



UEFA Authorisation Rules governing International Club Competitions – Edition 2022

Preamble

The following rules, which codify UEFA's existing authorisation practices and procedures as well as how they have been applied, have been adopted by the UEFA Executive Committee in accordance with the *UEFA Statutes*, in particular Articles 2, 49(3), 51 and 51^{bis} thereof.

I. General provisions

Article 1 – Definition of terms

For the purposes of these rules, the following definitions apply:

'Combination or Alliance': a grouping between UEFA Member Associations or between leagues or clubs affiliated, directly or indirectly, to different UEFA Member Associations;

'International Club Competition': a competition or tournament involving a series of football matches between a number of competing clubs which is: (i) played on UEFA's Territory by clubs affiliated to different Member Associations and which is not organised by UEFA; and/or (ii) played on the territory of one Member Association but involving clubs affiliated to other Member Associations;

'Member Association': a national football association which is a member of UEFA;

'Organiser(s)': one or more Member Associations or leagues or clubs or an authorised Combination or Alliance or any legal entity(ies) or any individual(s) proposing to organise an International Club Competition;

'UEFA Champion Club Competitions': competitions organised by UEFA involving clubs from across the UEFA Territory to determine the champion club of Europe in each respective category as well as to determine the winner of the UEFA Super Cup:

- a. UEFA Champions League: annual club competition to determine the champion club in Europe for senior men's football;
- b. UEFA Women's Champions League: annual club competition to determine the champion club in Europe for senior women's football;
- c. UEFA Futsal Champions League: annual futsal club competition to determine the champion futsal club in Europe;
- d. UEFA Super Cup: annual club competition between the winner of the previous season's UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League.

'UEFA's Territory': the territory of UEFA's Member Associations.

Article 2 – Scope of application

¹ The present rules apply to any football or futsal International Club Competition played on UEFA's Territory as well as to any Combination or Alliance formed to organise an International Club Competition.

² The *FIFA Regulations Governing International Matches* apply to:

a. international matches and tournaments played outside of UEFA's Territory, which are subject to the following additional provisions:

(i) the participation of any club affiliated to a Member Association in such a match or tournament is subject to UEFA's approval to ensure the good functioning and the protection of the overall interest of European football; and

(ii) such approval has to be requested at least twenty-one (21) days before the proposed match or tournament;

b. international matches and tournaments of a purely friendly or charitable or exhibition nature played on UEFA's Territory, classified as being Tier 2 in the *FIFA Regulations Governing International Matches*, which require UEFA's approval at least twenty-one (21) days before the proposed match or tournament;

c. international matches and tournaments involving youth teams of clubs who are not participating in the highest division of their association (i.e. classified as being Tier 3 in the *FIFA Regulations Governing International Matches*) and which do not need to be authorised by UEFA, but only require the prior approval of all Member Associations concerned, when they fulfil the following three cumulative conditions:

(i) played with no more than eight clubs; and

(ii) composed of players aged 16 or under; and

(iii) lasting no longer than one week (i.e. seven (7) consecutive days);

d. matches played as a single fixture between two clubs or tournaments played by clubs from divisions other than their Member Associations' highest division (i.e. classified as being Tier 3 in the *FIFA Regulations Governing International Matches*) and which do not need to be authorised by UEFA, but only require the prior approval of the Member Associations concerned;

e. any other international match or tournament that are not covered by the present rules or other relevant rules.

³ These rules do not apply to cross-border club competitions merging or replacing existing national leagues and/or national cup competitions across two or more Member Associations.

Article 3 – Purpose

¹ These rules contribute to the fulfilment of UEFA's statutory objectives and principles, notably:

- a. promoting fairness and openness in football competitions;
- b. supporting the voluntary and grassroots structures of football at all levels through the implementation of development and solidarity programmes;
- c. redistributing revenue generated by football in accordance with the principle of solidarity and supporting reinvestment in favour of all levels and areas of football;
- d. ensuring that International Club Competitions are organised in accordance with the principle of sporting merit and that sporting values always prevail over commercial interests;
- e. guaranteeing that International Club Competitions are played in compliance with the *IFAB Laws of the Game* or *FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game* in order to guarantee the uniform nature and core identity of football;
- f. maintaining ethical, anti-doping, health and safety standards for the benefit of clubs, players, officials and fans;
- g. prohibiting any discrimination on account of politics, gender, religion, race or any other reason;
- h. organising the European calendar during the football season to ensure the calendar is not overloaded or to limit clashes between competitions to the benefit of clubs, players, officials and fans.

² These objectives and principles are achieved in the following manner:

- a. defining, for the sake of transparency, a fair and non-discriminatory procedure to be followed in order to obtain the authorisation from the UEFA Executive Committee to organise an International Club Competition and/or establish a Combination or Alliance to organise such an International Club Competition;
- b. finding a right balance between an overly administrative burden for all those concerned (i.e. both the Organisers and UEFA) and the promotion of football as a whole at a European level (in accordance with UEFA's statutory objectives);
- c. allowing UEFA, as the European football governing body, to:
 - (i) monitor the development of international club football in Europe and have regulatory oversight over all International Club Competitions played on UEFA's Territory and/or involving clubs affiliated to Member Associations;

(ii) ensure that International Club Competitions are played in line with UEFA's statutory objectives and principles, such as the fight against any practice which might jeopardise the integrity of the competitions and the respect of players' health (by taking care that the international match calendar is not overloaded for the latter);

(iii) enforce these rules in a proportionate manner (to ensure that the objectives and principles mentioned above are achieved).

II. Authorisation criteria

Article 4 – Administrative and financial criteria

¹ The Organiser shall submit the following information relating to the proposed International Club Competition in fulfilment of the administrative and financial criteria:

- a. details on the Organiser of the International Club Competition;
- b. title of the competition which must reflect the nature of the competition (e.g. a regional competition must not be portrayed as being a pan-European competition);
- c. details of payments and prize monies to the participating clubs;
- d. details of proposed solidarity payments:
 - (i) Social, Educational & Sporting fund towards projects with social, educational and sporting purposes (such as grassroots projects, youth player development, dual-career education, anti-racism, gender balance, refugee integration, etc.);
 - (ii) European Sports Model fund for non-participating clubs;
- e. evidence that the Organiser is in good financial standing for the organisation of the International Club Competition and the fulfilment of its commitments in particular has access to sufficient funds to pay all:
 - (i) payments and prize monies due to the participating clubs; and
 - (ii) solidarity payments;
- f. evidence of a relevant professional risk liability insurance for the Organiser from a reputable insurer;
- g. a warranty that the title and associated logos/trademarks of the competition shall not infringe any intellectual property rights of UEFA or, to the Organiser's reasonable knowledge, the intellectual property rights of any other football competition.

² The Organiser shall provide written confirmation that any dispute between the Organiser and UEFA shall be resolved by arbitration before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in accordance with Article 16 of these rules.

Article 5 – Sporting and technical criteria

¹ The Organiser shall submit the following information relating to the proposed International Club Competition in fulfilment of the sporting and technical criteria:

a. proposed dates for the International Club Competition, including an indication of any potential conflicts with events on the UEFA and/or the FIFA international match calendar (having regard in particular to the proposed dates, standard of clubs, and venue(s) of the proposed International Club Competition);

b. list of the participating clubs or criteria identifying them;

c. details on referees to be appointed to officiate at the International Club Competition matches:

(i) which organisation(s) will provide the referees;

(ii) by whom and how the referees will be appointed;

(iii) if not sourced from Member Associations, qualification of referees (with referees being equivalent to referees of UEFA club competitions or referees from the first division of the leagues in the Member Associations in which the International Club Competition is to be played) and details about their education, career, experience at the level of the clubs participating in the International Club Competition;

(iv) availability of referees during the International Club Competition to ensure consistency in the officiating and to avoid any conflict with other football competitions.

d. competition schedule and venues:

(i) when and where each competition match is intended to be played (or criteria for venues);

(ii) measures to be taken to protect health and safety at those venues to a standard equivalent to those of UEFA (or best practices for the level of competition).

e. copy of the regulations governing the International Club Competition;

f. where relevant, information relating to protocols for safeguarding of youth players;

g. information showing that the competition will allow the players of the clubs concerned to gain more international experience and/or to indirectly improve their performance for their national teams when called up by their respective association;

h. confirmation that the competition will be played in accordance with the *IFAB Laws of the Game* or *FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game*.

² Where relevant, the Organiser shall provide confirmation that the clubs concerned can always comply with their obligation to:

a. field their strongest team throughout UEFA club competitions and national club competitions and any other International Club Competition authorised by UEFA;

b. release their players to the national teams pursuant to Annex 1 of the *FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players*.

³ The Organiser shall provide confirmation that it was not involved in the preparation or organisation of an unauthorised International Club Competition in the previous five (5) years from the date of the application (but not applying to any period prior to the entry into force of the present rules).

Article 6 – Ethical criteria

¹ The Organiser shall submit the following information relating to the proposed International Club Competition in fulfilment of the ethical criteria:

a. confirmation that neither a natural nor a legal person will exercise control or influence over more than one club participating in the International Club Competition;

b. confirmation that any person involved in the organisation of the International Club Competition or participating in the International Club Competition (e.g. players or club officials or match officials including referees) shall:

(i) be strictly prohibited from betting on matches of the International Club Competition;

(ii) be strictly prohibited from exerting, or attempting to exert, any unlawful or undue influence on the course and/or result of any competition match.

c. undertaking from the Organiser to immediately and voluntarily report to UEFA full details of any knowledge of any activity aimed at influencing in an unlawful or undue manner the course and/or result of any competition match.

² The Organiser shall put in place an anti-doping programme compliant with the WADA Code and equivalent to the UEFA Anti-Doping Regulations.

³ The Organiser shall adopt appropriate measures to sanction any club, player or official involved in the International Club Competition who insults the human dignity of a person or group of persons on whatever grounds, including skin colour, race, religion, ethnic origin, gender or sexual orientation.

⁴ The Organiser shall put in place a disciplinary mechanism allowing that any offence to the competition regulations may be penalised with appropriate disciplinary sanctions (taken by independent disciplinary bodies and right of appeal *de novo* to the CAS to be guaranteed).

Article 7 – Sporting merit criteria

¹ The Organiser shall provide a commitment that all clubs participating in the competition will be treated in the same manner throughout the competition in accordance with the principles of sporting merit and fair play.

² The Organiser shall submit the following information relating to the proposed International Club Competition in fulfilment of the sporting merit criteria:

a. confirmation that the International Club Competition complies with the principles of sporting merit and openness at a national and/or European level;

b. confirmation that the clubs concerned will be admitted on the basis of non-discriminatory conditions based upon sporting merit;

c. confirmation that the International Club Competition is compatible with the European Sports Model (e.g. involving clubs from a diverse number of Member Associations) and does not adversely affect the good functioning of national club competitions and/or international competitions.

³ The Organiser may request a derogation from the principle of sporting merit where the International Club Competition involves no more than four (4) clubs or in other exceptional circumstances (e.g. involving clubs with very limited experience of International Club Competitions in order to promote a European dimension to their activities).

⁴ In order to protect the sporting merit of UEFA Champion Club Competitions, the good functioning of the international calendar as well as the health and safety of players, authorisation of an International Club Competition shall be subject to the following cumulative conditions so that it shall not adversely affect the good functioning of UEFA Champion Club Competitions with respect to:

a. the participation of the following qualified clubs for determination of a champion club of Europe in each respective category:

(i) the club is qualified to play as the winner of the top domestic league championship; or

- (ii) the club is qualified to play as runner-up or qualified through the top domestic league championship in accordance with UEFA's association coefficient ranking; or
 - (iii) the club is qualified to play as the titleholder of the UEFA Champion Club Competition; or
 - (iv) the club is qualified to play as the titleholder of the UEFA Europa League;
- b. the commitment by and duties of all qualified clubs participating in the UEFA Champion Club Competition to field their strongest team throughout the competition;
 - c. the commitment by and duties of all qualified clubs participating in the UEFA Champion Club Competition to play only in such competition:
 - (i) until their elimination up to the completion of qualifying rounds and/or play-offs; and/or
 - (ii) for the duration of the UEFA Champion Club Competition for all successive rounds until its completion.

III. Authorisation Procedure

Article 8 – Procedure for processing an authorisation request

¹ In order to obtain authorisation from the UEFA Executive Committee, the Organiser of an International Club Competition shall submit an authorisation request to the UEFA Administration at least twelve (12) months before its anticipated start date. The authorisation request must be accompanied by all the relevant information and supporting documents (in English) relating to the authorisation criteria (administrative and financial criteria, sporting and technical criteria, ethical criteria, and sporting merit criteria) for the request to be considered.

² The UEFA Administration shall inform the Organiser of any missing information in the authorisation request (usually within four (4) weeks of receipt of such request). The authorisation request will not be processed until the missing information is submitted. The UEFA Administration shall provide the Organiser with written confirmation that the authorisation request will be processed (usually within four (4) weeks of receipt of the authorisation request or the supplemented authorisation request).

³ Upon confirmation of that the authorisation request can be processed, a notice of the authorisation request shall be published on UEFA's website setting out the main features of the International Club Competition with a time limit of at least four (4) weeks for the submission of statements by interested parties. UEFA shall provide the Organiser with the opportunity to respond to or address any points of concern raised by interested parties (to be provided in an anonymised format) within a time limit of at least four (4) weeks as of notification from UEFA.

⁴ UEFA may at any time request additional information or obtain its own expert evaluation should it be reasonably necessary to assess whether the requested International Club Competition is consistent with UEFA's statutory objectives and the requirements set out in the present rules. UEFA has the right to suspend the review of the application request pending the provision of the additional information or expert evaluation for a reasonable period, usually within four (4) weeks.

⁵ UEFA may reasonably extend the duration of the above timeframes depending on the complexity of the application. UEFA may also exceptionally reduce the above timeframes (e.g. a request for International Club Competitions involving no more than four (4) clubs). Any decision by UEFA to apply a shorter or extended timeframe shall not be a precedent for other requests.

⁶ The Organiser will be sent confirmation by the UEFA Administration that the file is complete upon receipt of all relevant information relating to the authorisation request from the Organiser and interested parties.

⁷ By seeking authorisation under these rules, the Organiser irrevocably agrees to be bound by them, including in particular by the dispute resolution clause at Article 16 below.

Article 9 – Submission of complete file to UEFA Executive Committee

¹ The UEFA Administration shall endeavour to submit the authorisation request together with any relevant information from interested parties relating to the International Club Competition to the UEFA Executive Committee for a decision within twelve (12) weeks of the confirmation to the Organiser that the file is complete. This period may be extended by up to twelve (12) weeks, in particular where the authorisation request is complex.

² No International Club Competition shall proceed or be announced as proceeding before the authorisation decision of the UEFA Executive Committee. The Organiser may, however, announce that an application request for authorisation by UEFA has been made.

Article 10 – Decision by the UEFA Executive Committee

¹ When taking its decision, the UEFA Executive Committee shall take the following elements into account having regard to the information submitted by the Organiser and any interested parties:

- a. administrative and financial criteria;
- b. sporting and technical criteria;
- c. ethical criteria;
- d. sporting merit criteria.

² The UEFA Executive Committee shall have the right to reject a request in the event of its reasonable assessment that one or more of the criteria are not fully satisfied.

³ Any decision of the UEFA Executive Committee to approve an authorisation request may be subject to one or more conditions such as:

- a. International Club Competition in question authorised on a trial basis for a specified period of time;
- b. report to be sent to the UEFA Administration at the end of the International Club Competition in question;
- c. name of the International Club Competition in question to be changed (including if reasonable objections on grounds of intellectual property rights are raised by UEFA or a third party);
- d. measures to be taken to protect the principles of sporting merit and openness at a national and European level;
- e. distribution of revenues to participating clubs from the International Club Competition to be based primarily on sporting merit;
- f. the Organiser of an International Club Competition with annual gross revenues exceeding EUR 10 million to contribute to the objective of promoting solidarity in football in a reasonable and proportionate manner:
 - (i) Social, Educational & Sporting fund: for projects with a social, educational and sporting purpose in line with best practices having regard to the standard of the International Club Competition (such as grassroots projects, youth player development, dual-career education, anti-racism, gender balance, refugee integration, etc.);
 - (ii) European Sports Model fund: a redistribution scheme for non-participating clubs, having regard to the standard and number of clubs participating in the authorised International Club Competition;
- g. participation to the International Club Competition in question is restricted to a specific age category;
- h. participating clubs refraining from signing any exclusivity agreement/undertaking not to take part in any other International Club Competition of the similar nature for a specified period of time;
- i. confirmation that all Member Associations and affiliated leagues concerned have granted their written approval to the International Club Competition;
- j. fulfilment of an undertaking linked to the criteria for authorisation.

⁴ Any decision taken by the UEFA Executive Committee on an authorisation request shall be communicated promptly by the UEFA Administration to all those concerned and may be followed up, where necessary, and in any case where an authorisation request is rejected, with the reasons for the decision within a period of eight (8) weeks.

Article 11 – Authorisation of Combination or Alliance to organise an International Club Competition

¹ An Organiser of an International Club Competition which is planning to be a Combination or Alliance requires separate authorisation prior to its formation from the UEFA Executive Committee in accordance with Article 51 of the *UEFA Statutes*. Any material change to an authorised Combination or Alliance shall require new authorisation from the UEFA Executive Committee prior to its implementation.

² A Combination or Alliance shall not be formed before it has been authorised by the UEFA Executive Committee.

³ To protect the integrity of the International Club Competition and equality between clubs, a Combination or Alliance which controls in full or in part an Organiser directly or indirectly may only be approved by the UEFA Executive Committee if membership of such Combination or Alliance is based primarily on sporting merit on an equal and non-discriminatory basis.

⁴ In the event that a Combination or Alliance is not authorised by the UEFA Executive Committee (or has been formed prior to authorisation), the UEFA Executive Committee may order the clubs or leagues or Member Associations concerned to take all steps within their power to terminate their involvement in the Combination or Alliance, including measures to dissolve or liquidate the unauthorised Combination or Alliance.

Article 12 – Effects of a decision

¹ Any decision of the UEFA Executive Committee relating to an authorisation request is final, subject to an appeal to CAS as per Article 16 below.

² UEFA can in no way be held liable for having granted its authorisation to an International Club Competition in the event that any legal claims subsequently arise in connection with the authorised International Club Competition. The Organiser (and/or participating clubs) shall hold UEFA harmless against any such claim.

³ A new application relating to the same International Club Competition (or similar in nature) cannot be made for at least twelve (12) months after a rejection decision.

⁴ Authorisation may be withdrawn at any time by the UEFA Executive Committee if the above-mentioned criteria or conditions are no longer met.

IV. Disciplinary procedure and measures

Article 13 – Disciplinary procedures and measures for clubs

¹ Any breach of these rules by a club may be sanctioned by UEFA in accordance with the *UEFA Statutes* and/or *UEFA Disciplinary Regulations*.

² In addition to the measures specified in the *UEFA Statutes* and/or *UEFA Disciplinary Regulations*, the competent UEFA disciplinary body may impose, in conjunction with any such disciplinary measures, one or more of the following measures upon a club in accordance with the principle of proportionality and on the basis of the circumstances of the case:

a. warning for a first-time minor breach committed due to an administrative error (e.g. Organiser failed to notify the club's participation);

b. fine of:

(i) up to five hundred thousand euros (EUR 500,000) for a first-time minor breach;

(ii) up to 5% of the turnover of a club in its previous financial year for a first-time breach committed intentionally or negligently by a club;

(iii) up to 10% of the turnover of a club in its previous financial year for each case of recidivism committed intentionally or negligently by a club in the previous five (5) years;

c. exclusion of a club from UEFA club competitions for a period up to three (3) seasons for an intentional or negligent breach of the present rules, applicable in particular where the unauthorised International Club Competition or unauthorised Combination or Alliance is found to be in breach of the objectives protected by the present rules;

d. ineligibility of a club from UEFA club competitions for as long as the club participates in an unauthorised International Club Competition and/or for the duration of the agreement to establish or the establishment of an unauthorised Combination or Alliance.

³ UEFA reserves the right to impose these measures and those set out in the *UEFA Disciplinary Regulations* for any intentional or negligent failure by a club to request UEFA's approval for participating in or for having formally agreed to participate in a club competition held outside of UEFA's Territory.

Article 14 – Disciplinary measures for Member Associations, Organisers and other entities or persons

¹ Any breach of these rules by a Member Association or by an entity or person subject to the *UEFA Statutes* and/or regulations may be sanctioned by UEFA in accordance with the *UEFA Statutes* and/or *UEFA Disciplinary Regulations*.

² UEFA may impose measures upon any Organiser of an unauthorised International Club Competition prohibiting the organisation of International Club Competitions for a period up to three (3) years in addition to any disciplinary measures provided for in the *UEFA Disciplinary Regulations*.

Article 15 – Protection of sporting merit in Member Associations

In accordance with Article 51^{bis} of the *UEFA Statutes*, each Member Association is responsible for deciding national issues relating to the protection of the principle of sporting merit, in particular with respect to promotion/relegation and access to European club competitions. The Member Associations should have rules and disciplinary procedures in place to protect the principle of sporting merit within national club competitions. The disciplinary decisions adopted by UEFA relating to an unauthorised International Club Competition are, therefore, without prejudice to any disciplinary measures taken by its Member Associations to protect sporting merit at a national level.

Article 16 – Dispute resolution

¹ Any dispute related to these rules, including without limitation final decisions relating to the authorisation procedure and final decisions imposing disciplinary measures, shall be finally resolved by arbitration before the CAS in accordance with the Code of Sports-related Arbitration (CAS Code) as in force at the date of the filing of the request for arbitration, the statement of appeal or the request for provisional measures, whichever is relevant at that time.

² In agreeing to submit any dispute to the CAS under the CAS Code, all parties subject to the present rules expressly waive their rights to request any provisional measures from state authorities or tribunals in accordance with Article R37 of the CAS Code.

³ The decision of CAS shall be final and binding to the exclusion of jurisdiction of any civil court. This is without prejudice to the right of appeal before the Swiss Federal Tribunal in accordance with Swiss law and the right to challenge the enforcement or recognition of an award on grounds of public policy in accordance with any applicable national procedural laws or the right to file a case before a competent competition authority.

⁴ Any circumvention of UEFA's disciplinary procedures and/or CAS's exclusive jurisdiction under these rules by an entity directly or indirectly affiliated to UEFA (i.e. Member Association or club or league or Organiser), including with respect to provisional measures, is strictly prohibited. This provision shall not apply to any legal action, including with respect to provisional measures, commenced prior to the entry into force of the present rules concerning an entity affiliated directly or indirectly to UEFA.

⁵ UEFA may accept to settle any potential disciplinary case with a Member Association or club or league or Organiser or party subject to these rules by means of other measures.

V. Final provisions

Article 17 – Authoritative version

In the event of discrepancy in the interpretation of the English, French or German versions of these rules, the English version prevails.

Article 18 – Unforeseen cases

¹ The UEFA Executive Committee may take a final decision on any cases not provided for in these rules which is reasonably necessary to achieve a legitimate objective pursued by UEFA.

² UEFA retains the right to inform the football community by means of a notice on its website that a particular International Club Competition or event has not been authorised by it in order to address any uncertainty or confusion on the subject.

Article 19 – No retroactive effect

¹ The present rules do not have retroactive effect.

² Any equivalent breach relating to the preparation or organisation of an unauthorised International Club Competition prior to the entry into force of the present rules shall be dealt with by UEFA in accordance with the relevant disciplinary rules in force at the time and any measures imposed for such a breach shall not count towards recidivism for the purpose of the present rules.

³ In order to ensure legal certainty and equal treatment for Organisers (and to avoid parallel procedures), any application for authorisation of an International Club Competition and/or for a Combination or Alliance received by UEFA which has not been authorised by the UEFA Executive Committee at the time of entry of the present rules shall only be processed in accordance with the present rules. In order to request authorisation, the Organiser concerned is required to submit a new application in conformity with the present rules.

Article 20 – Adoption, entry into force and codification

¹ These rules were adopted by the UEFA Executive Committee on 10 June 2022.

² They codify UEFA's existing authorisation practices and procedures, as well as how they have been applied, with respect to the authorisation of International Club Competitions as defined in these rules.

³ They come into force immediately.

For the UEFA Executive Committee

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President

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Nyon, 10 June 2022