

The UEFA Study Group Scheme is an innovative technical exchange programme which allows UEFA's 53 member national associations to discuss and share knowledge on topics such as coach education, grassroots, elite youth football and the women's game.

Some 54 seminars are planned for the present season – with one new initiative involving four additional pilot seminars for goalkeeping coach educators. The first Goalkeeper Study Group Seminar took place in Brussels in September, and the Football Association of Ireland was chosen to host the second of these initiatives. In total, 46 delegates from 18 different countries attended this seminar which was very well received by all, and held from the 18th – 21st October 2011 at Tallaght Stadium.

"The Football Association of Ireland was honoured to have the opportunity to stage one of the UEFA Study Group Scheme Seminars for the specialist position of the goalkeeper. The seminar itself concentrated on the way in which those working with professional or elite goalkeepers should shape their training sessions and the competencies required by both the coach and the goalkeeper himself", said FAI National Co-ordinator for Coach Education, Greig Paterson. "Following our exchange of information, I noted that opinions were very positive and favourable towards our hosting of this seminar and of the way in which we have been working hard to devise a course curriculum for a Goalkeeping Coaching Licence that might become standardised across Europe."

"Eighteen nations were represented at the seminar- nineteen including ourselves," added Wim Koevermans, FAI High Performance Director. "It comprised thirteen theoretical presentations and five practical demonstration sessions. The chief objective was to propose new methods of education, with our reality-based learning approach at the heart of this. We also wanted to propose that the goalkeeper coach takes on more responsibility and works with the goalkeeper in tandem with other units of the team, rather than working with the goalkeeper in isolation."

"We are extremely pleased to be able to add this additional specialist education to the Study Group Scheme," concluded UEFA's Head of Football Education Services Frank Ludolph. "A clear link will be established with the guidelines for goalkeeper coach education that were worked out recently by the UEFA Jira Panel. The four hosts are associations experienced in education for this specific coaching target group."