



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**BETWEEN**  
**THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**  
**AND**  
**THE FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE**  
**DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (FIFA)**  
**(HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS “FIFA”)**

Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Europe and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”.

Whereas:

The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its member States for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles that are their common heritage. In pursuit of this objective, the core values for which the Council of Europe stands are human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Sport plays a fundamental role in the realisation of the aim of the Council of Europe by promoting its key values in and through sport and reinforcing the bonds between peoples. The Council of Europe advocates fair play and respect in sport, helping make sport safe, ethical and accessible to all. This work contributes to inclusive, democratic societies which respect human rights and the rule of law.

The Council of Europe pursues its aims inter alia by facilitating inter-governmental dialogue and co-operation in the development of legal instruments, associating relevant stakeholders to its standard-setting activities. Its action also involves monitoring compliance with standards and the provision of technical support to member States for the implementation of standards, as well as awareness raising initiatives targeting specific groups and/or the general public.

Several Council of Europe treaties<sup>1</sup> are particularly relevant in the field of sport, setting up the backdrop against which legislations and policies in Europe must evolve to guarantee safety, security and services at football matches; to fight doping, corruption and the manipulation of sports competitions, to combat violence against women as well as sexual exploitation and abuse of children. These treaties are open to accession by non-European States and are used as a reference by other internationally established bodies.

One of FIFA’s statutory objectives is to improve the game of football constantly and to promote its global reach in the light of its unifying, educational, cultural and humanitarian values, particularly through youth and development programmes.

FIFA promotes integrity, ethics and fair play with a view to preventing all methods or practices, such as corruption, doping or match manipulation, which might jeopardise the integrity of matches, competitions, players, officials and member associations or give rise to abuse of association football.

In its Human Rights Policy, FIFA recognises its obligation to uphold the inherent dignity and equal rights of everyone involved in and affected by its activities. The Human Rights Policy specifies FIFA’s statutory human rights commitment and outlines FIFA’s approach to its implementation in accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Article 3 of FIFA’s Statutes states that FIFA is committed to respecting all internationally recognised human rights and will strive to promote the protection of these rights.

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<sup>1</sup> These include: The Anti-Doping Convention (ETS No. 135, 1989) and its additional Protocol (ETS No. 188, 2002); the Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (CETS No. 215, 2014); the Council of Europe Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (CETS No. 218, 2016); the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197, 2005); the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210, 2011) and the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (CETS No. 201, 2010); the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption (ETS No. 173, 1999) and its Protocol (ETS No. 191, 2003); the Civil Law Convention on Corruption (ETS No. 174, 1999).

In pursuit of its objectives, FIFA engages in dialogue with European institutions, international and intergovernmental organisations and with national authorities, in order to contribute to the development of norms and standards.

In the pursuit of their objectives, the Parties recognise the importance of close co-operation between public authorities and sports organisations, both in respect of making sport activities accessible to everyone and also in disseminating the diverse sport content.

The Parties have reached the following understanding:

## **1. BASIS FOR CO-OPERATION**

The Council of Europe and FIFA recognise that:

- 1.1. Football is intended for all citizens, regardless of gender, race, age, disability, religion, nationality, sexual orientation and social background. Diversity must be promoted in and through sport and any kind of discrimination – either institutional or social – must be rejected;
- 1.2. The European sports model, characterised by a democratic, territorial and pyramid shaped structure, is based on sporting and financial solidarity mechanisms, such as the principle of promotion and relegation, open competitions with a balance between clubs and national teams, and a symbiotic relationship between elite and amateur sport;
- 1.3. As the development of new talent is one of the core activities of sports clubs, policies designed to encourage the local training and education of athletes should be strengthened. Furthermore, appropriate measures should be devised to protect the welfare and physical integrity of young players, and to protect the human dignity of athletes in general;
- 1.4. National teams can be a powerful symbol for social integration, particularly when men and women from minority groups and marginalised communities are selected to play alongside one another;
- 1.5. More co-operation between the different stakeholders in the fight against major threats for football, such as violence, stigma and discrimination, doping or match fixing, is necessary; appropriate legal frameworks, including possible further development of existing standards and a more co-ordinated approach from public authorities and sports organisations will help tackle these issues in a timely and effective manner;
- 1.6. The further implementation of good governance in sport is key to achieving financial predictability, sustainability of sport and to protecting its autonomy.
- 1.7. Major sporting events have the potential to deliver a legacy of positive and lasting changes at social, political and economic level.

## **2. AREAS AND OBJECTIVES OF CO-OPERATION**

The aim of this Memorandum of Understanding is to create a framework for strengthening and further developing synergies, co-operation and, where appropriate, partnerships between the Parties. This framework in itself is not legally binding for either Party. Specific arrangements may be concluded for carrying out joint activities. The Council of Europe and FIFA will take all the necessary measures to promote their co-operation by exchanging views on their respective activities and by preparing and implementing common strategies and programmes for the priorities and areas of shared interest set out below.

### *Human Rights, Integrity and Good Governance in sport*

- 2.1. Protection and promotion of **human rights** in the context of sport activities,<sup>2</sup> including by using football events as a leverage. Particular efforts will aim at:
  - 2.1.1. combatting violence against women and promoting gender equality, including by further developing a gender sensitive approach in policies and measures and countering gender stereotypes and sociocultural barriers;
  - 2.1.2. promoting and protecting the rights of children and vulnerable adults involved in sport activities;
  - 2.1.3. preventing and combating discrimination of any kind in football.
- 2.2. Promoting a culture of **clean sport** and effective independent anti-doping processes, respecting the rights of the participants;
- 2.3. Preventing and combatting match fixing building upon the relevant Council of Europe conventions, including the Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sport Competitions (CETS No. 215, 2014);
- 2.4. Promoting **good governance** in sport, in particular compliance of the FIFA member associations with its key principles, such as democracy, gender equality, stakeholder's involvement, transparency, accountability, solidarity and checks and balances, as well as with the relevant anti-corruption standards.

### *Safety and Security at Football Matches*

- 2.5. The Parties undertake to co-operate in promoting an integrated **Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches**, in co-operation with relevant public and private stakeholders.

### *Major Sport Events*

- 2.6. The Parties express their wish to develop their mutually beneficial dialogue and co-operation in view of major football events, namely in those taking place in Europe or including European teams.

### *Institutional Co-operation*

- 2.7. The Parties will continue to enhance their co-operation by the way of regular exchanges of views, good practices, and the development of joint initiatives and co-ordination of operational activities.
- 2.8. FIFA is committed to exchanging best practices with the Council of Europe bodies in charge of human rights, anti-doping, safety, security and services at sport events, sport governance and anti-corruption.

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<sup>2</sup> Including through the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

### 3. COMMUNICATION

The Parties will agree on how to communicate on their shared objectives and joint actions related to the implementation of this memorandum of understanding. They will explore together possible themes for high profile communication projects or campaigns.

### 4. IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1. Every two years, after the adoption of the Council of Europe Programme of Activities for the biennium, the Parties will jointly review their co-operation and identify the specific activities or projects to be implemented during the next biennium. These activities and projects will be reflected in a **Co-operation Plan** with a respective road map, to be included in an exchange of letters between the Parties and intended to become immediately effective.
- 4.2. Each Party will manage its own budget. Without prejudice to specific agreements on a case-by-case basis, joint action will not give rise to financial contributions, compensation or reimbursement by either Party.
- 4.3. The implementation of joint activities shall be subject to the availability of adequate resources to be determined by each Party in accordance with their respective rules and regulations.
- 4.4. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall be interpreted as obliging either of the Parties to take part in, contribute to or in any other way support any activities planned or action proposed or undertaken by the other Party.
- 4.5. Upon signature of this Memorandum of Understanding, each Party will appoint a liaison person and a deputy for the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding. The liaison persons will in particular be in charge of revising and updating the detailed objectives and strategies of co-operation for each biennium, by the way of regular exchanges of views. This is without prejudice to persons entrusted with specific activities, who will communicate directly with each other while keeping the liaison persons informed. Any changes concerning the liaison person will be promptly notified to the other Party.
- 4.6. The Parties will contribute to the preparation of a stocktaking document at least once every 24 months following the entry into operation of this Memorandum of Understanding. This is without prejudice to more regular reporting which may be required by the governing bodies of each Party.

### 5. ENTRY INTO OPERATION, AMENDMENTS AND TERMINATION

This Memorandum of Understanding will enter into operation upon its signature by the Parties. Amendments will be agreed by both Parties in writing.

This Memorandum will remain in effect until terminated by mutual consent or by either of the two Parties at any time, giving three months' written notice.

## 6. FINAL PROVISIONS

This Agreement is an expression of common understanding and does not create legally binding rights or obligations under international or domestic law. Any dispute, controversy or claim arising out of or in relation to this Agreement will be settled by the Parties through good faith negotiations.

Signed in Strasbourg on 5 October 2018, in English, in two copies.

**For the Fédération Internationale  
de Football Association (FIFA)**

*(signed)*

Gianni INFANTINO  
President

**For the Council of Europe**

*(signed)*

Thorbjørn JAGLAND  
Secretary General