



EUROPEAN CLUB ASSOCIATION

# Annual Report 2020/21

## Including Financial Report 2020/21 & Budget 2021/22





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# A message from the Chairman

Nasser Al-Khelaïfi

## **Before we look forward, we need to briefly look back.**

I will not spend much time talking about 18 April, and the “not-so-Super League” because I do not like to focus on fabulists and failures. Together, we defended the interests of European football for everyone – for the players, the Clubs, the Leagues, the National Associations, and most of all, the fans. We relied on the resolve and strength of President Čeferin, who stood up to the midnight coup – people with short memories should remember that this is exactly what it was. You all should know, that President Čeferin was confident from the start. We spoke early in the morning on 18 April, and he said, “we will win”. And we did. Thank you, President Čeferin.

Amid the turmoil created by three rebel clubs, the rest of us are moving forward and focusing every energy on building a better future for European football – together as one. For the 9 clubs who asked to come back into our family, the ECA Board has re-integrated them into our structures with renewed commitments to strengthen our Association. I welcome them back to the ECA family.

And now, looking ahead, to meet the challenges currently facing European football, ECA needs to evolve with a stronger purpose. We want ECA to be the heart of European football – a purposeful and powerful stakeholder driving the agenda and development of a united European football family. We also want ECA to represent and support more and more European professional football clubs so we truly represent the

interests of all.

To achieve this, we need to repair and strengthen European football by starting with the following 5 strategic priorities:

### **1) Financial Stability of European Football**

The first priority is to bring urgent financial stability to European football. Even before COVID, many financial problems affected football. However, the pandemic has magnified them all. We are all facing this new COVID reality today – every single club is feeling the pain; big clubs and small clubs, from all parts of Europe. During the two pandemic seasons, there has been billions of losses in revenues in European football – and we are not through the woods this season either. If we don't act soon, the damage will be impossible to reverse.

So, what role can ECA play? To start with, ECA is working hand-in-hand with UEFA to put in place a multi-billion Euro debt fund to allow clubs of all tiers to accelerate their recovery from the financial devastation of COVID. We know the need from our members is significant; and we have fought strongly for this project.

In addition, as we look to avoid financial trouble in the future beyond the COVID crisis, an emergency UEFA-ECA fund for future crises is being examined. Further, ECA has also championed a separate initiative to redistribute around 50 million Euros per year more of solidarity money for the benefit of smaller clubs not participating in European Club Competition. This is what I mean by

saying ECA represents the interests of all. Finally, new Financial Fair Play (FFP) regulations will be put in place with the objective for European club football to remain at the pinnacle of sport & entertainment, but while also ensuring a stable, sustainable, inclusive and competitive Football Pyramid.

These measures are vital to secure financial and economic sustainability at all levels of European football.

## **2) Stronger ECA Relationships**

Our second priority is to make ECA's relationships stronger across the entire football family, particularly with UEFA. As an organisation, we will always have direct and honest conversations with UEFA on many topics; and while we will disagree on some things, we must never lose sight of the common interest that binds us. European Football's future is dependent on this. We have a duty to find solutions to the common problems we face because we share the same objectives and goals. After all, ECA and UEFA share the same vision – we both believe football is for everyone – we are two sides of the same coin, not two different coins.

What does this mean practically? Most pressingly, we need to work with UEFA to better optimise revenues from club competitions. To that end, as you know, we have recently negotiated a Letter of Intent with UEFA to establish a new model for commercialising UEFA Club Competitions. This new model will be a joint-venture between ECA and UEFA with ultimate responsibility for the business and commercial side of the club competitions, resulting in new and better commercial rights strategies and management. In addition, we will also work with UEFA on ways to maximize the value of the new post-2024 format and to improve club relationships with national associations, which is in everyone's interests.

ECA also needs to work more closely with other stakeholders. And we will. We have important challenges to solve. The most urgent of which is the International Match Calendar – this needs honest engagement, not unilateral and self-interested decisions. Over-scheduled and disrupted matches put the players' health and wellbeing at risk – and the clubs bear all the risk. Agreements and MOUs should not be broken – integrity and trust are important values. This issue is critical for the clubs, the players and the fans.

## **3) Meaningful ECA member-benefits**

The third priority is to make ECA work better for its members – to provide valuable resources for the clubs. We should ask ourselves, what should ECA provide for its members? For me, right now, not enough. This needs to change.

ECA has huge unfulfilled potential to help clubs in more concrete ways. We need to become a centralised hub of excellence – a provider of the best club management expertise on the market. This means providing medical, legal, scouting, youth development and networking advice and opportunities. It means creating best-in-class courses for sports management. It means thinking out of the box. For example, let me ask you: how can we use our masses of collective data and our social media platforms to generate more revenues for us all? Digital is the future. How can we make match-days a destination – blending entertainment with sport to appeal to new audiences?

Change is happening already. We will be forming a 'Football Advisory Panel' of ex-players, ex-coaches and ex-managers – some of the greatest minds and experience within football. Retired players, coaches and managers are constantly asking me how they can help, and now their input will help guide our footsteps as we strengthen

# Chairman's message continued

European football. To make this step-change within ECA a reality, we need your help. I would like everyone to be involved... not just the management or the Board. For ECA to better serve its members, by definition, we need input and contribution from everyone.

## **4) Diversity & Inclusion – reflecting all of Europe**

The fourth pillar is that diversity and inclusion need to be at the core of our new ECA. This could be one of our greatest potential strengths but currently we are falling short. If we want ECA to be a force for change in European football, we need ECA to reflect all of Europe.

First, the only way to truly include everyone is to remove politics from football and to put an end to racism. President Čeferin, we are aligned with UEFA on this topic. In addition, reflecting all of Europe means investing more in women's football, rather than it being treated as a separate tier or an after-thought. As you know, starting this new cycle, Men's European Football will invest more in the UEFA Women's Champions League every year – this needs to be the first step of many. We should also focus on developing youth football programmes in all member clubs and all new network-club members. Our new 'Football Advisory Panel' of ex-players, coaches and managers can help our clubs develop the next generation of footballers; and we are also working with UEFA on various youth projects, for instance on the UEFA Youth League task force.

Further, the reforms that we push for in European football need to be focused more around the principle of inclusion. The new UEFA Europa Conference is a fantastic example of this, with European competitions now more inclusive for more clubs than ever before – today 20% more teams participate in the Group Stages of the European Club Competitions. This is a great example of ECA and UEFA working hand-in-hand.

In addition, I am happy to announce that the ECA Board has approved the expansion of our membership to

include more professional clubs in our network, so ECA can be a resource for more European professional clubs.

## **5) Renewed ECA / European Football Spirit & Values**

Finally, a priority that some people think is invisible, but it should be visible in everything we do: the underlying spirit and values of our organisation and European football.

The “not-Super League” was defeated through integrity, togetherness, and protecting the interests of every member of our European football community. These values need to define ECA every single day. Every club is respected equally at ECA. And sporting merit based on open competition has been the foundation of our system – clubs of all sizes deserve a chance to chase their dream in open competition. These values can never be compromised. In addition, once the clubs agree on something at ECA, we will stand by our word.

As you all know, football clubs are not ordinary businesses, they play a huge social and civic role in their local communities. And at the heart of every club, big and small, are the fans. Fans are the engine of football, and they need to be protected. Without them, football is not the same. We should never forget that.

These are the strategic priorities that will make European football stronger in the face of all our current challenges.

Over the past few months, European football has faced challenges like never before. People have tried to divide us; they have tried to separate us; they have tried to make us weaker. They have failed. In fact, they have achieved the exact opposite – they brought us together. They have made us stronger. And if all of us continue to work together with integrity; fully committed to our ideals; fully committed to each other as fellow clubs; and fully committed to ECA, then European football can only flourish.

This is my one request I ask of all you: to work together as one family, and if we do that, then the future of European football could not be brighter.



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# ECA CEO report

Charlie Marshall

**To say that ECA has undergone a significant amount of change this year is an understatement. We have faced unprecedented challenges, but also achieved incredible things.**

The only constant has been the strength of the Association and its Members.

By April, ECA had delivered on its core objectives of laying out a clear and compelling position on the future direction of UEFA Club Competitions after 2 years of extensive consultation. The ECA Board approved a vision of a closer partnership between UEFA and clubs, building on UEFA's proposals for the UCCs post 2024.

Yet, just two days later, twelve clubs attempted to breakaway from the structures of European football. The swift failure of this project was in part due to the rapid response of the ECA Board; rejecting the plan by a clear majority, reaffirming its support for the work carried out to date and immediately working with UEFA and other stakeholders to stop the plot.

Nasser Al-Khelaifi was asked by the Board to take up the Chairmanship of ECA and also to lead a new Executive Committee comprising the remaining Vice-Chairmen and ECA's independent board member, Michele Centenaro. The Board also asked Honorary Chairman, Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, to represent ECA on UEFA's Executive Committee, and Michael Gerlinger to take up the role of

first Vice-Chairman of the association. We remain hugely grateful to them all for their sense of leadership and duty towards ECA.

Within two weeks, further apologies and official renouncements of the failed project were made by nine clubs to both UEFA and ECA. A thorough process of reintegration, reconciliation and recommitment took place over the summer between ECA and those nine clubs and on 16 August the retention of their ECA memberships was formally confirmed.

As we leave this unfortunate episode behind, we can look forward to ECA working to deliver the new Chairman and Executive Board's five strategic pillars in order to safeguard, strengthen and shape European club football as it enters a new era.

## **First, Financial Stability and Sustainability.**

At the core of this pillar is the need to ensure that European club football remains at the pinnacle of sport & entertainment worldwide while also ensuring a stable, sustainable, inclusive and competitive football pyramid.

There are short- and medium-term aspects on which to act to solve present liquidity crises and to transition to a new financial regulatory environment for the future, to encourage investment into a football ecosystem which at the same time has clear mechanisms for cost control.

# ECA CEO report

## Continued

### **Second, Closer and Stronger Stakeholder Relationships.**

As the events of April demonstrated, we can achieve great things when we work together as stakeholders in European football.

Our work with UEFA is of paramount importance. Over the coming months this will intensify as we seek a new set of agreements with UEFA for the post-2024 period, covering both the commercial, sporting and regulatory aspects of UCCs, and the delicate balance of club and national team football.

We also have vital work to do with FIFA. The International Match Calendar and managing the release of players to national team football are critical matters. All stakeholders have needed to work hand in hand since the start of the pandemic to balance interests and to make compromises with each other, to try to recover as best as possible.

We remain actively engaged on behalf of all our members and together with the leagues, trying, with FIFA, to resolve short-term problems and most of all ensure to a sensible dialogue about the future of the calendar. European Club interests, as the engine of global football, must be protected and we have a duty of care to our members, to do so.

Our third and fourth pillars are around **Enhancing Value and Services to our Members** and adopting a **Broader European view**.

We cannot rest on laurels. We need to focus on innovation, new ways of attracting and engaging audiences, new ways of internationalising and developing football. So we must keep our focus on 2024 and beyond, when international club competitions can be made even better - even higher quality, even more competitive, even more attractive and even more diverse.

Diversity and inclusion is central to both sporting and social impact and it needs renewed effort and education. On and off-the-pitch, in physical and digital environments, in and out of workplaces and in everyday lives.

And it's with these thoughts that we can look towards refreshing **ECA's Spirit and Values**, the fifth pillar. As we bring together a new framework for the next decade of European football – encompassing the calendar, the competitions, financial sustainability, distribution and investment across the pyramid, commercialisation and social impact and responsibility – we'll only succeed if we understand how to work together. ECA is at its best when it is able to create unity – even in the face of extreme disruption – which means that everyone needs to work together for the greater collective good.

I look forward to working with all of you over the coming year and beyond to make all of this a reality.





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## A message from the UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin



### **It is my pleasure to address you in this edition of the ECA Annual Report.**

With the return of UEFA competitions and tournaments last year in August, we proved to the world that European football is resilient because of its strength and unity. In an exceptional season, where all matches were played against all odds, a tribute must be paid to Chelsea FC who had both its men's and women's teams reach their respective Champions League finals. But allow me to congratulate all teams participating in our club competitions.

By competing in the UEFA Champions League, the UEFA Europa League and the UEFA Women's Champions League, clubs can verify every day the importance of the European sports model and pyramid. Their validation of UEFA club competitions means this is where legitimacy, legacy and history are established – not in a rogue commercial enterprise.

It cannot be ignored that the ECA was also significantly affected by the breakaway threat. Here I would like to acknowledge the professionalism of your organisation and club members who recognised the cynicism of the European Super League and chose to be on the right side of history. Your resolution to stand by UEFA

and the rest of the football community and resist this mirage is a testimony to your strength and commitment to true European football. I would also like to express my gratitude to the ECA chairman, Nasser al-Khelaifi. During these extraordinary times for all of us, he has always maintained a clear head, a sharp focus and a positive outlook regarding what needs to be done to make things better for European football.

But now is the time to look forward. We cannot remain distracted with illusions of the past if we are to focus on making 2021/22 the greatest season ever. We have a new club competition to welcome into the European football family, the UEFA Europa Conference League which will see more clubs making their contributions to the diversity and experience of UEFA club competitions. The new format of the UEFA Women's Champions League will further propel European women's club football across the globe and be an inspiration and source of pride to all fans.

Hope remains alive and will fan the flames of football passion over the coming season. If the 2020/21 season was truly unparalleled and exceptional, thanks to our mutual determination, commitment and resolve, I am certain we can make 2021/22 extraordinary.

# A new competitions landscape for European football

**The development of competitions over the past year has highlighted the importance of clubs and UEFA working together, with the introduction of the innovative UEFA Europa Conference League in 2021/22 and the agreement on the future direction of UEFA Club Competitions from 2024.**

The UEFA Europa Conference League sees 184 teams involved across the full season, including at least one from each of the 55 UEFA National Associations and 46 clubs accessing via the UEFA Champions League or UEFA Europa League.

ECA's Director of Football, Diederik Dewaele, said: "Our members want more European opportunities and that is why the UEFA Europa Conference League is critical to the competition ecosystem.

It offers increased opportunities to clubs from a wide range of associations to taste the European group stage experience. It will be a very open competition, granting many different clubs and their fans the excitement of reaching its final stages."

Not only is the addition of this competition to the current European portfolio exciting from a sporting perspective, but it also provides new opportunities for

clubs in their commercial activities.

"The UEFA Europa Conference League offers an excellent opportunity to more European clubs, providing a platform and window to further shape and amplify their international brand appeal and exposure, creating additional revenue streams in out-of-home markets off the back of it," added ECA's Director of Commercial & Business Development, Lasse Wolter.

April 2021 also saw the formal approval from the UEFA Executive Committee of a new format for UEFA Club Competitions as of the 2024/25 season.

Upon the decision, the newly formed ECA Executive Committee, consisting of the ECA Chairman, Vice Chairmen, and Independent Board Member Michele Centenaro, commented: "We are pleased that UEFA Club Competitions reform has reached this important milestone. The agreement of new competition formats will create a greater number of high quality, relevant, exciting European matches for fans and increase participation for clubs at all levels - principles and targets that ECA laid out back in the spring of 2019 when we embarked on this reform journey.

Moving forward, the entire ECA Executive Board's focus

will be on pursuing efforts to conclude arrangements with UEFA around its renewed relationship post 2024 as we look to shape European club football for the years ahead.”

The decision concluded two years of widespread and extensive consultations between ECA members and with UEFA and other stakeholders. Based on the feedback from clubs during the in-depth consultation process, ECA's vision for the future of the European club game was built on 4 key principles:

- More European matches with higher quality, competitiveness, and relevance at all levels
- The opportunity for greater financial income and stability from a broader and deeper base of European club football
- Rewards based on meritocracy in domestic and European competitions, with links between how clubs perform in domestic competitions and how they access Europe, and the opportunity for European performances also to be rewarded
- Retaining chances for the dream to be kept alive at all levels, with no closed systems

It is not possible to discuss the future of competitions without also looking at the next generation of stars of the

European game with the UEFA Youth League.

“Unfortunately, with the risks of the pandemic, we weren’t able to experience the excitement of the UEFA Youth League in the 2020/21 season. However, going forward, the competition is a key priority for ECA in the coming years as we aim to evolve the opportunities for young players whilst ensuring it remains an inclusive competition which focuses on providing players with high-level international experience, but without overloading their calendar especially during their development phase,” said Dewaele.

ECA also launched its ECA Youth Football Strategy 2021-23 in May, dedicated to driving the development of youth football across Europe. Based on four fundamental pillars, the strategy aims to better protect and reward training clubs, enhance the European youth competition landscape and facilitate the valuable exchange of knowledge between and deliver essential research to Member Clubs.

“The identification and development of talented young players has become a central concern of modern football clubs and a productive academy system can be key to long-term success. It is therefore ever more important to establish safe, stable and professional environments to nurture the next generation. That is exactly what we aim to do with this strategy,” added Dewaele.

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# 2021/22 Financial report: road to sustainability with support of new UEFA FSR framework

**The COVID-19 pandemic had a destabilising financial impact across society and industries, including football, with stadiums closed and clubs unsure when fans would be back once again.**

Lost revenue to clubs – who together have borne over 90% of the financial impact of COVID – is certainly in excess of €8bn. Like the entertainment sector, football suffered reduced income from ticket sales and hospitality, as well as stalled and/or reduced income from sponsorship and media. Despite the shortfall, clubs faced fixed cost commitments, particularly wages, from times of growth.

Mitigating measures were sought to ensure the short-term stability of clubs in the midst of the financial uncertainty that came with empty stands but there is a growing need to adapt the financial infrastructures to maintain economic balance and ensure viability for the future.

Charlie Marshall, ECA's Chief Executive Officer, stated: "Now is the time to build common and widespread understanding across all stakeholders of the economic drivers and pressure points of football clubs, so that in working together on recovery we can also take the opportunity to build more sustainability. This is imperative as we have learned that being flexible and prepared for unpredictability is part of our future."

ECA has been vocal in its mandate to pursue meaningful financial reform to solve the immediate solvency issues facing all clubs across Europe and the longer-term challenge of delivering regulation that ensures both sustainability and competitiveness.

The initial introduction of UEFA's FFP regulations played a significant role in driving improvements in underlying financial metrics within European football during the 2010s, significantly reducing club losses and improving debt positions. However, even prior to the outbreak of the

COVID-19 pandemic, the overall European club football wage to revenue ratio had risen to an average of 64% and revenue shortfalls during the pandemic hit clubs hard.

ECA Executive Board Member, Michael Verschueren (RSC Anderlecht), who also sits as Chair of ECA's Finance Working Group, said: "Clubs today are in critical need of cash to allow them to honour their short-term commitments. Given this new reality, it is necessary and logical that the current UEFA Financial Fair Play regulations are evolved and that there is a need to introduce a robust and sustainable cost control mechanism."

Amendments to FFP regulations are key to achieving lasting positive change for clubs across the football pyramid. Hugo Hamon, ECA's Head of Finance, said: "Regulations in European football finances need to be clear, fair and enforceable. Since the start of the pandemic, debt has risen considerably within club football in general, with many clubs across the continent having faced or even succumbed to existential threat.

We need to encourage investment in our sport to repair the financial damage and to drive future growth. Financial reform should not be a short-term goal. In fact, it will require action over the next decade to properly resolve."

Given the mandate for change, the ECA FFP Strategic Panel has initiated detailed work, supported by a Technical Panel made up of further ECA member representatives, to develop a shared vision, principles, and objectives for financial regulation in European football going forward.

"Ensuring financial sustainability while embracing competitiveness and an inclusive football pyramid is paramount for the game to remain at the pinnacle of sport and entertainment and in the hearts and minds of fans and players of all levels worldwide," concluded Verschueren.

2020/21

# Income Statement

The operational result (EBIT) of the **2020/21** booking year amounts to **€1'164'502** (vs €60'521 in 2019/20). After deduction of financial expenses, amortisation, and after accounting for an increased risk provision concerning the events of the last quarter of FY20/21 and extraordinary income and taxes, the net result of the **2020/21** booking year amounts to **€250'744**.

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## Income Statement

2020/2021

2019/2020

Income

8'178'601

7'566'726

Operating expenses

-7'014'099

-7'506'205

Earnings before interest, Tax,  
depreciation, Amortization (EBITDA)

1'164'502

60'521

Depreciation

—

—

Earnings before interest and tax (EBIT)

1'164'502

60'521

Financial expenses

-5'636

-8'064

Operating result before taxes

1'158'866

52'457

Extraordinary income, non recurring

43'896

19'958

Extraordinary expenses, non recurring

-916'884<sup>1</sup>

—

Result before taxes

285'879

72'415

Income taxes

-35'134

-7'847

Net result

250'744

64'568

<sup>1</sup> The extraordinary expense amount is mostly composed of the increase in the risk provision recorded during the exercise. This provision has been increased due to the potential liability, which may arise from European Club Association participation in the decision-making process of the football governing bodies and European football system.

# Funding

Total ECA funding for the **2020/21** period amounted to **€8'178'601** (vs. €7'566'726 in 2020/21).

Same as in previous years, the main source of funding remains the contribution from the UEFA Champions League (UCL). Other income was generated from membership fees and the registration fees for the third edition of the ECA Club Management Programme ("CMP").

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# Funding



Reporting of 30 June 2021

**Budget High**

**Actual**

**Membership Fees**

**24'600**

**24'600**

**UCL contribution 19/20**

**1'600'000**

**1'600'000**

**UCL contribution 20/21 drawdown**

**8'400'000**

**6'400'000<sup>2</sup>**

**Other income**

**179'000**

**154'001**

**Total Funding**

**10'203'600**

**8'178'601**

<sup>2</sup> Please note that €1.6m related to the 20/21 budget will appear in the 21/22 accounts due to invoicing schedule

# Expenses

The total expenses in **2020/21** amounted to **€7'892'722** (vs. €7'506'205 in 2019/20).

This result was around 20% lower than originally budgeted, mostly due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (meeting fees reduction, slower recruitment and other operational savings and efficiencies generated over the period).

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# Expenses



Reporting as at 30 June 2021

**Budget High**

**Actual**

<b>Staff &amp; HR Costs</b>	<b>4'918'553</b>	<b>4'015'113</b>
<b>General Expenses</b>	<b>1'090'924</b>	<b>969'829</b>
<b>Events &amp; Travel Costs</b>	<b>2'030'100</b>	<b>371'104</b>
<b>Consultancy &amp; Research</b>	<b>1'067'810</b>	<b>1'580'934</b>
<b>Other Items</b>	<b>20'000</b>	<b>77'119</b>
<b>Total operating expenses *</b>	<b>9'067'386</b>	<b>7'014'099</b>
<b>Financial Expenses</b>	<b>10'000</b>	<b>5'636</b>
<b>Contingency / Risk Provisions</b>	<b>1'100'000</b>	<b>902'403</b>
<b>Extraordinary items</b>	<b>-60'000</b>	<b>-29'415<sup>3</sup></b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>10'177'386</b>	<b>7'892'722</b>

<sup>3</sup> The amount reported includes €44k from VAT reimbursement and €14k for tax liabilities related to previous years.

# 2020/21

# Balance Sheet

The total balance sheet as at **30 June 2021** amounts to **€3'673'134** (vs. €2'321'355 as at 30 June 2020).

The increase is mostly explained by early UCL contribution collection (Trade Receivables) and increase in provisions as per explained in note 1.

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2020/21

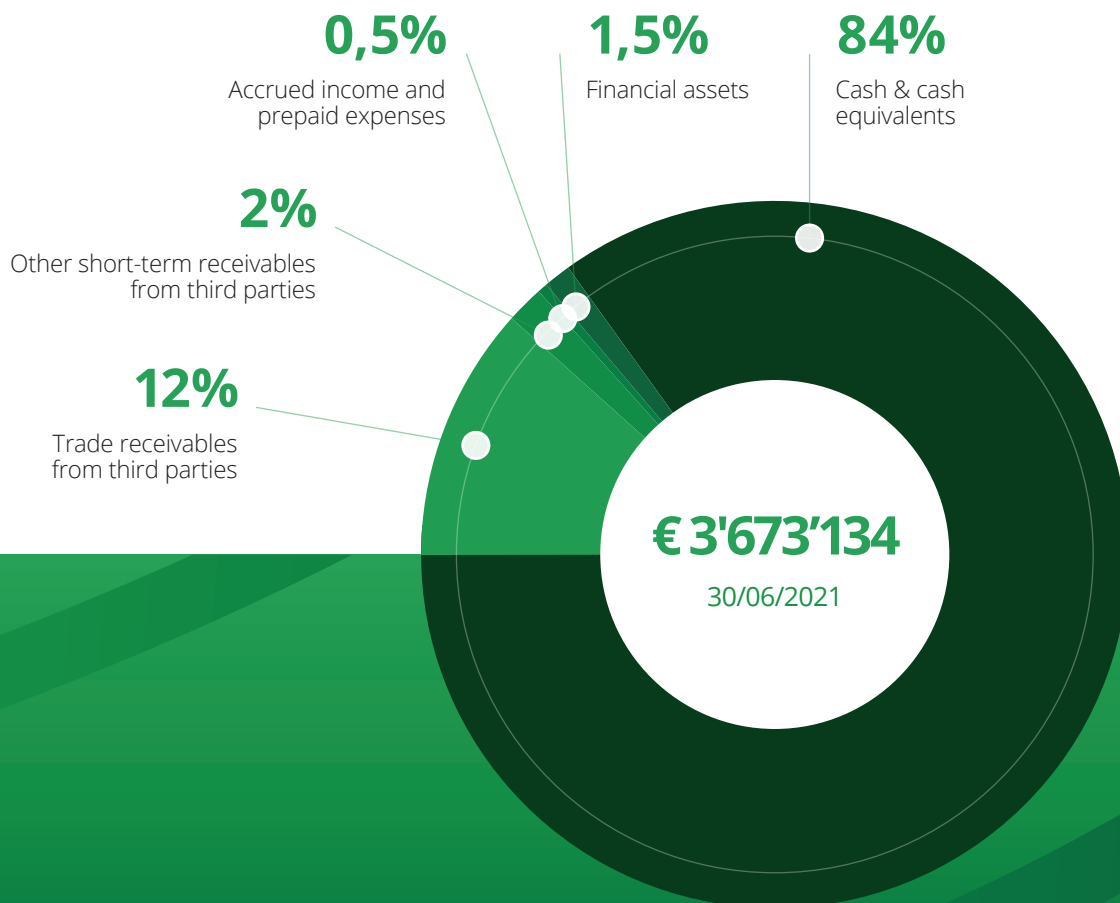
## Balance Sheet



<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>30/06/2021</b>	<b>30/06/2020</b>
Cash & cash equivalents	3'087'711	816'157
Trade receivables from third parties	439'543	1'402'021
Other short-term receivables from third parties	73'129	4'784
Accrued income and prepaid expenses	19'591	43'912
Tangible fixed assets	—	—
Financial assets	53'160	54'481
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>3'673'134</b>	<b>2'321'355</b>

2020/21

# Balance Sheet



# Assets

2020/21

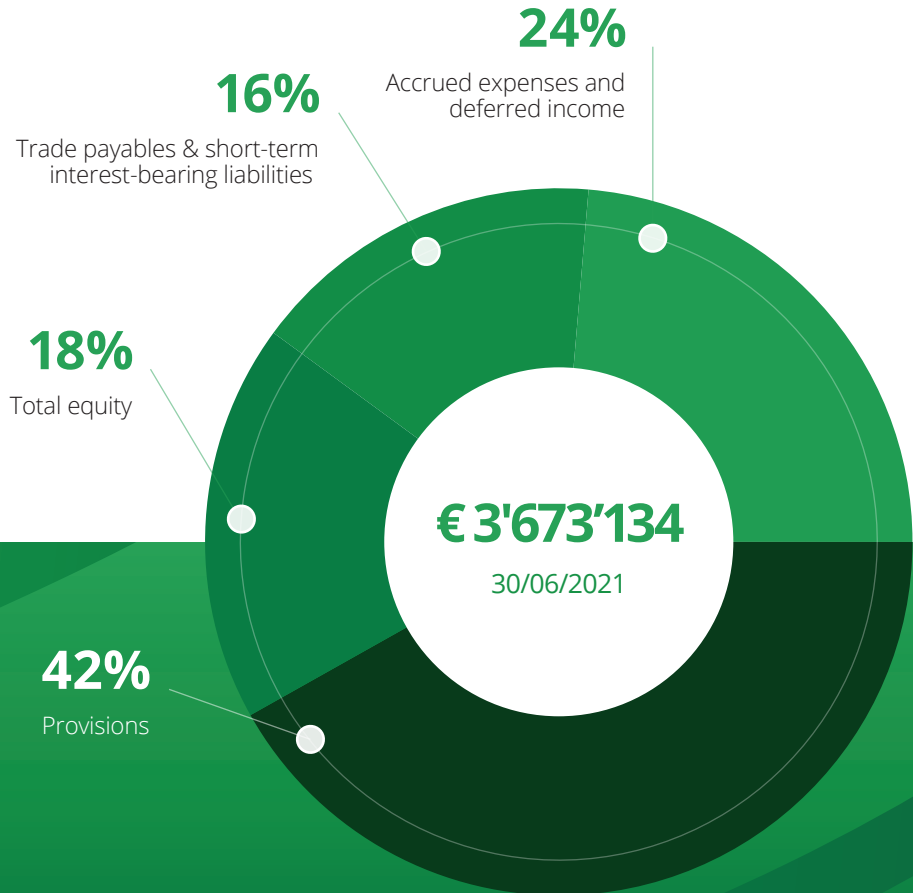
## Balance Sheet



<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>30/06/2021</b>	<b>30/06/2020</b>
Trade payables & short-term interest-bearing liabilities	597'869	170'837
Accrued expenses and deferred income	869'143	1'095'746
Provisions	1'536'853	636'246
Total equity	669'270	418'526
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	<b>3'673'134</b>	<b>2'321'355</b>

2020/21

# Balance Sheet



# Liabilities & Equity



# 2021/22 Budget

# Budget 2021/22

## GENERAL REMARKS



A 2021/22 UCL contribution budget of €9.2m has been approved by the ECA Executive Board for recommendation to the General Assembly. This represents a higher outlook than the 2020/21 contribution (a total of €8.4m budgeted and €8.0m drawn down) considering notably the resumption of physical membership and stakeholder meetings, as conditions allow, under a hybrid form to start with (both physical and virtual events). This budget also reflects a renewed focus on the development of member services

and ongoing organisational development of the ECA administration to adapt to the changing stakeholder environment and football landscape.

The rest of the budgeted funding will comprise of unchanged Membership fees (proposed at €100) as well as a new edition of the ECA's education management programme. The currency exchange (EUR vs CHF) rate assumed for budgeting purposes is CHF 1.080 for €1.00.

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At full budget, a financing gap of €0.4m is foreseen in the 2021/22 budgeted net result. In order to keep the call on UCL revenues as low as possible, this will be addressed via a combination of focus on savings via close budget monitoring on a quarterly basis and ECA reserves if need be. We know from past experience that rapid changes in the public health situation, to do with the ongoing policy responses to COVID-19, can have a dramatic and short term effect on budget (both positively and negatively) and, therefore, flexibility in managing both finance and operations is paramount.

## In Euro

## Budget 2021/22

UCL Contribution 2020/21	1'600'000
UCL Contribution 2021/22	9'200'000
Other	72'500

### **Total Funding** 10'872'500

Staff & HR Costs	5'418'704
General Expenses	999'742
Events & Travel Costs	2'814'133
Consultancy & Research	1'990'054
Other Items	25'000

### **Total Expenses** 11'247'632

<b>Result before Taxes</b>	<b>-375'132</b>
Taxes	—
<b>Net Result</b>	<b>-375'132</b>

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# ECA launches first-ever women's football strategy

**Together with leading women's football clubs across Europe and key stakeholders, ECA is part of a growing movement committed to making a transformative difference to the women's game.**

But to do this effectively, and with real impact, ECA needed a well-articulated vision and roadmap. The launch of the Association's first-ever women's football strategy, 'Be A Changemaker' in March 2021 marked the beginning of a new chapter for club football in Europe.

Under the leadership of Claire Bloomfield, ECA's Head of Women's Football, ECA is helping clubs drive a better tomorrow through six strategic goals, with the aim of elevating multiple areas of the women's game simultaneously:

Enhance club player pathways to provide a prosperous and sustainable future for the game

Accelerate professionalisation, empowering clubs to reach, maintain and exceed improved minimum standards

Advance the economic development of women's football and identify new commercial opportunities

Boost the opportunities for clubs to realise European ambitions through the development of the competition landscape

Facilitate the successful creation of new women's football clubs across Europe

Produce 'first of its kind' research studies that become a reference point for the women's game globally

"Women's football offers a new space in which to innovate and although the pandemic has exposed the fragilities of the women's football ecosystem, ECA is uniquely placed to provide solutions to some of the industry's toughest challenges," explained Bloomfield, who joined ECA in September 2020 after more than a decade-long career as a football correspondent in England, in addition to spells at West Ham United and Chelsea Football Club.

"Crucially, this strategy sets out creative action to support

leading clubs from any and every European nation to have an opportunity to be competitive, sustainable and have a clear path to grow.”

The strategy, which runs through to the end of 2023, is built on bringing together a diverse community of football clubs, developing valuable resources and co-creating bold solutions. But what is a ‘changemaker’?

“The ‘Be a Changemaker’ concept is about using adversity to think big and challenge the status quo. But this is more than just a three-year plan, it’s the start of a long-term pledge to securing a bright and sustainable future for women’s club football,” Bloomfield described.

“Together with our Women’s Football Committee, we believe this strategy will lay the crucial foundations needed at this time in order to achieve the vision for women’s football that we have committed to working towards.”

In the days leading up to the launch of the strategy, which delivered one of ECA’s most successful press and social media campaigns, Bloomfield hosted a virtual event with Club Atlético de Madrid and Sweden international goalkeeper Hedvig Lindahl exclusively for Administration staff, to bring the challenges of the women’s game to life.

Bolstering the department with full-time women’s football expertise this season has also enabled ECA to take a more proactive and vocal approach in engaging stakeholders, developing regulatory mechanisms, and identifying

solutions to professionalise the women’s game – and the successful conclusion of the reforms to the UEFA Women’s Champions League is just one of the highlights to note.

The competition will distribute an estimated €24m – a sum four times greater than the current figure – and negotiations spearheaded by the ECA’s Director of Football, Diederik Dewaele, resulted in a €10m strategic investment from the men’s European club competitions.

The additional funds secured have allowed for the creation of a mechanism that sees non-participating clubs receive solidarity payments for the first time, with a view to supporting the delivery of elite environments and improved infrastructure.

In June 2021, ECA also welcomed the new four-year global broadcasting partnership between UEFA and streaming platforms DAZN and YouTube, relying also on much greater club involvement, that will see all 61 games of the UEFA Women’s Champions League (from the group stage onwards) made available to supporters worldwide.

Bloomfield said: “This partnership has the potential to take the competition to new heights and sets a benchmark for future broadcasting deals in women’s sport.

“Gone are the days when you are searching in disbelief for ways to follow Europe’s premier club competition for women. This is a much-needed step forward in the battle for visibility.”

# Evolving our services for our members

## **ECA is working on new plans designed to reshape how it services its members.**

Since it was founded in 2008, ECA has built a portfolio of club services, including education and research programmes, webinars, workshops and access to data platforms.

These benefits ensure member clubs are provided with tools and insights in a range of crucial areas - but the decision was taken to bolster these offerings in the aftermath of the pandemic by ECA CEO Charlie Marshall.

He said: "We want more stability, more sustainability and more success for European club football. One way of achieving that is to broaden out what we do and scale it up, that is how we can bind more clubs together and help them drive forward."

Over the last 18 months COVID-19 and the failed Super League bid have both had an impact on European football, heightening the need for change.

Marshall added: "The point we are at now, with a new football reality after all that has happened, ECA is a real part of the rebuild and we know we need to - and can - do more for more clubs.

"We want to double down on some of these services we provide, make them bigger, better, and deliver more impact."

Over the last year ECA has collected and assessed member needs with a structured and tailored approach through surveys and consultation.

Clear key performance indicators have been defined to better engage members in the services through a club-

centric and insights-driven approach, with satisfaction rates over 80% as a result.

The findings also indicate that 75% of the membership felt positive towards a new approach for a holistic service model and a shared platform for services, with the organisation more effectively partnering with its member clubs.

Marshall said: “We are talking about where we have got to. We have some really good seeds from what we have done. There is a lot more we can do and we want everyone to be on the club services journey with us.”

The fresh outlook was helped by the recruitment of new staff in this field during the 2020/21 season.

As ECA looks to accelerate the shift towards ever greater engagement with clubs, the ongoing reshaping of our Club Services will see, for example, more areas specific consulting capability (in legal, finance and commercial advisory) and also a move towards shared services, more European fan research and the continuation of the revamped ECA Awards.

The introduction of the ECA Campus, which will house the Association’s educational offerings going forwards,

is destined to include a Young Talent programme, an e-learning platform, plus a new and improved edition of the ECA Club Management Programme (CMP) set to be rolled out in 2022.

Stephane Mottaz, ECA’s new Head of Club Services said: “We are moving from the CMP to a more global knowledge services proposition. We are revamping the CMP to make it future proof. It will be an educational programme that will be blended as an e-learning platform.

The most important part of this evolution will mean, step-by-step, programme by programme, we are going to increase the knowledge services portfolio. That will be built around standard career paths for club managers, from trainee to executives. We can build on our CMP, layer by layer.”

The aim is to become a central source of information, education and insight - about matters affecting European football.

As well as education and knowledge, there are plans to develop networking platforms to bring members together and add further partnerships to a roster that already includes TransferRoom and TransferLab.

# Introducing a new leadership model

**ECA and its Executive Board is determined to ensure European club football continues to bounce back and return stronger than ever after an incredibly challenging 12 months where the effects of the most damaging public health crisis in recent history continue to be felt far and wide.**

Following the appointment of Paris Saint-Germain's Nasser Al-Khelaifi as the new ECA Chairman in April, days after the ill-fated 'Super League' project came to light, ECA has worked hard with its members to repair the damage it inflicted on European club football.

Upon appointment as ECA Chairman, Al-Khelaifi said: "The leadership, integrity and togetherness of our organisation has never been more required than at this pivotal moment in European football. I will provide my unconditional commitment to the entire football

community: that means to all ECA Member Clubs from every European nation, and to the fans and communities they represent.

"I, alongside all my fellow ECA Board Members and Clubs, am looking to reinforce ECA in its undisputed role as the sole legitimate and singular voice of Europe's clubs. Our game, adored by generations of supporters, will only prosper under unity, and it is our duty as the custodians of football to fulfil this obligation."

There is a clear statement of intent from across ECA's membership to recover from the unprecedented events last season in addition to the impact of the global pandemic.

Charlie Marshall, ECA's Chief Executive Officer, said: "The key for us in terms of the outlook for European club



football is that the huge financial impact of Covid-19 on the industry will be with us for some time to come, combined with the impact of the failed Super League on the requirements for continual reform.

“We are working hand in hand with stakeholders to address the financial challenges and to create a football future from a sporting, commercial and regulatory perspective which is stable and robust enough to withstand and prevent such hardships in the future.”

The unity shown over this period from the football community at large and the core of ECA’s membership - competitors on the pitch but always striving to work together off it, showed our shared ambition to drive and inspire the development of the game in a progressive manner.

“Our relationship with UEFA is critical and it can be seen in the work we have done since April in ensuring the relationship is stronger than ever at an institutional level.

“A lot of this is thanks to the new leadership we have in place with the implementation of a new Executive

Committee and the exceptional individuals who have great experience and ability to drive this Association into a new era for football,” explained Marshall.

As part of a new and enhanced approach to inclusive leadership, an ECA Executive Committee was formed by the Chairman, in which he is joined by Vice-Chairmen Michael Gerlinger (FC Bayern München), Edwin van der Sar (AFC Ajax), Dariusz Mioduski (Legia Warszawa) and Aki Riihilahti (HJK Helsinki), as well as ECA Independent Executive Board Member Michele Centenaro.

Marshall said: “ECA’s leadership is driven by teamwork and what football is built around: openness, sporting excellence and the connection between everyone across the football family.

“We are working closely with the governing bodies and competition organisers to ensure clubs, as the engine room of the game, are more deeply involved in the decision-making processes going forward, in order to provide for a fair and stable future for all stakeholders and to militate against further tendencies towards factionalism.”

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# ECA Member Clubs

Albania	FK Kukësi	Ordinary Member
	KF Vllaznia	Associated Member
	FK Partizani	Associated Member
Andorra	FC Santa Coloma	Ordinary Member
	UE Sant Julià	Associated Member
Armenia	Alashkert FC	Ordinary Member
	FC Pyunik	Associated Member
	FC Urartu	Associated Member
Austria	LASK	Associated Member
	FC Salzburg	Ordinary Member
	SK Rapid Wien	Ordinary Member
	SK Sturm Graz	Associated Member
Azerbaijan	Gabala SC	Ordinary Member
	Neftçi PFK	Associated Member
	Qarabağ FK	Ordinary Member
Belarus	FC BATE Borisov	Ordinary Member
	FC Dinamo Minsk	Ordinary Member
	FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk	Associated Member
Belgium	RSC Anderlecht	Ordinary Member
	Club Brugge	Associated Member
	KRC Genk	Ordinary Member
	KAA Gent	Ordinary Member
	R. Standard de Liège	Associated Member
Bosnia-Herzegovina	FK Sarajevo	Associated Member
	NK Široki Brijeg	Associated Member
	FK Željezničar	Associated Member

	HŠK Zrinjski	Ordinary Member
Bulgaria	PFC Botev Plovdiv	Associated Member
	PFC CSKA-Sofia	Ordinary Member
	PFC Levski Sofia	Associated Member
	PFC Ludogorets 1945	Ordinary Member
Croatia	GNK Dinamo	Ordinary Member
	Zagreb	Associated Member
	HNK Rijeka	Ordinary Member
Cyprus	AEK Larnaca FC	Ordinary Member
	APOEL FC	Ordinary Member
	Anorthosis Famagusta FC	Associated Member
	Apollon Limassol FC	Ordinary Member
	Omonoia FC	Associated Member
Czech Republic	AC Sparta Praha	Ordinary Member
	FC Slovan Liberec	Associated Member
	FK Mladá Boleslav	Associated Member
	AC Sparta Praha	Ordinary Member
	SK Slavia Praha	Ordinary Member
	FC Viktoria Plzeň	Ordinary Member
Denmark	Aalborg BK	Associated Member
	Brøndby IF	Ordinary Member
	F.C. Copenhagen	Ordinary Member
	FC Midtjylland	Ordinary Member
	FC Nordsjælland	Associated Member
	Odense BK	Associated Member
England	Arsenal FC	Ordinary Member
	Aston Villa FC	Associated Member
	Chelsea FC	Ordinary Member
	Everton FC	Associated Member

	Leicester City FC	Associated Member
	Manchester City FC	Associated Member
	Manchester Utd FC	Associated Member
	Liverpool FC	Associated Member
	Newcastle United FC	Associated Member
	Tottenham Hotspur	Associated Member
Estonia	FC Flora Tallinn	Associated Member
	FC Levadia Tallinn	Associated Member
	Nõmme Kalju FC	Ordinary Member
Faroe Islands	NSÍ Runavík	Associated Member
	EB/Streymur	Associated Member
	B36 Tórshavn	Associated Member
	HB Tórshavn	Associated Member
	Víkingur	Ordinary Member
Finland	HJK Helsinki	Ordinary Member
	FC Inter Turku	Associated Member
	SJK Seinäjoki	Associated Member
France	AS Monaco FC	Ordinary Member
	AS Saint-Étienne	Associated Member
	FC Girondins de Bordeaux	Associated Member
	LOSC Lille	Associated Member
	Montpellier Hérault SC	Associated Member
	Olympique Lyonnais	Ordinary Member
	Olympique de Marseille	Ordinary Member
	Paris Saint-Germain	Ordinary Member
	AS Saint-Étienne	Associated Member
	Stade Rennais FC	Associated Member
Georgia	FC Dinamo Tbilisi	Ordinary Member
	FC Chikhura Sachkhere	Associated Member

	FC Samtredia	Associated Member
Germany	Bayer 04 Leverkusen	Ordinary Member
	FC Bayern München	Ordinary Member
	VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach	Associated Member
	Borussia Dortmund	Ordinary Member
	Eintracht Frankfurt	Associated Member
	RB Leipzig	Associated Member
	TSG 1899 Hoffenheim	Associated Member
	FC Schalke 04	Ordinary Member
	SV Werder Bremen	Associated Member
	VfL Wolfsburg	Ordinary Member
Gibraltar	Lincoln Red Imps FC	Ordinary Member
Greece	AEK Athens FC	Associated Member
	Asteras Tripolis FC	Associated Member
	Atromitos FC	Associated Member
	Olympiacos FC	Ordinary Member
	PAOK FC	Ordinary Member
	Panathinaikos FC	Associated Member
Hungary	Budapest Honvéd FC	Associated Member
	Debreceni VSC	Associated Member
	Fehérvár FC	Ordinary Member
	Ferencvárosi TC	Associated Member
Iceland	FH Hafnarfjörður	Ordinary Member
	KR Reykjavík	Associated Member
	Stjarnan	Associated Member
	Valur	Associated Member
Israel	Beitar Jerusalem FC	Associated Member
	Bnei Yehuda Tel-Aviv FC	Associated Member
	Hapoel Beer-Sheva FC	Ordinary Member

	Maccabi Haifa FC	Associated Member
	Maccabi Tel-Aviv FC	Ordinary Member
Italy	ACF Fiorentina	Associated Member
	AS Roma	Ordinary Member
	Atalanta BC	Ordinary Member
	ACF Fiorentina	Associated Member
	FC Internazionale Milano	Ordinary Member
	AC Milan	Ordinary Member
	SSC Napoli	Ordinary Member
	UC Sampdoria	Associated Member
	Udinese Calcio	Associated Member
Liechtenstein	FC Vaduz	Ordinary Member
Lithuania	FK Riteriai	Associated Member
	FK Sūduva	Associated Member
	FK Žalgiris Vilnius	Ordinary Member
Luxembourg	FC Differdange 03	Associated Member
	F91 Dudelange	Ordinary Member
	CS Fola Esch	Associated Member
Kazakhstan	FK Aktobe	Associated Member
	FC Astana	Ordinary Member
	FC Kairat Almaty	Ordinary Member
	FC Shakter Karaganda	Associated Member
Kosovo	KF Drita	Ordinary Member
	FC Prishtina	Associated Member
Latvia	FK Liepāja	Associated Member
	FK Spartaks Jūrmala	Ordinary Member
Lichstenstein	FC Vaduz	Ordinary Member
Lithuania	FK Riteriai	Associated Member
Lithuania	FK Sūduva	Associated Member

	FK Žalgiris Vilnius	Ordinary Member
Luxembourg	FC Differdange 03	Associated Member
	F91 Dudelange	Ordinary Member
	CS Fola Esch	Associated Member
Malta	Birkirkara FC	Associated Member
	Birkirkara FC	Associated Member
	Valletta FC	Ordinary Member
Moldova	FC Milsami Orhei	Associated Member
	FC Sheriff Tiraspol	Ordinary Member
	FC Zimbru Chişinău	Associated Member
Montenegro	FK Budućnost Podgorica	Associated Member
	OFK Titograd	Associated Member
	FK Sutjeska	Associated Member
	FK Zeta	Associated Member
Netherlands	AFC Ajax	Ordinary Member
	AZ Alkmaar	Associated Member
	Feyenoord	Ordinary Member
	SC Heerenveen	Associated Member
	PSV Eindhoven	Ordinary Member
	FC Twente	Associated Member
	FC Utrecht	Associated Member
	Vitesse	Associated Member
North Macedonia	FK Rabotnički	Associated Member
	KF Shkëndija	Ordinary Member
	FK Vardar	Associated Member
Northern Ireland	Cliftonville FC	Associated Member
	Crusaders FC	Ordinary Member
	Glenavon FC	Associated Member
	Glentoran FC	Associated Member

	Linfield FC	Associated Member
Norway	Lillestrøm SK	Associated Member
	Molde FK	Ordinary Member
	Odds BK	Associated Member
	Rosenborg BK	Ordinary Member
	Strømsgodset IF	Associated Member
	Vålerenga Fotball	Associated Member
	Viking FK	Associated Member
Poland	Jagiellonia Białystok	Associated Member
	KKS Lech Poznań	Ordinary Member
	Legia Warszawa	Ordinary Member
	WKS Śląsk Wrocław	Associated Member
	Wisła Kraków	Associated Member
Portugal	SC Braga	Associated Member
	SL Benfica	Ordinary Member
	CS Marítimo	Associated Member
	FC Porto	Ordinary Member
	Sporting Clube de Portugal	Ordinary Member
Republic of Ireland	Cork City FC	Associated Member
	Dundalk FC	Ordinary Member
	Saint Patrick's Athletic FC	Associated Member
	Shamrock Rovers FC	Associated Member
Romania	FC Astra Giurgiu	Associated Member
	CFR 1907 Cluj	Associated Member
	FCSB	Ordinary Member
Russia	PFC CSKA Moskva	Ordinary Member
	FC Krasnodar	Ordinary Member
	FC Lokomotiv Moskva	Ordinary Member
	FC Rostov	Associated Member



	FC Rubin	Associated Member
	FC Spartak Moskva	Associated Member
	FC Zenit	Ordinary Member
San Marino	La Fiorita 1967	Ordinary Member
	SS Murata	Associated Member
	SP Tre Fiori	Associated Member
	SP Tre Penne	Associated Member
Scotland	Aberdeen FC	Associated Member
	Aberdeen FC	Associated Member
	Celtic FC	Ordinary Member
	Heart of Midlothian FC	Associated Member
	Rangers FC	Ordinary Member
	Motherwell FC	Associated Member
Serbia	FK Crvena Zvezda	Ordinary Member
	FK Partizan	Ordinary Member
	FK Vojvodina	Associated Member
Slovakia	MFK Ružomberok	Associated Member
	ŠK Slovan Bratislava	Associated Member
	AS Trenčín	Associated Member
	FC Spartak Trnava	Ordinary Member
	MŠK Žilina	Associated Member
Slovenia	NK Domžale	Associated Member
	NK Maribor	Ordinary Member
	NK Olimpija Ljubljana	Associated Member
Spain	Athletic Club	Associated Member
	Club Atlético de Madrid	Ordinary Member
	Real Sociedad de Fútbol	Associated Member
	Sevilla FC	Ordinary Member
	Valencia CF	Ordinary Member

	Villarreal CF	Ordinary Member
Sweden	AIK	Ordinary Member
	Djugårdens IF	Associated Member
	IF Elfsborg	Associated Member
	AIK	Ordinary Member
	IFK Göteborg	Associated Member
Switzerland	BSC Young Boys	Ordinary Member
	FC Basel 1893	Ordinary Member
	FC Sion	Associated Member
	FC Thun	Associated Member
	FC Zürich	Associated Member
Turkey	Beşiktaş JK	Ordinary Member
	Fenerbahçe SK	Ordinary Member
	Galatasaray AS	Ordinary Member
	Istanbul Başakşehir	Associated Member
	Trabzonspor AS	Associated Member
Ukraine	FC Dynamo Kyiv	Ordinary Member
	FC Shakhtar Donetsk	Ordinary Member
	FC Zorya Luhansk	Ordinary Member
Wales	Connah's Quay Nomads FC	Associated Member
	The New Saints FC	Ordinary Member





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