

UEFA

60 years at the heart of football



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UEFA 60 years at the heart of football

André Vieli



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4	Foreword by the UEFA President
6	Preface
60 years at the heart of football	
9	I. The birth of the union
19	II. A European cup for national teams
25	III. The Champion Clubs' cup leads the way
33	IV. From Paris to Berne
39	V. Initial assessment and further development
61	VI. From Gustav Wiederkehr to Artemio Franchi
73	VII. Before and after the Heysel tragedy
89	VIII. The Champions League is born
101	IX. Associations from the east
109	X. The Bosman case
119	XI. Much-coveted club competitions
129	XII. Closer dialogue with the European Union
133	XIII. Entering a new era
147	XIV. Parallel activities
Gaining ground	
153	I. The rapid rise of women's football
159	II. The long journey from indoor football to futsal
165	III. A coaching licence recognised throughout Europe
At the heart of UEFA	
169	I. Member associations
172	II. Congress
173	III. Presidents
184	IV. Executive Committee and honorary members
192	V. General secretaries and CEOs

Neither soothsayers nor revolutionaries

Some say that there is no point dwelling on the past. We cannot change it, after all. However, it is useful, essential even, to be aware of it. Unless you know, for example, why an organisation was created in the first place, how can you be sure that the direction in which you are taking it is in line with its original objectives?

Those who founded UEFA 60 years ago were no soothsayers, and none of them could have imagined what the organisation they created would become. Football has changed in step with a society whose lightning-quick evolution means that many parents today have more in common with their ancestors than with their own children.

Neither were UEFA's founders revolutionaries. They had absolutely no intention of turning the football world upside down or challenging the established institutions. All they wanted was to better protect Europe's interests at a time when its position within FIFA was being weakened by the continuous arrival of new members. They also wanted to create a continental competition, because, in short, a football organisation without any competitions of its own makes about as much sense as an airport without aeroplanes.

In this respect the pioneers would delight in the vast range of competitions that UEFA organises today, their global reach and their incredible popularity throughout the world.

But what would they think of UEFA's position in the world of football? They would doubtless understand, broad-minded individuals that they were, that UEFA's role is not to dominate but to set an example, to cooperate with the other confederations; in short, to make a decisive contribution to the health and prosperity of our sport.

This book shows that, over the years, UEFA has constantly endeavoured to continue the work begun by its founders, that it has managed to adapt to the constant changes going on around it, and that it is aware that the job is never done; we must remain vigilant if pitfalls are to be avoided and, where possible, anticipated.

This book presents UEFA as seen from the inside by an author who worked for the UEFA administration for more than 31 years and who, as the long-standing editor of our official publications, was ideally placed to observe and inform about UEFA's inner workings and myriad activities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Platini', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Michel Platini

The history of football is of course written by the players, on the pitch and in the stadium. However, their feats would go largely unnoticed, or soon be forgotten, if they were not achieved in competitions with such a vast reach. It is the game's pioneers who created these competitions and their successors who continue to shape them; administrators and leaders whose main concern is to protect the interests of the game, enhance its popularity and promote values that extend far beyond the world of football and sport as a whole.

This book is not meant as yet another in the long line of publications, pictures and video footage that retrace the history of the European competitions, the top players and their accomplishments. Rather, it seeks to recall the main stages of the development of European football's governing body, from its birth 60 years ago to its current position as a major force on the international stage. It does not set out to examine every aspect of UEFA's activities, the range of which has become as vast as it is complex. Neither is it intended to emulate UEFA's golden jubilee publication, which presented the organisation in its sociological, economic and political context. This book simply aims to pay tribute to the pioneers of the past and to all those members of committees, the administration and other bodies who have followed in their footsteps, acting not for themselves but in the interests of football and UEFA's good name.

This work is largely based on Congress and committee meeting minutes, accounts by some of the most prominent figures in UEFA's history, and various official UEFA publications.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed in one way or another.

André Vieli

60 years at the heart of football



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The birth of the union

The Union of European Football Associations was founded a mere 50 years after the creation of world football's governing body, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). Although half a century may seem like a long time, it should be remembered that this was a period marred by two world wars that hampered the growth of all organisations, sporting or otherwise. Furthermore, not all European national football association officials saw the need to establish a European grouping within FIFA, which had been founded by seven European associations (Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland) in Paris on 21 May 1904, had set up its headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland, and had always had a European president at the helm, Jules Rimet of France having followed in the footsteps of his compatriot Robert Guérin and Englishman Daniel Burley Woolfall.

By 1954, the 31 European associations were by far outnumbered within FIFA, which welcomed another four new members that year, bringing the total to 85, and at whose congresses the principle of one vote per association, whatever its size, history or record of success, applied then as it does today. Nonetheless, as French journalist Jacques Ferran wrote in UEFA 50 Years, the book published by UEFA to commemorate its golden jubilee, FIFA remained "a federation charged with the task of governing world football, but which was actually dominated by Europeans."

With all the excitement of the World Cup match between Belgium and England in Basel on 17 June 1954, the creation of European football's governing body two days previously went virtually unnoticed.

The three pioneers

Ottorino Barassi (1898-1971)

Although Italy's Ottorino Barassi played a fundamental role in the creation of UEFA and chaired its founding meeting in Basel in 1954, he was not among the continental confederation's future leaders. Paradoxical as this may seem, the Italian Football Federation president was seeking re-election to the FIFA Executive Committee and simultaneous membership of both committees was not allowed at that time.

Ottorino Barassi joined the FIFA Executive Committee in 1952 and was a FIFA vice-president from 1960 until his death in 1971. He also played an important role in the organisation of the 1934 World Cup in his home country and of the 1950 tournament in Brazil. However, he is perhaps best known for hiding the Jules Rimet trophy, won by Italy at the 1938 World Cup, in a shoe box under his bed during the second world war to keep it safe from the German occupying forces.

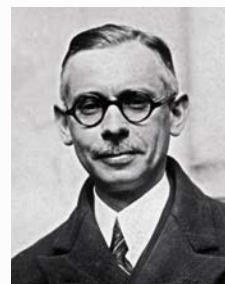


RA

Ottorino Barassi

Henri Delaunay (1883-1955)

As one of its founders and its first general secretary, Henri Delaunay holds a prominent position in UEFA's history, and his role would no doubt have been all the greater if serious illness had not cut his life short on 9 November 1955. Having helped to create the World Cup at the end of the 1920s, Henri Delaunay was also a fervent advocate of a European national team competition and, in collaboration with Austrian Hugo Meisl, had, at that time, already suggested a specific competition for European national teams. It took 30 years for that idea to become reality and Henri Delaunay was no longer alive when the competition finally came into being, but the trophy awarded to its winners bears his name, in recognition of his visionary ideas.



AFP

Henri Delaunay

If we are to show proper reverence for Henri Delaunay, we should also give him the title that is duly his: in UEFA publications he heads the list of UEFA general secretaries but never appears in the list of Executive Committee members. And yet, at both the 1954 founding meeting and the assembly in Vienna, it was clear to everyone that Henri Delaunay was a fully fledged member of the Executive Committee, on which he acted

as secretary, with Ebbe Schwartz as president. The minutes of the 1955 assembly are unequivocal: “The General Assembly unanimously confirms in their functions the Executive Committee members who were elected at the general assembly in Basel, i.e. President: Dr. Schwartz, Vice-president: Mr. Sebes, Members: Mr. Crahay, Mr Delaunay and Sir Graham.” It was not until 1956, when it was decided that a paid general secretary should be appointed, that the statutes were changed to specify that the general secretary took part in meetings of the Executive Committee but did not have a vote. The fact that Pierre Delaunay had to be elected to the Executive Committee when he stepped down as general secretary, whereas, in the same situation, his father Henri would have simply had his title changed from ‘secretary’ to ‘member’ only reinforces his case.

José Crahay (1899-1979)



UEFA

Of UEFA’s three founders, the general secretary of the Royal Belgian Football Association was the only one able to follow and influence the early years of the new confederation, remaining a member of the Executive Committee from its creation until 1972 and becoming vice-president in 1961. He chaired the European Champion Clubs’ Cup organising committee from 1958 to 1972 and left behind a valuable legacy of written documents, including his editorials for *La Voix sportive*, the official publication of the Belgian FA.

José Crahay

Well-respected by his peers and the leaders of the other national associations, he was named UEFA’s first honorary member when he retired from the Executive Committee at the Vienna Congress in 1972.

José Crahay also managed the European team that beat a Great Britain XI 4-1 (with three goals by Yugoslavian Bernard Vukas) in Belfast on 13 August 1955. UEFA received a share of the receipts from this match, which was played to mark the Irish Football Association’s 75th anniversary; this was UEFA’s first income other than the statutory 250 Swiss franc annual membership fee paid by the member associations.

The South American example

The South American associations had opened the door to a European alliance by forming their own confederation in 1916, which enabled them to examine the items on FIFA Congress agendas in advance and adopt a common position. At the start of the 1950s, the benefits of such a process were becoming increasingly clear to the European associations, whose individual views sometimes differed too much for them to effectively defend their common interests. Initial discussions about forming an alliance were therefore held, with the president of the Italian Football Federation, Ottorino Barassi, and the general secretaries of the national associations of France and Belgium, Henri Delaunay and José Crahay, generally recognised as the main architects behind the creation of UEFA, even though the idea of founding a European confederation was not theirs alone.

José Crahay wrote a valuable account of these initial steps in the Handbook of UEFA 1963/64: "At that time a Confederation existed already in South America which makes it all the more understandable that Europe, too, wished to get organized. During his frequent travels Dr. Barassi spoke to the leaders of several National Associations about this plan, and they were all highly interested. A first officious meeting was called in May, 1952, in Zurich, by Mr. Henri Delaunay, Secretary of the French FA. Only those European National Associations which on the occasion of preliminary talks with Dr. Barassi had in principle agreed to the project, were invited to attend."

Founding meeting in Basel

At that meeting in Zurich, Henri Delaunay presented a draft set of statutes for the future organisation – officially baptised the Union of the European Football Associations ('Union des associations européennes de football' in French) in October 1954, with the initials UEFA. A standing committee comprising the three aforementioned founders was appointed to operate on this basis and to convene further (for the time being still informal) meetings.

One was held in Paris in November 1953, on the occasion of the FIFA Congress, followed by another on 12 April 1954, also in the French capital, at which it was decided that a formal meeting should be convened in Berne, where the FIFA Congress was to take place ahead of that summer's World Cup in Switzerland. When the Swiss Football Association announced, however, that all the hotels in Berne were full, it was decided that Basel should host the meeting of the delegates of the European national associations, 22 of which had already responded to a questionnaire sent out after the meeting of 12 April to seek their views on what shape the statutes should take.

The meeting in Basel was held in the Salon Rouge at the Euler hotel at 10.30 on 15 June 1954. It was attended by representatives of 25 European national associations. Two other associations (Romania and Wales), which had been prevented from attending, were represented by Czechoslovakia and England respectively – a practice that the FIFA Statutes did not permit. The number of voters rose again, to 28, when the Greek delegate arrived in time for the afternoon session. Although the national associations had not had time to examine the draft statutes, the delegates adopted a motion that “the European football associations decide definitively on the constitution of a group of the said associations, under a form to be determined”.

On the eve of the World Cup, the creation of this European alliance did not exactly make the headlines. Even the September issue of the FIFA Official Bulletin failed to mention the foundation of UEFA, or the fact that the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) had been created in Manila a few days earlier, on 8 May. No reference was made to it in the minutes of the FIFA Congress, nor in the ‘presidential programme’ of the new FIFA president, the Belgian Rodolphe William Seeldrayers. The official report on the 1954 World Cup indicated that “on the occasion of the World Cup, various events took place in Switzerland”. It mentioned, among others, FIFA's 50th anniversary celebrations and the congress of the International Sports Press Association but said nothing about the foundation of UEFA.

The éminence grise

Sir Stanley Rous (1895-1986)

Although he was never UEFA president, Sir Stanley Rous held the top job at FIFA and was at the forefront of UEFA's early development while still secretary of The Football Association. It was he who proposed the first UEFA Executive Committee members. He was also involved in the negotiations concerning the relocation of UEFA's headquarters and played a crucial role in Switzerland's Hans Bangerter being appointed as UEFA general secretary. He was behind the creation of the International Youth Tournament, the organisation of which was taken on by UEFA at his initiative, and was among the founders of the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup and chairman of its organising committee. A former international referee, he also coordinated the revision of the Laws of the Game before embarking on a career as an administrator as secretary of The Football Association, a position he held from 1934 until 1962.



AFP

Sir Stanley Rous

At UEFA, Sir Stanley joined the Executive Committee in 1958, becoming vice-president in March 1960, before leaving to become FIFA president the following year. Welcoming his election, the UEFA president of the time, Ebbe Schwartz, described him as "the most important personality in European football during the last 15 years". He remained FIFA president until 1974 when, after standing for a further term, he was defeated at the Frankfurt Congress by Brazilian João Havelange, who thus became FIFA's first (and, at the time of writing, only) non-European president.

"Looking back now over his active and creative part in the various national and international bodies and casting an eye also over the various decisive moments in the history of European and world football, we continually come across the name of Sir Stanley Rous," wrote Hans Bangerter in a tribute published in the UEFA Official Bulletin of June 1985 on the occasion of the Englishman's 90th birthday.

The first committee

It was decided at UEFA's founding meeting, on the proposal of Englishman Sir Stanley Rous, to appoint a six-member executive, which met in Berne on 22 June 1954 to distribute the roles of president (Ebbe Schwartz, Denmark), vice-president (Josef Gerö, Austria), general secretary (Henri Delaunay, France) and members (José Crahay, Belgium; Sir George Graham, Scotland; and Gustáv Sebes, Hungary). A draft set of statutes in three languages – French, German and English – was then submitted to the 31 European member associations of FIFA, and their responses were analysed by the committee in Copenhagen on 29 and 30 October, with a view to the body of rules being adopted by the general assembly (known as the UEFA Congress since 1968), which was convened at the Austrian Football Association's headquarters in Vienna on 2 March 1955.

There were 29 European national associations in the roll call, with Poland the only addition to the 28 that had met in Basel the previous year. The admission of Turkey brought the final number of associations represented to 30. They unanimously adopted the statutes proposed by the Executive Committee, with just one amendment: the expansion of the committee to eight members.

The general assembly re-elected all the existing committee members, including Gustáv Sebes, who the Executive Committee had appointed as vice-president following the death of Josef Gerö at the end of 1954. The seat left vacant as a result was unanimously awarded to Austrian Alfred Frey and in a separate ballot, Peco Bauwens (West Germany) and Constantin Constantaras (Greece) were elected as new members.

The legal foundations of the confederations

The creation of new continental confederations had been considered at the 1950 FIFA Congress in Rio de Janeiro. As Sir Stanley Rous wrote in the Handbook of UEFA 1963/64: "The idea of grouping National Associations according to the Continents in which they were situated was first discussed following the circulation of proposals made by two countries – England and the Argentine." A study group was appointed, but it reached the conclusion that "changes in the constitution should be kept to a minimum" and that "no reference should be made to the possible formation of Confederations." However, the 1953 Extraordinary FIFA Congress in Paris, convened to revise the FIFA Statutes, had opened the way by allowing the continents to elect their own representatives to the FIFA Executive Committee. Associations from the same continent therefore all had a reason to get together; Europe's associations simply took it one step further and, like the South Americans before them, decided not to limit themselves to elections, but to form a proper alliance.

At its 1954 Congress in Berne on 21 June, FIFA merely noted the fact that UEFA had been created. Jules Rimet, stepping down as FIFA president after 33 years, did, however, express concerns about the changes adopted in Paris the previous year: "This evolution is not without risk, I fear, but I have confidence in you. I would also remind you that first of all you are Members of the Federation and then representatives of particular interests ... You will have to have in mind above all the interest of world football and not those of your group."

FIFA had been aware of the statutory proposals UEFA was planning to submit to its general assembly in Vienna but did not receive a copy of the text adopted by the new confederation until Kurt Gassmann, FIFA general secretary at the time, requested it in February 1956.

In reality, the creation of confederations did nothing to fundamentally change FIFA's relations with the national associations, which remained directly affiliated to both the world governing body and their respective confederations. This two-fold membership still exists today. The European members of the FIFA Executive Committee were elected by the UEFA general assembly/Congress from 1954 onwards, although the FIFA Statutes made exceptions for the British and Soviet associations, which were each allowed to elect a representative of their own to the position of FIFA vice-president. Meanwhile, UEFA declared,

and formally confirmed at its 1956 general assembly in Lisbon, that in order to preserve the independence of its own Executive Committee, members of the latter could not also be members of the FIFA Executive Committee. As far as independence was concerned, it was soon realised, in fact, that the European members of the FIFA Executive Committee had perhaps a little too much, and that they did not necessarily defend the positions adopted by UEFA. In order to improve relations between the two organisations, a FIFA-UEFA consultative committee was established in July 1960. After that, the UEFA Executive Committee invited the European members of the FIFA Executive Committee to specially arranged meetings, always with the purpose of obtaining a consensus of opinion. Since the mid-1990s, on the initiative of the then UEFA president, Lennart Johansson, European members of the FIFA Executive Committee who are not members of the UEFA Executive Committee have always been invited to attend UEFA Executive Committee meetings, for the sake of cohesion. At the Extraordinary UEFA Congress in Geneva in June 1993, an amendment to the UEFA Statutes was even adopted, entrusting the Executive Committee rather than the Congress with the task of appointing the European members of the FIFA Executive Committee. Since FIFA considered the new article incompatible with the FIFA Statutes, the procedure remained unchanged, but the tacit rule under which someone could not sit on both committees simultaneously was abandoned, allowing members of the UEFA Executive Committee to be elected to the FIFA Executive Committee as well.

Officially, the confederations were not recognised until the FIFA Statutes were revised at the Extraordinary FIFA Congress in London on 28/29 September 1961, when Sir Stanley Rous, UEFA vice-president at the time, was elected FIFA president after his compatriot Arthur Drewry had died mid-term.



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A European cup for national teams

Although primarily founded to better defend the interests of European football, UEFA's original aims already included the idea of a European competition for national teams, expressed in Article 4(e) of the first UEFA Statutes as "the arrangement when appropriate and at least every four years of a European Championship Series, the UEFA being the sole body competent to fix the regulations and conditions thereof". The words "subject to FIFA authorisation" were later added at the world governing body's request.

Of course, this article merely imitated what FIFA itself had done at the time of its creation. "When the Fédération Internationale de Football Association was founded in 1904, one of its original statutes gave FIFA the exclusive right to run an 'International Football Championship'," wrote Hans Bangerter, UEFA general secretary from 1960 to 1988, in UEFA, Past and Present, the first chapter of UEFA's 25th anniversary book. As recorded in FIFA's Official Bulletin of May 1954: "The founders of FIFA, at the same meeting at which they adopted the Federation's Articles of Association, resolved to create a World Championship, worked out the regulations for it and entrusted the Swiss Association with the task of organizing the semi-final and final rounds." As Hans Bangerter pointed out: "It soon became clear that these bold plans were a little premature."

Times changed, the context was different for UEFA and some Europeans clearly had no intention of waiting so long. Before the general assembly had even adopted statutes the Executive Committee decided, in October 1954, to create a sub-committee to consider draft regulations for a European national team competition. They felt that a confederation without its own competition would be lacking something. "So we now have a Union of European Football Associations, and that is all well but, in my opinion, it has not yet entirely fulfilled its objective," Henri Delaunay wrote in the 20 September 1955 edition of France Football Officiel. "It has become a grouping in the legal sense but not yet in sporting terms. And yet I'd say that this sporting aspect is as essential to it as a national competition is to an association, the South American Championship is for the South American Football Confederation or the World Cup is to FIFA."

Czechoslovakian goalkeeper Viliam Schroiff catches the ball in the semi-final against the USSR on 6 July 1960 in the inaugural Nations Cup. The USSR won that match 3-0 and went on to beat Yugoslavia in the final.

Fears of rivalry

On the basis of the sub-committee's discussions, the Executive Committee drew up a proposal at its meeting in Brussels on 3 February 1955, which José Crahay and Henri Delaunay were invited to present at the general assembly in Vienna. Henri Delaunay, already suffering from the illness that would lead to his untimely passing in November 1955, never got the opportunity to defend this project he held so dear. The idea was to divide the competition into two phases, with a knockout stage the season before the World Cup and a final tournament in a single country the following season. It was also proposed that this new competition would serve as the European qualifying competition for the World Cup, to avoid taking up additional dates in the international calendar.

After attending the meeting in Brussels, the FIFA general secretary, Kurt Gassmann, immediately wrote to inform Pierre Delaunay, who had replaced his father as acting UEFA general secretary, that he did "not entirely agree with the ideas that were presented concerning a UEFA competition and the qualifying competition for the 1958 World Cup".

Kurt Gassmann had, in fact, already drafted some observations on the project two days before the Brussels meeting, in particular that it went "against the vital interests" of FIFA. "As a matter of principle, FIFA should not allow the final phase of a continental competition to take place during the same year as the final stages of the World Cup. The year of the final phase of the World Cup must be kept clear of any other competition involving the national associations."

The FIFA general secretary also stressed that the idea of playing the final phase of a European competition in a single country in the same year as the World Cup finals represented dangerous competition for the latter and jeopardised income that was "absolutely" indispensable to FIFA. On the subject of finance, he added that "FIFA should insist that the financial situation be neither altered nor undermined and that its previous resources remain guaranteed". He therefore suggested that the European competition be played two years (knockout stage) and one year (final tournament) before the final phase of the World Cup, and that "depending on the situation, it would perhaps be advisable to separate the knockout stage of the European competition from the preliminary stage of the FIFA competition".

A project deemed premature

Kurt Gassmann's observations were sufficiently echoed at the general assembly in Vienna in March 1955 for the idea of a European competition to be deemed premature and referred back to the sub-committee for re-examination. Writing in *L'Équipe*, Jacques Ferran summed up the meeting rather bluntly: "The three-member committee responsible for this project (José Crahay of Belgium, Frenchman Henri Delaunay and Sir George Graham of Scotland) had spent almost six months drafting the regulations. In ten minutes in Vienna ... it was swept away."

It is not hard to imagine the disappointment of Henri Delaunay, who, in an article entitled *The European Cup* published in the 20 September 1955 edition of *France Football Officiel*, wrote: "Our mosaic of European countries needs this outlet for sporting expression. We cannot continue living in an atmosphere of routine and obsolescence. All other sports ... organise European championships; will football, which has always been in the vanguard of sporting progress, remain trapped in its outdated models? We very much hope that the national associations will find a fair solution to the problem they face."

Undeterred, the sub-committee got back to work and certainly could not be accused of having failed in its remit: amendments were made to reassure FIFA, in particular by preventing clashes with the World Cup finals, and the idea of group matches was abandoned in favour of a direct knockout system, to ensure the calendar did not get too congested.

However, the project's opponents were resolute and included some highly influential figures, including Ottorino Barassi (despite having previously come out in favour of the competition) and Sir Stanley Rous. The clubs also had their word to say and even back then were reluctant to release their players for a greater number of national team matches. As a result, the project was postponed twice more, at the general assemblies in Lisbon and Copenhagen in 1956 and 1957 respectively. A step forward was taken in 1957, when a vote was won by supporters of the competition (15 to 7, with four abstentions and one blank paper), but still this was not enough to disarm the project's opponents and Ottorino Barassi was first on the offensive at the 1958 general assembly in Stockholm, suggesting, on the Italian association's behalf, that the competition was undesirable because it would restrict the international calendar and might "excite national passions".

Uncontainable momentum

Although supported by the Swiss and West German delegates, this attempt to stem the tide was short-lived. In Stockholm as in Copenhagen, 15 delegates voted in favour of going ahead with the competition and, on reconvening after lunch, UEFA president Ebbe Schwartz came out with guns blazing in defence of the project. With the support of Pierre Delaunay, spokesman for the sub-committee, he brought discussions to a close by announcing that the draw for the first edition would be held two days later, on 6 June. With enormous foresight, Pierre Delaunay had written in *France Football Officiel* a short while before: "Whether we like it or not, the momentum is uncontainable ... the European international competition will take off in the end, and sooner or later it will have the virtually unanimous backing of the associations."

In recognition of the role played by Henri Delaunay in the creation of the competition, Ebbe Schwartz proposed that it be called the Henri Delaunay Cup, while the president of the French Football Federation, Pierre Pochonet, announced that his association would provide the trophy, entrusting Pierre Delaunay with its production.

As Pierre Delaunay told UEFA-direct in September 2005: "Europe is a word of Greek origin. Europe certainly originated in the Mediterranean Basin, and Greece invented the Olympic Games, so I thought it would be a good idea to find an ancient Greek artefact, depicting a ball if possible – something which was not particularly common – and reproduce this in the form of a trophy. A Greek journalist who was a friend of Constantin Constantaras, a member of the Executive Committee, found a sculpture of an athlete controlling a ball at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. The Parisian silversmith Chobillon, who was commissioned to make the trophy, reproduced it on the cup, on the opposite side to the title." The sculpture in question did not survive the recasting of the trophy by London-based goldsmith Asprey in 2006.

More than 100,000 spectators

The competition draw was held on 6 June at the Foresta Hotel in Stockholm, under the direction of UEFA vice-president Gustáv Sebes. A total of 17 associations had entered, which meant a two-team preliminary round was required. This involved the Republic of and Czechoslovakia (2-0, 0-4), but for calendar reasons their matches were not played until after the round of 16 had begun. The first match in the competition was therefore between the USSR and Hungary, who met in Moscow on 28 September 1958. The USSR, who went on to win the competition, beat the Hungarians 3-1 in front of more than 100,000 spectators. Overall, the 29 matches in this first edition were watched by more than 1 million spectators, at an average of 37,101 per game, going to show that, although the new competition was unpopular with some in the corridors of power, it had what it took to attract the fans and convince other national associations to take part (29 out of a possible 33 signed up for the second edition).

Financially, the final round of the new competition earned UEFA 24,112 new French francs: a modest but not insignificant sum for an organisation with very limited financial resources to its name.



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The Champion Clubs' Cup leads the way

It is no surprise that the leaders of the national associations were more interested in a competition for national teams than in one for clubs over which they did not always hold much sway in their respective countries. Paradoxically, however, the first competition to be organised under UEFA's aegis was for clubs, in a reversal of priorities that was, to begin with at least, entirely unintentional and can be put down to the determination of the journalists at the French sports daily L'Équipe.

Unsurprisingly for a competition created by journalists, the story of the Champion Clubs' Cup has been told many times and in minute detail. Here we will limit ourselves to a broad recollection of the events that followed Gabriel Hanot's planting of the seed in L'Équipe on 15 December 1954. "The idea of a world, or at least European, championship for clubs, ... more original than a European championship for national teams, is worth putting out and we are going to venture it." This was the conclusion to his article about the match between Wolverhampton Wanderers FC and Budapest Honvéd FC that had prompted Britain's Daily Mail to presumptuously hail Wolverhampton as club world champions, the English team's 3-2 victory coming shortly after a 4-0 win over FC Spartak Moskva.

Gabriel Hanot's testy response might have remained nothing more than journalistic reverie had he not been such a big name in the field and had his idea not been blazoned in his headline: 'No, Wolverhampton are not yet 'club world champions'! But L'Équipe has ideas for a European club championship.' More important still was the full and resolute support Hanot's idea received from Jacques Goddet, owner and director of L'Équipe, who instructed Jacques de Ryswick, in charge of the football section, to turn this fantasy into reality as quickly as possible. The very next day, de Ryswick wrote in L'Équipe of a "plan for a European club championship". Pan-European consultation in January 1955 reinforced the journalists' confidence in their project and L'Équipe entrusted another of its staff, Jacques Ferran, with the task of drafting a set of regulations.

Alfredo Di Stéfano's face says it all after Real Madrid's 4-3 win over Stade de Reims in the final of the inaugural European Champion Clubs' Cup in Paris on 13 June 1956.

The competition was no longer to be a championship but a cup competition, and the first edition was designed for 16 clubs (one per country), each chosen by the organisers on the basis of prestige (so not necessarily national champions). The format would consist in home and away knockout ties to be played within fixed periods.

Favourable reception from the clubs

Overall, the clubs concerned were very keen to participate, although most were reluctant to commit without their national association's permission. L'Équipe, for its part well aware of the complexity of the undertaking, had no intention of organising the competition itself. Despite a lukewarm response from the French Football Federation, which supported the plans for a European Nations' Cup and did not want to jeopardise them by subscribing to another project, the newspaper took its idea to the very top. The FIFA president, Rodolphe William Seeldrayers, himself responded, telling the journalists that if the calendar allowed, it would surely be an "extremely interesting and very successful" initiative, but the organisation of a club competition was not in the world governing body's remit.

L'Équipe then knocked on the door of the recently founded UEFA, which was busy preparing for its first general assembly. Although it was too late to add the item to the agenda, Gabriel Hanot and Jacques Ferran were invited to present their idea in Vienna. The assembly heard them out but told them it was up to the "associations to give their clubs permission to participate in such an event".

It would take more to dampen the enthusiasm of the team at L'Équipe, who knew at the end of the day that they had the support of the clubs. And so they decided to go ahead and organise a meeting in Paris for representatives of those clubs they had already sounded out. Held in the Salon des Gobelins at the Ambassador Hotel on 2 and 3 April, this extremely constructive meeting resulted in the adoption of the regulations proposed by L'Équipe and the constitution of an 'executive organising committee' chaired by Frenchman Ernest Bédignans, vice-president of the association of French clubs that would later become the French Professional Football League. They even decided the pairings for the round of 16 – the only time in the competition's history that lots were not drawn to determine the ties.

Faced with such determination, UEFA had no choice but to respond, especially since one of its vice-presidents, Gustáv Sebes, was on the organising committee. Its response came from the Emergency Committee (a panel of the Executive Committee's highest-ranking members, convened to deal with urgent questions arising between Executive Committee meetings), which met in London on 6 and 7 May. Plans for a European clubs' cup were the first item on the agenda and the panel decided to draft a letter to the FIFA Executive Committee, itself due to meet in the English capital on 8 May, asking it "to examine the conditions for the organisation of such a competition, in order to ensure that it complied with the international rules governing the responsibilities of the national associations." The Emergency Committee also asked that the label "Europe" be reserved exclusively for UEFA.

The green light from FIFA

The request was well received by FIFA, which responded by inviting UEFA to organise the competition, on condition that the national associations concerned gave their consent and it did not contain the word "Europe" in its name. For the project's initiators, who met in Madrid on 17 May at the invitation of the president of Real Madrid CF, Santiago Bernabéu, the joy of seeing their plan made reality outweighed the disappointment of some members of the organising committee, who had been relieved of their duties.

At its meeting in Madrid, the original committee suggested that the new competition be called the President Seeldrayers Cup, in recognition of the FIFA president's efforts to enhance the status of European football. The proposal was not taken up. Nor was their request to be allowed to work with UEFA on the organisation of the competition. Hoping to have national champions involved, UEFA called the competition the European Champion Clubs' Cup. After Gabriel Hanot's death in 1968, RSC Anderlecht suggested that it be renamed in the French journalist's honour but this proposal was not pursued either.

The regulations drawn up by Jacques Ferran, on the other hand, were adopted with just a few minor adjustments, and the fixture list was only amended following the late withdrawal of the English representatives, Chelsea FC, and one or two other changes at national level. UEFA had written to all its members, inviting them to enter their champions in the forthcoming competition, but it gave priority to the clubs previously selected by L'Équipe, thanking the associations whose teams were surplus to requirements "for their eagerness in showing an interest in this competition" and promising "to take their applications into consideration the following season". Although no one could have imagined the phenomenal success the competition would enjoy, clearly UEFA knew it would be no flash in the pan.

Dissolution of the organising committee

The original organising committee met one last time after the competition had got under way. It wound itself up, according to its secretary, Frenchman Pierre Junqua, in his account for UEFA's 25th anniversary book, and issued a press release that read:

"The Executive Committee of the European Football Cup, representing the 16 clubs participating in this competition, met in Paris on 3 November 1955, with Mr. Bédignans in the chair, so that its members could exchange views on the situation created by the Union of European Football Associations, which has decided to assume all the functions for which the Committee was elected.

"The Committee has decided to suspend all its activities for the time being, declining all the responsibilities entrusted to it but sincerely hoping, nonetheless, that the competition is a complete success."

The competition trophy, created by Parisian silversmith Maeghe, was donated by L'Équipe. With its name on the base, the French paper's ties to the competition were not truly cut until 12 years later, when the UEFA president, Gustav Wiederkehr, took the cup to the Spanish capital and presented it to Real Madrid CF on 21 October 1967 as a permanent tribute to the club's sixth victory in the competition. It was replaced from the 1966/67 season by the famous 'cup with the big ears', designed by Bernese jeweller Jürg Stadelmann, and the reference to L'Équipe disappeared forever.

Celtic FC captain Billy McNeill was the first to hold the new cup aloft after his team's 2-1 win over FC Internazionale Milano at the national stadium in Lisbon on 25 May 1967.

The first match in the European Champion Clubs' Cup was a 3-3 draw between Sporting Clube de Portugal and FK Partizan in Lisbon on 4 September 1955. The first edition of the competition, which culminated in the first of Real Madrid CF's five consecutive victories, encapsulated everything that was to follow, as Jacques Ferran pointed out 50 years later in an interview in *L'Équipe*: "Everything, and I mean everything, that has characterised the European Cup, both good and bad, was apparent in the very first edition." In particular, he mentioned the two quarter-final matches between Real Madrid CF and FK Partizan (4-0 and 0-3): "Everything was there in that match: pressure, passion, violence, politics, refereeing and technical quality. Everything!"

Competition between competitions

Club competitions were, in fact, nothing new in Europe. Forerunners included the Mitropa Cup (for clubs from central Europe, played between 1927 and 1939 and relaunched in the mid-1950s) and the Latin Cup (involving the champions of Spain, France, Italy and Portugal, discontinued after nine editions in 1957, a victim of the creation and success of the Champion Clubs' Cup). There had even been a short-lived European club tournament called the 'Cup of Nations' staged in Geneva in 1930. The influence of all these events was limited, however, in terms of both geographic reach and prestige. On the other hand, with the desire for more international competition stemming from the frustration of the war years and their organisation facilitated by advances in air travel, *L'Équipe*'s was not the only project in the pipeline and it was partly in an effort not to be outdone that the French paper was redoubling its efforts.

The most well-honed of the other projects on the table, the one with the best chance of seeing the light of day, was the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup, which enjoyed the backing of several influential football officials, including FIFA Executive Committee members Ernst Thommen (president of the Swiss Football Association), Sir Stanley Rous and Ottorino Barassi.

With the support of such individuals, there was no need for the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup to seek the approval of the international governing bodies. Given these favourable conditions, it went ahead on 4 June 1955, before the Champion Clubs' Cup, from which it differed in terms of timing (the first edition lasted almost three years), structure (it included group matches) and participants (with teams representing cities rather than clubs). As its name suggests, the aim was to link trade fairs and football, in the hope that the fairs could promote the competition.

Although 12 teams entered, only 10 actually took part in the inaugural edition, played from 1955 to 1958. The regulations were subsequently changed so that club sides could enter, since they were stronger and more popular than city teams, and from the third edition (1960/61) the competition was played in a single season.

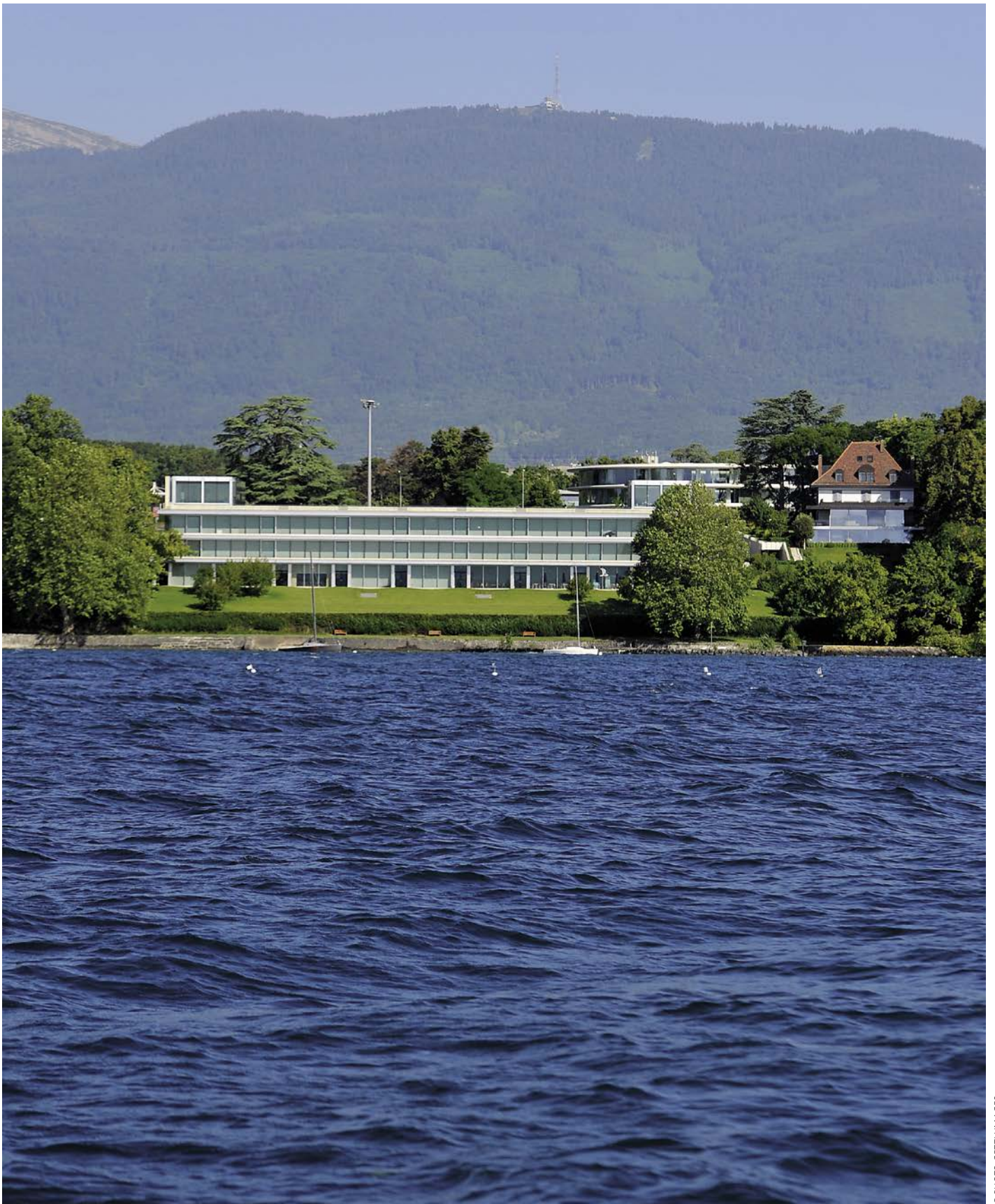
In the May 2009 edition of UEFA-direct, Hans Bangerter explained: "The competition was clearly well organised, with a permanent secretariat hosted by Ernst Thommen who, at that time, was also a director of the Swiss sports betting company, Sport Toto, in Basle."

At that time, the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup was totally separate from UEFA's competitions. "They appointed their own referees, took disciplinary measures and managed everything themselves," Hans Bangerter recalled. There was no danger of it eclipsing the Champion Clubs' Cup, though, and even in those early years UEFA was too busy with its own activities to give it much thought, especially after FIFA asked it to take on another competition, the International Youth Tournament, in 1957.

Something for youth players

The International Youth Tournament had been created just after the war, in 1948, with the aim of forging closer relations between young players from all over Europe rather than establishing a hierarchy of European youth teams. The competitive element was secondary, as explained by Gustav Wiederkehr, UEFA president from 1962 to 1972, in a book commemorating 25 years of the UEFA Youth Tournament: "With a determined aim, the friendly character of the matches of this competition is stressed ... During the period of 'apprenticeship', the stress in football should first of all be put on playfulness. Wit and imagination should be displayed freely."

For the 1955 and 1956 editions, it was even decided to dispense with the semi-finals and final and end the tournament after the group stage so that there would be multiple winners. However, under pressure from the national associations, the organising committee set up by UEFA and chaired by Sir Stanley Rous abolished this arrangement for the following edition, which brought 15 teams to Spain in 1957. Austria beat the hosts 3-2 in the final in a packed Santiago Bernabéu stadium in April, but had to wait until the general assembly in June to receive their trophy. "It was something of a disappointment when our Secretary, late in March, received a letter from the Secretary of FIFA, saying that his Emergency Committee had decided not to hand the old cup to UEFA," Ebbe Schwarz explained in his speech. "It was impossible in such a short time to have another made up, but here in Copenhagen I have the great pleasure to ask the President of the Austrian FA to come forward to receive the new cup."



From Paris to Berne

As UEFA's activities increased, it was not long before the thoughts turned to the secretariat. The first general secretary, Henri Delaunay, worked for UEFA on a voluntary basis. Combining his UEFA duties with his role as general secretary of the French Football Federation, he worked out of an office at the FFF headquarters at 22 Rue de Londres in Paris, the city in which the UEFA Statutes had been filed with the authorities so that the European body would be officially recognised as an association. With few financial resources of its own, UEFA could not have managed without the help of a large national association such as the FFF.

Henri Delaunay's son, Pierre, took over as acting general secretary in March 1955, with the Executive Committee's approval, when his father fell ill. Following Henri's death in November 1955, the position of general secretary was discussed at length at the Lisbon general assembly in June 1956, under the item dealing with amendments to the UEFA Statutes, and after some strenuous debate the Spanish association's proposal to create a salaried position was accepted. In the second half of the meeting Pierre Delaunay was elected by acclamation.

This could have been the start of a long career, Pierre Delaunay being only 36 years old at the time. However, UEFA's continuous expansion dictated otherwise. Less than three years after his election, the UEFA general assembly decided to move the association's headquarters to Berne in Switzerland, putting paid to lengthy debate about whether or not to stay in Paris. A dedicated House Committee chaired by the president, Ebbe Schwartz, had even been set up, but not before the Finance Committee, chaired by the influential Peco Bauwens, had made its views known, Pierre Delaunay had been promised administrative assistance, and draft contracts between the FFF and UEFA had been drawn up, first for ten years, then for three. There was also talk of moving the headquarters to Zurich, while the Council of Europe had even thrown Strasbourg's name into the hat. Finally, despite the UEFA Official Bulletin, edited by Pierre Delaunay, announcing in its January 1959 'News in brief' that "the principle of definite installation of the UEFA headquarters in Paris, rue de Londres, has been accepted by the Members of the Executive Committee," nothing came of this and at an extraordinary general assembly held in Paris on 11 December that year, the Executive Committee's proposal that the headquarters be moved from Paris to Berne was approved by 16 votes to 9, with three abstentions.

The House of European Football moved to the shores of Lake Geneva from Paris, via Berne.

UEFA's Swiss headquarters

Opened on 4 January 1960 in the presence of the president, Ebbe Schwartz, UEFA's first headquarters of its own were located in three basement rooms at 24 Kirchenfeldstrasse, in the diplomatic quarter of the Swiss capital. Hans Bangerter took up his position on 1 January, initially assisted by just two secretaries. Before long he received further administrative support, first from Suzanne Otth, who went on to manage the office until her retirement in 1990, and then in 1961 from Bulgarian lawyer Michel Daphinoff, who left his national football association and Olympic committee to become assistant general secretary and take charge of financial matters, a role he continued to fulfil until he retired, also in 1990.

Running out of space, the administration moved on 1 August 1962 into the House of Sport on Laubeggstrasse, where it occupied seven offices and was able to use various conference rooms.

The number of employees continued to grow in proportion to the new tasks that the governing body assumed. "The expansion of UEFA during the last year has been such that the amount of work has almost doubled," the periodical UEFA Information announced in January 1972. This resulted in the recruitment of four new employees, almost doubling the size of the nascent administration and bringing the staff total to 11, including the general secretary.

Meanwhile, in 1968, in order to protect UEFA's finances from the effects of inflation, the Executive Committee decided to erect a 16-storey building on the outskirts of Berne, at 33 Jupiterstrasse. The general secretariat moved in on 11 February 1974, initially occupying one and a half floors of the building, the rest of which was rented out as residential flats. On account of the very busy calendar, it was not officially inaugurated until 17 September 1976. The general secretariat had 16 full-time staff at that time. In 1987, further expansion led to UEFA taking over the remainder of the floor that it had only been partially occupying, as well as the top floor, which was converted into a conference room. Later on it also took over the ground floor. Since local regulations prohibited any further extension of the office space, UEFA then started looking for a new site for its headquarters and found a piece of land in Nyon, in the French-speaking part of Switzerland,

on the shores of Lake Geneva and within 30km of the international airport. It moved its headquarters to temporary offices rented from an insurance company in Nyon in February 1995, and then, after the official inauguration on 22 September 1999, into the House of European Football, an elegant building designed by French architect Patrick Berger and superbly integrated into its surroundings. For the first time, UEFA had a home all for itself and its ever-expanding activities.

In 2010, UEFA took the next-door stadium under its wing. As the UEFA general secretary, Gianni Infantino, wrote in his editorial for the April edition of UEFA-direct: "It was proposed that efforts should be made to combine our administrative offices with these adjacent sports facilities by asking the Nyon authorities to entrust us with the long-term management and upkeep of the Colovray centre, so that we can stage our own events there, while protecting the interests of the sports clubs that also use the facilities." Numerous courses for referees and coaches have been organised at Colovray, as well as the final rounds of the UEFA European Women's Under-17 Championship between 2008 and 2013, and, in 2014, the final round of the inaugural UEFA Youth League, a pilot club competition for youth teams in the U19 category.

At around the same time, with its administration outgrowing offices designed to accommodate 110 people, UEFA decided to construct a new building opposite the House of European Football. La Clairière, a circular five-storey building with office space for some 230 staff, was inaugurated on 18 October 2010. It was designed by Geneva-based architects Bassi and Carella. A third building, known as Bois-Bougy, then opened in March 2012. Designed by the same company, it accommodates around 190 staff and a match command centre from where all operations linked to UEFA matches can be monitored – which became more important than ever when the Executive Committee decided at its meeting in Minsk in October 2010 that UEFA would take control of competition operations itself.

In addition to the aforementioned Suzanne Otth and Michel Daphinoff, and general secretaries Hans Bangerter and Gerhard Aigner, several members of UEFA's administrative staff, past and present,

have served European football for more than a quarter of a century: René Eberle (1972–2007), Silvia Meister (1971–2002), André Vieli (1982–2013), U. Rudolph Rothenbühler (1973–2003), Manuela Pfister (1983–2013), Ursula Krähenbühl (1964–1993), Rita McKinnon (1976–2003), Ines Lauber (since 1987), Anna Simon (since 1988) and Dominique Maurer (since 1989).

The size of the administration has steadily increased over the years: from 3 when UEFA arrived in Berne, the number of employees had risen to 65 by the time of the move to Nyon in February 1995. At the end of 2013, the permanent headcount stood at 403.

In terms of structure, in September 2009 a new company, fully owned by UEFA, was established to help the governing body carry out its operational and commercial activities. It was given the name UEFA Events SA at the Executive Committee's meeting in Funchal in December that year. David Taylor became its CEO, managing three divisions: sales and marketing, events and operations, and technology and media, the last of which took over the activities of UMET (UEFA Media Technologies), a UEFA subsidiary created in 2001 under the name UEFA New Media to deal with matters related to digital media.

In 2010, technology and media became part of UEFA's communications division, leaving UEFA Events SA with two divisions: marketing and operations. In January 2013, these were placed under the direct responsibility of the general secretary, who is supported in his work by directors Theodore Theodoridis (national associations division, deputy general secretary), Alasdair Bell (legal affairs), Stéphane Igolen (services), Josef Koller (finance), Giorgio Marchetti (competitions), Martin Kallen (UEFA Events SA, operations) and Guy-Laurent Epstein (UEFA Events SA, marketing).

In addition, since UEFA EURO 2004, UEFA has set up companies in various legal forms to take charge of the organisation of each EURO tournament. The latest set-up, EURO 2016 SAS, is led by Frenchman Jacques Lambert, who also played a major role in the organisation of the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France.

Yugoslav delegate Mihajlo Andrejević was ardently in favour of the organisation remaining in Paris and criticised the Executive Committee for acting too quickly, forgetting that the 1958 general assembly had approved, albeit tacitly: “That the association’s headquarters be established at a permanent address proposed by the Executive Committee and decided by the general assembly”.

A new general secretary and a treasurer

Whether for or against the move, most of the delegates agreed with the arguments put forward by Ebbe Schwartz regarding the secretariat. He is recorded in the general assembly minutes as saying: “The workload has increased considerably during recent years and it is indispensable that the secretary is able to work full time.” Faced with the choice between a job abroad with an uncertain future and his work as general secretary of the FFF in Paris, Pierre Delaunay opted for Paris. His successor, Hans Bangerter, was already prepared to take over and present at the general assembly, where he was appointed that same day. As FIFA deputy general secretary, he was familiar with European football and its key personalities. After his appointment, the UEFA headquarters moved from Paris to Switzerland, where they would eventually relocate again – many years later – from Berne to Nyon. The FFF had little to say at the assembly. Its president, Pierre Pochonet, had already resigned himself to the move following a visit to Paris by the House Committee in March 1959. Now more mature and with revenue coming in from the competitions it organised, UEFA no longer wanted to be in a large association’s tutelage, so to speak. It wanted its own headquarters, and although some feared that this independence was a delusion, given that UEFA’s new headquarters would be closer to FIFA’s and that the new general secretary himself had moved from the world governing body, they were ultimately won over by Switzerland’s central location in Europe, its political stability and the stability of its currency.

Meanwhile, Pierre Delaunay was rewarded for his unquestionable merits with a seat on the Executive Committee. The general assembly decided to increase the number of members to ten (it had been increased to nine, excluding the general secretary, at the 1956 general assembly), allowing him to join the executive body immediately.

It was also at the extraordinary general assembly in Paris that the office of treasurer was created. As the Executive Committee member responsible for financial matters, it made sense that Alfred Frey should be given this task and title.



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Initial assessment and further development

Despite the stir caused by UEFA's relocation, disagreements with FIFA (cryptically referred to in the minutes of an Executive Committee meeting in October 1958 as "various misunderstandings ... between UEFA and FIFA"), and the existence of a parallel club competition outside UEFA's control, the situation in autumn 1961 was surely not as bad as UEFA's first vice-president, Sándor Barcs of Hungary, described it in the speech he gave at the funeral of the incumbent UEFA president, Gustav Wiederkehr, on 12 July 1972: "The situation in UEFA [in 1961] was quite unacceptable. Total anarchy ruled at Congress, the administration was practically non-existent, hardly any attention was paid to the decisions of the Executive Committee in Europe."

In a worthy effort to eulogise his friend, Sándor Barcs had been a little hasty in forgetting that, during Ebbe Schwartz's presidency, UEFA had managed to overcome various obstacles to successfully organise the inaugural European Nations' Cup, that it was efficiently running the Champion Clubs' Cup in spite of the complexity of the task, and that it had recently taken the Cup Winners' Cup under its wing. On top of that, it had achieved unity in Europe before and, sometimes, despite the politicians. It had also, from its very first general assembly, grasped the importance of TV, which had initially been viewed as a threat that could empty the stadiums. It has passed a motion prohibiting matches from being broadcast without the permission of the visiting team's national association and limiting broadcasts to the territory of the home country, unless agreed otherwise.

Launched in 1960, the curtain fell on the Cup Winners' Cup on 19 May 1999 in Birmingham when SS Lazio beat RCD Mallorca 2-1.

UEFA had shown that it was interested not only in administrative matters and formalities, such as the choice of UEFA's official colours of white, royal blue and red in March 1961, but that it was also concerned about the quality and development of the game, as it demonstrated by organising its first course for coaches and managers at the Swiss national sports centre in Macolin in June 1961. Finally, the desire to share information had led to the publication of an Official Bulletin which, from May 1956, provided a communication platform that was mainly used, in the early days, for official communications and to share the minutes of meetings with a larger audience.

The Cup Winners' Cup

The idea of a European competition for domestic cup winners took a while to gain acceptance, not least because not all the national associations had their own cup competition and if they did it often had only a limited reach. At the Executive Committee meeting in Brussels in November 1957, Spaniard Agustin Pujol mentioned "a plan to organize a tournament involving the Cup Winners from different countries," echoing a proposal made by Alfred Frey at the March 1956 meeting. The subject was raised again at the June 1958 meeting in Stockholm when, after "lengthy debate", a committee was created to draw up regulations to be submitted to a general assembly. Agustin Pujol reported back with draft regulations at that year's October meeting of the Executive Committee, which then decided to sound out the national associations, explaining that it would only take the proposal further if at least ten of them showed an interest. Only six of them did so, and in March 1959 the Executive Committee abandoned the project.

However, meeting back in Brussels on 10 March 1960, Alfred Frey told his fellow Executive Committee members that the Cup Winners' Cup would replace the Mitropa Cup, and that "the [Mitropa Cup] organizers, faithful members of UEFA, are aware of the Union's statutes and shall need no instruction. As soon as more associations apply for the participation of their Cup Winner, this competition will be taken over by UEFA."

The Mitropa Cup organising committee therefore assumed the task of launching the Cup Winners' Cup for the 1960/61 season. From a field of 14 participants, it was the Italian club of ACF Fiorentina who lifted the trophy, winning both legs of the final against Rangers FC. UEFA was then persuaded to take over the running of the competition and appointed Alfred Frey as chairman of its organising committee. In October 1963, it was also persuaded by the Italian Football Federation to recognise the first edition, and added ACF Fiorentina to the official list of competition winners.

From 1962/63, the Cup Winners' Cup final was played as a single match at a neutral venue, like the Champion Clubs' Cup final. The last final was held in Birmingham on 19 May 1999, when another Italian club, SS Lazio, completed the circle by beating Real Mallorca 2-1.

Domestic cup winners were later awarded UEFA Cup places when the Executive Committee decided to merge the two competitions at its meeting in Lisbon on 6 October 1998. A part of European football's heritage, the Cup Winners' Cup trophy remains in UEFA's possession.

In the Handbook of UEFA 1963/64, Gustav Wiederkehr offered a much more positive assessment of UEFA's early years than the gloomy picture painted by Sándor Barcs: "On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of UEFA the question may be raised as to whether or not this Union of European Football Associations has realized the expectations placed in it when it was founded. Its main tasks were to promote football in our continent, to defend the well-founded interests of its affiliated National Associations, to bring under control the international management of the game, and, last but not least, to nominate the personalities representing Europe in the Council of the World Union of Football [FIFA Executive Committee]. We believe that these duties were fulfilled in the best interests and to the satisfaction of all concerned." He concluded by declaring that: "Today UEFA is a firm bloc and ready to master with joint efforts the problems which future years may have in store."

Greater authority

By succeeding Ebbe Schwartz at the ordinary general assembly in Sofia in April 1962, Gustav Wiederkehr – the only candidate for the post of president – had certainly not taken the helm of a sinking ship. Just the year before, at its Extraordinary Congress in London in 1961, FIFA had officially recognised the continental confederations and clearly defined their responsibilities. "The efforts of UEFA to have the official recognition of the Continental Confederations by FIFA incorporated in the Statutes of this latter were successfully concluded at the Extraordinary Congress of the World Federation on September 28th/29th, 1961, in London, which undoubtedly represents an important milestone in the history of the Continental Confederations, their standing and activities," wrote the general secretary, Hans Bangerter, in his biennial report for 1960 and 1961.

This considerably strengthened the confederations' authority since, from then on, their member associations were bound by all general assembly and Executive Committee decisions, which had previously been no more than recommendations. Indeed, according to Article 8 of the UEFA Statutes valid until then: "Decisions taken by the Union are not binding upon the National Associations: they are in the nature of recommendations. They are binding as far as the election of the FIFA Executive Committee and the Union Committee [UEFA Executive Committee] is concerned."

Revision of the UEFA Statutes

UEFA overhauled its statutes in light of the confederations' new status. A revised version had in fact already been prepared by a committee composed of Sir Stanley Rous, Peco Bauwens, José Crahay and Hans Bangerter before FIFA's decision.

After being approved by the Executive Committee, the new statutes were adopted at the general assembly in Sofia. With 33 articles, they were much more substantial than the previous version, which had only contained 12. The committees, which had acted as advisory working groups as and when required during UEFA's early years, were now enshrined in the statutes. There were ten of them and their responsibilities were clearly defined. Thanks to Gustav Wiederkehr, these committees, which had previously been composed of Executive Committee members, were opened up to members of virtually all the national associations. This expansion strengthened the organisation's unity by enabling all its members to participate in its work and share their ideas and opinions.

Another step taken on the new president's initiative, also in an effort to involve the associations in the life of UEFA, was the organisation of conferences for the general secretaries of the member associations, at which the participants could discuss administrative questions of general interest. The first of these was held in Copenhagen on 27 and 28 August 1963. Similar meetings were also introduced for association presidents, with the first held in Zurich on 19 December 1967, and from 1971 the two events were combined into a single conference for presidents and general secretaries. Even though these gatherings – forerunners of the strategy meetings organised during Michel Platini's presidency – were not officially grounded in the statutes, they constituted important platforms for discussing topical issues affecting European football and showed the Executive Committee the direction that the national associations wanted it to take.

From UEFA Cup to Europa League

As UEFA general secretary, Hans Bangertter actively participated in the negotiations that resulted in UEFA taking control of the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup. "The competition was very successful but the time came when the UEFA Executive Committee thought that such a major competition should be governed and organised by UEFA itself, which could ensure that standard rules were followed and could deal with refereeing and disciplinary matters," he explained in the May 2009 issue of UEFA-direct.

"There was no coordination with our competitions. We therefore thought that this could not last. Finally, with the support of Sir Stanley Rous ... we came to an agreement. And I remember the last meeting of the Fairs Cup Committee, which was held in Barcelona. UEFA had been invited to send a representative to this final meeting and the Executive Committee asked me to go. I received a polite but rather frosty welcome. Sir Stanley Rous, who had many other important responsibilities, had little problem in handing over the task of chairing the committee, but some of the other members were not exactly thrilled to be losing a position that, when all is said and done, was quite a nice one to have. We kept one or two of them in our committees to iron out some of the difficulties and, in the end, everything went smoothly."

The last Inter-Cities Fairs Cup final saw Juventus take on Leeds United FC. The first leg on 26 May 1971 had to be abandoned at the start of the second half because torrential rain had made the pitch unplayable. The match was replayed a couple of days later and ended in a 2-2 draw. The second leg was also drawn (1-1) and Leeds United FC were declared winners under the away goals rule. As if to show the two competitions did indeed have something in common, the same rule had been introduced in the Champion Clubs' Cup just the previous season!

With new ownership came a new name and new regulations, which is why the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup winners do not appear on the list of UEFA Cup winners. Participating teams no longer had to come from cities with trade fairs, and the 'one city, one team' rule was also abolished. The 64 participants were now selected on the basis of sporting merit, i.e. their finishing position in the previous season's domestic league championship.

Initially the number of participants per country was determined by the Executive Committee but in 1978, after several years of careful consideration, UEFA finished working out a system based on the results obtained by the clubs of each association in the five preceding UEFA seasons. The associations were ranked accordingly and their position determined how many clubs they could enter, up to a maximum of four. Introduced for the 1980/81 season, the coefficient ranking system has since been amended several times but it is still used to determine how many clubs from each association can enter the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League and at what stage.

The UEFA Cup also got a brand-new trophy. Created by Swiss graphic designer Alex W. Diggelmann, it is still presented to the Europa League winners today. Meanwhile, the old Inter-Cities Fairs Cup trophy was given to FC Barcelona, winners of a match between the first and the last winners of the competition, FC Barcelona and Leeds United AFC.

The first UEFA Cup final, played over two legs, was an all-English affair between Wolverhampton Wanderers FC and Tottenham Hotspur FC. The Londoners won 2-1 in the first leg in Wolverhampton before drawing the second 1-1 at home. The two-leg format was retained until 1998, when it was replaced with a single match at a neutral venue. FC Internazionale Milano beat SS Lazio 3-0 at the Parc des Princes in Paris in the final that year.

The UEFA Cup steadily became more prestigious and attracted increasing levels of interest. In 1978, the British Daily Mail even suggested that it should be transformed into a 48-club European league. The Executive Committee rejected the idea on the grounds that it was not the right time to launch such a competition and there were too many drawbacks. Hence the UEFA Cup continued to prosper under the same format until the Champions League, breaking away from the 'one association, one champion' principle, opened its doors to domestic league runners-up and, later on, to a maximum of four clubs from the same association. By way of compensation, the UEFA Cup swallowed up the Cup Winners' Cup in the 1999/2000 season.

In addition, the system whereby clubs eliminated from the Champions League were fed into the UEFA Cup – already applied since 1994/95 for clubs knocked out in the third qualifying round – was extended in 1999/2000 to include clubs finishing third in their group. “In sporting terms, this measure is certainly open to criticism,” admitted former UEFA general secretary Gerhard Aigner in the June 2009 issue of UEFA-direct, “but the result is positive because it adds extra interest and the eliminated clubs often offer good value.”

Galatasaray AŞ in 2000, Feyenoord in 2002, PFC CSKA Moskva in 2005, FC Shakhtar Donetsk in 2009, Club Atlético de Madrid in 2010 and Chelsea FC in 2013 proved Gerhard Aigner’s point by winning the UEFA Cup/Europa League after moving into the competition from the Champions League group stage.

Another change was made in the 1995/96 season, when two new routes into the competition were opened up: one via the fair play rankings, calculated on the basis of all the results of the national and club teams of each national association in all UEFA competitions; and the other through the new UEFA Intertoto Cup, which was designed to enable clubs from every association to enjoy a taste of European football.

Following the Champions League’s example, group matches (eight groups of five teams) were introduced in 2004/05, an idea that the UEFA Club Panel had approved back in February 2002. The UEFA Cup was then transformed into the UEFA Europa League in 2009/10, with 12 groups of 4 teams, the centralised sale of media rights from the group stage onwards and fully centralised marketing of the subsequent knockout rounds. It was decided to introduce central marketing for the entire competition for the 2015–18 cycle.

Unlike his predecessor, Gustav Wiederkehr also benefited from the assistance of a full-time general secretary, who had already been in the post for more than two years and had accumulated a wealth of FIFA experience before that. Having been modestly housed in a basement on Berne's Kirchenfeldstrasse, where it employed Hans Bangerter and two additional staff, the UEFA general secretariat found more appropriate premises in 1962 at the House of Sport, where many Swiss sports organisations were based. It was here that the administration steadily grew, developing a structure that enabled it to accomplish an ever-increasing number of tasks. The Executive Committee expanded in parallel, from 10 to 11 members in 1966.

Regulating international competition

Buoyed by its new vigour, it was not long before UEFA sought to bring some order to the continental competitions, as was its prerogative according to the FIFA Statutes. It had already taken charge of the European Cup Winners' Cup, a competition for domestic cup winners, in 1961. In 1962, after drawing up a list of existing competitions, the Executive Committee laid down principles for the authorisation of other international club competitions. It did so not so much in an effort to exert its authority as to avoid overloading the calendar and to protect the players from playing too many matches, especially towards the end of the season when, as Hans Bangerter later wrote in the Official Bulletin of December 1965, "situations which are almost inconceivable for those who are not directly involved" tended to arise.

He was alluding to the extreme difficulty of finding dates for national team matches, domestic cup matches and postponed championship matches. In the same article, he warned against the growing number of matches that were being televised either live or pre-recorded, concluding that: "Too many delicious dishes spoil the appetite for the homely fare of the national championship."

UEFA therefore required clubs to obtain their national association's permission to participate in international competitions. The regulations of such competitions were subject to UEFA's approval, which had to be renewed annually. Furthermore, meeting minutes and competition reports had to be submitted to UEFA, which reserved the right to be represented on the organising committees. The principles laid down by the Executive Committee also stipulated that: "Competitions open to the clubs of all National Associations affiliated to UEFA may only be organized by UEFA itself."

In this context, the days of the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup were clearly numbered, although its good reputation and the influence held by its organisers helped to keep it alive for a while longer.

At the 1964 general assembly in Madrid, Scotland launched the first attack, but Sir Stanley Rous, then FIFA president, personally intervened to save 'his' competition from UEFA's grasp. The Scots, whose proposal that UEFA should take over control of the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup was rejected by 15 votes to 5, tried again two years later, at the general assembly in London, this time with England's support. Abandoned by his national association, Sir Stanley Rous received the backing of another of the competition's co-founders, Ottorino Barassi, but his efforts too were in vain and the proposal was adopted by 11 votes to 10. The margin was so narrow that the UEFA president, Gustav Wiederkehr, suggested that negotiations be held with the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup organising committee, which the general assembly accepted. In 1968, the Executive Committee decided that the competition would be held under the UEFA umbrella from the 1969/70 season. Although the 1968 UEFA Congress in Rome supported this decision, the majority of participants at the June 1969 conference of member association presidents held in Bürgenstock, near Lucerne in Switzerland, agreed that the transitional phase should be extended, and it was not until the 1971/72 season that the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup was finally replaced by the UEFA Cup.

More implementation than innovation

UEFA was now running three major continental club competitions, none of which were, however, its own creations. The same was subsequently true of the UEFA Super Cup, which was launched on the initiative of the Dutch newspaper De Telegraaf, and the UEFA Intertoto Cup, organised between 1995 and 2008 on the initiative of pools companies who wanted official matches to offer customers over the summer. This competition, which offered a gateway to the UEFA Cup, was based on the former International Football Cup, created in 1961 as the Karl Rappan Cup (named after the Swiss national team coach) by eight national associations (Austria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, West Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland), and later called the International Summer Championship.

The European/South American Cup is another competition that was placed partially under the aegis of UEFA but originated with someone else, in this case the South American Football Confederation. Contested by the winners of the Champion Clubs' Cup and its South American equivalent, the Copa Libertadores, this intercontinental competition had been launched in 1960 but it was many years before it was officially recognised by the game's governing bodies.

A single organising committee

Another important development concerned the organisation of the UEFA club competitions. From 1972, there was just one organising committee, whereas each competition had previously had its own. At the same time, the regulations of the three competitions were standardised. Match organisation was also improved through the introduction of a calendar with fixed dates for UEFA club competition matches. The calendar was introduced in two stages, covering the round of 32 and the round of 16 from the 1968/69 season and all rounds from the following season. "The introduction of a European fixture list for the UEFA Club Competitions and the concentration of the matches on the same dates allow a much better overall picture, and thus the football fan is in a much better position to follow the Competitions," noted Hans Bangerter in his general secretary's report for 1968 and 1969. "The press has already found the right denomination for the days of the matches: they simply speak of the 'European Cup Wednesdays'."

Intercontinental competition

On the pitch, Europe and South America were the two main forces of world football, so it is no surprise that the idea arose to organise a contest between the best clubs from each continent, the South Americans having been inspired by the European Champion Clubs' Cup and their own experiences in creating the Copa Libertadores de América in 1960, a competition reserved for South American domestic champions and organised by CONMEBOL, UEFA's South American counterpart.

The competition between the club champions of Europe and South America, the European/South American Cup (also known as the Intercontinental Cup), was also launched in 1960 and regarded as an unofficial world club championship. It remained informal for many years because FIFA was reluctant to recognise it, having even banned it in 1961. UEFA was not overly enthusiastic either, according to the 25 March 1970 edition of UEFA Information, which reported Gustav Wiederkehr's comments at a press conference in Rome: "In principle UEFA was also opposed to the matches between the European and the South American champions. However, since these matches cannot be interdicted, it is preferable that they be played under the jurisdiction of the continental confederations concerned."

It should also be said that this home-and-away contest – with the possibility of a third match in the first few years, when goal difference was not taken into consideration – lived a rather difficult existence: it was hard to find suitable dates; the clubs, especially in Europe, were not particularly interested; and the matches were too often marred by scenes of violence unacceptable on a football pitch. The competition's very survival was even questioned and two editions, in 1975 and 1978, did not take place.

On the initiative of UEFA's then sports marketing agency West Nally, the competition found a home in Japan, where it was played from 1980 onwards as a single match at the end of the year, initially at the national stadium in Tokyo and then in Yokohama. The competition's sponsor added a second trophy, the Toyota Cup, to be presented alongside the traditional cup. Since the media tended to call the competition by the name of the new trophy rather than use its more long-winded official title, it became known as the Toyota Cup until 2004, after which the FIFA Club World Cup offered the confederations a new competition.

Right from the start of the European/South American Cup, CONCACAF, the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football, had expressed an interest in participating but was never invited to do so.

In 1988, CONMEBOL also approached UEFA to suggest a competition, a single match, between the winners of the Cup Winners' Cups of both continents. Although the ISL agency found a sponsor in Miami, Florida, it was a cigarette manufacturer, which UEFA considered undesirable. Two years later a Japanese sponsor showed an interest, but this time it was the eternal problem of finding a suitable date that got in the way and, in any case, UEFA had serious doubts about the sporting merits and impact of such a match. The project was subsequently shelved.

A first step towards a calendar covering all the UEFA competitions was taken when fixed dates were laid down for the European Championship quarter-finals. Another change, brought in for the 1970/71 season, was the abolition of the drawing of lots to decide which team went through from a direct knockout match that ended in a draw, with penalty shoot-outs introduced instead.

Bolstering national team football

Gustav Wiederkehr's presidency was marked by a desire not only to regulate the club competitions, but also to make national team matches more attractive. "The revaluation of the international matches is another task which we consider to be of great importance," wrote the UEFA president in the Handbook of UEFA 1963/64. "As a result of the popularity of the European Club Competitions and numerous other international events in which club teams participate, the interest of the public and, in part, also of the press, in international matches has in many countries suffered considerably ... Under no circumstances shall we idly watch this development. In the great majority of cases our National Associations depend upon the receipts of international matches in order to be able to fulfil their duties towards amateur football, which must be one of our main concerns."

The European Nations' Cup was, not surprisingly, the first to benefit from this solicitude. It underwent a change of format for the 1966–68 edition, with the introduction of group matches followed by a knockout stage (quarter-finals onwards) and the organisation of the final round once again in a single country, in this case Italy. At the same time, the competition was renamed the European Football Championship. The new format satisfied the member associations' desire to play more competitive matches, given the mixed appeal of friendly matches, depending on who they were against.

Another national team competition came into being in 1966: the Under-23 Challenge Cup. After a quiet first edition in 1967, it grew and became the European Under-21 Championship in 1976, with final rounds staged as of 1994, comprising semi-finals and final to begin with, then from 1998 the last eight. The importance of this competition for the development of young players was highlighted by the Executive Committee at its meeting in January 2014, when it decided to expand the final round to 12 teams from 2017.

Filling the amateur gap

Around the same time, in 1965, the Competition for Amateurs was created to make up for the lack of pan-European competition for amateur footballers, who accounted for 99% of all licensed players. The tricky question of how exactly to define 'amateur' proved to be a stumbling block though, and the competition was discontinued in 1978 after four editions. An attempt to revive it failed when the presidents and general secretaries of the member associations discussed the question at their conference in Berne in June 1979 and concluded – as reported by the Executive Committee – “that there was no urgent demand for such a competition and that it was quite impossible to find criteria of participation which would satisfy the wishes of all member associations”.

UEFA therefore decided to focus its efforts on youth footballers, whether by organising competitions or promoting training.

It was not until 1996 that an Amateur Football Committee was re-established and the idea of a competition for amateur footballers reappeared on the agenda. The result was the UEFA Regions' Cup. First organised in 1999, it recognises the importance of amateur football and gives Europe's best regional amateur teams the chance to play on an international stage.

Finally, it was during Gustav Wiederkehr's presidency that UEFA started to show an interest in women's football. Although a women's competition remained a long way off, it was a first step in the right direction.

Politics and religion

Football spurned politics by creating a European union in an era when certain European countries maintained no diplomatic relations with each other. European football even built a few bridges, such as during the first season of the Champion Clubs' Cup, when Real Madrid CF and FK Partizan met in the quarter-finals at a time when their respective countries were ignoring each other. Most of the time, however, UEFA has had to give in to political diktats. Spain refused to play the USSR in the 1960 Nations' Cup quarter-finals and political interference even disrupted the 1961 International Youth Tournament, whose line-up of participants had to be changed right at the last minute following the withdrawals of East Germany, Hungary and Yugoslavia. UEFA initially took a hard line in such cases, awarding matches by default and fining those who refused to play. It later softened its approach, following FIFA's lead and taking the necessary steps to ensure that teams from conflicting countries were not drawn against each other in the first place.

Aside from the problems posed by conflicts, especially in eastern Europe and the Balkans – resulting in Denmark being invited to take Yugoslavia's place in the European Championship final round in 1992 – relations with the European Economic Community (EEC), later the European Community (EC) and then the European Union (EU), have often been tense.

On the other hand, while guarding against any kind of religious bias, UEFA has always been on good terms with the Roman Catholic Church.

At the UEFA Congress in Rome in 1968, UEFA's leaders enjoyed a private audience with Pope Paul VI, who paid them the following tribute: "Sports competitions, when they are not misused and are played in this spirit of 'Fair Play' that ordinarily characterises football matches, help to forge friendly relations between men of all backgrounds, all nations and all races.

Your Union ... helps to bring together the sons of our old and still young Europe, whether from the east, the centre or the west, thereby fostering human contact that sometimes leads to true friendships between players and administrators from different countries. It also gives, not only to the players, but also to the countless spectators who watch these matches, a vision of people and things that goes beyond the limited horizon imposed on the sons of the same civilisation, of the same continent, by barriers that are often artificially erected between different peoples. And so, Gentlemen, we welcome this opportunity to congratulate you and encourage you in your endeavours."

In June 1980, the UEFA Congress was again held in Rome, during the presidency of Artemio Franchi, who obtained an audience with Pope John Paul II for the Executive Committee and national association delegates. On retiring as UEFA CEO, Gerhard Aigner reminisced about the event in the January 2004 issue of UEFA-direct: "The Pope showed that he knew a lot about football. He talked about when he had kept goal for a club in Poland. He also followed teams' results and knew what he was talking about. I have never forgotten that audience. The Pope made a huge impression on me."

The Executive Committee was again received by the pope, this time by Pope Benedict XVI in St Peter's Square, on the occasion of its meeting in Rome in September 2005.

Fostering referees

Outside the competitions, but directly connected to them, refereeing was another focal point for UEFA. On 28 October 1969, over 100 participants gathered at the Italian Football Federation's technical centre in Coverciano, near Florence, for the start of the first UEFA course for elite referees. The aim, even back then, was to develop a uniform interpretation of the Laws of the Game in UEFA competitions, a subject presented at the course by legendary Scottish coach Sir Matt Busby, a survivor of the air disaster that had destroyed Manchester United FC's squad on their way home from a Champion Clubs' Cup match in Belgrade on 6 February 1958. The course, which required the services of 14 interpreters, also covered topics such as the prevention of inappropriate conduct by players and spectators, the structure and organisation of UEFA, team work between the referee and his linesmen, and even elite referees as public figures.

The UEFA Official Bulletin of December 1969 reported: "The presence of the Presidents of FIFA [Sir Stanley Rous] and UEFA [Gustav Wiederkehr] was ample proof of the importance of the event." The article concluded by saying that: "Certainly such conferences will be organized regularly by UEFA in the future." And so they have.

UEFA's position in world football

Although its competitions took up a lot of UEFA's time, the organisation did not forget its initial *raison d'être*, which was to strengthen Europe's position within FIFA – clearly no easy task. Writing in the Handbook of UEFA 1963/64 on the occasion of UEFA's tenth anniversary, the president, Gustav Wiederkehr, went so far as to place "the reconstruction of FIFA" at the top of the list of problems that needed to be addressed.

"If, however, the voting power of the Associations of Europe, where football is played in almost every larger village, and which presumably still represents the majority of all football clubs in the world, is reduced to 25 per cent, this can, in the long run, only have derogatory effects on the position of the FIFA. This fact cannot be denied," wrote the UEFA president, who feared, in particular, a reduction in the number of European places in the World Cup and Olympic Football Tournament.

However, it was not a case of asking the FIFA Congress to abandon the long-standing principle of one association, one vote, which meant that, as more and more associations from other continents joined, Europe was increasingly outnumbered at the world governing body's general assemblies. Such a proposal would have clearly had no chance of obtaining the majority of votes required.

The Extraordinary UEFA Congress in Monte Carlo on 16 June 1971 spent a long time debating "the position of Europe in world football", and an overwhelming majority approved the proposal that the UEFA president should automatically become a FIFA vice-president. In his general secretary's report for 1970 and 1971, Hans Bangerter wrote: "This is indeed an important step towards coordination of European solidarity and its efficacious representation in the World Federation, the result of which will certainly bear good fruit for Europe."

The national associations were, however, less enthusiastic about adopting an amendment to the UEFA Statutes under which: "If an item on the agenda is discussed thoroughly, and if a majority agrees on the subject, then the minority should accept the line followed by that majority". The aim was to enable UEFA to speak with one voice at the FIFA Congress. The Executive Committee, which itself was not unanimous on this question, was asked to present a proposal to the next UEFA Congress and decided that a qualified majority of two-thirds should be required. If obtained, all European associations would be required to defend the majority position when voting at the FIFA Congress. At the UEFA Congress in Vienna in June 1972, 20 of the 32 delegations present voted to return the proposal to the Executive Committee for further examination, with several delegates of the opinion that it violated fundamental democratic principles.

The Executive Committee learned its lesson: unity came second to individual interests and obligations. The 'Commission of Study concerning the position of Europe in World Football' was abolished only a year after its creation, and a proposal was adopted which, according to the general secretary's report for the period in question, simply read: "The representatives of UEFA within FIFA should show unanimity insofar as European affairs are concerned."

Meeting the media

The ever-increasing popularity of football and its major competitions also made UEFA aware of the need to communicate not only with its member national associations but also with the outside world, through the media. This was not something that came naturally to an organisation for whom discretion had always been a watchword and whose role was to manage the game effectively rather than bask in the limelight.

In 1970, a new bimonthly publication, UEFA Information, was launched to give journalists a better understanding of UEFA by writing about its structures and activities. It later provided practical information too, such as referee appointments, kick-off times and statistics concerning UEFA matches. "I am convinced that we owe a lot to the press, radio and television and film reporting if the development of the Union has been so gratifying and if Europe is still looked upon as a model in world football," wrote Gustav Wiederkehr in the first issue.

1970 was also the year when UEFA decided to organise press conferences at major events such as the UEFA Congress and competition finals. "The first such conference took place in Rome. 49 journalists from Italy, Great Britain, Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany and France attended – indeed a gratifying result!", reported UEFA Information about the press conference held after the qualifying round draw for the 1970–72 European Championship.

While UEFA's leadership had clearly understood the need to open up to the media, it took longer to convince the administration, for whom communication remained a foreign concept – so much so that, in June 1973, the general secretary had to issue a memo to the staff about providing the newly appointed chief of press with the information that needed to be communicated to the media.

UEFA's communications policy was extended to include the distribution of press releases throughout Europe by the agency Sportinformation, occasional meetings with media representatives and, in the late 1990s, the creation of the UEFA website, which was made public in 1998 and is now split into two sites: UEFA.org for information about UEFA itself, and UEFA.com for information about its competitions and related matters.

In addition, close cooperation was established with the International Sports Press Association (AIPS) in 1967, and later with its European section (UEPS), to help deal with technical and accreditation matters at UEFA matches. UEFA and the AIPS had previously worked together to launch, on the AIPS's initiative, a fair play campaign in April 1963, with the aim of curbing unsporting conduct and incidents at UEFA matches. The campaign, which all member associations were invited to join, included the creation of a logo and posters, newspaper articles, competitions, symbolic gestures such as handshakes between referees and players, public address announcements in the stadiums and fair play slogans.



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From Gustav Wiederkehr to Artemio Franchi

The sudden death of Gustav Wiederkehr, who suffered a heart attack in his Zurich office on 7 July 1972, plunged European football into a state of mourning but at a practical level UEFA at least had the structures in place to ensure his work could be pursued with continuity. In accordance with the statutes, Sándor Barcs, the longest-serving vice-president, took over as acting president and an Extraordinary Congress was convened for elections to be held. On 15 March 1973 in Rome, Artemio Franchi was elected UEFA president on home soil. With 21 votes he finished a long way ahead of the other two candidates, Sándor Barcs (7 votes) and Englishman Denis Follows (4).

UEFA sent a sure sign of the importance it attaches to youth football when it launched an Under-16 competition to run alongside its Under-18 championship. Spain lifted the trophy in 2001 after beating France 1-0 in the final. The following season the age limits of the two competitions were raised to Under-17 and Under-19 respectively.

As Hans Bangerter pointed out in his general secretary's report for 1972 and 1973: "The policy of UEFA ... did not alter due to this change at the top level. Our Union has, regardless of the new leadership, continued to show great efficiency in the fields of the Competitions, deepened the relations between the 33 affiliated Associations, nearly 200,000 clubs, more than 385,000 teams, approx. 12 million players and 250,000 referees, has ascribed great importance to Courses, to the Control and Disciplinary fields and also devoted its attention to all the problems beyond the field of the Competitions and the promotion of our sport."

In terms of discipline, this new era was marked by an important legal development: the principle of the separation of powers was adopted at the 1973 Congress in Rome, creating a 'judiciary' that would be truly independent of the legislature and executive represented by the Congress and Executive Committee respectively.

Organs for the Administration of Justice

A first step towards independent disciplinary authorities came when the statutes were revised at the Extraordinary Congress in Rome on 7 June 1968 (actually the same day as the Ordinary Congress). A clause was adopted under which a disciplinary committee could be established. The new committee held its first meeting in Geneva on 3 October that year, with future UEFA president Artemio Franchi in the chair. Until that point, disciplinary cases had been dealt with by the various specialist committees working from a catalogue of sanctions – a system clearly not conducive to the uniform treatment of cases. There was a possibility of appealing to an appeals panel, which from 1968 was composed exclusively of Executive Committee members.

UEFA's disciplinary system was later amended, as part of a two-stage process concluded at another Extraordinary Congress. The process was initiated at the 1972 Congress in Vienna, where a partial revision of the statutes was on the agenda and the West German delegation proposed that the independence of UEFA's disciplinary bodies be incorporated. The Congress mandated the Executive Committee to look into the proposal and a year later, at the Extraordinary Congress in Rome, the principle of the separation of powers was approved and enshrined in the statutes. Since that time, members of the Organs for the Administration of Justice, as they are now known, have not been allowed to be serving members of the Executive Committee or any other UEFA committee. As far as disciplinary matters are concerned, the president and Executive Committee's only powers are to appoint the members of the Organs for the Administration of Justice and approve the UEFA Disciplinary Regulations, in which the catalogue of possible sanctions is defined. They have no influence whatsoever on disciplinary decisions.

UEFA's disciplinary system was developed further when a full revision of the statutes – the first since 1968 – was undertaken at the Extraordinary Congress in Helsinki in October 1997. It was here that the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) was introduced as an arbitral body. The role of disciplinary inspector was then introduced in 1998 and written into the statutes at the 2001 Congress in Prague. Disciplinary inspectors, who represent UEFA in disciplinary procedures, may initiate disciplinary investigations, lodge appeals and be asked to conduct investigations.

The creation of the Club Financial Control Body to deal with cases linked to financial fair play resulted in a further amendment to the statutes, adopted at the 2012 Congress in Istanbul.

Two years later, in Astana, the Congress changed the name of the Control and Disciplinary Body to 'Control, Ethics and Disciplinary Body' and the disciplinary inspectors became 'Ethics and Disciplinary Inspectors'.

At the 1992 Congress in Gothenburg all the different provisions on disciplinary matters were brought together in a single set of UEFA Disciplinary Regulations.

Off the pitch

It was during the 1970s that UEFA began to see its competition-related workload matched by the other demands on its time, as recorded by Hans Bangerter in his report for 1974 and 1975: "A decisive role is played here by the increasing interference of outside factors, such as supranational legislation, political authorities, trade unions, etc., into our field of activity: for football has long ceased to be an object of interest for the sports world alone. Thanks to its popularity, it also offers a very attractive field of activity for advertising and for influencing the masses. Here it is, among other things, its commercialization which led to problems that cannot be solved easily, as it is essentially a problem of safeguarding the popularity and independence of the game in the face of all financial and public implications (publicity, sponsorships, players' unions, television, etc.)."

Four years later he wrote: "Today, it is practically no longer possible to hold an important sporting event without involving commercial interests from outside the game. The business of merchandising clearly has a firm foothold in football. With first division clubs, for example, now well established as business enterprises, this additional source of income obviously appears appropriate or even necessary. But it is still important that a few basic principles be maintained, with the sporting authorities under no circumstances being allowed to lose overall control."

UEFA stuck to its guns, "expressly forbidding any form of advertising on players' equipment". It was not until the Dresden Congress on 28 April 1982 that the governing body allowed shirt advertising in its club competitions – in all matches except finals. In the 1994/95 season this rule was extended to all matches except the Cup Winners' Cup final, which was not included until 1997/98.

Two books for two anniversaries

A pleasant break from everyday activities, UEFA's 25th anniversary celebrations in Berne on 13 June 1979 brought together some 260 guests from the worlds of football, politics and media, including the FIFA president, João Havelange, and Swiss federal councillor Rudolf Gnägi. In his speech, Artemio Franchi reminded the leaders of the national associations that UEFA was "a forum in which to discuss your problems, a place to bring your ideas, your criticisms and your suggestions ... We wanted this celebration to be more than simply a feast in the traditional sense. We wanted it also to be a working meeting, a chance to discuss things among ourselves; for every time we meet, we part enriched by the experience."

The official ceremony at Berne city hall was followed by a cruise on Lake Thun and a gala dinner.

UEFA's 25th anniversary was also marked by the launch of a contest for professional photographers on the topic 'The fascination of football', and the publication of a book, *25 Years of UEFA*, edited in UEFA's three official languages by its press officer, U. Rudolph Rothenbühler. In this book, Artemio Franchi discussed the topic of Europe and world football and, like his predecessor before him, called on FIFA to recognise the role played by the confederations: "I believe it would be in the general interests of world football for the continental confederations to be granted official and formal recognition for the role which they are in reality now already fulfilling."

This book remains a useful source of information, thanks to contributions such as Hans Bangerter's, which retraces the first 25 years of UEFA, and first-hand accounts by pioneers such as José Crahay, Sir Stanley Rous and Jacques Ferran.

Another, more ambitious publication, comprising around 700 pages in two volumes, was produced to mark UEFA's golden jubilee. U. Rudolph Rothenbühler was again the architect but he was unable to see his project through to completion (he passed away in October 2003). Keith Cooper, former FIFA communications director recruited to coordinate UEFA's golden jubilee celebrations, was appointed chief editor of the first volume, devoted to the history of UEFA, its member associations and the context of football, while UEFA media officer Frits Ahlstrøm assumed responsibility for the second, which focused primarily on the competitions and evolutions in the game, its infrastructure and its equipment.

UEFA's golden jubilee celebrations were held on Monte Caputo, high above the Cypriot city of Limassol, on 22 April 2004, taking up the entire first day of the 28th Ordinary Congress. "It was an opportunity to pay tribute to some deserving servants of football, as well as to remember the pioneers and visionaries who built UEFA, and their successors, who have made it the dynamic and efficient organisation that it is today," wrote UEFA CEO Lars-Christer Olsson in his editorial for the June 2004 edition of UEFA-direct. "The representatives of the national associations also had the possibility to relive – through archive pictures and commentaries from some of the great figures of European football – the evolution of the game and some of the moments in the history of the European competitions that remain firmly etched in the memory."

Franz Beckenbauer, Emilio Butragueño, Sven-Göran Eriksson and Michel Platini took to the stage to answer questions from another former football star, Hansi Müller, and to reminisce together about the history of European football. UEFA also celebrated its golden jubilee with a project to provide mini-pitches to all its member associations, who were invited to join in the celebrations by participating in the Summer of Grassroots Football, the forerunner of UEFA Grassroots Day. Finally, UEFA stayed true to its commitment to defend the specificity of sport, staging a highly successful exhibition on the topic in Brussels in September that year.

Meanwhile, the televising of matches, which had been on the agenda of the very first UEFA assembly, remained a constant source of debate thanks to rapid advances in technology and the development of international live broadcasts in particular, which could run the risk of drawing spectators away from the stadiums. Nevertheless, the football authorities no longer saw TV as just a threat, but also as an opportunity to increase the popularity of their sport while at the same time generating significant financial resources. "With respect to negotiations between National Associations and their television companies, it might be useful for them to know that figures prove the viewing audiences for TV broadcasts of important football matches is much above the average," Hans Bangerter noted in his report for 1974 and 1975. "This proves the interest that viewers have in these broadcasts and their high market-rating. This fact will come in useful to back the justified claims of football with respect to television."

Competition growth

In terms of competitions, the European Football Championship continued to evolve under Artemio Franchi's presidency, with the final round expanded from four to eight participants for the 1980 tournament in Italy. With the teams split into two groups, the winners contested the final and the runners-up played for third place. The mark one format did not meet with great success, though, and a number of adjustments were made for the 1984 edition in France, in particular the introduction of semi-finals and the removal of the match for third place, which was considered largely irrelevant. This was the first real 'EURO', as the European Championship final round would now become known.

The Super Cup finds its feet

The UEFA Super Cup, a contest between the winners of the Champion Clubs' Cup and the Cup Winners' Cup, initially struggled to find its niche in the European calendar, not least because of its initial home-and-away format. Moreover, participation was not compulsory. The two legs of the first edition could not be scheduled until January of the following year and what should have been the second edition, in 1975, had to be cancelled altogether. Neither was the competition played in 1981 or 1985, although the latter was because of the Heysel tragedy rather than calendar constraints.

Further evidence of the Super Cup's inauspicious start: unlike in UEFA's other competitions, there was no trophy. The winners merely received a plaque embossed with the UEFA logo. It was not until after the 1983 edition, when Aberdeen FC beat Hamburger SV, that the delegate from the second leg – future UEFA treasurer Jo van Marle of the Netherlands – suggested that a cup be presented to the winners, a proposal that was supported by the UEFA president, Jacques Georges. Produced by Italian firm Bertoni, it was presented for the first time in 1987 to the FC Steaua București captain, Ștefan Iovan, after his team's 1-0 victory over FC Dynamo Kyiv.

In parallel, UEFA had started work in 1983 on a new approach to the competition, similar to that of the European/South American Cup. Various problems meant, however, that these plans did not come to fruition until the match between the winners of the 1985/86 club competitions, which was played as a single match on neutral territory in Monaco, but not until 24 February 1987 – hardly the ideal slot in the calendar. Furthermore, as a match between two eastern European teams, FC Steaua București and FC Dynamo Kyiv, it failed to generate sufficient general interest to get sponsors behind the new format: a crowd of only 8,500 or so attended the game, while TV channels showed only limited interest. The old format was therefore reintroduced for the following season, when calendar problems immediately resurfaced, resulting in the second leg between FC Porto and AFC Ajax not being played until January 1988.

In addition, since the club that staged the second leg considered the game a home match, "criteria regarding UEFA's protocol for such events were barely met," as the UEFA general secretary, Gerhard Aigner, explained in a memo to the Executive Committee members. "This affected transportation, ticket allocation, hotel reservations, protocol in the VIP box, order around the pitch and press work, causing unreasonable situations for the UEFA delegation," he added.

Since it in any case no longer lived up to its initiators' vision of the ultimate decider between the best club sides of the season, the question was should it simply be abolished? Meeting in Moscow on 31 March 1995, the Executive Committee decided that, on the contrary, more should be done to raise its profile. Another new formula was introduced in 1998 – the right one this time. The only aspect retained from the first attempt at staging the competition as a single match was the venue, Monaco's Stade Louis II, which was the perfect size for this sort of occasion. With the clubs that qualified now obliged to take part, the Super Cup became the sporting highlight of a much bigger football gathering held each August that included club competition draws, various meetings, a gala evening with awards for the best players of the season and a get-together with journalists. "By linking it with the first-round draw, we hope to achieve a dual effect: to associate the competition with the excitement of the draw, on the one hand, and to bring a purely sporting element to the draw ceremony, on the other. Both events should be reinforced as a result, as should football as a whole," wrote Gerhard Aigner in a UEFAflash editorial. This format lasted from 1998 to 2012, with a few small adjustments along the way and the replacement of the Cup Winners' Cup holders by the winners of the UEFA Cup (from 2000) and Europa League (2010).

On the initiative of Michel Platini, who had since taken the helm as president of UEFA, the Super Cup left the principality of Monaco after the 2012 edition, to visit a different European city each year. Its first two stops were in Prague (2013) and Cardiff (2014). Monaco, meanwhile, continued to host the annual draws and meetings.

Meanwhile, there was a new addition to the list of UEFA club competitions. Dutch newspaper De Telegraaf came up with the idea of the Super Cup, a contest between the winners of the Champion Clubs' Cup and the Cup Winners' Cup, designed to determine, once again, which really was the best club side in Europe. A first unofficial edition, held in January 1973, saw Johan Cruyff's AFC Ajax, Champion Clubs' Cup winners, beat Rangers FC over two legs (3-1 and 3-2). The two clubs in contention the following year – AFC Ajax and AC Milan – also expressed an interest in going head to head. Considering "that it would be wrong if UEFA did not take under its control these matches," the Emergency Committee met on 29 June 1973 to lay down some guiding principles, which the Executive Committee ratified in October that year. The new competition was dubbed the 'Super Competition' and participation was optional, a principle reconfirmed by the Executive Committee at its meeting in Marbella on 27 January 1976. AFC Ajax, Champion Clubs' Cup winners again but now without Cruyff, who had left for FC Barcelona, beat AC Milan (0-1, 6-0) in this official first edition in January 1974.

During this time the most noteworthy changes were actually happening in youth football. The International Youth Tournament was replaced by the European Under-18 Championship from the 1980/81 season and in 1980 UEFA launched a second age-limit competition – the European Under-16 Tournament – initially played over two seasons. This acquired the status of European Under-16 Championship in 1998, and in 2001 the age limits in the both categories were raised to Under-19 and Under-17 respectively.

Meanwhile UEFA took up the fight against doping, creating a new study group to examine the possibility of carrying out doping controls at UEFA matches. The group met for the first time in Zurich on 10 July 1979, with Austrian Executive Committee member Heinz Gerö in the chair. An initial set of regulations was drawn up so that controls could be carried out at the 1980 European Championship in Italy and the rules were then adapted to include the finals of the Champion Clubs' Cup and Cup Winners' Cup as of 1981.

A tragic accident

Like his predecessor, Gustav Wiederkehr, Artemio Franchi was unable to complete his term of office. A road accident in Tuscany on 23 August 1983 brought a sudden end to the life of a leader who had seemed destined to become FIFA president one day.

As UEFA first vice-president at the time, Frenchman Jacques Georges stepped in, initially on an interim basis. He was then elected president for two years at the Paris Congress on 26 June 1984, to cover the two remaining years of Artemio Franchi's term, and was re-elected for a further four years at the Munich Congress in 1998.

Once again, the transition was smooth and undisruptive, with due respect paid to everyone's opinions. Jacques Georges, like those before him, favoured dialogue over dogmatism.

And yet it was during Jacques Georges's presidency that UEFA was to endure the darkest night in its history, when, on 29 May 1985, the Heysel disaster transformed the annual celebration of European club football into a tragedy that cost 39 spectators their lives.



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Before and after the Heysel tragedy

Violence in and around football stadiums was one of the first serious problems that UEFA had to deal with, after the very first UEFA competition match ever played, the Champions Clubs' Cup match between Sporting Clube de Portugal and FK Partizan, was marred by violence both on and off the pitch.

UEFA relied on tough disciplinary measures to deal with players who resorted to violent behaviour. These were strictly enforced, to good effect, and even served as an example for the national associations' own domestic competitions. In 1979, to mark its 25th anniversary, UEFA thought it should grant a partial amnesty, cancelling more than 100 player suspensions of up to three matches and reducing more severe punishments. "UEFA hoped this partial amnesty would act as an encouragement for greater sportsmanship and more fair play. Unfortunately it did not have this effect. On the contrary: the level of disturbances had never been so high as it was at the beginning of the 1979–80 season. This provided plenty of food for thought and also provided the UEFA authorities with plenty of work," the general secretary, Hans Bangerter, wrote a few months later. There was nothing else for it but for UEFA to return to its hard line, an approach that it has never veered from since.

A much more difficult task was that of eradicating crowd trouble in and around the stadiums. Twenty years after UEFA came into being, Hans Bangerter noted in his biennial report for 1994 and 1995 that: "... much more obvious was the increase in incidents and disturbances caused by the public ... Violence does not only occur in the stadia, where the mob believes that it is particularly easy to give vent to its violence in the anonymity of the crowd; examples from other walks of life show sufficiently clearly that this is a serious social problem."

Football matches wouldn't be the same without passionate fans. Sadly they do not always manage to channel their emotions as well as the Bayern München crowd at the 2013 UEFA Champions League final in London, where the Bavarians beat Borussia Dortmund 2-1.

A series of measures taken

While there was no denying that hooliganism was a social problem, and UEFA sometimes criticised the public authorities' failure to take a harder line with the troublemakers, it did not merely sit back and wait for them to take stringent action. Instead, it emphasised in its disciplinary framework the clubs' responsibility for their supporters, whether genuine fans or just troublemakers; it issued 'Binding guidelines and recommendations for the prevention of crowd disturbances', which entered into force in 1976 and were revised in May 1983; and it imposed harsh disciplinary sanctions, ranging from the disqualification of clubs from UEFA competitions to stadium bans and heavy fines. Between 1973 and 1975 alone, SS Lazio and Leeds United AFC were disqualified for supporter misconduct, while stadium bans were imposed on Panathinaikos FC, Olympiacos FC, Fenerbahçe SK and Tottenham Hotspur FC for crowd disturbances or violent conduct by their supporters.

Even UEFA finals were not immune. The 1972 Cup Winners' Cup final between Rangers FC and FC Dinamo Moskva on 24 May in Barcelona had to be interrupted several times when visibly drunk Rangers supporters repeatedly invaded the pitch. At its meeting in Vienna on 6 June, the Executive Committee unanimously decided that finals staged at neutral venues should only be held in stadiums with adequate security installations, such as wire fences or moats. It also "urgently recommended" that all national associations and their clubs should put such security installations in place for all UEFA competition matches, and declared that associations or clubs that failed to do so would be held responsible for any incidents.

This did not prevent further disgraceful incidents occurring at the Champion Clubs' Cup final between FC Bayern München and Leeds United in Paris on 28 May 1975, when, despite all the security measures that had been taken, so-called 'supporters' of the English club went on the rampage at the Parc des Princes, causing damage inside the stadium. During the economic crisis of the early 1980s, when unemployment was high, hooliganism became increasingly common and posed a constant threat to international competitions. In 1984, the Council of Europe showed how serious the problem by issuing 'Recommendations on the reduction of spectator violence at sporting events and in particular at football matches', themselves based on binding instructions issued by UEFA. These recommendations, which were approved by the sports

ministers of the countries concerned, urged that public authorities do everything in their power to combat hooliganism. This was clearly not always the case.

Fearing the worst

So, despite the steps taken, there was a constant sense at this time that disaster could strike. It did on 11 May 1985, albeit by accident, when a stand at the Valley Parade stadium in Bradford caught fire during an English Third Division match between Bradford City and Lincoln City, causing the death 56 spectators and injuring many more.

Some two weeks later, the Heysel Stadium in Brussels was to host the Champion Clubs' Cup final and, although the clash between Juventus and Liverpool FC was a mouth-watering prospect on the pitch, many feared the worst on account of the hostility between certain English and Italian 'supporters'. Those fears were confirmed when 39 supporters died that night, with several hundred more left injured.

This was, without doubt, the blackest day in the history of European international football, as Hans Bangerter wrote in the preamble to the general secretary's report for 1984 and 1985: "UEFA, together with the entire European football community, suffered during this period the darkest day in its whole history, when on May 29, 1985, what was to have been ... the highlight of the 1984/85 European club season turned out instead to be the most terrible tragedy in the history of football in our continent. Senseless acts of violence by criminal elements caused the death of 39 innocent people, and inflicted injuries on a further 400. This bloody spectacle with its record of horror unleashed a wave of sorrow and helplessness, as millions of people witnessed the catastrophe on live television."

Investigatory panel

UEFA immediately set up an investigatory panel, which comprised two Executive Committee members, Antero da Silva Resende of Portugal and Günter Schneider of East Germany, who had been the UEFA delegate at the match. Technical problems meant that it was Resende who had to present to the Executive Committee the conclusions of the investigation, together with the report written by Schneider immediately after the final.

The report's conclusion was clear: "The tragedy was in the first place caused by the aggressive, undisciplined and violent behaviour of a part of the English supporters. It might, however, have been avoided by preventive and efficacious interventions of the security forces." Having rushed to the scene of the initial incidents, Günter Schneider realised immediately that the police presence was inadequate, but his requests for reinforcements went unheeded.

Preparations for the final had nonetheless been carried out in accordance with UEFA's requirements and special measures had been taken, including the construction of a fence to segregate the two groups of supporters on the terraces and another barrier around the stadium to create a 'neutral zone' which could only be accessed after initial checks had been carried out. The Royal Belgian Football Association had suggested additional measures, such as a ban on the sale of alcohol within a certain radius of the stadium on the day of the match, but the authorities had rejected them. Recalling that the Heysel Stadium had hosted nine previous UEFA finals, Antero da Silva Resende stressed that: "Five meetings took place as from 12 February. At each of these meetings one representative of the police was present, and a representative of the gendarmerie attended three of the meetings. The police had also sent a representative to the European Cup Winners' Cup final Everton – Rapid Vienne on 15.5.1985 in Rotterdam to examine the security measures taken there, and to Liverpool to consult the local police authorities. Representatives of the two finalist clubs were present at least at one of the meetings mentioned above." Ticket sales had also been arranged to keep the supporters apart, but the production of counterfeit tickets in Italy, the black market and the inordinate number of Italian supporters upset the organisers' plans. Finally, as detailed by the investigators, the police (around 120 officers were stationed inside the stadium when the incidents took place, with around 300 outside, mainly searching spectators) were totally overwhelmed for a number of reasons:

- the stadium was divided into two zones, one controlled by the police and the other by the gendarmerie, with no coordinating officer;
- the action plan was too rigid and it was clear that it could not be adapted to the situation;
- there were insufficient officers on duty and no special forces on standby (even though this was clearly stipulated in the UEFA requirements);

- there was no police surveillance in the city centre;
- controls at the stadium entrances were ineffective and supporters were able to take dangerous objects into the stadium, or even enter without tickets;
- the fences did not have the desired effect because the police presence around them was inadequate.

English clubs out in the cold

After receiving the investigators' report, the UEFA Executive Committee met in Basel, Switzerland, on 2 June 1985. Since it was unable to impose disciplinary measures itself because of the principle of the separation of powers adopted by UEFA, the committee submitted the file to the Control and Disciplinary Committee. It did, however, decide that UEFA would not allow any English clubs in its competitions until further notice and that action would be taken to improve safety in and around stadiums. It also decided that the England national team's participation in the 1988 European Championship qualifying competition would be discussed but at a later date.

Shortly before that, under pressure from the British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, The Football Association, chaired by Bert Millichip, had itself decided that English clubs should not be allowed to play in UEFA competitions until football hooliganism had been properly dealt with. The Belgian government, meanwhile, banned English clubs from its territory.

The UEFA Control and Disciplinary Committee, meeting in Zurich on 20 June with Vladimir Petr of Czechoslovakia in the chair, suspended Liverpool FC from all UEFA club competitions for three seasons, as of when the other English clubs were readmitted. The Italian club, which already had a disciplinary record, was ordered to play its next two UEFA competition home matches behind closed doors for the less than exemplary conduct of some of its supporters. Finally, the Royal Belgian Football Association was banned from hosting a Champions Clubs' Cup or Cup Winners' Cup final for ten years.

Appeals from both clubs were rejected by the Board of Appeal on 8 August 1985.

UEFA's press release

"Following the tragic events which occurred before the European Champion Clubs' Cup Final between Liverpool and Juventus Turin at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels on May 29, 1985, UEFA wishes to express its deepest condolences to the families of all those victims of acts of criminal violence by so-called supporters. Sympathies are also extended to the clubs, associations and countries affected.

The decision to play the game despite the tragedy was taken in consultation between UEFA, the finalist clubs, their national associations, the organizing association and the police and gendarmerie forces. It was felt that it would have been an enormous risk to evacuate the stadium without playing, and that this might have caused more victims.

As a result of this catastrophe, which calls the future of the European competitions into question, UEFA will immediately launch an investigation to identify those responsible to ensure that such a tragedy does not happen again." Brussels, May 29, 1985

On 7 June, UEFA created a fund for the families of victims of the Heysel disaster. Following an initial donation of 500,000 Swiss francs, a total of around 1.2 million Swiss francs was raised and distributed with the help of the Red Cross.

The Belgian FA's reaction

The president of the Royal Belgian Football Association, Louis Wouters, a former UEFA Executive Committee member, was quoted in the 30 May edition of the daily newspaper *Le Soir* as saying: "We deployed 2,500 helmeted gendarmes. We could not justify mobilising all the country's gendarmes to keep order at a football match."

"As a last resort," he added, "before the match finally kicked off at 21.40, it was decided to call in the army to assist ... Calling the match off would have added fuel to the fire. We plunged into a full-blown disaster; that evening, Belgian football, European football and football as a whole suffered one of the darkest tragedies in the history of sport."

“We had to play”

Much has been written about the Heysel tragedy, which moralisers of all kinds used as a choice platform from which to make noxious comments not so much about the hooligans but rather about the organisers, in particular UEFA, which was described as reckless, immoral, and even greedy. Professional football itself was thrown to the lions and had shame heaped upon it.

One aspect that came in for particular criticism was the fact that the match went ahead while bodies lay nearby. The players were also criticised for celebrating during the match. “We weren’t told”, says Michel Platini, who was playing for Juventus that evening. “Admittedly, kick-off was delayed, but incidents were common in those days. Fights happened all the time; supporters took knives and other weapons into the stadium, and the authorities did not do enough to stop them. At the time, we weren’t told about the scale of the tragedy.”

While the players waited, representatives of UEFA, the two clubs and their national associations, the mayor of Brussels, an Italian politician, and representatives of the Royal Belgian Football Association and the Belgian public authorities held a crisis meeting in a stadium lounge plunged into darkness for fear of attracting the attention of the hooligans. The atmosphere was toxic, with criticism flying in all directions, and there was no sign of a decision being reached. It took all the sang-froid and clear-headedness of the UEFA general secretary, Hans Bangert, to break the impasse. When the police representatives said they would be unable to control the situation if the final was cancelled, only one decision was possible: the match had to go ahead if further tragedy were to be avoided. The two captains would address the supporters over the loudspeaker but they were not told of the seriousness of what had happened, since most were unaware of the situation that had unfolded around them.

As Michel Platini still says today: “Had we known, we’d probably have refused to play, but there was no other option.”

New preventive measures

The Executive Committee took some time to reflect before dismissing the idea of cancelling the UEFA competitions for a season, or even longer, concluding that this would be tantamount to giving in to the troublemakers and condemning football for a problem for which it was not ultimately responsible. It also rejected measures such as banning the sale of tickets to visiting supporters, judging that this would be impossible to enforce

At its meeting in Paris on 20 and 21 August 1985, the Executive Committee established a Stadia Committee, which was given the task of closely inspecting all stadiums put forward to host club competition finals. It also decided to draw up a list of requirements to be met by stadiums wishing to host UEFA finals. Until then, the national associations had been responsible for the state of these stadiums, with the UEFA administration only visiting them in advance to sort out matters relating to protocol, technical and contractual issues, and media facilities. At that same meeting in August 1985, the Executive Committee approved a revised version of its binding instructions and recommendations to avoid crowd disturbances, which divided UEFA competition matches into two categories: high-risk matches and normal-risk matches. High-risk matches included all UEFA club competition finals and semi-finals, European Football Championship final rounds, matches involving clubs whose supporters had caused trouble at previous matches, sold-out matches, matches played in front of more than 50,000 spectators, matches at which more than 3,000 visiting supporters were expected, and matches that were likely to attract a large number of nationals of the country of the away team residing in the country of the home team or in neighbouring countries.

Appealing to the authorities

UEFA also knew that football could not solve this societal problem on its own and needed the unconditional support of the public authorities. It was therefore quick to accept the invitation of the Council of Europe to participate in a meeting of an expert commission on the problem of violence in sport in general and in the football stadium in particular, which convened in Strasbourg on 24 and 25 June 1985. As reported in the 28 August 1985 issue of UEFA Information, the Executive Committee "noted with satisfaction the Convention drawn up by the Sports Ministers of the Council of Europe [and] expressed its hope that all the member States would ratify and observe the Convention in full, so that the public authorities would support the enormous efforts involved in organizing major football matches." UEFA was given a permanent seat as an observer on the Standing Committee of the Convention.

The Executive Committee also asked three independent, reliable individuals who lived in England to monitor hooliganism in the country and report regularly to the general secretariat.

At its meeting in Vienna on 17 October 1985, the Executive Committee unanimously decided to allow the English national team to participate in the qualifying matches for the 1988 European Championship, which was to be held in West Germany. However, it did so on condition that The Football Association obtained the full cooperation of the British government in order to avoid incidents at its team's matches, including checks on supporters' travel arrangements and travel agencies involved in away matches, and if necessary the deployment of specialist British police officers in the countries hosting those matches.

Before the start of each season, the Executive Committee, on the basis of the aforementioned reports and other documents, assessed whether the time was right to readmit English clubs into the UEFA club competitions. In 1987 and 1988, it said no. The English themselves were not convinced that they had managed to get hooliganism under control. The Liverpool FC chairman, John Smith, said at a press conference that, in his opinion, the English public was still not ready, psychologically, to return to European football. He also said that although some other countries were experiencing the same problems, they did not export their hooligans in the way the English did.

In 1988, The Football Association itself decided not to request readmission to the UEFA club competitions following trouble by English supporters at the recent European Championship.

A winning return

The following year, the Executive Committee decided the time had come to give English clubs a chance, even though the reports coming out of England were still not entirely positive, far from it in fact. On 12 April 1989, following its meeting in Palmela in Portugal, it issued the following press release: "Having regard to the enormous efforts undertaken by the English Football authorities in order to improve the security measures at football matches, the Executive Committee of UEFA decided unanimously the re-integration of the English clubs into the European Club Competitions, with effect from the 1990–91 season. This re-integration will take place subject to the implementation and observation by the British government of the European Convention for the fight against violence in sports, and provided the government gives its support and aid to the English Football authorities. UEFA President Jacques Georges will seek a meeting with the British Minister for Sports in April 1990. Based on the President's report, the Executive Committee will confirm or refuse the decision taken today in Portugal."

That meeting with the British sports minister had not taken place by the time Jacques Georges stepped down as UEFA president at the UEFA Congress in Malta in April 1990. It was his successor, Lennart Johansson, who travelled to London on 12 May and met the minister for sport, Colin Moynihan, along with the chairman and chief executive of The Football Association, Bert Millichip and Graham Kelly. They agreed to see how England supporters behaved at the 1990 FIFA World Cup in Italy before taking a final decision.

At the Executive Committee meeting in Geneva on 10 July, Bert Millichip reported on the positive feedback he had received from the British sports minister. As a result, English clubs were readmitted to the UEFA club competitions for the 1990/91 season.

Having not been represented in the UEFA club competitions for five seasons, The Football Association's coefficient ranking had reached rock bottom and, according to the UEFA access list, it was only entitled to enter two clubs. With the champions, Liverpool FC, suspended for three

more seasons, those places were awarded to Aston Villa FC in the UEFA Cup and Manchester United FC in the Cup Winners' Cup. To mark the English clubs' return in the best possible way, Manchester United went all the way to the Cup Winners' Cup final, where they beat FC Barcelona 2-1 in Rotterdam on 15 May 1991.

The suspension of Liverpool FC was lifted by the Executive Committee a season later, at its meeting in London on 18 and 19 April 1991.

Hauled before the courts

While the return of English clubs was undoubtedly good news, the Brussels appeal court's guilty verdict against the UEFA general secretary, Hans Bangerter, was met with incomprehension and indignation by the Executive Committee. At its meeting in Zurich in July 1988, it had already declared that it was "deeply troubled by the direct summons to appear before a court in Brussels" and had objected to "these summons, which are contrary to the conclusions of the investigation led by the court authorities entrusted with the inquiry and prosecution. Said investigation did not raise any accusation nor any charge of negligence against UEFA which could serve as a basis for legal action." At the same time, the Executive Committee said that it had "every confidence in the Belgian courts." It was initially proved right, since the Brussels court of first instance absolved UEFA of all responsibility, while issuing a guilty verdict against the general secretary of the Royal Belgian Football Association, Albert Roosens. However, it had not reckoned on the tenacity of the civil action lawyers, who lodged an appeal.

On 26 June 1990, the Brussels appeal court gave the by then former UEFA general secretary a three-month suspended prison sentence and a fine, a verdict described as "incomprehensible" by his successor, Gerhard Aigner, in the September 1990 UEFA Official Bulletin. Under the heading 'The end justifies the means' he wrote: "For any observer of the trial there can be no doubt whatsoever that this verdict was passed with the sole intention of finding in UEFA a party which would be able to meet the financial demands of the injured parties." He continued: "Not only has the Court in Brussels perpetrated a gross miscarriage of justice, but it has also placed in jeopardy all football events and other sporting occasions ... The situation could, therefore, arise where the local organizers who are directly responsible for safety completely underestimate the realities of

staging a football match and flout the regulations which have been laid down by the European national associations themselves, but they would still be either wholly or partially released from their responsibility.”

Standing firmly behind its former general secretary, UEFA appealed to the court of cassation but failed to persuade it to overturn the decision, which was confirmed on 16 October 1991. Making it clear that it had never recognised the jurisdiction of the Belgian courts, UEFA did not take the case any further. However, in a press release issued after its meeting in New York on 4 December, the Executive Committee announced that there could be no question, under these circumstances, of Belgium hosting a UEFA club competition final or a European Football Championship final round.

Defining responsibilities

The European governing body’s implication in the tragedy, through its general secretary, forced it to take steps to ensure that legal proceedings could not be taken against it, directly or through one or other of its representatives, whenever the slightest incident occurred in a competition organised under its auspices. In 1987 it had already set up an ad hoc legal committee, chaired by Austrian Heinz Gerö and composed of legal experts from various other UEFA committees. They were asked to better define the responsibilities of the hosts and UEFA in relation to UEFA competition matches, especially finals and final tournaments. They also recommended that the UEFA Statutes be amended at the 1988 UEFA Congress in Munich in order to make a distinction between the administrative side, which was UEFA’s responsibility, and the operational side, which was part of the local organisers’ remit.

As well as amendments to its directives on safety and security in stadiums, UEFA adopted a plan to gradually reduce the use of standing areas at UEFA competition matches, culminating in a total ban as of the 1998/99 season. In addition, from 1990/91, clubs entering UEFA competitions had to submit a certificate from the public authorities confirming that their stadiums complied with the applicable safety regulations. National associations wishing to participate in European Championship qualifiers had to do the same. Clubs and member associations were also required to have the necessary insurance policies in place, in particular for civil liability.

At its meeting in New York in December 1991, the Executive Committee also decided to amend the procedure for selecting stadiums to host club competition finals. Instead of inviting the member associations to submit nominations, it asked the Stadia Committee to draw up a list of stadiums that met a very strict set of criteria, so that it could choose the host stadiums of future UEFA club competition finals itself, in principle on the recommendation of the Club Competitions Committee.

In the first few months after the tragedy, UEFA also expressed a desire to implement educational and preventive measures alongside its crackdown on hooliganism. One of the first things it did was to encourage fair play in its competitions, starting with the youth competitions, in which fair play trophies were awarded from 1988. A fair play trophy was then introduced at EURO '92, and awarded to the Netherlands. Fair play rankings for all the national associations were introduced in the 1995/96 season, taking all UEFA club and national team matches into account. The reward for the top three associations has been an extra place – in principle, for the winners of their domestic fair play competition – in the qualifying rounds of the UEFA Europa League (or the UEFA Cup before that).

European football starts to thrive

It would be completely unjust to limit an account of Jacques Georges's presidency to that ill-fated evening at Heysel and its consequences. The 1980s were also a period in which European football thrived and saw its popularity steadily increase. Its leaders' initial distrust of TV had long disappeared, and they no longer feared that televised football would empty the stadiums, at least not where major international matches were concerned. Also long gone was the time when the holders of football match rights had been forced to fight for a decent return on their investment because the lack of competition between broadcasters had provided no incentive for them to be generous. In 1960 UEFA had signed an agreement for the transmission of its club competition finals and the European Nations' Cup with the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), essentially composed of western European broadcasters, and in 1963 with the International Radio and Television Organisation (OIRT), an eastern European network. In 1976 UEFA created a UEFA-EBU joint committee to deal with TV matters.

As far as the balance sheets of the associations and clubs were concerned, television income was poised to overtake gate receipts, while the sale of advertising boards in the stadiums became more lucrative as TV – albeit reluctantly – introduced them to an international audience. Even though marketing agencies, who were more familiar with commercial negotiations than the average football administrator, sometimes kept a significant share of the financial windfall for themselves, the future looked bright as more and more independent broadcasters started to appear on the scene.

The main beneficiaries of the increasing media coverage of football and the financial income that it generated were, not surprisingly, the top professional footballers, who were gradually transformed into true international stars, with pay packets to match, often thanks to agents who acted as intermediaries between players and clubs. However, salaries were still a world away from the astronomical sums paid to subsequent generations of footballers, as journalist Chérif Ghemmour wrote in 'Football champagne et soirées paillettes' (Champagne football and glitzy parties), published by the French magazine *So Foot* in 2013: "When he signed for Parma in 1998, Alain Boghossian, a decent player, earned as much in a month as the great Michel Platini had earned in a year when he was at Juve ... That says it all. In the 1980s, except for a handful of stars, footballers earned a good living, but nothing more."

In search of new resources

By the end of the 1970s, football had become more professional and the clubs had to keep boosting their coffers if they were to afford the best players. Not all the methods they used were above board, with some creating secret funds in an attempt to evade the taxman. The clubs entered a world of commercial enterprise. While their income steadily rose, they needed to be very sensible if they were to really make the most of it, and reason and passion do not always go hand in hand ...

Paradoxically, the richer the game became, the greater the number of clubs that went into the red. A report by the Study Commission on the Crisis in Football, submitted to the Executive Committee in April 1986, described the situation in no uncertain terms under the heading 'The poor management of professional clubs': "The clubs' expenditure is higher by about 10% than their receipts, and this in spite of substantial television and publicity [advertising] receipts. The players' wages are too high.

Some transfers cost the clubs a fortune." Ten years earlier, UEFA had already started to worry about club debts and had sent its member associations a circular asking for their views, in order to try to remedy the situation. In contrast to most of the replies, which were generally positive, the West German association accused UEFA of interfering in the associations' internal affairs, "to the astonishment of the Executive Committee," according to the minutes of its March 1977 meeting.

Promoting development

UEFA also benefited financially from the growing popularity of its competitions. It dedicated this income exclusively to football development activities, subsidising its youth competitions and regularly organising courses for coaches and referees. It also made payments to the clubs knocked out in the early rounds of its competitions, which had incurred losses by participating.

It organised special activities from time to time, too. To mark International Youth Year in 1985, for example, it invited two young footballers from each of its 34 member associations to attend the match between France and Uruguay at the Parc des Princes in Paris on 21 August in the European/South American Nations Cup, a short-lived competition (only two editions ever took place) between the champions of Europe and South America, dedicated to former UEFA president Artemio Franchi. During their stay, the youngsters also took part in a cultural programme, visited the French Football Federation headquarters, enjoyed a training session with the French national team and met its coach, Michel Hidalgo. The UEFA president, Jacques Georges, was in Paris to greet them. "I hope that this visit will be about more than a football match and everything that goes with it, enjoyable though that may be, and that it will bring all the countries that make up UEFA closer together," he told them.

As the turbulent 1980s drew to a close, the 1988 UEFA Congress in Munich adopted the proposal tabled by the Danish Football Association and seconded by the British and the other Nordic associations to expand the Executive Committee to 12 members, in view of the governing bodies growing number of activities.



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The Champions League is born

Deeply affected by the Heysel tragedy and all the criticism that had followed (some of which even suggested, without a hint of evidence, that the match had been fixed), Jacques Georges stepped down as president at the Congress in Malta on 20 April 1990 and was appointed UEFA honorary president. Another significant change had taken place just over a year earlier, when Hans Bangerter had retired from his position as UEFA general secretary at the end of December 1988, after 29 years of service. He was succeeded at the helm of the general secretariat by Gerhard Aigner of West Germany, a UEFA employee since 1969 who had been in charge of the competitions department when he was appointed general secretary.

Two very different candidates, both Executive Committee members, were in the running to succeed Jacques Georges as UEFA president. It was Sweden's Lennart Johansson who came out on top, beating UEFA vice-president Freddy Rumo of Switzerland by 20 votes to 15.

The very core of European football

Lennart Johansson's presidency was a particularly eventful period for UEFA, which, more than ever before, established itself as an indispensable link between the European national associations. "The associations no longer see UEFA as the classic sporting authority of yesteryear, but as the very core of European football. UEFA has become an institution which ... has to realize the revenue that our sport deserves, in accordance with its popularity, for the benefit of football. At the same time, UEFA, on account of its tradition, history and expertise, must effectively represent the continent's interests within the world footballing body, FIFA," Gerhard Aigner said in his general secretary's report for 1994 and 1995. "All in a growing Europe, which, in all areas of life, including the world of sport, is seeking a new identity."

Danny Blind,
after AFC Ajax's
1-0 victory over
AC Milan in the
inaugural UEFA
Champions League
final on 24 May
1995 in Vienna.

Lennart Johansson hit the ground running and the foundations for the Champions League were laid within a few months of his election. Gerhard Aigner, who was also heavily involved in this process, explains: "We had to do something. The clubs, especially Real Madrid, wanted more matches, more financial security. The Champion Clubs' Cup was overshadowed by the UEFA Cup at the time because it only included one club from each association, whereas there were several from each country in the UEFA Cup. The answer was to introduce group matches." Back in 1968, in the September edition of the Official Bulletin, Hans Bangerter had posed the question: "Has the time come for a European Football League Championship?" He had imagined, among other things, a competition combining group and knockout matches. However, he had concluded that "a European Championship for Clubs ... cannot be set up without careful preparation work and will not come into being in the near future."

Almost a quarter of a century later, the time for "careful preparation work" had come. "Directors Klaus Hempel and Jürgen Lenz were about to leave UEFA commercial partner ISL and they had invited us to a farewell dinner in Zurich to mark the occasion," Gerhard Aigner explained. "Various discussions and exchanges of opinion that evening resulted in a meeting at the Käfer restaurant in Munich, where an agreement to develop the project was signed on four beer mats! The final could not be included in the deal immediately because there were existing contracts in force. We also had to work with a different agency so that there would be no conflicts of interest."

The plan was discussed in detail at the Executive Committee meeting in London on 18 and 19 April 1991. The minutes of the meeting are discreet – not everyone was in favour of the project. The official record focuses on the financial considerations: "The introduction of a new system of staging the European Champions Cup also calls for a re-assessment of the financial requirements. UEFA must make it clear to the world at large that this phase of the competition is under the complete control of the European Confederation."

A new format

A working group was set up to lay the groundwork for a new set of regulations, to be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting in Bari, on 29 May. The group met three times: in Muri, near Berne, on 6 May; in Rotterdam on 14 May; and in Bari the morning of the Executive Committee meeting on 29 May. The committee approved the working group's proposal that 1991/92 be used as a transitional season, in which the Champion Clubs' Cup would follow a new format. Originally proposed by Rangers FC and backed by the Club Competitions Committee, the new format involved a final round of two groups of four teams who met each other home and away, with a final between the two group winners but no central marketing of the commercial rights because there was still no legal basis for such an arrangement. In order to establish a basis in the UEFA Statutes, an Extraordinary Congress was held on 19 September 1991 in Montreux, where the presidents and general secretaries of the member associations were already due to meet the following day.

Under the headline 'All-inclusive contract required', Gerhard Aigner clearly explained the Executive Committee's thinking in his editorial for the September issue of UEFAflash, a monthly publication launched at the start of that year to supplement the Official Bulletin: "There are several reasons for this proposal: Developments in politics, economics and technology are increasingly pushing the medium of television to the fore as a means of communication in Europe. The various holders of rights (associations/clubs) have also recognized this, but insufficient experience in the field has brought them into contact with third parties whose prime interest, generally speaking, is not the game of football, and this leads to the uncontrolled marketing of television pictures of football matches.

"However, the Executive Committee is convinced that a lucrative all-inclusive contract can be concluded for the matches in the final phase of the Champion Clubs' Cup, which would in turn provide significant sums for all those involved. By distributing the money in a fair manner which has been carefully thought out in advance, it will be possible to guarantee that the marketing of these matches will be to the benefit of the game of football as a whole and not merely the eight clubs involved, who, as a rule, are among the most significant ones from a financial point of view ...

“Consequently, UEFA will be in a position to improve the technical and organizational structures of the competitions by virtue of the income which it receives from the venture. This will mean in particular that all costs for referees at each European Competition match can be assumed by UEFA; drug testing can be carried out at all matches from the quarter-final stage onwards or, in the cases of the European Club Competitions, from the final round; two delegates can be used at all high-risk matches ... ; the final tournaments of the youth competitions will be able to benefit from extensive financing, including the travelling expenses of the teams, as well as payment of substantial contributions towards the travel expenses for qualifying matches in the youth competitions; the Women’s European Championship can also receive extensive financing, and the referees can be given more intensive training and preparation for the European competitions.”

The green light from Congress

At the Extraordinary Congress in Montreux, the national association delegates unanimously approved the amendments to the statutes that were required to establish the new format, although some expressed concerns, in particular about the high number of televised matches and the congested calendar.

The new format, with its two groups of four in which first place led straight to the final, was tried out during the 1991/92 season while, behind the scenes, preparations were made for centralised marketing. This included, where necessary, negotiations to resolve cases in which clubs were already tied to long-term contracts with marketing agencies.

The Executive Committee reviewed the experiment in Brussels on 22 April 1992, based on the conclusions of the Club Competitions Committee, which had met in the same city earlier in the day. One opinion in particular held sway – that of a panel of renowned technicians Jupp Heynckes, René Hüsey, Josef Hickersberger and Gérard Houllier, all of whom welcomed the new format, believing that it enabled the coaches of the eight participating clubs to prepare better, that it reduced the risk/luck factor, and that the referees detected less tension in the early matches, since a defeat at that stage did not put the clubs in too precarious a position. They also pointed out that club directors liked knowing they had three matches’ worth of guaranteed gate receipts.

Centralised marketing

The new format was therefore adopted until further notice. All that was left was to finalise the centralised marketing of the 24 group matches. UEFA had decided not to give up the TV and advertising rights to an agency that would re-sell them, but to market them centrally itself. To help it in this task, UEFA wanted an agency that could dedicate itself entirely to the competition. After an in-depth analysis of the seven bids submitted, the Executive Committee convened in London for an extraordinary meeting on 2 February 1992 and chose The Event Agency and Marketing, or TEAM AG, a Swiss company based in Lucerne. Until that point, the European confederation had worked with agencies only in connection with the Champion Clubs' Cup and Cup Winners' Cup finals, and European Football Championship final rounds. Its partners, dealing initially only with advertising inside the stadiums and later with merchandising as well, had been Sport TV Bruxelles (1973–78), West Nally Group (1979–82), ROFA (1983–1990) and ISL (since 1983). Still under contract when the new European Cup format was adopted, ISL remained a EURO partner until it went bankrupt in 2001.

“The new system,” explains Gerhard Aigner, “was broadly based, only more successfully, on the same principles as the European Championship final round. But as far as the club competitions were concerned, the partnership between rights holders, TV broadcasters and sponsors was a revolutionary idea that subsequently became the norm in other competitions, not only in football but in many other sports.”

Uniformity and visibility

The name 'Champions League' was adopted to give prominence to the group stage and a corresponding logo was unveiled to the media at the club competition first round draws in Geneva on 15 July 1992. The 'UEFA' prefix was added the following season to reinforce the event's identity as a UEFA competition.

Changes to the UEFA Champions League

The basic concept of the Champions League was to offer the clubs group matches to help them manage their budgets more efficiently. They were each guaranteed a fixed number of home games, as well as a share of TV and advertising revenue that did not depend on the attractiveness of the opposition. However, they still had to qualify for the group stage, which could be more than a mere formality, as Leeds United AFC, VfB Stuttgart and holders FC Barcelona (who faced CSKA Moskva) all learned to their cost in the 1992/93 season. The following year, it was Manchester United FC's turn to fall before reaching the group stage, when they were knocked out by Galatasaray AŞ.

When eliminated, the clubs themselves were not the only ones feeling downcast: the broadcasters in their respective countries also lost out because audience figures were bound to suffer from the national champions' absence, making it more difficult for them to recoup the money they had invested.

After the introduction of single-leg semi-finals in 1993/94, when each group winner played host to the other group's runner-up, the format was therefore adjusted again in 1994/95. This time the basic structure of the competition was reversed: after just one qualifying knockout round, the main part of the competition started with group matches, then quarter-finals, semi-finals and the final. In addition, the number of group stage participants was doubled, from 8 to 16. The holders and the national champions of the seven countries at the top of the UEFA rankings received a bye in the qualifying round, which only involved domestic champions from the associations occupying the next 16 places. This meant that the other national champions were excluded from the Champion Clubs' Cup. By way of compensation they were awarded a place in the UEFA Cup, which now numbered 100 participants rather than 64.

In the editorial for the December 1993 issue of the UEFA Official Bulletin, Gerhard Aigner commented on the new system: "By changing the format of its club competitions and by reserving the Champion Clubs' Cup for an elite selection of teams, and a large one at that, the European Football Union has not departed from the original pioneering spirit [of the competition's founders]; in fact, UEFA has merely adapted its competitions to the changed circumstances. The new system adopted does not ultimately close the door on anyone as far as participation is concerned; the clubs will, however, have to cross this particular threshold on merit by achieving worthy performances over a number of years ... UEFA feels that by introducing its new format, it has considered the interests of European football in general. The Champion Clubs' Cup must remain what its initiators intended it to be: a competition to determine the best club team in the continent, without the burden of a surfeit of preliminary-round matches that merely serve to dilute the interest in the event."

Another change was introduced in 1997/98, when the access list again included 48 domestic champions. The top eight national associations in the UEFA rankings were invited to enter two clubs: their league champions, who, in principle, qualified for the group stage automatically, and the runners-up, who had to negotiate qualifying. The champions of the 32 lowest-ranked associations played in the first qualifying round; the 16 winners then contested a second qualifying round, where they were joined by the domestic runners-up and the remaining champions. The number of group stage participants rose to 24, split into six groups. The group winners and the two best runners-up went through to the quarter-finals.

This format only lasted two seasons, as the competition was expanded further in 1999/2000 to accommodate a group stage of 32 teams divided into eight groups. The associations at the top of the UEFA rankings were each able to enter up to four clubs, two of which had to go through qualifying. The top two in each group entered a second group stage; the top two in each of these groups then contested the quarter-finals.

Despite opposition from the big clubs, the Executive Committee decided to get rid of the second group stage as of 2003/04 on the grounds that it made the competition more cumbersome without generating any sporting benefit. It replaced it with a round of 16 played home and away.

After Michel Platini's election to the UEFA presidency in 2007, his desire to make it easier for champions from the lower-ranked associations to participate in the Champions League led to the qualifying stage being divided into two paths, one for champions that failed to qualify directly and the other for the teams finishing second, third or fourth in the domestic championships of the highest-ranked associations. After a round of play-off matches, five teams from each path would qualify for the group stage.

A total of 23 broadcasters signed a contract guaranteeing them exclusive rights to broadcast all Champions League matches in their respective countries. They agreed to provide live coverage of one of the four matches each evening and to show recorded highlights of the other three. Studio programmes completed the package, which was designed to ensure excellent Europe-wide coverage of the competition. To this end, as the November 1992 issue of UEFAflash reported: "The Champions League signature tune, commercial airtime, interviews, tables and charts must all follow a uniform pattern, to ensure that the public can identify with the competition in the same way throughout Europe." This desire for uniformity and visibility also translated into standardised kick-off times for all matches (20.45CET) and the adoption of a competition ball, anthem and flag.

Meanwhile, the sponsors, of which there were four for the first edition, along with an official supplier, enjoyed exclusive rights for their respective product categories on the advertising boards in the stadiums, in the TV commercials shown during match broadcasts, and on printed materials such as tickets and official match programmes.

Inclusion of the final in 1995

The first Champions League event was the 1992/93 group stage draw, held at the Intercontinental hotel in Geneva on 6 November 1992. Meetings for the clubs, sponsors and broadcast partners were organised at the same time. The competition broadcasters also held the broadcasting rights for the draws, which added a unique dimension to the event. The décor was even changed after the Cup Winners' Cup and UEFA Cup draws so that the Champions League visual identity could be displayed.

Based on the solidarity principle that remains, to this day, one of the key characteristics of the Champions League revenue distribution system, 54% of total revenue was earmarked for the eight participating clubs, 18% for the clubs knocked out in qualifying or the first two rounds of the three UEFA club competitions, 8% for the UEFA member associations and 20% for UEFA.

The new format of the champions' competition was immediately a great success. "With the Champions League, European football has managed to create a mouth-watering shop window for itself, a symbol of its unity and of its openness to new ideas," Gerhard Aigner wrote in his editorial for the April 1993 issue of UEFAflash. "Moreover, it is from this enticing window that the rest of the shop must now be built, which will ultimately constitute the future of the European club competitions." In financial terms, the centralised marketing of the advertising and TV rights generated revenue of around 70 million Swiss francs for the inaugural 1992/93 season, compared with a figure of less than 10 million reported by the clubs the previous season, when they had still been responsible for marketing the rights themselves.

The competition as a whole initially retained its title of 'Champion Clubs' Cup' because the qualifying matches and final were not covered by the centralised marketing contract. This original name was not dropped until 1994/95, when the final was included in the commercial programme for the first time. The final at Vienna's Ernst Happel stadium on 24 May 1995, when AFC Ajax beat AC Milan 1-0, was therefore not only the competition's 40th overall, but also the first UEFA Champions League final.

To prevent matches in UEFA's new flagship competition from clashing with those in its other club competitions, from 1994/95 the match schedule was arranged such that Champions League matches were played in the traditional Wednesday evening slot, Tuesdays were reserved for the UEFA Cup and Thursdays for the Cup Winners' Cup. When those two competitions merged, Champions League matches were held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, while UEFA Cup matches were played on Thursdays.

Knock-on effects

The creation of the Champions League and, especially, the fact that the top-ranked associations were later allowed to enter up to four clubs, inevitably had an impact on the other two UEFA club competitions. When the UEFA Cup and Cup Winners' Cup merged in 1999, it was a logical consequence of the dwindling popularity of these two competitions.

The possibility of entering several clubs in the Champions League also had repercussions on the domestic championships of the major leagues, in which the prospect of ending the season in a Champions League position created new incentives for clubs.

On the financial front, the Champions League and its influx of revenue, combined with the steady rise in income from the European Football Championship final round, or EURO, meant that UEFA enjoyed an enviable degree of financial stability that was threatened neither by the collapse of its commercial partner ISL nor by predictions of an imminent drop in revenue linked to the financial crisis and saturation of the market – predictions that remain all-too common but have never yet materialised.

UEFA's medical programme

This new-found prosperity enabled UEFA not only to finance its other competitions, in particular in youth and amateur football, but also to cover the costs of all its assistance and development programmes and assume its social responsibility, in particular in the fight against racism and other forms of discrimination, aid for charitable work and support of integration.

None of this in any way detracted from UEFA's core mission and as much attention as ever was directed at the many facets of football. In 1993, for example, a project was launched to establish a European coaching licence, which proved to be a great success, and in January that year the first sports medicine symposium was held in Frankfurt. If UEFA's initial work in the medical field focused almost entirely on anti-doping controls and increasing their use in UEFA competitions, as of 1986 and the creation of the UEFA Medical Committee activities extended into all sorts of other areas, such as player injury studies, advice for players and referees, pre-tournament examinations, the publication of a specialist journal, *Medicine Matters*, and, more recently, the development of an education programme for football doctors. At the same time, the fight against doping, based on the list of prohibited substances and methods published by the World Anti-Doping Agency, was stepped up with out-of-competition controls and the testing of blood samples, first at EURO tournaments and then, since 2013, as part of UEFA's general anti-doping programme. Furthermore, at its meeting in London in May 2013, the Executive Committee gave the green light to a study aimed at retrospectively analysing the steroid profiles of around 900 players who had been tested at least three times in the UEFA club competitions since 2008.



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Associations from the east

At the start of the 1990s, economic considerations were by no means the only factors to influence the development of the UEFA competitions. Politics also played a crucial role. The map of eastern Europe was redrawn following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the break-up of Yugoslavia and a host of previously non-existent national associations needed adopting by European football's governing body in the space of just a few years.

Although UEFA lost one member after the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification, it was very quickly inundated with new requests from the national associations of the newly formed states. Between 1992 and 1994 UEFA's membership rose from 35 to 49 – a rapid expansion that was all the more problematic because almost all the new members lacked both experience and the necessary structures.

UEFA immediately set about looking for ways and means of helping these associations to play their newly acquired role as fully fledged UEFA members. They were obviously entitled to participate in UEFA competitions, for example. The Federation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), founded in Moscow on 11 January 1992, was provisionally recognised as the successor of the USSR Football Federation and all players from the territory of the now defunct USSR Football Federation were eligible to play for the CIS team, which took part in EURO '92 in Sweden. At its meeting in Istanbul on 30 November 1992, the Executive Committee decided to double the number of participants from 8 to 16 for EURO '96, for which England had already been selected as hosts.

Mini-pitches such as this one in Belarus have played an important role in the development of grassroots football.

Meanwhile, the number of participants in the club competitions also shot up, rising by almost a third from 128 in 1990/91 to 170 in 1995/96. Initially, the expansion was kept in check, since not all clubs were able to meet the criteria imposed by a task force set up to examine the safety and security standards, structures and infrastructure of the new associations. In 1992/93, for example, 151 clubs were entered in the different competitions but the Club Competitions Committee, chaired by Executive Committee member Şenes Erzik of Turkey, authorised only 136 of them to participate. This removed the need for a preliminary round in the UEFA Cup, but not in the other two competitions. At its meeting in Berne in April 1993 the Executive Committee instructed another

working group to analyse all the economic and sporting data and the calendar, in order to find a solution and shape the future of the UEFA club competitions. Lennart Johansson had just recently planted the idea of merging the Champion Clubs' Cup and UEFA Cup but withdrew the suggestion in the face of opposition.

While looked down on by some, the UEFA Intertoto Cup, launched in 1995, played an interesting role in this regard, as Gerhard Aigner noted in his editorial for the August 1995 issue of UEFAflash: "Its most positive aspect is certainly the opportunity it offers numerous clubs to participate in a true European club competition for the first time and to familiarize themselves with the standards in force (neutral referees, presence of a UEFA delegate, safety and security criteria, etc.). This is exactly the direction that UEFA wishes to pursue ... i.e. to help all European associations and their clubs to attain high standards."

Creating an assistance programme

While their clubs' participation in competitions was the most urgent aspect of the new associations' integration into the UEFA family, it was not the most fundamental. As Lennart Johansson wrote on 'The UEFA President's Page' in the December 1992 Official Bulletin, the main requirement was "to provide the correct structures to guarantee a swift and complete integration of these new member associations." This had been the reason behind UEFA's decision to create the Ad-hoc Committee for Technical and Administrative Assistance to Eastern European Associations in 1990. Composed of experts from western Europe, this committee organised meetings for representatives of the new associations on topics such as club privatisation, club organisation and structures, budgets, sponsors and marketing, and even insurance. On the initiative of this ad hoc committee, the Executive Committee, at its meeting in Berne in April 1993, approved an assistance programme and agreed to set up the East European Assistance Bureau (EEAB), which had its own department within the UEFA administration and was financed by a special UEFA fund.

Conferences involving the associations concerned (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine, with Albania joining later) had been held in 1990 and 1991, and in June 1993, drawing on the lessons learned, UEFA invited these associations to sign a charter setting out the conditions of their cooperation with the EEAB. The proposal was for a five-year agreement,

with the possibility of renewal. Instead of being purely financial, UEFA's assistance comprised two main facets: material support in the provision of equipment and other materials, and expert advice designed to enable the participating associations to fulfil their administrative and technical responsibilities.

The charter required the associations to entrust the EEAB with the sale of advertising and TV rights for international matches played by their national teams and clubs. All transfers of players leaving their territory were also to be managed by the EEAB. The associations were to receive the lion's share of the transfer fees, although a percentage would also be paid into a solidarity fund managed by the EEAB. The idea was to protect the associations and their clubs from agencies and agents anxious to profit from their arrival on the market by purchasing rights at low cost in order to make a tidy profit later on.

Some agents had already taken advantage of the situation by the time the charter was presented, which in theory meant that some associations were unable to sign it as they were tied into existing contracts. The EEAB therefore had to amend the charter, allowing the member associations to choose whether to deal with these matters themselves or entrust them to either the EEAB or an agent. Whichever option they chose, all negotiations had to take place in the presence of a UEFA representative. In addition, so as not to be stretched too thin, the EEAB decided to deal only with the national associations and not with their clubs. With these new conditions in place, all 11 associations were able to sign the charter for a four-year period. A further four-year agreement containing various amendments was subsequently adopted and the associations of FYR Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the programme in 1998 and 1999 respectively.

Achievements

In the first year of its existence, the EEAB organised courses for coaches and referee instructors, ran pitch restoration projects, installed inflatable tents to house training pitches and provided management training for administrative staff, as well as sports, IT and technical equipment. It also visited all the participating associations in order to inspect their organisational structures and define specific measures for improving them. These visits were also used to examine aspects of safety and security and problems specific to non-amateur football in the countries concerned.

The UEFA president himself visited the countries that had signed up to the charter to show his support and see for himself the progress that had been made.

In a show of solidarity, other UEFA member associations also offered assistance to the charter's signatories. Representatives of eastern European associations were, for example, invited to visit their western counterparts, in order to study their administrative structures with a view to transposing them back at home. In 1994, 29 officials from EEAB countries were able to attend knowledge-sharing courses hosted by 12 western European associations. Other associations offered material assistance, donating projectors and other equipment, while some, including those of Norway, Denmark and Sweden, also invited youth teams to participate in tournaments they were hosting.

In 1996, a seminar for the presidents and general secretaries of the signatories to the charter was held in Riga. The meeting was considered so useful that it was repeated in Chisinau in 1998, in Baku in 2000 and in Minsk in 2002.

New programmes initiated

November 1996 saw the launch of 'Progress' courses as part of the second phase of UEFA assistance. Hosted by the signatory associations themselves and coordinated by the EEAB, they were designed to give clubs in the most outlying regions an opportunity to receive professional training. At the same time, the EEAB associations were offered favourable terms on credit for stadium renovation projects and the installation of artificial pitches to be used primarily for youth coaching. As a result, every association ended up with at least one stadium that met international standards.

Although the programme was therefore fulfilling its objectives very successfully, a number of small national associations outside the charter were also finding it difficult to modernise and felt they were at an unfair disadvantage. UEFA therefore launched 'Kiosk', a parallel programme which, as its name suggests, offered support to each association according to its needs. A total of 13 UEFA member associations benefited from this programme.

The EEAB had been established for a ten-year period, by the end of which it had achieved everything it had set out to do. It was therefore wound up in summer 2003 and replaced with the HatTrick programme, which was aimed at all the member associations, offering both direct subsidies and training courses.

Dissolution of the groups of influence

With the influx of new national associations, it was only right that the influential groups that had long existed within UEFA should be disbanded. There were four such groups: the group of Eastern bloc associations, set up in 1954; the Nordic associations; the British associations, who often took a similar line to the Nordic group; and the 'Entente de Florence', which had been founded on Artemio Franchi's initiative to represent the southern and western European associations. These groups, which had been set up along political, sporting or simply geographical and linguistic lines, had tended to get together shortly before important UEFA gatherings, especially the Congress, in order to discuss the items on the agenda and, if necessary, prepare for elections. Their role was to guarantee a healthy balance within UEFA by ensuring that all the regions of Europe were fairly represented on the Executive Committee and that everyone's interests were taken into account. They also sometimes submitted proposals to the Executive Committee.

The large number of new eastern European associations would have created an imbalance that could have jeopardised UEFA's unity, as Lennart Johansson pointed out on 'The UEFA President's Page' of the March 1994 Official Bulletin: "The integration of these associations has brought to an end the situation whereby influential groups attempted to determine policy. Nowadays, the major focus is on solidarity." The Executive Committee was also expanded from 12 to 14 members at the 1996 Congress in London on 29 June, to ensure that all parts of the continent were fairly represented and to help it deal with the huge number of tasks for which it was now responsible.

The HatTrick programme

The assistance provided by UEFA through its HatTrick programme is not only used to improve infrastructure, modernise administration and support participation in UEFA competitions; it is designed to strengthen the national associations by enhancing quality at all levels. This was stressed by Lennart Johansson in his opening speech at the conference of presidents and general secretaries in Nyon on 3 February 2005, when he presented one of the HatTrick components, the Top Executive Programme (TEP), aimed at senior national association officials and designed to promote new initiatives. His intervention was recorded in the March 2005 issue of UEFA-direct, a publication that resulted from the merger of the UEFA Official Bulletin and UEFAflash in April 2002: "The UEFA President placed the new programme in the current context of European football, where the massive influx of financial resources had led to a shift in power from the national associations to the leagues and clubs. It was therefore necessary to redress the balance and help restore the importance of the national associations, which were the foundation on which UEFA was built." The TEP was initially based on the following ten key points:

- national association management
- relations with national authorities
- commercial/marketing management
- information technology
- relations and cooperation with other sports entities
- human resources, qualification of staff
- setting of targets and long-term strategies
- financing, budgeting and accounting
- project management
- media relations, communication and public relations.

Organised as round-table discussions, TEP meetings have since been expanded to include other important subjects of general interest, such as the centralised sale of rights for national team qualifiers, the format of the European Football Championship final round and the future of the UEFA club competitions.

The HatTrick programme also includes the KISS project (Knowledge & Information Sharing Scenario), which was devised by UEFA to help its member associations to improve their governance through the sharing of information, good practices and knowledge. This is organised by means of workshops on various subjects, such as marketing, communication and

media, and event management, as well as through tailor-made IT tools. Launched in March 2005, the HatTrick programme is currently in its third four-year cycle (2012–16). The next cycle will be funded with a record budget of €600 million, which should enable the member associations to run their activities and finance long-term projects. More than €1.2 billion of revenue from the European Football Championship has already been distributed to the associations during the first three cycles, funding the construction and renovation of stadiums and training centres, grassroots football projects and women’s football development, for which a special grant was awarded to each member association as part of HatTrick III.

Supporters brought to the fore

While the crucial role of supporters has never been overlooked, and UEFA is no exception in this regard, it was primarily those who caused trouble in stadiums who drew the most attention from football’s leaders. Nonetheless, as the end of the millennium approached, competition organisers became fully aware of the importance of supporters’ well-being and the fact that spectator comfort could also enhance crowd safety and fan loyalty. According to a report in the March 1999 issue of UEFAflash on the European club workshop held in Geneva, a large part of which had been devoted to supporters: “Stadiums are ... becoming meeting places where spectator clients have to be able to enjoy – apart from a comfortable seat and shelter from inclement weather conditions – maximum security, refreshment stands and even restaurants, as well as sanitary facilities (including facilities for women, which were all too often overlooked in the past), shops and giant TV screens, not to mention crèches – the surest way to ensure the loyalty of spectators being to allow them to bring their families with them to the stadium.”

It was this concern for supporter well-being that led, among other things, to the creation of fan zones. After a trial culminating at UEFA EURO 2004 in Portugal, the project was repeated on a much larger scale in Austria and Switzerland in 2008 and in Poland and Ukraine in 2012.

UEFA has also forged links with supporters’ organisations, which it regularly invites to the House of European Football in Nyon to engage in constructive dialogue. In order to ensure positive relations between clubs and supporters, the UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations have required clubs to appoint a supporter liaison officer since 2012/13.



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The Bosman case

On 25 March 1957, some three years after UEFA was founded, Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands had laid the foundations for political and economic unity in Europe by signing the Treaty of Rome which, among other things, guaranteed the free movement of workers between the signatory states.

For more than a decade, the newly founded European Economic Community (EEC) and UEFA coexisted without any problems at all. Since sport was not mentioned in the treaty, it did not fall under the jurisdiction of the EEC authorities. "At first sight," wrote Gerhard Aigner in an editorial for the UEFA Official Bulletin, "the European Union and the European Football Union, sharing the same ideal, can only agree and complement one another, one dealing with the economy, the other sport."

When it came to professional sport, however, conflicts of interest could not be ruled out. Even though only a small minority of UEFA's member associations were from countries originally represented by the EEC, the governing body considered it vitally important to study the matter in detail. From 1970, various committees, study groups, conferences and experts were asked to examine the relevant issues and it soon became clear that player transfers were one of the most important, especially when the European Court of Justice decided in 1973 that professional footballers were salaried workers and therefore entitled to freedom of movement between member states.

The need to find some common ground on this issue was clear, to prevent the EEC authorities from being able to challenge the regulations of the national associations concerned. The authorities issued a decision on 23 February 1978 requiring the associations of the EEC member states to amend their transfer regulations. The associations were no longer allowed to limit the number of players from other EEC member states in their domestic championships, although in the two highest divisions they could still limit them to two per team per match. It was also at this point that the notion of 'assimilated players' came into being, referring to players who had played in a foreign country for a certain number of years.

The final of the 1995/96 UEFA Cup between Bayern München and Girondins de Bordeaux. By agreeing to respect the rules in place pre-Bosman, the clubs still in the running for European silverware that season enabled the competitions to run their course.

The national football associations of the EEC member states reacted by adopting 'Principles of Co-operation between Clubs of different National Associations of the EEC Countries', under which players were free to join any club of their choice once their contract had expired. At the same time, UEFA drew up a list of experts who could be appointed to an ad hoc committee authorised to iron out disagreements relating to player transfers between EEC countries. This list was subsequently expanded to include names from nine different member states.

According to Hans Bangerter's report on 1980 and 1981, a conference of delegates of the associations of the EEC member states, held in Zurich on 5 December 1980, noted that: "The internal regulations of all the countries concerned were now in accordance with the EEC's regulations on the free movement of labour, which were introduced on February 23, 1978."

New tensions

Despite appearances, the question was still far from resolved, however, and tensions reappeared, as Hans Bangerter explained in his report for 1984 and 1985: "The tug-of-war in which we have been engaged with the European Community Commissioner has now reached a critical and decisive phase, with the EC insisting stubbornly on wide-scale (and even total) freedom for professional players – something which would have very serious consequences for the game. If the EC continues to insist on blindly applying the Treaty of Rome to the very specific sphere of professional football, as we may fear it will do after the last round of talks, then it is to be feared that UEFA will in the foreseeable future no longer have an intermediary role to play; instead, negotiations will be held at a strictly national level, with each national association having to appeal for the support of its own political authorities and having also to defend itself." Jacques Georges, the UEFA president, expressed the same view at the Executive Committee meeting in Vienna on 17 and 18 October 1985, after he had met the new European Commissioner, Peter Sutherland. According to the minutes of that meeting: "Quite apart from the fact that [Peter Sutherland] proved to be a rather disagreeable interlocutor Mr Georges came to the conclusion that UEFA should no longer act as negotiating party to the EC, since only 15 countries of the 34 UEFA member associations were affiliated to the EC."

Moreover, the UEFA club competitions were not affected by this problem since their regulations had never limited the number of foreign players that could be fielded, as the European Champion Clubs' Cup organising committee had pointed out in February 1957, following a complaint by Grasshopper Club about the eligibility of ACF Fiorentina players: "The question of limiting the number of foreigners in a team taking part in this competition is not specifically dealt with in the Regulations of the Cup." The only rule was that players had to be considered eligible to play for their club at specific points in time, with the national associations deciding on questions of player eligibility.

Differences of opinion

UEFA nevertheless remained at the heart of negotiations. The stumbling block was undoubtedly the concept of professional sport, or of professional football in this case. As far as the EEC was concerned, it was an economic activity like any other – and a rather lucrative one at that – which was subject to European law. Football association leaders, on the other hand, constantly pointed to football's specific nature and asked not to live above the law but to have a legal framework that respected the sport's unique characteristics. Their objective was – and still is – to preserve the European sports model with its system of promotion and relegation, rather than fall into the sports entertainment industry championed by the American model, to preserve teams' local and national identity, and to promote the training of young players rather than buying in seasoned players trained elsewhere. This was also the best way of encouraging volunteer coaches, with the promise of seeing talented young players break through to the top. Finally, the link between the top and bottom of the pyramid, i.e. professional and amateur football, was sacred. While this seemed obvious to football's leaders, it was apparently less so to the advocates of EEC law, especially as, once again, football failed to speak with one voice. Club directors were vocal about the fact that they had to manage their clubs like commercial enterprises, while players, advised by their agents or unions, were reluctant to accept anything that might hinder their chances of getting better contracts. Any discussions between the EEC and UEFA therefore fell on deaf ears.

Adding fuel to the fire, certain associations could not understand why a minority of countries should be able to impose their laws on the whole of Europe, or the entire world even, through political and economic alliances. Others such as Switzerland even called for a limit on the number of foreign players in UEFA competitions, a wish that was granted when, from the 1988/89 season, the number of non-nationals among the 16 players named on the match sheet was limited to 4.

With FIFA's help, UEFA nevertheless continued to look for a solution that would suit everyone's interests. "The football authorities had indicated their readiness for a dialogue on the issue and appointed a commission to negotiate with the EEC," Hans Bangerter noted in his report for 1986 and 1987. However, the EEC, whose convictions had been strengthened by the signature of the Single European Act in 1986, stuck to its guns and wanted first three, then six foreign players to be allowed per team, followed by total freedom of movement for footballers from 1992. "The European football association representatives felt quite unable to accept this proposal, and this refusal amounted to the negotiations being broken off," the UEFA general secretary added soberly in his report.

A very temporary solution

This was but a brief interlude, however, as the EEC continued to pile on the pressure. As far as football was concerned, recognition of the specificity of sport was central to any solution: "The aim ... is to obtain a special ruling which would apply to football and to convince the EEC authorities that top-class football needs to be organized in the same way throughout Europe," wrote Gerhard Aigner, who had succeeded Hans Bangerter as UEFA general secretary, in his report for 1988 and 1989. With Lennart Johansson having just been elected president, UEFA was also dealing with the arrival of the new eastern European associations and was in the process of revamping the Champion Clubs' Cup. It was therefore necessary to look at all these issues from a global perspective and, in May 1990, the aforementioned principles of cooperation between the associations of EEC member states were completely overhauled and, with the approval of the majority of the national associations, extended to all 36 UEFA member associations for the 1990/91 season under the title 'Principles of Co-operation between Member Associations of UEFA and their Clubs'.

Incomprehension and anger

Seen as a victory for individual interests over the general good, the Bosman ruling was met with incomprehension and indignation among football's leaders. Gerhard Aigner spoke on their behalf in the December 1995 issue of UEFAflash, in an editorial tinged with bitter humour entitled 'The saviours are here!': "The footballing community was not exactly unprepared for the verdict by the European Court of Justice. The Bosman case had indeed been pending for several years. The issue had been examined by experts from a variety of fields, and all possible scenarios had been highlighted. Furthermore, just days before the verdict was announced, the European Commissioner for competition was already letting it be known via the press just what was in store for football's 'bigwigs'; i.e. an end to the enslavement of players and immediate total freedom of movement. Now that the European Union exists, national teams and the interests of the national associations no longer matter.

"Brussels obviously assumes that football will finally start to head along the right track after a century of ploughing its own tortuous path. After all, clear conditions are needed in an area that is so important in economic terms ... It was also high time that the last of the ignoramuses were made aware that clubs are businesses that make massive profits, and that players must be considered as members of a profession like anyone else. Consequently, the linguistic rules can also be modified. The terms usually employed in sport must now be replaced by those used in the world of work. Thus, players become employees; fans and supporters become consumers; training sessions and matches become working hours, and teams are asked to fulfil their planned production target. The football pools and lottery competitions are replaced by stock-market reports, and the phrase 'this is a commercial presentation' will soon have to accompany televised football transmissions."

Meanwhile, in Stockholm on 31 January 1990, a conference of national football associations of the EEC states proposed the basis for an agreement with the EEC, the so-called 3+2 rule, which was presented thus: "The number of non-selectable players per team would be limited to three. Nevertheless, two assimilated players could be fielded, who had played for five years in the association concerned, three of which had been at youth level." Although it had intended the 3+2 formula as a threshold not a ceiling, the European Commission, chaired by Martin Bangemann of Germany, accepted this gentlemen's agreement on 18 April.

It would enter into force on 1 July 1992 for all top-division clubs affiliated to the national associations of EEC member states and be extended to all non-professional leagues from the 1996/97 season. Clubs subject to the rule were free to recruit more non-national players, they just had to adhere to the 3+2 limits in each match, and the national associations were, of course, free to adopt more liberal rules for their domestic activities should they wish. Also under the agreement, the European Commission and UEFA would meet regularly from 1996/97 to review the situation. On the initiative of the UEFA Club Competitions Committee, the Executive Committee decided to apply the 3+2 formula in UEFA competitions from 1992/93.

Changing the rules

It was in this context of apparent harmony – especially since the restriction applied to team line-ups rather than to contracts – that, on 15 December 1995, the European Court of Justice published the so-called Bosman ruling, named after the Belgian player Jean-Marc Bosman, who wanted to leave Belgian club RFC Liège to play for USL Dunkerque in France. Since there were still no provisions on sport in EEC legislation, the court was able to flout the gentlemen's agreement and issue a verdict based on purely economic considerations. It ruled that the transfer system restricted the free movement of players and could not be allowed to continue. In addition, limiting the number of players from other countries bore all the hallmarks of discrimination and therefore had to be condemned. In reality this had little to do with Jean-Marc Bosman's direct interests – by taking his case to a civil court his lawyers wanted more than just to assert his right to carry out his profession.

Coaches and players have their say

The leaders of UEFA and of the national associations were not the only ones upset by the effects the Bosman ruling would have on European football. At the fourth UEFA National Coaches' Conference, held in Geneva and Nyon from 11 to 13 September 2000, the coaches issued an appeal to the EU, expressing their concern about the threats hanging over the transfer system and their support for "the efforts being made to protect the training, development and education of young players, and the proper use of contracts and compensation to support stability in the game".

The players themselves were not immune to the practical repercussions of the Court of Justice's decision. Professional footballers in Spain, for example, appointed a committee of eight players to find solutions to the problems posed by the Bosman ruling, in particular the invasion of La Liga by foreign players. The committee included Josep Guardiola, future coach of FC Barcelona and, later, FC Bayern München, who was a midfielder of some repute for the Catalan club at the time. He sounded the alarm in the UEFA Official Bulletin of September 1998: "The situation has made it absolutely essential to hold emergency meetings. We have to find a route out of this mess ... We would like to continue to produce good players. But this seems impossible unless we can find ways of restricting the presence of foreign players ... without infringing the new rules. It's complicated, but urgent and necessary." A solution? "Work at youth level is the key to producing talent ... But we do need the state, the government and the Council for Sport to help us work on measures which will give young players more protection and more hope."

Moreover, despite the disagreement between the clubs concerning the financial aspect of the transfer, the case should never have got so far. Article 2(2) of the Regulations of UEFA governing the fixing of a Transfer Fee was perfectly clear: "The financial relations between the two clubs in respect of the compensation fee for training and/or development shall exert no influence on the sporting activity of the player. The player shall be free to play for the club with which he has signed the new contract." In other words, if the case had been submitted to UEFA at the outset, Jean-Marc Bosman would have been able to play for Dunkerque and the financial differences between the two clubs would have been resolved by UEFA's committee of experts.

"UEFA's rules were different to FIFA's," recalls Gerhard Aigner, "and since FIFA's prevailed if there was a discrepancy between the two, the court ignored those of UEFA."

Safeguards disappear

The consequences of the Bosman ruling were precisely what football's leaders had feared. Gerhard Aigner's successor, Lars-Christer Olsson, summed them up ten years later in his editorial for the December 2005 issue of UEFA-direct: "The Bosman ruling is certainly not the cause of all the evils afflicting European football but it did away with safeguards that the game's leaders had established quite consciously, not to raise football above EU legislation, but to preserve the special nature of the game and to prevent exploitation."

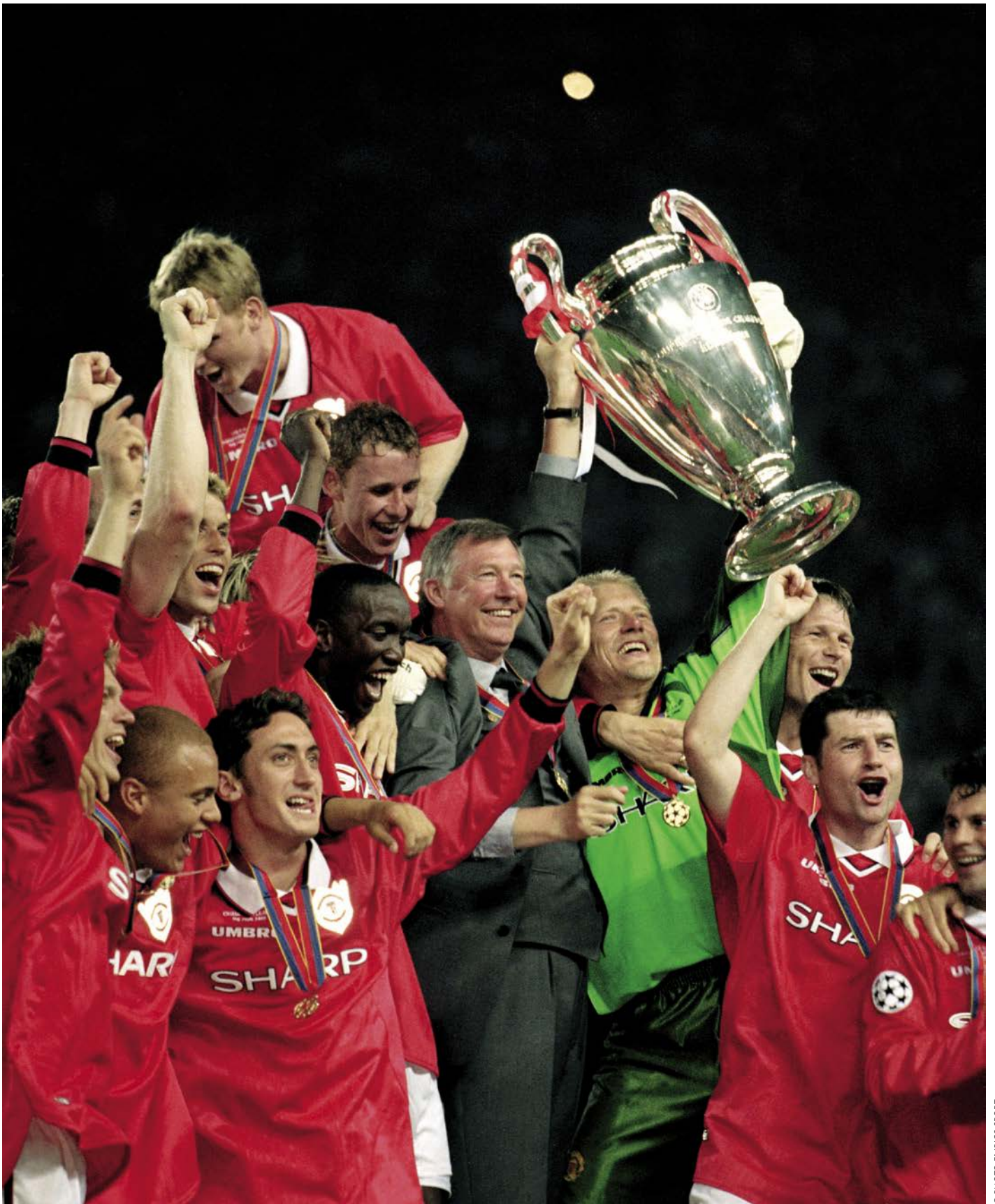
"Since then, transfers have mushroomed and the masses of money flowing into the game have accentuated this tendency, gradually depriving clubs of their local identity. Some astute clubs have taken advantage of this enlargement of the market to reach unprecedented heights, but they are in a minority. Generally speaking, the gap between the rich and the less well-off has widened, a phenomenon which can be nothing but detrimental on the competitions, making them less interesting."

Abolishing the 3+2 rule

In the short term, however, with the decisions of the European Court of Justice entering into force in March 1996, UEFA needed to take urgent steps to preserve the integrity of its club competitions that were already in progress. On 19 February 1996, at its meeting in London, the Executive Committee decided to abolish the 3+2 rule with immediate effect, in the knowledge that, a few days earlier, the clubs still involved had voluntarily agreed to play their remaining matches under the conditions in place since the start of the season. Meanwhile, FIFA and UEFA formed a working group to devise a new transfer system that would give priority to compensation for training clubs, a certain degree of contractual stability and the retention of fixed transfer windows.

From 2006/07, UEFA required clubs participating in its competitions to include a certain number of locally trained players in their 25-strong squads. This measure, which was primarily intended to safeguard the training of young players at local level, was confirmed on 28 May 2008 when the European Commission gave its official backing to the rule, declaring it in line with the freedom of movement principle because it did not mention players' nationality. The quota of locally trained players has since grown steadily to eight, up to four of whom may have been trained by another club within the same association.

Meanwhile, the clubs, no longer entitled to transfer fees, found a way round the problem by requiring their players to sign long-term contracts with an indemnity clause that would be triggered if they left ahead of time. The players have benefited greatly, as have their agents!



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Much-coveted club competitions

Faced not only with the serious problems caused by the Bosman ruling, UEFA also had a fight on its hands to protect its club competitions from the covetous desires of third parties outside the game. The success of the Champions League and the influx of money that it was generating for professional football prompted plans for a European 'SuperLeague', the threat of which materialised in summer 1998. An international group of investors, Media Partners, approached the big European clubs with the promise of revenue out of all proportion with what they could earn from the Champions League if they joined the new SuperLeague, accompanied by a 'ProCup'. The SuperLeague would have involved 36 prominent clubs, split into three groups, with play-off matches at the end of the season. Half the clubs would have had founder club status, which would have guaranteed their participation in the competition for at least three seasons. The ProCup, meanwhile, would have involved 96 clubs in a direct knockout system. If the proposal had been adopted, it would have led to a set-up similar to the American sports model, with clubs contracted for several years in a system not dissimilar to that of the franchises used in the USA. There is no doubt that the unity of European football would have suffered, since the eastern European clubs, which were considered financially less attractive, would have been left out in the cold.

Under the heading 'Europe's football under attack', Lennart Johansson issued a vigorous response in his editorial for the August 1998 issue of UEFAflash: "UEFA is not surprised by these new plans, and is also ready to react to this new challenge. However, money will not dictate the course of this reaction. Financial profit can be only one of the criteria. Sporting credibility and the consideration of the needs of the associations, leagues and spectators are other key factors. And discrimination against large areas of the continent is out of the question.

"European football has been developing in an organised manner, in a spirit of solidarity, for more than 100 years, and this attempt to lop off the most lucrative part and exploit it financially will not succeed. UEFA will not let European football be shed of its credibility."

Only a few months after the FIFA presidential election and the stir that it had caused, this attack on the European game provided an opportunity to reaffirm the unity of world football, as the new FIFA

The dramatic ending to the 1999 final as Manchester United snatched victory from Bayern München in extremis only enhanced the appeal of the Champions League.

president, Joseph S. Blatter, demonstrated by attending the August meeting of the UEFA Executive Committee in Monaco. The FIFA president, whose presence was described by UEFAflash as “not only a first, but also a sign of football’s unity”, assured the committee members that FIFA “gave its total backing to UEFA’s efforts to protect football from the control of financial or other sectors.”

A change of format

European Club Football 2000, a task force led by the UEFA general secretary, Gerhard Aigner, was also created to consider the future of the European club competitions. Comprising representatives of various UEFA committees and clubs, the task force was instructed to report to the Executive Committee and did so at a meeting in Lisbon on 6 October 1998, less than a month after it had been given its remit. “Now the speculations about the future of European football must come to an end,” announced Lennart Johansson as he presented the decisions taken by the Executive Committee, the most important of which was to increase the number of places in the Champions League group stage from 24 to 32.

Since the top associations would be able to enter up to four clubs in the newly expanded competition, the UEFA Cup would be deprived of some big names. The Executive Committee therefore decided to merge the UEFA Cup with the Cup Winners’ Cup, which had been losing momentum for a number of years. During its discussions, the committee also expressed concern about the financial health of the clubs, some of which were accumulating losses that left them with considerable deficits, forcing them to chase money at any cost. It wondered whether access to the UEFA competitions should be restricted to clubs on a sound financial footing, thereby already anticipating financial fair play.

National association fears

During this period, UEFA also had to make a concerted effort to keep its member associations informed of its activities, especially as some feared that direct dialogue between UEFA and the clubs would undermine their authority over their clubs, and that national team football would suffer.

The situation was reviewed at an extraordinary conference of UEFA member association presidents held in Geneva on 24 November 1998, during which multi-club ownership was unanimously condemned as a threat to sporting ethics, and support was pledged for UEFA's efforts to ensure the EU heard and understood its views more clearly.

Following this conference, UEFA's president and general secretary, Lennart Johansson and Gerhard Aigner, wrote a lengthy open letter to the member associations in which they explained that, although it was the national associations rather than the leagues and clubs that were UEFA members, the situation was not that simple. Referring to the problems caused by the Bosman ruling, they continued: "UEFA's hard-line stance vis-à-vis the clubs was based on the assumption that it could count on the full and unconditional support of the national associations and their leagues. Investigations soon revealed, however, that a united front did not exist. Consequently, we embarked on a policy of negotiation."

The letter went on to say that since the Bosman ruling complaints of various kinds had been lodged with the European Commission, challenging UEFA's regulations. "As with the Bosman case, certain national associations have contributed to this situation, either because they have not adopted a resolute stance, or because they have not observed the regulations in force," it said. However, the purpose of the open letter was not to settle scores but to give a realistic assessment at a delicate time in UEFA's history. As UEFA's leaders noted: "Clubs, leagues, sponsors, TV stations and players' union representatives, as well as every possible kind of grouping which has a commercial interest in football, are all entitled to go unhindered before the European Commission and make pronouncements on European football."

Appealing to governments

"How can football deal with this situation?" The president and general secretary pointed the way forward: football needed to fight to be treated as an exception in European legislation. To this end, they called for the "active co-operation of the associations" and urged their leaders to do everything possible to convince the governments of the EU member states that "only when we are allowed to apply suitable regulations will it be possible to maintain football's traditional structures, to protect the real values of our sport and its national identity".

The authors of the letter also promised that UEFA would “continue to do its utmost to support its members, i.e. the national football associations.” At the same time, however, they called for the national associations’ understanding and support, stating that to meet the current demands, “the leagues and clubs have to be involved in an appropriate manner in the work of those bodies dealing with professional football and the European club competitions”. Gerhard Aigner reiterated this position in his general secretary’s report for 1998 and 1999: “The leagues and their clubs have become direct partners of UEFA, and it is only natural for them to have access to UEFA. Nevertheless, UEFA stands firm on the principle that it cannot and will not recognise a group of self-constituted clubs as a partner.”

Relations with the leagues ...

Dialogue with the leagues had, in fact, begun many years earlier in the context of the Committee for Non-Amateur and Professional Football which, in 1964, had seen its membership increase from 5 to 11 in order to put an end to what the UEFA general secretary, Hans Bangerter, described in his secretary general’s report for the period as “a most inadequate situation”. Representatives of non-amateur and professional football had come together before that even, in 1958, to form an International Liaison Committee of Football Leagues outside UEFA’s control. They were invited to cooperate with the governing body and, in exchange for the dissolution of their own committee, were given seats on UEFA’s Committee for Non-Amateur and Professional Football. In 1968, the committee was expanded even further to accommodate one representative from each national association that organised a non-amateur championship. With 17 members, it remained UEFA’s largest committee until 1974, when it was reduced in size and temporarily divided into two sub-committees. In March 1998, following the Dublin Congress at which Lennart Johansson was re-elected UEFA president for a second term, the committee was replaced by the Professional Football Committee, comprising representatives of Europe’s major professional leagues. These leagues had formed a European association in 1997 which in 2005 would become the European Professional Football Leagues (EPFL). A memorandum of understanding was signed with the leagues in 1998, setting out their objectives (to protect clubs, promote national championships and improve relations between the leagues in different countries) while stressing the need to avoid any form of conflict with UEFA. A new memorandum of understanding was signed in 2005.

... and with the clubs

For a long time, UEFA's only contact with clubs had essentially been administrative or disciplinary in nature, and only with those clubs participating in its competitions. It was true that, through their national associations, a number of club administrators were members of the Organising Committee of the UEFA Club Competitions, the most long-standing being the Belgian Roger Vanden Stock of RSC Anderlecht, who joined the committee in 1982 and was still a member in 2014. However, it was not until economic questions assumed greater significance that more direct links were forged. In March 1995, on the occasion of the club competition quarter-final draws in Geneva, UEFA decided to convene a meeting of representatives of the clubs still involved in order to improve cooperation and gain from their experiences and ideas. This was the first UEFA club workshop, an event that was repeated in subsequent years and expanded in 1998 to include the 24 clubs participating in the Champions League. Also in 1998, UEFA invited five leading clubs to participate in the discussions of the European Club Football 2000 task force. In 1999, new criteria were laid down to determine who should be invited to the club workshop: some 50 clubs were chosen from the top 27 national associations in the UEFA rankings. At its July meeting in Geneva, the Executive Committee reached another milestone when it created a Club Advisory Board with a view to stepping up UEFA's dialogue with the clubs. This group included clubs that had won five or more UEFA competitions – and had qualified for the new season – as well as the current Champions League holders. Members of the committee, which was chaired by Martin Edwards of Manchester United, were also entitled to attend the plenary meetings of the UEFA Club Competitions Committee.

This new advisory body was dissolved in the course of the restructuring UEFA underwent after the 2000 Congress in Luxembourg.

Structural change

In view of the complexity, specific nature and permanent relevance of issues as delicate as the integration of new associations, relations with the EU, the fight against violence and the management of competitions, it was clear that UEFA's traditional structures had become outdated and were too rigid to cope with current demands. With the help of the Boston Consulting Group, an audit was therefore carried out, resulting in the establishment of the FORCE project (Football Organisation Redesign for the next Century in Europe). At the 2000 Congress in Luxembourg,

the national association delegates accepted the proposed new structure, in which some of their powers were transferred to a chief executive officer (CEO), established as an organ in the UEFA Statutes, and to the UEFA administration. The Executive Committee, whose members were divided into four working groups, was to concentrate on the organisation's overall policy, political matters and financial control. Meanwhile, the operational management of UEFA's affairs became the responsibility of the CEO, assisted by seven directors, who had broader powers than the previous heads of department and were instructed to report directly to the Executive Committee on their respective areas of responsibility. Gerhard Aigner was appointed CEO. The UEFA committees – of which there were now only 11, each with 11 members – were no longer chaired by Executive Committee members but reported directly to the CEO and his administration, whereas previously the administration, or general secretariat, had been at the service of the committees. These changes were designed to make UEFA more efficient, by entrusting full-time specialists to deal with the various problems rather than committee members who only met once or twice a year and were now restricted to expert or advisory roles.

In this context, the Club Advisory Board was partly swallowed up by the Club Competitions Committee, which saw its own membership reduced to 11 and was chaired by French former Executive Committee member Jean-Fournet Fayard. The final piece of the jigsaw was a panel of 62 clubs, chosen on the basis of both their national associations' position in the UEFA rankings, which took into account results from the past five seasons, and their own UEFA coefficient. They could be invited by the committee to work on various specific topics.

Clubs come together

Despite all its efforts to consult and cooperate more closely with the clubs, at the end of 2000 UEFA was confronted with the creation of the G14, an interest group comprising 14 major European clubs. After the Executive Committee had been informed of the group's existence at its meeting in Nyon on 4 and 5 October, an initial discussion between the representatives of these clubs and a UEFA delegation led by UEFA vice-president and former Club Competitions Committee chairman Şenes Erzik was organised in Geneva at the group's request on 10 November. The clubs explained that they had no intention of breaking away from UEFA or creating their own competition, but that they wanted, among other things, to promote

cooperation, unity and friendly relations between clubs, defend the interests of member clubs and negotiate with FIFA and UEFA regarding the format, administration and organisation of their club competitions. In addition, in view of the EU's increasing interference in football's affairs, the group considered direct relations with the EU a necessity and had decided to set up its permanent headquarters in Brussels.

The G14 was officially founded that same day.

At its meeting in Lausanne on 14 and 15 December 2000, the Executive Committee noted its delegates' report and, in the uncertain legal climate of the post-Bosman period, adopted a cautious approach to its relations with the G14. It avoided any direct confrontation, preferring to ignore its existence altogether. Nevertheless, it adopted a set of principles concerning club football, reaffirming in particular that there could only be a single governing body for European football and for international competitions in Europe: UEFA. It also emphasised that domestic club football was the very lifeblood of the professional game and that UEFA competitions should run alongside domestic calendars, acting as a stimulus rather than exercising a dominant or damaging influence.

The Executive Committee also announced that it would open broader discussions about the future format of the club competitions, including at the annual club workshop, to which the 62-strong UEFA Club Panel would be invited from now on.

A European Club Forum

In 2002, UEFA took the additional step of creating the European Club Forum, a group of 102 clubs chosen by UEFA in accordance with their national associations' UEFA coefficient rankings and their own performances in UEFA competitions. After seven editions the club workshops thus became a thing of the past.

The European Club Forum held its first general assembly in Monaco on 30 August 2002, with Karl-Heinz Rummenigge of FC Bayern München in the chair. Under the heading 'The need to communicate', Gerhard Aigner explained in the September 2002 UEFA-direct editorial: "This platform, set up so as to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the clubs, reflects UEFA's general desire to keep its finger on the pulse of football and to listen to all its various voices."

“Certainly in the dynamic and fast-changing environments of modern football,” he continued, “the UEFA Executive Committee sometimes has to take major decisions at a rapid pace. In order to do so, it needs to be aware of the ideas, needs and concerns of the European football family as a whole so that, when the time comes, it can decide on the basis of a thorough knowledge of the issues and take account of the general interests of European football.”

The European Club Forum was managed by UEFA and was restricted to an advisory role. However, it offered the clubs a chance to get to know each other better and to find common ground in spite of their differences in resources and interests. It was invited to have a real say on the future development of the UEFA competitions and the related revenue distribution models, as well as on issues of general interest concerning club football. Furthermore, from 2004, the European Club Forum was able to appoint its own representatives to the Club Competitions Committee.

The European Club Forum included virtually all the G14 clubs, who therefore wore two hats, contributing to the European Club Forum’s discussions on the one hand, while continuing to defend their independent interests on the other, to the point of dragging UEFA before the courts of the EU.

A licence for clubs

Despite this latent threat and the instability it caused, UEFA’s cooperation with the professional leagues and clubs enabled initial steps to be taken to help the clubs improve their governance. At the UEFA Congress in Luxembourg in 2000, the European Commissioner responsible for sport, Viviane Reding, pointed out that it was “up to the clubs alone to decide what players to recruit and from what countries,” emphasising, albeit indirectly, that the clubs’ problems could not all be put down to the free movement of players and the abolition of the transfer system as they knew it.

It was in this context that the idea of a licence for clubs – a kind of passport that would be required to participate in the UEFA competitions – had been suggested. “Why a licence for the clubs?” asked Gerhard Aigner in the editorial of UEFAflash in October 1999. His answer: “Such a system already exists in many European countries, and ensures that

only clubs which are in an acceptable financial situation can take part in the top competitions. The idea would be to follow this example for UEFA's club competitions. At a time when these competitions tap larger and larger sums of money, it is essential to ensure that this money stays in football, and is not used to try and mop up bottomless debts."

The first stage of this project was the creation, in September 1999, of a working group on club licensing and salary caps. While the second element was quickly abandoned, work on the licensing project started immediately and four different sets of criteria were laid down: sporting, administrative, financial and legal. These were designed to cover everything from infrastructure to youth training and the clubs' overall financial well-being, the aim being to improve football through healthy clubs with proper structures in place, a good technical set-up and high-quality facilities. The system was also meant to bring all clubs up to the same high standard. It would be implemented by the national associations, some of which already applied similar systems at national level.

The Executive Committee approved the project in Rotterdam on 26 June 2000 and a working group chaired by Şenes Erzik met for the first time that September. A timetable was set out, with 2003/04 chosen as the introductory season, and eight pilot associations (England, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Scotland, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden) were selected to help fine-tune the project and the accompanying manual that defined the licence conditions. The club workshop in 2001 was then used to present the project and get the clubs on board.

Given the complexities of the project, the amount of time required to provide the licensors with the necessary information and training, and the final adjustments made, the introduction of the UEFA club licensing system was postponed by a season. It therefore entered into force in 2004/05.

Since then, the UEFA licence has been mandatory for clubs wishing to participate in the UEFA competitions and licensing has also become common practice at national level. In addition, the licensing process represents a unique source of information for UEFA, which the administration analyses as the basis for its highly informative annual overview of the European club football landscape.



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Closer dialogue with the European Union

Much like with the clubs, UEFA felt that dialogue and consultation was the best way of moving forward in its relations with the EU. “There is no point in calling the Bosman ruling into question; it would be a waste of time to do so. What matters is learning from the past and from the Bosman ruling and, as a result, maintaining close dialogue with the European Union in order to be able to convince its leaders of the special nature of our game and of the challenges facing it. Such dialogue is already on the right track, but if football’s arguments are to be clearly heard and understood, then it has to speak with one voice.” These were the words of Lars-Christer Olsson, in an editorial written by the UEFA CEO ten years after the Bosman ruling, clearly illustrating UEFA’s thinking in the post-Bosman period.

UEFA hoped that improved communication and closer dialogue with the EU would lead to better mutual understanding which, in turn, would produce results that everyone could live with. Indeed, non-nationals and transfers were not the only questions attracting attention in Brussels: TV broadcasts (the UEFA Statutes had already been amended more than once in this regard), the centralised sale of commercial rights and attempts to clean up debt-ridden club football had not escaped the watchful eye of the EU’s lawyers. UEFA’s objective therefore remained to achieve recognition of the specific nature of football’s in European legislation in order to create a stable legal framework in which it would be protected from all manner of civil actions and able to develop without interference.

Numerous contacts

This was the start of a long journey which, some 20 years later, is still not complete. Along the way, UEFA opened an office in Brussels in April 2003 (operational until November 2009), has worked with the International Olympic Committee and other sports federations and had close contact with top EU officials such as Jacques Delors in October 1989, then European Commission president, to whom the first UEFA President’s Award was presented in 1998.

At the end of 1998, in an editorial for UEFAflash, Gerhard Aigner wrote: “Without being recklessly optimistic, 1998 can be said to have ended by giving European football reasons to approach the future

The European Parliament in Strasbourg: dialogue with the EU authorities has become increasingly important for the leaders of European sport.

with confidence ... At the heart of the problem [are] relations with the European Union, and its manner of reducing professional football to a purely economic activity. Nothing has yet been decided in this area, and there is still a long way to go before sport obtains the status it deserves in the European treaties. However, the concerted efforts of football and other sports, notably with the support of the International Olympic Committee – and perhaps, paradoxically, the very excesses of the economic circles which are prepared to take football into their clutches – seem to have opened the eyes of the political authorities and reminded them that sport has too important a social dimension for the wheeler-dealers to be allowed to extract its economic value to the detriment of its other elements.”

Promises ...

At the UEFA Congress in Luxembourg in June 2000, the European Commissioner responsible for sport, Viviane Reding, became the first European Commissioner to address the general assembly of the European football associations. She welcomed the improvement in relations between sports authorities and the European Commission and was sure that “certain misunderstandings could have been avoided if this dialogue had started sooner”. She also called on football to show that it was innovative and assured UEFA of her active support.

A number of documents also gave UEFA reasons for hope, such as the Amsterdam Declaration of 1997, the 1999 Helsinki Report on Sport and, in December 2000, the European Council’s Nice Declaration, which was welcomed as “a step in the right direction” in Gerhard Aigner’s UEFAflash editorial. “Although the declaration does not have force of law,” he said, “it nevertheless clearly indicates the way ahead in terms of conserving the role of sport in society.” He was especially pleased that the declaration recognised the role of sports federations and the need to preserve sports competitions and the welfare of young sportsmen and women. The Independent European Sport Review was then published by former Portuguese minister José Luis Arnaut in 2006. UEFA’s efforts to build and deepen relations with the EU authorities seemed to be bearing fruit.

... and problems

Nevertheless, progress remained slow and gradual. For it to be considered credible football’s authorities needed to speak with one voice, and this was still far from being the case. The FIFA presidential election in June

1998 is a case in point. Despite written confirmations from 50 of them, the UEFA member associations failed to give the support they had promised to the UEFA candidate, Lennart Johansson, who ultimately lost out to the FIFA general secretary, Joseph S. Blatter.

On the club front, the self-appointed G14 (now with 18 members) threw their support behind a club which had challenged before a civil court the requirement to release players for national team duty without compensation. At the UEFA Congress in Budapest on 23 March 2006, the governing body felt obliged to emphasise the indispensable role played by the national associations, whose delegates in turn unanimously adopted a seven-point resolution, backed by FIFA and the other continental confederations, to serve as a public reminder of some of UEFA's essential values. It ended: "UEFA will not stand in the way of those who want to leave the family (which also means the domestic competitions) and who do not share our sporting values. But you cannot 'pick and choose'. We will defend our beliefs and we will defend our rules. Our structures may evolve but our core beliefs are set in stone. All national associations stand together with UEFA on this fundamental issue."

A vision

In the face of all the issues it was having to deal with, UEFA, for the first time, felt the need to put down in writing a strategy expressing more than just the objectives enshrined in its statutes. Ratified by the UEFA Congress in Tallinn in 2005, this Vision Europe document was supposed to be "binding on all UEFA organs." Published in the form of a 38-page brochure, Vision Europe was meant to "clearly and concisely summarise the strategy" of UEFA and serve as a guide during a period of significant and rapid change. According to a UEFA-direct editorial by Lars-Christer Olsson, it also reflected "a general awareness of the fact that after years of unrestrained developments a certain degree of control is now required". Vision Europe set out a three-point summary of UEFA's philosophy: football is UEFA's *raison d'être*, UEFA is an association of associations based on representative democracy, and the football family must remain united.

Although the idea was commendable, the document was too heavy-going to survive past Lennart Johansson's presidency.

XXXVI UEFA
Ordinary Congress
Istanbul 22 March 2012



A smaller version of the UEFA logo is located on a lower panel of the backdrop. To its right, the text 'XXXVI Istanbul' is visible. Below the logo, the slogan 'WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL' is printed in white capital letters.

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Entering a new era

Lennart Johansson's long presidency came to an end at the Ordinary UEFA Congress in Dusseldorf on 26 January 2007, when the national association delegates elected Frenchman Michel Platini with 27 votes to Johansson's 23. Michel Platini's victory signalled a desire on the part of the associations to see some changes brought to UEFA's activities and structures, as promised by the incoming president in his election manifesto.

The first reforms were carried out four months later, at UEFA's tenth Extraordinary Congress, in Zurich on 28 May, when the UEFA Statutes were amended to reflect the principles proposed by the new president. The general assembly unanimously adopted the amendments, under which the UEFA president replaced the CEO as a UEFA organ alongside the Congress and the Executive Committee. As such, the president was given responsibility for:

- a) relations between UEFA and FIFA;
- b) relations between UEFA and other confederations;
- c) relations between UEFA and its member associations;
- d) relations between UEFA and political bodies and international organisations;
- e) implementing the decisions of the Congress and the Executive Committee through the administration;
- f) supervising the work of the administration.

For the first time in its history UEFA now had a full-time president based at its headquarters, much like at FIFA since Joseph S. Blatter had been elected. Michel Platini explained the advantages of such a system: "A full-time president knows what he is talking about and is aware of what's going on. He devotes his full attention to the job. All major sports associations are heading in this direction – otherwise, it's the general secretary who leads, the administration has all the power and there is no political vision."

A symbol of European football unity: at the 2012 UEFA Congress in Istanbul, the UEFA president, Michel Platini, shares the stage with Sergey Pryadkin of the EPFL (professional leagues), Philippe Piat of FIFPro Europe (players' union) and Karl-Heinz Rummenigge of the ECA (clubs).

More power for the national associations

As he had promised, the new president gave back to the national associations the power that had been taken away from them by the FORCE project. In his opening address to the Extraordinary UEFA Congress, he said: "The philosophy underlying these changes will continue to inspire our action in the future. I want to return power to those who exercise it at national level thanks to the fundamental democracy which lies at the root of the European sports movement."

The committees reported directly to the Executive Committee and were chaired by Executive Committee members. The number of committees was increased to 19, meaning that all the member associations could be represented by at least two of their officials in UEFA bodies and thereby forge closer links with the European governing body. "We gave the national associations a different vision of UEFA; UEFA is the national associations," said Michel Platini.

Another new UEFA body, the Professional Football Strategy Council, was written into the statutes at the Extraordinary Congress. Composed of representatives of UEFA, the professional leagues, the clubs and professional footballers through their union, FIFPro Division Europe, it was given an advisory role. The idea behind the PFSC dated back to 2004 and its foundations were laid during the last days of Lennart Johansson's presidency, when a meeting of what was then known as the European Professional Football Strategy Forum was held on 19 January 2007. The footballers themselves were not represented at that stage.

Administrative changes

On the administrative front, with Michel Platini's election came the departure of the CEO, Lars-Christer Olsson, who was replaced by a general secretary. After Gianni Infantino had filled in for a time, David Taylor of Scotland took up the new post on 1 June 2007. Gianni Infantino himself became general secretary in October 2009.

With the turbulence of the electoral period behind it, the Executive Committee enjoyed a period of relative calm. Meanwhile, the administration, which had rarely seen previous presidents at the headquarters in Nyon, needed time to adapt and to finalise the distribution of tasks and responsibilities between the president and the general secretary, especially as both were newcomers to the House of European Football. The situation was completely different at FIFA in that respect, Joseph S. Blatter having already been familiar with the administrative machinery when he became president.

By amending the UEFA Statutes Michel Platini had already partially fulfilled one of his pre-election pledges, i.e. to restore power to the national associations. However, it was not a question of simply turning back the clock to how things were before the FORCE project came into being. The president's role had been strengthened and the reintroduction of the role of general secretary did not undermine the role of the directors or reduce the administration.

Guiding principles

Once these changes had been made, Michel Platini set to work on a collection of fundamental principles that would underpin UEFA's activities, in the spirit of a central phrase from his election speech: "Football is a game before a product, a sport before a market, a show before a business." UEFA's 11 key values were presented to the Congress in Copenhagen on 25 March 2009, where they received the unanimous approval of the national association delegates. Based on the concept of 'Football first', they relate to football's pyramid structure, unity, good governance and autonomy, grassroots football and solidarity, youth protection and education, sporting integrity, financial fair play, the balance between clubs and national teams, respect and the European sports model.

Seeking unity

Michel Platini's presidency, although marked by various innovations, has also demonstrated continuity, building on the work done in numerous fields under his predecessors' leadership, in particular with regard to such fundamental objectives as unity in football and closer dialogue with the authorities of the EU. Methods have changed where necessary, though. As a player Michel Platini showed no lack of creativity in breaking down his opponents' defences, and as a leader he has not hesitated to break with dogma, where necessary, in an attempt to find new solutions to old problems. In March 2007, shortly after being elected president, he had told the European Club Forum: "The football family has for too long been torn apart by internal squabbles, and these rifts have allowed outsiders to 'move the goalposts'. This has simply got to stop."

When asked by the Executive Committee to initiate dialogue with the clubs, the president got straight down to business with the newly formed Professional Football Strategy Council and the European Club Forum. Encouraged by positive feedback from these initial discussions, the Executive Committee then asked him to reach an agreement with the clubs. The world governing body also joined the discussion table and a declaration of intent was signed by FIFA, UEFA and a dozen European clubs in Zurich on 15 January 2008.

From a forum to an association of European clubs

Just under a week later, on 21 January, the next step was taken at a plenary meeting of the European Club Forum: 16 clubs founded the European Club Association (ECA) and signed a memorandum of understanding with UEFA, recognising the new body as the only authority defending the clubs' interests at European level and granting it four seats on the Professional Football Strategy Council. Instead of being managed by UEFA, the new body was independent. It had its own board and secretariat in Nyon, headed by a general secretary, Michele Centenaro, a former employee of the UEFA administration. All the members of the now dissolved European Club Forum were invited to join the ECA. "Normally with agreements there are winners and losers but this time everyone is a winner," said Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, who was elected chairman by the ECA board at the end of the association's first meeting in Nyon on 7 and 8 July 2008. The ECA had 103 member clubs at that time; by 2014 it had 214.

Presenting the agreement to the UEFA Congress in Zagreb on 31 January 2008, Michel Platini said: “The member clubs of this association have promised to call an end to the legal proceedings they have instigated against our bodies and not to start any more. They have promised not to belong to any other association of clubs from more than one country. And they have promised to recognise the value of the national teams and not to organise or take part in any competition that is not recognised by either UEFA or FIFA.”

Dissolution of the G14

This agreement also signalled the dissolution of the G14. It had meant reconciling two previously irreconcilable positions: on the one hand, the clubs wanted, or demanded even, a share of the revenue from the major international competitions for national teams, arguing that they were the players’ employers throughout the year and that they should be compensated for releasing their players for national team duty, with all the risks that this entailed; football’s international governing bodies; on the other hand, had always firmly opposed this idea, explaining that they paid significant prize money to the participants, i.e. the national associations, and that it was up to them to come to an agreement with their clubs. They also pointed out that the national associations were not responsible for the salaries paid to the players, which were astronomical in some cases, and that the value of international players could be boosted by their participation in these major competitions, ultimately benefiting the clubs too. To each his own. Believing, with the backing of the Executive Committee and then the Congress, that a compromise was needed to protect the unity of the game, Michel Platini achieved a settlement. Clubs whose players participated in a EURO would therefore receive a share in the profits of the tournament as of 2008, and FIFA would put a similar system in place for the World Cup. The UEFA president made it clear that this share in the profits was not a form of compensation and that, far from undermining the fundamental principle of releasing players for national team duty, it reinforced it because the clubs “finally recognise the value of the national teams”.

However it was interpreted, this memorandum of understanding, which complemented those signed with the leagues in 2005 and the European division of the players' union FIFPro in 2007, created a relationship of trust between UEFA and the clubs, and helped them to realise that they were partners, not adversaries.

The desire for unity expressed by the UEFA president on numerous occasions was fully realised at the Istanbul Congress on 22 March 2012, when UEFA signed memorandums of understanding with the European Club Association, the European Professional Football Leagues and FIFPro Division Europe, all on the same day. Although separate memorandums of understanding had previously been signed with all three branches of the European football family, Istanbul was the first time their representatives had stood together, alongside the UEFA president, at a UEFA Congress. It was a highly symbolic demonstration of the unity of European football.

Less than a month later, on 19 April, UEFA, the EPFL, the ECA and FIFPro Division Europe met again in Brussels under the banner of European social dialogue, as advocated by the EU. They signed the first ever social agreement in the European professional football sector, aimed at protecting footballers through the adoption of minimum requirements for player contracts.

Recognising the specific nature of football

Michel Platini also wasted little time before showing his determination to improve relations between UEFA and the EU. He sent out a very strong message when he met the president of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, in Brussels on 12 March 2007, the day before a match between Manchester United FC and a 'Europe XI', held to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome. The UEFA president also wrote to the EU heads of state and has since constantly sought to maximise contact and maintain a permanent dialogue with the various institutions of the EU and their leaders.

Following the publication of the European Commission's White Paper on Sport in July 2007, the adoption of a new treaty by the EU member states in Lisbon on 13 December that year marked an important step towards fulfilling the objective of UEFA and the other sports organisations. Article 149 of the treaty stipulated: "The Union shall contribute to the promotion of European sporting issues, while taking account of the specific nature of sport, its structures based on voluntary activity and its social and educational function." To this end, the EU's activities should, among other things, be aimed at "developing the European dimension in sport, by promoting fairness and openness in sporting competitions and cooperation between bodies responsible for sports, and by protecting the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen, especially the youngest sportsmen and sportswomen."

"A treaty-based reference to the specific nature of sport is a positive development. We look forward to these principles being applied in practice," Michel Platini was quoted as saying in UEFA-direct in February 2008. Ratified by the 27 EU member states, the new treaty entered into force on 1 December 2009. Under the treaty, "the EU has a supporting competence in the field of sport, meaning that its activities are limited to coordinating, where necessary, sports-related initiatives undertaken at Member States level," UEFA explained in a document entitled 'UEFA's position on Article 165 of the Lisbon Treaty'. Although the aim of UEFA and the other sports organisations had still not been fully achieved, the specificity of sport was now enshrined in EU constitutional law. "In other words," the document continued, "while sport is not 'above the law', there is now a provision in the Treaty itself recognising that sport cannot simply be treated as another 'business', without reference to its specific characteristics."

Financial fair play

Having restored a relationship of trust with the clubs and initiated cooperation with the EU, UEFA had laid the foundations it needed to embark on the ambitious project of financial fair play in 2009.

Even though their incomes remained on an upward curve despite the financial crisis, too many clubs, even prominent ones, were struggling to cover their costs, mainly because their wage bills were out of all proportion with their revenue. In order to put an end to the spiralling debts that threatened the very existence of many of these clubs, blanket action was needed since most of them could not bring themselves to abandon the quest for silverware. They would rather get into debt in an attempt to qualify for the lucrative Champions League, for example, even though they clearly had no guarantee whatsoever that this would generate the desired revenue in return.

In the face of this situation, to which it had unwittingly contributed by creating a competition with such mouth-watering prize money, UEFA looked for solutions that would help the clubs, such as salary caps or at least wage-bill restrictions. However, it abandoned this approach, convinced that the cause of the problem was not the abundance of money but mismanagement of it. The clubs themselves were prepared to accept restrictive measures, as long as they were the same for everyone and enforced everywhere with the same rigour.

A financial control panel

It was in this context that Michel Platini launched the concept of financial fair play, which was defined as follows in the 11 key values adopted by the Executive Committee and the March 2009 Congress in Copenhagen: "Financial fair play means that clubs operate transparently and responsibly, to protect both sporting competition and the clubs themselves. Financial fair play means clubs not getting into a spiral of debt to compete with their rivals but rather competing with their own means, ie the resources they generate." The financial fair play rules would apply to all clubs participating in UEFA competitions, with the hope that they would subsequently be applied at national level too.

Presenting the concept to journalists in January 2011, the UEFA president explained: “It is a complex project, but one which I consider vital for football’s future. Financial fair play is not aimed at putting clubs in difficulty. On the contrary, it aims to help them exit an infernal spiral which prevents certain of them from having a viable medium-term or long-term model. Supporters and lovers of football have no interest in seeing clubs that are part of European football’s heritage disappear as a result of hazardous management. It was necessary for an authority to intervene, and this is what we are doing.”

A Club Financial Control Panel, composed of independent financial and legal experts, was created in March 2009 and former Belgian prime minister Jean-Luc Dehaene was appointed its chairman in September that year. At the 2012 UEFA Congress in Istanbul, the UEFA Statutes were amended to include what was now the Club Financial Control Body as one of UEFA’s Organs for the Administration of Justice. The UEFA Emergency Panel then appointed the members of the Club Financial Control Body, which is composed of an adjudicatory chamber chaired by José da Cunha Rodrigues, formerly a judge at the Court of Justice of the European Union, and an investigatory chamber that was chaired by Jean-Luc Dehaene until his death in May 2014. The Club Financial Control Body is responsible for overseeing the application of the UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations, which replaced the club licensing manual in June 2010. If necessary, it can impose disciplinary measures in case of non-fulfilment of the regulations and decide on cases relating to club eligibility for UEFA club competitions. The Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne is competent to hear appeals against Club Financial Control Body decisions. In February 2012 the European Parliament adopted a report on sport, recognising the legitimacy of sports courts for resolving disputes in sport, which strengthened UEFA’s position in this field.

Universal support

Having obtained the unqualified backing of all sections of the football family, in particular the clubs, and following a series of discussions with the authorities, the project also received the support of the EU when a joint statement was issued by the European Commission and UEFA on 21 March 2012, the day before the Istanbul Congress. The UEFA president welcomed a "marvellous victory for UEFA and for football" in his opening speech the following day. The European authorities have since reiterated their support of financial fair play on several occasions, including as recently as April 2014 via the European Commission vice-president, Joaquín Almunia, and the European Commissioner responsible for education, culture, multilingualism and youth, Androulla Vassiliou, during her second trip to the House of European Football in Nyon following an initial visit in January 2011.

UEFA's position is clearly strengthened by this support just as it has been in the past in fields such as the centralised sale of TV rights, the intellectual property rights of competition organisers, the fight against illegal betting and the preservation of the European sports model.

Innovations

Another new idea implemented on the current UEFA president's initiative, this time in the competitions field, was a change of date for the Champions League final, which was moved from a Wednesday night to a Saturday in 2010 so that more families and children could watch the final of UEFA's flagship club competition. This also made it easier to organise a whole week of football activities in the same city, including the Women's Champions League final, Grassroots Day (celebrated throughout Europe with the Champions League final host city as the epicentre), the Champions Festival and various exhibitions and other activities, culminating in the week's showpiece event, the UEFA Champions League final itself.

In Kyiv in June 2012, Michel Platini also launched the idea of a 'EURO for Europe' to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the European Football Championship. The 2020 final round would be played in 13 cities across Europe, giving the event a special dimension. The idea was so popular that it was adopted even before all the organisational principles had been finalised.

A significant change to the competition had already been introduced in Bordeaux in September 2008, when the Executive Committee decided to increase the number of final round participants to 24 from 16. In addition, on the commercial front, Michel Platini was able to announce at the 2011 UEFA Congress in Paris that all the member associations had agreed to the centralised sale of the rights to their European Football Championship and FIFA World Cup qualifying matches. This project, implemented for the first time for the UEFA EURO 2016 qualifiers, coincided with the introduction of a new 'week of football' concept, designed to give greater exposure to national team football by enabling supporters and TV viewers to watch matches spread between a Thursday and the following Tuesday. This arrangement should also see national associations achieve more stability in their income, since their earnings no longer depend on the attractiveness of their opponents.

Following the collapse of ISL in 2001, UEFA decided to create its own structure to manage the commercial exploitation of its EURO tournaments and other main national team competitions. At its meeting in St Petersburg on 1 October 2012, the Executive Committee changed tack and appointed a new partner, the agency CAA Eleven, to sell the rights for matches in its national team competitions. The marketing of club competition matches remains the responsibility of the agency TEAM, but UEFA has taken over the operational management of these competitions, previously also dealt with by TEAM.

A new national team competition

Along similar lines, the national associations agreed to the launch of a new competition, the UEFA Nations League, at the 2014 Congress in Astana. The participating teams will be split into four divisions, with a system of promotion and relegation and centralised marketing of the commercial rights. The idea of a second continental competition for national teams had already been suggested at the 1999 conference of presidents and general secretaries in Geneva, in view of the general lack of interest in friendly matches and as a counterproposal to FIFA's suggestion that the World Cup should be held every two years. After being raised again at the October 2001 conference in Prague, the idea has since taken shape.

As regards refereeing, Michel Platini championed the introduction of two additional assistant referees, stationed along the goal line to help the referee deal with contentious incidents inside the penalty area. Trialled initially in 2008 and subsequently in the club competitions and at EURO 2012, the system was approved by the International Football Association Board, the guardians of the Laws of the Game, on 5 July 2012. It is now used by UEFA in all its major competitions, as well as by several national associations.

Greater involvement of the associations

UEFA's policy of openness towards the east, which was initiated in the 1990s, has continued during Michel Platini's presidency in the form of closer involvement of these national associations in the organisation of UEFA events. First and foremost, on 18 April 2007, Poland and Ukraine were chosen as co-hosts of UEFA EURO 2012. Although this decision was not without risk, and numerous working meetings, site visits and other measures were required to pull it off, the tournament proved to be a resounding success both for the organisers and, on the pitch, for Spain. Meanwhile, the 2008 Champions League final took place in Moscow and the 2012 Europa League final in Bucharest. The 39th Ordinary UEFA Congress was held in Astana in Kazakhstan on 27 March 2014, and several associations of the erstwhile East European Assistance Bureau have hosted final tournaments in youth football or futsal in recent years. The decision to hold the UEFA Super Cup in a different city each season, rather than Monaco, where it was held for many years, was taken for the same reason, with all UEFA member associations in mind. The idea was to make it clear that each association is a fully fledged member of UEFA and able to play a full part in the life of European football's governing body by hosting one of its events, whether an Executive Committee meeting, a Congress, a final tournament or a final, depending on its resources.

Major reforms under way

Numerous other important projects have been launched during Michel Platini's presidency, but since they relate more closely to the present and future than to the past, they are not included here. Mention should nonetheless be made of UEFA's sustained efforts to protect young players, the fight against corruption, illegal betting and match-fixing (including a betting fraud detection system covering all UEFA matches as well as the top division and domestic cup matches of its member associations, run in cooperation with betting agencies from all over the world),

the assistance provided by public authorities and police forces in these crucial areas, UEFA's determination to ban third-party ownership of players, and the stepped-up fight against all forms of discrimination, and racism in particular. At the two most recent UEFA Congresses, the member associations reaffirmed their position in two of these key areas. In London in 2013, they unanimously adopted a resolution against racism and discrimination in football, while an amendment to the statutes was adopted in Astana in 2014, requiring the member associations to "implement an effective policy aimed at eradicating racism and any other forms of discrimination from football" and to ensure that misconduct in this area is met with strict sanctions. Also in Astana, the national association delegates approved a resolution entitled 'European football united for the integrity of the game' and, following on from this, in May 2014, UEFA and Europol signed a memorandum of understanding designed to step up the fight against match-fixing in European football.

Strategy meetings

While conferences of the national association leaders, i.e. presidents and general secretaries, had long been used by UEFA as a means of communicating with its members, Michel Platini wished to revitalise these meetings, which had tended to become more informative than advisory and interactive. They were therefore transformed into strategy meetings at which, in line with their original purpose, the national association representatives were able to tell the Executive Committee which direction they wanted it to take. The first such meeting was held in Limassol in Cyprus in September 2011 and resulted, among other things, in several amendments to the UEFA competitions, including an increase in the number of European Women's Championship final round participants to 16 (as of 2017) and the expansion of the European Women's Under-17 Championship final round from four to eight teams.

The second of these two-yearly strategy meetings was held in Dubrovnik in Croatia on 17 and 18 September 2013, when the member association leaders discussed, among other things, the future of the national team competitions post-2018 and condemned third-party ownership of players.



Parallel activities

Since its creation in June 1954, UEFA has never stopped working on its relations with FIFA – the cordiality of which has varied over the years and across different topics – and its ever-expanding competitions. It has also closely monitored developments in TV and the effects of broadcasting on match attendance, has negotiated contracts and dealt with associated commercial issues, and has consistently kept pace with the growth of professional football, fought against its excesses and analysed its problems, be they political or financial. What began as purely a sports organisation has become a true governing body that defends the interests of its member associations, coordinates their activities and gives them all the support it can.

As soon as it had the necessary financial resources, UEFA also set about improving the game, its infrastructure and its environment. In 1961, it organised its first course for coaches. Referee training soon followed, with courses for elite referees launched in 1969. Youth football, meanwhile, has been a central part of UEFA's activities ever since it assumed responsibility for the International Youth Tournament in 1957. UEFA's dedication to this part of the game can also be seen in its establishment of a conference for youth football leaders, who came together in Baden-Baden in 1967 for the first in a long series of meetings between youth football's administrators. Later on, it played a major part in the development of women's football and brought futsal into the fold, while concerning itself only to a limited extent with beach soccer.

Last but by no means least, UEFA's constant efforts to promote grassroots football should not be overlooked, the principle being that strong, healthy foundations are the best guarantee of excellence at the highest levels of the game.

UEFA is unrelenting
in its fight against
racism.

The power of football ...

As the years passed and football's social value became more evident, with UEFA also venturing outside its purely sporting environment to engage with politicians, public bodies and government authorities, European football's governing body – and the game as a whole – started to realise just how much power it wielded and set itself an objective far more ambitious than simply to inject into people's daily lives a bit of entertainment and excitement. "A football pitch on Moscow's Red Square, opposite Lenin's mausoleum; match tickets serving as visas for English supporters travelling to the UEFA Champions League final; European Championship accreditations allowing the holder to use public transport free of charge in order to protect the environment; a Turkish national youth team playing in a mini-tournament in Armenia," wrote Michel Platini in his editorial for the July 2008 issue of UEFA-direct. "Football can certainly make unusual things happen, but should we really be surprised? When you see the enormous demand for tickets for finals or major tournaments, when you see supporters snapping up tickets to watch a team training session, when heads of state and ministers find the time in their busy schedules to go to the stadium, when crowds celebrate in the streets late into the night following a victory, you are left in no doubt that elite football – and more generally, top-level sport – is a tremendous social phenomenon, a characteristic feature of our modern world."

... and its social responsibility

For those who play it, football helps to foster integration, mutual understanding, team spirit, physical well-being and broader horizons. Making use of its high profile, financial resources and appeal, football has chosen to do more than just promote its own values in society. With increasing determination and the conviction that to do so is an obligation rather than an act of charity, it has devoted itself to a variety of projects with the common goal of enhancing the well-being of individuals and of society as a whole. Without going into detail – for the list would be too long – mention should be made of UEFA's unambiguous stance against racism and all forms of discrimination and the associated educational and punitive measures it has introduced (including the possibility of interrupting or even abandoning a match); the annual presentation, since 1998, of a cheque to a selected charity; the use of disciplinary fines for charitable purposes; support for athletes with physical and learning disabilities; measures taken to make it easier for disabled people to

attend football matches; the launch of the Respect campaign at UEFA EURO 2008, echoing one instigated by Lennart Johansson in 2002; various forms of participation in projects aimed at promoting health and environmental protection; and, finally, in March 2014, the creation of a UEFA children's foundation which, according to Michel Platini, will help "to preserve the magic of football and give hope to those children who need it most".

Cooperating with the other confederations

Aware of its social responsibility, UEFA also knows – as the FIFA president, Joseph S. Blatter, regularly points out in his speeches to the UEFA Congress – that it is a driving force and even a role model for world football. It therefore has a duty to show solidarity, and one of the main ways it fulfils this duty is through its relations with the other continental confederations. After the Meridian project, implemented in partnership with the African confederation and launched in 1997 with a gala match in Lisbon, and with the aim of strengthening cooperation at global level, UEFA has since signed memorandums of understanding with all the confederations. In 2013 Portugal's Fernando Gomes was appointed as special advisor to the Executive Committee in charge of UEFA's relations with the other confederations.

UEFA has also forged closer links with other sports federations and, on 8 December 2009 in Nyon, became one of the founder members of the Association of European Team Sports (ETS), alongside FIBA (basketball), the EHF (handball), the IIHF (ice hockey), the FIRA-AER (rugby) and the CEV (volleyball). In partnership with these federations and a number of academic institutions, it launched the Executive Master in European Sport Governance (MESGO), the highest qualification in a range of programmes that, for football, also includes the UEFA Certificate in Football Management (CFM) and the UEFA Diploma in Football Management (DFM). Lots of national association staff have already taken part in these courses, thereby deepening their knowledge and expertise in football management. UEFA also created a dedicated research grant programme in 2010 to support football-related research projects.

Corporate identity

Since the early 1990s, when UEFA's commercial activities began to take off and it created its own marketing department, UEFA has also paid close attention to its corporate identity, updating its traditional logo and creating new ones to give its competitions better-defined identities. It has adopted notions such as 'business philosophy', 'identification' and 'product enhancement'. At commercial level, it has also kept up with current business trends, adopting a slogan, developing brands, producing advertising spots of various kinds and, through its subsidiary UMET, entering the world of digital media. It has revitalised its website and even started producing the TV feed for UEFA matches itself, in particular for EURO tournaments. It has also endeavoured to strike the difficult balance between the need to optimise revenue for the benefit of football on the one hand and respect for the game's fundamental values on the other.

Has any of this changed the public's perceptions of UEFA? It is hard to say without commissioning an extensive survey and an unbiased analysis of the results. However, there is no doubt that Michel Platini's election as UEFA president has changed things appreciably, the aura of the former French national team captain being such that some people confuse the institution itself with its president, even in areas such as disciplinary matters, with which he has nothing to do.

Be that as it may, UEFA and football authorities in general do not have to bow to social media and their no holds barred approach to communication, which is more about individuals than institutions. The image projected by their competitions remains their greatest asset in terms of corporate identity. By resolutely committing itself to high-quality football played by excellently trained players who respect the principles of fair play, and by fighting to preserve the integrity of its competitions and the environment in which they evolve, UEFA has endeavoured to remain faithful, throughout its 60-year history, to the principle that its founders held so dear: the interests of football must come first.

Gaining ground



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The rapid rise of women's football

The earliest evidence of UEFA's interest in women's football appears in a report by UEFA general secretary Hans Bangerter, submitted to the Executive Committee at its meeting at the French Football Federation's headquarters in Paris on 17 November 1970. According to the minutes of that meeting: "It was decided to recommend the Associations to keep a watchful eye on the further development of ladies' football in their country in order to avoid that wily business managers get a hold of it."

The following year, women's football was one of the two main topics on the agenda of an Extraordinary UEFA Congress held in Monte Carlo on 16 June 1971. It was still the subject of wide-spread prejudice, as illustrated by the head of the Soviet sports council's medical service who, according to the December 1972 edition of UEFA Information, "explained ... that football when practiced by women increases the formation of varicose veins, that the close fight for the ball may cause harm to the sexual organs and that a violently thrown ball may damage the organs protected by the pelvis."

Women's football nevertheless grew rapidly in some European countries, although it remained outside the national football association's control in all but eight cases. Consequently, the UEFA Executive Committee considered it a matter of urgency to bring the sport under the wing of the national associations before anyone else got to it. The Congress adopted a resolution along these lines and asked the Executive Committee to monitor the situation. A Committee concerning Women's Football was set up, composed entirely of men.

The committee was asked to draft a set of guidelines on women's football structures and standardisation, given the amount of variation from one country to the next in areas as fundamental as the size of the ball and the length of matches. A summary was submitted to the Executive Committee and approved at its meeting in Brussels on 15 March 1972. The guidelines were then submitted to the 1972 Congress in Vienna in June, where they were adopted in principle, but given the reservations expressed about certain specific points the matter was referred back to the Executive Committee.

The 2011–13
Women's European
Championship final,
won by Germany
against Norway.

First female committee member

The Executive Committee's response was to establish a Women's Football Committee, this time including a woman, Kerstin Rosén of Sweden – the first female member of a UEFA committee. The new committee met in Zurich in March 1973, at a women's football conference involving representatives of 11 UEFA member associations. A survey carried out before the conference, to which 23 national associations had responded, revealed some support for the introduction of an international competition managed by UEFA, although some favoured the idea of a competition for national teams and others a competition for clubs. The majority, however, thought it was still too early to launch any type of continental competition for women. The conference delegates unanimously agreed that regulating women's football by placing it under the authority of the national associations remained the top priority.

Loss of momentum

The women's football movement ran out of steam somewhat during the years that followed, as the sport's growth slowed down in all but a few countries such as West Germany and England. Although indoor football was added to the remit of the Women's Football Committee in 1974, it met only once that year, noting, among other things, that there were still many, primarily financial obstacles to the creation of a European competition. This was the committee's last meeting before it was dissolved in 1978. "It was not felt absolutely necessary to have any further direct influence on the development of women's football on a European level," explained Hans Bangerter in his general secretary's report. "After a pause for reflection, however, this aspect of the game will shortly be receiving the appropriate attention again."

This apparent change of policy followed a survey conducted among the member associations that same year, in which many of the respondents had reported a new upsurge in women's football activities. After the aforementioned period of reflection, another women's football conference was convened, the urgency of which was heightened by the fact that an Italian association not recognised by the Italian Football Federation had announced plans to hold an international congress on women's football. UEFA's conference took place in Zurich on 20 February 1980 and was attended by delegates from 17 national associations.

The participants thought that UEFA should devote more attention to the women's game and that the national associations should do everything possible to save it from the clutches of organisers who were putting their own interests over those of the sport itself. They also felt that the time had come to launch a European competition for national teams.

The UEFA Women's Football Committee was reinstated with two female members – Patricia Gregory of England and Hannelore Ratzeburg of Germany – sitting alongside the Belgian chairman Louis Wouters, who had recently been elected to the UEFA Executive Committee, Poland's Bronisław Kołodziej and Carl Nielsen of Denmark.

A favourable response

Meeting in Florence on 24 April 1981, after the Women's Football Committee had informed it of its support for the creation of a women's football competition, the Executive Committee gave the green light to the project on condition that at least 12 of UEFA's 34 member associations were prepared to take part. "Everything moved really fast," recalled Hannelore Ratzeburg in the April 2006 issue of UEFA-direct. "The decision was taken in 1981 and the first matches were already played the next year. The fact that 16 associations entered in such a short space of time was brilliant. In Germany, the DFB entered the competition first and then I had to set about creating a national women's team afterwards. We even had to postpone our first match, against Belgium because we still didn't have a team."

The competition kicked off on 18 August 1982 with Finland v Sweden – the first women's match played under the UEFA banner – and culminated in May 1984 with Sweden beating England in a two-leg final.

The 1985–87 competition ended with a four-team final round and in its fourth edition, in 1989–91, it became the European Women's Championship. Meanwhile, women's football enjoyed such a global boom that FIFA organised the first Women's World Cup in China in 1991.

A competition for clubs

The 140 or so participants who gathered at UEFA's next women's football conference in London from 27 to 30 October 1998 were well aware that much had changed since the previous event, held 18 years earlier. Women's football was now played in almost every European country and the ever-growing impact of the European Women's Championship was proof of the game's popularity. A total of 33 teams had taken part in the 1995–97 edition, which, on account of the huge differences in standard between some of the teams, had been split into two divisions, the 16 strongest teams playing for the title and the other 17 vying for promotion to the top division. This two-division format was abandoned in 2008.

The conference in London stressed the importance of grassroots activities, primarily in schools and clubs. Those driving women's football were also challenged to come up with a financially viable plan for a European club competition. They rose to the challenge and the UEFA Women's Cup was established in 2001. The first draw for the competition was held in Ulm on 6 July that year, during the European Women's Championship final round in Germany. As women's football continued to grow, other competition-related landmarks included the Executive Committee's decision in November 2005 to expand the European Women's Championship final round from 8 to 12 teams, the transformation of the UEFA Women's Cup into the UEFA Women's Champions League as of 2009/10 and the decision to hold the Women's Champions League final in the same city and during the same week as the men's equivalent, thereby significantly raising its profile. More than 50,000 spectators watched Olympique Lyonnais beat 1. FFC Frankfurt 2-0 in the 2012 final in Munich.

In addition, UEFA has organised women's youth competitions for Under-18s/19s since 1997 and for Under-17s since 2007.

A woman on the Executive Committee

As well as creating competitions and recruiting and training ever more players – reaching beyond the 1 million mark – efforts were made to involve more women in all the other areas of the game, by recruiting female coaches, referees and administrators. On the refereeing side, one particular milestone was reached at the 1997 European Women's Championship final round in Norway – the first involving eight teams and the first to be refereed entirely by women. Courses for female referees have been organised since September 1991 and UEFA's traditional elite referees' course was opened up to women for the first time in 2013.

In the meantime, the UEFA Executive Committee sent out a strong signal against institutional discrimination at its meeting in Paris in March 2011 by appointing a woman to chair the Women's Football Committee and inviting her to participate in Executive Committee meetings. Karen Espelund, former general secretary of the Football Association of Norway, was selected for the role and the UEFA Statutes were amended at the following year's Congress in Istanbul to give her the same rights and obligations as her fellow Executive Committee members. She was also given the task of devising and overseeing a women's football development strategy, which receives funding from the HatTrick programme and is supported by a women's football ambassador, former German international Steffi Jones.

Within the UEFA administration, however, all the key posts are still held by men.



The long journey from indoor football to futsal

In July 1974, the Executive Committee decided to bring women's and indoor football under the umbrella of a Committee for Women's Football and Indoor Football. However, for "practical reasons", it was the Committee for Non-Amateur and Professional Football that made the greatest contribution to the development of indoor football by submitting to the Executive Committee, in September 1977, a series of guidelines it had drawn up in consultation with the member associations. The aim was to bring some measure of consistency to indoor football, a vast concept that covered everything from five- to eight-a-side versions of the game, with pitches and balls of varying sizes, different lengths of game and the possibility or not of playing with rebound boards around the pitch. These were very humble beginnings and, as demonstrated by the dissolution of the Committee for Women's Football and Indoor Football in 1978, the sport was not considered a priority, especially as only five European countries even played in organised competitions, at national or international level. In most cases football was played indoors only for training purposes, especially during the winter months.

Characterised by
high-drama, futsal
is now going from
strength to strength.

Hesitations

In 1980 indoor football was still so vaguely defined that even the Executive Committee had to be told that “the type of football ... played indoors with 22 players on a pitch of normal dimensions was not indoor football ... The so-called ‘indoor football’, on the other hand, was played on smaller pitches with sides of only 5 to 6 players each.”

The Royal Belgian Football Association thought it was time to convene an international conference with a view to standardising the rules but refused to take the initiative itself, on the grounds that it was UEFA’s responsibility to do so. The president of the Belgian FA, Louis Wouters, who was also a member of the UEFA Executive Committee, also warned his colleagues that indoor football could end up competing with the outdoor game if it managed to poach some of its players. It was therefore absolutely essential for indoor football to be placed under the authority of the national football associations.

UEFA wanted to wait for the conclusions of a study FIFA was conducting on indoor football before taking any action itself. It did, however, create a committee, chaired by Louis Wouters, which met for the first time on 20 November 1980 and immediately set about revising the 1977 guidelines. It turned to outside experts for help, including the future FIFA president, Joseph S. Blatter, recently appointed general secretary of the world governing body. New rules, identical to those used by FIFA, were adopted in 1982, although it was made clear that they only applied to international competitions, with national associations free to regulate the sport as they saw fit at domestic level. As for a UEFA-organised international competition, this remained out of the question. Virtually everyone agreed that it was too early.

A first European tournament

The Committee for Indoor Football nevertheless continued to monitor the sport's development closely and even attended a tournament, in January 1985, involving the national champions of four countries where indoor football was played virtually all year round: Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain. The committee also insisted that indoor football should be exclusively controlled by the national football associations and later that year the chairman of the Committee for Indoor Football and Executive Committee member Ellert Schram of Iceland attended an international conference organised in the Netherlands by the Royal Netherlands Football Association to review the development of the indoor game.

The idea of creating a UEFA competition was given crucial impetus in January 1989, when FIFA held its first indoor football competition, the FIFA World Championship for Five-a-side Football, in the Netherlands. Brazil beat the hosts in the final and the competition was deemed a success. However, the UEFA committee, which had been renamed the Committee for 5-a-Side Football in July 1987, noted serious differences of opinion between supporters and opponents of the use of rebound boards. It therefore considered it still too early to launch a European competition, a view echoed at the conference of UEFA member association presidents and general secretaries in Montreux on 20 September 1991. Meanwhile, UEFA firmly rejected an EEC proposal to organise an indoor tournament for the national teams of EEC member states, pointing out that such a tournament could only be organised by a national association, and only after the rules had been approved by FIFA and UEFA.

Once again, it was FIFA who took the initiative by asking its confederations to organise qualifying matches for the second World Championship for Five-a-side Football, to be played in Hong Kong in November 1992. Only national associations that organised their own domestic five-a-side championship were eligible to take part. Ten European associations put their names into the hat and UEFA organised a draw in Geneva on 17 December 1991 – its first five-a-side football event – where the teams were split into two qualifying groups. Their matches took the form of mini-tournaments, in Spain and Italy respectively.

Standardised rules

Despite a rather discouraging survey of the UEFA member associations, only 13 of which organised an official championship, the UEFA committee, now chaired by Ángel María Villar Llona of Spain, decided to forge ahead. For financial reasons, however, they had to limit themselves to organising a European five-a-side tournament, which would serve as the qualifying competition for the FIFA world championship. The Executive Committee gave the project its blessing at its meeting in December 1993. The final plans comprised three qualifying mini-tournaments, through which five teams would earn a place not only at the world championship in November/December 1996 but also in the first ever UEFA tournament, to be played in Cordoba in the January of that year. Meanwhile, indoor football had been rebranded as futsal, with standardised rules (without rebound boards) and, before long, its own list of FIFA referees.

Creation of a European championship

Encouraged by the success of the first UEFA tournament and the increase in the number of national associations interested in competing, the Executive Committee created a European Futsal Championship, the regulations of which were approved in Geneva in December 1997. A total of 24 teams – of widely varying standards, as illustrated by one 24-0 scoreline – took part in qualifying, in the form of mini-tournaments played in November and December 1998. The 25th participant, Spain, hosted the seven mini-tournament winners in Granada in February 1999. The Spaniards reached the final, where they lost to Russia on penalties.

The teams have become much more evenly matched since that first edition, and in 2009 the final tournament was expanded to 12 teams.

The UEFA Futsal Cup

Futsal's growing popularity within UEFA's member associations prompted the Executive Committee, at its meeting in Nyon in March 2001, to grant a request from the Futsal Committee to launch a club competition. The first edition, which was also made up of mini-tournaments, attracted entries from 27 associations. The eight group winners contested the final round in Lisbon, where the Spanish team Playas de Castellón FS became the first UEFA Futsal Cup winners on 3 March 2002.

A few months later, from 26 to 28 November 2002, UEFA held its first futsal conference at the Italian Football Federation's technical centre in Coverciano. The fact that 49 of the 52 member associations attended – even though only 30 were involved in futsal competitions at the time – showed that the game was now attracting widespread interest throughout Europe.

The 2006/07 edition of the Futsal Cup was the first to reach the landmark of 40 participating teams and a new format was therefore introduced, in which the last four teams remaining after a multi-stage qualifying competition contested the semi-finals and final in the same city.

Finally, at its meeting in Cardiff in April 2007, the Executive Committee approved the launch of a pilot European Under-21 futsal tournament, which ended with Russia beating Italy after extra time in St Petersburg on 14 December 2008. Although there were some positive sides to the experiment, it was decided not to repeat it.



Coaching Programme

Lisbon 2008



A coaching licence recognised throughout Europe

Alongside coaching courses organised since 1961, other events, studies and technical reports, UEFA's efforts to enhance the quality of coach education – and thereby improve standards of play – received new impetus in 1991 when the Executive Committee asked the Committee for Technical Development to come up with a detailed plan for a coaching licence that would be recognised throughout Europe. A task force chaired by René Hüssy of Switzerland kicked the process off and presented its conclusions early in 1993. The project was named after former UEFA vice-president Václav Jira of Czechoslovakia, in honour of his significant contribution to coach education before he passed away in November 1992. It was perfectly in keeping with the times and with the principle of free movement advocated by the European Community.

The project to develop coaches at three levels (B, A and Pro) was given the go ahead by the Executive Committee in April 1993. The next step was to recruit a full-time coordinator. The Romanian Football Federation had proposed creating such a post in 1978, but at that time the Executive Committee had not seen the need. By this point, however, the appointment of a technical director was perfectly justified, indispensable even, if the project was to be successfully implemented. The role was assigned to Andy Roxburgh, former coach of the Scottish national team, which he had guided to EURO '92 in Sweden, and since 1992 a member of the Committee for Technical Development. He took up the new post on 1 March 1994.

UEFA programmes are constantly helping to enhance the quality of the game through education and development.

Convention and charters

It was certainly a wise choice, as borne out by the infectious enthusiasm and incredible capacity for hard work that Andy Roxburgh demonstrated throughout his 19 years at UEFA. Besides the UEFA coaching licence, the requirements for which were set out in the Convention on the Mutual Recognition of Coaching Qualifications, he was the driving force behind two other agreements to which the member associations all signed up: the UEFA Grassroots Charter and the UEFA Convention on Referee Education and Organisation.

The Grassroots Charter was launched in 2005, with a star system to reward the efforts of the national associations with the most effective grassroots programmes. This system was revised and simplified in 2014 in order to better meet current and future needs, as explained by former UEFA Executive Committee member Per Ravn Omdal of Norway, a fervent advocate of integration and grassroots football, for which he is a UEFA ambassador: “All over Europe, coaches and leaders are organising football activities for millions of boys and girls, every day, year after year. UEFA’s new Grassroots Charter will stimulate participation from all age groups even further, as well as improve quality in education and training.”

Created in 2006, the Convention on Referee Education and Organisation was first signed by ten member associations in 2007. It aims to strengthen the role of referees and improve refereeing at all levels, as well as providing financial support to its signatories.

To supplement its long-established courses for referees and those subsequently introduced for assistant referees, UEFA set out to raise refereeing standards further still in 2001 by creating a programme in which seasoned former match officials act as mentors for talented young referees. Since 2010 UEFA has also run the UEFA Centre of Refereeing Excellence (CORE) at the Colovray sports centre in Nyon, opposite the House of European Football. Here, promising young referees and assistant referees from all over Europe are given specific, intensive training designed to prepare them to officiate at the very top.

Meetings for coaches

Andy Roxburgh also came up with the idea of inviting elite club coaches to get together to share ideas and opinions on UEFA's competitions and developments in the game, away from all the pitchside pressures. The inaugural Elite Club Coaches Forum was held in Geneva on 1 September 1999 and the event has been organised every year since, providing a platform for coaches to make the Executive Committee aware of their views and to make valuable proposals, many of which are subsequently adopted.

Conferences for national team coaches are also held after each World Cup and EURO, when the technical aspects of the tournament are analysed. The results of this analysis are then also published, as a complement to the UEFA periodical *The Technician*. In addition, UEFA maintains regular contact with the Alliance of European Football Coaches' Associations (AEFCA).

As regards coach education, the UEFA Study Group Scheme is another valuable initiative, enabling trainee coaches to broaden their knowledge and horizons during study visits to other national associations.

After Andy Roxburgh's retirement in summer 2012, UEFA's technical sector was restructured and, in January 2014, former Manchester United FC coach Sir Alex Ferguson was named UEFA coaching ambassador. His goal is to share his vast wealth of experience with young coaches, in particular by participating in the numerous events that UEFA organises for its technicians.

At the heart of UEFA

The founding members

The following 25 national associations were represented at UEFA's founding meeting in Basel on 15 June 1954:

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Czechoslovakia
Denmark
England
Federal Republic of Germany
Finland
France
German Democratic Republic
Hungary
Italy
Luxembourg
Netherlands
Northern Ireland
Norway
Portugal
Republic of Ireland
Saarland
Scotland
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
USSR
Yugoslavia

The national associations

Since the Romanian association's representatives had been unable to get visas to enter Switzerland, the assembly agreed that they could be represented by Czechoslovakia. The Welsh association, whose delegate was unable to travel due to illness, was represented by England.

The representatives of the Hellenic Football Federation arrived in time for the afternoon session.

Three other national associations were among the 31 European FIFA member associations when UEFA was founded: those of Albania, Iceland and Poland. Even though they were not represented at the founding meeting in Basel (Poland attended its first European general assembly in 1955, Iceland in 1956 and Albania in 1962), they were recognised as UEFA members as of 1954.

One of the founding associations, that of Saarland, put an end to its international activities at the end of July 1956. The people of Saarland had voted in a referendum to join the Federal Republic of Germany and its football association in turn asked to be affiliated to that of the Federal Republic (the DFB). As well as appearing on the list of UEFA's founder members, the Saarland association left its mark in the history books of the European Champion Clubs' Cup, in which it was represented in 1955/56 by 1. FC Sarrebruck, who were knocked out by AC Milan in the round of 16. Furthermore, the association's president, Hermann Neuberger, went on to become DFB president and a FIFA vice-president, while its national team coach for the 1954 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, Helmut Schön, lifted the World Cup with West Germany 20 years later.

The Turkish Football Federation joined UEFA at the general assembly in Vienna in 1955, but FIFA vetoed its membership, considering Turkey to be part of Asia. On 23 February 1956, the FIFA general secretary wrote to his UEFA counterpart that: "The request by the Turkish Association to be considered as belonging to the continent of Europe has been unanimously rejected by the Executive Committee."

He took the opportunity to point out that the same applied to the national associations of Cyprus and Israel, but that the Executive Committee saw “no disadvantage with your Union authorizing them to participate in competitions organized by you”.

At the 1956 general assembly in Lisbon, the delegates ratified the Turkish Football Federation’s affiliation to UEFA, but without voting rights. It was not recognised by FIFA as a fully fledged member of UEFA until 1962. The Cyprus Football Association had to wait until 1964, while the Israel Football Association was finally allowed to join UEFA in 1994, after lengthy negotiations.

In the meantime, UEFA had granted membership to the associations of Malta (1960), Liechtenstein (1974), San Marino (1988), the Faroe Islands (1990), Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (1992), Armenia, Belarus, Croatia, Georgia, Russia, Slovenia and Ukraine (1993). Azerbaijan, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, the Czech Republic and Slovakia all joined UEFA in 1994, followed by Andorra in 1996, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1998, Kazakhstan in 2002 and Montenegro in 2007. The Gibraltar Football Association became UEFA’s 54th member in 2013.

Considered the successor of the Yugoslavian Football Association, the Football Association of Serbia is deemed to have been a UEFA member since 1954.

Saarland was not the only German founder member later absorbed by the DFB: on 21 November 1990, after the reunification of Germany, the football association of the German Democratic Republic (DFV) merged with that of West Germany under the banner of the DFB.

Congress

Known as general assemblies until 1968, the UEFA Congress met annually until 1958, when the delegates convened in Stockholm and decided to amend the UEFA Statutes so that they could meet every two years. This biennial rhythm continued until 2002, when the UEFA Congress, meeting in Stockholm again, decided that they would once more convene annually, mainly in order to facilitate the management of the organisation's financial affairs. Additional Extraordinary Congresses have been held when necessary.

02/03/1955	Vienna	19/04/1990	Malta
08/06/1956	Lisbon	25/06/1992	Gothenburg
28/06/1957	Copenhagen	28/04/1994	Vienna
04/06/1958	Stockholm	29/06/1996	London
21/08/1960	Rome	30/04/1998	Dublin
17/04/1962	Sofia	30/06-01/07/2000	Luxembourg
17/06/1964	Madrid	25/04/2002	Stockholm
06/07/1966	London	27/03/2003	Rome
07/06/1968	Rome	22-23/04/2004	Limassol
08/05/1970	Dubrovnik	21/04/2005	Tallinn
07/06/1972	Vienna	23/03/2006	Budapest
22/05/1974	Edinburgh	25-26/01/2007	Dusseldorf
15/06/1976	Stockholm	31/01/2008	Zagreb
22/04/1978	Istanbul	25-26/03/2009	Copenhagen
21/06/1980	Rome	25/03/2010	Tel Aviv
28/04/1982	Dresden	22/03/2011	Paris
26/06/1984	Paris	22/03/2012	Istanbul
24/04/1986	Cascais	24/05/2013	London
24/06/1988	Munich	27/03/2014	Astana

Extraordinary Congresses

11/12/1959	Paris	19/09/1991	Montreux
27/09/1961	London	17/06/1993	Geneva
07/06/1968	Rome	24/09/1997	Helsinki
16/06/1971	Monte Carlo	11/10/2001	Prague
15/03/1973	Rome	28/05/2007	Zurich

Presidents

Ebbe Schwartz

(1901-1964)

UEFA President from 1954 to 1962



UEFA

Ebbe Schwartz

In its early days, when football in Europe was characterised by lots of strong personalities who did not always see eye to eye, UEFA was more in need of a mediator than a heavy-handed leader and Denmark's Ebbe Schwartz was the ideal man for the job. He had successfully resolved the conflict between professional players and amateur football at home and was a keen advocate of collaboration and concerted effort. That is not to say that he could not show a firm hand when necessary, as demonstrated in 1958 when he brought an end to the procrastination concerning the launch of the European Nations' Cup.

Elected by the Executive Committee on 22 June 1954, he was confirmed in his position as president by the general assembly in Vienna the year after and was unanimously re-elected for a second term at the 1958 assembly in Stockholm. Two years later, at the general assembly in Rome, he told the delegates: "We have, in fact, progressed so quickly that it may be wise to make a halt, in order to consolidate what we have achieved."

He took a step back himself by deciding not to seek a third term as UEFA president, although he did not hang up his boots entirely, instead joining the FIFA Executive Committee in 1962. He died of a heart attack in Honolulu on 19 October 1964, on his way home from the Olympic Football Tournament in Tokyo.

Paying tribute to him in the December 1964 issue of the UEFA Official Bulletin, his successor, Gustav Wiederkehr, wrote that Ebbe Schwartz's greatest strength was "loyalty in friendship".

Gustav Wiederkehr

(1905-1972)

UEFA President from 1962 to 1972

President of the Swiss Football Association from 1954 to 1964, vice-president of the 1954 FIFA World Cup Organising Committee and elected UEFA president in 1962, Gustav Wiederkehr, a qualified economist, was an able negotiator and a stickler for detail. He fervently defended UEFA's position within FIFA, judging that the principle of 'one association, one vote' was detrimental to Europe, which accounted for the majority of players and clubs and was clearly the heavyweight of world football. It was already too late to go back on this principle but that did not stop him from trying, suggesting, for example, that FIFA become a 'Supreme Body of the Continental Confederations' in which voting rights were distributed in proportion to the number of clubs or players represented, or that the confederations be given an advisory role at the FIFA Congress. Europe would have needed to speak with one voice if it were to push through these plans but the European members of the FIFA Executive Committee did not always see eye to eye with the UEFA executive.

In an attempt to reinforce the cohesion of European football, Gustav Wiederkehr opened the membership of UEFA committees to representatives of virtually all the member associations. He also organised conferences that gathered together the presidents of the national associations. Although not enshrined in the UEFA Statutes, these conferences provided a forum in which to discuss topics affecting European football and showed the Executive Committee which path to take. At the conference in Bürgenstock in June 1969, the delegates unanimously urged Gustav Wiederkehr to stand for a third term as president, despite his plans to step down.



KEYSTONE

Gustav Wiederkehr

Gustav Wiederkehr's desire to maintain unity in European football was also demonstrated by his commitment to negotiations that resulted in the abolition of the Liaison Committee of Football Leagues, a body founded in 1958 without UEFA's consent. It was dissolved in 1964 and several of its members joined the UEFA Committee for Non-Amateur and Professional Football.

"Clearly and purposefully, G. Wiederkehr set the course and stuck to it unerringly, inspiring the same zeal in all who worked alongside him," wrote Victor de Werra, president of the Swiss Football Association, in a publication dedicated to the late UEFA president.

Extremely friendly, with a real sense of humour, he attached great importance to the quality of human relationships and had many friends. In order that his memory might live on, they paid tribute to him by organising the 'Gushti Cup' in Zurich, an annual football match and social get-together for leading figures from the worlds of football, politics and finance.

Artemio Franchi

(1922-1983)

UEFA President from 1973 to 1983

It was in refereeing that Artemio Franchi began his career as a football administrator, before climbing to the top of the ladder in his home country and becoming president of the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) in 1967. His involvement at UEFA began in 1962, when he joined the Publicity Committee. He then served as a member of the Organising Committee of the UEFA Club Competitions and was elected to the Executive Committee in 1968, immediately taking up the role of vice-president, a position he held until being elected president at the 1973 Congress in Rome.



ROWELL

Artemio Franchi

What better way of paying tribute to Artemio Franchi than by quoting some of the words used by his successor, Jacques Georges, at a ceremony held at the FIGC technical centre in Coverciano a month after his death in a road accident: "He pursued his career correctly and honestly, with intelligence and with courage and with a sense of goodwill and determination that were universally acknowledged. It was no mere chance that he had so many honours bestowed upon him, for he was a man of culture, of human warmth, a refined man with a sharp and precise intelligence. He combined intellectual ability with striking emotional qualities ... Whether in the UEFA or the FIFA Executive, Artemio always tried to address his words to his colleagues as men, as human beings, people of intelligence and not people who were there simply to do as they were told. His aim was always to convince rather than to constrain."

As a further tribute to Artemio Franchi, the Executive Committee decided that the 1984 European Champion Clubs' Cup final should be played at the Olympic Stadium in Rome. His name was also given to the trophy of the European/South American Nations Cup, a national team competition between the European and South American champions. Having failed to secure a slot in the calendar it was held only twice, in Paris in 1985 and in Mar del Plata in 1992, when it was won by France and Argentina respectively.

Jacques Georges

(1916-2004)

UEFA President from 1983 to 1990



SABE

Jacques Georges

Mayor of Saint-Maurice-sur-Moselle and owner of the family textile firm, Jacques Georges certainly did not shy away from responsibility. He was not even 30 when he began his career in football administration, as chairman of his village club. After climbing the domestic ladder and becoming president of the French Football Federation, he joined the UEFA Executive Committee in 1972 and was first vice-president when he was unexpectedly called on to succeed Artemio Franchi as president. He had to make some hard decisions during his presidency but always stood by them without pretence, in particular when he decided that the ill-fated final at Heysel should go ahead.

Throughout his career, all those who knew him from the numerous committee meetings he chaired found him to be a man who listened to others, a firm leader who nevertheless wanted to reach a consensus and, for many, a friend. The staff of the UEFA general secretariat who served under him appreciated his human touch and his constant concern for their well-being. Jacques Georges liked people and knew how to listen to them, appreciate them and help them to be their best.

He always campaigned for fair play and opposed violence, including by supporting the activities of the International Association for Non-Violent Sport (AICVS). He also fought against political interference in sport, writing in the French Football Federation's official publication in October 1975: "We have often said it, we have often written it: football is just a game. A game that must be played and managed seriously, of course, but one that should never be considered by a nation as a test of its strength or influence. There are plenty of other avenues for that."

He described his philosophy as follows: "To all of us passionate people whose love of our club, of our association sometimes makes us unreasonable, should someone not sit us down and say: 'But you have the same goal, the same ideal, you should be brothers; brothers united by the ideal of sport, the ideal of football.'"

It was in this spirit that, in autumn 1987, he established the circle of former UEFA committee members, best known by its French name, the Amicale des anciens, whose aim it was – and still is – "to make it possible for former members of UEFA and of the FIFA Executive Committee, who had worked at least 12 years in these bodies, to see their old friends again from time to time and to avoid losing contact altogether with UEFA".

After stepping down as president and being named honorary president by the UEFA Congress in April 1990, Jacques Georges completed one more term as FIFA vice-president before retiring from the international stage for good. FIFA also made him an honorary member. In the meantime he had returned to office with the French Football Federation, taking the role of acting president after the Furiani stadium disaster in Bastia.

Jacques Georges died peacefully at home in Saint-Maurice-sur-Moselle during the night of 25/26 February 2004.

Lennart Johansson

(born in 1929)

UEFA President from 1990 to 2007



UEFA

Lennart Johansson

Elected UEFA president at the 1990 Congress in Malta, where he beat Switzerland's Freddy Rumo by 20 votes to 15, Lennart Johansson of Sweden, who had been an Executive Committee member since 1988, led UEFA for a record-breaking four terms, spending a total of 17 years at the helm of European football and as a vice-president of FIFA at a time when relations between the two organisations were not exactly idyllic. A constant advocate of balance and unity, Lennart Johansson set an example of great dignity during the 1998 FIFA presidential election and in the period that followed he rejected controversy in favour of dispassionate dialogue, which was not always an easy task. He remained faithful to his philosophy, as expressed in the first issue of UEFAflash in May 1991: "I am against radical solutions, as experience has shown me that we will only move forward if we add to our 'mosaic' step by step." It was a message he repeated 11 years later in an interview for the first issue of UEFA-direct: "I like people to help each other. I like us to be honest with each other if we are in disagreement. I like us to talk directly to each other – not through the media."

Lennart Johansson's long presidency was marked by many important events. On the pitch, the main innovation during his tenure was the creation of the UEFA Champions League, which is considered his 'baby', and which was destined to give unprecedented impetus to the global phenomenon that is European club football.

Events off the field also left their mark: at a political level, the break-up of the USSR and Yugoslavia led to the creation of new states and the arrival of many new UEFA member associations in a very short space of time, with all the challenges of integration that one would expect. "Football has once again proven that it is more than capable of achieving such integration," the president observed in his message for the December 1994 issue of the UEFA Official Bulletin. "Football has succeeded – long before the politicians, scientists and technocrats – in creating a united Europe. And we should all be proud of this."

In terms of politics and law, the Bosman case destroyed all the safeguards that football had established to protect its values and identity. Once again, Lennart Johansson chose dialogue over confrontation, convinced that better mutual understanding between the EU and UEFA was the best way of maintaining the principles of the EU while keeping football's own values alive.

The rapid growth of women's football and futsal, the introduction of club licensing and the opening of new headquarters in Nyon were just a few of the other developments that helped to make Lennart Johansson's presidency a highly eventful period for UEFA.

Since becoming UEFA honorary president at the 2007 Congress in Dusseldorf, Lennart Johansson has remained a regular face at Executive Committee meetings and other UEFA events. On 14 April 2014, for example, he travelled to Nyon to present the trophy that bears his name to the captain of the FC Barcelona U19 team that beat SL Benfica in the final of the first edition of the UEFA Youth League, the first ever UEFA club competition organised for youth teams, on a trial basis to begin with. It was a highly symbolic day, since UEFA had also invited the members of its Amicale des anciens to this showcase of young talent.

Michel Platini

(born in 1955)

UEFA President since 2007



UEFA

Michel Platini

It can hardly be said that Michel Platini's election to the Executive Committee and later as UEFA president was met with universal enthusiasm. Had he not supported Joseph S. Blatter in the 1998 FIFA presidential election campaign against UEFA's Lennart Johansson, and had he not remained too close to the FIFA president? And yet there were genuine reasons to welcome his arrival, not least because it is always good when a player stays in football after hanging up his boots – the examples are growing all the time. Second, the former France captain's extraordinary reputation and popularity gave UEFA a media platform with unprecedented punch. It could also be argued that his ascent to the top vindicates the supporters of the current system, proving that the UEFA presidency is not an impregnable fortress even if Michel Platini, with his unique aura, did not exactly follow the traditional route.

It was doubtless for all these reasons, and more besides, that 27 national associations voted for him over than his rival, the incumbent president, Lennart Johansson, at the UEFA Congress in Dusseldorf on 26 January 2007.

Michel Platini joined the UEFA family at the instigation of his compatriot and mentor Jacques Georges, who in January 1988 informed the Executive Committee that “Mr Platini had offered his services to UEFA for the European Championship 1988 and that it was intended to appoint him Member of the Technical Committee after the Congress”. Subsequently, on a different level altogether, he and Fernand Sastre co-chaired the French organising committee for the 1998 FIFA World Cup. It was in this capacity that he met the then FIFA general secretary, Joseph S. Blatter. “He suggested I become FIFA president,” Michel Platini recalled. “But I didn’t even know what FIFA was! So I helped Blatter in his campaign, and then as advisor. Later on Lennart Johansson announced that he was stepping down as UEFA president. So, there was this vacancy and not necessarily any candidates who represented my ideas. That’s why I put my name into the hat.”

For Michel Platini, becoming UEFA president was not a about power but legitimacy, as he explained in an interview for L’Équipe Magazine in May 2008: “The difference is that, before, I had the power to speak. Now I have the power to act.” He continued: “There is no ‘logic of power’. You have to convince people and strike the right balance, just as you have to strike a balance between club and national team football: I played both. There is only one football.” In his very first message for UEFA direct after his election, he admitted: “My aim is to convince the leaders of European football to share my vision of football ... I am deeply democratic and I put the interests of football above all else.”

Michel Platini has also managed to carry into the world of politics and diplomacy his remarkable ability to 'read the game', an invaluable skill for anyone wanting to progress in today's football environment and persuade those around them to adopt their ideas. It has enabled him, for example, to push through major projects such as the restructuring of UEFA, the introduction of financial fair play, the women's football development programme, the creation of a week-long celebration of club football culminating in the Champions League final, the opening of the Champions League to more national champions, the centralisation of the sale of rights for national team qualifying matches and the launch of the 'week of football', measures taken in all areas to protect the integrity of football, including the appointment of national association integrity officers, strengthening of the fight against doping, the relentless battle against racism and all forms of discrimination, the expansion of the EURO to 24 teams from 2016 and the adoption of an unprecedented 'EURO for Europe' format to celebrate the competition's 60th anniversary in 2020. All this has been achieved through permanent dialogue with the entire European football family, the EU authorities and national governments, as well as with the police where integrity is concerned.

Michel Platini was re-elected by acclamation for a second four-year term at the Paris Congress in 2011.

Executive Committee

Initially composed of six members, including the president and general secretary, the Executive Committee was expanded to eight members at the first general assembly in Vienna in 1955. It grew to 9 members in 1956 (no longer including the general secretary), ten in 1959, 11 in 1966, 12 in 1988, 14 in 1996, 16 in 2009 and 17 in 2012, when the Istanbul Congress confirmed that one seat would be reserved for a woman appointed by the Executive Committee at the proposal of the Women's Football Committee.

Ordinary terms of office have lasted four years ever since UEFA was founded. However, at the 2005 Congress in Tallinn the national association delegates decided to move the elections to odd-numbered years from 2007 onwards in order to keep in step with FIFA, which had decided in 2003 to elect its president the year after the World Cup. Five-year terms were served during this period.

Under the heading 'True servants of UEFA', Lars-Christer Olsson paid tribute to the Executive Committee in an editorial published in the November 2005 issue of UEFA-direct:

"Men in the shadows? This expression does not really apply to a group of people who all either hold or have held top positions within their national football associations and whose media profile within their respective countries is therefore considerable.

"Nevertheless, when they are elected to the UEFA Executive Committee, the supreme body of European football, these same leaders are still able to function together as a group, chaired by the President ... , and exercise shared responsibility in a way that shuns any form of individualism. Even the tasks they are called on to fulfil individually are carried out on the Executive Committee's behalf rather than their own. They work as a team and are well aware that, in football, it is the players who are the stars.

“These men are nonetheless key personalities in the fabric of European football. They have been entrusted by the national association representatives who elected them with the job of taking our sport forward whilst upholding its traditions, protecting its interests, maintaining its equilibrium and, in particular, ensuring that the general good prevails over individual concerns.

“Their task is huge; they are required to study carefully countless documents on the broadest possible range of subjects, from sporting aspects to legal and financial questions, as well as constantly evolving information on new media technologies.

“Whether in meetings, travelling, pitchside, at seminars or in their offices, the Executive Committee members spend endless hours working to promote the development and popularity of football in general, particularly within the continent of Europe.

“It is fitting that ... they should each be the subject of a brief ... tribute.”

UEFA Executive Committee members past and present

President	Ebbe Schwartz	Denmark	22/06/1954	17/04/1962	
	Gustav Wiederkehr	Switzerland	17/04/1962	07/07/1972	
	Artemio Franchi	Italy	15/03/1973	12/08/1983	
	Jacques Georges	France	12/08/1983	26/06/1984*	
			26/06/1984	19/04/1990	
	Lennart Johansson	Sweden	19/04/1990	26/01/2007	
	Michel Platini	France	26/01/2007		
	* Acting president				
Vice-presidents	Josef Gerö	Austria	15/06/1954	03/02/1955	
	Gustáv Sebes	Hungary	01/03/1955	21/08/1960	
	Peter Joseph Bauwens	West Germany	08/06/1956	22/11/1963	
	Sir Stanley Rous	England	21/08/1960	27/09/1961	
	José Crahay	Belgium	27/09/1961	07/06/1972	
	Sándor Barcs	Hungary	17/04/1962	07/07/1972*	
			15/03/1973	22/04/1978	
	Agustin Pujol	Spain	14/02/1964	07/06/1968	
	Artemio Franchi	Italy	07/06/1968	15/03/1973	
	A. Dahl Engelbrechtsen	Denmark	08/07/1972	22/04/1978	
	Heinz Gerö	Austria	15/03/1973	16/09/1976	
			26/08/1984	24/06/1988	
	Jacques Georges	France	16/09/1976	12/08/1983	
	Václav Jira	Czechoslovakia	22/04/1978	25/06/1992	
	Sir Harold Thompson	England	22/04/1978	28/04/1982	
	Nikolay Ryashentsev	USSR/Russia	24/08/1982	28/04/1994	
	Ellert B. Schram	Iceland	26/06/1984	25/04/1986	
	David H. Will	Scotland	25/04/1986	19/04/1990	
	Freddy Rumo	Switzerland	24/06/1988	19/04/1990	
	Antonio Matarrese	Italy	19/04/1990	01/07/2000	
	Sir Bert Millichip	England	19/04/1990	29/06/1996	
	Egidius Braun	Germany	28/04/1994	01/07/2000	
	Şenes Erzik	Turkey	28/04/1994		
	Per Ravn Omdal	Norway	29/06/1996	09/02/2007	
	Ángel María Villar Llona	Spain	01/07/2000		
	Des Casey	Republic of Ireland	01/07/2000	25/04/2002	
		* Acting president from 07/07/1972 to 15/03/1973			

IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Vice-presidents	Geoffrey Thompson	England	25/04/2002	24/05/2013
	Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder	Germany	09/02/2007	25/03/2009
	Marios N. Lefkaritis	Cyprus	01/06/2007	
	Joseph Mifsud	Malta	25/03/2009	22/03/2011
	Giancarlo Abete	Italy	22/03/2011	
	Grigoryi Surkis	Ukraine	24/05/2013	
Treasurers	Alfred Frey	Austria	11/12/1959	17/04/1962
	Lodewijk Brunt	Netherlands	17/04/1962	13/11/1966
	Herbert Powell	Wales	18/11/1966	19/02/1972
	Jos Coler	Netherlands	08/06/1972	22/04/1978
	Lucien Schmidlin	Switzerland	22/04/1978	26/06/1984
	Jo van Marle	Netherlands	26/06/1984	14/03/1995
	Egidius Braun	Germany	14/03/1995	01/07/2000
	Mathieu Sprengers	Netherlands	01/07/2000	09/02/2007
	Marios N. Lefkaritis	Cyprus	09/02/2007	01/06/2007*
* The office of treasurer changed to that of vice-president				
Members	Gustáv Sebes	Hungary	15/06/1954	01/03/1955
	Henri Delaunay	France	15/06/1954	10/11/1955
	George Graham	Scotland	15/06/1954	04/06/1958
	José Crahay	Belgium	15/06/1954	27/09/1961
	Peter Joseph Bauwens	West Germany	02/03/1955	08/06/1956
	Constantin Constantaras	Greece	02/03/1955	17/06/1964
	Alfred Frey	Austria	02/03/1955	11/12/1959
	Leszek Rylski	Poland	08/06/1956	17/06/1964
			06/07/1966	07/06/1968
	Sir Stanley Rous	England	04/06/1958	21/08/1960
	Agustin Pujol	Spain	06/06/1956	13/02/1964
	Pierre Delaunay	France	11/12/1959	17/04/1962
	Lodewijk Brunt	Netherlands	21/08/1960	17/04/1962
	Herbert Powell	Wales	17/04/1962	18/11/1966
	Toivo Ekholm	Finland	17/04/1962	06/07/1966
	Ota Beck	Czechoslovakia	17/06/1964	07/03/1966

UEFA Executive Committee members past and present

Members				
	Hermann Gösmann	West Germany	12/06/1964	07/06/1968
	Giuseppe Pasquale	Italy	17/06/1964	07/06/1968
	Tore Brodd	Sweden	06/07/1966	08/05/1970
	Nikolay Ryashentsev	USSR	06/07/1966	24/08/1982
	José Luis Costa	Spain	07/06/1968	07/06/1972
	Jos Coler	Netherlands	07/06/1968	15/03/1972
	Francisco do Casal-Ribeiro	Portugal	07/06/1968	07/06/1972
	Václav Jira	Czechoslovakia	07/06/1968	22/04/1978
			25/06/1992	09/11/1992
	A. Dahl Engelbrechtsen	Denmark	08/05/1970	08/07/1972
	Heinz Gerö	Austria	07/06/1972	15/03/1973
			16/09/1976	26/06/1984
	Jacques Georges	France	07/06/1972	16/09/1976
	H. S. Nelson	Scotland	07/06/1972	22/05/1974
	Roger Petit	Belgium	07/06/1972	21/06/1980
	Lucien Schmidlin	Switzerland	15/03/1973	22/04/1978
	Sir Harold Thompson	England	22/05/1974	22/04/1978
	Günter Schneider	GDR	22/04/1978	Dec. 1990
	Einar Jørum	Norway	22/04/1978	28/04/1982
	René Van Den Bulcke	Luxembourg	22/04/1978	28/04/1982
	Louis Wouters	Belgium	21/06/1980	26/06/1984
	Ellert B. Schram	Iceland	28/04/1982	26/06/1984
	Jo van Marle	Netherlands	28/04/1982	26/06/1984
	Thomas Younger	Scotland	28/04/1982	13/01/1984
	Antero da Silva Resende	Portugal	26/06/1984	25/06/1992
	Freddy Rumo	Switzerland	26/06/1984	24/06/1988
			19/04/1990	25/06/1992
	Federico Sordillo	Italy	26/06/1984	24/06/1988
	David H. Will	Scotland	26/06/1984	25/04/1986
	Lauri Pöyhönen	Finland	25/04/1986	24/06/1988
	Egidius Braun	Germany	24/06/1988	25/04/1994
	Lennart Johansson	Sweden	24/06/1988	19/04/1990
	Antonio Matarrese	Italy	24/06/1988	19/04/1990
	Sir Bert Millichip	England	24/06/1988	19/04/1990
	Ellert B. Schram	Iceland	19/04/1990	25/04/1994
	Şenes Erzik	Turkey	19/04/1990	25/04/1994

IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members				
	Jean Fournet-Fayard	France	25/06/1992	01/07/2000
	Per Ravn Omdal	Norway	25/06/1992	29/06/1996
			09/02/2007	25/03/2009
	Ángel María Villar Llona	Spain	25/06/1992	01/07/2000
	Des Casey	Republic of Ireland	28/04/1994	01/07/2000
	Viacheslav Koloskov	Russia	28/04/1994	25/03/2009
	Joseph Mifsud	Malta	28/04/1994	25/03/2009
	František Chvalovský	Czech Republic	29/06/1996	25/04/2002
	Marios N. Lefkaritis	Cyprus	29/06/1996	09/02/2007
	Giangiorgio Spiess	Switzerland	29/06/1996	26/01/2007
	Mathieu Sprengers	Netherlands	29/06/1996	01/07/2000
			09/02/2007	06/04/2008
	Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder	Germany	01/07/2000	09/02/2007
	Claude Simonet	France	01/07/2000	25/04/2002
	Geoffrey Thompson	England	01/07/2000	25/04/2002
	Eggert Magnusson	Iceland	25/04/2002	26/01/2007
	Michel Platini	France	25/04/2002	26/01/2007
	Henri Roemer	Luxembourg	25/04/2002	23/04/2004
	Franco Carraro	Italy	23/04/2004	25/03/2009
	Grigoriy Surkis	Ukraine	26/01/2007	24/05/2013
	Mircea Sandu	Romania	26/01/2007	
	Gilberto Madaíl	Portugal	26/01/2007	22/03/2011
	Giancarlo Abete	Italy	25/03/2009	22/03/2011
	Allan Hansen	Denmark	25/03/2009	
	František Laurinec	Slovakia	25/03/2009	
	Avraham Luzon	Israel	25/03/2009	
	Michael van Praag	Netherlands	25/03/2009	
	Liutauras Varanavičius	Lithuania	25/03/2009	22/03/2011
	Theo Zwanziger	Germany	25/03/2009	24/05/2013
	Karen Espelund *	Norway	16/06/2011	
	Sergey Fursenko	Russia	22/03/2011	
	Peter Gillieron	Switzerland	22/03/2011	
	Borislav Mihaylov	Bulgaria	22/03/2011	
	David Gill	England	24/05/2013	
	Wolfgang Niersbach	Germany	24/05/2013	

* Appointed by the Executive Committee

UEFA Executive Committee members past and present

Co-opted members (without voting rights)	Grigoriy Surkis	Ukraine	2004	2007
	Gilberto Madall	Portugal	2004	2007
	Giangiorgio Spiess	Switzerland	2007	2008
	Friedrich Stickler	Austria	2007	2008
Advisor (without voting rights)	Fernando Gomes	Portugal	2013	
Honorary members				
Honorary presidents	Jacques Georges †	France		
	Lennart Johansson	Sweden		
Honorary members	Gerhard Aigner	Germany		
	Hans Bangerter	Switzerland		
	Sándor Barcs †	Hungary		
	Egidius Braun	Germany		
	Des Casey	Republic of Ireland		
	Jos Coler †	Netherlands		
	José Crahay †	Belgium		
	Jean Fournet-Fayard	France		
	Artemio Franchi †	Italy		
	Viacheslav Koloskov	Russia		
	Antonio Matarrese	Italy		
	Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder	Germany		
	Joseph Mifsud	Malta		
	Sir Bert Millichip †	England		
	Per Ravn Omdal	Norway		
	Sir Stanley Rous †	England		
	Nikolay Ryashentsev †	Russia		
	Lucien Schmidlin †	Switzerland		
	Giangiorgio Spiess	Switzerland		
	Geoffrey Thompson	England		

Meetings outside Europe

The Executive Committee has already met on the territory of most UEFA member associations. In many cases this has been at the invitation of the associations and is seen as a good way to demonstrate that, in UEFA's eyes, all the national associations are of equal importance, whatever their size, prestige and means. This approach has also enabled the Executive Committee to strengthen its relationship with the associations concerned. In recent years it has regularly invited the president and general secretary of the host association to attend the meeting, as a sign of openness and transparency, but also so that they can see how the executive works and the diversity and sheer number of topics it deals with.

Looking at where the Executive Committee has been over the years, two meetings, or rather two pairs of meetings, stand out for not having been held on UEFA territory. The first, in New York on 4 December 1991, was a double meeting because it was followed the next day by a meeting with the European members of the FIFA Executive Committee. The UEFA executive met in the United States because most of its members had to be there for FIFA meetings connected to the qualifying draw for the 1994 FIFA World Cup held on 6 December in New York.

The other was in Cape Town, on 26 and 27 January 1999, when the UEFA Executive Committee convened at the invitation of the Confederation of African Football (CAF), ahead of a joint meeting with the CAF executive on the second day to review the progress of the Meridian project, launched by the two confederations in Lisbon two years earlier. This joint meeting itself was, in fact, a prelude to the second edition of the UEFA-CAF Meridian Cup, a competition for youth teams from the two continents held between 1997 and 2007.

A third, so-called consultative meeting was held in Chicago on 15 June 1994 on the eve of the FIFA Congress and two days before the start of the FIFA World Cup. The meeting was called in order to discuss, before the club competitions kicked off, a proposal from the disciplinary bodies concerning yellow cards. The Executive Committee agreed to simplify the procedure by abolishing automatic suspensions after three cautions, given that players were already suspended after two.

General secretaries and CEOs

Henri Delaunay

(1883-1955)

UEFA General Secretary from 1954 to 1955

(see pages 10-11, The three pioneers)

Pierre Delaunay

(born in 1919)

UEFA General Secretary from 1956 to 1959

When he was struck down by illness, Henri Delaunay had alongside him the ideal candidate to take up the torch as UEFA general secretary: his son Pierre, who had already been immersed in the world of football for several years and was secretary of the French professional league at the time.

Officially appointed UEFA general secretary at the 1956 general assembly in Lisbon, Pierre Delaunay also succeeded his father as general secretary of the French Football Federation (FFF) and, working from the same office as UEFA had yet to acquire its own headquarters, he divided his time between the two institutions.

When UEFA moved to Berne without him, Pierre Delaunay continued to work at the FFF and attended the meetings of the UEFA Executive Committee, on which a seat had been created for him. He completed one term of office and remained a member of the European Football Championship organising committee until 1969. Following the occupation of the FFF and his being held hostage in May 1968, and with very little enthusiasm for the changes set out in the new FFF statutes, Pierre Delaunay radically changed direction and opened an antiques shop in Versailles. He did not turn his back on the game though, his interest in the past leading him to accept a proposal to write a book, 100 Ans de Football en France, on the last century of French football.



UEFA

Pierre Delaunay

Pierre Delaunay is still a member of the Amicale des anciens. Along with Polish former Executive Committee member Leszek Rylski, he is its most senior member, although unlike the latter, who attended the UEFA Youth League final in Nyon in April 2014, ill health has prevented the erstwhile head of the secretariat from attending the gatherings of these valued servants of football.

When he stepped down as UEFA general secretary, Pierre Delaunay wrote a message in the January 1960 UEFA Official Bulletin that remains as pertinent now as it was back then:

“Knowing the extraordinary enthusiasm of the crowds for football, its power to reach all classes of society and the moral influence it exercises over our youth, we must all, as European leaders, be deeply aware of our responsibilities.

“It behoves us therefore to fight against any split, to subordinate all personal interests to the general one, to continue to make great efforts to understand each other better, to promote an active interchange of ideas, which after all is only following our statutes, and to permit no one to appropriate the rights and powers which are recognised as ours as much by the FIFA as by our own members.”

Hans Bangerter

(born in 1924)

UEFA General Secretary from 1960 to 1988

“I was secretary to the administration of the Swiss federal school of gymnastics and sport in Macolin and, as I spoke several languages, I was responsible, among other things, for looking after foreign guests. One day the ‘big bosses’ of world football, Peco Bauwens, Sir Stanley Rous and Ottorino Barassi, came to Macolin and invited me to work at FIFA.” Hans Bangerter spent seven years at the world governing body, where one of his tasks was to help organise the 1954 World Cup in Switzerland. UEFA then came knocking on his door when it was looking for a new general secretary. “I was offered the job but I wanted the secretariat to be based in Switzerland. Zurich and Geneva were proposed to me but I wanted Berne.” Although a hard runway had recently been built at Berne-Belp airport, there were still no international connections, which would have made getting to UEFA’s new headquarters somewhat easier. But who cared? Responding to those at the Extraordinary Congress in Paris who had criticised Berne for being a “provincial” town, the May 1960 issue of the UEFA Official Bulletin pointed out: “The speakers were unaware that the policy of the UEFA Executive Committee is not to hold its meetings always in the city where the offices are situated, but to meet the members of its affiliated Associations in various countries and cities.”

One of the things Hans Bangerter was responsible for as general secretary was the introduction, of two regulatory provisions that, as he himself wrote in *25 Years of UEFA*, “were adhered to resolutely, despite widespread opposition from different sides”: the introduction, partial in the 1968/69 season then general from 1969/70, of fixed dates for European club matches and a “system to reward teams for goals scored away from home”, which was mainly brought in to dissuade visiting teams from adopting the overly defensive style of play all too often seen away from home. This innovation also had the advantage of eliminating the need for play-offs, thereby easing some of the congestion in the match calendar.



SABE

Hans Bangerter

An attentive and privileged observer of the development of European football, Hans Bangerter wrote numerous reports, analyses and commentaries for official UEFA publications. He was never short of ideas. For example, in an article entitled 'Prospects of the new Decennium' published in the UEFA Official Bulletin of March 1970 he suggested: "Would it not be possible to have a nursery in or close to the stadium so that even couples with small children can go and see the match together? How many a young house-wife might thus become a serious fan of the game!"

Hans Bangerter retired on 31 December 1988. He was made a UEFA honorary member at the Congress in Gothenburg in June 1992, and as such he regularly attends the UEFA Congress and other important European football gatherings.

Jacques Georges gave the following résumé of the Swiss general secretary's career on this 60th birthday: "Hans Bangerter has managed his career with the precision of a watch, the rigour of a bank and the softness of chocolate, a symbol of friendship."

Gerhard Aigner

(born in 1943)

UEFA General Secretary from 1989 to 2000

UEFA CEO from 2000 to 2003

A football fan through and through, Germany's Gerhard Aigner tried his hand at all aspects of the game: player, coach, referee and administrator, and it was clearly in this final role that he established his excellent reputation in football circles.

Having joined UEFA in 1969, polyglot Gerhard Aigner headed the competitions department before being appointed general secretary on 1 January 1989, following Hans Bangerter's retirement.

Heavily involved in the creation of the UEFA Champions League and the restructuring of the other club competitions, Gerhard Aigner also played a crucial role in the relocation of the UEFA administration from Berne to Nyon in 1995. Moreover, he completely reorganised the administration to meet the needs of its constantly and rapidly changing environment. "The situation had become impossible for me, because all the projects dealt with by the administration ended up on my desk. I was swamped," he recalls. He therefore proposed to change the system and did so by means of the FORCE project, approved by the 2000 Congress in Luxembourg. As part of the project, he had been appointed to the new post of CEO in December 1999 already and was able to hand some of his work to a team of newly appointed directors.



Gerhard Aigner

Gerhard Aigner was at the heart of UEFA's efforts to repair the damage caused by the Bosman ruling and preserve the balance and values of football. "The effects of this ruling can still be seen today," he says. "Before, integration went deeper, with assimilated players who often ended up even applying for the nationality of the countries they played in. It also discouraged all those who looked after young players voluntarily, by depriving them of the pleasure of seeing their protégés climb the ladder and become big names themselves one day. Now, attracted by money, players leave their clubs at a younger and younger age and volunteers rarely see the fruits of their labour.

"The balance in football must come from the players, not the money. It was crazy to think that, by getting rid of transfer compensation, TV revenue would finance youth development. This would not have been possible in lots of countries where TV revenues are not very high."

Gerhard Aigner retired at the end of 2003 to devote more time to family life. He was made a UEFA honorary member at the 2004 Congress in Cyprus, and in that capacity he continues to attend big European football gatherings. Retirement may have given him more time to travel and play golf, but it has done nothing to diminish his love of football.

Lars-Christer Olsson

(born in 1950)

UEFA CEO from 2004 to 2007

Appointed general secretary of the Swedish Football League in 1990, Lars-Christer Olsson took up the same position at the Swedish Football Association a year later. His new employers were busy preparing for UEFA EURO 1992 at the time, and the new general secretary, who was also appointed tournament director, found this to be the ideal opportunity to demonstrate his organisational skills on the international stage. The tournament in Sweden, which was won by Denmark – invited to participate at the last minute following Yugoslavia’s suspension – was a great success and it was not long before Lars-Christer Olsson was appointed to his first UEFA post as a member of the Committee for the European Championship.

In 2000 he stepped down from his advisory role as a committee member in order to join the UEFA administration in the newly created position of director of professional football and marketing. When Gerhard Aigner announced that he would be retiring at the end of 2003, he then applied for the job of CEO and the Executive Committee appointed him at its meeting in Seville on 22 May 2003.

During his term as CEO, Lars-Christer Olsson focused his efforts on the marketing of the UEFA competitions and the creation of new structures for the organisation of the EURO. He also lent his support to the Independent European Sport Review and made a significant contribution to the Vision Europe strategy document.

Famed for his exemplary punctuality, Lars-Christer Olsson endeavoured to strengthen team spirit within the UEFA administration by advocating interdivisional cooperation, while also encouraging initiative and flexibility. Having never disguised his loyalty to Lennart Johansson, he left UEFA shortly after Michel Platini’s election in January 2007.



UEFA

Lars-Christer Olsson

David Taylor

(1954-2014)

UEFA General Secretary from June 2007

to October 2009



UEFA

David Taylor

General secretary of the Scottish Football Association, David Taylor acted as spokesperson for the advocates of a 24-team EURO at the 2007 UEFA Congress in Dusseldorf. Having been a member of the UEFA Control and Disciplinary Body since 2002, he took up the post of general secretary on 1 June 2007. In October 2009, he became CEO of the company UEFA Events SA, but health problems forced him to step down at the end of 2012.

He then became a business advisor to UEFA, representing it on the boards of its commercial partners TEAM and CAA Eleven.

David Taylor died on 24 June 2014 after a short illness.

“He was ... a football administrator of the highest calibre. In addition, he gave us his boundless enthusiasm as a lover of football ... We will all greatly miss his outstanding professional competence, as well as his countless qualities as a colleague and a person,” the UEFA president, Michel Platini, wrote in tribute to him.

Gianni Infantino

(born in 1970)

UEFA General Secretary since October 2009

A multilingual lawyer with dual Swiss and Italian nationality, Gianni Infantino joined the UEFA administration in summer 2000 as a member of the professional football and marketing division. He then took charge of relations with the leagues before becoming director of the legal division in 2004.

After Lars-Christer Olsson's departure, he became acting CEO. Appointed deputy general secretary in October 2007, he replaced David Taylor at the head of the administration two years later.

As well as managing the UEFA administration ("a huge machine that generates a lot of pressure"), Gianni Infantino dedicates a lot of his time to the implementation of financial fair play, which has already produced a massive reduction in the losses registered by clubs. He also plays an active part in protecting the integrity of football. "Even if we are convinced we have good arguments, it's not always easy to get them across and convince others," says the general secretary, who nevertheless has an obvious sense of diplomacy. "It's a question of balance; you have to strike the right balance between all the different interests," he adds before revealing the one thing every football administrator needs: "to be passionate about the game". This passion and his desire to share it with his staff is evident in initiatives such as the annual UEFA interdivisional football tournament.



UEFA

Gianni Infantino
