UEFA STRATEGY 2019-2024

TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE OF FOOTBALL

UEFA STRATEGY 2019-2024
European football is thriving. Record revenues, record interest in the game and record amounts being reinvested in the grassroots of the sport.

Four European teams contested the semi-finals of the 2018 FIFA World Cup and six were in the last eight.

Such success is laudable, but now is not the time to stand still – we can use it as a platform to kick on to even greater heights. For me, the most important thing that we must remember is that we who govern the game now, in 2019, have a solemn responsibility to act as its guardians and to hand it to our successors in better shape than we found it.

This is not an easy task. Yes, European football is the best and most watched in the world. The question is, how do we keep it that way? How do we rise to the challenges of the 21st century – on the pitch, off the pitch and in our broader communities – and retain our place at the top of people’s affections and respect?

This strategy seeks to answer those questions to the benefit of the entire European football community – national associations, professional clubs, match officials, amateur clubs, coaches, players and fans – while recognising our role in using the power and reach of football to help the societies that we are a part of.

It deals with five main themes: keeping football first, building trust, ensuring competitiveness, increasing prosperity and acting responsibly.

These themes focus on increasing participation, improving good governance at all levels, allowing teams more opportunities to play competitive matches and enhancing engagement for football fans around the world.

In each of these areas, UEFA should retain its standing as a leading sports body; continue to build its reputation for openness, integrity and trust; further enhance its role and responsibility as a leader in sports social responsibility; and set the benchmark against which other bodies are measured.

This requires all football organisations to work closely together, potentially resisting what may appear to be tempting commercial paths that ultimately may result in restrictions on football’s openness and solidarity. We maintain that football is not for sale and that UEFA, in partnership with our associations, clubs, leagues and players, will continue to uphold a strong, structured and sustainable European football ecosystem.

You should not expect this strategy to rewrite UEFA’s activities. The current success of European football needs to be a starting position not an end point. It describes an evolution for UEFA and one that I hope will provide a solid platform on which future generations can build.

Aleksander Čeferin | UEFA President
INTRODUCTION

UEFA embarked on outlining a strategic framework to provide guidance and support as we strive to preserve this successful community, forever adhering to the principles of promotion, relegation, solidarity and subsidiarity, as well as recognising the true value and role of all national and club teams across Europe.

As we continue to strive to fully restore faith in the governance of football, the strategy will help us attain the high standards of integrity required. The strategy will ensure UEFA remains true to its core values and has the ability to drive progressive initiatives and programmes to be implemented over the next five years.

UEFA member associations, leagues, clubs and players have been consulted throughout the development of the strategic plan and their input incorporated. It is important that the football community is unified and supportive of the strategic plan, as its ultimate ambition is to benefit all football throughout Europe.

The achievement of our mission rests on five main pillars, laid out in this document, supported by a wide set of objectives and policies. Specific actions are not defined here and will be implemented through the UEFA administration in coordination and cooperation with our members and stakeholders. A concise summary of the strategy structure can be found in the one-page outline appended to the main document.

The UEFA Strategy 2019-2024 Together for the Future of Football is a living, breathing document that takes inspiration from the entire football community. We have created this roadmap together to help us navigate to our common destination, but made it flexible enough to allow for various modes and speeds of travel.

We have reinforced our commitment to the European sports model and remain dedicated to open dialogue and service to our fans, players, clubs, leagues and associations as we implement this strategy going forward. The UEFA strategy is meant to provide the signposts and momentum to take football forward and shape the future of football for future generations.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this strategy and look forward to continuing to work together in order to achieve our common goals.
UEFA plays a vital role in ensuring the long-term health of European football from the elite to the grassroots, men’s and women’s football, national team and club football.

UEFA is committed to providing high standards of education and expertise to its members throughout Europe. We rely on the success of our elite competitions to generate solidarity funds which are distributed among our member associations and reinvested in tailored support for development and participation programmes throughout the football community.

Our collaboration with our member associations, along with clubs, leagues and players, ensures we devise and apply fair and constructive regulatory frameworks and reinforces the integrity and sporting values in everything we do.

Our constant operational and technological support enables European football to offer the best competitions in a safe and vibrant atmosphere.

UEFA is continuously rolling out new initiatives and projects to sustain the football ecosystem and always prioritises the promotion, protection and development of European football at every level.

We remain fully committed to the European sports model, which follows a pyramidal framework not only administratively (through confederations, national associations, regional associations, professional leagues and clubs) but also with respect to competitions, through promotion and relegation, and gaining access to international competitions through national competitions.

Competitions organised outside this established structure with predominantly commercial aims directly threaten to undermine the sports model and vital solidarity that is the foundation for the development of football in Europe.
THE FUNDAMENTALS

EUROPEAN FOOTBALL HAS BEEN BUILT ON FOUR STRONG ELEMENTS. EVERY DECISION AND ACTION THAT WE MAKE SHOULD UPHOLD THEM.

THE TEAM Solidarity unites us and instils a team spirit and recognition of our responsibilities towards each other. From the elite to the amateur game, we are together, allied in the promotion of European football and a shared, harmonious relationship. Our community will continue to flourish as long as we maintain broad dialogue and democratic values. We rely on our diversity to make European football inclusive and welcoming to all.

THE GAME Integrity lies at our core. We can do nothing without a belief in and the reliability of our competitions, our institutions and our people. Our reputation relies on fair play, accountability and transparency across all our activities, with the conviction that our sporting principles and ethics help us overcome all challenges.

THE FANS Passion takes us forward. Football can bring unparalleled levels of enjoyment, fun and unscripted drama. The loyalty and passion of supporters are the major driving forces behind the continued success of the game. The ability of football to connect and bind communities is indispensable and cherished.

THE RULES Respect is our badge of honour. We recognise the valuable contribution of everyone involved in the football community by respecting autonomy and subsidiarity. We rely on our diversity to make European football inclusive and welcoming to all. We appreciate our differences and value our strengths through a common understanding of social fair play.
THE MISSION

OUR MISSION IS TO ENSURE FOOTBALL IS THE MOST PLAYED, TRUSTED, COMPETITIVE, ENGAGING AND RESPONSIBLE SPORT.

We will continue to protect, grow, innovate and promote football in the most responsible way, to preserve its ecosystem and to keep the game enjoyable for all, and sustainable for future generations of fans and players to come.
Together for the Future of Football

UEFA Strategy 2019-2024

The development of football lays the foundation for a solid sport. It is essential we keep football first in everything we do. Youth and amateur football are key building blocks of tomorrow’s elite men’s and women’s game and are fundamental to the success of European football. Together with our member associations, clubs, players and fans, we will work to build a unified and solid football ecosystem to grow European football.

Our competitions need to be dynamic, entertaining and effective. For this, we must ensure teams, players and their fans have the hope of winning, have the right stage to compete on and that opportunities remain open to all. We must put the right provisions in place to safeguard clubs’ sustainability and competitions’ integrity.

We must be able to have faith in our institutions and in the integrity of the sport to move forward. This means working collectively with our members and stakeholders and trusting one another. We need to lead and be the standard-bearer for good governance, working together with the whole football community and ensuring transparent and democratic processes.

The commercial exploitation of UEFA’s premium competitions ensures the majority of UEFA’s solidarity funds. These rights need to be ring-fenced and further grown by increasing the engagement of current and future fans. In parallel, we should continue to try new things in order to adapt to changing environments and create new opportunities. New avenues will contribute to a prosperous commercial development for the whole of European football and protect the solidarity funds that are essential for many within our community.

We have a responsibility to ensure football fits in a sustainable, safe and diverse society. Our activities can only be implemented when the direct and indirect impact on environments, societies and economies has been acknowledged. Setting policies that are aligned with the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals will help protect the fundamentals of the game for future generations.

THE PILLARS

FOOTBALL
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Together for the Future of Football

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS OUR PRIORITIES WILL BE:

WOMEN’S FOOTBALL
Secure long-term growth and sustainability of the women’s game through dedicated programmes aimed at strengthening competitions and doubling the number of registered female players.

GOOD GOVERNANCE
Enhance transparency of information, decision-making and procedures to protect the existing football ecosystem and ensure the European sports model is maintained.

COMPETITIVE BALANCE
Develop and implement specific regulations aimed at preserving and improving competitive balance while always preserving sustainability, incentivising investment and promoting the growth of European football.

FAN ENGAGEMENT
Develop higher levels of fan engagement by broadening reach and personalising experience through the launch and promotion of a direct-to-consumer digital platform expanding exposure to European football.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT
Guarantee all our activities and events are founded on the values of respect and sustainability, leading by example for the benefit of current generations and ensuring a positive legacy for the future.
FOOTBALL

KEEPING FOOTBALL FIRST IN EVERYTHING WE DO

OBJECTIVES

- Grow and secure long-term participation within European football
- Ensure football in Europe is accessible and available to all
- Lead and support the advancement of national football associations
- Promote and develop football infrastructure across Europe
POLICIES

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
Place a heavy emphasis on the role of clubs, big and small, in youth development, rewarding and incentivising those which prioritise investment in future players, their education and the necessary infrastructure. Promote, simplify and expedite training compensation and solidarity payment schemes at both international and domestic level.

GRASSROOTS GAME
Continue to give strong support to the amateur and grassroots game, providing opportunities for players of all ages and keeping participation high across society. Further promote child protection policies in order to hold coaches and administrators accountable to high standards and values.

WOMEN’S FOOTBALL
Focus on heightening professionalism and engagement within the women’s game, as well as providing more regular playing opportunities for girls at grassroots level. Emphasise the values and strengths of the women’s game and endeavour to make it commercially self-sustainable, and use the existing club licensing programme to meet women’s football needs and raise standards.

FUTSAL PROMOTION
Improve and further promote futsal competitions through a wider representation of associations and players. Ensure futsal has the platform and exposure it requires to step up to the next level.

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT
Work with local governments, authorities and national associations in setting modern standards to ensure safe and accessible playing and training facilities which have an economic, ecological and socially beneficial rationale. Encourage advanced connectivity and modern amenities across national team and top-division club stadiums to ensure that attending matches remains a pleasant, convenient and fun experience. Maintain appropriate funding levels for infrastructure where necessary and safeguard transparent distribution of these resources.

INCLUSIVITY PROGRAMMES
Work with member associations and stakeholders to attract and integrate marginalised communities through inclusivity, anti-violence, and anti-discrimination campaigns and education programmes. Support and appreciate the services which local clubs provide to foster assimilation and participation in their communities and the role they play in opening their doors to marginalised people.

NEW FORMATS
Encourage the formal recognition and appreciation of other formats of the game to bring more participants under the football umbrella. Further innovate and integrate these formats with the rest of the European football community to broaden the outreach and appeal of football.

PROMOTING VOLUNTEERISM
Increase the recognition and support of all those in the football community who volunteer. Encourage all stakeholders to promote volunteerism and the crucial role it plays in enabling football to take place in all communities. Provide incentives and encouragement for volunteers to remain motivated and proud to take part in the game.

RAISING STANDARDS
Focus on and advance UEFA programmes to provide development assistance to national associations. Capitalise on successful practices to help raise standards, improve professionalism and operational efficiencies. Establish a set of best practices with our member associations to continue the growth and development of the game across Europe in a structured manner.

HARMONISE REGISTRATIONS
Focus on systematic player registration measurement standards to improve accuracy and targeted recruiting campaigns to ensure a healthy future for the game. Ensure participation is central to our member associations’ strategic plans by providing bespoke support in planning and resources to achieve these aims.

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES
Provide tailored educational and development support for players and other stakeholders through UEFA education programmes. Continue evolving our technical education, making use of modern technology to ensure European coaches have the skills and expertise for the advancement of European football.
BUILDING TRUST IN OUR COMPETITIONS AND OUR INSTITUTIONS

OBJECTIVES

- Provide leadership to the national associations
- Promote good governance and increased transparency
- Protect the integrity of football
- Develop stakeholder involvement
Policies

Higher Standards
Encourage all member associations to adopt a number of good governance standards. Help harmonise procedures through a common standard across the various political landscapes and assist members in raising the professionalism and commonality of administrative systems.

Reputation and Credibility
Define objective and robust regulatory frameworks to uphold credibility and trust. Establish simpler and clearer guidelines and procedures to preserve structured and transparent decision-making processes and better align with UEFA regulations. Protect the reputation and image of UEFA and member associations not only at institutional level as governing bodies but in all facets of the game.

Stakeholder Collaboration
Training and development programmes, competitions, regulatory procedures and business endeavours will all benefit from increased dialogue, democracy and representation across various levels of governance. A more collaborative approach and greater stakeholder involvement will make more informed decisions and choices easier to come by.

Autonomy Principles
Reinforce support for national association autonomy and sporting subsidiarity so members have the freedom to govern the domestic game without undue political influence or corruption.

Competition Integrity
Develop existing and identify new means to protect the integrity of European football competitions. Improve the ability to detect suspicious activity in relation to doping and match-fixing using advanced technology. Increase the focus on the impact of potential conflicts of interest on match and competition integrity. Through joint efforts with clubs, leagues and governing bodies, diligently persist in rooting out activities that undermine our competitions and harm our collective reputation.

Public Affairs
Deeper engagement with the European Union and national governments will strengthen the ability to provide the appropriate regulatory framework to ensure integrity and secure the support and funds for projects vital for development. Further work with other confederations and sports bodies will increase knowledge and allow the sharing of expertise.

Protecting People
Continue to identify procedures and good practices which ensure the protection of people. Players, fans, officials and volunteers must be confident of their safety and well-being when participating in any football-related activities within a secure atmosphere, free from abuse, violence or danger. Fight against player trafficking and exploitation, embracing the principles of human rights to eradicate these issues. Continue to work towards harmonisation and consistent application of players’ minimum contract standards.

Transparency
Clear communication and publication of financial, organisational and procedural information in the public domain will further improve the image and reputation of our football institutions. Transparent and accountable financial flows, especially regarding UEFA solidarity payment programmes, are necessary for accountability and will help redirect more funds back into the parts of the game where they are most needed. Bring in procedures to improve corporate cost efficiencies and lower exposure to risk.

Platforms for Fans
Reinforce interaction with all stakeholders and further cooperate with clubs to create additional avenues and platforms for fans to express their concerns and opinions when shaping the future of the game.
ENSURING COMPETITIVENESS AND CREATING VALUE AT ALL LEVELS OF THE GAME

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure all UEFA competitions are competitive and meaningful for all
- Pursue the optimal football calendar to facilitate domestic and international competitions
- Work to maintain competitive balance through sporting and financial measures
- Protect and support financial sustainability at all levels
POLICIES

MORE OPPORTUNITIES
Along with stakeholders, examine the potential impact of new competitions to provide more opportunities for more teams to play meaningful matches, allowing players to excel and giving fans hope of their teams achieving success.

REGULATORY ADVANCEMENT
Continue to assess and adapt regulations as times change and new challenges emerge. Assess the impact of financial and sporting measures to encourage growth and investments and the creation of value. Safeguard football from inappropriate control structures, financial crime and spiralling debt.

LOCALLY TRAINED PLAYERS
Identify, along with stakeholders, sporting and financial measures that encourage locally trained players and cultivate a broader and deeper player talent pool across all European clubs.

PLAYER HOARDING AND AGENTS
Work for a fairer and more transparent player transfer and loan system instead of one that, in combination with multi-club ownership within and across European leagues, has increasingly become a means of hoarding players and can affect the integrity and competitiveness of all competitions. Make a continued push for greater accountability, transparency and further regulations with regard to agents and an awareness of money exiting the football ecosystem.

STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION
Work with stakeholders to analyse and measure the potential secondary effects any measures would have on domestic football. Provide assistance to member associations and leagues to develop higher standards of administrative management to improve competitiveness at all levels.

SOLIDARITY FUNDING
Maintain and further encourage the principle of solidarity by providing smaller clubs and nations with funds from elite competitions. Consider with stakeholders how earnings and benefits from competitions at all levels of the game can be shared more fairly and proportionately across the football community.

MATCH CALENDAR
Together with stakeholders, calibrate and maintain the right balance between all competitions while respecting the international match calendar. Reinforce the commitment between club and national team football in all age groups to ensure the best playing talent is available, enhancing competitiveness and engagement.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY
Encourage regulatory frameworks to increase professionalism and ensure all member associations and clubs remain financially sustainable. Support members in improving transparency and harmonising domestic club licensing and establishing domestic club monitoring systems.

Minimum number of countries to be represented in the group stage of UEFA club competitions

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Together for the Future of Football
PROSPERITY

INCREASING PROSPERITY BY ENGAGING FANS AND EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES

OBJECTIVES

- Continue growing revenues
- Pursue more efficient development through research and investment
- Establish continuous fan engagement and relationships
- Enhance our international image and awareness
POLICIES

REVENUE STREAMS
Grow and diversify revenue streams by grasping new opportunities in order to ensure a continuation of solidarity payments that improve player development and education, leading to increased investments in order to offer more opportunities to play football. Assist members in this regard by passing knowledge, expertise and prosperity down the football pyramid.

BESPOKE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS
More bespoke business solutions to support revenue growth in the coming years by addressing market-specific needs. Seek to strengthen direct relationships with strategic partners in order to improve efficiencies in revenue generation by defining optimal and tailor-made business practices.

BRAND GROWTH
Create further value by delivering a consistent brand identity for all UEFA competitions in order to build a platform that partners and fans want to engage with. Deliver fully integrated promotional plans in order to strengthen competitions’ brand value and the interest in them.

PERSONALISED FAN EXPERIENCE
Create personalised fan experience platforms, keeping all engaged and interested, and satisfying expectations through continuous assessment and understanding of fans’ needs and changing behaviour. Grow direct-to-fans engagement channels in order to offer an immersive and personalised content experience.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS
Develop a holistic digital ecosystem in order to grow a wide digital UEFA fans community that will provide more fans with more content and opportunities to engage with European football at all levels. Build a significant value proposition by offering relevant European football content.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
Encourage the whole football community to provide resources and commit to creating platforms for innovation, research and development. Support the use of modern technologies and techniques to better generate, curate and exploit data, to better respond to business needs and improve engagement with fans. Support the creation and development of knowledge centres to optimise intelligence and to deepen knowledge for better decision-making and assistance to member associations.

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE
Explore opportunities that may benefit UEFA, its members and European clubs by gaining international insights and increasing global awareness. With expanded outreach, we can help introduce European football to new fans and markets in which to grow, test new propositions and provide others in the football community with the opportunity to gain and share common insights.

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30% increase in fan engagement across national associations’ digital platforms by 2024
RECOGNISING UEFA’S RESPONSIBILITY TO EMBODY AND NURTURE THE PRINCIPLES OF RESPECT, DIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

RESPONSIBILITY

OBJECTIVES

Ensure European football takes responsibility for helping to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Guarantee the safety of everyone involved in football, safeguarding youth players and children

Maintain respect as our overarching value, encouraging inclusive practices and activities

Foster economically viable and sustainable programmes that conserve the game for future generations
Policies

Anti-discrimination
Guarantee that all UEFA policies and programmes are implemented without discrimination. Work with our stakeholders to establish footballing environments that welcome all individuals regardless of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, religion or disability. Fighting racism and all other prejudices remains an absolute focus.

Child and youth safeguarding
Promote the safeguarding of children’s and youth rights. Protect children and youth players from any form of abuse. Support associations in implementing appropriate child and youth protection policies, which ensure all young footballers are kept safe and can enjoy the game.

Solidarity and rights
Reinforce principles of individual human rights, freedom of expression and independence. Show solidarity during humanitarian emergencies by leveraging football’s potential to help. Establish a secure workplace, including transparent communication and data privacy, that allows everyone to thrive.

Football for all
Ensure playing football is accessible and enjoyable for everyone, independent of sex, gender identity, age, background, ability or disabling factors. Continue to explore solutions to exclusion, encouraging diversity and providing equal opportunities for every member of society.

Health and well-being
Raise awareness of the physical and mental health benefits of playing football. Ensure that stadiums used for UEFA competitions provide healthy environments in which to watch and enjoy the game.

Equality and inclusion
Apply principles of equal rights and opportunities to all sectors of European football. Continue to foster a fair environment, truly representative of all sections of society, where all those involved feel respected and empowered to perform to the best of their abilities.

Refugee support
Encourage the integration of refugees into civil society through European football. Initiate dedicated funding programmes for member associations and wider support for other stakeholders to strengthen ties between diverse communities, unlocking benefits for football and society.

Environmental protection
Raise awareness of environmental protection and climate change. Reduce or compensate for emissions caused by our activities through quality carbon credits. Respect natural habitats and bio-diversity when planning or investing in infrastructure projects.

Event sustainability
Ensure UEFA’s social responsibility policies are reflected in all aspects of our football competitions. Integrate sustainability in our event operations and develop carbon neutral competitions to raise public awareness of the sustainability challenges facing society.

Circular economy
Support society’s transition to a circular economy by optimising the consumption and life-cycle of products, cutting waste and promoting renewable energy sources. Promote more sustainable forms of economic activity that protect the environment and deliver long-term societal benefits.
Our mission is to ensure football is the most played, trusted, competitive, engaging and responsible sport.

We will continue to protect, grow, innovate and promote football in the most responsible way, to preserve its ecosystem and football takes responsibility for helping to achieve the United Nations Development Goals.

Specific policies

- Act, transparent and fully disclosing all financial transactions.
- Increase participation and building a truly global football community.
- Develop transparent and advanced regulatory frameworks for global football to ensure the integrity of football.
- Protect the reputation and credibility of football.
- Support the development of football at all levels.
- Improve the governance and sustainability at all levels.
- Facilitate public and private partnerships.
- Support grassroot support and participation.
- Reinforce and develop stakeholders through financing and collaboration with stakeholders.
- Provide more efficient and effective national football associations.
- Provide assistance to national football associations.
- Develop stakeholder programmes that provide football opportunities to all.
- Develop volunteer and fan engagement and organisations.
- Encourage football for everyone, including refugees and international players.
- Convey the ethos and values of football to all that we do.
- Conserve the game for future generations.
- Raise and harmonise standards for national associations.
- Provide research and advanced regulatory frameworks for global football to ensure the integrity of football.

Pillar

Objectives

FOOTBALL

- Grow and secure long-term participation within European football.
- Ensure football in Europe is accessible and available to all.
- Lead and support the advancement of national football associations.
- Promote and develop football infrastructure across Europe.

TRUST

- Provide leadership at the national associations.
- Protect the integrity of football.
- Promote good governance and increased transparency.
- Develop stakeholder involvement.

COMPETITIVENESS

- Ensure all UEFA competitions are competitive and meaningful for all.
- Work to maintain competitive balance through sporting and financial measures.
- Pursue the optimal football calendar to facilitate domestic and international competitions.
- Protect and support the sustainability at all levels.

PROSPERITY

- Continue growing revenues.
- Establish continuous fan engagement and relationships.
- Pursue more efficient development through research and investment.
- Enhance our international image and awareness.

RESPONSIBILITY

- Ensure European football takes responsibility for helping to achieve the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals.
- Maintain respect as our overarching value, encouraging inclusive practices and activities.
- Guarantee the safety of everyone involved in football, safeguarding youth players and children.
- Foster economically viable and sustainable programmes that contribute to the game for future generations.

Actions performed at UEFA Administration level in collaboration with member associations and stakeholders.

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