



UEFA

GRASSROOTS  
PROGRAMME

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UEFA GRASSROOTS PROGRAMME

# Charter Guidelines



## UEFA's Vision

- Football is based on the grassroots, played everywhere by men and women, boys and girls. The top professional level is just the tip of the iceberg. UEFA will continue with, and even strengthen solidarity, both to protect the future of football and to deliver the wider benefits that our sport brings to society as a whole. And it is also because the strength of football lies in its grassroots that we have to preserve the local, regional and national identities of our game, always in accordance with the law.  
(No5 of UEFA's 11 values)
- The UEFA Grassroots Programme is a "vehicle for educational, social and sporting development"  
(Michel Platini, UEFA President, at the UEFA Presidents and General Secretaries Conference in Prague in 2011)
- "We have the best product in the world but we must continually refine it and adapt it to future needs. (...) We must all focus on our local societies and decide how we can make them a little better."  
(Per Omdal, UEFA Grassroots Ambassador, in the 14th edition of the UEFA Grassroots Newsletter)

It is with this background that UEFA in conjunction with the national associations developed and promotes the UEFA Grassroots charter.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. For whom is the Grassroots Charter intended?

- UEFA member associations only

### 1.2. What is the purpose of the revised Grassroots Charter?

- In cooperation with its member associations, for UEFA to support, stimulate, recognise and reward the development of grassroots football at national level

### 1.3. What are the benefits of the revised Grassroots Charter for national associations?

- A tool to assist in the self-evaluation of grassroots programmes and to help plan accordingly
- Recognition by UEFA of effective grassroots football providers
- Added value of UEFA recognition in the eyes of clubs, regional associations, sponsors, governments, etc.
- Use of the UEFA grassroots logo
- Continued, earmarked financial assistance from UEFA

### 1.4. Why have the previous Grassroots Charter criteria been changed?

- To address weaknesses identified in the previous system, which included the following:
  - the system appeared over-complicated;
  - the focus was almost exclusively on attracting players, with little emphasis on retention;
  - having seven stars increased the gap between the weaker and the more developed associations;
  - the ten associations having six stars would also be eligible for seven stars;
  - the differences between the sixth and seventh stars were not defined clearly enough;
  - the criteria for the seventh star were not easy to measure.
- To rationalise and re-order the present seven tiers into three, as follows:
  - Basic level: Bronze
  - Advanced level: Silver
  - Top level: Gold
- To create transparent and objective criteria which are clear, measurable and consistent. Reliable data are therefore required which will also enhance the national associations' ability to *effectively* audit, monitor and plan their grassroots football programmes.
- UEFA recognises the need for the Grassroots Charter to reflect the demographic, economic and social changes to which grassroots football has been exposed since the launch of the Charter in 2006. It must therefore place more emphasis on the retention of players as well as initial growth.

### 1.5. What are the new Grassroots Charter criteria?

Please see Section 2 for an overview of the new criteria, then read Section 3, which explains in more detail the criteria and benchmarks. Please note that the benchmarks are based on data collected over a three-year period.

#### 1.6. How do the new criteria work?

- The associations need to meet all benchmarks to gain the award for each level.
- Regional meetings will be organised under the Study Group Scheme umbrella to inform and support the national associations.
- In order to measure participation, the criteria of 'registered player has been selected. A registered player is defined for the purpose of the UEFA Grassroots Charter as an 'individual player registered with the national association via an affiliated club, league or regional association playing regularly on a seasonal or annual basis'. Players at schools, colleges or universities can only be included if they are registered by some means with the national association (i.e. via clubs, leagues or regional associations), and playing regularly on a seasonal or annual basis. They also may only be counted if they take part in football competitions approved by the national association and may not be counted if they are already registered with the national association by another means.

## 2. UEFA Grassroots Charter: from good to GREAT!

	<b>GROWTH</b>	<b>RETENTION</b>	<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>ALWAYS FAIR PLAY</b>	<b>TERMS</b>
	<p>a) Number of registered players as a percentage of the country's overall population</p> <p>OR</p> <p>b) Growth in the total number of players as a percentage of the country's overall population over a three-year period</p> <p><u>AND</u></p> <p>c) Number of female players as a percentage of the total number of registered players</p>	<p>a) Number of registered players aged 18 or over as a percentage of those under the age of 18</p> <p>OR</p> <p>b) Growth in the number of registered players aged 18 or over in a three-year period</p>	<p>a) Number of teams coached by someone with at least the UEFA Leader's Certificate</p> <p>OR</p> <p>b) Growth in the number of teams coached by someone with at least the UEFA Leader's Certificate over a three-year period</p> <p><u>AND</u></p> <p>c) Number of women with at least the UEFA Leader's Certificate as a percentage of the total number of coaches</p>	<p>Inclusive programmes for the whole community, reflecting an emphasis on fair play and respect in all grassroots activities</p>	<p>Other preconditions of the relevant level</p>
GOLD BENCH - MARKS	<p>a) Minimum of 5% of the overall population</p> <p>b) Minimum growth of 0.2% over the three-year period</p> <p>c) depending on the growth margins (see guidelines, 3.2)</p>	<p>a) The number of registered players aged 18 or over must be at least 90% of the number of registered players under the age of 18</p> <p>b) Minimum growth of 5%</p>	<p>a) Minimum of 10% of all teams coached by someone with at least the UEFA Leader's Certificate</p> <p>b) Minimum growth of 2%</p> <p>c) Women holding at least the UEFA Leader's Certificate must account for at least 3% of all coaches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimum of two fair play programmes</li> <li>- Minimum of four social programmes (of which at least two must concern disability football)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Silver level already achieved</li> <li>- System for recording the name, age and gender of each registered player</li> <li>- System for registering the gender and qualifications of each coach and checking for criminal records</li> <li>- Minimum of one programme to attract and support club organisers</li> <li>- Prepared to mentor other associations</li> <li>- Minimum of two nationwide grassroots programmes with schools</li> </ul>
SILVER BENCH - MARKS	<p>a) Minimum of 3% of the overall population</p> <p>b) Minimum growth of 0.1% over the three-year period</p> <p>c) depending on the growth margins (see guidelines, 3.2)</p>	<p>a) The number of registered players aged 18 or over must be at least 50% of the number of registered players under the age of 18</p> <p>b) Minimum growth of 1%</p>	<p>a) Minimum of 5% of all teams coached by someone with at least the UEFA Leader's Certificate</p> <p>b) Minimum growth of 1.5%</p> <p>c) Women holding at least the UEFA Leader's Certificate must account for at least 1.5% of all coaches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimum of two fair play programmes</li> <li>- Minimum of two social programmes (of which at least one must concern disability football)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bronze level already achieved</li> <li>- System for recording the age and gender of each registered player</li> <li>- System for recording the gender and qualifications of each coach</li> <li>- Prepared to mentor other associations</li> <li>- Minimum of one nationwide grassroots programme with schools</li> </ul>
BRONZE BENCH - MARKS	<p>a) Minimum of 1% of the overall population</p> <p>b) Numbers must remain stable over the three-year period</p> <p>c) depending on the growth margins (see guidelines, 3.2). In addition, an action plan in place for women's and girls football</p>	<p>a) The number of registered players aged 18 or over must be at least 10% of the number of registered players under the age of 18</p>	<p>UEFA grassroots leader courses and C certificate courses must be available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimum of one fair play programme and one social programme relating to disability football</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evidence of an agreed grassroots plan as part of the national association's strategy, in line with the UEFA Grassroots Charter guidelines</li> <li>- Dedicated grassroots manager</li> <li>- System for estimating the number of registered players by age and gender</li> </ul>

### 3. The revised Grassroots Charter criteria and benchmarks explained

#### 3.1. Terms

- Grassroots plan

National associations will still be required to provide evidence of a grassroots plan as part of their strategy. This plan will need to include:

- a code of conduct for players, leaders, parents and club organisers with reference to expectations, fair play, respect, acceptable behaviour, etc. (anti-racism/bigotry guidelines, fair play policy, inclusion of women);
  - a committee responsible for grassroots football;
  - a dedicated budget for grassroots football activities and administration;
  - a grassroots manager (i.e. a dedicated person responsible for grassroots football);
  - an equity and child protection policy;
  - only grassroots "football" schemes;
  - targets and means of evaluation with regard to growth and retention.
- Registered player data
    - A key requirement of the revised Grassroots Charter is reliable data regarding the number of registered players. The current basis for calculating registered player numbers is the data provided by each national association and published in UEFA's First Division Clubs in Europe<sup>1</sup>.
    - This data is currently provided by the national association press officers to the UEFA media department for this publication.
    - From 1 September 2014, national associations will be required to complete an online registered players form.
    - The form will require the following data:
      - number of registered male and female players aged both 18 and over and under 18 on a given date (e.g. 1 January);
      - number of registered clubs and teams.
    - At bronze level the number of registered players may be an estimate based on the number of teams.
    - At silver level the national association must have a system that records the age and gender of each individual player.
    - At gold level this system must record the name, age and gender of each individual player.

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.uefa.org>library>periodicals](http://www.uefa.org>library>periodicals) or <http://www.uefa.org/documentlibrary/periodicals/firstdivisionclub/index.html>

- Schools
  - In order to stimulate growth (especially among girls), at least ONE nationwide grassroots programme with schools (or colleges/universities) is required at silver level and TWO at gold level.
- Registration of coaches
  - To evaluate the provision of grassroots coaches and leaders in grassroots football, national associations are required to register coaches by gender at silver level and have a process in place to check the criminal records of coaches at gold level (in the context of child protection).
  - In addition, in conjunction with the data collected on teams, national associations at silver and gold levels must record the coaching qualifications of all coaches and team leaders.
- Mentoring
  - National associations at gold and silver level should be prepared to 'mentor' other comparable national associations.
  - Mentoring involves telephone and email communication, and visits as appropriate.
- Club organisers and volunteers
  - Besides the development of registered players and qualified coaches, the number and quality of club organisers and volunteers is another key criterion for grassroots development.

### 3.2. Growth

- The growth criteria reflect UEFA's desire to recognise the efforts of associations which have built up a strong rate of participation or increased their numbers of registered players. Growth is therefore determined as either:
  - the total number of registered players as a percentage of the country's overall population;  
OR
  - growth in the total number of registered players as a percentage of the country's overall population over a three-year period.
- In addition, there is a specific focus put on women's and girls' football. In order to consider both the associations that have already achieved a high level in this field and associations that have lower numbers, growth margins have been established according to the number of female registered players existing within the national associations.
  - Rationale
    - When it comes to girls' and women's football, growing participation levels should be the primary focus.
    - Including specific targets in the growth category of the Grassroots Charter ensures that it is in line with the UEFA Women's Football Development Programme objectives.
    - Growth margins have been set according to six different tiers due to the large difference existing in the levels of development in the women's game, in comparison to the men's game.

- Growth margins proposal

Proposed growth margins based on number of registered players in a national association, to be achieved over a period of three years (in blue= growth margins, in white= upper tier examples)  
 As stipulated below, the associations need to meet all benchmarks to gain the award for each level. This is only one of the 5 categories :

Registered female players	Bronze	Silver	Gold
<b>500 or less</b>	25%	50%	75%
e.g. 2016-17 target if starting with 500	625	750	875
<b>1000 or less</b>	15%	30%	50%
e.g. 2016-17 target if starting with 1000	1150	1300	1500
<b>5000 or less</b>	8%	15%	25%
e.g. 2016-17 target if starting with 5000	5400	5750	6250
<b>20'000 or less</b>	4%	8%	15%
e.g. 2016-17 target if starting with 20'000	20800	21600	23000
<b>60'000 or less</b>	2%	4%	6%
e.g. 2016-17 target if starting with 60'000	61200	62400	63600
<b>60'001 or more</b>	1%	2%	3%
e.g. 2016-17 target if starting with 60'001	60601	61201	61801

- Exceptions due to plateau in growth

For countries that are nearing a plateau in terms of possible growth, i.e. 3% or more of the female population, NAs are exempt from the mentioned growth margins.

National associations having overtaken the 3% threshold of female population playing football are the following:

- Faroe Islands (8%)
- Norway (4.4%)
- Iceland (3.8%)
- Sweden (3.5%)

- Monitoring

The Women’s Football Development sub-unit will monitor the growth margins on a yearly basis to see if the NAs are on track. The margins can be revised in three years’ time.

- Example

Using the above mentioned grid to refer to the relevant growth margins per tier:



- If a national association has 500 players in 2014-15, they must aim to have 875 players in 2016-17 in order to be eligible for “gold” status, i.e. a 75% growth rate, having started out in the “500 or less” category.
- If a national association has 45’000 players, they must aim to have 47’700 in 2016-17 in order to be eligible for gold status, i.e. a 6% growth rate, having started out in the “60’000 or less” category.

### 3.3. Retention

- UEFA recognises the importance of retaining players introduced to the game and of nurturing lifelong participation where possible. It is especially important to retain as many teenagers as possible, as tomorrow’s adult volunteers are today’s teenage players. There is also evidence of the commercial value to football as a whole (sponsorship, merchandise, match attendance, TV rights) of grassroots players who remain active in adulthood. It is also only logical to devote time and resources to retaining players, given the time and resources devoted to introducing them to the game in the first place.
- Correspondingly, retention is included as a KEY criterion and is measured as:
  - the number of players aged 18 or over as a percentage of those under the age of 18;
  - OR
  - growth in the number of registered players aged 18 or over in a three-year period;

### 3.4. Education

- It is entirely appropriate that education is another KEY criterion in the revised Grassroots Charter.
- UEFA recognises the great progress made by national associations over the past eight years in the provision of coach and leader education below the UEFA B level (i.e. in the delivery of the UEFA C Grassroots Coach Certificate and the UEFA Leaders Certificate).
- UEFA notes with admiration that, according to data provided, over a quarter of a million UEFA C Licence Coaches have successfully completed this course in the last eight years.
- UEFA wants to ensure that these coaches and leaders are actively involved in the coaching of affiliated teams. Correspondingly, education will be assessed as follows:
  - number of teams coached by someone with at least the UEFA Leader’s Certificate;
  - OR
  - growth in the number of teams coached by UEFA grassroots leaders over a three-year period;
  - AND
  - number of female leaders as a percentage of the total number of leaders.
- The requirements for the UEFA Grassroots Leaders and Coaches courses remain unchanged.

### 3.5. Always Fair Play

- UEFA is committed to promoting fair play in the Grassroots Charter, at least because of the importance it plays in all other criteria (growth, retention, education, etc.).
- Correspondingly, UEFA requires national associations to implement the following programmes:

- fair play programmes of a national dimension to address key areas such as sportsmanship, respect and anti-racism;
- social programmes targeting specific groups such as disabled people, homeless people, disadvantaged groups, orphans, children at risk, ethnic minorities and prisoners.

#### 4. Frequently asked questions

##### 4.1. What is the timescale for implementation?

- The revised criteria will come into force in July 2014 for the 2014/15 season.
- National associations will be evaluated after the initial three-year period finishing, in June 2017.

##### 4.2. What are the transitional arrangements?

- For the provisional three-year period, UEFA will award bronze to current 1-star associations; silver to 2, 3, 4 and 5-star associations; and gold to 6 star associations.
- To ensure they obtain the annual Grassroots Charter funding during these first three years, national associations must complete the online application form indicating the progress they are making towards meeting the revised criteria (and how they are using the earmarked funding).
- Associations can apply to UEFA to upgrade their status during the provisional period as long as they provide evidence from the previous three years.
- The revised criteria are dynamic and will be continuously reviewed.

##### 4.3. What should national associations do NOW, in 2014?

- Check your own data against that previously provided to UEFA.
- Start to adapt to the new criteria in order to ensure that you will be able to provide the requested figures at the end of season 2014/15 as this will provide the baseline on which UEFA's evaluation in June 2017 will be based.
- Undertake a self-evaluation to establish the strengths and weaknesses of your current grassroots plan.

##### 4.4. What will UEFA do to support the national associations?

- Player registration and data collection
  - UEFA will conduct research into the methods national associations use to register players, then collect and analyse data in order to provide greater insights for grassroots planning.
  - From this research UEFA will develop case studies of best practice across the different national associations and publish a directory of methods used to register players.
  - UEFA will share the directory and case studies with national associations annually.
- UEFA will develop an online form for national associations to complete on an annual basis and help the associations to evaluate their grassroots plans accordingly
- The UEFA Grassroots Panel and Working Group will monitor these forms and review the process, acting as a service team, every year for the next three years. If there are large increases or

decreases in participation data before June 2017, national associations may be asked to provide reasons for the changes.

- UEFA will consider further incentives for advanced and top-level associations as part of the next HatTrick cycle, which begins in 2016.



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