



The Sustainability Report

2024/25



Foreword From our CEO

As European Football Clubs (EFC), we know football has a unique power to influence society for good. Our aims are simple: to demonstrate how clubs can be a driving force in sustainability within our sport and to support our members in their own sustainability journeys by sharing knowledge and real-world approaches from the world of football and beyond.

The backdrop is clear. Climate, equality and inclusion, child and youth protection and other challenges are reshaping expectations of sport. Fans, partners and stakeholders are asking challenging questions about impact and accountability. Sustainability is no longer a choice; it is a necessity for the future of our clubs, our communities and our society. This report is timely because it shows that football is not standing still and that we at EFC, on behalf of our 800+ Member Clubs, are committed to harnessing the power and popularity of our sport as a force for good.

Since launching our Sustainability Strategy in 2024, we have worked collectively with our members to turn ambition into measurable action. From reducing emissions and offsetting our footprint to advancing diversity and inclusion and equipping clubs with practical tools, like the Sustainability toolkit on EFC Campus, we are proud of what has been achieved in such a short space of time. These results reflect the commitment of our clubs and partners, and I want to thank everyone who has contributed to this journey.

This report is more than a record of progress - it is a call to action. By shining a light on our own practices and the incredible work many of our clubs are already doing, we hope to spark conversations and, more importantly, inspire action across every level of the club game.

**Together, we can
ensure football grows
in a way that leaves
a positive legacy for
future generations.**



Charlie Marshall
CEO, EFC



DISCLAIMER

The EFC Sustainability Report is complemented by the 2024/25 EFC Annual Report, which provides more detailed information on other EFC workstreams, including Women's Football and Youth Football.

The EFC Sustainability Report for the 2024/25 season covers data collected between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, highlighting the work and achievements of the EFC sustainability workstream.

European Football Clubs (EFC) is the legally protected brand and trading name of the European Club Association (ECA). Accordingly, all references to EFC shall, for legal and practical purposes, be deemed to include ECA.





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Executive Summary

FOOTBALL'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON OUR ACTIONS TODAY

Football's future depends on the actions we take today. At European Football Clubs, we believe that football has an unparalleled ability to influence society for good. With this influence comes a responsibility to act boldly, transparently and collectively.

Sustainability is no longer a choice; it is essential for the future of our clubs, our communities and our planet. This first Sustainability Report marks an important milestone in embedding sustainability at the heart of EFC and across our membership. Since establishing the dedicated Sustainability workstream in 2023 and launching our Sustainability Strategy in 2024, we have taken significant, practical steps forward.

Together with our 800+ Member Clubs, we are driving real progress.

Education & Knowledge Sharing

Since 2023, we delivered over 10 webinars and workshops on priority topics, including compliance with the UEFA Sustainability Licensing Requirements and EU Corporate Social Responsibility Directive (CSRD); and other topics such as carbon measurement and Sustainability Management Systems (SMS).

Capacity Building

We launched two new educational programmes: the Women on Board Programme, developed in partnership with Women in Football to increase the number of women in leadership positions across European football, and the Sustainability in Football Compact Course, co-created with UEFA and SDA Bocconi to strengthen the skills and knowledge of sustainability managers at clubs and federations.



Practical Tools

We developed and rolled out a dedicated sustainability toolkit and online knowledge hub, supporting clubs with actionable resources and case studies, available for all Member Clubs in our online EFC Campus.

On-The-Ground Engagement

We delivered the first edition of a Sustainability Roadshow across five countries in collaboration with UEFA, taking expertise directly to clubs, federations and leagues across Europe and creating space for peer learning and collaboration.

Measuring & Reporting

We started calculating our carbon footprint in the season 2023/24 and we are offsetting all our emissions with the purchase of Gold Standard carbon credits and Sustainable Aviation Fuel certificates.

These actions show that sustainability is not an add-on, but a core pillar of how EFC serves its members and strengthens the football ecosystem. Our vision is bold: to make football a driving force for sustainable transformation. By equipping clubs with the tools, knowledge and networks they need, we are not only building resilience within football but also shaping positive impact across society.

We are proud of what has been achieved in such a short time, from our first educational programmes to this inaugural report, and we are even more excited about what lies ahead. Together with our clubs, partners and stakeholders, we will continue to raise standards, inspire action and ensure that sustainability is central to football's future success and integrity.



EFC Sustainability Commitment

PLACING CLUBS AT THE HEART OF SUSTAINABLE FOOTBALL

EFC's commitment to sustainability is not just about environmental responsibility but about safeguarding the future of football, strengthening clubs and building a more inclusive, resilient and responsible game.



Our Vision

To make football a driving force
for sustainable change

We aim to harness the collective power and influence of clubs to inspire fans, governments, sponsors and suppliers to act more sustainably.



Our Mission

Put clubs at the heart of football,
and make EFC the heart of
sustainable football

When clubs are empowered and equipped to lead, the entire game becomes stronger, economically, socially and environmentally.



EFC Sustainability Commitment

Guiding Principles

The foundation of our commitment to sustainability and club development.

Representation



We champion the collective voice of our Member Clubs, ensuring their interests are effectively represented and protected at the highest levels of European and global football.

Cooperation



We actively contribute to the decision-making processes of football's governing bodies, ensuring that clubs shape the future of the game, not just respond to it.

Participation



We believe in partnership over isolation, building trust and fostering constructive dialogue with all football stakeholders to drive shared progress.

Service



We are committed to delivering meaningful value for our members, providing tailored support, strategic guidance and practical tools to help clubs grow, adapt and lead.

Through our EFC Sustainability Strategy, we are working towards:



Supporting our Member Clubs to integrate sustainability into their strategies, operations and cultures.



Fostering innovation and collaboration across leagues, brands, and governing bodies.



Setting a benchmark for sustainability leadership within football institutions.



Embedding sustainability across all EFC services, from education and funding to advocacy and governance.

We are committed to leading by example. While EFC is not currently within scope of the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), we are proactively preparing to align with its requirements. Similarly, we have developed a Sustainability Management System (SMS) based on ISO 20121, to ensure that our operations and events reflect sustainable best practice.



Season 2024/25 Impact

+500m

visualisations of the Football Clubs Alliance for Climate across all EFC social media accounts.



EFC Foundation established in January 2025.

183

participants from an average of 126 clubs joined each of the 7 sustainability webinars delivered across the season.

4.3/5

satisfaction rate of participants in webinars done in season 2024/25.

12

international conferences, advocating for our Member Clubs on sustainability topics.



6

Sustainability Working Group meetings, with 27 clubs engaged and 16 countries represented.

40%

women representation within EFC Senior Management Administration.

5

countries visited in the first edition of the Sustainability Roadshow with UEFA.

100%

emissions offset through Gold Standard certified carbon projects.



15

women from EFC Member Clubs participating in the Women on Board Programme. 2 participants are now Board Members.



First purchase in Sustainable Aviation Fuel Certificates (SAFc) to reduce lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions related to staff business travel.



Sustainability Management System (SMS) implemented based on ISO 20121.

11

clubs initially committed to the Football Clubs Alliance for Climate, launched at COP29.

23%

women representation at board level.

+60

Member Clubs engaged in 2 sustainability themed Academy Visits.

Business Model & Strategy

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Governance Structure

Sustainability at EFC is addressed at three levels:

Board

Working Group

Administration

After last season's EFC Strategic Review, the priorities for Sustainability are as follows:

Establish EFC as the Club Voice in Sustainability

Addressed via the Board

Build strong partnerships with key stakeholders (e.g. UEFA, FIFA, EU, NGOs), advocate for club-relevant regulations and promote sustainability through active industry engagement and advocacy.

Empower Clubs to Become More Sustainable

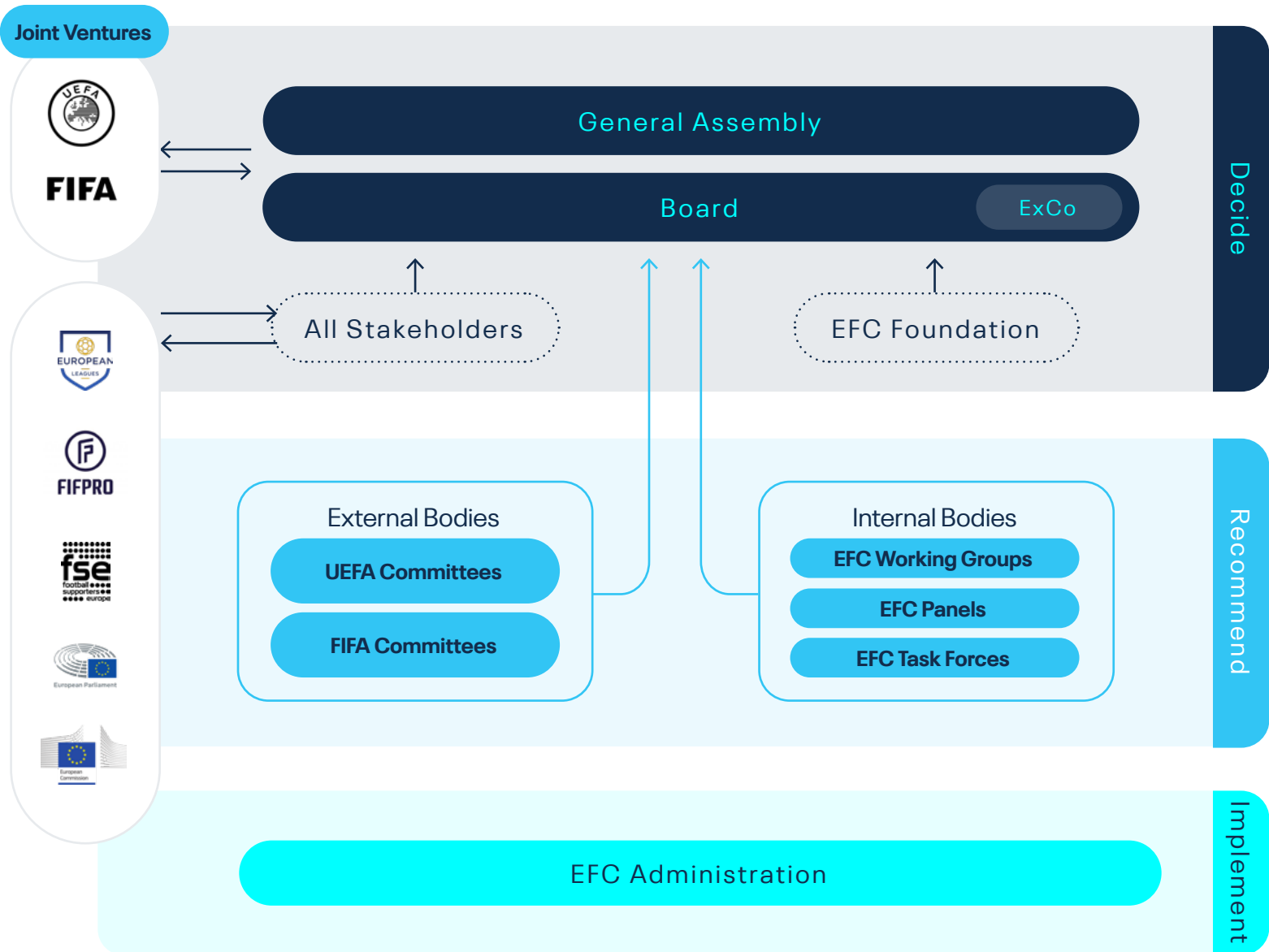
Addressed via the Working Group

Help them meet regulatory requirements (e.g. UEFA licensing, EU laws) and foster a knowledgeable community of sustainability professionals within football organisations.

Enhance EFC's Internal Sustainability

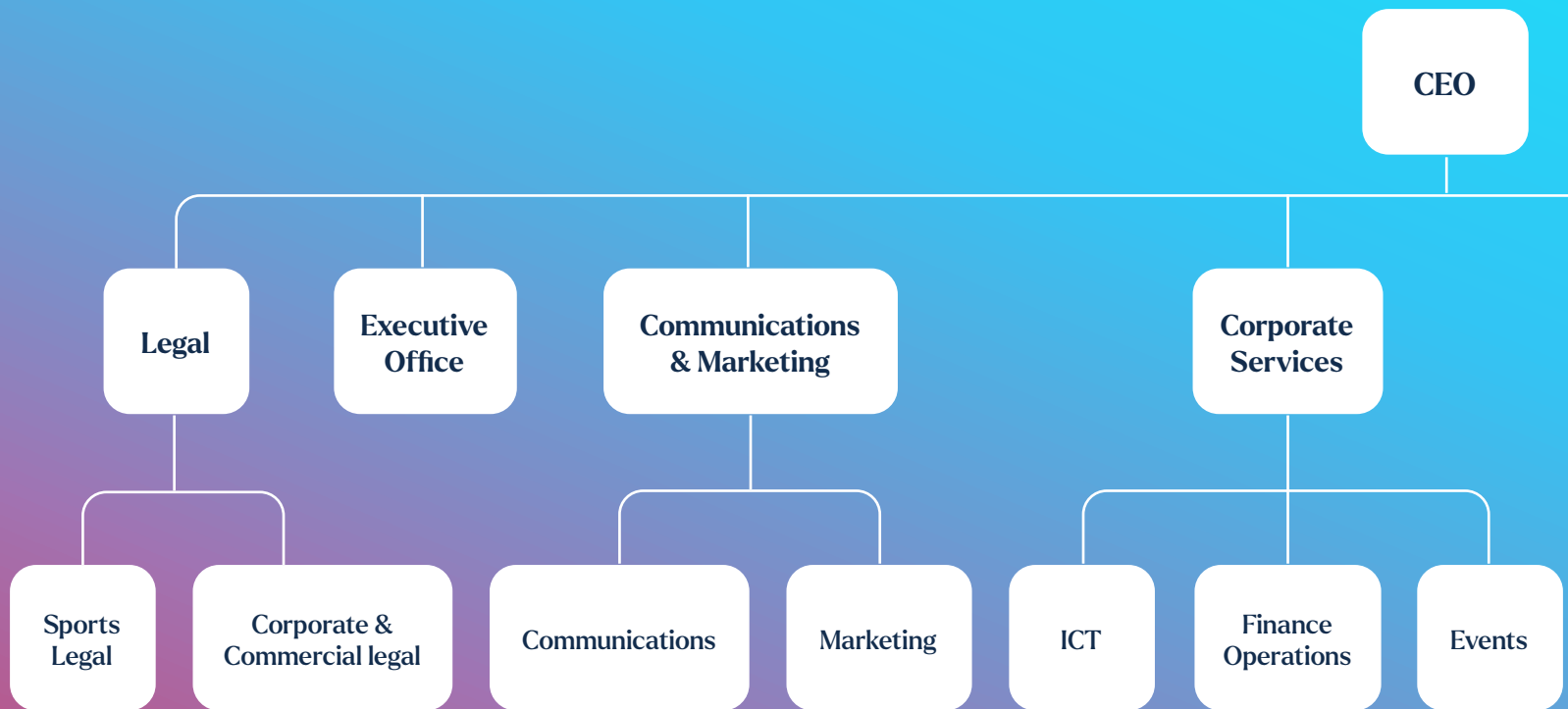
Addressed by the Administration

Implement a Sustainability Management System, integrating feasible sustainability objectives within EFC's main events and publishing an annual Sustainability Report detailing the company's performance.





EFC Administration Org. Chart







Working Groups

EFC's nine Working Groups are key spaces where members come together to talk, share ideas and come up with solutions. Representing a community of over 800 professional clubs, these groups reflect EFC's commitment to inclusive, knowledge-based collaboration.

These Working Groups serve as platforms for identifying shared priorities, co-creating strategic responses, and shaping the future of European club football. To respond to emerging topics with greater agility, they may establish temporary Task Forces or permanent Panels, ensuring flexibility and depth of focus.

MEN'S FOOTBALL

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

YOUTH FOOTBALL

LEGAL & REGULATORY

COMMERCIAL & INNOVATION

FINANCE

GOVERNANCE & DEVELOPMENT

FANS



SUSTAINABILITY

Among these, the Sustainability Working Group plays a central role in advancing environmental and social leadership throughout football.

Sustainability Working Group

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF
SUSTAINABLE FOOTBALL

The Sustainability Working Group (SWG)

The SWG leads efforts to make football a positive force for the environment and society. Chaired by ExCo and Board Member Niclas Carlén, CEO of Malmö FF, the group brings together members' representatives committed to making sustainability a central part of how football operates.

27
leading
clubs

from

18
European
countries

Structure

Clubs of different sizes and backgrounds from all four EFC subdivisions are included to ensure fair representation, giving every member an equal voice in the Sustainability Working Group's governance and decision-making.

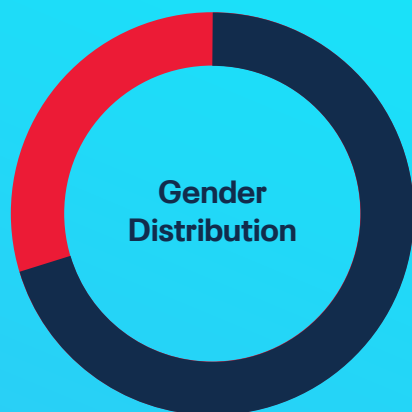
Task Forces and Panels, representing the following key focus areas:

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) Panel

Sustainable Venue Management Panel

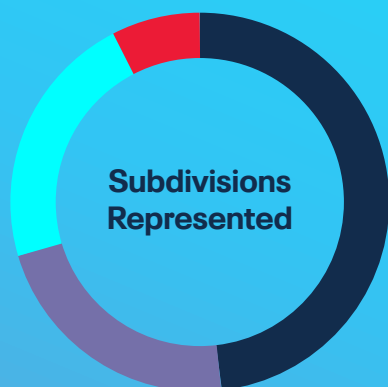
CSRD Task Force





30% Female

70% Male



48% Sub 1

22% Sub 2

22% Sub 3

7% Sub 4

Achievements

Since the launch of the EFC Sustainability working group in 2023, the SWG has played a leading role in delivering tangible change. It has:

- ✓ Joined the UN's *Football for the Goals* initiative.
- ✓ Become an associate partner in the Erasmus+ Project FREE KICKS on Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) and Ecolabel in football.
- ✓ Spearheaded the development of EFC's first-ever Sustainability Strategy, launched in April 2024.
- ✓ Enabled regulatory readiness by launching a dedicated Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) Task Force to prepare clubs for future reporting expectations.
- ✓ Promoted inclusion and equity through a joint ED&I Panel with the Governance & Development Working Group.
- ✓ Championed climate leadership through the creation of the Football Clubs Alliance for Climate, in cooperation with the UNFCCC at COP29 with 11 initial signatories.
- ✓ Engaged over 200 clubs through Academy Visits and facilitated knowledge-sharing via 13 webinars and six SWG meetings.



Our Working Group as of June 2025



Chair of WG
Niclas Carlén
CEO



Pál Orosz
CEO



Thomas Harris
Sustainability Manager



Denise Heinemann
Team Lead Sustainability



Philipp Heßberger
Advisor to the Executive Board



Angeliki Arkadi
General Manager



Rocco Giorgianni
Senior Manager Public Affairs & Sustainability



David Begley
COO



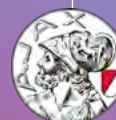
Teresa Muller e Sousa
Chief of Staff for the Chief Strategy & Operations Officer



Rafael Muela Pastor
General Manager Foundation



Aslı Elif Koç Tiryaki
Manager, Commercial & Sustainability



Shaun Akse
CSR Manager



Brian Månsson
Director Venue



Pete Bradshaw
Head of Sustainability



Rishi Jain
Director of Impact



Jani Meriläinen
InterAction Manager



Luca Militti
Chief Strategy & Finance
Officer



Matthias Mühlen
Head of Sustainability



Irini Karypidis
President & Owner



Raphael Thonhauser
Head of Corporate
Development & Project
Management



Magda Pozzo
COO



Teresa Santos
Sustainability Manager



Tony Hamilton
CEO Celtic Foundation



Christian Schneider
Head of Operations



Elisabeth Overbeeke
Diversity and
Sustainability Manager



Øyvind Alapnes
CEO



Our Panels & Task Force

ED&I Panel



Siri Wallenius

Head of International Relations



Rishi Jain

Director of Impact



Annemarie Reynolds

Head of Finance



Aslı Elif Koç Tiryaki

Manager, Commercial & Sustainability



Ebru Köksal

Chairwoman

CSRD Task Force



Denise Heinemann
Team Lead Sustainability



Rafael Muela Pastor
General Manager Foundation



David Begley
COO



Matthias Mühlen
Head of Sustainability



Shaun Akse
CSR Manager



Henrique Conceição
Head of Sustainability

Sustainable Venue Management Panel



Magda Pozzo
COO



Pete Bradshaw
Head of Sustainability



Christian Schneider
Head of Operations



Thomas Harris
Sustainability Manager



Pál Orosz
CEO



Angeliki Arkadi
General Manager



Our Sustainability Journey so Far

2022

Joined the UN's *Football for the Goals* initiative, which provides a platform for the global football community to engage with and advocate for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also inspires and guides the world of football to build on existing sustainability approaches and to implement SDG strategies that lead to behavioural change.

The Sustainability Working Group was created.

Niclas Carlén was named ExCo Lead for Sustainability.

2023

Joined as an associate partner in the Erasmus+ project FREE KICKS on EMAS and Ecolabel in football.

Creation of the Sustainability function by hiring a Head of Sustainability.

First meetings of the Sustainability Working Group.

First sustainability webinars for members, in cooperation with UEFA.

2025

2024

Creation of the SWG Task Forces and Panels.

Launch of the Sustainability Strategy at the first Club Connect, which focused on the Sustainability and Commercial workstreams.

First Women on Board Programme with 15 women from different clubs and nationalities.

COP29 event with the launch of the Football Clubs Alliance for Climate with 11 initial signatories.

First-ever carbon footprint measurement and offsetting of 100% of carbon emissions via three Gold Standard Projects.

Charity event in Athens at the 31st General Assembly (donations were committed for the rebuilding of football pitches affected by fires instead of gift-giving).

First edition of the Sustainability Roadshow with UEFA in five countries: Ireland, The Netherlands, Italy, Romania and Austria.

First edition of the Sustainability in Football Compact Course in partnership with UEFA and SDA Bocconi.

First CSRD webinars for Members.

Publication of the first Sustainability Report.

Development of a Sustainability Management System for EFC events

Sustainability Strategy Approach

EFC's Sustainability Strategy was created through a detailed process to respond to the changing sustainability challenges in European club football.

This approach ensures that key external pressures and internal priorities are fully considered, enabling a robust framework for both EFC's organisational improvement and support to Member Clubs. EFC's strategy addresses two core challenges:

- Enhancing EFC's own sustainability performance and credentials.
- Guiding Member Clubs to meet both mandatory regulatory requirements (such as UEFA's Licensing Requirements) and evolving stakeholder expectations regarding sustainability.

The goal of the strategy is to help Member Clubs move toward sustainable ways of running their organisations and to encourage European club football as a whole to make sustainability a core principle.



Context Analysis



Internal Stakeholder Consultation EFC



External Stakeholder Consultation



Club Consultation



Materiality Analysis

EFC carried out a detailed review of its operating environment, looking at important rules like EU laws and football governing body regulations, as well as changes in fan demographics and values.

All employees took part in three workshops to identify internal sustainability champions, reviewing UEFA's Sustainability Strategy as an example, and shared ideas for future sustainability priorities.

Interviews were conducted with 17 key external stakeholders across environmental, social and governance (ESG) domains. These discussions explored EFC's potential impact both as an organisation and as a supporter of clubs. Insights from these interviews directly informed the strategic framework.

A targeted questionnaire was sent to sustainability managers at EFC's Member Clubs. It looked at current sustainability governance, existing commitments, awareness levels and what clubs need in order to improve their sustainability practices.

Using a careful, evidence-based approach, a materiality matrix was created to show which sustainability topics matter most to EFC's operations and to external stakeholders. This ensures the strategy is firmly grounded in the realities of European football.

From Local to Global

EFC'S SUSTAINABILITY OUTREACH AND INFLUENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Webinars and Knowledge Sharing

Seven sustainability webinars reached an average of 126 clubs and 183 participants per session. Expert speakers from organisations such as UEFA and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) shared insights, helping Member Clubs build awareness and skills on collaborative sustainability practices and emerging ESG topics like CSRD.

The webinars focused on:

- EFC Sustainability Strategy: an extended overview.
- UEFA Accessibility Guidelines.
- Sports for climate and the Football Clubs Alliance for Climate.
- An update on UEFA licensing requirements.
- An update on EU Financial Regulation compliance.
- EU CSRD: demystifying the double materiality assessment.
- EU Omnibus latest updates and the EU VSME.



Sustainability Roadshow

EFC conducted the first edition of an in-person Sustainability Roadshow jointly with UEFA across five countries, working in partnership with national football associations, leagues and clubs to explore sustainability opportunities at the local level.

On average, 15 clubs participated in each country visit, discussing topics such as environmental and social strategy, sustainability related partnership opportunities and applicable regulations. These visits reinforced EFC's commitment to supporting clubs of all sizes with practical, place-based sustainability solutions.



Global Sustainability Engagement

Throughout the season, EFC took part in 12 international conferences, ensuring that the voice of European clubs was represented in key sustainability dialogues.

Highlights include:

UN Human Rights Consultation (Brussels, Mar 2025)

Represented European club football into high-level human rights dialogues, shaping international policy responses to online abuse and racism in sport.

Berlin Sustainability Summit (UEFA EURO 2024, Jul 2024)

Shared insights on advancing sustainability in football during one of the most high-profile sporting events in Europe.

World Football Summit (Seville, Sep 2024)

Contributed to the panel "Greening the Game" alongside leading clubs and global experts, highlighting football's role in accelerating climate action.

COP29 (Baku, Nov 2024)

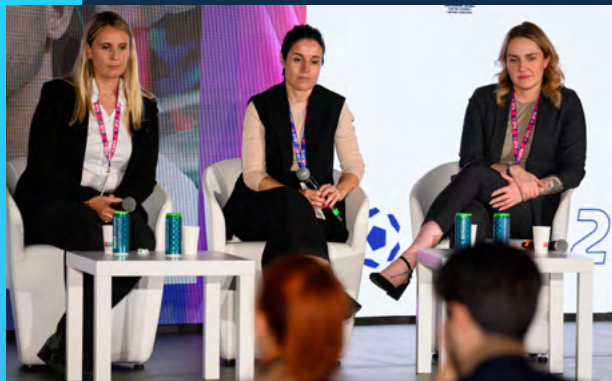
Launch of the Football Clubs Alliance for Climate, strengthening the role of clubs in delivering global climate goals.

Social Football Summit (Rome, Nov 2024)

Participated in the panel "Sustainability at 360 degrees", showcasing the growing contribution of women leaders in football sustainability.

UEFA Respect Forum (Zurich, May 2025)

Coached the "Clubs Engagement" working table, emphasising the relevance that clubs have in advancing sustainability of football, from grassroots to elite competitions.



Governance

RISK MANAGEMENT

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Risk Management

As the recognised voice of European football clubs, EFC understands the importance of managing ESG risks to protect its long-term resilience, credibility and value to members.

Sustainability risk management at EFC has involved the identification, assessment, prioritisation, mitigation and review of ESG risks that could influence the integrity of football and the organisation's ability to serve its members effectively. These risks may relate to climate change, shifting regulations, supply chain ethics, human rights and/or evolving expectations from stakeholders across the football ecosystem.

Sustainability Risk Mapping for Members

To support this commitment, EFC incorporated sustainability risk mapping into its CSRD-focused webinar, "EU CSRD: Demystifying the Double Materiality Assessment." The session attracted 147 participants from 101 clubs, including special guest F.C. Copenhagen, highlighting the importance of structured risk management across European club football.





Identification

Recognising potential ESG risks that may impact operations, finances, reputation and stakeholders.



Assessment

Evaluating each risk based on severity, likelihood and impact on the organisation's operations, financial stability and broader sustainability goals.



Prioritisation

Ranking risks based on how important and urgent they are, while also looking at how well EFC can manage them and how they fit with our mission and priorities. This was guided by a double materiality assessment.



Mitigation

Developing and implementing strategies, policies and controls to reduce or avoid risks, integrating sustainability into decision-making and enhancing stakeholder engagement.



Monitoring and Reviewing

Regularly reviewing new risks, trends and how well our actions are working to make sure we keep improving and stay on track with sustainability challenges.

Aligning our Objectives

In response to stakeholders' suggestions, we aligned our objectives with UEFA's sustainability strategy, *Strength Through Unity*, using its social and environmental policy categories to streamline our approach and adding four policies under the governance dimension.

Environment

Climate & Advocacy

Promoting environmental preservation across football activities and leveraging the influence of sport to advocate for urgent action.

Infrastructure Sustainability

Fostering collaboration to promote sustainable infrastructure among our members and other clubs.

Event Sustainability

Minimising the environmental impact of events from design to implementation.

Circular Economy

Adopting circular economy principles to minimise waste and optimise product consumption and life cycles.

Governance

Risk management

Actions to steer clubs towards sustainable risk management encompassing environmental, social and governance factors in football, aiming for long-term success, financial stability, enhanced reputation and increased community engagement.

Accountability and transparency

Tools and training to cultivate accountable and transparent football clubs. Transparency ensures accountability and fosters stakeholder trust.

Communication

Assistance for members in developing effective sustainability-related communication strategies.

Training and capacity building

Action plans and training programmes to promote the integration of sustainability principles into daily routines.

Social

Anti-Racism

Initiating actions to combat racial discrimination in European football, promoting inclusivity through education, policy reforms and collaborative efforts across all levels.

Child & Youth Protection

Dedication to safeguarding children, prioritising protection against abuse, neglect, bullying and discrimination.

Equality & Inclusion

Accelerating actions to promote equality and inclusion, combating discrimination based on gender, age, race, ability, sexual orientation, religion and nationality.

Football for All Abilities

Encouraging inclusive football infrastructure and venues, ensuring accessibility for players and fans of all abilities and backgrounds.

Health and Wellbeing

Taking actions to support health, enhance well-being and encourage inclusivity in football, recognising its vital role in bringing communities together.

Solidarity & Rights

Promoting dignity, respect and equal rights in football, driving solidarity and ensuring universal access to the sport.

Refugee Support

Promoting refugee integration through football, enhancing physical and mental wellbeing and building community connections and social inclusion.



Responsible Governance

DOUBLE MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT

Strengthening Risk Recognition and Strategic Focus

To prepare for the EU CSRD and strengthen its sustainability governance, EFC conducted its first Double Materiality Assessment (DMA) in 2025. This builds on the materiality assessment used for the Sustainability Strategy, looking at both the financial impact and the direct effects of EFC’s events and operations.

This assessment has identified the issues most critical to EFC and its stakeholders, applying two lenses:

Financial Materiality

How sustainability risks and opportunities affect EFC’s performance.

Impact Materiality

How EFC’s activities influence people, the environment and society.

The assessment, informed by stakeholder consultation and regulatory review, identified 10 priority topics across **five operational areas**:



Emission reductions



Inclusivity & accessibility



Supply chain sustainability

(sourcing, labour standards, human rights)



Sustainable event operations

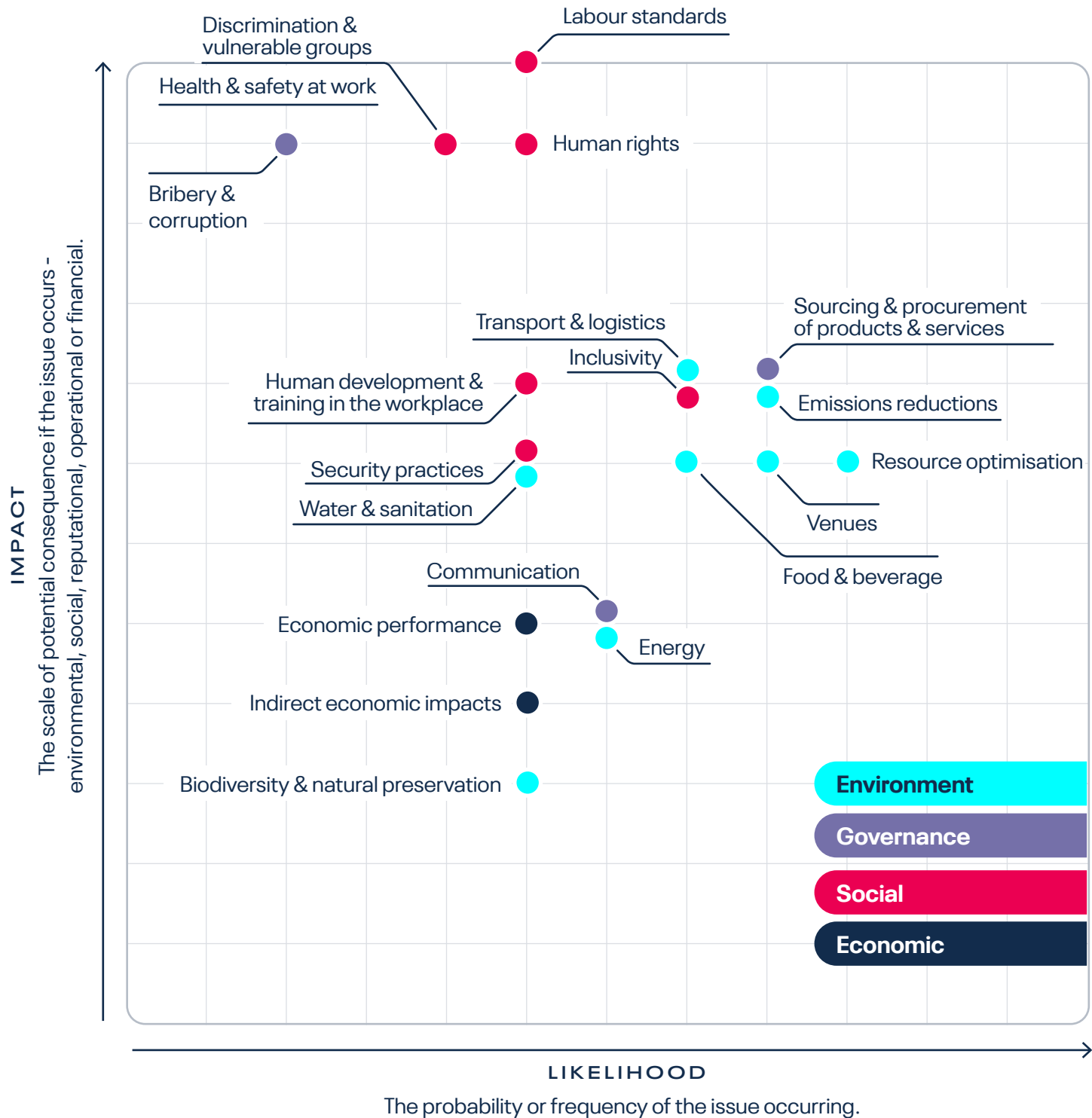
(venues, transport, logistics, energy)



Resource optimisation

(waste, food, efficiency)

The resulting materiality matrix provides a clear roadmap, ensuring resources are directed where EFC can deliver the greatest value, support members and contribute to a more sustainable future for European football.



Responsible Governance

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE

As part of our commitment to responsible operations, EFC has implemented a structured Sustainability Management System (SMS), based on ISO 20121, built on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle:



As part of our commitment to risk management, we are developing a sustainable procurement policy, based on the following questions:

What is it made of?

Where does it come from, who made it?

What impact does it have in use?

What is it wrapped in?

What will happen to it after the event or activity that it has been procured for?

Additionally, taking into account certificates from manufacturers' social audits, and choosing sustainable products (FSC Certified, recycled materials, etc).

All these actions reflect EFC's commitment to continuous improvement and sustainable governance, building capacity internally while setting an example for clubs across European football.



CASE STUDY



Shortlisted for the EFC Sustainable Governance Award

To Care Is to Do

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR ACHIEVES CERTIFICATION TO ISO 20121 STANDARD

Tottenham Hotspur has embedded sustainability across all aspects of its operations, consistently recognised as the Premier League's greenest club by the annual Sport Positive league table. Committed to achieving net zero by 2040, the club pursued and successfully achieved ISO 20121 certification for sustainable event management. This internationally recognised standard reinforces the club's commitment to integrating sustainability into event planning and operations, aligning with best practices seen at global events such as the London and Tokyo Olympics, COP28 and the G7 Summit.

Key Initiatives & Impact

Renewable Energy & Zero Waste

The stadium and training centre are powered by 100% renewable electricity. The club has achieved zero waste to landfill, eliminated single-use plastic water bottles, introduced a reusable beer cup scheme and adopted compostable food packaging.

Sustainable Sourcing & Food Systems

All food produce is sourced within a 60-mile radius of the stadium, with plant-based options widely available. A kitchen garden at the training centre supports sustainable food production.



Sustainable Transport

Enhanced public transport options include upgraded train stations, matchday shuttle buses, a carbon-neutral regional coach service and improved cycling infrastructure, with the club nearing its target of limiting car travel to 23% of fans.

Fan & Player Engagement

A major sustainability campaign during Green Football Weekend inspired fans to take climate action. Players, including goalkeeper Guglielmo Vicario, have actively promoted sustainability initiatives.

Socio-Economic Impact

An independent EY study found that the club contributes approximately £900 million in gross output to London's economy, generating £478 million in Gross Value Added and supporting 3,700 full-time equivalent jobs.

Conclusion

Tottenham Hotspur's achievement of ISO 20121 — a standard for sustainable event management — represents a key milestone on the club's journey to achieve net zero by 2040. ISO 20121 is a beacon for sustainable event management, guiding organisations to seamlessly integrate sustainability into every facet of their event planning and execution, considering key environmental, social and economic impacts. This important step forward can help the football industry and wider society accelerate progress towards a sustainable world.

Transparency & Accountability

EFC ACTION WITH THE EVOLVING CSRD LANDSCAPE

CSRD TIMELINE

JAN 2023

CSRD put into force across EU states

JUL 2023

ESRS Adoption

The European Commission adopted the first set of European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS), outlining the content and structure of disclosures.

JAN 2024

First wave of CSRD

Reporting began for large public-interest entities (including some listed clubs or parent companies), with first reports due in 2025.

NOV 2024

CSRD Adoption

Introducing mandatory sustainability reporting for around 150 EFC Member Clubs.

EFC TIMELINE

OCT 2023

CSRD Task Force

EFC monitored developments to inform upcoming member support aligned with ESRS expectations, constituting the CSRD Task Force.

MAR - JUN 2024



Bocconi Field Project:

Mapped UEFA Licensing and CSRD requirements, helping clubs understand overlaps and obligations. Outputs included an online presentation for the SWG and HQ visit for the students.

FEB 2024

CSRD Introduction **WEBINAR** (🎥)

In collaboration with strategic finance & operations, EFC hosted a webinar for 214 clubs. The webinar addressed five key questions:

- What is the CSRD?
- Is my club in scope and when?
- Is there more to this than compliance?
- What does the report entail and what is the required effort?
- What do I need to get started?

The European CSRD introduced extensive new disclosure obligations for companies across the EU, including football clubs. In response, EFC provided timely and practical support to help clubs understand and prepare for the regulation.

FEB 2025

Omnibus Directive proposal

CSRD amendments proposed, including raising the employee threshold from 250 to 1,000 employees and reducing scope for disclosure.

APR 2025

The “Stop the Clock” Directive

The directive delayed the two-year compliance timelines for companies in the second and third waves of CSRD reporting.

JUN 2025

Implementation Requirements

Clubs await further guidance from the EU on CSRD scope of application and requirements, which will inform EFC’s next steps for webinars and capacity-building activities.

MAR 2025

The Double Materiality Assessment (DMA)

Supported 147 clubs in understanding one of the core CSRD requirements: assessing how sustainability issues impact the club (outside-in) and how the club impacts people and the planet (inside-out). The session featured insights from F.C. Copenhagen, including how to approach a DMA and what a practical assessment could look like.



APR 2025

Omnibus & VSME

WEBINAR (»)

Hosted 102 clubs to unpack the implications of the Omnibus and Voluntary Sustainability Reporting Standard for certain SMEs. Manchester City and VfL Bochum 1848 shared how they assessed scope and selected their reporting approach, helping clubs navigate key decisions on next steps.



MAY 2025

WG Meeting

CSRD developments were integrated into the Sustainability Working Group meeting in Zurich, enabling peer learning and shared interpretation.



CASE STUDY



EFC Karl-Heinz Rummenigge Award 2024 for Club Management Excellence Winner

VfL Bochum 1848

ADVISORY BOARD OF THE FUTURE

In season 2022/23, VfL Bochum 1848 launched its Beirat Zukunft ("Advisory Board of the Future") in partnership with NGO Kindernothilfe. The initiative brings together 12 members of Gen Z (ages 14–25) to advise the club's management on strategic, governance and operational matters — ensuring the voice of the next generation is embedded in decision-making. A long-standing pioneer in child and youth protection, VfL Bochum had already created a "Child-Friendly Stadium" concept in 2019. The Advisory Board, which has four active Working Groups, moves beyond protection to active empowerment, giving young people a real seat at the table and helping address one of football's key challenges, engaging the next generation of fans while ensuring governance reflects their values and vision for the game.

Key Initiatives & Impact

Youth-Led Governance

Young people share needs and ideas directly with senior management, influencing VfL Bochum's strategy and long-term direction.

Collaborative Project Design

Members develop innovative, sustainable projects in areas including stadium experience, merchandising, partnerships and environmental action.

Sector Knowledge Sharing

VfL Bochum openly shares its approach with other clubs, encouraging industry-wide adoption of youth-led advisory structures.



Working Group Focus Areas:

Fans, Content & Stadium Experience

Ideas for more diverse and accessible matchdays, interactive digital experiences and stronger sustainability communications.

Merchandising

Exploring sustainable retail ideas, such as adding return stations in fan shops and offering local food products instead of just textiles.

Environment & Climate

Proposals for biodiversity, renewable energy, sustainable mobility and local carbon offsetting.

Responsibility & Partnerships

New partnership models with measurable impact and initiatives promoting literacy among young fans.

Conclusion

While still in its early stages, the Advisory Board of the Future has already exceeded expectations, attracting high numbers of applicants and generating a pipeline of fresh, practical ideas. Its four active Working Groups have initiated projects that span fan engagement, climate action, community partnerships and sustainable retail, all driven by the perspective of young supporters who will inherit the game. By including youth voices, VfL Bochum is creating a governance model that is not only future-ready but also replicable across the football industry. The message is clear: if you want to build the “club of tomorrow”, you need to start by inviting tomorrow’s decision-makers into the conversation today.

Conferences & Events

SHOWCASING EFC AND MEMBER CLUBS ON GLOBAL PLATFORMS

Using football's global platform to drive sustainability dialogue and action.

As the collective voice of Europe's football clubs, EFC recognises the powerful role communication plays in shaping the future of football and the planet. In 2024, EFC significantly strengthened its influence on climate and sustainability, not just by sharing stories, but by creating platforms for global collaboration and change.

Throughout the 2024/25 season, EFC amplified the voice of European clubs on the global stage. By actively participating in leading conferences, summits and consultations, we showcased football's role in shaping a more sustainable, inclusive and responsible future.



12

high-profile conferences attended

Highlights of the Season:

EU Parliament Event "The Future of Football"

Brussels

Panel alongside Serie A and Como 1907, highlighting clubs' role in shaping football's sustainable future.

World Football Summit

Seville

Greening the Game
panel with Liverpool FC & Real Betis.

ESSMA Summit

Madrid

Moderation of sustainability session with UEFA, Malmö FF and KPMG.

UN Human Rights Consultation

Brussels

Dialogue on safeguarding human rights in football, with contributions from global unions and leagues.

Additional Engagements:

Social Football Summit

Rome

Sustainability at 360° panel.

European Commission

Brussels

Presentation of the EFC Sustainability Strategy.

Football for Sustainability Summit

Berlin

Sessions on teamwork & female leadership in football.

UEFA Respect Forum

Zurich

Led the Clubs Engagement table at UEFA Respect Forum 2025

Warsaw Federation Sustainability Conference

Warsaw

Panel with UEFA and Malmö FF, exchanging best practice across Europe.

Juventus ESG Strategy Launch,

Turin

Keynote address on embedding sustainability into club strategies.

Conferences & Events

LEADING THE
CONVERSATION AT
COP29

In a landmark moment for football's climate leadership, EFC hosted its first-ever conference at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP29) in Baku, placing its members and the sport at the heart of global environmental dialogue. Co-hosted with COP29 Presidency and Qarabağ FK, the event in the prestigious Blue Zone sent a powerful message: football is not only aware of the climate crisis, it is acting on it.



Key Highlights

Global platform for football's climate commitments

Clubs including Qarabağ FK, Atlético de Madrid, Liverpool FC, FC Porto, Tottenham Hotspur, Real Betis and Udinese Calcio, Galatasaray S.K., Fenerbahçe S.K., Malmö FF and Clube de Regatas do Flamengo showcased pioneering sustainability programmes, from circular economy pilots and water management systems to certified ISO standards and fan-driven climate engagement.

Panel discussions explored:

- How football can reduce emissions and influence fan behaviour.
- The role of governance, data and innovation in net zero strategies.
- The significance of aligning with frameworks such as UNFCCC's Sports for Climate Action.

Launch of the Football Clubs Alliance for Climate

A historic signing by 11 leading clubs committing to collaborate, share progress and advocate for urgent climate action across football and beyond.

“Football can and must be a driver of real climate action. We are proud to unite clubs behind a shared vision for sustainability.”

**– Charlie Marshall,
EFC CEO**



EFC Awards

SHOWCASING AND INSPIRING SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP

The EFC Awards provide a unique platform for clubs across Europe to showcase their most impactful initiatives, celebrate achievements and inspire change throughout the football community.

By recognising and rewarding good practice, the awards not only highlight the diverse ways clubs are embedding sustainability but also encourage others to follow their example. Through this platform, EFC amplifies stories of innovation and positive impact, strengthening collective ambition and driving progress across our game.



EFC Sustainability Awards

Recognising leadership and innovation

Communication is also about celebrating impact. The EFC Sustainability Awards spotlights clubs driving real change across governance, social inclusion and environmental innovation.

The 2024 winners demonstrated how football can lead with purpose, integrity and creativity:

Sustainable Governance Award

Winner Liverpool FC: The Red Way

For embedding ethical leadership and long-term sustainability across operations, culture and decision-making.

Environmental Sustainability Award

Winner VfL Wolfsburg: Fair Play for Nature

For developing innovative microplastic filtration systems for artificial turf, reducing environmental harm and championing resource protection.

Social Impact Award

Winner AIK Football: The AIK-style

For translating club values into real-world action through impactful community programmes, social outreach and inclusive culture.

By sharing these achievements across our network and communication channels, EFC inspires and accelerates meaningful progress across the wider football ecosystem.

Shortlisted Sustainability Awards

EFC Award 2024 for Sustainable Governance

Club: Tottenham Hotspur

Project: To Care Is To Do: Tottenham Hotspur achieves certification to ISO 20121 standard

Club: Eintracht Frankfurt Fußball AG

Project: From waste to wins: Eintracht Frankfurt's path to a circular economy

EFC Award 2024 for Environmental Sustainability

Club: Club Atlético de Madrid, S.A.D

Project: Sustainable Water Management

Club: FC Gelsenkirchen-Schalke 04 e.V.

Project: S04-Mitfahrbörse: A Ride-sharing platform

EFC Award 2024 for Social Impact

Club: Udinese Calcio

Project: Udinese Summer Camp, Education for Life

Club: Celtic Football Club

Project: Ability Counts

Other EFC Awards 2024

EFC Karl-Heinz Rummenigge Award - Club Management Excellence

Winner VfL Bochum 1848

Advisory Board of the Future

EFC Commercial Development Award

Winner Tottenham Hotspur Stadium

F1 Karting Experience

EFC Football Development Award

Winner FC Bayern Munich Women

Women's Mentoring Programme

EFC Visiting Supporters Experience Award

Winner AC Sparta Praha

Europa League Away Experience



Publications & Media

AMPLIFYING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout the 2024/25 season, EFC strengthened its communications by publishing key articles and insights to support Member Clubs in their sustainability journeys, align with evolving EU regulations and inspire best practices across the football sector. These publications underscore our commitment to embedding sustainability in governance, environment and social engagement.

8+

Articles & Publications



Featured in the Sustainability Magazine

April 2025

EFC and four Members Clubs were featured in Sustainability Magazine, in an article focusing on the strategic approach now adopted by European football clubs on environmental sustainability and highlighting the guiding role played by EFC.

“The European Club Association renews its focus on sustainability”

Forbes, January 18, 2024

- by V. Carosella

This article spotlighted ECA (now European Football Clubs, EFC) and its strengthened focus on sustainability, recognising the organisation’s ambition to embed environmental, social, and governance priorities within football. It highlighted the organisation's role as a key driver in reshaping the sport’s sustainability agenda.

[READ MORE](#)



Helping football clubs get to grips with emerging sustainability requirements”

Sustainability Report / Off The Pitch, May 30, 2024

- By Matthew Campelli

Explored how around 150 European clubs will be impacted by the EU’s Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), highlighting EFC’s proactive role in preparing clubs for compliance.

[READ MORE](#)

“Man City, Benfica & More: How Football can be Sustainable”

Sustainability Magazine, April 1, 2025

- by S. Downes

Highlighted sustainability initiatives from clubs including Manchester City, SL Benfica, and Eintracht Frankfurt, presented within the wider context of EFC’s efforts to guide the football ecosystem toward long-term sustainability goals.

[READ MORE](#)



Training & Capacity Building

MEMBERS

EFC continues to strengthen the capacity of its Member Clubs to lead on sustainability.

Through formal education programmes, targeted webinars and internal initiatives, we are equipping clubs with the skills, knowledge and confidence to drive meaningful change within their organisations and inspire progress across European football. The second edition of the Sustainability in Football Compact Course (SFC) is planned for June 2026.

“An inspiring course that combines strategic vision with practical exchanges between different football realities.”

Felice Fabrizio,

Head of ESG, Juventus FC

Sustainability in Football Compact Course (SFC)

To accelerate sustainability leadership in football, EFC partnered with UEFA and SDA Bocconi School of Management to launch the Sustainability in Football Compact Course — the first formal executive programme of its kind tailored specifically for professionals working in European football organisations. Held over four days at SDA Bocconi’s campus in Milan, the course provided participants with a strategic and practical understanding of sustainability, combining academic credibility with real-world application.



Key Features

- 31 participants, including representatives from 16 clubs and several national associations
- Designed for sustainability managers and professionals from clubs, national associations, leagues and confederations.
- Delivered through interactive workshops, expert lectures and peer learning.

Core Modules

Fundamentals of sustainability and ESG in sport

Social impact and inclusion in football

Environmental responsibility and carbon reduction

Policy frameworks and EU regulations (including CSRD)

Monitoring, reporting and action planning

Strategies for securing internal and external stakeholder buy-in

“Great atmosphere, interesting presentations, engaging discussions, and excellent speakers. It’s amazing to exchange experiences with others from the football world – I know I’ll leave full of new ideas!”

Irena Smetanova,

CSR Manager, AC Sparta Praha

EFC Campus

Built on knowledge, education and action, EFC Campus is the home of all EFC learning and development programmes including our groundbreaking course with Harvard Executive Education.

149
participants

6
educational
programmes

30%
female
representation

2024/25 Webinars

EFC delivered a series of expert-led webinars attended by clubs across Europe, covering critical sustainability topics:

- EFC Sustainability Strategy – Deep Dive
- UEFA Accessibility Guidelines
- UNFCCC: Sport for Climate
- UEFA Licensing Updates
- CSRD Series (x3)
 - Double Materiality
 - Omnibus & VSME
 - Reporting Readiness
- EU Financial Regulation – Compliance Overview

Training & Capacity Building

EMPLOYEES

EFC is committed to equipping its staff with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to embed sustainability, inclusion and human rights across all areas of football governance.

Through targeted training and ongoing capacity-building initiatives, employees are empowered to make informed decisions, uphold ethical standards, and contribute to meaningful impact for clubs, players, and communities.

Impact in Practice

- Leadership programmes and Women in Football Leadership enhanced management and inclusion capabilities.
- Legal, HR, and negotiation training strengthened organisational compliance and professional confidence.
- Language and communication training supported cross-cultural collaboration and effective international representation.

SEASON 2023/24

Courses Provided

9 

Employees Trained

20 

Main Topics

Leadership

Legal/HR

Negotiation

French

Communication

Investment (CHF)

29,253.73

Female Representation

50% 

SEASON 2024/25

Courses Provided

7 

Employees Trained

18 

Main Topics

Women in Football Leadership

French

Legal

IT

Sustainability

Investment (CHF)

22,523.58

Female Representation

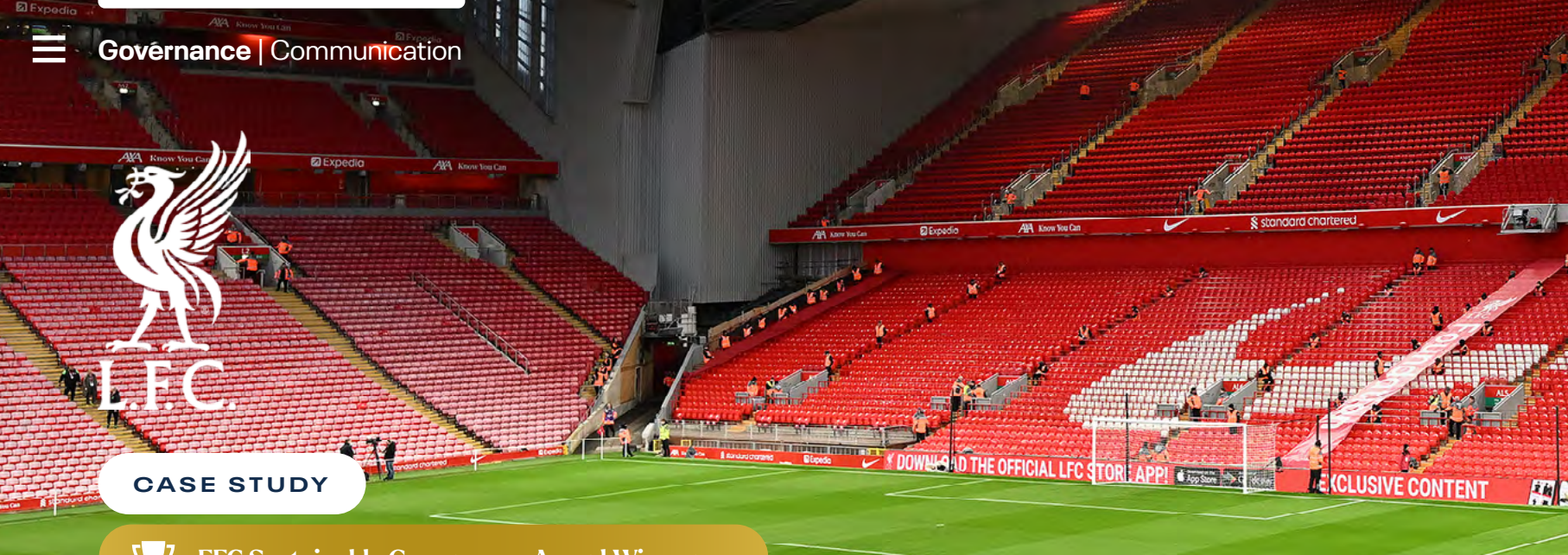
50% 

Lunch & Learn (L&L)

Internal Sustainability Awareness

EFC People & Culture organises L&L every month, providing training and knowledge sharing on different topics like commercial, football, membership and sustainability. EFC Sustainability hosted a dedicated session engaging 38+ EFC employees to deepen the understanding of the organisation's sustainability strategy, internal targets and practical actions. The session helped staff to integrate sustainability into their daily work, encouraging a culture of responsibility and collective impact.





Sustainable Governance Award

THE RED WAY

Launched in 2021, The Red Way is Liverpool Football Club's comprehensive sustainability programme that reflects the club's commitment to building a better future for its people, planet and communities. Aligned with 16 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the programme integrates sustainability into every level of the club's operations. It is supported by a robust sustainability management system certified to the ISO20121 standard, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement across key areas.

Key Initiatives & Impact

People

The Red Way focuses on empowering employees and fans through education and engagement, achieving notable recognition in ED&I with advanced standards in the Premier League. The club also played a key role in the United Nation's global sports initiative to combat hate speech.

Community Engagement

The LFC Foundation supported over 127,000 individuals in the 2023/24 season, contributing to local economies and generating significant social return on investment (for every £1 invested, they saw a social return of £13.70).



Environmental Impact

- Reduced waste tonnage by 30% since 2019 and increased recycling rates of plastic bottles at Anfield Stadium from 25% to over 90%.
- Achieved a 15% reduction in carbon emissions from the 2019/20 baseline, with 100% carbon offsetting for football operations.
- Significant steps were also taken to reduce emissions from travel, including eliminating 100% of carbon emissions from domestic team flights through investment in sustainable aviation fuel.
- Biodiversity efforts have flourished under the club's award-winning grounds team, with more than 1,000 trees and hedges planted. Further initiatives include the installation of honeybee colonies and solitary bee habitats; the club now has 60,000 bees across all its sites.
- Transitioned 96% of club operations to clean energy, with renewable electricity used across all sites.
- Installed solar panels at Anfield and electric vehicle charging stations at training centres, contributing to the club's net-zero carbon goals.

Conclusion

The Red Way programme demonstrates how a comprehensive, data-driven sustainability strategy can have a profound impact both internally and externally. The club's commitment to continual improvement is evident in the measurable outcomes across waste reduction, carbon emissions and community engagement. By aligning operations with global sustainability goals and ensuring transparency, Liverpool FC is not only leading in football but also setting an example for sustainability in sports and beyond. Key learnings include the importance of integrating sustainability at every level and the value of partnerships to amplify positive impacts on and off the field.

Social

ANTI-RACISM

66

CHILD & YOUTH
PROTECTION

68

EQUALITY & INCLUSION

72

FOOTBALL FOR
ALL ABILITIES

80

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

86

REFUGEE SUPPORT AND
SOLIDARITY & RIGHTS

90





Anti-Racism

STANDING UNITED AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

EFC is unwavering in its commitment to building a game and a future which is free from racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination. As the collective voice of European clubs, we recognise our platform and responsibility to drive meaningful change within the football ecosystem and beyond.



WEBINAR

Webinar on Anti-Racism

140

Member Clubs

170+

Participants

Featured Speakers:



Focus Areas:

- Club-led strategies to tackle racism
- UEFA's licensing requirements for anti-discrimination
- Tools for educating players, staff, and fans

Strengthening Inclusive Recruitment

EFC revised its job description template to include an explicit anti-discrimination clause, reinforcing its commitment to equal opportunities and ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion are embedded from the first stage of recruitment.

UN-OHCHR Regional Consultation/Theme:

“A World of Sport Free from Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance”

This was a rare, high-level dialogue to connect sport with international human rights obligations, helping shape future anti-racism policy across sport governance. Alongside global institutions such as the European Commission, UNESCO, Centre for Sport and Human Rights and player associations, EFC represented its members, presenting in a session dedicated to online abuse.

Manifestations of Racism in Sport:

Exploring how racism and intolerance appear at different levels, from grassroots to elite competitions and the gaps in response mechanisms.

Firsthand Testimonies:

Real experiences shared by athletes and organisations illustrated the emotional and professional impact of discrimination, underscoring the urgency of reform.

Building Alliances:

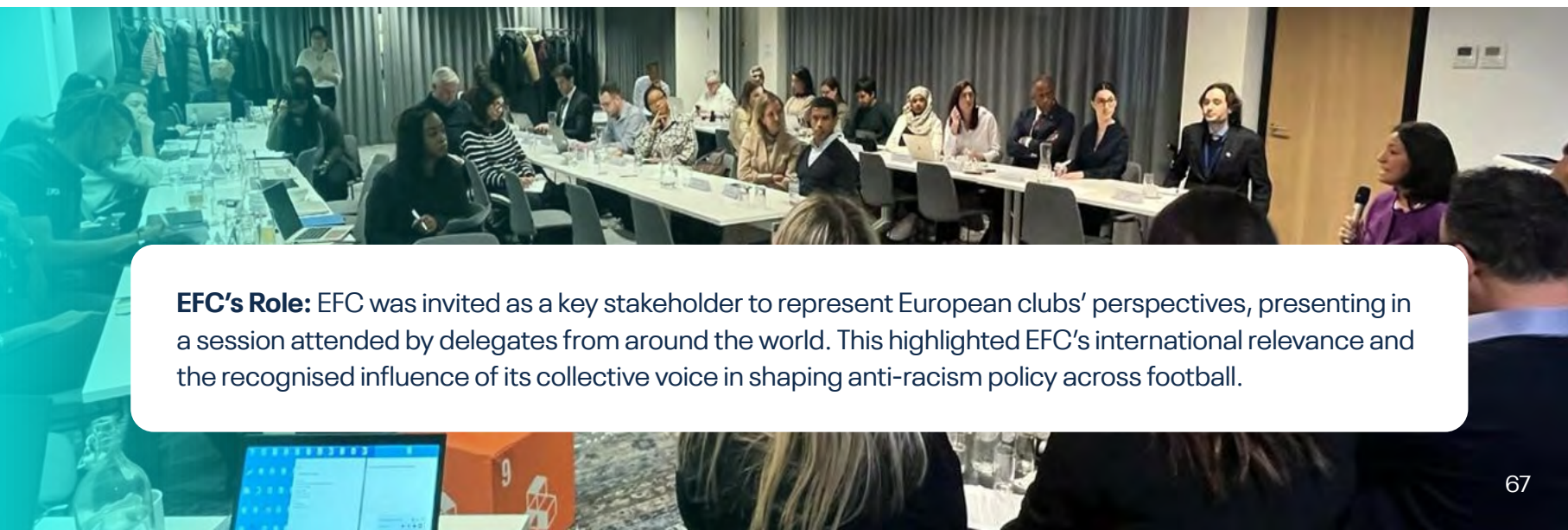
Encouraged cross-sector collaboration between governments, clubs, civil society and international bodies, all crucial to enforce accountability and unify standards.

Enforcement & Legal Reform:

Reviewed existing regulations and where they fall short, with a call to develop stronger laws, club policies and reporting structures.

Human Rights Frameworks in Sport:

Emphasised using UN treaties and global rights mechanisms to protect athletes and hold institutions accountable, setting a foundation for long-term change.



EFC's Role: EFC was invited as a key stakeholder to represent European clubs' perspectives, presenting in a session attended by delegates from around the world. This highlighted EFC's international relevance and the recognised influence of its collective voice in shaping anti-racism policy across football.

Child & Youth Protection

PRIORITISING SAFE, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS FOR YOUNG TALENT

Safeguarding children and young people is not just a duty for clubs; it is a shared responsibility across the entire football ecosystem. From grassroots to elite academies, EFC, Member Clubs, governing bodies and stakeholders must work together to ensure football provides a safe, empowering and supportive environment for all young players.

With its unique position of influence, EFC is helping to shape a culture where child protection is not just a policy, but a deeply embedded practice, protecting wellbeing, nurturing potential and reinforcing trust across the game.

In 2024/25, EFC helped catalyse this change through two high-impact Academy Visits. Both sessions earned an average satisfaction score of 4.5/5, reinforcing the appetite for stronger safeguards, peer learning and long-term player support.

Brighton & Hove Albion F.C. hosted a session on Child & Youth Protection, joined by 36 Member Clubs and UEFA, with demand exceeding capacity.





Malmö FF led a session on dual career development, engaging 28 Member Clubs to explore how young athletes can balance football with education and life beyond the pitch.

WEBINAR (🎧)

Webinar on Child & Youth Protection (EFC x UEFA)

235+

representatives engaged

164+

clubs participated

Key Highlights

Focus: UEFA Licensing Requirements on Child & Youth Protection

Best practices shared by: Internazionale Milano FC & Athletic Club de Bilbao

Impact: Strengthening safeguarding across European clubs by equipping members with knowledge, practical tools and shared experience to create safe and inclusive environments for children and youth in football.

Building on this momentum, EFC aims to strengthen collective action and practical implementation across European club football.

The future of football depends on how we protect, educate and empower its youngest players, having to raise the standards across the game.



CASE STUDY



Shortlisted for the EFC Social Impact Award

Udinese Calcio

INSPIRING YOUNG SUSTAINABILITY SUPERHEROES

Udinese Calcio recognises the urgent need to address environmental and social challenges and leverages its influence as a football club to inspire action. Through its long-running Udinese Summer Camps, the club has embedded sustainability education into youth training, empowering the next generation to become responsible global citizens. By integrating sustainability into everyday activities, the club ensures that young players not only develop as athletes but also as environmentally conscious individuals.





Key Initiatives & Impact

The Udinese Summer Camp, Education for Life initiative introduces children to sustainability principles through engaging and interactive methods, including the Sustainability Superheroes — a creative concept inspired by psychological modelling theories.

The programme focuses on:

Sustainability education: Teaching waste reduction, eco- friendly material choices, plant-based nutrition and social inclusion.

Behavioural impact: Encouraging children to apply lessons in daily life, from waste sorting to challenging unsustainable habits at home.

Measurable outcomes: Tracking engagement through KPIs such as reduced plastic use, improved recycling habits and increased awareness of discrimination and inclusion.

By leveraging football's unique ability to shape behaviour, the camp has successfully transformed young participants into real-life sustainability champions, with parents and coaches witnessing tangible changes in their attitudes and habits.

Conclusion

Udinese Calcio's initiative proves that sustainability education can be seamlessly integrated into sports development. The project's success highlights the role of football clubs in driving environmental and social change by making learning interactive, relatable and action orientated. By nurturing sustainability awareness at an early age, Udinese is not just shaping better footballers but also building a more responsible future generation.



Equality & Inclusion

SHAPING A GAME WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS

True progress in football is not only measured by goals and trophies but by the diversity of voices leading the game, the fairness of opportunity and the culture of inclusion we build at every level. As the representative voice of European clubs, EFC recognises its responsibility and opportunity to influence systemic change. By setting targets, investing in talent and creating platforms for dialogue and development, we are helping to shape a more equitable future for football, both on and off the pitch.

Leadership in Action

EFC's Women on Board Programme

In 2024, EFC launched ambitious governance reforms to drive gender diversity across European football, setting targets of:

25%

female representation on the EFC Board by 2027

35%

female representation on the EFC Board by 2030

40%

female representation in Working Groups by 2027

50%

female representation in Working Groups 2030



To help achieve this, EFC launched the Women on Board Programme, a bespoke development journey designed specifically for women working in football clubs, equipping them with the tools, skills and community to step confidently into leadership roles. The course includes:

Training sessions

Coaching & mentoring opportunities

Practical leadership tools

Supportive peer networking

This programme is a cornerstone of EFC's long-term plan to break down barriers and ensure more women have the opportunity to lead at the highest level of the game.



Powerful Conversations

EFC-UEFA Webinar on Equality & Inclusion

WEBINAR (10)

With 170 participants from 80 clubs, this high-engagement webinar featured:

- Expert insights from Liverpool FC, Real Betis, Bayern Munich.
- A deep-dive into UEFA Licensing Requirements.
- Interactive dialogue on what inclusion looks like in practice.

Advancing Knowledge

Research on Female Leadership in Football

EFC is also leading research to better understand the realities of women in football leadership, helping to spotlight structural challenges and design effective interventions.

Tracking What Matters

Internal Culture & Data

Through human resources-led engagement, metrics and training, EFC is actively monitoring and supporting:

- Staff diversity
- Representation in senior management
- Inclusive workplace practices

Driving Progress Through Partnership

The EFC ED&I Panel, made up of representatives from Liverpool FC, Malmö FF and AFC Ajax, with guidance from respected advisor Ebru Köksal, is working to set strategic priorities and shape EFC's ED&I roadmap.

Inclusive Governance

DIVERSITY IN BOARD & WORKING GROUPS

EFC is committed to enhancing gender diversity across its leadership and decision-making structures.

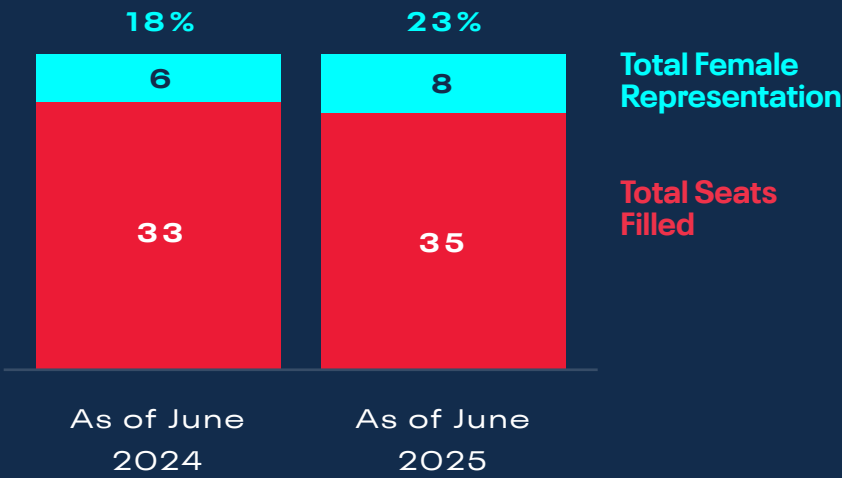
Greater representation is central to better decision-making, broader perspectives, and stronger leadership. By including women in key forums, EFC ensures that the strategic direction of European club football benefits from diverse viewpoints and sets a benchmark for Member Clubs.

Between 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2025, women’s representation in EFC’s Board and Working Groups rose by 5%, reflecting steady progress towards more inclusive governance.

Looking ahead, EFC aims to continue to promote diversity in all areas, reinforcing its commitment to equality, inclusivity and leadership excellence in European football.



EFC Board (Members + Observers)
 Gender Distribution





**Total Working
Group Gender
Distribution**

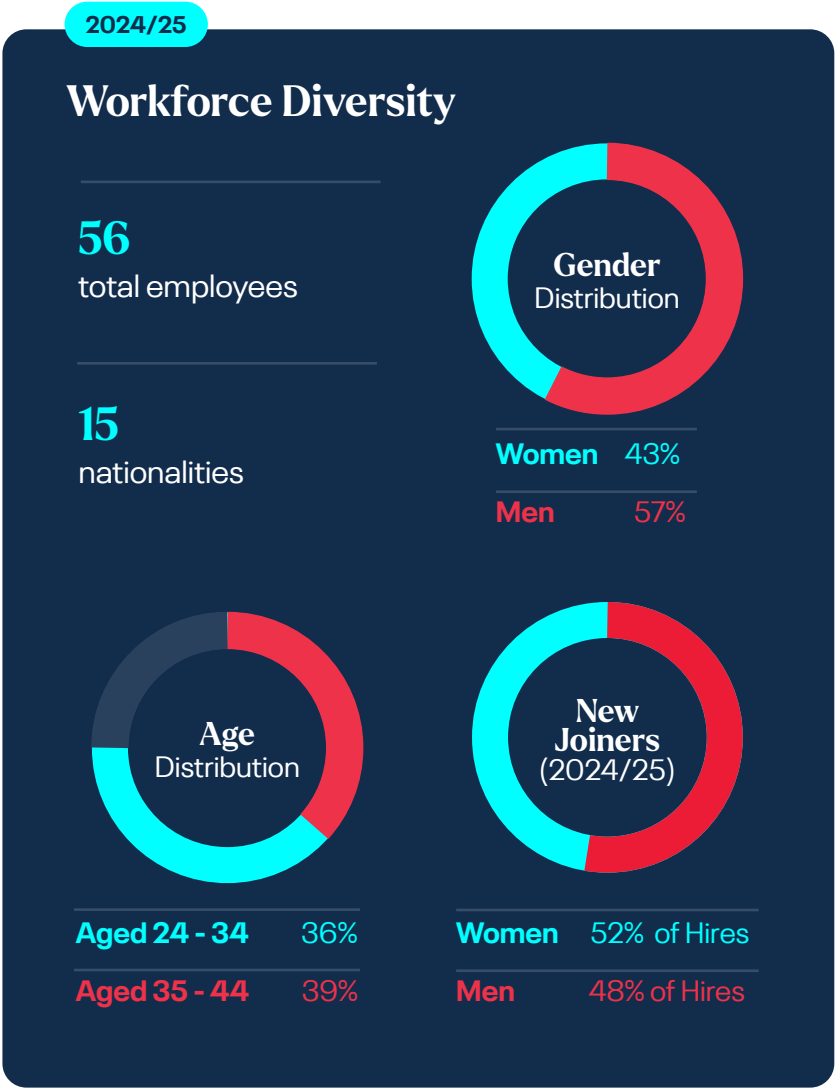
Women 22%

Men 78%



Workforce Diversity

SHAPING A GAME WHERE
EVERYONE BELONGS



Impact & Progress

Senior Leadership Growth

Female representation in senior roles increased from 33% to 40%.

Talent Pipeline

52% of new hires are women, reflecting focus on equitable recruitment.

Diverse Perspectives

Employees represent 15 different nationalities, enriching EFC's global outlook.



Ingrid Vanherle
EFC Role:
Board Observer
Club Role:
Women's Football & Futsal
Director at Standard de Liège
Member Since:
2024



Trine Hopp
EFC Role:
ED&I Representative
Club Role:
CEO of FC Nordsjælland
Member Since:
2024

Ingrid Vanherle and Trine Hopp were appointed to the EFC Board after participating in the first edition of the EFC Women on Board Programme.

Inclusive Culture

"The EFC Way" embeds five core values, reinforced through culture initiatives:

Leadership

We lead from the front.

Accountability

We own our game plan.

Diligence

We know that every move matters.

Collaboration

We win the match together.

Openness

Together we are different, together we are strong.

Key ED&I Initiatives

Culture & Engagement

Culture Committee & Social Club: Employee-led initiatives promoting inclusion, collaboration, wellbeing, belonging and fun.

Flexible Working: Two days work from home policy, supporting work-life balance.

Dog-Friendly Office: Fostering a positive and welcoming work environment.

Recruitment & Development

Diversity in Hiring: Recently implemented a new Applicant Tracking System (ATS) that collects voluntary candidate data (gender, race, etc.) to ensure equitable recruitment.

Leadership & Skills Development: Targeted training programmes, including Women in Football Leadership, to support career progression. Each employee has a training budget.

Internships: Offered to various research students and passionate individuals, as a platform to create impact.

Employee Feedback & Insight

Engagement Survey: Working on launching surveys to measure employee experience and identify inclusion gaps.

Diversity Survey: Working on launching surveys to provide actionable insights on workforce composition and development opportunities.



CASE STUDY



EFC Social Impact Award Winner

AIK-Style

TRANSFORMING VALUES INTO REALITY

AIK Football recognises its role not just as a football club but as a key pillar of society, responsible for shaping individuals beyond the pitch. With the understanding that while not all players will become professionals, every individual will be part of society, AIK has developed a unique educational platform. This initiative ensures that all players, from age five to the men's and women's teams, receive structured education rooted in values such as inclusion, equality and mental resilience.



Key Initiatives & Impact

At the heart of AIK's approach is an educational handbook and platform designed to instil empathy, critical thinking and emotional intelligence across all age groups. The programme aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, fostering a safe and inclusive environment while addressing key societal challenges such as sexism, homophobia and toxic masculinity.

Key outcomes include:

Over 1,700 players and 500 coaches educated annually within AIK.

A wider reach extending to thousands of parents, coaches and players in other clubs.

A cultural shift in behaviour, language and team dynamics, reinforcing positive communication and respect.

Players and staff proudly advocating for AIK's values, establishing the club as a role model in football and society.

By prioritising mental wellbeing and psychological safety, AIK's initiative directly enhances player development, performance and long-term engagement in the sport.

Conclusion

AIK's model demonstrates that instilling inclusivity within a football club strengthens both team performance and social impact. By living out its principles rather than simply promoting them on paper, AIK has cultivated an environment where players, coaches and the wider community feel safe, empowered and valued. This case study underscores the power of sport as a vehicle for social change, proving that investing in people leads to victories both on and off the pitch.

Football for All Abilities

EFC believes football should be accessible to everyone, regardless of ability. Accessibility in football means ensuring people with disabilities can enjoy the game as fans, participate as players and contribute as employees within clubs. By promoting inclusive programmes and showcasing club-led initiatives, EFC works to build a game that reflects the full diversity of society.

Through increased visibility, education and collaboration, EFC supports clubs in creating meaningful opportunities for participation on and off the pitch. For example, during one of our webinars, an FC Bayern Munich employee with lived experience of visual impairment shared her perspective, highlighting the importance of building inclusive workplaces in football.

Event Accessibility

All EFC events follow an accessibility checklist as part of the SMS, ensuring that venues provide accessible rooms, toilets, entrances, and other essential facilities for attendees with disabilities.

Webinars & Knowledge Sharing

UEFA Licensing Requirements WEBINAR (▶)

Over 170 club representatives from 80 Member Clubs attended this session, with special participation from Liverpool FC, Real Betis and FC Bayern Munich, deepening the understanding of accessibility standards to get the UEFA License

UEFA Accessibility Guidelines WEBINAR (▶)

More than 157 club representatives from 116 clubs participated in this webinar, learning practical guidance on making stadiums and football experiences more inclusive for fans, with insights shared by SK Slavia Prague and Club Atlético de Madrid.



Strategic Partnerships

Driving Innovation & Accessibility

As part of EFC's strategic partnership with ESSMA, we actively engaged in the ESSMA Summit to share best practices, showcase club-led innovations and shape industry standards in stadium accessibility and inclusive fan experiences. This collaboration reinforces EFC's commitment to ensuring that football venues and events are welcoming for all abilities and that clubs have access to practical guidance, resources and peer learning opportunities. Through this partnership, EFC continues to amplify accessibility innovations, promote recognition of inclusive initiatives, and influence the broader stadium and event management ecosystem, creating long-term impact for fans with disabilities across Europe.



Award-Winning Innovation

FC Porto was recognised as the Accessibility Initiative of the Year at the second ESSMA Stadium Industry Awards (November 2024) for their INZONE sensory room, which creates three dedicated zones for individuals with sensory disabilities. This enables fans to experience a football match in a fully supportive environment. The response from attendees has been overwhelmingly positive.



CASE STUDY



Shortlisted for the EFC Social Impact Award

Celtic Football Club

ABILITY COUNTS

Ability Counts (AC) is Celtic FC Foundation's flagship inclusion programme, offering children, young people and adults with additional support needs the chance to thrive through sport. Developed in 2010 and launched in 2011, it is built on the values of inclusion, companionship and fun, providing a safe, non-judgemental space where participants can enjoy football, build skills and develop confidence.

The project now runs three main strands – Down Syndrome, Autism, and 18+ – each tailored to specific needs and life stages.

From its Glasgow roots, Ability Counts has expanded to Ireland, operating in Donegal, Derry and Mayo, combining play, personal growth and social connection. Attendance has grown from just 25 in its first year to over 3,400 across both countries in 2024/25, reflecting its deep and lasting impact on participants and their families.





Key Initiatives & Impact

Three tailored strands:

- **AC Down Syndrome (ACDS):** Sport and play-based sessions for children and young people, with a pathway into adult provision.
- **AC Autism (ACA):** Personalised support built around each participant's strengths and behaviours.
- **AC 18+:** For young adults, combining physical activity with life skills, social development and wellbeing.

Cross-border reach:

Operating in Glasgow and across Ireland, with over 3,400 attendances in 2024/25 (1,800 in Glasgow; 1,600 in Ireland).

High retention & positive outcomes:

98% retention rate; all participants report improved mental and/or physical wellbeing; most show improved football and motor skills.

Growth & sustainability: Long-term pathways from childhood to adulthood, promoting inclusion, diversity, health and social integration, while challenging stigma and stereotypes.

Community celebration:

The annual Lennoxtown Football Festival brings together 150+ children and families from Scotland and Ireland at the club's training ground.

Family support:

Parent and guardian workshops, wellbeing days, and alternative therapies to strengthen family resilience.

Conclusion

Ability Counts is more than a football programme, it is a trusted, inclusive community where individuals often excluded from mainstream sport can flourish. Its success lies not only in the measurable outcomes from wellbeing improvements to skill development, but in the sense of belonging it creates. By combining tailored support, family engagement and a genuine commitment to inclusion, Celtic FC Foundation is delivering a model that demonstrates how football can break down barriers, foster resilience and create life-changing opportunities. With its growth, retention and cross-border reach, Ability Counts stands as a blueprint for other clubs looking to make "Football for All Abilities" a reality.



CASE STUDY

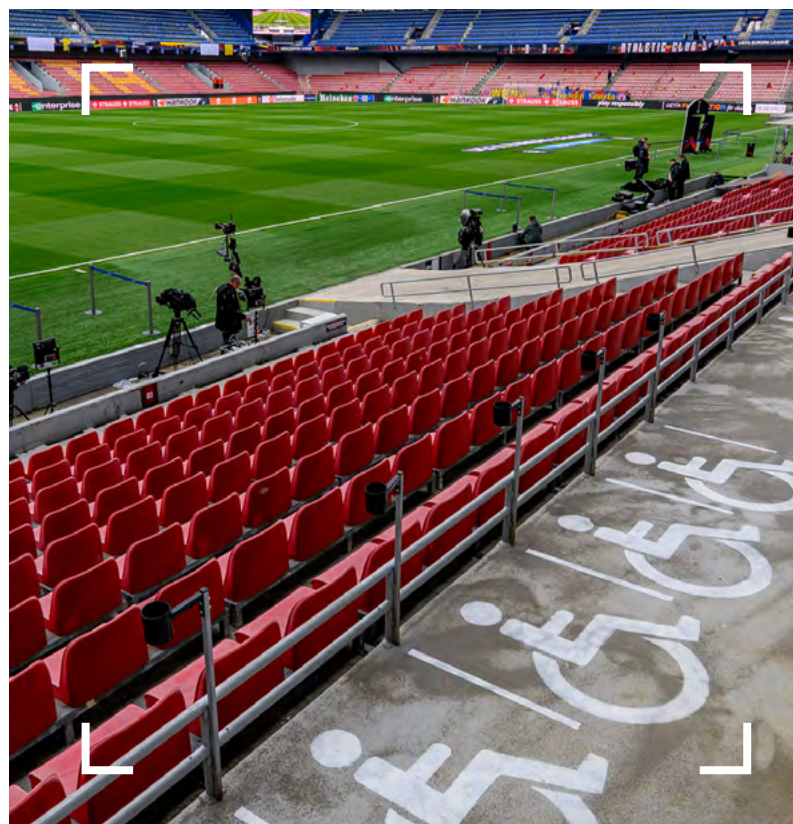


EFC Visiting Supporters Experience Winner

AC Sparta Praha

EUROPA LEAGUE AWAY EXPERIENCE

One of AC Sparta Praha's strategic areas, called Sparta Without Barriers, focuses on making their stadium as accessible as possible, not only during home matches but also during Stadium Tours and other events. They strive to provide fans with experiences they didn't even know they could have. This commitment to fan experience includes visiting supporters; for example, during the Europa League match at epet ARENA, disabled Liverpool FC fans and their companions were offered tailored service and support.





Key Initiatives & Impact

The main initiatives of the project included several key steps aimed at improving the experience for wheelchair users and their companions. Specifically, they:

- ✓ Increased the capacity of the sector for wheelchair users of the visiting team from 5 to 8 bays, thereby meeting UEFA standards for stadiums with a capacity of up to 20,000 seats, and enabling more wheelchair fans to attend the match.
- ✓ Supplemented the signage to the separate entrance for wheelchair fans and their companions, which provided a more comfortable entry to the stadium, away from the large crowd of visiting fans.
- ✓ Provided a refreshment delivery service for visiting disabled fans, run by youth academy players volunteering through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme. The club also met with Ted Morris, Chair of the Liverpool Disabled Supporters Association, to fine-tune plans and ensure visiting fans had a smooth, positive matchday experience.
- ✓ Created a welcoming and supportive environment for visiting Liverpool FC fans, who shared positive feedback about their matchday experience — even with some non-standard solutions required by the stadium's limitations.
- ✓ Generated strong engagement on social media, with positive responses from both our Member Club and the Liverpool Disabled Supporters Association.



Conclusion

The main benefit of this activity was providing an equal experience for wheelchair fans and their companions. They demonstrated that, despite the limitations of an outdated stadium infrastructure, it is possible to ensure a safe and pleasant stay at the stadium for all fans, regardless of their abilities. The project also helped raise awareness about stadium accessibility for fans with disabilities, inspiring other clubs to take similar steps.



Health & Wellbeing

SUPPORTING PEOPLE ON AND OFF THE PITCH

At EFC, we believe that the health and wellbeing of our people is the foundation for long-term success, both as an organisation and as a community.

In line with our commitment to social sustainability, we foster a workplace culture that prioritises physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. From access to healthcare and language learning to team sports and inclusive events, our internal initiatives reflect the values we champion across European club football. These efforts aim to cultivate a positive, inclusive, and engaging environment where every team member can thrive, professionally and personally.

EFC invests in supporting employees and their loved ones, creating a healthy, engaged, and balanced workplace.

Key benefits include:

Future Planning

Information sessions on pension and medical insurance.

Flexible Work

2 days WFH per week for work-life balance.

Health Care

Coverage through CSS for all Swiss based employees.

Dog-Friendly Office

Employees can bring their dogs.



Engagement & Culture

- Culture Committee fostering The EFC Way, a set of five company values: Leadership, Accountability, Openness, Collaboration and Diligence.
- Entertainment Committee creating social events and team activities.
- Internships to nurture talent and develop future leaders.

Learning & Development

- A training budget is allocated per employee.
- French lessons (A1, A2, B1 levels).
- Lunch & Learn sessions with internal knowledge-sharing and external speakers.
- Tailored programmes for women: Women on Board, UEFA Women in Football Leadership Programme (2 spots per season).

Fitness & Wellness

- Gym discounts.
- Bootcamp, football & padel sessions, encouraging team bonding through sport.



CASE STUDY



EFC Football Development Award Winner

EFC Football Development Award

FC BAYERN MUNICH WOMEN FOR THEIR WOMEN'S MENTORING PROGRAMME

FC Bayern Munich Women launched their EmpowerHer mentoring programme in early 2024 with a clear goal: to support the holistic development of their players by preparing them for life beyond football. The programme pairs first-team players with mentors from leading companies such as Allianz, MAN, SAP and Airbus, providing tailored guidance to help players identify interests, plan for the future, and build networks. This ground-breaking initiative was recognised with the 2024 EFC Football Development Award, celebrating its impact on player welfare and professional growth.

Key Initiatives & Impact

Mentorship Network: 28 mentors from major corporate partners were matched with FC Bayern players to provide personal, academic and career advice tailored to each player's interests.

Kick-off event: The programme began with a launch event at Clubhouse 1900 in January 2024, attended by around 50 participants including mentors, mentees and club representatives, establishing an engaging and supportive atmosphere.



Player Endorsements:

Glódís Perla Viggósdóttir, club captain, described the programme as “incredibly valuable... a huge help in stepping outside our comfort zone.”

Klara Bühl shared that she is now “better prepared for what comes after football.”

Career transition support: Players receive help planning for careers after football through coaching, exposure to different industries and regular contact with mentors.

Empowering identity: The club framed the initiative around the message “Mehr als nur ein Spiel” (“More than just a game”), encouraging players to embrace their full identity beyond the pitch.

Conclusion

FC Bayern Munich Women's mentoring programme sets a new standard in women's football, proving clubs can — and should — play a critical role in the long-term development of their athletes. By investing in identity, future planning and individual growth, the club has created a powerful model of what athlete care truly looks like, both on and off the pitch.

EFC Foundation

INSPIRING CHANGE THROUGH THE POWER OF SPORT

The EFC Foundation, a separate legal entity, is committed to supporting initiatives that foster a more inclusive, sustainable and healthy world through the power of sports.

Our Vision

“Creating a more inclusive, sustainable and healthy world through the power of football.”

✓ Backed by EFC’s reach and partnerships

✓ Built on collaboration with clubs and local communities

✓ Focused on real, lasting impact

Action:

Emergency Recovery for Greece

EFC supported a charity initiative with Eleven Campaign and Desmos, where local children met football legends and players in a unique moment of joy and solidarity.

Funds raised were committed to emergency recovery projects in Greek communities affected by the devastating 2024 wildfires, including the restoration of damaged sporting facilities.

A powerful reminder of how football can heal, unite and inspire hope in times of crisis.



The Foundation aims to provide resources, create new opportunities, promote awareness and advocacy about the importance of equal access to sports, notably through educational initiatives, training and learning programmes.

Theme	Focus	Examples of Impact
Inclusion & Integration	Equal access to sport for all	Programmes for refugees, disadvantaged youth, local communities
Gender Equality & Equal Opportunities	Removing barriers and creating opportunities for all in sport	Research funding, career pathways, support for female athletes
Education & Learning	Using football to build futures by skill development & experiential learning	Scholarships, training, life skills development
Environmental Sustainability	Tackling climate change through and in sport	Awareness campaigns, education on sport's environmental impact
Health & Wellbeing	Supporting physical & mental health	Community health programmes, sport therapy initiatives



Environment

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

94

CLIMATE & ADVOCACY

100

EVENT SUSTAINABILITY

108

INFRASTRUCTURE
SUSTAINABILITY

114





Circular Economy in Football

THE FREE KICKS PROJECT

Football has a unique platform to inspire circular solutions, both on and off the pitch. FREE KICKS (Football Relies on EMAS and ECOLABEL to Keep Innovating on Circularity as a Key for Sustainability) is an EU-funded project launched in 2023 to accelerate football's transition to the EU Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan.

Led by Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, involving EFC Members: FC Porto, Malmö FF and Real Betis Balompié, and supported by Racing Club de Avellaneda from Argentina, the Romanian Football Federation, Sport Positive and EFC.



1,947,196+

people reached directly and indirectly through matches, media and educational initiatives.



Sant'Anna
Scuola Universitaria Superiore Pisa



Real Betis
Fundación



“We’re proud to lead sustainability in our community.”

Niclas Carlén,
CEO Malmö FF & EFC ExCo
& Board Member

“It will be a lever for behavioural change and environmental performance.”

Teresa Santos,
Sustainability Manager,
FC Porto

“A new opportunity to learn and innovate in football sustainability.”

Rafael Muela Pastor,
General Manager,
Real Betis Fundación



Key Achievements

Life Cycle Assessments (LCA)	EMAS Environmental Management	Fan Engagement
All three Member Clubs conducted LCAs to identify the environmental hotspots of a single match.	Achieving EMAS includes environmental review, policy, management system, verified statement.	FC Porto featured FREE KICKS on LED boards during high-attendance matches (Sporting CP, Boavista, Guimarães).
FC Porto: Highlighted supporter mobility, stadium energy use, and food & beverage as top impact areas.	FC Porto became the first football club in Portugal to achieve EMAS certification (April 2024).	Malmö FF displayed FREE KICKS content on stadia TVs at every home match since July 2023.
Malmö FF: Found mobility, food & beverage, and energy to be high-impact areas at Eleda Stadion.	Malmö FF, Real Betis and the Romanian Federation have also obtained the certification.	Real Betis used LED boards and roll-up banners during La Liga matches (vs Real Madrid, Atlético).
Real Betis: Found similar hotspots at Villamarín Stadium and Rafael Gordillo Sports City.	EMAS positions these clubs as leaders in sport and sustainability.	Messaging reached hundreds of thousands of fans with each campaign.

Circular Economy in Football

EFC'S HQ and Events

EFC donated surplus food to The Lost Food Project Switzerland (TLFP), a nonprofit food rescue and redistribution initiative based in Nyon. TLFP rescues surplus food and delivers it to people in need and raises awareness around sustainable food systems and social equity in Switzerland. By 30 June 2025, EFC rescued over 20 kg of surplus food, preventing approximately 200 kg of greenhouse gas emissions from discarded food.



Responsible waste disposal efforts at events were put in place to reduce food waste:

- Surplus food from the 2025 Club Connect in Madrid was donated to humanitarian aid organisation, Caritas, ensuring it was redistributed rather than discarded.
- Waste data was collected at the Athens General Assembly as part of EFC's Sustainability Management System (SMS) journey, supporting continuous improvement in responsible event practices.

Knowledge Sharing & Capacity Building

To strengthen understanding and action on circular economy principles across European clubs, EFC co-hosted a joint webinar with UEFA. The session brought together 122 participants, reflecting strong engagement from across the membership.

The webinar explored UEFA's new Licensing Requirements on circular economy, while also showcasing good practices from FC Porto and Eintracht Frankfurt. By sharing practical experiences and compliance insights, the session helped clubs translate high-level commitments into tangible actions on waste reduction, reuse and resource efficiency.

122

representatives

96

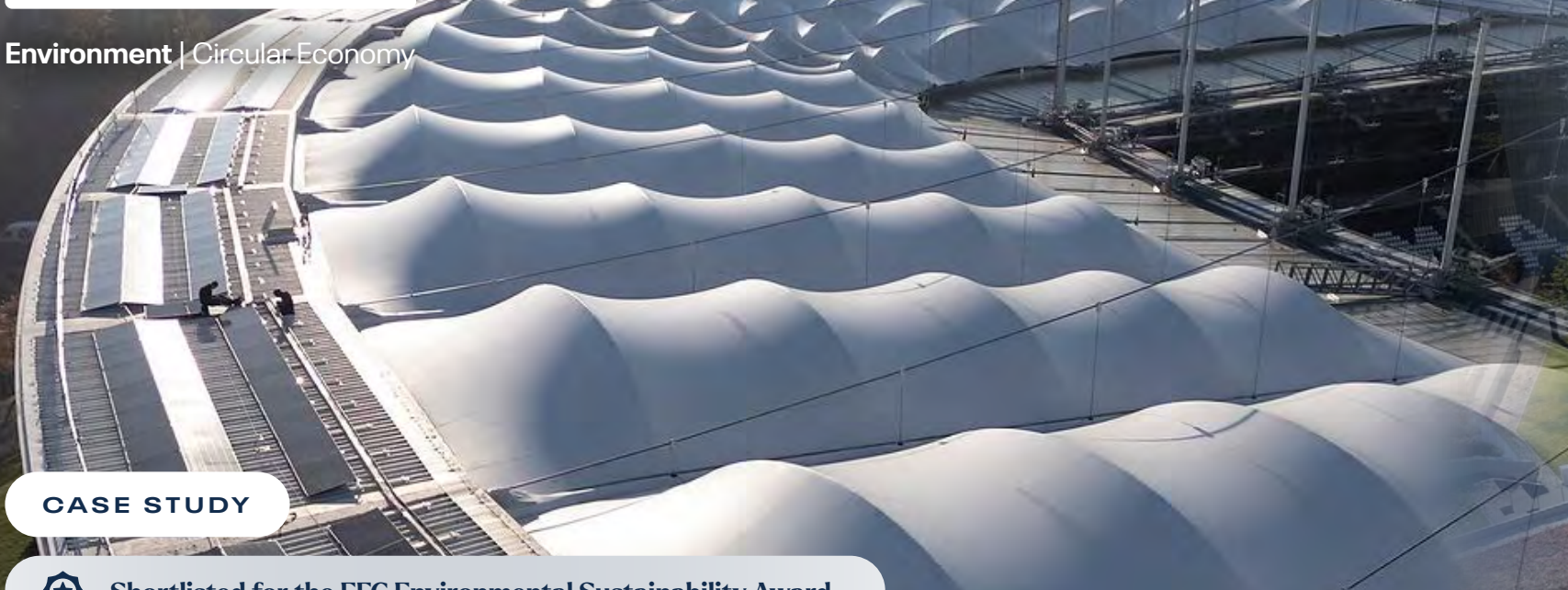
clubs represented



Sustainable merchandising by Eintracht Frankfurt



Reusable cups in FC Porto's stadium



CASE STUDY

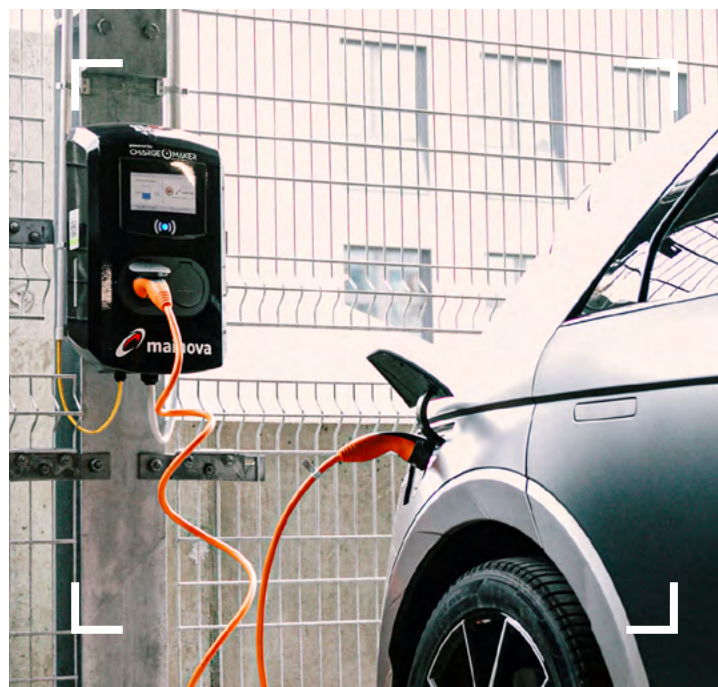


Shortlisted for the EFC Environmental Sustainability Award

From Waste to Wins

EINTRACHT FRANKFURT'S PATH TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Eintracht Frankfurt is a pioneer in sustainability, embedding ESG principles into its operations since 2021. The "From Waste to Wins" initiative is driven by a sector-specific, data-driven ESG tool that serves as the basis for continuous improvement and innovation. It enables the club to implement impactful circular economy measures, reducing waste, reusing resources, recycling materials, and recovering energy, while setting new benchmarks for sustainability in football.





Key Initiatives & Impact

Sustainable Infrastructure

The club's ProfiCamp office operates on over 70% renewable energy, achieving 80% energy self-sufficiency and reducing approximately 700 tonnes of CO2 annually. In addition, a newly installed photovoltaic system on the stadium roof contributes a 10% energy self-sufficiency rate, further advancing the club's commitment to renewable energy and sustainable operations.

Rainwater Harvesting

Three cisterns supply approximately 20% of the stadium's water demand, reducing reliance on potable water. A 2023 upgrade led to a 4% reduction in overall water consumption.

Sustainable Merchandise

The Upcycling Collection repurposes between 5,000 and 15,000 old jerseys into new apparel. The Pre-Consumer Collection transforms excess unsaleable goods into new products, including a "Legends Collection" made from 25,000 leftover jerseys.

Renewable Energy & Electric Mobility

The club's vehicle fleet has transitioned to electric, supported by 28 charging stations powered by a 95,000-kWh photovoltaic system, preventing approximately 60 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually.

Conclusion

Eintracht Frankfurt's commitment to circular economy principles and data-driven sustainability has set new standards in football. Its participation in the EFC Sustainability Award highlights its leadership in ESG transparency and environmental stewardship, paving the way for a greener future.

Carbon Footprint

BALANCING GROWTH WITH RESPONSIBILITY

As EFC expands its reach and services, our carbon footprint reflects the realities of growth. Between 2023-24 and 2024-25, our total footprint increased by 5%, driven primarily by growth in business and staff (by 20) leading to an increase in business travel (which represents 98% of Scope 3 emissions) and the expansion of professional goods and services.

Although EFC’s decarbonisation initiatives reduced emissions in certain categories, overall totals were shaped by broader organisational growth and improved data collection.

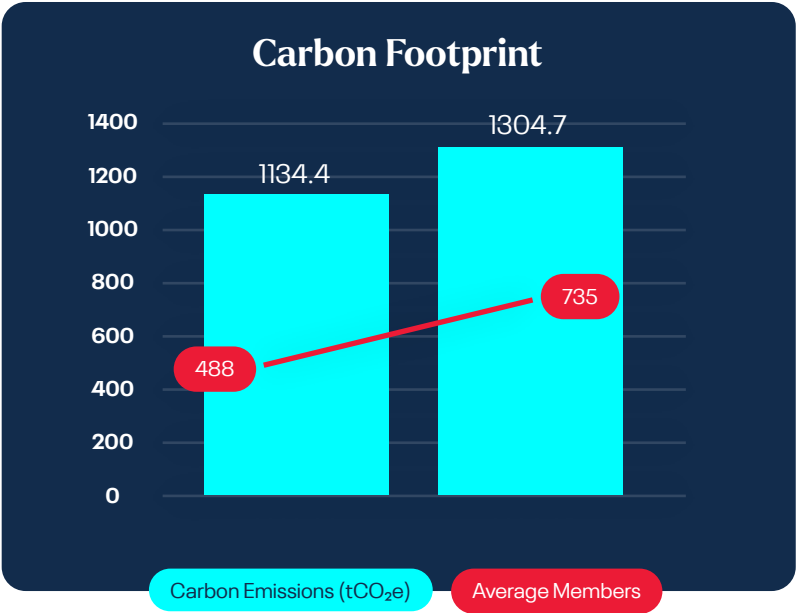
At the same time, our membership grew by 51%, with over 770 clubs (as of June 2025). This reduced our carbon intensity per member by 30%, showing that while our activities scaled significantly, emissions grew at a slower pace. This reflects our commitment to responsible growth: building impact without proportional environmental cost.

TARGET BY 2030:

30% emissions reduction per member from baseline year 2023/24

Carbon Reduction Measures

EFC has started to embed sustainability into its operations through a Sustainability Management System (SMS) and piloting solutions to reduce emissions.



“EFC’s real impact lies in helping our clubs reduce their footprints. That’s why we launched the Football Clubs Alliance for Climate.”

Charlie Marshall,
EFC CEO

		2023-24	2024-25
Total Emissions	↑ 5%	1,134 tCO ₂ e	1,307 tCO ₂ e
FTE Carbon Intensity per member	↓ 30%	2.32 tCO ₂ e 488 members	1.78 tCO ₂ e 735 members

Scope: covers emissions from its headquarters, staff travel and EFC-owned or managed events, and excludes the carbon emissions of its Member Clubs.

Scope 1: < 0%

Scope 2: 2.3%

Scope 3: 97.7%

2023-24

Drivers for Scope 3 emissions

2024-25

86%



Business Travel



89%

11%



Purchased Goods & Services



5%

3.8%



Others



6%

Spotlight: Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) 110 tCO₂e

To address the carbon intensity of business travel, EFC has invested in Sustainable

Aviation Fuel and begun insetting of emissions 110 tCO₂e. Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) can significantly cut lifecycle emissions compared to conventional jet fuel, with verified reductions claimed through a book-and-claim system. By investing in SAF, EFC demonstrates climate leadership and highlights pathways for football to decarbonise one of its hardest-to-abate areas.



These steps reflect our commitment to responsible growth and continuous improvement as our organisation expands



Carbon Offsets

TURNING RESPONSIBILITY INTO ACTION

EFC’s first priority is always reducing emissions at source through smarter operations, sustainable travel solutions and improved event practices.

However, where emissions cannot yet be fully avoided, we take responsibility by investing in high-quality, Gold Standard certified carbon offset projects. These projects not only mitigate our footprint but also deliver social and environmental co-benefits, ensuring our growth is aligned with global climate and community goals.



2023-24

100% CO₂ Offset
(1,134 tCO₂e)

Clean Cooking for Refugees & Host Communities

Bangladesh

592 tCO₂e Offset

Deploys clean cookstoves to improve air quality, reduce emissions and empower women. In 2024 alone: 100,000 cookstoves deployed, 100,000+ families reached.

PET Recycling Emissions Reductions (Greentech)

Romania

342 tCO₂e Offset

First Gold Standard-certified project of its kind in Europe. Avoids landfill waste and cuts emissions from plastic production. Expected to save 45,380+ tCO₂ annually.





BURGAZ Wind Farm

Turkey

200 tCO₂e Offset

Delivers clean, renewable energy to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Supports local green jobs and clean growth.

2024-25

100% CO₂ Offset
(1,197 tCO₂e)

Dinar Wind Power Plant

Turkey

597 tCO₂e

This 78.2 MW wind farm in Turkey's Dinar County generates 175 GWh of renewable electricity each year, helping to reduce over 103,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions, supporting local employment, and region's renewable energy infrastructure.

Clean Cooking Project

Bangladesh

600 tCO₂e

Distributed 100,000+ efficient cookstoves to Rohingya refugees and marginalised communities in 2024. The project cut over 216,000 tCO₂ by reducing fuelwood use, while improving household health, safety and resilience.





Climate & Advocacy

UNITING FOOTBALL FOR GLOBAL IMPACT

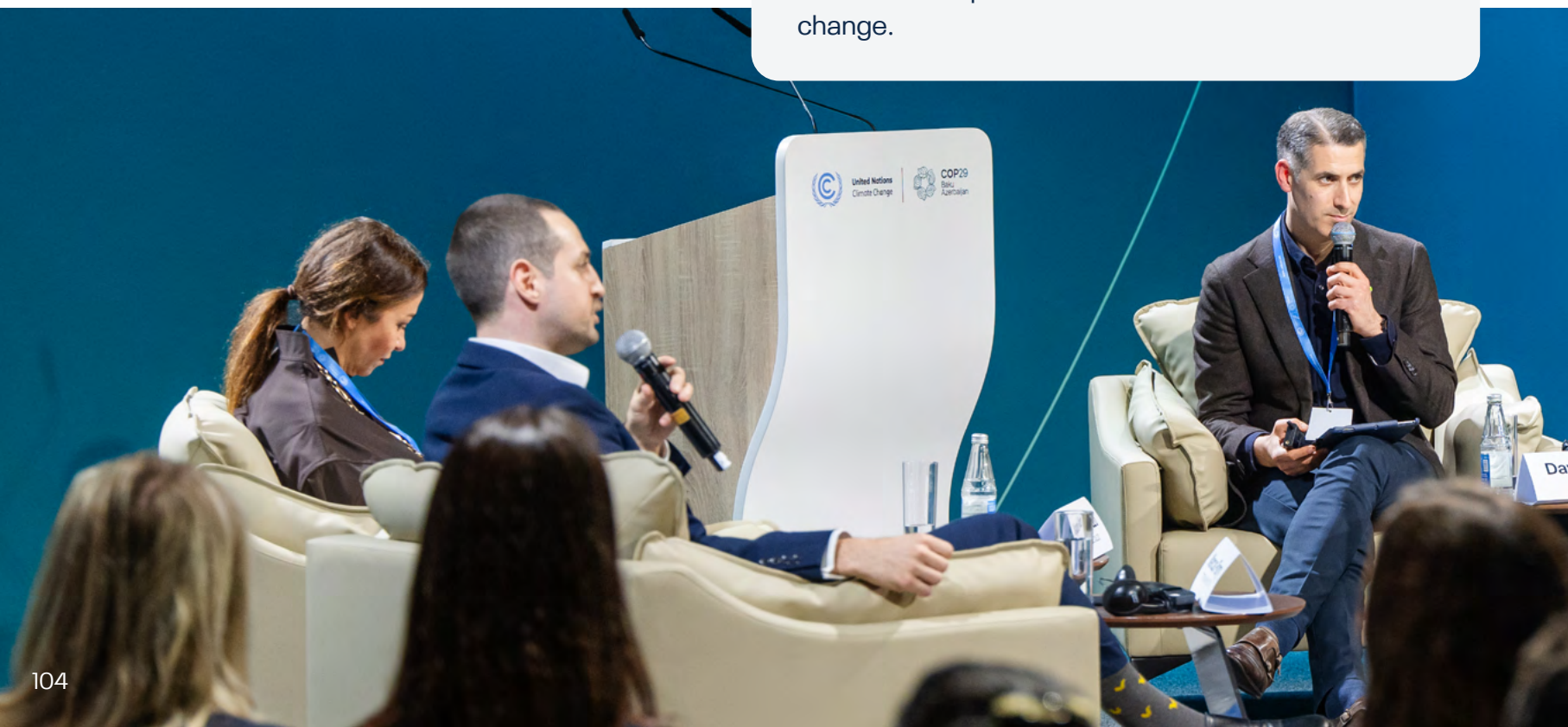
Football is more than a game, it's a platform for global leadership. At EFC, we are stepping up to the climate challenge by turning awareness into action.

EFC at COP29

A HISTORIC FIRST

Blue Zone, Baku – 16 November 2024

For the first time, EFC participated in the UN Climate Change Conference (COP29), hosting a landmark event co-presented with the COP29 Presidency and Qarabağ FK. This milestone placed football at the forefront of international climate discussions, reinforcing the sport's unique power to unite, inspire and lead global climate action. EFC Member Clubs from across Europe gathered in the Blue Zone to showcase pioneering sustainability initiatives and commit to deeper collaboration in the face of climate change.



“At COP29, EFC acknowledges our responsibility to play an active role in combating the climate crisis. We’ve recently published our first Sustainability Strategy and are committed to reducing our carbon emissions by 30% per member by 2030. EFC’s real impact lies in our ability to support our members in implementing strategies to reduce their carbon footprints. This is why we are here today: to launch the Football Clubs Alliance for Climate. Through this alliance and our collaboration with the UNFCCC’s Sports for Climate Action initiative, we are committed to supporting our clubs every step of the way in their climate action journey.”

Charlie Marshall,
EFC CEO





Football Clubs Alliance for Climate

UNITING CLUBS
ACCELERATING ACTION

The Football Clubs Alliance for Climate was formally launched on 16th November 2024 with the signing of a joint declaration by clubs committed to collective climate action.

“Clubs gathered are acting as role models for the rest of the football world.”

Asif Asgarov,

Qarabağ FK Executive Board
Member & EFC Board Member

Founding 11 Signatories:



Atlético de Madrid



Liverpool FC



Qarabağ FK



Fenerbahçe SK



Udinese Calcio



Real Betis Balompié



Flamengo



Malmö FF



Tottenham Hotspur



Galatasaray SK



FC Porto



Climate Advocacy Webinars

EFC continues to act as a catalyst for climate action across European club football, using webinars to inform, inspire and equip clubs with the tools to accelerate progress.

UNFCCC Webinar

Building on COP29 (6 December 2024)

This session introduced EFC's first carbon footprint measurement (2023/24 season), the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework, and clear next steps for climate reporting by clubs. Inspiring video messages from players of founding clubs underlined the urgency and opportunity for football to lead by example.



Webinar on Climate and Advocacy

Engaged over 132 representatives from 110+ Member Clubs

Held jointly with UEFA, this session focused on UEFA's Licensing Requirements and their climate implications. Olympique Lyonnais and Manchester City shared practical insights on embedding sustainability into club operations, offering replicable models for others.



Together, these webinars are helping to build a stronger culture of climate responsibility, supporting clubs in meeting new regulatory demands while amplifying football's collective voice in global climate advocacy.



Event Sustainability

REDUCING IMPACT, INCREASING PURPOSE

Football events are more than matches, they're opportunities to support people and the planet. EFC recognises the influence its events — from forums to our annual General Assembly — can have in modelling sustainable practice across European football. Guided by a set of sustainability principles, EFC is progressively embedding stronger practices into how its events are designed and delivered.



Our Principles in Action



Sustainable Procurement

Prioritising certified, ethical and resource-efficient products and services for events.



Reusable Temporary Infrastructure

Exploring alternatives to single-use structures through modular and reusable designs.



Circular Waste Management & Responsible Disposal

Working towards reducing, reusing and recycling to minimise event waste streams.



Fair Work & Human Rights

Embedding fair labour practices in all event planning and execution.



Accessibility & Inclusion

Ensuring all participants can engage safely and meaningfully in events.



Community & Legacy Benefit

Maximising positive outcomes for local communities and reinforcing long-term social impact.

How EFC is Taking Steps

Sustainable Gifts Catalogue

EFC has developed a Sustainable Gifts Catalogue to guide employees when selecting gifts for members and partners. Each item in the catalogue will be accompanied by clear information on its sustainability certifications and environmental qualities, helping ensure choices are aligned with EFC's principles. The catalogue emphasises:

- Certified sustainable products (e.g. FSC, Fairtrade, organic)
- No single-use plastic and minimising disposable items
- Reduced and recyclable packaging
- Durability and long-term use instead of short-lived items

The aim is to embed sustainability into everyday decision-making and to raise awareness among staff, making the most sustainable choice the most accessible one.

At the 2024 General Assembly in Athens, EFC took things a step further by offering no gifts to general attendees. Instead, the money saved was committed in a local pitch repair project — a simple but powerful way to show how thoughtful choices can deliver real community benefit.

Continuous Improvement

At Club Connect 2025 in Madrid, EFC piloted its new SMS. An internal audit was conducted, providing key insights to refine processes and strengthen future events.



CASE STUDY



Shortlisted for the EFC Environmental Sustainability Award

S04-Mitfahrbörse

FC SCHALKE 04'S RIDE-SHARING PLATFORM

Since January 2024, FC Schalke 04's free "S04-Mitfahrbörse" app has made it easy for fans to arrange carpools for home and away matches, with fan buses also able to offer spare seats. The idea, pitched by members at a club congress, was developed entirely in-house to safeguard member data rather than outsourcing to a third-party provider. Fans offering rides can list their departure time, route and available seats. Others can search in three ways — by start and destination with a date, by a specific match, or by browsing all upcoming rides by departure date — making it easy to find the right trip and plan ahead.





Key Initiatives & Impact

FC Schalke 04's new ride-sharing platform offers the perfect opportunity to form carpools and travel to the Royal Blues' matches together with other Schalke fans. This includes:

- Providing a simple, convenient and environmentally friendly travel option combining social connection with sustainability.
- Helping fans meet and travel together, especially those living further away or without existing contacts in the Schalke community.
- Home and away games, as well as other major stadium events.

Conclusion

With almost 11,000 downloads, the app has generated over 3,000 ride offers and nearly 1,300 carpools, covering more than 300,000 kilometres and saving around 83 tonnes of CO₂. Fans have also used it for concerts by artists including Taylor Swift, AC/DC and Rammstein.

The project showcases Schalke's collaborative approach, with teams across Digital, Sustainability, Marketing, Finance, Fan Affairs, IT, Legal, Purchasing, Media, Communications and Graphics working together to turn a member-driven idea into a successful, community-focused solution.



Strategic Projects & Impact

Global Sustainability Engagement

The club has endorsed the UN's "Sports for Climate Action" Framework and joined "Football for the Goals," committing to halve emissions by 2030 and raise awareness of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through sport. These global alliances reflect AS Roma's alignment with international best practices in sustainability leadership.

CASE STUDY

 Shortlisted for the EFC Environmental Sustainability Award

Leading the Green Revolution

AS ROMA STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS

AS Roma stands out as a football club deeply committed to environmental responsibility. Through its pioneering role in UEFA's "Strength Through Unity – Sustainability Strategy 2030," and active participation in the EFC's Sustainability Working Group (2022-2023), AS Roma is leading by example in embedding climate action and ecological stewardship in sport.

Its sustainability framework spans green operations, circular economy models, nature-based solutions and education, creating long-term value for both the club and the wider community.



“Score a Goal for the Earth”

This flagship reforestation initiative plants three trees for every goal scored by the men’s first team. Developed in collaboration with RomaNatura — the project supports urban biodiversity and enhances Rome’s protected natural reserves — demonstrating how football can contribute to climate resilience.

Food Recovery & Social Solidarity

In partnership with local charities, AS Roma redistributes surplus food from stadium hospitality and its garden to vulnerable families in Rome. More than five tonnes of food have been donated to date. This initiative connects food waste reduction with social inclusion, embodying the principles of circular economy and community support.

Urban Garden: Farm-to-Table at Trigoria

An organic vegetable garden adjacent to AS Roma’s training ground produces over 1,200 kg of fresh food annually. These crops feed players, youth teams and staff, while also serving as a learning hub for local schools. The garden reinforces sustainability education through hands-on experiences and promotes regenerative agriculture practices within the club’s facilities.

Water and Energy Resource Efficiency

AS Roma employs a range of water-saving measures, including groundwater irrigation for pitches and efficient irrigation systems. The club has also reduced plastic use significantly by installing filtered water stations across facilities and continues to explore renewable energy integration as part of its carbon footprint reduction strategy.

Conclusion

AS Roma’s environmental strategy is a powerful example of how professional football can be a platform for systemic change. Through innovative local partnerships, community empowerment and alignment with global climate goals, the club is actively shaping a sustainable legacy that goes far beyond the pitch.

Infrastructure Sustainability

Football's infrastructure provides the stage where communities gather, memories are created and the future of the game is shaped. EFC works with partners and members to ensure that these spaces evolve responsibly, meeting growing expectations on sustainability, accessibility, and efficiency.



Partnership with ESSMA

As part of our strategic agreement with the European Stadium & Safety Management Association (ESSMA), EFC actively contributes to advancing sustainability in stadiums and venues:

10th ESSMA Summit (Jan 2024, Johan Cruyff Arena) & 11th ESSMA Summit (Nov 2024, Madrid)"

EFC took part in key discussions on sustainable venue management.

Sustainability Panel: Regulations, requirements or recommendations? (Nov 2024)

Panel moderation exploring how stadium operators can navigate complex sustainability demands, from CSRD directives to UEFA recommendations, league requirements, and national legislation. Panelists included UEFA, KPMG, and Malmö FF.

Mastermind Sessions

EFC contributed to knowledge exchanges with experts and peers, reinforcing its role as a convener for practical sustainability solutions in football infrastructure.





EFC Headquarters

While EFC does not own its HQ, operating instead from three rented floors in a small building in Nyon housing around 50 employees, sustainability remains a priority. We apply the same principles of efficiency, accessibility, and responsible resource use in our day-to-day HQ operations, demonstrating that progress is possible regardless of ownership status.





CASE STUDY



EFC Environmental Sustainability Award Winner



VfL Wolfsburg

FAIR PLAY FOR NATURE — INNOVATIVE MICROPLASTIC FILTERS FOR ARTIFICIAL TURF PITCHES

VfL Wolfsburg's Fair Play for Nature project addresses the environmental issue of microplastic pollution from artificial turf pitches. Synthetic turf, often filled with plastic granulate, leads to microplastic discharge through regular play and weather conditions, posing a significant threat to ecosystems and human health. The club partnered with Guppyfriend and tested with independent test institutes to install custom-built filters designed to capture these microplastics, aiming to reduce environmental impact while recycling turf material.

Key Initiatives & Impact

Microplastic Filter Installation

VfL Wolfsburg installed innovative filters around artificial turf pitches to capture microplastic granulate released during play and washed off by rain. The collected material is then recycled for use on the pitch.

Collaboration with Guppyfriend & Fraunhofer Institute

The club worked with start-ups and research institutions to develop filters for washing machines and exhaust air dryers to capture microplastics from clothing.



Environmental & Industry Recognition

Since 2022, over 2,000 kg of microplastic granulate has been retained. The project has earned industry accolades, including the ESSMA Stadium Industry Award, and inspired other local authorities and clubs to adopt similar solutions.

Biodiversity Commitment

The project supports VfL Wolfsburg's broader sustainability strategy, which includes initiatives to protect biodiversity and the environment. It aligns with the club's role as the first German club to join the Sports for Nature initiative.

Conclusion

VfL Wolfsburg's Fair Play for Nature project showcases how football clubs can lead in environmental stewardship through innovation and collaboration. The project has proven effective in capturing microplastics and recycling turf materials, offering a scalable model for other clubs and municipalities. Key learnings include the importance of cross-sector partnerships in developing practical, environmentally friendly solutions and the potential for football clubs to inspire positive change within their communities and the wider sports industry.



CASE STUDY



Shortlisted for the EFC Environmental Sustainability Award

Club Atlético de Madrid

SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT

In response to the increasing challenges posed by climate change, Club Atlético de Madrid has developed its first Sustainable Water Management Plan. Recognising the critical role water plays in both human life and the club's operations, the plan focuses on reducing water consumption and maximising the use of recovered water. This initiative is part of the club's broader commitment to sustainability and resource conservation.

Key Initiatives & Impact

Water Consumption Audit and Management

The club conducted an external audit to assess its water usage across operations. Based on the findings, the club identified key areas for improvement and implemented measures to optimise water use.

Recovered Water Usage

As a result of the plan, 34% of the total average water consumption for the pitch over the past 32 months has been covered by recovered water, significantly reducing the club's reliance on potable water.

Sustainable Water Practices

The plan also includes ongoing monitoring and further improvements to reduce water usage, focusing on sustainability and minimising the environmental impact of water consumption.



Conclusion

Club Atlético de Madrid's Sustainable Water Management Plan highlights the importance of proactive resource management in addressing climate change. By recovering and reusing water, the club has achieved significant reductions in its environmental footprint. Key learnings include the value of conducting thorough audits to identify improvement areas and the long-term benefits of adopting sustainable water practices for both operational efficiency and environmental stewardship.

Final Statement

FINAL STATEMENT

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SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY
IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

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Final Statement

In just 14 months since the launch of our sustainability strategy, EFC has successfully achieved 35 out of 47 short-term sustainability objectives with still 7 months left to go — a progress rate of 74%.

This includes:



These results demonstrate not only the speed of our progress, but also the depth of commitment from across our organisation and our members. Together, we have turned ambition into measurable action, embedding sustainability into the way European clubs operate and collaborate.

This level of progress at the two-thirds stage of our journey shows that we are on track and indeed accelerating, towards fulfilling our commitments. More importantly, it underscores that EFC’s sustainability strategy is not a standalone project, but a driver of cultural change across football governance, operations and community impact.

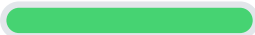
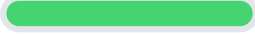
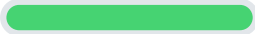
As we move into the final phase of this cycle, our focus will be on consolidating achievements, advancing the remaining objectives with the same determination and preparing for the next horizon of impact. Our responsibility is clear: to ensure football continues to be a powerful force for positive transformation, inside the game and far beyond it.

For EFC, Sustainability is not an endpoint but a continuous commitment, one that will shape how European club football leads, inspires and creates value for future generations.



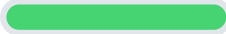
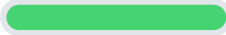
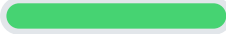
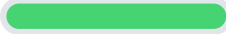
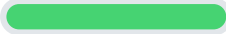
Timeframe: Short-term targets (deadline – 31st December 2025)

Objective	Dimension	Targets
Risk Management	EFC	Initiate sustainability risk assessment covering human rights and environmental protection
Risk Management	Members	Webinar on how to map sustainability risks
Transparency & Accountability	EFC	Create a sustainable procurement policy encompassing common categories of goods and services purchased by EFC (e.g. hotels, venues, food, gifts, dressing & signage materials)
Transparency & Accountability	EFC	Develop EFC Sustainability Policy
Transparency & Accountability	EFC	Sustainability Report (year-based)
Transparency & Accountability	EFC	Development of Sustainability Management System, based on ISO 20121.
Transparency & Accountability	Members	Webinar on sustainable procurement in football
Transparency & Accountability	Members	CSRD Task Force established
Transparency & Accountability	Members	Create guidelines and a training course on selecting KPIs from European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG) protocols.
Training & Capacity Building	EFC	Train all employees on sustainability and pertinent topics in football sustainability
Training & Capacity Building	Members	Create a training programme for clubs’ sustainability managers
Communication	EFC	Establish a sustainability-focused page on the EFC website
Communication	Members	Launch a communication campaign on one sustainability topic
Communication	Members	Launch the EFC Sustainability Award for EFC Members

KPIs	Progress	Page Index
Done/not done		Pages 40 - 41
Number of EFC members and other clubs attending		Page 36
Done/not done		Pages 43, 108 - 109
Done/not done		Page 42
Done/not done		All pages
Done/not done		Page 42
Number of EFC members and other clubs attending		-
Number of meetings.		Pages 27, 46 - 47
Done/not done		Pages 46 - 47
Number of training sessions organised. Number of EFC employees trained.		Pages 60 - 61
Programme established		Pages 58 - 59
Done/not done		EFC Website
Number of views, impressions, likes		Pages 32-33, 50-53, 56-57
Number of Members participating		Pages 54-55 44-45, 48-49, 62-63, 70-71, 78-79, 82-85, 88-89, 98-99, 110-113, 116-119

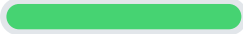
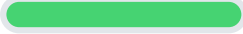
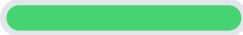
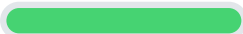
Timeframe: Short-term targets (deadline – 31st December 2025)

Objective	Dimension	Targets
Anti-Racism	EFC	Revise EFC job descriptions template to include an anti-discrimination clause
Anti-Racism	Members	Disseminate best practices for establishing a system to report and address discrimination incidents within clubs
Anti-Racism	Members	Create a service for Member Clubs to remove hate content from their social media accounts
Anti-Racism	Members	Webinar with UEFA on anti-racism licensing requirements
Child & Youth Protection	EFC	Identify experts within the Youth Football department who possess combined knowledge in child and youth protection and coaching to collaborate on training initiatives
Child & Youth Protection	Members	Webinar with UEFA on child and youth protection licensing requirements
Child & Youth Protection	Members	All EFC members with a focal point/officer
Equality & Inclusion	EFC	An annual equality monitoring survey is distributed to all employees to gain insights into our workforce and enhance our support for them.
Equality & Inclusion	EFC	ED&I Panel established
Equality & Inclusion	EFC	Empower EFC female staff through training and mentorship events
Equality & Inclusion	EFC	Create a system for reporting discrimination incidents and ensure responsive action within EFC.

KPIs	Progress	Page Index
Done/not done		Page 66
Number of best practices shared		Pages 66-67
Done/not done		-
Number of EFC members and other clubs attending		Page 66
Number of staff attending training/number of training sessions delivered		Pages 68-69
Done/not done		Page 69
Number of clubs with a focal point/officer		-
% of staff answering the survey		Pages 76-77
Done/not done		Pages 26, 73
Number of women involved/number of events created		Pages 72 - 75
Done/not done		-

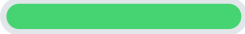
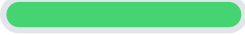
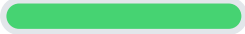
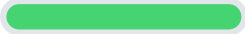
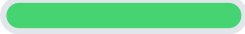
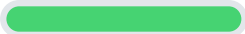
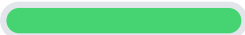
Timeframe: Short-term targets (deadline – 31st December 2025)

Objective	Dimension	Targets
Equality & Inclusion	Members	Webinar with UEFA on equality and inclusion licensing requirements
Equality & Inclusion	Members	Webinars and events on equality and inclusion topics
Equality& Inclusion	Members	Develop an ED&I policy for EFC Campus Educational Programme
Equality & Inclusion	Members	Conduct research to identify the primary barriers to female representation in C-level and administrative roles within clubs
Football for All Abilities	EFC	Create a mechanism to ensure accessibility in all EFC activities, including documents, activities and working spaces
Football for All Abilities	Members	Webinar with UEFA on football for all abilities licensing requirements
Football for All Abilities	Members	Share best practices and training materials to improve stadium accessibility and enhance the match experience for all members
Health & wellbeing	EFC	EFC staff needs assessment
Health & wellbeing	Members	Webinar on the importance of sport for physical and mental health and wellbeing.
Refugee Support	EFC	EFC Foundation constitution
Solidarity & Rights	EFC	Risk assessment on human rights.

KPIs	Progress	Page index
Number of EFC members and other clubs attending		Page 73
Number of participants / Number of events		Pages 72-73
Done/not done		Pages 72-73
Done/not done		Page 73
Done/not done		-
Number of EFC members and other clubs that attended the webinar		Page 80
Number of best practices shared		Pages 80-81
Done/not done		Pages 77, 86-87
Number of EFC members and other clubs attending		-
Done/not done		Pages 90-91
Done/not done		Pages 40-41

Timeframe: Short-term targets (deadline – 31st December 2025)

Objective	Dimension	Targets
Circular Economy	Members	Webinar with UEFA on circular economy licensing requirements.
Circular Economy	Members	Develop concise summaries of UEFA circular economy guidelines for food and beverages, energy and water, apparel and football equipment and event materials.
Climate and Advocacy	EFC	Measure carbon footprint to pinpoint key contributors and develop a CO2e emission reduction strategy
Climate and Advocacy	EFC	Carbon offsetting for unavoidable emissions
Climate and Advocacy	Members	Webinar with UEFA on climate and advocacy licensing requirements.
Climate and Advocacy	Members	Assist members in adopting the UEFA Carbon Footprint Calculator.
Event Sustainability	EFC	Identify and measure critical elements (e.g. dressing and signage, food, merchandise) for waste generation during EFC events.
Event Sustainability	EFC	Implement internal guidelines to reduce the environmental impact of transportation to attend EFC events.
Event Sustainability	Members	Sustainable Venue Panel established
Event Sustainability	Members	Establish partnerships (UEFA, ESSMA, EU Commission etc.) on event sustainability
Infrastructure Sustainability	Members	Webinar on the UEFA Sustainable Infrastructure Guidelines.

KPIs	Progress	Page index
Number of EFC members and other clubs attending		Page 97
Done/not done		-
Done/not done		Pages 100 - 101
Done/not done		Pages 102 - 103
Number of EFC members and other clubs attending		Pages 107
Number of EFC members that adopt the UEFA Carbon Footprint Calculator		-
Done/not done		Pages 108 - 109
Done/not done		Pages 108 - 109
Done/not done		Page 27
Number of partnerships		Page 114
Number of EFC members and other clubs attending		-



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