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TO UEFA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

For the attention of
the President and the General Secretary

Your reference

Your correspondence of

Our reference

Date

F/WF/MAC/NKE/GOU 21 December 2023

Changes to the UEFA Women's Champions League and introduction of second women's club competition

Dear Sir or Madam,

Following a thorough review process involving all stakeholders, several changes to the UEFA Women's Champions League have been introduced for the new cycle, which runs as of 2025/26.

Whilst it is evident that competitiveness, attendances, and visibility significantly improved after the introduction of the current format in 2021, at their meeting on 2 December 2023 the UEFA Executive Committee approved changes to the format and access list of the UEFA Women's Champions League (UWCL) and the introduction of a second-tier competition. These changes are designed to further enhance the flagship UWCL and to benefit the wider European women's football ecosystem.

A summary of the various changes can be found below.

UEFA Women's Champions League

Competition format

Replacing the UWCL group stage, a league phase will be introduced and increase the number of participating teams from 16 to 18. Teams will be seeded into 3 draw pots and will play two opponents from each pot, one at home and one away for a total of 6 matches per team. All results are counted in one ranking: 3 points for a win, 1 for a draw, 0 for a loss.

- Clubs ranked 1 to 4 in the league stage will go directly to the quarter-finals.
- Clubs ranked 5 to 12 in the league stage will play an additional two-legged knock-out stage play-off for the four remaining quarter-final spots.
- Clubs ranked 13 to 18 will be eliminated.
- After the two-legged quarter-finals, the competition is concluded by two-legged semi-finals and a single leg final.
- Preceding the league stage, the competition still features a preliminary round, round 1 and round 2 and divides teams into champions and league paths.

Access list (based on 52 national associations registered)

Existing association quotas are retained, while the positions of higher ranked associations are strengthened. The third placed team from association 7 and the runner-up from association 17 will access the competition for the first time.

The composition of the league stage will be as follows:

- 9 teams qualify directly
 - Titleholder
 - Associations 1 to 2: domestic champions and runners-up
 - Associations 3 to 6: domestic champions
- 9 teams qualify from round 2 (champions path and league path combined)
 - 4 teams from the champions path
 - Preliminary round
 - Associations 29 to 52: domestic champions
 - Round 1
 - Associations 7 to 28: domestic champions
 - Round 2
 - The title holder of the 2nd competition
 - 5 teams from the league path
 - Round 1
 - Associations 4 to 7: third placed teams
 - Associations 6 to 17: runners-up
 - Round 2
 - Associations 1 to 3: third placed teams
 - Associations 3 to 5: runners-up

All changes made to the access list will enter into force in the 2025/26 season.

Calendar

Calendar constraints have been considered when developing the competition. While the knock-out stage play-off round involving eight teams has been added, access list upgrades ensure that eight teams play two fewer qualifying matches. The full competition scheduling will be confirmed once the FIFA Women's International Match Calendar post 2025 is established.

Commercial concept

A commercial task force has been set up involving UEFA, the European Club Association and representatives of participating clubs. Its role is to assess and agree on the optimal commercial concept for the future of the competition. Details will be communicated in due course.

2nd UEFA Women's Club Competition

Competition format

The competition is a 44-team knock-out competition played over six rounds: rounds 1 and 2, the round of 16, quarter-finals, semi-finals and final. Each round, including the final, is played over two legs (home and away).

Access

- 13 teams access the competition directly
 - Round 1
 - Associations 8 to 13: third placed teams
 - Associations 18 to 24: runners-up
- 31 teams eliminated from the UWCL will access the second competition through a feeding process
 - Round 1
 - The 11 third-placed teams from the round 1 tournaments
 - Round 2
 - The 9 teams defeated in round 2
 - The 11 runners-up from the round 1 tournaments

Calendar

The second competition will run parallel to the UWCL. No new dates are required.

Commercial concept

Clubs retain full ownership of media and sponsorship rights relating to their home matches in every round.

Further details

As per standard procedure, the review of the competition regulations and financial distributions will be addressed via a working group in due course.

For more detailed information and a visual representation of the above, please refer to the enclosed overview of changes. Should you have any questions or require any clarifications, please feel free to contact the Women's Football sub-division.

Yours faithfully,

U E F A



Theodore Theodoridis
General Secretary

Enclosure

- UWCL Competition review

cc (with enclosure)

- UEFA Executive Committee
- UEFA Women's Football Committee
- European members of the FIFA Council
- FIFA, Zurich
- European Club Association