantage you get physically and you have to come up with solutions technically, tactically, mentally. These guys suddenly feel less confident as they're being put under pressure for the first time."

The late-maturing players benefit too, obviously, and Bunce is equally sensitive to their needs, having worked previously at Southampton FC, where he helped Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, now an Arsenal FC and England winger, overcome difficulties caused by his delayed development. With the selection year running from 1 September in England, Oxlade-Chamberlain, born in August, was one of the youngest in his group.

"There was a time in his career when he almost got released for being too small," Bunce recalls. "He was technically gifted but he couldn't thrive when he was getting put into game situations because he'd get bullied physically. At Southampton we made the decision we would keep him back a year so he would develop and that kept him in the system. He said playing with that group allowed him to build his confidence and believe in himself."

In August last year Bunce helped organise the first bio-banding tournament in England, involving four clubs – Southampton, Stoke City FC, Norwich City FC and Reading FC – for boys in the 85/90% maturity category. A second tournament followed in April this year, and today at least eight clubs train with

bio-banded groups each week.

Over in the Netherlands, AZ Alkmaar have been doing the same since the beginning of the decade. The Eredivisie club's coaches measure their new arrivals when they join the academy aged 10 or 11, and each week AZ's youngsters train twice on the pitch and once in the gym with their biological age group. "It is helping us a lot," says AZ's head of youth development, Paul Brandenburg, citing the successful case of first-team players Dabney Dos Santos and Guus Til. "These players might have dropped out of the academy if we hadn't known their biological ages.

"They were younger players by their biological age throughout the youth academy and, as a result, they weren't players who were decisive during matches. We saw by their biological age they were really young compared to their teammates, so we kept them, and over the years they developed really well and are now playing for the first team. If all clubs incorporate biological age like we do, I think the relative age effect will disappear."

Smaller nations lead the way

Jean-François Domergue, UEFA's head of football development, encourages every UEFA member association to act to address this problem. "There's no magic recipe for talent identification, but we try to persuade the associations in our academy and development tournament projects to focus not on immediate results but on helping players to meet their own individual potential in the medium and long term," he says.

"As a result, the associations are encouraged to identify young players who fit their playing philosophy and have good technical ability, vision and game intelligence, amongst other qualities, regardless of their physical maturation."

Research highlights the fact that the relative age effect is most prevalent in larger countries, which – according to a widely held view – is the product of the bigger pools of players available. It may be more than a coincidence then that the first international tournament for 'future' talents in Europe – in April this year – featured four of the smaller nations: Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark and Sweden.

As Browaeys puts it: "The biggest countries have ten times more →



Late bloomers' longevity

Our table shows that in the long run, the biggest and strongest players in their mid-teens have shorter careers than their later-maturing peers. Indeed, the relative age effect is actually reversed by the time footballers – and other athletes – reach their mid-thirties.⁶

Dr Steve Cobley, a leading researcher in athlete development at the University of Sydney, has previously identified similar occurrences in Canadian ice hockey and rugby league in Britain. "If you think about Under-15 or Under-16 level for example, it's very easy to select

the one who's got the brute strength or power – it is often predicated on advanced maturation, but actually those players are less likely to go on to make it. It is more likely to be the player who's a late maturer at 15, lean and very quick, that excels later."

potential talent than Belgium. At the highest level we cannot miss one talent."

The event in the southern Swedish city of Helsingborg featured not just matches for the young footballers involved but also a workshop for the coaches. This was an invaluable experience for the Czech delegation present, according to Václav Černý of the Football Association of the Czech Republic. "We've just started with this project in the Czech Republic and I have to say that we really appreciate the experience of our foreign colleagues."

The Czechs have now incorporated future squads at U15, U16 and U17 levels, following the lead of the other nations involved, and are now seeking to get the message across to their clubs.

In Sweden, they are further down the road in their efforts. "We started four years ago," says Claes Eriksson, head of the Swedish Football Association's youth department. The Swedish FA's programme for its future talents involves four training camps for 33 players – three for each position – and Eriksson notes with satisfaction that four of his youth talents have already made their debuts in the

The goalkeeper question

The relative age effect has a particularly strong impact in certain positions – notably, goalkeeper and centre-back. Indeed, as Claes Eriksson of the Swedish Football Federation explains, the four-nation tournament for future talents in April did not include any goalkeepers. "It is very hard to find a small player who is a goalkeeper," he says. "If you're going to be a very good goalkeeper at the highest level, you must have some height. Maybe centre-back is also difficult to find."

Professor Werner Helsen adds: "There's a position-specific effect, in particular for goalkeepers, central defenders and central attackers." To illustrate the point, at the European Under-17 Championship in May, 16 of the 32 goalkeepers had January–March birthdays; just two had October–December birthdays.

Swedish top flight: Carl Johansson at Kalmar FF, Jesper Karlsson at Falkenbergs FF, Adin Bukva at IFK Norrköping and Albin Lohikangas at Gefle IF.

A key point for Eriksson is how involvement with the future squad affects the confidence of young players – and shifts others' perceptions of these players. "If they get the message that they're going to Stockholm for a camp with the Swedish FA they don't believe it – they think, 'There are ten guys better than me in my club,'" he says. There is then a knock-on effect whereby fellow players, then coaches and even parents will ask why a certain boy is going. "This is a big positive with this project," adds Eriksson. "Parents, coaches, members of the board – everyone is looking at the players through a different prism. It means coaches and parents are more patient with the players."

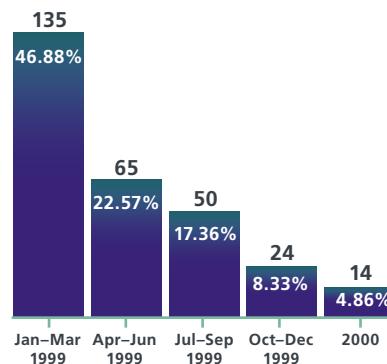
This raises once again the question of talent identification – and the importance of looking beyond the physical attributes of young footballers. In the case of the Belgian FA there are six boxes any hopeful must tick: winning mentality; emotional stability; personality; explosiveness; understanding of the game; and body and ball control.

"It is very important we try to convince clubs not to discriminate against late-maturing players – a high performer is not the same as high potential," says Browaeys. "There are players we think will be ready when they are Under-19 or Under-21. We try to explain to our elite clubs they also have to identify high potential. Not all the players who are good at the age of nine are talented sometimes."

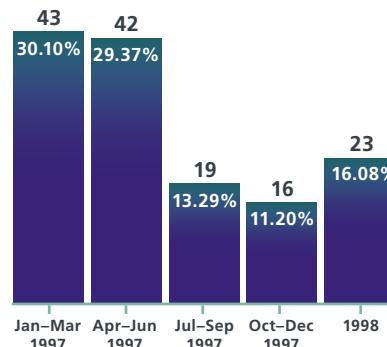
"It's the reason we organise talent days and games: to say to clubs, 'This player is always on the bench but look how much talent he has when he is playing with only the late-maturing

PLAYERS' MONTHS OF BIRTH

2016 European Under-17 Championship final round (288 players)



2016 European Under-19 Championship final round (143 players)



players'. Then you see he is very skilful, has good insight into the game, is very explosive and has a very good game mentality. The clubs sometimes open their eyes and see."

¹Lovell R, Towson C, Parkin G, Portas M, Vaeyens R and Cobley S (2015) 'Soccer Player Characteristics in English Lower-League Development Programmes: The Relationships between Relative Age, Maturation, Anthropometry and Physical Fitness', PLoS ONE 10(9): e0137238. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0137238

²Cobley S, Schorer J and Baker J (2008) 'Relative age effects in professional German soccer: A historical analysis', Journal of Sports Sciences, 26(14), 1531-1538

³Salinero JJ, Pérez B, Burillo P, Lesma ML and Herrero, MH (2013) 'Relative Age Effect in Spanish Professional Football', Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte, 14(56), 591-601

⁴Helsen WF, Baker J, Michiels S, Schorer J, Van Winckel J,

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⁵Helsen, W., Starkes, J., Van Winckel, J. (2000). Effect of a change in selection year on success in male soccer players. American Journal of Human Biology, 12 (6), 729-735.

⁶Deane RO, Lowen A, Cobley S (2013) 'Born at the Wrong Time: Selection Bias in the NHL Draft', PLoS ONE 8(2): e57753. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0057753

⁷Gladwell, M. 'Outliers' (2008) Penguin Books

⁸Romann M, Cobley S (2015) 'Relative Age Effects in Elite Sprinting and Corrective Adjustments as a Solution for Their Removal', PLoS ONE 10(4): e0122988. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0122988

Thirty years and the search for solutions goes on

Research into the relative age effect began in the 1980s in Canada, with the focus on ice hockey. Roger Barnsley, a Canadian psychologist, was the first academic to investigate the problem, his interest sparked by attending a junior hockey league game where his wife pointed out the disproportionately high number of players on the team sheet with January–March birth dates.⁷ His ensuing research highlighted that players born in the first quartile formed 40% of all elite teams – at both national and junior level. Spool forward to the second decade of the 21st century and the problem has not gone away, even if awareness of the relative age effect has grown. When Professor Werner Helsen co-authored a 2012 paper asking if ten years of research had made any

difference to the problem in European football, the evidence highlighted “the robust nature of this phenomenon”.

Dr Steve Cobley was co-author of a 2009 meta-analytical review study which examined the prevalence and size of relative age effects across studies in 14 sports between 1984 and 2007. Based on these findings, he notes: “It seems that sport is less likely to be an activity or career pathway for relatively younger individuals, whose birth dates coincide with the last three months of an annual age-grouping strategy. With any event where power or exertion or acceleration are required during the growth and development ages, you are going to get these kinds of effects.”

It is not just football seeking solutions. In his study of the 100m trials

in Swiss athletics,⁸ Cobley performed an experiment where times were adjusted according to the chronological age differences of the participants. He explains: “If you’ve got two kids running in a trial for 100m and they have clearly different relative ages with the same age group, such as Under-14s, then you can’t treat them the same. It is more likely that the relatively older one will run faster. However, if you correct for the chronological age difference between two runners, then you can potentially remove its influence and you are left with examining something else, e.g. technical skill. This potentially represents a better way to more accurately evaluate kids and might be more motivating for those who are relatively younger.”



The first research into the relative age effect was conducted in ice hockey in Canada in the 1980s.

Getty Images



FAN CULTURE, SPORTS AUTHORITIES AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

To give you a taste of the interesting work supported by the UEFA Research Grant Programme, we are showcasing a selection of research projects funded by the 2015/16 programme. This month, Radosław Kossakowski presents details of his study, which looks at fandom, sports authorities and social engagement in Poland.

Most major academic books and articles on football fandom focus on the issue of hooliganism. However, we need to look at fans' identity from a broader perspective, as fandom also involves issues such as passion, a feeling of belonging, family entertainment and a sense of involvement. In Poland, football fandom has, for many years, had only negative connotations, being associated with violence, racism, and so on. However, as with many other social phenomena, football fans' environment is currently undergoing a transformation which can be described as a 'civilising process'. The Supporters United initiative is an excellent example of this kind of development.

The Supporters United initiative is unprecedented in Poland, combining fan culture with institutional actors such as the Polish Football Association (PZPN), the Polish ministry of sport and tourism, and local councils. It is administered by the ministry and the PZPN, but coordinated by fans of local clubs in 12 cities across the country. In the past, the actions of supporters' groups regularly failed to live up to the standards set by authorities, in terms of both morality and legality. However, with institutional support, fans are now taking responsibility for giving fandom a more positive image, building social capital around their clubs, gaining the trust of local communities, and branching out into other areas – for instance, by organising educational and charitable activities or tackling discrimination and homophobia.

This appears to be a natural stage in the development of the fan movement. At the same time, it requires compromise, so fans have to adjust their actions accordingly. Various respondents in my study used words such as 'credibility', 'trust' or even 'surprise' – especially people who did not know the fans and did not know what to expect from them. Gaining credibility is crucial for fans as they strive to achieve a positive reputation. This programme has reduced the level of antagonism, with antipathy giving way to a desire for dialogue and a need for cooperation. For example, fans of Arka Gdynia and KS Lechia Gdańsk are now working together and exchanging ideas – despite their two teams being local rivals.

The challenge for institutions

The fact that supporters had such a negative image initially raised lots of concerns and resulted in potential risks for organisations supporting the programme, which were worried about being accused of cooperating with hooligans and criminals. This was compounded by the fact that the programme is largely funded using public money, so any problems accounting for 'unreasonable' spending could become a pretext for very strong criticism. However, this initiative has resulted in many benefits for both sides: a considerable increase in the amount of trust placed in fans, greater activism on the part of supporters, and a belief that football can be opened up to other sections of society.



Radosław Kossakowski is assistant professor of sociology at Gdańsk University. His main fields of expertise are the sociology of sport, football studies and qualitative research methods.

The most important aspect of the programme would appear to be the resulting local activism. This initiative has led to an incredible range of activities, including football tournaments, preventive measures for children from disadvantaged social backgrounds, charity work and fund-raising activities, and academic conferences. Local centres help to provide cultural support, shaping the attitudes of young fans by organising family picnics or family sections in stadiums. In addition to this work with children, another key feature of the Supporters United initiative is the outstanding cooperation between local centres and disabled supporters' clubs.

These examples of activism under the Supporters United initiative have to be regarded as the beginning of a new phenomenon. However, this work is taking place at grassroots level. Consequently, the programme should not be regarded as a great revolution, but rather as a fledgling initiative resulting in creeping social change. ☈

MESGO RENDEZ-VOUS IN PARIS

Having provided a backdrop for EURO 2016 this summer, Paris staged a rendez-vous of a different kind in September as the fourth edition of the Executive Master in European Sport Governance (MESGO) got under way in the French capital.

MESGO is targeted at experienced sports sector professionals eager to tackle current and future challenges faced by sports organisations. The current 26 participants largely come from continental and national sports organisations (including one president, three general secretaries, a deputy general secretary and other high-ranking staff from UEFA member associations), with governments, NGOs and sports clubs also well represented.

Those participants represent 21 nationalities, speak 20 different languages and are based in 20 different countries across four continents. This reflects the multicultural nature of the 20-month course, which consists of nine week-long seminars in seven European cities, before heading to New York and Tokyo.

Setting the scene

The opening week in Paris set the scene for what is to follow, as the topic of the context of international sport at institutional, legal and economic level was discussed and put into social, technological and media contexts. Areas covered in future seminars will range from commercial rights exploitation, social dialogue, match-fixing, doping and social responsibility to in-depth analyses of legal, political and economic issues, such as competition law, litigation prevention, risk management, regulation and media policy.

Răzvan Burleanu, president of the Romanian Football Federation, sees MESGO as the perfect platform to help him implement his vision for the association. "I have the will to implement change," he said. "I consider MESGO as vital to keep the federation on the path to success. For me, it's all about the commitment to improving sports governance in Romanian football."

As well as the academic side, the programme provides participants with opportunities for knowledge-sharing, personal development and making new professional contacts. Burleanu added: "Team sports, and football especially, show that extraordinary things can happen when committed people come together as a team. Whatever the size of the national association, there are benefits to be gained from the kinds of modern management



The latest MESGO cohort as they embark on a unique two-year programme that explores the economic, political and legal dimensions of professional sport at international level.

tools that I'm looking forward to finding out about on this programme."

A great learning experience

The Irish Football Association (IFA) is already feeling the benefits of MESGO III, chief executive Patrick Nelson having been among the graduates. "It was a fantastic bunch of people that I did MESGO with," he said. "I had fantastic experiences, I saw world-class speakers in world-class locations and it was a great learning experience.

"I chose an area that would make a real difference for us at the IFA when I chose my subject for my dissertation – independent non-executive directors. We have a mission to be one of the best-governed sporting bodies and my experience in researching this subject and writing a thesis on it gives us some guiding lights on the way forward." And his advice for the current students? "Start writing early!"

Created by initiatives from internationally renowned universities and research centres, MESGO has been developed as a partnership between the members of the Association of European Team Sports and has UEFA's full support. 

COMPETITIONS



The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, with the UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin, and the chairman of The FA, Greg Clarke.

UEFA EURO 2020 LOGO UNVEILED

The countdown to EURO 2020 officially began at London's City Hall on 21 September, when the tournament's visual identity and London's host city logo were unveiled by the newly elected UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin, together with the new chairman of The Football Association, Greg Clarke, and the mayor of London, Sadiq Khan.

The logo for EURO 2020 features the Henri Delaunay Cup standing on a bridge – a universal symbol of togetherness and unity – surrounded by celebrating fans. That bridge theme will be repeated in the logos of all 13 host cities, with the iconic Tower Bridge taking centre stage in London's logo. The remaining 12 logos will be unveiled one by one at individual launch events.

At the ceremony in London, Aleksander Čeferin said: "Twenty-four years after EURO '96, football will once again return to its mythical cradle. It is clear that London, and Wembley, will bring outstanding organisational expertise to this event. I am sure that supporters, visitors and guests will flock to this distinguished city to experience a remarkable week of football and festivities that will bring the tournament to a fittingly

momentous climax. There is great pleasure in being able to bring EURO 2020 to so many countries and cities, to see football acting as a bridge between nations, and to bring the competition closer to the fans, who are the essential lifeblood of the game."

Why a 'EURO for Europe'?

EURO 2020 will mark 60 years of the European Football Championship, and to celebrate that fact, the tournament will be shared between 13 European host cities, giving fans across the continent a chance to be part of the action. "Instead of having a party in one country, we will have a party all over Europe," explained the then UEFA general secretary, Gianni Infantino, as he introduced the concept behind the tournament in 2012. "2020 is the 60th anniversary of the first European Football Championship. Obviously, the fact that future EUROS will feature 24 teams instead of 16 will place an additional burden on countries hosting such an event. This will make it much more difficult for many countries, with the requirements becoming bigger and bigger.

"An opportunity like this to give many cities and many countries the chance to

host even just one part of a EURO is certainly an excellent thing, especially in times when you have an economic situation where you cannot expect countries to invest in the facilities that such an event requires."

How will teams qualify?

The success of the competition's first 24-team final round – EURO 2016 – vindicated UEFA's decision to widen the net for the final tournament, and EURO 2020 will also be contested by 24 sides. Nobody will qualify automatically, however, with all of the teams representing host nations required to earn their place in the final round.

The European Qualifiers – which will run from March to November 2019 – will provide the names of 20 finalists, namely the top two teams in each of the ten qualifying groups. In addition, four more countries will qualify via the new UEFA Nations League, with the decisive play-offs being staged in March 2020.

The format of the final round will be the same as at EURO 2016. The top two in each of the six groups will proceed to the round of 16, along with the four best third-placed teams. ☑

Which cities will host games?



DISTRIBUTION TO PARTICIPATING CLUBS

The 32 clubs that took part in the 2015/16 UEFA Champions League group stage and the ten that were knocked out in the play-offs shared more than €1.345bn in payments from UEFA, over €315m more than the previous season.

The 20 clubs that took part in the play-offs – with the ten winning clubs qualifying for the Champions League group stage, and the other ten joining the UEFA Europa League group stage – shared €50m. Total participation payments reached over €1.345bn, with an additional €4.17m allocated to the European Club Association (ECA), in accordance with its memorandum of understanding with UEFA.

This brought the total distribution from last season's competition up to over €1.349bn. Each club was entitled to a minimum payment for participating in the competition. In addition, every group stage win or draw brought performance bonuses. The clubs also received bonuses for each knockout round they reached. Monies from the market pool were divided according to the proportional

value of the national TV market allocated to each individual club, among other factors.

The highest earners were Manchester City FC (€83.8m), Real Madrid CF (€80m), Juventus (€76.2m) and Paris Saint-Germain (€70.8m).

A new distribution system was introduced for the 2015/16 season, in which all net revenue from the club competitions (including the sale of tickets and hospitality packages for the Champions League and Europa League finals and the UEFA Super Cup) are now centralised, in one single pot, and reallocated to the Champions League and Europa League on a fixed ratio of 3.3:1. Under this system, the amounts available to the clubs from the Champions League have increased considerably compared with the 2012–15 cycle.

The figures in the table do not include solidarity payments to any of the clubs participating in the qualifying rounds, nor do they include any additional solidarity payments made to leagues for club youth development projects.

UEFA via Getty Images



UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: DISTRIBUTION TO CLUBS 2015/16 IN EUROS

	Play-offs	Participation bonus	Performance bonus	Market pool	Round of 16	Quarter-finals	Semi-finals	Final	Total
Group A									
FC Shakhtar Donetsk	2,000,000	12,000,000	1,608,000	2,015,000					17,623,000
París Saint-Germain		12,000,000	6,932,000	40,371,000	5,500,000	6,000,000			70,803,000
Malmö FF	2,000,000	12,000,000	1,608,000	4,901,000					20,509,000
Real Madrid CF		12,000,000	8,540,000	26,027,000	5,500,000	6,000,000	7,000,000	15,000,000	80,067,000
Group B									
Manchester United FC	2,000,000	12,000,000	4,216,000	19,914,000					38,130,000
VfL Wolfsburg		12,000,000	6,432,000	20,360,000	5,500,000	6,000,000			50,292,000
PFC CSKA Moskva	2,000,000	12,000,000	2,108,000	3,103,000					19,211,000
PSV Eindhoven		12,000,000	5,324,000	11,423,000	5,500,000				34,247,000
Group C									
FC Astana	2,000,000	12,000,000	2,000,000	1,292,000					17,292,000
Galatasaray A.Ş.		12,000,000	2,608,000	17,881,000					32,489,000
Club Atlético de Madrid	2,000,000	12,000,000	6,932,000	21,733,000	5,500,000	6,000,000	7,000,000	10,500,000	69,665,000
SL Benfica		12,000,000	5,324,000	7,331,000	5,500,000	6,000,000			36,155,000
Group D									
VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach	12,000,000	2,608,000	12,556,000						27,164,000
Manchester City FC	12,000,000	6,432,000	46,921,000	5,500,000	6,000,000	7,000,000			83,853,000
Juventus Football Club		12,000,000	5,824,000	52,932,000	5,500,000				76,256,000
Sevilla FC	12,000,000	3,216,000	5,968,000						21,184,000
Group E									
FC Barcelona	12,000,000	7,432,000	25,620,000	5,500,000	6,000,000				56,552,000
Bayer 04 Leverkusen	2,000,000	12,000,000	3,108,000	9,567,000					26,675,000
FC BATE Borisov	2,000,000	12,000,000	2,608,000	1,473,000					18,081,000
AS Roma		12,000,000	3,108,000	47,853,000	5,500,000				68,461,000
Group F									
FC Bayern München	12,000,000	8,040,000	25,851,000	5,500,000	6,000,000	7,000,000			64,391,000
GNK Dinamo	2,000,000	12,000,000	1,608,000	2,629,000					18,237,000
Arsenal FC		12,000,000	4,824,000	31,099,000	5,500,000				53,423,000
Olympiacos FC	12,000,000	4,824,000	16,134,000						32,958,000
Group G									
Maccabi Tel-Aviv FC	2,000,000	12,000,000		2,683,000					16,683,000
FC Dynamo Kyiv		12,000,000	5,824,000	3,318,000	5,500,000				26,642,000
FC Porto	12,000,000	5,324,000	4,916,000						22,240,000
Chelsea FC		12,000,000	6,932,000	44,742,000	5,500,000				69,174,000
Group H									
Olympique Lyonnais	12,000,000	2,108,000	27,770,000						41,878,000
Valencia CF	2,000,000	12,000,000	3,216,000	9,776,000					26,992,000
Football Club Zenit		12,000,000	8,040,000	5,138,000	5,500,000				30,678,000
KAA Gent	12,000,000	5,324,000	5,119,000	5,500,000					27,943,000
Clubs eliminated in play-offs									
APOEL FC	3,000,000								3,000,000
KS Skënderbeu	3,000,000								3,000,000
Celtic FC	3,000,000								3,000,000
FC Basel 1893	3,000,000								3,000,000
FK Partizan	3,000,000								3,000,000
Lazio	3,000,000		10,810,000						13,810,000
Club Brugge KV	3,000,000		368,000						3,368,000
Sporting Clube de Portugal	3,000,000		954,000						3,954,000
SK Rapid Wien	3,000,000								3,000,000
AS Monaco FC	3,000,000		7,178,000						10,178,000
Total 32 clubs	50,000,000	384,000,000	144,032,000	577,726,000	88,000,000	48,000,000	28,000,000	25,500,000	1,345,258,000
Allocated to the European Club Association in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with UEFA									4,170,000
Total									1,349,428,000



UEFA via Getty Images

HIGHER REVENUE DISTRIBUTION IN 2015/16

More than €411.1m in payments from UEFA have been shared by the 56 clubs that took part in the UEFA Europa League group stage and/or knockout phase in the 2015/16 season.

With the new distribution system, the 48 clubs that participated in the Europa League group stage and the eight clubs that joined after finishing in third place in their respective Champions League groups benefitted from a global amount higher than the commercial revenues of the Europa League.

The clubs receiving the highest amounts were Liverpool FC (€37.8m), Tottenham Hotspur FC (€20.8m), Villareal CF (€16.4m) and S.S. Lazio (€15.3m).

The new distribution system introduced for the 2015/16 season means that the amounts available to the clubs from the Europa League have risen substantially compared with the 2012–15 cycle.

The figures in the table do not include solidarity payments to any of the clubs – including those involved in the group stage – participating in the qualifying rounds, nor do they include any additional solidarity payments made to leagues for clubs' youth development projects or any other payments made to clubs.

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE: DISTRIBUTION TO CLUBS 2015/16 IN EUROS

	Participation bonus	Performance bonus	Market pool	Round of 32	Round of 16	Quarter-finals	Semi-finals	Final	Total
Group A									
Celtic FC	2,400,000	360,000	3,051,070						5,811,070
Fenerbahçe SK	2,400,000	1,419,200	9,460,830	500,000	750,000				14,530,030
Molde FK	2,400,000	1,953,800	1,914,271	500,000					6,768,071
AFC Ajax	2,400,000	884,600	1,540,378						4,824,978
Group B									
FC Rubin Kazan	2,400,000	764,600	1,358,280						4,522,880
FC Girondins de Bordeaux	2,400,000	480,000	3,549,583						6,429,583
Liverpool FC	2,400,000	1,789,200	26,406,398	500,000	750,000	1,000,000	1,500,000	3,500,000	37,845,598
FC Sion	2,400,000	1,419,200	962,974	500,000					5,282,174
Group C									
FC Krasnodar	2,400,000	2,238,400	1,604,615	500,000					6,743,015
FC Qābālā	2,400,000	240,000	382,565						3,022,565
PAOK FC	2,400,000	884,600	2,227,839						5,512,439
Borussia Dortmund	2,400,000	1,583,800	8,040,307	500,000	750,000	1,000,000			14,274,107
Group D									
Club Brugge KV	2,400,000	644,600	1,041,032						4,085,632
FC Midtjylland	2,400,000	1,179,200	2,820,635	500,000					6,899,835
Legia Warszawa SA	2,400,000	524,600	1,434,771						4,359,371
SSC Napoli	2,400,000	2,927,600	6,690,425	500,000					12,518,025
Group E									
FC Dinamo Minsk	2,400,000	404,600	456,204						3,260,804
SK Rapid Wien	2,400,000	2,523,000	2,209,827	500,000					7,632,827
Villarreal CF	2,400,000	1,988,400	8,359,646	500,000	750,000	1,000,000	1,500,000		16,498,046
FC Viktoria Plzeň	2,400,000	524,600	518,422						3,443,022
Group F									
Olympique de Marseille	2,400,000	1,868,400	4,534,925	500,000					9,303,325
FC Slovan Liberec	2,400,000	929,200	551,821						3,881,021
SC Braga	2,400,000	2,238,400	1,636,256	500,000	750,000	1,000,000			8,524,656
FC Groningen	2,400,000	240,000	1,808,982						4,448,982
Group G									
Rosenborg BK	2,400,000	240,000	1,282,766						3,922,766
FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk	2,400,000	929,200	1,672,208						5,001,408
S.S. Lazio	2,400,000	2,358,400	9,357,556	500,000	750,000	1,000,000			15,365,956
AS Saint-Étienne	2,400,000	1,419,200	4,534,925	500,000					8,854,125
Group H									
Besiktas JK	2,400,000	1,169,200	6,512,286						10,081,486
Sporting Clube de Portugal	2,400,000	1,583,800	1,131,355	500,000					5,615,155
FC Lokomotiv Moskva	2,400,000	1,953,800	1,832,159	500,000					6,685,959
KS Skënderbeu	2,400,000	404,600	519,649						3,324,249
Group I									
CF Os Belenenses	2,400,000	644,600	916,934						3,961,534
ACF Fiorentina	2,400,000	1,583,800	6,690,425	500,000					11,174,225
FC Basel 1893	2,400,000	2,238,400	980,585	500,000	750,000				6,868,985
KKS Lech Poznań	2,400,000	644,600	1,169,470						4,214,070
Group J									
FK Qarabağ	2,400,000	524,600	383,703						3,308,303
RSC Anderlecht	2,400,000	1,583,800	1,244,828	500,000	750,000				6,478,628
AS Monaco FC	2,400,000	764,600	3,549,583						6,714,183
Tottenham Hotspur FC	2,400,000	2,238,400	14,967,056	500,000	750,000				20,855,456
Group K									
AC Sparta Praha	2,400,000	1,823,800	755,687	500,000	750,000	1,000,000			7,229,487
APOEL FC	2,400,000	404,600	619,600						3,424,200
FC Schalke 04	2,400,000	2,358,400	4,756,484	500,000					10,014,884
Asteras Tripolis FC	2,400,000	524,600	2,227,839						5,152,439
Group L									
FC Augsburg	2,400,000	1,463,800	4,756,484	500,000					9,120,284
FK Partizan	2,400,000	1,213,800	826,292						4,440,092
AZ	2,400,000	524,600	1,540,378						4,464,978
Athletic Club	2,400,000	2,238,400	7,374,361	500,000	750,000	1,000,000			14,262,761
Clubs from Champions League									
FC Shakhtar Donetsk		903,665	500,000	750,000	1,000,000	1,500,000			4,653,665
Manchester United FC		2,551,427	500,000	750,000					3,801,427
Galatasaray A.Ş.		952,497	500,000						1,452,497
Sevilla FC		3,598,973	500,000	750,000	1,000,000	1,500,000	6,500,000		13,848,973
Bayer 04 Leverkusen		1,413,903	500,000	750,000					2,663,903
Olympiacos FC		574,783	500,000						1,074,783
FC Porto		90,323	500,000						590,323
Valencia CF		861,760	500,000	750,000					2,111,760
Total	115,200,000	60,843,000	183,112,000	16,000,000	12,000,000	8,000,000	6,000,000	10,000,000	411,155,000

2015/16 SOLIDARITY PAYMENTS FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Revenue from the European club competitions also benefits top division clubs that do not participate in the competitions. Consequently, an increased total of €120.8m in UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League income for the 2015/16 season is being redistributed to these clubs, and must be used for their youth development and local community programmes.

The €120.8m – up from €85m in 2014/15 – is being made available for distribution via the professional leagues or the national associations.

This substantially higher amount results from the new distribution system introduced for the 2015/16 campaign, combined with increased gross commercial revenue. The new system strengthens UEFA's solidarity principle, an essential component of UEFA's key values, because it ensures a fairer distribution of solidarity amounts to European clubs.

The associations are divided into two categories for the payments:

- 17 associations and/or leagues with participants in the 2015/16 Champions League group stage (€96.6m, up from €73.2m in 2014/15);
- 37 associations and/or leagues without participants in the 2015/16 Champions League group stage (€24.2m, up from €11.8m in 2014/15);

Under the new distribution arrangements, 60% of the available amounts will be distributed in equal shares among all national associations and/or leagues, and 40% will be distributed according to the value of the TV market of each association in the Champions League.

In principle, the money should be shared equally between all top division clubs concerned in each league or association. However, as this money is intended for youth development or local community projects, a club must run an approved youth development programme in accordance with the national club licensing manual and accredited by UEFA.



UEFA via Getty Images

PAYMENTS TO NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTED IN THE GROUP STAGE

2015/16 SEASON	€
England	13,416,980
Italy	11,439,057
Spain	9,066,546
France	8,741,886
Germany	7,907,048
Turkey	4,653,319
Greece	4,510,612
Netherlands	4,125,302
Portugal	4,119,950
Russia	3,789,939
Sweden	3,695,396
Belgium	3,684,693
Ukraine	3,590,149
Israel	3,540,201
Croatia	3,526,823
Belarus	3,434,955
Kazakhstan	3,425,144
TOTAL	96,668,000



PAYMENTS TO NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS NOT REPRESENTED IN THE GROUP STAGE

2015/16 SEASON	€
Norway	2,144,257
Scotland	2,122,595
Denmark	1,972,075
Poland	1,447,199
Romania	1,113,944
Austria	858,449
Hungary	791,798
Republic of Ireland	691,821
Serbia	682,379
Switzerland	624,781
Bulgaria	595,566
Czech Republic	537,969
Slovenia	511,308
Cyprus	509,642
Albania	486,314
Finland	475,206
Bosnia and Herzegovina	463,986
Malta	455,210
Iceland	450,211
Slovakia	431,882
FYR Macedonia	431,605
Montenegro	421,329
Lithuania	414,109
Azerbaijan	408,832
Georgia	405,889
Latvia	397,446
Moldova	395,780
Armenia	395,613
Estonia	394,669
Andorra	391,892
Faroé Islands	391,892
Gibraltar	391,892
Liechtenstein	391,892
Luxembourg	391,892
Northern Ireland	391,892
San Marino	391,892
Wales	391,892
TOTAL	24,167,000



€81M SHARED AMONG 179 CLUBS IN 2016/17

UEFA's solidarity payments have been enhanced as part of the new distribution agreement initially put in place for the 2015/16 season, meaning that this season, 2016/17, clubs are receiving increased amounts from the revenue generated by the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League.

In total, 179 clubs have received a solidarity share of €81m. The beneficiaries are clubs eliminated in one of the three qualifying rounds of the Champions League and Europa League, and clubs that go out of the Europa League at the play-off stage.

Clubs involved in the UEFA Champions League

Domestic champions that do not qualify for the group stage each receive €260,000, in addition to the amounts due for participation in each qualifying round.

Clubs participating in the qualifying rounds and not qualifying for the group stage receive the following amounts for each round played:

- First qualifying round: €220,000
- Second qualifying round: €320,000
- Third qualifying round: €420,000 (only eliminated clubs)

No solidarity payments are made for the play-offs, but each of the 20 clubs involved is entitled to the following play-off allocation: €2m for each winner, and €3m for each club that is eliminated. Clubs eliminated at this stage retain the payments made for taking part in the first and second qualifying rounds, as applicable.

Clubs involved in the UEFA Europa League

All clubs taking part in the qualifying rounds receive the following amounts per round played, even if they qualify for the group stage:

- First qualifying round: €215,000
- Second qualifying round: €225,000
- Third qualifying round: €235,000

In addition, each club eliminated in the play-offs receives €245,000. No solidarity payments are made to winners of the play-off matches. However, they retain the payments received for the first, second and third qualifying rounds, as applicable.

Significant payment increase

The significant increase in solidarity payments to clubs that came into force for the 2015/16 season particularly benefits those clubs that failed to qualify for the group stage of either the Champions League or Europa League, and thus constitutes an important example of the proper implementation of the solidarity principle that is a cornerstone of UEFA's key values.



All figures in euros

Association	Clubs	Champions League	Europa League	Total
ALBANIA	FK Partizani	740,000	460,000	1,200,000
	KF Teuta		215,000	215,000
	FK Kukësi		440,000	440,000
Total association				1,855,000
ANDORRA	FC Santa Coloma	480,000		480,000
	FC Lusitans		215,000	215,000
	UE Santa Coloma		215,000	215,000
Total association				910,000
ARMENIA	Alashkert FC	800,000		800,000
	FC Pyunik		215,000	215,000
	FC Shirak		440,000	440,000
	FC Banants		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,670,000

Association	Clubs	Champions League	Europa League	Total
AUSTRIA	FC Salzburg	580,000		580,000
	VfB Admira Wacker Mödling		675,000	675,000
	FK Austria Wien		460,000	460,000
	SK Rapid Wien		235,000	235,000
Total association				1,950,000
AZERBAIJAN	Qarabağ FK	1,000,000		1,000,000
	Neftçi PFK		440,000	440,000
	Qəbələ FK		675,000	675,000
	Kəpəz PFK		440,000	440,000
Total association				2,555,000
BELARUS	FC BATE Borisov	1,000,000	245,000	1,245,000
	FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk		440,000	440,000
	FC Dinamo Minsk		675,000	675,000
	FC Torpedo-Belaz Zhodino		460,000	460,000
Total association				2,820,000
BELGIUM	RSC Anderlecht	420,000		420,000
	KRC Genk		460,000	460,000
	KAA Gent		235,000	235,000
Total association				1,115,000
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	HŠK Zrinjski	580,000		580,000
	FK Radnički Bijeljina		215,000	215,000
	NK Široki Brijeg		215,000	215,000
	FK Sloboda Tuzla		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,225,000
BULGARIA	PFC Beroe Stara Zagora		440,000	440,000
	PFC Slavia Sofia		215,000	215,000
	PFC Levski Sofia		225,000	225,000
Total association				880,000
CROATIA	NK Lokomotiva Zagreb		920,000	920,000
	HNK Hajduk Split		705,000	705,000
	HNK Rijeka		235,000	235,000
Total association				1,860,000
CYPRUS	APOEL FC	580,000		580,000
	AC Omonia		440,000	440,000
	AEK Larnaca FC		920,000	920,000
	Apollon Limassol FC		235,000	235,000
Total association				2,175,000
CZECH REPUBLIC	FC Viktoria Plzeň	260,000		260,000
	AC Sparta Praha	420,000		420,000
	SK Slavia Praha		705,000	705,000
	FK Mladá Boleslav		235,000	235,000
	FC Slovan Liberec		235,000	235,000
Total association				1,855,000
DENMARK	Brøndby IF		920,000	920,000
	FC Midtjylland		920,000	920,000
	SønderjyskE		705,000	705,000
Total association				2,545,000
ENGLAND	West Ham United FC		480,000	480,000
Total association				480,000
ESTONIA	FC Flora Tallinn	480,000		480,000
	JK Nõmme Kalju		675,000	675,000
	FCI Tallinn		215,000	215,000
	FC Levadia Tallinn		440,000	440,000
Total association				1,810,000
FAROE ISLANDS	B36 Tórshavn	480,000		480,000
	Vikingur		215,000	215,000
	HB Tórshavn		215,000	215,000
	NSÍ Runavík		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,125,000
FINLAND	SJK Seinäjoki	580,000		580,000
	IFK Mariehamn		215,000	215,000
	HJK Helsinki		675,000	675,000
	RoPS Rovaniemi		440,000	440,000
Total association				1,910,000
FRANCE	AS Saint-Étienne		235,000	235,000
	LOSC Lille		235,000	235,000
Total association				470,000
GEORGIA	FC Dinamo Tbilisi	1,000,000	245,000	1,245,000
	FC Samtredia		215,000	215,000
	FC Chikhura Sachkhere		215,000	215,000
	FC Dila Gori		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,890,000

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Association	Clubs	Champions League	Europa League	Total
GERMANY	Hertha BSC Berlin		235,000	235,000
Total association				235,000
GIBRALTAR	Lincoln FC	800,000	800,000	800,000
	Europa FC		440,000	440,000
Total association				1,240,000
GREECE	PAOK FC	420,000		420,000
	Olympiacos FC	680,000		680,000
	PAS Giannina FC		460,000	460,000
	AEK Athens FC		235,000	235,000
	Panathinaikos FC		235,000	235,000
Total association				2,030,000
HUNGARY	Ferencvárosi TC	580,000		580,000
	Debreceni VSC		440,000	440,000
	MTK Budapest		440,000	440,000
	Videoton FC		675,000	675,000
Total association				2,135,000
ICELAND	FH Hafnarfjördur	580,000		580,000
	Valur Reykjavík		215,000	215,000
	KR Reykjavík		440,000	440,000
	Breidablik		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,450,000
ISRAEL	Hapoel Beer-Sheva FC	580,000		580,000
	Beitar Jerusalem FC		920,000	920,000
	Maccabi Tel-Aviv FC		675,000	675,000
	Maccabi Haifa FC		225,000	225,000
Total association				2,400,000
ITALY	US Sassuolo Calcio		235,000	235,000
Total association				235,000
KAZAKHSTAN	FC Astana	1,000,000		1,000,000
	FC Kairat Almaty		440,000	440,000
	FC Ordabasy Shymkent		215,000	215,000
	FC Aktobe		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,870,000
LATVIA	FK Liepāja	580,000		580,000
	FK Spartaks Jūrmala		215,000	215,000
	FK Jelgava		675,000	675,000
	FK Ventspils		440,000	440,000
Total association				1,910,000
LIECHTENSTEIN	FC Vaduz		440,000	440,000
Total association				440,000
LITHUANIA	FK Žalgiris Vilnius	580,000		580,000
	FK Süduba		215,000	215,000
	FK Trakai		215,000	215,000
	FK Atlantas		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,225,000
LUXEMBOURG	F91 Dudelange	580,000		580,000
	CS Fola Esch		215,000	215,000
	AS Jeunesse Esch		215,000	215,000
	FC Differdange 03		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,225,000
FYR MACEDONIA	FK Vardar	580,000		580,000
	FK Sileks		215,000	215,000
	KF Shkëndija		920,000	920,000
	FK Rabotnicki		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,930,000
MALTA	Valletta FC	800,000		800,000
	Hibernians FC		215,000	215,000
	Birkirkara FC		675,000	675,000
	Balzan FC		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,905,000
MOLDOVA	FC Sheriff	580,000		580,000
	FC Zaria Balti		215,000	215,000
	FC Dacia Chișinău		215,000	215,000
	FC Zimbru Chișinău		440,000	440,000
Total association				1,450,000
MONTENEGRO	FK Mladost Podgorica	580,000		580,000
	FK Budućnost Podgorica		440,000	440,000
	FK Rudar Pljevlja		215,000	215,000
	FK Bokelj		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,450,000
NETHERLANDS	AZ Alkmaar		235,000	235,000
	Heracles Almelo		235,000	235,000
Total association				470,000

Association	Clubs	Champions League	Europa League	Total
NORTHERN IRELAND	Crusaders FC	580,000		580,000
	Cliftonville FC		440,000	440,000
	Glenavon FC		215,000	215,000
	Linfield FC		215,000	215,000
Total association				1,450,000
NORWAY	Rosenborg BK	1,000,000	245,000	1,245,000
	Stabæk Fotball		215,000	215,000
	Odds BK		440,000	440,000
	Strømsgodset IF		225,000	225,000
Total association				2,125,000
POLAND	MKS Cracovia Kraków		215,000	215,000
	Zagłębie Lubin		675,000	675,000
	GKS Piast Gliwice		225,000	225,000
Total association				1,115,000
PORTUGAL	Rio Ave FC		235,000	235,000
	FC Arouca		480,000	480,000
Total association				715,000
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	Dundalk FC	580,000		580,000
	Cork City FC		675,000	675,000
	Shamrock Rovers FC		215,000	215,000
	Saint Patrick's Athletic FC		440,000	440,000
Total association				1,910,000
ROMANIA	FC Astra Giurgiu	680,000		680,000
	CSMS lași		225,000	225,000
	FC Viitorul Constanța SA		235,000	235,000
	CS Pandurii Târgu Jiu		235,000	235,000
Total association				1,375,000
RUSSIA	FC Krasnodar		235,000	235,000
	FC Spartak Moskva		235,000	235,000
Total association				470,000
SAN MARINO	SP Tre Penne	480,000		480,000
	SS Folgore		215,000	215,000
	SP La Fiorita		215,000	215,000
Total association				910,000
SCOTLAND	Heart of Midlothian FC		440,000	440,000
	Aberdeen FC		675,000	675,000
	Hibernian FC		225,000	225,000
Total association				1,340,000
SERBIA	FK Crvena Zvezda	1,000,000	245,000	1,245,000
	FK Vojvodina		920,000	920,000
	FK Čukarički		440,000	440,000
	FK Partizan		225,000	225,000
Total association				2,830,000
SLOVAKIA	AS Trenčín	1,000,000	245,000	1,245,000
	ŠK Slovan Bratislava		440,000	440,000
	Spartak Myjava		215,000	215,000
	FC Spartak Trnava		675,000	675,000
Total association				2,575,000
SLOVENIA	NK Olimpija Ljubljana	580,000		580,000
	ND Gorica		215,000	215,000
	NK Domžale		675,000	675,000
	NK Maribor		705,000	705,000
Total association				2,175,000
SWEDEN	IFK Norrköping	580,000		580,000
	IFK Göteborg		920,000	920,000
	AIK		675,000	675,000
	BK Häcken		225,000	225,000
Total association				2,400,000
SWITZERLAND	Grasshopper Club Zürich		705,000	705,000
	FC Luzern		235,000	235,000
Total association				940,000
TURKEY	Fenerbahçe SK	420,000		420,000
	Osmanlıspor A.Ş		460,000	460,000
	İstanbul Başakşehir		480,000	480,000
Total association				1,360,000
UKRAINE	FC Shakhtar Donetsk	420,000		420,000
	FC Vorskla Poltava		235,000	235,000
	FC Olexandryia		235,000	235,000
Total association				890,000
WALES	The New Saints FC	800,000		800,000
	Llandudno Town FC		215,000	215,000
	Bala Town FC		215,000	215,000
	Connah's Quay Nomads FC		440,000	440,000
Total association				1,670,000
TOTAL				80,950,000

STADIUM SAFETY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Safety and security risks at football events, potential liabilities for organisers, and the threat of terrorist attacks at matches were central topics that dominated the latest UEFA-EU Stadium and Security Conference in Bucharest on 8 September.



Liability and risks was the theme of the gathering, attended by over 300 delegates from UEFA, the EU, national associations, clubs, police forces and other partners.

The conference heard that safety and security risks represent a significant challenge for UEFA, national associations, clubs, venue owners and other participants, and can concern stadium construction, violence inside or outside stadiums, the use of pyrotechnics or potential terrorist actions.

UEFA Executive Committee member and UEFA Stadium and Security Committee deputy chairman František Laurinec told the audience that safety risks at football events remained "an ever-present reality – and with risks comes liability".

Laurinec urged all stadium and safety stakeholders to heed European and national laws, stressing that all stadiums must conform to European safety standards. "Whether you are a police officer, a stadium safety officer or an event organiser," he said, "failure to mitigate against foreseeable or preventable risks comes with a risk of liability for the responsible party."

The conference heard that the threat of terrorist incidents at football matches was now a priority item on the security agenda. "We have all been reminded that football events are a target," Laurinec reflected. "We must all pull together to counter the risk of terrorism. None of us can feel remotely complacent. People's lives are at stake."

Delegates agreed that integrated cooperation involving governments, police, security forces,

match organisers and the general public must be increased. Effective security controls by well-trained security staff around stadiums were crucial as a deterrent, and people should be encouraged to report or give information to the police on any suspicious people or incidents.

No excuse for disorder

In a message to the conference, European Commission first vice-president Frans Timmermans called for no-nonsense exclusion measures to deal with violence around football matches. "Every season, millions of football fans from all European countries travel all across Europe to support their teams," he said. "The overwhelming majority of these fans just want to enjoy the game."

"Unfortunately," he added, "some see the games as an opportunity for crime, disturbance and hooliganism. There can never be an excuse for football violence and disorder. That means that the governments and the police must be at the forefront of its prevention. Keep these people away from football."

Another important focal point in Bucharest was the health and safety risks associated with the use of pyrotechnics in stadiums – responsible for the single highest number of incidents at UEFA matches last season. "UEFA has never accepted that an activity which puts at risk the lives and health of supporters should be tolerated," said František Laurinec.

UEFA's head of stadium and security, Marc Timmer, explained the body's new stadium and security strategy, featuring a comprehensive support programme for national associations. The strategy includes reviews of current national and international strategies and arrangements, support in developing new strategies and legal frameworks, and ongoing training for stadium safety officers, stewards and police.

The strategy is fully aligned with the Council of Europe's new Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events. "The new convention represents a unique opportunity to make European football more safe, secure and welcoming," said Timmer. ☈

"The overwhelming majority of fans just want to enjoy the game."

**Frans Timmermans
European Commission
first vice-president**

2016/17 ANTI-DOPING DRIVE IN FULL SWING

UEFA's comprehensive anti-doping programme has been strengthened further this season, with a firm warning given to players that if they take banned substances, they risk a heavy punishment that could have a disastrous impact on their football career.

Anti-doping workshops held in Monaco during the week of events marking the start of UEFA's new club competition season were attended by clubs participating in the 2016/17 UEFA Champions League, UEFA Europa League and UEFA Youth League.

Those meetings served to explain what UEFA requires from clubs, players and officials, as well as emphasising UEFA's commitment to implementing an intelligent and effective testing programme with a strong deterrent effect, in conjunction with national anti-doping organisations (NADOs) across Europe.

By the end of September this year, 27 NADOs had entered into cooperation agreements with UEFA, supporting the governing body's efforts to create a network of coordination and information sharing across Europe.

This, combined with the use of the World Anti-Doping Agency's centralised ADAMS database of testing information, ensures that UEFA has a full picture of all anti-doping tests conducted on players at national and international level. This information allows UEFA to adjust its own testing programme accordingly, since it knows which players and teams are tested and when, in Europe and around the world.

Biological passports

The clubs were told that UEFA would continue to implement the steroid and blood modules of the Athlete Biological Passport (ABP) programme in its 2016/17 club competitions, after their successful introduction last season. The ABP programme monitors players over a period of time, allowing UEFA not only to detect the effects of doping, but also to gather intelligence for target testing.

The reinforced programme for the 2016/17 campaign follows hot on the heels of UEFA's anti-doping programme for EURO 2016. That programme – the largest ever conducted for a EURO – involved tests before and during the



sportsfile

tournament, in close cooperation with the NADOs of the participating countries. A total of 2,242 samples were collected under the programme, which started back in January, and no positive cases were reported.

In addition to the EURO testing programme, UEFA collected a total of 2,542 samples in its other club and national team competitions during the 2015/16 season, with three players being punished for doping offences by UEFA's disciplinary bodies. Two of those players – one of whom has appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport – received four-year bans, while the third was given a six-month suspension.

Of those 2,542 samples, 1,808 were collected in-competition and 734 out-of-competition. They included 415 blood samples and 802 EPO analyses, all of which came back negative.

This season also sees the continuation of education sessions for teams at each of UEFA's men's and women's Under-17

and Under-19 final tournaments, as well as at the UEFA Youth League finals. Young players, who are considered to be particularly vulnerable to such dangers, are given a clear warning at these sessions that being caught doping – even after taking a substance unintentionally – can quickly nip a promising career in the bud.

Players have to understand that doping is not only cheating, but also hazardous to their health. It is therefore vital that effective anti-doping education is delivered to players, team officials and team doctors in order to protect our sport.

The 55 UEFA member associations should also integrate anti-doping messages into their regular education programmes, particularly at youth level. They can use the material produced by UEFA, or they can work with their respective NADOs, given that many of those organisations have already produced tailor-made material in their native languages on the basis of the standards applied by the World Anti-Doping Agency. ☑

SOCIAL INTEGRATION PROJECT WINS UEFA GRASSROOTS AWARD

CARMEN REDL

 The Austrian Football Association's 'Teamplay ohne Abseits' (team play with no offside) initiative has been awarded the prize for the best project in the 2016 UEFA Grassroots Awards.

This project seeks to foster further integration within the football community and, in the context of nationwide activities organised in cooperation with ZUSAMMEN:ÖSTERREICH, to use the potential that football has from an integration perspective to promote respectful and harmonious coexistence both on and off the pitch. The initiative is aimed at children and young people playing the game in Austria's clubs, who represent both the next generation of footballers and the future of society.

This project, which involves cooperation between Austria's federal ministry for Europe, integration and foreign affairs, the Austrian Integration

Fund, the Austrian Bundesliga and the Austrian Football Association, was officially unveiled back in November 2015 at Vienna's Ernst-Happel-Stadion.

The association's president, Leo Windtner, says: "Football represents one of the best examples of a positive approach to integration. Every day, across Austria's 2,300 clubs, children and young people play together, experiencing a sense of community, with no regard for each other's country of origin, religion or skin colour. We at the Austrian Football Association are always delighted to support initiatives that foster the integration of disadvantaged, displaced or persecuted individuals."

Workshops are organised for clubs' youth teams, exploring the issue of integration at the level of those individual teams and giving young players the opportunity to meet professionals playing the game in Austria. Each workshop



GEPA Pictures

is attended by two integration ambassadors, who provide insight into their personal and sporting backgrounds, talking about constructive cooperation and answering the talented young

players' questions.

The association's sporting director, Willi Ruttensteiner, says: "This initiative is the only one of its kind in Austria and serves as an example to the rest of the sporting community. This important project seeks to further the positive integration that we are already seeing across the country on a daily basis in the 295,000 or so people who are actively playing the game in Austria."

AN EVENT TO MARK THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

ULVIYYA NAJAFOVA

 The Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) recently organised an event to mark the International Day of Peace as part of Peace One Day's 'One Day One Goal' initiative.

This initiative, which involves football matches being played around the world on 21 September, clearly illustrates football's ability to unite people, give hope and strengthen peace-building efforts, while at the same time raising awareness of the International Day of Peace. Thousands of football matches have been played under this banner since 2008, with more than 40,000 people taking part in more than 3,600 matches



last year. The initiative highlights sport's ability to transcend boundaries and

teach values that are central to conflict resolution, such as teamwork, respect and communication, while simultaneously building self-esteem and providing a sense of purpose.

This year, the AFFA organised a friendly match between the Baku International Students Organisation and Azerbaijan's national women's team. The international team consisted of students from all over the world – including countries such as Chad, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Turkmenistan and Yemen. The match was played on a temporary pitch constructed in Ahmadli, a suburb of Baku, and the players released doves into the sky after the game.

BELARUS

www.bff.by

A NEW QUALIFYING CAMPAIGN – A NEW APPROACH

ALEKSANDR ALEINIK

 In a move timed to coincide with the start of the qualifying competition for the 2018 World Cup, the Football Federation of Belarus (BFF) recently stepped up its efforts in the areas of marketing and communications. Having already rebranded the national team as the 'White Wings', it was now time for the BFF to think about improving the interaction between the national side and their fans as part of preparations for the forthcoming qualifying campaign.

This resulted in one of the team's open training sessions being turned into a real football festival, with a number of additional activities being organised. The event was a great success, with more

than 350 people coming to the BFF's training centre on 3 September to wish Aleksandr Hatskevich's team luck ahead of their opening match against France. The main aim was to bring the team closer to all target groups: both families and individual fans, both younger and older generations, and both men and women. Before the squad arrived, supporters had the opportunity to buy the team's new kit or a snack, take part in a mini-competition or just soak up the atmosphere in the company of a DJ. At the end of the training session, everyone had the chance to have a quick chat with the players and coaches, take photographs and, of course, ask for autographs.



With the EURO 2016 runners-up coming to town, it was clear that Paul Pogba and company would attract plenty of attention. As it turned out, though, local fans showed just as much interest in the home side. The whole of Borisov Arena dressed in white for the occasion, and their efforts had the desired effect, with Belarus securing a creditable goalless draw.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

www.nfsbih.ba

UNDER-17S THROUGH TO ELITE ROUND

FUAD KRYAVAC

 Bosnia and Herzegovina have made a very good start to their qualifying campaign for the 2018 World Cup, with the Dragons beating Estonia 5-0 at Stadion Bilino polje in their opening match.

The Under-21s, however, are not doing quite as well. They recently drew 0-0 with Switzerland at Sarajevo's Stadion Grbavica, leaving them bottom of their qualifying group after seven matches, with just three points – their worst position ever in a qualifying competition.

The Under-17s, meanwhile, have made it through to the elite round of the 2016/17 European Under-17 Championship, finishing second in their qualifying round group. In their first two matches in that mini-tournament, they defeated Latvia 3-0 and beat hosts Moldova 1-0. In their third match, however, they faced Russia, who also had maximum points from their first two games, and lost 2-1.



The national Under-19 team recently played two friendly matches against FYR Macedonia in Skopje. The first ended in a 2-2 draw, while the hosts won the second 2-0.

At club youth team level, HŠK Zrinjski's Under-19 side, the national youth champions, were beaten 3-0 at home by FC Zürich in the first round of the UEFA Youth League.

In the women's sector, the senior women's side recently played the final match of their qualifying campaign for Women's EURO 2017, which took place

at the Bosnia and Herzegovina Football Federation's national training centre in Zenica. The Serbian visitors ran out 4-2 winners, leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina in fourth place with 9 points. Ahead of them were Serbia with 10 points, Belgium with 17 points and England with 22 points. Estonia finished bottom of the group with 0 points.

That training centre also played host to an event marking UEFA Grassroots Week. Young boys and girls got to meet the national Under-17 squad, as well as members of the women's national team, who were preparing for their match against Serbia. Participating children were given certificates and a variety of gifts. More than 600 children from all over the country took part in the national association's 2016 Grassroots Week.

This year, the national association also joined UEFA in marking World Heart Day – a World Heart Federation initiative – with the aim of raising awareness of cardiovascular diseases and the advantages of an active and healthy lifestyle. World Heart Day is celebrated on 29 September every year. The slogan for this year's awareness-raising campaign was Power Your Life.

BULGARIA

www.bfunion.bg

SPECIAL TOURNAMENT HIGHLIGHTS ISSUE OF ADDICTION

YORDAN GROZDANOV

 A special tournament entitled '3-0 to the People' was recently organised in Sofia with the support of the Bulgarian Football Union. The tournament, which was held at the Barocco Sport Complex, was contested by six teams representing organisations fighting various forms of addiction. The main message of the event was that not all people are addicts, but all addicts are people.

The teams from Second Chance, New Beginning, Bilani, Betel, Solidarity and Open Eyes played not only very

effective but also very attractive football, with matches being refereed by Hristiana Guteva, Antoaneta Pancheva and Gergana Tsankova. Open Eyes beat Bilani 4-1 in the final and were deserved winners of the tournament.

The event was also attended by the head coach of the Bulgarian national side, Ivaylo Petev, and Bulgarian international Ivelin Popov, who presented participants with signed footballs and shirts and congratulated them on behalf of the rest of the national team.

CZECH REPUBLIC

www.fotbal.cz

TAKING COACH EDUCATION TO LOCAL YOUTH TEAMS

MICHAL BLAŽEJ

 The Football Association of the Czech Republic (FAČR) has given its grassroots managers new cars and football equipment to make it easier for them to visit clubs and coaches in their respective regions.

The cars were delivered to the Czech Republic in the first half of September and the FAČR proposed a graphic design and purchased the necessary football equipment. At the end of September, the keys were handed over to the chairmen and grassroots managers of the country's 14 regional associations at a ceremony at the FAČR headquarters.

Every week, the grassroots managers and their teams of 'flying coaches' will

travel around their regions to take coach education to local clubs at all levels.

The initiative will improve players' skills and develop the coaching skills of amateur coaches (parents who work with players under the age of 12).

In each region, the FAČR has six to eight instructors/ coaches with the UEFA A licence or the UEFA Elite Youth A licence. These coaches work in professional clubs and have extensive experience of working with children. At the request of an amateur club, two instructors will visit and give a 90-minute demonstration training session for amateur coaches and parents for players in the target age groups (U6s–U12s). The training session is followed by a 90-minute discussion with the amateur coaches, volunteers and parents, who also receive a poster and training DVD, from which they can continue to learn new skills to use in their work with children.



CROATIA

www.hns-cff.hr

PREPARATIONS STEPPED UP AHEAD OF FINAL TOURNAMENT

TOMISLAV PACAK

 Eight months before the final round of the European Under-17 Championship kicks off in Croatia, the Croatian Football Federation (HNS) has been stepping up its preparations for the event – the first youth tournament to take place in the country. Through a number of teleconferences with UEFA representatives, members of the HNS's local organising committee (LOC), led by tournament director Romeo Jozak, have been learning about all the various requirements and obligations that need to be met over the next few months.

At the end of September, the HNS organised a four-team Under-17 Croatia Cup tournament as a rehearsal for next year. England, Germany and Greece joined Croatia for the four-day event, with UEFA staff on hand to check the stadiums, hotels, training pitches and other facilities. UEFA representatives also met LOC staff and talked in detail about the forthcoming tournament.

As usual, September was a busy month for the HNS, with most of its national teams in action and important events being organised by various divisions, such as its coaching and refereeing departments. Rijeka, for example, was the venue for a coaching seminar, while the island of Rab hosted a seminar for futsal referees.

Rovinj, meanwhile, played host to the 17th National Veterans' Championship. Arbanasi Zadar emerged triumphant, beating VNK Lokomotiva Zagreb on penalties in the final after a gripping match.

The HNS is also proud to report that two of its employees have gained recognition in the world of academia. Dario Bašić, head coach of the national Under-17 team, has successfully defended his doctoral thesis, while Tanja Peraković has completed UEFA's Football Law Programme.

DENMARK

www.dbu.dk

NEW COMMISSION LOOKING AT WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

MARTIN MOGENSEN

 A new commission chaired by Helle Thorning-Schmidt, chief executive of Save the Children International and a former prime minister of Denmark, is to embark on a mission to develop girls' and women's football in Denmark.

The commission, which will seek to come up with new ideas on how to get more girls and women involved in Danish football, will meet a number of times over the next few years and will report to the board of the Danish Football Association (DBU).

The DBU believes that far more girls and women should experience the joys of football and the opportunities it provides in terms of exercise, health,

social integration and fun. What is more, if more girls and women were to get involved in football – both on and off the pitch – football would, in turn, benefit greatly from the resulting increase in diversity.

One of the commission's objectives is to come up with ideas on how to make playing football and working in the football industry a more attractive prospect, increasing participation on the pitch and getting more women into leadership positions in Danish football.

This commission is just one of a number of new initiatives launched by the DBU in the area of girls' and women's football. In spring of this year, a disturbing report entitled 'Girls' Voices' was published,



Anders Kjærbye

which revealed, among other things, that girls in the world of football do not feel appreciated. The same sentiments have unfortunately been expressed by many former members of the women's national team.

ENGLAND

www.thefa.com

GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL SURVEY LAUNCHED

AMY HART

 The Football Association (The FA) recently launched its 2016 Grassroots Football Survey, as it prepares to unveil its first Parklife Football Hub in Sheffield. In October 2015, more than 28,750 players, coaches, referees, staff and volunteers completed the inaugural online survey – the largest survey ever undertaken by The FA. The results provided valuable feedback on the grassroots game and revealed a number of positives, but also underlined some areas for improvement.

The FA is committed to spending £260m on the grassroots game, with facilities being one of the key areas highlighted by last year's survey. The FA's Parklife Football Hub Programme is now well under way, with its first state-of-the-art multi-pitch community football hub, known as 'St George's Park (SGP) Sheffield Graves', officially opening at the end of October. A second pilot hub, 'SGP Sheffield Thornciffe', will open imminently.



The FA

This year's survey will again aim to gather opinions from the 400,000-strong grassroots football workforce, measuring the progress that The FA has made to date and pinpointing areas that require particular attention. Martin Glenn, chief executive of The FA, said: "I am

delighted to announce the launch of the second Grassroots Football Survey. I am hopeful that this year the survey will reach even more people involved in grassroots football and look forward to being able to take their valuable feedback on board."

ESTONIA

www.jalgpall.ee

GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S FOOTBALL ENJOYING STRONG GROWTH

MAARJA SAULEP

The head coach of the Estonian women's national team, Keith Boanas, is set to leave his position at the end of 2016 after eight years in the role. The 57-year-old Englishman has helped to raise both participation levels and standards in girls' and women's football in Estonia. In addition to coaching the women's national team, he has also been responsible for restructuring youth development and coach education in the country.

A major project in that regard has been the establishment of a national Under-15 girls' team. They have progressed very rapidly, playing their first official matches in 2014 and winning the Baltic Cup in their age category just a year later.

There has also been considerable focus on grassroots football. In 2013, the Estonian Football Association (EJL) organised its first-ever 'Live your Goals' festival in cooperation with FIFA, and that event has since become a firm fixture

in the EJL's annual calendar. National team players and coaches have played an active role at those festivals, participating in activities and encouraging people to take up the sport, and thousands of girls have discovered the joys of football as a result.

"The key objective of my job here has been to increase participation, so the opportunity to organise festivals has been crucial. Just as important has been our function as passionate and enthusiastic role models, encouraging people not only to play the game, but also to go out and coach young girls. For me, this has been a major success and something I am very proud of," Boanas said.

Boanas has also made an important contribution to coach education in Estonia. Indeed, he established the country's first ever C licence course for female coaches. Thanks to his efforts, the number of women with coaching qualifications has risen dramatically since 2009, with Estonia now boasting about 40 female coaches with C licences, 15 with UEFA B licences and two with UEFA A licences.

FAROE ISLANDS

www.football.fo

FIRMS INSPIRED BY FOOTBALL LEADERS

TERJI NIELSEN

 In recent years, prominent figures in Faroese football have attracted the attention of a number of Faroese firms, with businesses contacting them to find out more about their approach to leadership.

A good example of this is the Faroe Islands' National Business Day, which takes place every year in late September or early October. At this event, where business leaders from all over the country get together in the capital, Torshavn, to seek inspiration from people – both local and foreign – in high-profile leadership positions, the organisers have turned their attention to football in the last couple of years.

Last year, Lars Olsen, coach of the Faroese national team, was one of the guest speakers at the event. And this year, Pætur Smith Clementsen, the Faroe Islands Football Association's technical director, was asked to give a lecture.

This is a clear indication that people in the corporate sector increasingly regard football coaches and administrators as role models, believing that their approach to leadership can be replicated in a modern business setting. This is a great compliment for the Faroese football community.

FRANCE

www.fff.fr

A SHIRT PACKED WITH HISTORY

LAURA GOUTRY

 The French Cup is celebrating its centenary this season. To mark the occasion, the French Football Federation has designed a special collector's edition shirt, which it sent out to all 1,132 clubs that took part in the fourth round of the competition on 24 and 25 September – including a record 180 clubs from overseas departments and territories.

That distinctive shirt stands out on account of the centenary logo printed on the chest and the fact that the numbers on the back contain the names of all the previous winners of the competition. Those names vary in size, depending on the number of times the club has lifted the

trophy, ranging from Olympique de Pantin, the first winners back in 1917/18, to Olympique de Marseille and Paris Saint-Germain FC, who have won the cup ten times apiece.

Every club that made it to the fourth round was given a full set of kit (shirts, shorts and socks for 16 players), with both home and away kits being distributed. The clubs that progressed to the fifth round were then given a full set of the home or away kit they had not received in the previous round, resulting in kit for another 9,344 players being handed out, making a grand total of enough kit for 27,456 players being distributed altogether.



FSF

GEORGIA

www.gff.ge

NEW PROJECTS TO DEVELOP GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

OTAR GIORGADZE



The inaugural Amateur Cup is under way, bringing together amateur players of all ages from 46 municipalities across the country. This initiative has proved immensely popular in every region, with 250 teams and more than 5,000 players taking part. The winners of the first stage advance to an interregional knockout stage, after which the finalists will face each

other in Tbilisi on 14 December.

Another grassroots football project started on 17 September in Gori in eastern Georgia, where the opening game of the Georgian Amputee League was played. This national championship will be played in a full league format for the first time. The competition aims to increase the involvement of amputee footballers in competitive sport, which, in turn,



allows them to pursue an active and healthy lifestyle.

The growth of football at grassroots level in Georgia is also demonstrated by the unprecedented number of teams participating in this year's national Second League (third tier). A total of 65 sides are taking part, 22 of which were formed in 2016.

GERMANY

www.dfb.de

STUDY GROUP LOOKS AT ISSUE OF REFUGEES

THOMAS HACKBARTH



From 19 to 22 September, representatives of 14 member associations met in Frankfurt am Main under the UEFA Study Group Scheme to talk about how football can deal with the high levels of migration that are being seen at the moment – the first time that the issue of refugees had been addressed in this forum.

"We want everyone to have the opportunity to play," said UEFA grassroots ambassador Per Ravn Omdal. "We have come to Frankfurt am Main to talk about how we can make football accessible."

In 2015, about half a million people applied for asylum in Germany. And refugees love football, just like the rest of us. The number of foreign nationals applying to register with the German Football Association (DFB) has risen from 10,000 a year to more than 40,000.

Back in March 2015, the DFB published a booklet entitled 'Welcome to the Club!', which sought to give volunteers advice on things like the question of how to register or the rules that apply to refugees when it comes to insurance cover or residency requirements.

It was clearly on to something, as almost 30,000 copies of that publication have been requested to date.

Meanwhile, the DFB's Egidius Braun Foundation has launched a campaign entitled '1-0 to Acceptance' in partnership with Aydan Özoguz, Germany's federal commissioner for migration, refugees and integration. "In practice, it's about taking care of the membership fee for the first few months, or arranging a pair of football boots," says DFB vice-president Eugen Gehlenborg. "For 2015 and 2016, we budgeted for the provision of support to 600 clubs a year. After just a year and a half, we have already been contacted by 2,500 clubs who have invited to refugees to play."

The session included workshops on the potential benefits of football in terms of language learning and the question of how to deal with attacks triggered by work with refugees, as well as visits to two local clubs.

A total of about 350 sessions of this kind have been run since 2008 under the UEFA Study Group Scheme, but this was the first to address the issue of refugees. One thing seems certain: it will not be the last.



NEW COACHING TEAM ANNOUNCED

STEVEN GONZALEZ

 The Gibraltar Football Association (GFA) has announced the appointment of a new coaching team (Erin Barnett, Steve Cummings, Richard Duarte, Michael Felice, Stephen Head, John Moreno, David Ochello, Jonathan Sodi, John Thicke and Christian Wink) that will oversee all the national teams, through all age groups, including assisting head coach Jeff Wood with the men's senior team.

The pool of coaches will also be available to the association's grassroots manager and the heads of youth

football, women's football and futsal for any activities, courses and camps they may run throughout the year.

Jeff Wood is delighted with the appointments. "It is great that we can be in a position to formally bring on board these coaches, who will now begin working with the GFA and our various national squads, and indeed on grassroots plans and activities throughout the year. It is important that they are involved and work with all coaching aspects of the association, which will not only help them develop



GFA

as coaches but also play a crucial role in nurturing the next generation of Gibraltarian footballers," he said.

VASAS TOP TABLE AS CLUBS REBUILD

MÁRTON DINNYÉS



Gábor Baricsa, mlsz.hu

 Six-time Hungarian champions Vasas SC – a club originally established by workers at Budapest's ironworks – only returned to the top flight in the summer of 2015, but they are now two points clear at the top of the table after 11 rounds. As the league comprises 12 clubs and those teams play each other three times, this means that German coach Michael

Önning's side have effectively won the first third of the competition.

Videoton FC and last year's record-breaking league champions, Thomas Doll's Ferencvárosi TC, would seem to pose the greatest threat to the current leaders. Videoton, who have found their form after a poor start, are led by former Manchester United FC defender Henning Berg.

Historical rivals Budapest Honvéd FC and Újpest FC are not far behind, and neither are Szombathelyi Haladás. Újpest, in particular, more than held their own in a fantastic derby match away to Ferencváros in late September, coming away with a 3-3 draw which showed that they are ready to challenge for honours this season.

Ultimately, though, this season may end up being remembered more for its construction projects than its on-field drama. Many of the top-flight clubs' stadiums – including that of leaders Vasas – will be rebuilt in the coming months. MTK Budapest's new home was recently inaugurated with a gala friendly against another grand old club, Sporting Clube de Portugal, while the stadiums of fellow top-flight clubs Haladás, Újpest, Videoton, Paksi SE and surprise strugglers Diósgyőri VTK are all in the process of being rebuilt. The last stadium to be renovated will be Honvéd's József Bozsik stadion.

These construction projects are all taking place as part of a special government-backed programme, which aims to bring Hungary's facilities into line with those found in western Europe, closing the gap that has opened up over the last 30 years.

ITALY

www.figc.it

FOUR NEW DEPARTMENTS SUPPORTING ITALY'S NATIONAL TEAMS

DIEGO ANTEOZIO

 Club Italia, the division of the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) dedicated to running and supporting the country's national teams, has been revamped with additional personnel and four new departments that will enhance its already formidable reputation for scientific and technical excellence. The changes are part of a programme of strategic reforms championed by the FIGC president, Carlo Tavecchio, who explains: "We are beginning a new chapter for Club Italia with the creation of four new support departments. In doing so, we have been guided by two key concepts that reflect the federation's long-standing dedication to innovation: specialisation and planning."

The new departments will provide support to all 17 of the national football, futsal and beach soccer teams. The medical department is headed by Professor Andrea Ferretti, while the scouting and the match analysis departments are overseen



by Mauro Sandreani and Antonio Gagliardi respectively. The research and performance department, which has been set up in collaboration with the Qatar Football Association, is headed by Valter Di Salvo, and the national U21 and youth teams have seen overall responsibility for footballing matters entrusted to Maurizio Viscidi (men's teams) and Antonio Cabrini (women's teams).

"Ultimately, it is all about the success of our national teams," says Tavecchio. "Organisation and a scientific approach are fundamental in the Italian system." Chief executive Michele Uva adds, "This

is a significant investment in terms of finance and human resources. It signals an increased commitment to a modern form of sports management in which Italy can set the standard for excellence on a global scale by identifying innovative procedures early on and realising their potential. For each department we have secured the services of individuals working at the forefront of their respective fields, not least by recruiting from within the federation to take advantage of the invaluable experience certain individuals have acquired during their time with us."

KOSOVO

www.ffk-kosova.com

A DELEGATION VISITS UEFA

MEDIA DEPARTMENT

 UEFA's newest member association, the Football Federation of Kosovo (KFF), is already establishing strong ties with UEFA and receiving advice on how to develop its football infrastructures.

In September, a KFF delegation visited UEFA to discuss the renovation project for the national stadium in Kosovo's capital, Pristina. The Kosovo national team are currently taking part in their first major qualifying competition – for the 2018 World Cup – and are playing their home matches outside their territory, in Albania.

The meeting at the House of European Football in Nyon gave the KFF

representatives the opportunity to present plans and drawings of the stadium, and to get UEFA's feedback.

The KFF delegation was led by the federation's general secretary, Eroll Salihu; the director of the sports department in the Kosovo ministry of culture, youth and sport, Ibër Alaj; the head of the KFF infrastructure division, Florim Kryeziu; sport infrastructure engineer Refki Osmani and project leader Shkelzen Qorraj. Fruitful talks took place with members of UEFA's competitions, national associations, operations and marketing divisions.

The KFF and the Kosovo authorities aim to complete the stadium renovation work



by autumn 2017, to enable matches to be staged there in the closing phase of the current World Cup qualifying campaign.

IMPRESSIVE TURNOUT FOR GRASSROOTS WEEK EVENTS

TOMS ĀRMANIS

 Latvia's annual Grassroots Week took place in September, with the Latvian Football Federation (LFF) encouraging people from outside the football family to organise football-related activities and encouraging football clubs and organisations to play an active part in those events. With a total of 13,000 people taking part in this year's events, that objective was more than met.

This year, the LFF's Grassroots Week lasted an entire fortnight, combining events marking UEFA Grassroots Week with local activities taking place as part of the European Week of Sport. During this period, football fans organised all kinds of football-related events. They were encouraged to demonstrate

their creativity and imagination and were given just one guideline – to 'let football into their backyards' and show the incredible accessibility of the sport. All registered events were entered into a competition organised by the LFF, with prizes including VIP tickets for the

national team's next home match and a trip to Portugal with the national squad in November.

Local communities were invited to help organise events by celebrities from the worlds of television, theatre, music and sport – many of whom also took part in a charity football tournament as part of the festivities. A total of 114 different football-related activities took place across the country, with people with no formal connection to football clubs or organisations showing a noticeable interest in organising events.



LFF

SENIOR OFFICIALS RE-ELECTED

ALEX VELLA

 The Malta Football Association (MFA) recently held its annual general meeting, at which a number of the MFA's senior officials – including its president – were given another three-year term of office by

delegates from the association's clubs. Under their management, the MFA has made further progress in all areas of activity for the benefit of football in Malta, in line with UEFA's objectives.

The MFA has had a busy few years,

reforming competition rules and rules on players' status, developing infrastructure, improving governance, commercialising land to be used for football facilities, improving the licensing of clubs and academies, making progress with financial fair play and working on a joint national plan to combat corruption, and these initiatives have definitely contributed to the overall improvements seen in Maltese football.

According to the MFA president, Norman Darmanin Demajo, there remains scope for reforms in other areas, in order to further enhance the quality of Maltese football and improve the way that the game is administered in the country. The new mandate awarded by the recent annual general meeting will ensure that the future of the game in Malta remains in safe and knowledgeable hands.



MOLDOVA

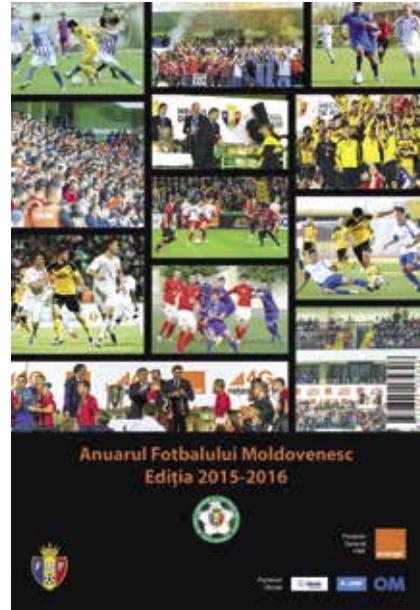
www.fmf.md

MOLDOVAN FOOTBALL YEARBOOK 2015/16

PRESS OFFICE

 The Moldovan Football Yearbook 2015/16 has recently been published in Chisinau – the seventh time that the Football Association of Moldova (FMF) has produced this book. The FMF's involvement lends this invaluable publication added authenticity and credibility as a point of reference. As has been the case for the last six years (the first issue having been published in 2010), the editor, Victor Daghì, has recorded for posterity the main important events of the domestic football season under review. The 144-page yearbook kicks off with a long message from Pavel Cebanu, president of the FMF, regarding the association's organisational achievements.

The book contains copious statistical information on the 2015/16 season in Moldovan football, including all appearances and goalscorers for Moldova's National Division, Division A and Division B, as well as lots of photos and selected historical records for each club. The yearbook is a must for statisticians, providing full individual analysis for each National Division club. Those facts, photos and figures are complemented by a narrative review of the season for each top-flight club. The yearbook also contains, among other things, a list of all Moldovan champions since 1992, an all-time table, details of the best goalscorers of all time for the top two divisions, information about each



FMF

Moldovan Cup final and Super Cup, and player listings for clubs in the top flight.

NORTHERN IRELAND

www.irishfa.com

MORE YOUNG PEOPLE THAN EVER INVOLVED IN FOOTBALL

NIGEL TILSON

 The Irish Football Association (IFA) has revealed that more young people are involved in football in Northern Ireland than ever before. Around 58,000 people aged between 4 and 24 are now participating in the game, up 16% from a year ago. The increase comes at the end of the first year of the Irish FA's first-ever ten-year youth strategy, Let Them Play.

Let Them Play has driven significant areas of growth and development in the IFA-McDonald's small-sided games centres (more than 9,000 children are involved on a weekly basis across 50 venues), the IFA's curriculum sports schools programme, which is funded by Northern Ireland's department of education (more than 18,000 children in more than 200 schools are involved) and the IFA's new disability, referee, futsal and girls' strategic plans. The IFA's chief executive, Patrick Nelson,

said: "We believe in football for all and because of that we are investing more than ever to develop and grow participation levels across the country.

We are delighted to have had such a successful year and we look forward to growing the game with our partners in year two. Let Them Play is a long-term strategy and we aim to have 75,000 young people playing the game by 2020 and 100,000 playing the game by 2025. These are ambitious targets but we are confident we can deliver with the support of schools, colleges, universities, clubs, volunteers and our partners."



IRISH FOOTBALL MOURNS DEATH OF MILO CORCORAN

STEPHEN FINN

 Irish football is mourning the death of Michael 'Milo' Corcoran, a former president of the Football Association of Ireland (FAI), who passed away in August after a brief illness.

Milo Corcoran was president of the FAI from 2001 to 2005, having previously served a five-year term as vice-president of the association, and he proved to be a hugely popular figure in all areas of Irish football on account of his unstinting commitment to improving the game at every level.

"In Milo Corcoran, we have lost one of Irish football's true gentlemen," said Tony Fitzgerald, the current FAI president. "Milo was someone who

made a huge impact on so many levels to improve football in this country, and his contribution is simply invaluable. From the grassroots right up to being FAI president, he made a difference wherever he was, and that will be his legacy."

The FAI's chief executive, John Delaney, also paid tribute to Milo: "Milo was a great personal friend of mine, someone who I had the pleasure of knowing for more than 30 years, and someone who I was extremely close to."

Born in Dublin to Kilkenny parents, Milo grew up in County Waterford. He quickly became a key figure in a local supporters' club, which sparked his desire to make a difference by helping

to shape the future of our beautiful game. In recent years, he sat on the FAI's board of management and chaired its international committee, where he was committed to improving the quality of football development throughout the country, working closely with a number of different departments and various members of the FAI's board of management and council.

Considered to be the main driving force behind the creation of the Setanta Sports Cup, a cross-border competition for clubs in Ireland and Northern Ireland, he served as the tournament's chairman from its inception in 2005. In recent years, he acted as one of the FAI's TV liaison officers.

A member of UEFA's Youth and Amateur Football Committee, Milo carried a strong reputation with him wherever he travelled around the world owing to his gregarious personality and his love of football.

GREAT PROGRESS – BUT STILL A LONG WAY TO GO

PAUL ZAHARIA

 Women's football is rapidly growing in importance at the Romanian Football Federation (FRF). In the 2009/10 season, there were just 9 teams in the national women's league, whereas this season there are 10 in the top flight, 18 in the second tier, divided into two groups, and 8 in the third tier, plus 24 teams competing in the new national Under-15 championship, with a total of 1,200 registered female players and more than 4,000 unregistered players.

This represents progress, but there is still a long way to go. Awareness-raising initiatives, such as the recent festival in Cluj-Napoca (part of the FRF's Football and Femininity project), have a special role to play in this regard. That festival took place on 16 September, the day after the national women's team had beaten Ukraine 2-1 to qualify

for the play-offs in their bid to reach Women's EURO 2017.

That festival began with the launch of a new girls' football competition at the Unirea sports facility in the district of Manastur, part of a new phase of the Football and Femininity project. Allan Hansen, chairman of UEFA's HatTrick Committee and a member of the UEFA Executive Committee, was a special guest at the event, accompanied by FRF president Răzvan Burleanu, FRF general secretary Radu Vișan, FRF deputy general secretary Gabriel Bodescu, FRF development manager Ciprian Paraschiv, and Alin Cioban, chairman of the FRF's women's football committee.

Later, at a ceremony in the city's Grand Hotel Italia, the FRF was presented with a UEFA HatTrick Award in recognition of its development of Romanian women's football through the Football and Femininity project. Romania's

senior women's squad made a surprise appearance at the ceremony and were given a standing ovation by the audience, which featured the presidents of regional football associations and women's football clubs. Mirel Albon and his team attended the entire ceremony and were congratulated by all speakers.

"The FRF has made remarkable progress, both with its strategic programme for the development of Romanian football and with this Football and Femininity project. I am confident that this project will continue to be just as successful in the future," Allan Hansen said.

"It is a great honour, both for me and for the FRF, to receive this extremely important award. Although it represents recognition of all the efforts made so far to develop women's football in Romania, it also rewards our current projects and confirms that we are moving in the right direction. UEFA's support and guidance, allied to the enthusiasm and determination demonstrated by each of us across the country, whether on the pitch or at institutional level, will allow us to continue our success in the medium and long term," Răzvan Burleanu said.

A NEW MANDATE FOR VITALY MUTKO

MEDIA DEPARTMENT



On 24 September, the Russian Football Union (RFS) held an extraordinary general meeting, at which the president of the RFS was elected. There were four candidates: Vitaly Mutko (the incumbent, who had headed the organisation since September 2015), Valery Gazzaev, Sergei Pryadkin

and Igor Efremov. Sergei Pryadkin and Igor Efremov withdrew in favour of the incumbent, and Vitaly Mutko was then re-elected for a four-year term. New members of the association's executive committee were also elected, with the number of members being reduced to 23.



UEFA

FOOTBALL FOR PEACE

EMILIO CECCHINI



As part of a wider campaign to promote mutual respect and tolerance between the peoples of Israel and Palestine, fifteen 11- and 12-year-old boys from Israel and Palestine – five Christians, five Muslims and five Jews – spent a week in San Marino, accompanied by four adults, as guests of the republic's football federation (FSGC) and the Universal Peace Federation (UPF).

The visit, which ran from 1 to 8 September, was organised by Alessandro Giaquinto, head of the FSGC's youth sector, and Giorgio Gasperoni, the UPF's coordinator for the Marche region and San Marino. Additional support was provided by the University of Peace in Marche.

On 2 September, the boys participated in a training session run by Carlo Chiarabini and Fabio Lepri of the FSGC's Culture-Education-Training (CEF) programme at the Falciano stadium, which culminated in a friendly match against their peers from the local Folgore football club.

Further coaching sessions and matches took place on 5 September, with children from the Polo Calcistico del Titano. On the morning of 6 September, the participants enjoyed another coaching session with the CEF instructors, but this time they were



FSGC

joined by the head coach of San Marino's national team, Pierangelo Manzaroli.

Later in the day, there were more matches, this time against the Serenissima club. On 3 September the football programme came to a close with a three-team tournament at the Falciano.

On 4 September, the boys were treated to an unforgettable experience as they accompanied the players onto the pitch ahead of the first 2018 World Cup qualifier between San Marino and Azerbaijan. Our thanks go to the

FSGC, whose contribution in terms of personnel, facilities and financial support was fundamental in helping achieve the goal of the initiative: namely to bring together a mixed team of Israeli and Palestinian children for a once-in-a-lifetime experience and offer them the chance to train and play friendly matches against their contemporaries in San Marino, demonstrating the belief that the simple act of kicking a ball can contribute to a world of universal solidarity, respect and peace.

STATUE OF ANTON MALATINSKÝ UNVEILED IN TRNAVA

PETER SURIN

 Anton Malatinský, one of the greats of Slovak football, was a good player. Wearing the colours of FC Spartak Trnava and ŠK Slovan Bratislava, he made 219 appearances in the top flight and scored 79 goals. He also played at international level, representing Slovakia on six occasions and playing ten times for Czechoslovakia.

However, he owes his position at the pinnacle of Slovak football to his feats as a coach. He led Spartak Trnava in 538 matches over three spells (1956–60, 1963–68 and 1971–76) – including the club's golden era, when he led them to the Czechoslovak title on three occasions. He also spent time

coaching in Austria and the Netherlands.

Since 1998, Spartak Trnava's stadium has borne his name. And on 19 August 2016 (24 years after his death), a statue of Malatinský – a 2.2m tall bronze sculpture standing on a stone pedestal – was unveiled in a ceremony in front of the venue. The sculptor, Pavol Dubina, has portrayed him in a characteristic pose, with his hands in the pockets of his unbuttoned coat. In honour of the occasion, the club's anthem, the mournful 'Il Silenzio', was played by a single trumpet. A number of players from his great Spartak Trnava side were there to pay tribute, including Karol Dobiaš, Jozef Adamec, Dušan



Keketi, Stanislav Jarábek, František Kozinka, Jaroslav Masrná, Vojtech Varadin, Alojz Fandel and Valér Švec, as was fellow coach Ján Hucko.

"All of us who had the pleasure of having him in our lives, all of us who experienced that, we identify ourselves with this great honour. Anton Malatinský is immortal for Trnava and football in Trnava," said Jozef Adamec, the most famous of his players – one of the few footballers in the world to have scored a hat-trick against Brazil.

FORMER INTERNATIONALS HEAD FOR THE HILLS

PIERRE BENOIT

 Switzerland's former internationals recently met up for their annual get-together at the invitation of Peter Gilliéron, president of the Swiss Football Association (SFV-ASF), and Alex Miescher, general secretary of the SFV-ASF. As always, they came in high spirits, looking forward to spending the day basking in their memories and recounting a few tales from the past. This year, two of the many participants – Hansruedi Fuhrer and Fritz Künzli – were veterans of Switzerland's 1966 World Cup campaign in England.

The group met up in the Lucerne Culture and Convention Centre for coffee and croissants, before walking down to the jetty and boarding a boat to Alpnachstad. As the boat chugged towards the canton of Obwalden, the former internationals ate and drank in the sunshine. The boat passed various historical sites as it made its way through

the Alpnachersee, one of the many arms of Lake Lucerne. After about two hours on board, the group arrived in Alpnachstad, where they were greeted by the mayor, Heinz Krummenacher, and the local press. They then embarked on the 4,618m journey to the top of the Pilatus on the world's steepest cog railway (which was built in 1889 and has a gradient of 48%).

However, the longer the journey went on, the thicker the fog became, and soon after arriving at the 2,128m-high peak, the former footballers decided to take the cable car down to Frakmuntegg and, in light of the weather, indulge in a few games of Switzerland's national sport – the card game 'Jass' – rather than going tobogganing. They did not all excel at Jass in the same way as they had on the football pitch, but that did nothing to dampen their spirits. A highly enjoyable day ended with a delicious dinner in Lucerne, and the ex-players then made their way home, already looking forward to next year's event.



UKRAINE

www.ffu.org.ua

KYIV TO HOST UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL IN 2018

YURI MAZNYCHENKO

 At its meeting in Athens in September, the UEFA Executive Committee decided that Kyiv's Olympic Stadium, scene of the final of EURO 2012, should host the final of the 2017/18 UEFA Champions League.

This will be the first time that the final of Europe's premier club competition has taken place in Ukraine, with the 70,000-capacity Olympic Stadium becoming only the 12th venue to have hosted both the final of a EURO and a European Cup final.

"This is a historic moment for Ukrainian football and the country as a whole," said Andriy Pavelko, president of the Football Federation of Ukraine. "The final of the UEFA Champions League will put smiles on the faces of everyone in Ukraine. We



are looking forward to bringing everyone to Kyiv for this festival of football. We will do everything we can to make this final an exemplary occasion."

The final of the 2017/18 UEFA Champions League will take place on 26 May 2018, coinciding with the city's annual Kyiv Day celebrations.

WALES

www.faw.cymru

EXCITING TIMES

ROB DOWLING



What was a remarkable season for Welsh football has been confirmed by official figures published in the Football Association of Wales 2016 End of Season Review. The report provides an overview of the association's work across all aspects and levels of the game in Wales.

While the senior men's team were breaking records on the pitch at EURO 2016, impressive media and financial statistics were being achieved off it.

Social and digital media statistics published in the report show that over the course of the EURO 2016 campaign there were 627,000 page views on the FA of Wales website, 67,000,000 Twitter page impressions, 2,640,000 average daily Facebook page impressions and a 140% increase in Instagram followers.

Financial information shared in the review shows that the association's annual turnover for the financial year

ending June 2016 was £21m, more than double that of the previous year.

This includes £9m relating to the national team's participation in EURO 2016 up to the round of 16, with the quarter-finals and semi-finals taking place in July, after the end of the financial year.

In the review, the chief executive of the FA of Wales, Jonathan Ford, praised both Chris Coleman's squad and Welsh fans for an incredible EURO 2016 performance: "Our team's performance exceeded all expectations, with two players selected in UEFA's team of the tournament. Off the field, the tens of thousands of supporters who made the trip to France were a credit to our country. At home we broke television and social media records."

David Griffiths, the president of the FA of Wales, wrote about building on the momentum generated over the past season: "These are exciting times for the game in Wales. However, we cannot stand still. Along with my colleagues at the Football Association of Wales, I am determined to make the most of the opportunities that lie ahead and continue to work hard to develop our sport at all levels."



STRAIGHT DOWN TO BUSINESS

Since he took office on 14 September in Athens, the new UEFA president, Aleksander Čeferin, has received visits from the leaders of a number of UEFA member associations and has already made several trips of his own, in particular for the EURO 2020 logo launches in London, Rome and Baku.



21 September

The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and the chairman of The Football Association, Greg Clarke



22 September

The mayor of Rome, Virginia Raggi, and the chief executive of the Italian Football Federation, Michele Uva



30 September

The president of the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan, Rovnag Abdullayev



4 October

The president of the Football Association of Albania, Armand Duka



4 October

The president of the Danish Football Association, Jesper Møller Christensen



4 October

The president of the French Football Federation, Noël Le Graët



4 October

The president of the Football Federation of Kosovo, Fadil Vokrri



5 October

The president of the Romanian Football Federation, Razvan Burleanu



17 October

The chief executive of the Football Association of Ireland, John Delaney



17 October

The president of the Football Federation of Ukraine, Andriy Pavelko



18 October

The president of the Football Association of Estonia, Aivar Pohlak



18 October

The chief executive of the Scottish Football Association, Stewart Regan

BIRTHDAYS

Marc Batta (France, 1 Nov.)
György Szilagyi (Hungary, 2 Nov.)
Francesco Bianchi (Switzerland, 2 Nov.)
Gianluca D'Aloja (Italy, 2 Nov.)
Amir Navon (Israel, 2 Nov.)
Łukasz Wachowski (Poland, 2 Nov.)
Georgios Vourvachis (Greece, 3 Nov.)
Anne McKeown (Scotland, 3 Nov.)
Vito Di Gioia (Italy, 3 Nov.)
Lars Richt (Sweden, 4 Nov.)
Diana Bianchedi (Italy, 4 Nov.)
Luís Figo (Portugal, 4 Nov.)
Lennart Johansson (Sweden, 5 Nov.)
Georgi Popov (Bulgaria, 5 Nov.)
Mircea-Mihaiu Pascu (Romania, 6 Nov.)
Efraim Barak (Israel, 6 Nov.)
Nadezhda Ulyanovskaya
(Russia, 6 Nov.) **50th**
Peter Gardiner (Scotland, 7 Nov.)
Vladimir Badura (Slovakia, 7 Nov.)
Sergio Di Cesare (Italy, 8 Nov.)
Haris Loizides (Cyprus, 8 Nov.)
Gjergji Bitri (Malta, 8 Nov.)
Michele Uva (Italy, 8 Nov.)
Aurel Mihail Ionescu (Romania, 8 Nov.)
Rudolf Zavrl (Slovenia, 9 Nov.)
Jorge Pérez Arias (Spain, 9 Nov.)
Willi Hink (Germany, 9 Nov.)
Theodore Giannikos (Greece, 9 Nov.)
Thomas Hollerer (Austria, 9 Nov.)
Michal Mertinyak (Slovakia, 9 Nov.)
Marc Van Geersom (Belgium, 10 Nov.)
Muharrem Zihni Aksoy (Turkey, 11 Nov.)
Mehmet Murat İlgaz (Turkey, 11 Nov.)
Uno Turtk (Estonia, 11 Nov.)
Kadir Kardaş (Turkey, 11 Nov.)
Willi Ruttensteiner (Austria, 12 Nov.)
Milan Vojtek (Slovakia, 12 Nov.)
Milan Spirkoski (FYR Macedonia, 12 Nov.)
Karol Belanik (Slovakia, 12 Nov.) **50th**
Nasser Al-Khelaifi (France, 12 Nov.)
Howard Wilkinson (England, 13 Nov.)
Stefan Hans (Germany, 14 Nov.)
Peter Fröjdfeldt (Sweden, 14 Nov.)
Samira Huren (Bosnia-Herzegovina, 14 Nov.)
Ciprian Paraschiv (Romania, 14 Nov.)
Jean Lemmer (Luxembourg, 15 Nov.) **70th**
Otto Demuth (Austria, 16 Nov.)
Wolf-Günter Wiesel (Germany, 16 Nov.)
Susan Ann Hough (England, 16 Nov.)
Radenko Mijatović (Slovenia, 16 Nov.)
Ján Fašung (Slovakia, 17 Nov.)
Per Svärd (Sweden, 18 Nov.)
Stanisław Piłkowski (Poland, 18 Nov.)
Knarik Abelyan (Armenia, 18 Nov.)
Jacques Liénard (France, 19 Nov.)
Horst R. Schmidt (Germany, 19 Nov.)

Petr Fousek (Czech Republic, 19 Nov.)
Cécile Grandsimon (France, 19 Nov.)
Jean-Louis Piette (France, 20 Nov.) **70th**
Paul-Heinz Lenhart (Germany, 22 Nov.)
Jyrki Filppu (Finland, 22 Nov.)
Emilia Wnuk (Poland, 22 Nov.)
Conrad Kirkwood (Northern Ireland, 22 Nov.)
Izabella Łukomska-Pyżalska (Poland, 22 Nov.)
Teun Jacobs (Netherlands, 22 Nov.)
Nikolai Pisarev (Russia, 23 Nov.)
George Koumas (Cyprus, 24 Nov.)
Zbigniew Przesmycki (Poland, 26 Nov.)
Borislav Popov (Bulgaria, 26 Nov.)
Styrbjörn Oskarsson (Finland, 26 Nov.)
Marcos Del Cuadro (Switzerland, 26 Nov.)
Miroslav Pelta (Czech Republic, 27 Nov.)
Marios Lefkaritis (Cyprus, 28 Nov.) **70th**
Ante Vučemilović Šimunović (Croatia, 28 Nov.)
Andrey Medintsev (Bulgaria, 28 Nov.) **60th**
Tomaž Ranc (Slovenia, 28 Nov.)
Marko Ilešič (Slovenia, 29 Nov.)
Alojzije Šupraha (Croatia, 29 Nov.)
Wolfgang Niersbach (Germany, 30 Nov.)

NOTICES

- Norman Darmanin Demajo was re-elected as president of the Malta Football Association on 30 July for a further three years.
- Vitaly L. Mutko was re-elected as president of the Russian Football Union on 24 September for a further four years.
- The Football Federation of Kazakhstan named Kanysh Aubakirov as its new general secretary.

Competitions

1/2 November

Champions League: group matches (matchday 4)
Youth League: Champions League path group matches (matchday 4)

2 November

Youth League: domestic champions path second round (first legs)

3 November

Europa League: group matches (matchday 4)

7-15 November

European U21 Championship: play-offs

9/10 November

Women's Champions League: round of 16 (first legs)

11-13 November

2018 World Cup: European Qualifiers

16/17 November

Women's Champions League: round of 16 (return legs)

22/23 November

Champions League: group matches (matchday 5)
Youth League: Champions League path group matches (matchday 5)

22-27 November

Futsal Cup: elite round

23 November

Youth League: domestic champions path second round (return legs)

24 November

Europa League: group matches (matchday 5)



NO TO RACISM

