

Women's Football

General introduction

Worldwide, 29 million girls and women play football

Key figures:

- 29 million women and girls play football worldwide
- 12% of youth players are female
- Women and girls play football in all **208** FIFA member associations *in one way or another*
- 24** teams will participate in the FIFA Women's World Cup Canada **2015™**
- In **1971**, **3** teams played **2** matches – in 2011, **129** teams played **514** matches

One of FIFA's missions is to promote the development of women's football, support women's football financially and give women players, coaches, referees and officials the opportunity to become actively involved in football. FIFA is helping to popularise the game by increasing public awareness and conducting information campaigns as well as overcoming social and cultural obstacles for women with the ultimate aim of improving women's standing in society.

FIFA's mission for women's football:

- To promote and develop women's and girls' football in the confederations and member associations;
- To improve the infrastructure of women's football in the confederations and member associations;
- To increase the proportion of women and girls playing football at the grassroots, in schools and at amateur and professional levels;
- To constantly improve the quality, organisation and expansion of FIFA women's football competitions;
- To create conditions for more women to occupy technical and managerial positions in football, including the domains of refereeing, coaching, medicine, media and administration;
- To increase the level of expertise of female coaches, players, referees, doctors, officials and any other women's football stakeholders worldwide, through courses, seminars and other capacity-building activities;
- To establish and publicise a coordinated international match calendar for women's football;
- To analyse and monitor technical developments in women's football;
- To organise women's football symposiums and conferences.

Development – FIFA support to the member associations

FIFA women's football development programmes:

FIFA women's football development programmes offer member associations multifaceted support ranging from expertise and teaching and promotional material to football equipment and financial assistance. The programmes on offer for the next four years will strive to encourage and create competition opportunities at all levels for women and girls.

Eleven programmes distributed in four main areas for football development – competitions, management, education and promotion – are available to the member associations for the period 2012-2015. This includes a programme focused on supporting member associations' women's leagues and competitions and another one targeting young girls through festivals and promotional initiatives.

FIFA encourages the member associations to request programmes that fit their needs and which are in line with their own women's football development strategy.

For more information, please refer to the FIFA Women's Development Programmes Guidelines 2012-2015:
http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/footballdevelopment/women/01/57/10/97/womensfootballdevprogr_e.pdf

Financial Assistance Programme (FAP)

FIFA provides financial assistance to the 208 member associations. Each member association receives a total amount of USD 1 million over a period of four years, which represents USD 250,000 each year. The member associations have to spend at least 15% (USD 37,500) of this amount on women's football development according to [FIFA circular letter no. 1169](#).

Link: <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/financialassistance/index.html>

The confederations also each receive USD 2,500,000 USD per year and have to allocate at least 15% to women's football.

Material and football equipment

Within the framework of FIFA's women's football development programmes, FIFA provides teaching and coaching manuals as well as promotional material and DVDs to support the member associations' projects. Furthermore, FIFA provides football equipment for FIFA coaching and refereeing courses as well as for girls' festivals and women's leagues.

Aside from the specific women's football development programmes, member associations can also seek support for their women's football initiatives through other FIFA programmes such as *Goal*, PERFORMANCE, and FIFA Grassroots for boys and girls.

FIFA Goal Programme

The *Goal* Programme allows member associations to devise, plan and finance football projects such as infrastructure, including headquarters and technical centres, competition organisation, IT assets, football equipment, talent academies and competition logistics. Member associations can apply for *Goal* projects focused on women's football, e.g. academies, changing rooms.

Link: <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/projects/goalprogramme/index.html>

PERFORMANCE: The Football Management Programme of FIFA

The PERFORMANCE programme focuses on various intervention areas and services based on three crucial pillars: strategic, organisational and technical. Member associations can also include women's football among their priorities for this programme.

Link: <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/performance/index.html>

FIFA Grassroots Programme

The Grassroots Programme is an initiative in which FIFA, its member associations and their respective education authorities work closely together to encourage young children to learn about football and human values and to enjoy the game as much as possible. In short, it aims to bring happiness to children the world over.

Link: <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/technicalsupport/grassroots/index.html>

Competitions

There are three committees fully dedicated to the women's football competitions:

The Committee for Women's Football and the FIFA Women's World Cup™

The Organising Committee for the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup

The Organising Committee for the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup

The committees organise the FIFA Women's World Cup™ and the FIFA U-20 and U-17 Women's World Cups respectively, in compliance with the provisions of the regulations and agreements applicable to the respective competitions, mainly the Hosting and Bidding Agreement, and deal with any other issues relating to women's football.

- The competitions organised by FIFA:

This competition format mirrors the one for men/boys, so FIFA has the same competition categories for women and men (U-15 Youth Olympic Football Tournaments, U-17, U-20, Olympics and World Cup).

The FIFA Women's World Cup™ is played every 4 years (since 1991) with 16 teams (24 teams as from 2015).

The FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup is played every 2 years (since 2002) with 16 teams (from 2002 until 2004 it was an U-19 event with 12 teams).

The FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup is played every 2 years (since 2008) with 16 teams.

The Women's Olympic Football Tournament is played every 4 years (since 1996) with 12 teams (1996 and 2000 with 8 teams, 2004 with 10 teams, as of 2008 with 12 teams).

The Girls' (U-15) Youth Olympic Football Tournament is played every 4 years (since 2010) with 6 teams – 1 per confederation.

- The FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking:

The FIFA Women's World Ranking is published four times a year. With this ranking, FIFA aims to contribute substantially to further arousing global interest in the women's game and stimulate discussion. At the same time, this service provides football fans and national players with a realistic comparative assessment. On a more technical note, it enables FIFA and others to better assess the development of specific teams and of the game in general. With the FIFA Women's World Cup™ as an established feature in the international football calendar, the FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking is designed to give a comprehensive insight into the current strength of the national teams that represent their countries in women's football.

Link: <http://www.fifa.com/worldranking/rankingtable/women/index.html>

FIFA also has the same award structure for men and for women (best player of the year, best coach of the year, and also Golden Ball, Golden Boot, etc. for each competition).

Specific campaign: "Live Your Goals"

FIFA launched a new initiative to inspire women and girls all over the world to participate in football during the FIFA Women's World Cup Germany 2011. Featuring some of the stars of this summer's FIFA Women's World Cup, "Live Your Goals" is targeting the next generation of women's footballers around the globe.

With "Live Your Goals", FIFA is aiming to use the popularity not only of the 2011 tournament, but also forthcoming editions of other FIFA women's competitions, as a catalyst to encourage young women and girls to participate in the sport. The campaign highlights the many different benefits active participation in football brings for young women and girls, ranging from making friends, learning about teamwork and being physically active to coping with challenging situations, emotions and success.

"The 'Live Your Goals' campaign is aimed at showing young girls that football is a great way to spend their time, from a social level with friends right up to the professional level at which the players featured in the campaign are playing," **said FIFA President Joseph S. Blatter**. "It gives me great pleasure to see the number of women playing football all over the world increasing. As I have always said, football truly is a game for everyone."

Featuring some top players from the women's game, such as Germany's rising star Kim Kulig and Canada's captain Christine Sinclair, the campaign highlights the challenges which women face to establish themselves in the world of football. The determination, enthusiasm and commitment that it takes to reach the top levels of the women's game are also very apparent in each of the players' stories.

Link to the website: www.FIFA.com/liveyourgoals

FIFA Women's Football Symposium

Since 1999, every four years at the FIFA Women's World Cup, FIFA has organised a symposium on women's football to give support and direction to further develop the game.

The 2011 Symposium held in Germany brought together over 550 representatives of FIFA's member associations from each corner of the world to discuss the current and future development of women's football. The overall objectives of the symposium were structure, increasing participation and promotion of the game.

Link: <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/technicalsupport/women/symposium.html>

Other topics related to women's football development

Health and fitness of the female player:

<http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/technicalsupport/women/health.html>

Resource kit:

<http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/technicalsupport/women/resourcekit.html>

FIFA Ambassadors:

<http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/technicalsupport/women/ambassadors.html>