

We are EFC

THE HEART OF FOOTBALL



Who we are and what we stand for

With over 800 Member Clubs — men's and women's, of all shapes and sizes — from 55 countries and territories across the continent, our goal is to promote and protect the interests of Europe's football clubs and ensure the stability and growth of European club football.

Formerly known as the European Club Association, we became European Football Clubs (EFC) in October 2025.

We have long-term partnerships with UEFA and FIFA which ensure we can represent our clubs in the regional and global conversations where football's future is written.

We firmly believe in the principles of the football pyramid and in clubs earning the right to compete at the highest levels through success on the pitch. We advocate for sporting integrity and the development of men's and women's club competitions. We deliver world-class events that bring clubs and industry leaders together and we provide benefits that support the growth of all our members, on and off the pitch. We also champion football as a force for good, with our EFC Foundation driving charitable programmes to support the communities our clubs represent.

This *Playbook* outlines the progress we have made in putting clubs at the heart of football. It highlights our long-term priorities and the major projects we will deliver in the seasons ahead.

We are European Football Clubs.



Our members are the heart of football

800+

800+ EFC Member Clubs, up from **276** at the beginning of the **2023/24 season**

169

169 clubs compete in men's and women's UEFA club competitions each season — up from **96** due to new formats and competitions driven by UEFA and EFC

125m+

Entertaining more than **125 million fans** live in stadiums (2024/25)

75,000

Our clubs **employ 75,000** full time staff, including **20,000** men's first team players and **10,000** women's first team players

150,000+

EFC clubs are training more than **150,000** academy players, developing the future stars of our game

2.4bn+

Our clubs have **2.4bn+** social media followers

UC3

Establishment of a joint venture company with UEFA, called UC3, looking after all commercial aspects of the UEFA club competitions

€233m

€233m distributed to **901 clubs** for releasing players to UEFA national teams between 2020 and 2024, through a Club Benefits Programme agreed between UEFA and EFC

\$355m

Together with FIFA, an agreement for a record **\$355m in club benefits payments** to clubs for the 2026 FIFA World Cup

€465m

Together with UEFA, **€465m in solidarity payments** every season to clubs which do not compete in European club competitions and for women's and youth competition development

\$250m

\$250m solidarity commitment — circa 12.5% of competition revenues — from the FIFA Club World Cup 2025, agreed by FIFA and EFC

€50

Away fan tickets in the UEFA Champions League have a **maximum price of €50**, driven by an agreement between UEFA, EFC and Football Supporters Europe

A moment of incredible momentum

Clubs are at the centre of their communities, harnessing the reach and popularity of the game as a force for good. They constantly innovate to better engage the local, regional and global fans whose passion drives the sport forward.

As football and fandom continue to evolve, clubs are ideally placed to harness the changing sports and media landscape and the benefits this presents for football and beyond.

Technology is reshaping the live match experience and new formats and competitions are engaging fans. The women's game is accelerating and there are a range of new opportunities and challenges for clubs.

We must continue to adapt. To help our members grow on and off the pitch, we've refined our strategic priorities — putting clubs and football first, working with our partners to collaborate on the evolution of the game, strengthening local and global influence and building on the success of our joint ventures.



A message from our Chairman

"The launch of EFC is a milestone moment in our great institution's evolution and modernisation.

We have placed 'football clubs' and the three most important letters — "EFC" — at the heart of our name, to communicate more clearly who we are, and also what we stand for.

However, this is also so much more than a rebrand — it shows we are always thinking differently and pushing boundaries to be even better. Most importantly, it is a declaration that football is at the heart of everything we do, and that clubs are at the heart of everything we represent.

Our name finally matches our purpose, and our purpose matches our name — we will never stop working for the collective interests of all our members and the development of club football as a whole."

Nasser Al-Khelaifi

Chairman
EFC





EFC markers of progress

As EFC we have put clubs at the heart of football by prioritising:

- 1 Enhancing club competitions**, prioritising opportunities for more clubs: working with UEFA, we drove the creation of enhanced competition formats and new tournaments which deliver access for even more clubs. **108** clubs (up from 80 under previous formats until 2021) now participate in men's club competitions through new formats in the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League and the introduction of the UEFA Conference League. In the women's game, the new format for the UEFA Women's Champions League and the introduction of the UEFA Women's Europa Cup will mean **61** clubs (up from 16 last season) now compete in European competitions.

2

Solidarity to benefit all clubs: Our deep strategic partnerships with UEFA and FIFA ensure we are able to protect and promote the interests of all clubs. Record levels of solidarity have been secured for clubs that do not participate in the full season of UEFA's club competitions. EFC agreements with UEFA deliver **€465m** of solidarity and investment funding for clubs across all of Europe as well as women's and youth competition development. We also worked with FIFA to ensure solidarity was prioritised when developing the FIFA Club World Cup, with a **\$250m** (circa 12.5% of competition revenues) solidarity commitment to benefit clubs not participating in the tournament.

3

Club Benefits Programmes: Professional clubs employ the players who compete in national team football, directly supporting football federations and tournaments all over the world. Through our partnerships with UEFA and FIFA, EFC has led the way in formalising "Club Benefits Programmes" which ensure all clubs benefit financially when their players compete for national teams. In the 2020-2024 four-year cycle, **901 clubs** across the football pyramid benefited from a total of **€233m** for players released for UEFA national teams. In a major new development, EFC has worked with FIFA to ensure that **\$355m** will be distributed to hundreds of clubs for releasing their players for the **FIFA World Cup 2026**.

4

UC3 — a groundbreaking joint venture between EFC and UEFA: Unprecedented in world football, UC3 is a commercial company jointly owned by the European clubs together with the competition organiser. It exclusively manages the marketing, sales and delivery of the commercial rights to all UEFA club competitions. This partnership ensures clubs truly have a say in the growth and development of the world-class tournaments in which they are competing, delivering stability, sustainability and success in European club football.

5

EFC Campus: Our knowledge and learning offering to clubs, supporting the football leaders of the future. Our Executive Leadership Programme, delivered in partnership with Harvard Business School Executive Education, is our flagship course and provides senior executives from clubs with world class education opportunities. Additionally, our Club Management Programme, Academy Management Programme and Women on Board Programme demonstrate our strong commitment to the professional development of club executives.

EFC's future commitments

1 Putting clubs and football first

We will champion clubs of all shapes and sizes, focusing as much on serving Europe's smaller clubs as representing higher profile teams with global reach. We will celebrate success and make sure clubs' voices are heard so we can proactively tackle the issues that matter to clubs, their fans and their partners.

This includes open, fair and constructive conversations on everything from match calendars to the laws of the game.

We will work with stakeholders to create, promote and support the growth of competitions and regulatory frameworks that benefit our clubs and the wider sport, sustaining investment in women's and youth football and protecting the ecosystem.



2 Evolving together to grow football

We will evolve with our members and partners, building consensus around policy and system changes that prioritise sporting and competition development, sustainable funding and sporting integrity.

We will work with governing bodies on practical, workable regulations and put clubs' needs at the heart of discussions on future International Match Calendars, player release rules, the Transfer System and competition formats.

For example, we will create a dedicated Multi-Club Ownership Taskforce to work with stakeholders across the game and find a sustainable path forward which balances prioritising the integrity of the sport with encouraging robust investment in clubs.



3 Strengthening international partnerships to grow global influence

We will strengthen our long-term partnerships with UEFA and FIFA, as well as other stakeholders that represent players, fans and the wider football ecosystem, to support the growth, reach and impact of the European and global game.

We will build stronger relationships with more international clubs and footballing bodies worldwide to align on common interests for the good of football, fostering a more inclusive, expansive vision for the future of the game.

4 Building on UC3's success

We will use the commercial strength of our members and our commercial expertise to help lead joint ventures like UC3, so clubs have a real say in decisions on international club competition rights and revenues.

We believe joint ventures have a key role to play in the progressive governance of international club competitions. We will build on the FIFA-EFC partnership that supported the delivery of the FIFA Club World Cup 2025 to create a global joint venture with FIFA to help shape the further development of international club competitions.

5 A force for good in football

We will support every member's development off the pitch through benefits and services, from legal services and IP protection to strategic finance, sustainability and HR. Through programmes like the EFC Executive Leadership Programme, developed in partnership with Harvard Business School Executive Education, we will raise clubs' professional skills and standards. Through our Women on Board Programme, we will help develop football's next generation of female leaders. We will continue to drive the growth of women's competitions, including the refreshed UEFA Women's Champions League and new women's Europa Cup competition, inspiring new fans. We will champion solidarity payments for clubs that don't compete in European and global club competitions. We will fully establish and grow the EFC Foundation to support local and international communities and grassroots sport.



What is coming next from EFC?

1

COLLABORATION CHARTERS

With UEFA and FIFA, we will further strengthen working relationships and technical processes between clubs and national teams around player release for national team matches.

2

FOOTBALL RESEARCH

We are passionate about informing decisions through data and analysis. We look at everything from player load to the transition from academies to first teams.

3

MATCH CALENDARS

We will continue to ensure the interests of all clubs are represented in discussions with UEFA, FIFA and other stakeholders about future match calendars.

4

CLUB BENEFITS FOR THE 2026 FIFA WORLD CUP

We will work with FIFA on a record-breaking \$355m distribution programme to clubs for releasing their players for the 2026 tournament — that's up ~70% from the previous competition.

5

THE LAWS OF THE GAME

We will accelerate EFC's newly formed Laws Advisory Panel, which is working proactively with the IFAB to develop the laws of the game.

6

EFC FOUNDATION AND INNOVATION CENTRE

As well as bringing the recently formed EFC Foundation to life, we will launch an Innovation Centre designed to create opportunities for new ideas, businesses and technologies to support the development of our members.

Frequently asked questions

Why was EFC founded?

EFC launched in 2008, under the previous name of ECA, as a coalition of European clubs seeking a voice in the European competitions they played in. In 2023 and 2024 we signed the latest in a series of long term partnership agreements with both UEFA and FIFA that give clubs even more of a voice in decision-making, continually evolving EFC from a lobby group to an equal player and a stronger influence in the sport. Now with 800+ Member Clubs of all shapes and sizes, EFC is committed to putting the interests of all clubs at the heart of football.

How is EFC funded?

EFC is mainly funded by its members, via direct and indirect membership payments.

As part of the overall distribution model, we receive a small share of the central revenues generated by the UEFA club competitions commercial programme, plus other revenues including member fees and paid services such as the EFC Brand Protection Service and our Executive Leadership Programme.

Where are you based?

We are headquartered in Nyon, Switzerland, with small hubs opening across Europe so that we can always be close to our members.



How often do you meet and make decisions?

In addition to our annual General Assembly, our Board and Executive Committee meet quarterly.

Our nine Working Groups, combining over 200 club representatives, meet regularly throughout the year, and we also host regular topic-specific events for our members, including Club Connect.

How do members influence decisions, what touchpoints do they have?

We always consult, driving consensus and collaboration, through regular meetings, Working Groups, task forces and surveys before key decisions.

How do you work with other stakeholders?

Outside of our commercial joint ventures, EFC appoints representatives from amongst our membership panel to all major club-relevant committees at UEFA and FIFA level. We have regular bilateral engagements and joint projects with recognised and legitimate representatives of other stakeholders such as players, fans and leagues.



How do you support many hundreds of clubs of different shapes and sizes from so many different countries?

Needs will always differ across clubs, but football thrives when we develop and expand the game, building consensus through compromise. We focus on football and on clubs, acting as a bridge between interests and ensuring opportunities for top professional clubs of every size and in every European country. EFC leadership commits to balanced representation and integrity, with every member eligible for a seat on the Board.

How do you tailor member services for smaller and larger clubs?

We design bespoke services around the needs of many different segments of members. We offer free and low-cost core benefits that help clubs with capability gaps. We build and manage centralised platforms to support clubs of all sizes in creating scale efficiencies for core functions such as commercialising and protecting their IP.

Why has membership growth accelerated recently?

We listened and made changes. Our 2023–25 “Membership for All” reforms broadened representation and inclusion, making it easier for more clubs to work with us and be heard.

Let's work together to put football first

Football is the most popular sport in the world, thanks to the clubs, players, fans, competitions, governing institutions, partners and communities which drive it forward.

We will continue to put football first, to support all clubs to develop on and off the pitch and to ensure they are at the centre of the major decisions impacting the future of the game.

We are European Football Clubs.

Connect with us on social media:
[@EFC_Football](https://twitter.com/EFC_Football)

For more information
visit the new EFC website:

WWW.EFCFOOTBALL.COM



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