

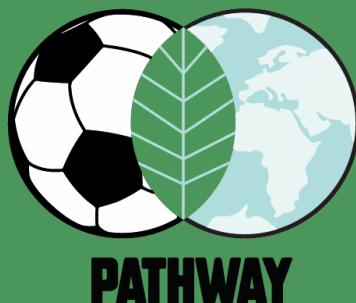
GUIDELINES TOOLKIT



A Manual for a
more sustainable
Football
Ecosystem.

#PATHWAYPROJECTEU

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T3.2

Sustainable Football in Practice



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Foreword & Introduction

Message from the PATHWAY Consortium

Few activities have the same reach and cultural significance as football. Every week, millions of people gather around stadiums, training grounds and screens, generating both a substantial footprint and at the same time, a unique opportunity. Football has the potential to reflect the challenges of society, while also leading the way in addressing them. Through harnessing its influence, the game can become a driving force for *environmental* and social sustainability.

The project “*Paving pATHs toWards footbAll’s sustainability*” (PATHWAY) was launched with this vision in mind: to support football organisations at both grassroots and professional level in improving their sustainability performance across a range of topics which are more relevant to the football ecosystem. PATHWAY is co-funded by the European Union and implemented by a consortium led by the Cyprus Football Association (CFA) together with partners from Greece and Bulgaria: Anorthosis Famagusta FC [CY], M.G.S. Panserraikos PAE 1964 [EL], Foul Training [EL] and the Municipal Football Club Academic Svishtov [BG].

This *Guidelines Toolkit* represents a key output of the project, consolidating approaches, good practices and lessons learned into one practical guide, enabling football organisations of all sizes to take concrete steps towards reducing their environmental footprint, promoting social responsibility and engaging with their communities in a more sustainable way.



Significance of Sustainability in Football



Environmental sustainability: Football events generate energy use, waste, transport emissions and water consumption at a scale that demands attention. For example, transport (fan and team travel) is often the largest component in carbon calculations. In estimates for *EURO 2024*, transport is modelled as contributing a very significant share under certain assumptions¹. Meanwhile, even standard grass pitches in warm climates may require ~20,000-25,000 litres of water daily for irrigation under hot and dry conditions².



Social sustainability: Issues of accessibility, inclusion, wellbeing and community engagement remain central to ensuring the game is open to everyone. Many stadiums still lack adequate services, such as audio-descriptive commentary for visually impaired fans³. At the same time, new challenges are emerging, including the rise of online harassment and discrimination targeting players and fans, as highlighted in recent studies (e.g. *FIFPRO's Decoding Online Abuse of Players*), which underline the need for stronger protection and awareness measures in the digital space.

Across Europe, football's sustainability landscape is evolving rapidly. Governing bodies such as *UEFA*, through *its Football Sustainability Strategy 2030*, have set out ambitions to guide the game towards greater environmental and social responsibility. In parallel, projects such as *LIFE Tackle* and club-led programmes/initiatives like *Forever Green (Real Betis)*, which we have come across and liaised with as part of this project, have demonstrated how targeted actions can be effective in generating real and positive impacts.

The PATHWAY project builds on this momentum while recognising the much broader ecosystem of efforts already underway, tailoring solutions to the specific realities and capacities of both grassroots clubs and professional organisations.

¹ Öko-Institut (2023). Reducing the carbon footprint of UEFA EURO 2024 / Concept & Feasibility Study (transport modelled as a dominant emissions source).

² Access Irrigation. "Watering a Football Pitch" (guide estimating ~23,000 litres/day for 110×70 m under dry conditions).

³ CAFE / UEFA references on audio-descriptive commentary and accessibility gaps



Objectives of the Toolkit

This Guidelines Toolkit has been developed under Task 3.2 of the PATHWAY project to:

- Provide insights into **practical solutions** for environmental and social sustainability in football.
- Support both **grassroots and professional organisations** in adopting these solutions.
- Offer a **practical monitoring framework** with easy-to-use indicators that clubs and associations can adapt to their context.
- Ensure complementarity with the **Online Sustainability Checker** (T3.3), which provides self-assessment and a tailored action plan, while this Toolkit delivers the detailed “how-to” guidance to support the improvement of practices.

Connection with the Online Sustainability Checker

The screenshot shows the homepage of the PATHWAY Sustainability Checker. At the top left is the PATHWAY logo. At the top right are links for Home, Sustainability Checker, About, and The Toolkit. Below the header is a large image of a soccer field at sunset. In the center, the text "Welcome to the PATHWAY Sustainability Checker" is displayed in white. Below it, a subtitle reads "Helping football clubs and organisations become more sustainable, one step at a time." A green "Get Started" button is located at the bottom of the main content area.



<https://www.pathwaychecker.eu/>

The PATHWAY Guidelines Toolkit and the Online Sustainability Checker have been designed as complementary tools:

- The **PATHWAY Online Sustainability Checker** enables football organisations to evaluate their current practices through a structured self-assessment. It produces a score, highlights areas for improvement and provides **recommended actions**, guiding next steps.
- The **Toolkit** builds on those recommendations by offering the “how-to” guidance needed to put them into practice, including step-by-step instructions, examples of good practice and monitoring tips.

Together, the *Online Checker* and *Guidelines Toolkit* form a continuous improvement pathway.



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Section A: Using the Toolkit

Purpose of the Toolkit

This Guidelines Toolkit has been developed under the PATHWAY project as part of Task 3.2. Its purpose is to provide football organisations with practical guidance on how to strengthen their environmental and social sustainability.

The Toolkit builds on *three* foundations of the project:

- **Good practices collected**, which demonstrate what has worked elsewhere in European football and beyond
- **Approaches developed under PATHWAY**
- **Pilot results**, which provide lessons learned from actions implemented by the PATHWAY partners

Who this Toolkit is for

The Toolkit is primarily aimed at *football organisations*, including:

- **Professional clubs and national associations**, managing stadiums, academies and infrastructures of larger scale
- **Grassroots clubs and academies**

How the Toolkit is Structured

The *Toolkit* is divided into three main sections:

1. Environmental Sustainability in Football

- Topics include energy and emissions, transport, waste and circular economy and water.

2. Social Sustainability in Football

- Topics include accessibility, diversity and inclusion, community engagement, health and wellbeing, talent retention, fan engagement and event safety.

3. Monitoring Tips and Guidelines

- A set of practical tips and key performance indicators (KPIs) to help football organisations track progress.



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Each topic is presented with:

- **Why It's Important:** The sustainability challenge in the context of football.
- **How to implement it:** Practical steps for clubs and associations.
- **Examples of good practices**
- **Monitoring tips:** Potential indicators to measure impact and track improvement.
- A **Mini Checklist** to reflect on your current practices.

How to Use this Toolkit

Football organisations can use the Toolkit in two main ways:

- **As a reference guide**, i.e. to explore possible actions and find practical examples that match their size, context and ambition.
- **In combination with the [Online Sustainability Checker](#)** - the Checker provides a *self-assessment* of an organisation's current practices across the different topics. Based on the results, users are provided with targeted recommendations on how to improve.

RECOMMENDED WORKFLOW

- 1 Use the Online Checker to identify priority gaps ([pathwaychecker.eu](#))
- 2 Pick 2-3 priority topics
- 3 Use each topic table to define 2-3 priority actions, a short implementation timeframe + KPIs.
- 4 Record in a KPI Log (see Appendix) and review quarterly



Section B: Environmental Sustainability in Football

Environmental Sustainability in Football: An Overview

From energy use in stadiums, to fan travel, catering and water consumption, the environmental footprint of football can be significant. At the same time, football's reach and influence provide a powerful opportunity to promote sustainable behaviours which have the potential to have an impact far beyond the game.

UEFA's *Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 – Strength through Unity* defines a comprehensive approach to sustainability built around **11 focus areas** under the guiding principle of *Respect, Protect and Prosper*. Within this framework, the “*Protect*” lens addresses football’s environmental responsibilities, covering areas such as climate action, circular economy, energy and resources, event sustainability and infrastructure.

These priorities align closely with the *European Green Deal* and the *EU Climate Law*, which set the broader direction for reducing emissions, promoting resource efficiency and transitioning to a circular economy. Football organisations are increasingly expected to contribute to these goals through sustainable facility management, mobility planning and environmental innovation.

Main Environmental Impact areas in football

The following areas are recognised as the most important contributors to football's environmental footprint:

- **Energy & Emissions:** Stadiums, training facilities and lighting systems consume significant electricity and heating, often contributing to high carbon emissions, especially if not sourced from renewables.
- **Transport:** Fan and team travel typically represent the largest share of match-day emissions, often more than 60% of a football event's carbon footprint.
- **Waste & Circular Economy:** Match-days generate large volumes of single-use plastic, packaging and food waste.
- **Water:** Pitch irrigation, sanitation facilities and catering services all drive high water use. This can put a lot of stress on water resources, especially in regions vulnerable to drought.



Key facts and direction of travel

- UEFA reports that **energy efficiency and renewable energy integration** are increasingly becoming standard expectations for modern stadiums.
- Studies of major tournaments (e.g. *UEFA EURO 2020, FIFA World Cup*) consistently show **transport as the single largest emissions category**.
- It has been demonstrated that introducing waste sorting, reusable cups and water saving measures in stadiums can significantly cut environmental impacts.
- Circular economy principles (*Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover*) are becoming embedded in *UEFA guidance*, promoting a shift away from disposable materials.
- Many clubs are now publishing sustainability or non-financial reports, reflecting growing regulatory pressure and expectations.

A practical approach for football organisations

The following sections of this *Toolkit* provide some concrete solutions under the four main topics of environmental sustainability:

- ➔ B1. Energy & Emissions
- ➔ B2. Transport
- ➔ B3. Waste & Circular Economy
- ➔ B4. Water



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B1. Energy & Emissions

Why It's Important

Energy use is one of the largest environmental impacts of football facilities. Stadiums, training centres and other facilities require significant amounts of electricity for lighting, heating, ventilation, catering and digital infrastructure. On match-days, demand can rise sharply with floodlights, broadcasting equipment and fan services operating simultaneously.

If sourced from fossil fuels, this energy use results in high carbon emissions. For example, UEFA's assessments show that energy and emissions from venues, combined with team and fan transport, represent the largest share of football's environmental footprint. With rising energy costs, clubs and associations also face significant financial risks from inefficient systems.

Reducing energy consumption and transitioning to renewable energy solutions therefore delivers triple benefits:



Environmental: lower carbon footprint and air pollution,



Economic: reduced operating costs over time,



Reputational: demonstrating leadership and responsible operation.

Examples of good practices

- **LED upgrades:** The Berlin Olympic Stadium replaced its conventional floodlighting with energy-efficient LED systems, achieving energy savings of around 50% for stadium floodlighting and reducing CO₂ emissions by approximately 142 tonnes per year.⁴
- **Renewable integration:** The Romanian Football Federation conducted feasibility studies for PV panels at its training centres, showing potential reductions of up to 45 tonnes of CO₂ annually.
- **Pilot PV systems:** FC Lausanne-Sport's Stade de la Tuilière integrated ~2,300 solar panels, generating 850 MWh of renewable power annually, significantly offsetting stadium operations.
- **UEFA guidance:** The **UEFA Sustainable Infrastructure Guidelines** recommend integrating renewable energy and smart building systems as standard in new or renovated football facilities.

⁴ Olympiastadion Berlin, Facts & Figures – Infrastructure and Sustainability, available at: <https://olympiastadion.berlin/en/facts-figures/>

⁵ New football stadium in Lausanne with its own PV system: <https://k2-systems.com/en/product-solutions/references/new-football-stadium-in-lausanne-with-its-own-pv-system/>



How to implement

Football organisations can take a *phased approach* depending on their size, resources and infrastructure:

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Conduct an energy audit to map electricity and fuel use across all facilities.	Low	Baseline kWh / year; energy cost per match.	Collect 12 months of bills or meter data; compile in a simple spreadsheet.
2	Replace conventional lighting with LED systems for pitches, stands and indoor spaces.	Medium to High	% of lighting converted to LED; kWh saved.	Compare pre- and post-installation bills; record total fixtures replaced.
3	Install smart meters and timers to monitor and optimise consumption.	Medium	% of facilities with smart controls; peak-load reduction.	Use meter logs to review hourly usage; note reduced night-time peaks.
4	Procure renewable electricity or install solar PV panels where feasible.	High	% of energy from renewables; tCO ₂ e avoided per year.	Track supplier certificates or PV output; use the UEFA Carbon Footprint Calculator .
5	Adopt an Energy Policy & Reduction Target aligned with UEFA 2030 goals or national frameworks.	Medium	Policy adopted (Y/N); year-on-year % reduction.	Review annual energy report; update KPI dashboard each season.

Monitoring tips

- Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:
 - Energy consumption (kWh per match / per season)** broken down by type (lighting, heating, digital systems).
 - % of energy** from renewable sources: own generation and purchased.
 - Carbon emissions (tCO₂e)** calculated via the UEFA [Carbon Footprint Calculator](#).
 - Efficiency indicators** e.g. kWh per spectator, or per m² of facility.

Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Have you conducted an energy audit or basic assessment of electricity and fuel use in the past two years?				



2. Have you replaced most traditional lighting with LED systems in stadiums, offices, or training facilities?				
3. Do you monitor total energy consumption (e.g., kWh per match, season, or facility)?				
4. Have you installed smart meters, timers, or automation systems to optimise lighting, HVAC, or irrigation schedules?				
5. Are you using or purchasing renewable electricity , or have you installed solar PV panels on-site?				
6. Have you set an official energy or carbon-reduction target and do you review progress annually?				

B2. Transport

Why It's Important

Transport is consistently the **largest source of emissions linked to football**, especially at large-scale events and busy match-days:

- For major tournaments, transport (fan, team and associated travel) usually accounts for a very significant share of total emissions.
- At the club level, the Bundesliga case study found that **~70 % of a fan's seasonal travel emissions** came from car usage (average seasonal carbon footprint of a Bundesliga fan amounted 311.1 kgCO₂-eq)⁶.
- In an analysis of a Vienna (Austria) football club, 42.4 % of spectators travelled by private car, which generated ~ 71.6 % of the transport-related GHG emissions in that case⁷.



⁶ Loewen, C. & Wicker, P. (2021). Travelling to Bundesliga matches: the carbon footprint of football fans. Journal of Sport & Tourism.

⁷ Herold, D. M. et al. (2025). The Impact of Sporting Events on Carbon Emissions and the Role of Transport. Polish Journal of Environmental Studies.



Examples of good practices

- **Host-city PT integration (EURO 2020):** Several cities (incl. Bucharest) enabled **free public transport for ticket holders** via digital travelcards and extended services on match-days (city/operator agreements).⁸
- **Cycling facilities:** King Baudouin Stadium (Brussels) offers free, secure bicycle parking for fans during events, encouraging sustainable mobility.
- **Micromobility partnerships:** Through its *Forever Green* initiative, *Real Betis Balompié* has collaborated with mobility operators to promote low-emission transport options.
- **Youth team transport:** As part of the PATHWAY pilot activities, the *Cyprus Football Association* organised group transport for children to attend local football matches.



How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Map travel patterns (fans, staff, teams): baseline survey + ticketing/postcode analysis; identify barriers to sustainable modes.	Low	Modal split (% public transport / walking / cycling / car / coach).	Short fan survey (e.g. QR at entry), sample postcode analysis, or app check-ins; repeat each season.
2	Public transport integration: match-day timetables, wayfinding and (where feasible) free/discounted travel for ticket holders.	Medium	% fans using public transport; number of integrated services per match.	Agreements with operators; gate or QR validation data; post-match survey.
3	Active & micromobility enabling: secure, well-lit bike parking, incentive provision, scooter/bike share hubs, liaise with local authorities for infrastructure provision, partner with sustainable mobility operators (bike/scooter sharing companies)	Medium	Bike/scooter parking occupancy; trips to/from hubs on match-days.	Simple counts by stewards; data shares with micromobility operators; spot counts at peak times.

⁸ Euro 2020 fan app includes free digital travelcard: <https://www.sportspro.com/news/broadcast-ott/uefa-euro-2020-fan-app-free-host-city-digital-travelcard/>



	Car demand management: carpool campaigns, priority parking for 3+ occupants/EVs, dynamic parking pricing.	Medium	Car occupancy rate; % EVs; carpark throughput vs. baseline.	Car park observations, periodic plate sampling, EV charger usage data.
4	Team & delegation travel policy: preference rail/coach for regional trips; direct flights only when unavoidable; plan EV/hybrid for local moves.	Medium to High	% team trips by rail/coach vs. air; tCO ₂ e per away trip.	Team ops logs; simple per-trip emission calculator (distance × mode factor).
5	Group transport for youth/grassroots: buses/minibuses for tournaments and match-days (with inclusion focus where relevant).	Medium	# group buses per season; estimated car trips avoided.	Booking logs; simple avoided-car calculation (bus seats filled ÷ avg. car occupancy).
6	Communications & incentives: pre-match travel emails, stadium screens, loyalty points/raffles for low-carbon travel.	Low	Campaign reach; participation in incentives; self-reported modal shift.	Email analytics, QR participation, prize entries tied to mode proof (e.g., PT ticket).
7				

Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- **Fan modal split** (% PT / walking / cycling / car / coach).
- **Team/delegation modal split** (% rail/coach vs. air) and **tCO₂e per away trip**.
- **% of fans using sustainable transport options** (e.g. via survey or digital tools).
- **Car occupancy** (average persons/vehicle on match-days) and **EV charging sessions**.
- **Public transport uptake** if integrated with ticketing.
- **Estimated CO₂e avoided** vs. baseline modal split.

Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Do you measure how fans, staff and teams travel?				
2. Do you coordinate public transport (timetables, wayfinding, or integrated tickets) on match-days?				



3. Do you provide secure bike parking and/or designate micromobility hubs?				
4. Do you run carpool/EV incentives or manage parking to discourage solo driving?				
5. Do you have a team/delegation travel policy that prefers rail/coach for regional trips?				
6. Do you organise group transport for professional and/or youth/grassroots events where feasible?				

B3. Waste & Circular Economy

Why It's Important

Football matches generate significant volumes of waste from food and drink packaging to promotional materials, to merchandise. In the absence of proper systems, most of this ends up in landfill or incineration, contributing to emissions, pollution and costs for clubs and local authorities.



The **circular economy** model offers a way forward: **reduce** waste at source, **reuse** materials where possible, **recycle** effectively and **recover** value from unavoidable waste. [UEFA's Circular Economy Guidelines](#) place waste among their four priority areas (Food & Beverage, Apparel & Equipment, Event Materials, Energy & Water), stressing that football must move away from single-use culture.



Key issues include:

- **Waste management infrastructure** limited or inconsistent (i.e. lack of sorting systems and waste management providers)
- **Single-use plastics** that dominate match-day waste streams.
- **Food waste**, often from unsold or untouched catering portions.
- **Event materials** that are discarded after single use.
- **Procurement practices**, which might overlook sustainable or recyclable products.

Examples of good practices



- **Reusable cups:** Reusable cups: Aviva Stadium (Ireland) piloted large-scale deposit-return pilots which have replaced tens of thousands of single-use cups in a single fixture⁹
- **Food donation:** Juventus has donated leftover food from match-day catering (e.g. 3 tons in a Juventus–Milan game) to local charities via Banco Alimentare and partner organisations.¹⁰
- **Material reuse:** Within the LIFE TACKLE project, reuse of event materials such as advertising banners has been proposed in pilot documentation to reduce waste.
- **PATHWAY pilots:** CFA's Waste Sorting Pilots, engaged supporters and waste management service providers in separating waste at the source at a Cup Final.

How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Assess your current waste flows: quantify volumes, identify main sources (catering, maintenance, merchandising).	Low	Total waste (kg / match); % waste by type.	Waste audit; visual inspections.
2	Reduce at source: eliminate single-use packaging, bulk-purchase supplies and require vendors to minimise packaging.	Medium	% reduction in single-use items; # suppliers compliant.	Procurement records; supplier checklists.
3	Reuse materials and equipment: introduce reusable cups, containers and signage; repurpose banners for training or community events.	Medium	# reusable items in circulation; # items repurposed.	Inventory logs; supplier data.
4	Sort at source: install clear, colour coded bins for recyclables, organics and	Medium	% correctly sorted waste;	Waste audits; photos.

⁹ Aviva Stadium – Our Move Away from SUP Plastics: <https://www.avivastadium.ie/blog/our-move-away-from-single-use-plastics>

¹⁰ Juventus donates leftover food to charity: <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/03/05/football/juventus-allianz-stadium-food-coronavirus-spt-intl>



	residual waste; train staff and volunteers.		contamination rate (%).	
5	Refill over single-use: install bottle refill stations/water dispensers at concession stands; phase down single-use bottled water in operations where safe.	Low to Medium	# refill points; estimated single-use bottles avoided.	Refill counter data (if available) or procurement reduction for bottled water.
6	Collaborate with service providers: engage municipalities or recycling cooperatives. If no recycling is available, collect data and advocate for services.	Medium	# meetings with authorities; separate collection introduced (Y/N).	Meeting notes; MoUs.
7	Recover materials or energy: where recycling is not possible, ensure residual waste is sent to energy-from-waste or other recovery processes rather than landfill. ¹¹	Medium	% residual waste sent to recovery; landfill diversion rate (%).	Contractor reports.
8	Engage fans and staff: communicate sorting points, run awareness campaigns and publicly report progress.	Low	# campaigns; fan participation rate (%).	Campaign logs; surveys.
9	Evaluate and adapt: review waste performance annually and update procurement or fan-engagement measures.	Medium	Annual waste audit completed (Y/N); % change vs baseline.	Annual report; audit summary.

Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- **Total waste generated** (kg per match/season).
- **Waste reduction (%)** compared with baseline.
- **Recycling/composting rate** (% by weight).
- **Surplus food donated** (kg/meals) and **food waste reduced** vs. baseline.
- **Materials diverted through reuse/repair** (kg) and **% suppliers with circular clauses**.
- **Measurement:** use haulier data (weighbridge/invoice) wherever possible; supplement with sampling audits.



¹¹ where aligned with local regulations and hierarchy principles, prefer recovery over landfill as a last step for residual waste





Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Do you track total waste and recycling per match/season?				
2. Are sorting stations co-located, well-signed and stewarded at peak times?				
3. Have you piloted or implemented reusable cups/bottles (training)?				
4. Have you installed water dispensers/refill points to avoid the use of SUP PET bottles on match-day?				
5. Do you have a surplus food donation arrangement?				
6. Do supplier contracts include packaging/take-back requirements?				

B4. Water

Why It's Important

Water use is another significant environmental impact in football. Large stadiums, training centres and academies consume considerable amounts of water for:

- **Pitch irrigation** (natural grass requires regular watering, particularly in warmer climates).
- **Sanitation** (showers, toilets, urinals and sinks for players, staff and fans).
- **Catering & hospitality** (food preparation, dishwashing, cleaning).



In regions affected by droughts or water scarcity, excessive water use can create tension with local communities and expose clubs to reputational risks. At the same time, rising water tariffs increase operational costs.



Examples of good practices

- **Romanian Football Federation (through LIFE TACKLE project):** Installed water-saving aerators at pilot venues, identifying up to 60% potential reduction in water use across tested facilities.
- **Johan Cruijff ArenA (Netherlands):** Integrates rainwater harvesting systems that enable the reuse of collected water for pitch irrigation and other non-potable uses, reducing dependence on mains water.¹²
- **Tottenham Hotspur Stadium (UK):** Uses rainwater harvesting systems capable of saving 47,000 liters per event and waterless urinals reducing water use by an additional 50,000 liters per match.¹³

How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Baseline and leaks: compile meter data; conduct a basic leak check (overnight tests, visible inspection).	Low	Baseline water use (m ³ /match or m ³ /month); leaks detected/resolved.	Gather 12 months of bills; perform off-hours meter tests; record fixes.
2	Irrigation optimisation: Install smart irrigation systems; adjust pitch schedules to weather/soil moisture; use nozzles/zoning; avoid daytime evaporation.	Medium	Irrigation volume (m ³ /season); water per pitch session.	Log irrigation cycles; use moisture probes or simple schedule records.
3	Low-flow & fixtures: fit low-flow taps/flush; sensor taps in high-traffic areas; service valves to avoid drips.	Medium	% low-flow fixtures installed; estimated m ³ saved vs. baseline.	Maintenance logs; spot checks; compare pre/post water bills.
4	Non-potable sources: assess rainwater harvesting for irrigation/toilets; explore greywater reuse where regulations allow.	Medium to High	m ³ of non-potable water used; % of irrigation demand met.	Tank and pump meters; maintenance logs; compliance records.
5	Policy & drought plan: create a Water Management Plan with seasonal targets; include drought contingency measures.	Medium	Plan adopted (Y/N); year-on-year % reduction; compliance with restrictions.	Annual review of consumption vs. target; document drought responses.

¹² What Makes the Johan Cruyff Arena the Perfect Modern Football Stadium?:

<https://www.ajaxdaily.com/2025/what-makes-the-johan-cruyff-arena-the-perfect-modern-football-stadium/>

¹³ Tottenham Hotspur Stadium – Engineering Tomorrow’s Game: <https://tf cstadiums.com/tottenham-hotspur-stadium/>



Tip: Leak checks and irrigation scheduling (Steps 1–2) often deliver immediate savings. Build towards non-potable systems (Step 5) as feasibility and funding allow.

Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- **Total water use** (m^3 per month/season; m^3 per match).
- **Irrigation water** (m^3/season) and **% demand met by non-potable sources**.
- **# leaks detected/resolved** and **response time**.
- **% low-flow fixtures installed** in high-traffic areas.
- **Year-on-year reduction** vs. baseline and **drought plan compliance**.

Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Do you track total water use and check for leaks at least annually?				
2. Is pitch irrigation scheduled and monitored (e.g., by soil moisture/weather)?				
3. Have you installed low-flow fixtures in high-use areas?				
4. Have you assessed rain/greywater options and regulatory requirements?				
5. Do you have a water management/drought plan with targets?				



Section C: Social Sustainability Solutions

Social Sustainability in Football: An Overview

Football is the most popular sport in Europe and one of the most powerful social platforms in the world. Beyond entertainment, football reflects and shapes society: it can bring people together, foster community pride and offer opportunities for participation and wellbeing. But it can also mirror wider social challenges such as discrimination, inequality and exclusion.

For football to remain truly the “people’s game,” it must be inclusive, safe and accessible for all. This is the essence of **social sustainability**: ensuring that the benefits of football are shared fairly and that the sport plays an active role in promoting equality, health and community development.

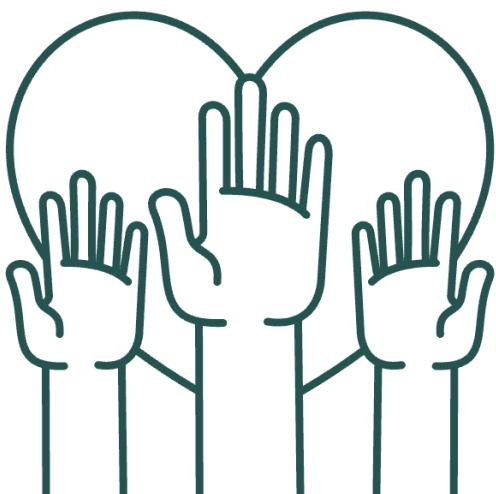
UEFA's Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 – Strength through Unity defines a clear sustainability vision built around 11 focus areas, guided by the principles of Respect, Protect and Prosper. These focus areas include priorities such as *Equality & Inclusion, Health & Wellbeing, Football for All Abilities* and *Anti-Racism*, forming the foundation of UEFA's approach to social responsibility. The strategy aligns closely with the *EU Work Plan for Sport* and the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.

Main Social Impact areas in football

Football organisations, from grassroots clubs to professional associations, can make a difference in the following key areas:

- **Accessibility:** ensuring stadiums, training facilities and programmes are inclusive for people with disabilities.
- **Diversity & Inclusion:** tackling discrimination and promoting equal opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, or background.

- **Community Engagement:** using football as a platform to connect with local communities, schools and vulnerable groups.
- **Health & Wellbeing:** safeguarding players, staff and fans while promoting healthy lifestyles and mental health.
- **Talent Retention & Youth Development:** ensuring fair pathways for young players, addressing dropout rates and creating positive environments for development.



- **Fan Engagement & Behaviour Change:** empowering fans to act as allies in sustainability, respect and inclusion.
- **Event Safety & Security:** creating safe, welcoming environments for all participants, spectators and volunteers.

Key facts and direction of travel

- **Online abuse** remains a growing challenge: according to FIFPRO and Signify's 2022 study, over half of players at recent major tournaments were targeted by abusive social media messages¹⁴.
- **Accessibility and inclusion:** Centre for Access to Football in Europe notes that while availability of audio-descriptive commentary has expanded, many European stadiums still lack this essential service¹⁵.
- **Grassroots and community impact:** The EU Work Plan for Sport (2021–2024) recognises grassroots sport as a major contributor to social inclusion, community cohesion and health¹⁶.

A practical approach for football organisations

The following sections of this Toolkit provide concrete solutions under the seven main topics of social sustainability:

- ➔ C1. Accessibility
- ➔ C2. Diversity & Inclusion
- ➔ C3. Community Engagement
- ➔ C4. Health & Wellbeing
- ➔ C5. Talent Retention & Youth
- ➔ C6. Fan Engagement & Behaviour Change
- ➔ C7. Event Safety & Security

¹⁴ FIFPRO & Signify (2022) *Online Abuse During International Tournaments*.

¹⁵ CAFE (Centre for Access to Football in Europe) (2021) *Annual Report*.

¹⁶ Council of the European Union (2021). *EU Work Plan for Sport (2021–2024)*, OJ C 501/1, 4 Dec 2021.



C1. Accessibility

Why It's Important



Football should be a sport for everyone, yet for many fans and participants with disabilities, barriers exist that prevent full and equal access to stadiums, training facilities and football programmes. Accessibility is not only a legal obligation under the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and EU non-discrimination frameworks, but also a moral imperative: excluding people from football denies them the health, social and cultural benefits the sport provides.

UEFA has made accessibility a strategic priority. The *UEFA and CAFE (Centre for Access to Football in Europe) Accessibility Guidelines* highlight the need for clubs and stadium operators to provide barrier-free access to facilities, services and match-day experiences. From wheelchair-accessible seating to audio-descriptive commentary, accessible transport links and clear signage, these measures ensure that everyone can enjoy football on equal terms.



Examples of good practices

- **UEFA EURO 2020:** Host venues, in collaboration with CAFE, provided audio-descriptive commentary in local languages and English, allowing visually impaired fans to follow every match.
- **Liverpool FC:** Operates a dedicated **Accessibility Hub**. Visually Impaired supporters can order a complimentary headset with full commentary once their ticket has been purchased.
- **CAFE's "Total Football, Total Access" project:** Showed that involving disabled supporters directly in stadium access audits leads to more realistic and effective accessibility improvements.
- **PATHWAY pilot:** Anorthosis FC implemented *Football for All* pilot action during grassroot activities, involving children with special needs in grassroots activities.

How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Conduct an accessibility audit of facilities and match-day operations (entry routes, seating, restrooms, concessions, signage, parking, communication).	Low	Audit completed; % accessible facilities.	Use CAFE's Access and Inclusion checklist; record actions in log.
2	Provide accessible seating with clear sightlines, adjacent	Medium	# accessible seats; % of total capacity.	Facility inventory



	companion seats and accessible restrooms nearby.			ticketing records.
3	Offer audio-descriptive commentary (ADC) and assistive hearing systems where possible.	Medium	ADC available (Y/N); # devices in circulation; % usage.	Match-day logs; feedback forms.
4	Address accessible transport: reserve accessible parking near entrances; provide information on accessible public transport routes; collaborate with municipalities to adapt nearby bus or tram stops.	Medium	# accessible parking spaces; accessibility info published (Y/N); # municipal improvements agreed.	Facility map updates; municipal correspondence; fan feedback.
5	Train staff and stewards in disability awareness and inclusive communication .	Medium	# staff trained; satisfaction scores from disabled fans.	Training records; post-event surveys.
6	Improve digital and physical wayfinding (clear signage, step-free routes, online accessibility info).	Low to Medium	Accessibility info published (Y/N); % routes step-free.	Website updates; facility plan reviews.
7	Develop an Accessibility Policy and Action Plan , with annual progress review.	Medium	Policy adopted (Y/N); implementation rate of actions.	Annual reporting; fan feedback mechanisms.

Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- % of accessible facilities and routes.
- **# of accessible seats and companion seats.**
- Availability and use of ADC/hearing systems.
- **# of staff trained in accessibility.**
- Fan satisfaction scores (disabled spectators).
- Accessibility Policy in place (Y/N) and progress rate (% actions implemented).
- Collect feedback directly from disabled supporters through short post-event surveys or fan panels.
- Include accessibility KPIs in annual sustainability reports and/or strategy.



Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Have you conducted an accessibility audit within the last two years?				
2. Do you offer accessible seating with adjacent companion seats?				
3. Is audio-descriptive commentary or assistive hearing support available during matches?				
4. Have stewards and staff received disability awareness training ?				
5. Is accessibility information clearly available on your website or match-day materials?				
6. Do you have a formal Accessibility Policy or Action Plan with defined responsibilities?				

C2. Diversity & Inclusion

Why It's Important

Football has the potential to either reinforce social divides or help bridge them. Issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination continue to appear in football environments, both on and off the pitch. Tackling these issues is critical, both for the integrity of the sport, but also for the wellbeing of players, staff and fans.



While professional football is becoming more representative, structural inequalities and discriminatory behaviours are still present. Women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and LGBTQ+ participants often face barriers to participation or progression.

UEFA's *Football Sustainability Strategy 2030* identifies *Equality & Inclusion, Anti-Racism and Human Rights* as key focus areas under its *Respect* lens. These goals echo the *EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025* and the *UN Sustainable Development Goals (5 & 10)*, calling for equal opportunities, fair treatment and respect in sport.



Examples of good practices

- **The FA (England):** Football Leadership Diversity Code committing clubs to diversity targets in recruitment and senior representation.
- **DFL Stiftung (Germany):** Through initiatives such as *Vielfalt gewinnt* ('Diversity Wins'), the DFL Stiftung promotes diversity, inclusion and visibility in football, including for LGBTQ+ communities.
- **UEFA Women's EURO 2022:** accessibility and safety measures that improved attendance and visibility for women's football across Europe.

How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Establish leadership and policy: adopt an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) policy aligned with UEFA and national frameworks; appoint a D&I Officer or working group.	Low	Policy adopted (Y/N); Officer/working group appointed.	Policy records; meeting notes; annual plan.
2	Build awareness and training: deliver anti-discrimination and inclusive-language training for all staff, coaches and volunteers; use UEFA/NGO materials (e.g. <i>OUTRAGED</i> campaign).	Medium	# trained / % workforce; post-training satisfaction.	Attendance logs; training feedback.
3	Create inclusive participation pathways: ensure access for girls, minorities, refugees and LGBTQ+ players; partner with schools and NGOs; provide targeted support (fees, gear, transport).	Medium to High	# under-represented participants; % increase vs. baseline.	Registration data; partnership records.
4	Address discrimination visibly: use match-day channels (stadium screens, announcements) to promote zero tolerance; establish fan/player reporting systems; cooperate with authorities on sanctions.	Medium	# incidents reported/resolved; # communications run.	Incident log; fan feedback; campaign analytics.
5	Monitor and review progress: track participation, representation and incidents; review D&I policy annually with stakeholder input.	Medium	Annual review completed (Y/N); KPIs updated.	Annual D&I report; stakeholder review notes.



Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- **% of workforce/leadership positions** held by women or minority representatives.
- **# staff/volunteers** completing **D&I or anti-discrimination training**.
- **# participants** from **under-represented groups** in academies or programmes.
- **# recorded discrimination incidents** and follow-up actions.
- **# public communications or awareness campaigns** on inclusion.
- **Fan/community satisfaction ratings** on inclusion and respect.
- Existence of D&I Policy (Y/N).

Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Do you have a written Diversity & Inclusion policy or statement?				
2. Have all staff and coaches received D&I or anti-discrimination training ?				
3. Do you track gender and diversity balance among staff, volunteers and players?				
4. Are there pathways or outreach programmes for under-represented groups (e.g. girls, minorities, people with disabilities)?				
5. Is there a safe reporting mechanism for discrimination or harassment?				
6. Do you actively communicate inclusion values through campaigns or match-day actions?				



C3. Community Engagement

Why It's Important

Football clubs and associations are usually significantly rooted in their local communities, acting as social points for people of diverse ages and backgrounds. Considering that, when community engagement is neglected or mismanaged, the same influence can have the opposite effect, fuelling divisions, exclusion, or negative rivalries that harm social cohesion. Poor communication, elitism, or a lack of inclusive outreach can isolate certain groups or reinforce stereotypes.

Engaging with community in a sustainable manner requires intentional effort. Organisations within the football ecosystem, must actively build trust, promote dialogue and ensure that football fuels inclusion.

Examples of good practices

- **Liverpool FC Foundation (UK):** delivers community outreach and health programmes, including *Premier League Kicks*, engaging thousands of young people in disadvantaged areas.¹⁷
- **Real Betis Balompié (Spain):** *Forever Green* community projects promote volunteering, tree planting and local clean-up campaigns.
- **PAOK FC (Greece):** PAOK FC (Greece): through its PAOK Action initiative, collaborates with local schools and charities to support children and families in need.¹⁸

How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Identify community needs: carry out short consultations, surveys, or meetings with residents, schools and NGOs to understand local priorities (e.g. youth inclusion, environment, wellbeing).	Low	# consultations / surveys completed; key needs identified.	Meeting minutes; survey reports; needs summary.
2	Map and engage community stakeholders: list schools, NGOs, charities, local authorities and fan groups to identify shared goals.	Low	Stakeholder map developed; # stakeholders contacted.	Stakeholder matrix; contact logs.
3	Develop a Community Engagement Plan outlining	Medium	Plan adopted (Y/N); # co-designed initiatives.	Approved plan; partnership documentation.

¹⁷ [Liverpool FC Foundation](#)

¹⁸ [PAOK Action](#)



	objectives, activities, timelines and responsibilities.			
4	Partner with local organisations to co-deliver initiatives such as school programmes, charity matches, or local sustainability projects.	Medium	# joint projects; # participants reached.	Partnership reports; attendance records.
5	Use football facilities as community hubs for inclusive events, educational sessions and social actions.	Medium	# events hosted; # community users.	Facility logs; sign-in sheets.
6	Engage fans and volunteers through campaigns, mentoring, or local improvement activities (e.g. clean-ups, food drives).	Low to Medium	# volunteers; # volunteer hours contributed.	Volunteer database; event documentation.
7	Communicate impact transparently – share outcomes through social media, newsletters and match-day materials.	Low	# communications issued; total reach.	Media analytics; annual summary.
8	Evaluate and adapt: review project outcomes with community partners, collect feedback and adjust future plans to improve inclusivity and effectiveness.	Medium	Evaluation completed (Y/N); # improvements integrated.	Feedback forms; post-event evaluations; annual plan review.

Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- **# community consultations, surveys, or needs assessments** conducted.
- **# active partnerships** with local organisations (schools, NGOs, municipalities).
- **# community projects** implemented per season.
- **# participants or beneficiaries** engaged (youth, residents, volunteers).
- **% of projects** that integrated feedback or led to new/improved initiatives.
- **Estimated social value** or resources contributed (€ or in kind).



Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Have you consulted your community to understand its main needs and priorities?				
2. Do you have an up-to-date stakeholder map and maintain relationships with local organisations?				
3. Is there a Community Engagement Plan that defines objectives, activities and roles?				
4. Do you partner with local organisations (schools, NGOs, municipalities) to co-deliver projects?				
5. Are fans, players, or volunteers actively involved in local initiatives?				
6. Do you communicate community outcomes publicly (reports, social media, match-day visibility)?				
7. Do you evaluate your activities with partners and adapt future plans based on feedback?				

C4. Health & Wellbeing

Why It's Important

Football offers a powerful platform towards promoting physical and mental health across all ages. Regular participation in football, whether as a player, coach, volunteer, or fan, contributes to improved fitness, social connection and wellbeing. For young people, sport is a proven protective factor against isolation and risky behaviours, while for older adults, it supports mobility and community inclusion.



However, the pressures of competition, long working hours and public scrutiny can also **impact mental health negatively**, particularly for players, coaches and referees. Studies by **FIFPRO** and national federations show that professional footballers face higher risks of **anxiety, depression and**



burnout, especially after injuries or retirement. Grassroots participants can also suffer when environments become overly competitive or unsafe.

A sustainable football ecosystem recognises health and overall wellbeing as a shared responsibility, protecting players, fostering safe environments and using football's reach to encourage healthy lifestyles among fans and communities.

Examples of good practices

- **FIFPRO Mental Health Programme:** provides confidential counselling and wellbeing resources for players across professional leagues.¹⁹
- **English FA - “Heads Up” campaign:** raised mental health awareness and normalised conversations about emotional wellbeing among players and fans.²⁰

How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Establish a Health & Wellbeing Policy covering physical safety, mental health and safeguarding (aligned with UEFA and national guidelines).	Low	Policy adopted (Y/N); responsible person assigned.	Policy document; review schedule.
2	Raise awareness on mental health and wellbeing: organise workshops, talks, or campaigns for players, staff and fans.	Low to Medium	# awareness sessions; # participants reached.	Attendance logs; feedback surveys.
3	Provide access to support mechanisms: ensure players and staff have clear referral pathways to mental-health professionals or trusted contacts.	Medium	Support service available (Y/N); # referrals / consultations.	Internal reporting (confidential); partner NGO data.
4	Promote physical wellbeing: integrate warm-up and recovery protocols; ensure facilities meet safety standards and provide appropriate nutrition/hydration options.	Medium	# injuries per season; compliance with safety checks.	Medical logs; safety inspection reports.
5	Train coaches and staff on recognising early signs of stress, fatigue, or harassment; include safeguarding modules.	Medium	# trained; % staff completing course.	Attendance records; annual refreshers.
6	Engage the wider community through health-promotion activities (e.g. walking football, blood-	Medium	# community participants; #	Event reports; community feedback.

¹⁹ FIFPRO Mental Health Programme

²⁰ The FA “Heads Up” Campaign



	donation drives, anti-smoking or fitness campaigns).		campaigns delivered.	
7	Monitor and review: review wellbeing initiatives annually, gather anonymous feedback from players/staff and update policies or activities as needed.	Medium	Evaluation completed (Y/N); # improvements implemented.	Annual review report; feedback summary.

Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- **# health and wellbeing sessions** or awareness events delivered.
- **# staff, coaches, or players trained** in wellbeing or safeguarding.
- **Availability** of mental-health support mechanisms (Y/N).
- **# reported wellbeing concerns** or injuries (tracked anonymously).
- **# community participants** in health-promotion campaigns.
- **Annual review** of wellbeing policy completed (Y/N).
- **% improvements implemented** based on annual evaluation.

Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Do you have a written Health & Wellbeing Policy covering both physical and mental health?				
2. Are there mental-health awareness or education sessions for players, staff, or fans?				
3. Do players and staff have access to confidential support or referral mechanisms?				
4. Are safety and injury-prevention protocols (warm-up, hydration, recovery) consistently applied?				
5. Have coaches and staff received training on recognising signs of distress or abuse?				
6. Do you monitor, evaluate and adapt your wellbeing activities annually?				



C5. Talent Retention & Youth Development

Why It's Important

The way football academies and grassroots manage talent is critical towards developing the next generation of players, yet many young athletes drop out due to lack of support, poor experiences, or unequal opportunities. Challenges may include early talent selection pressures, limited access for female athletes and underrepresented groups and risks of burnout or exploitation. At professional level, short-term contracts, injuries and uncertain career prospects can lead to early exits or mental-health strain.



Ensuring safe, inclusive and supportive pathways for youth is essential for the sport's sustainable development, as well as for safeguarding the wellbeing of young people. Through retaining talent and providing positive environments, clubs strengthen their own future while contributing to wider social goals such as education, equality and community engagement.

Examples of good practices

- **UEFA Assist Career Transition Programme:** provide guidance to future or newly retired players on the choices available, providing essential tools and knowledge they need to prepare the second stage of their careers²¹.
- **Real Sociedad (Spain):** Integrates a dual-career approach within its academy system, supporting young players to pursue formal education alongside football development through cooperation with local educational institutions.
- **Scottish FA – Coach Education and Volunteer Pathways:** provides structured progression routes from grassroots to advanced levels, supporting skills development and long-term engagement within the football system.

How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Assess retention risks: identify groups most at risk of leaving the sport (e.g. youth players, female coaches, volunteers)	Low	# consultations; key risk factors identified.	Survey results; focus-group notes.

²¹ [UEFA helping players consider their next steps](#)



	through interviews or surveys.			
2	Ensure fair and transparent working conditions: provide contracts, clear expectations and safe working environments.	Medium	% of staff/players with written agreements; # grievances.	HR or club records; annual reviews.
3	Support education and dual careers: help athletes and staff pursue studies or vocational training alongside football.	Medium	# dual-career participants; completion rate.	Partnership records with schools/universities; progress reports.
4	Offer mentoring and professional development: match young or new staff with experienced mentors; provide ongoing training for coaches and referees.	Medium	# mentoring pairs; # trained staff.	Mentoring logs; training attendance.
5	Promote gender equality and inclusivity in recruitment, pay and leadership pathways.	Medium	Gender pay gap (%); # women/minorities in leadership roles.	HR reports; diversity metrics.
6	Plan for career transitions: provide access to career guidance, networking and mental-health support for retiring players or staff.	Medium	# individuals supported in transition; satisfaction scores.	Exit interviews; wellbeing follow-ups.
7	Evaluate and adapt: review retention outcomes annually, track progression of former players/coaches and update support measures accordingly.	Medium	Annual retention rate (%); evaluation completed (Y/N).	Annual HR review; alumni surveys.

Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- Annual staff/player **retention rate (%)**.
- **# staff, players, or volunteers** participating in training, mentoring, or education programmes.
- **# dual-career or career-transition initiatives** implemented.
- **% of workforce** under written contract or clear terms of engagement.
- **Gender representation (%)** across roles and leadership levels.
- **Annual review** of retention and career support measures completed (Y/N).



Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Have you identified groups most at risk of leaving the sport (e.g. young players, women, volunteers)?				
2. Are all players, staff and volunteers provided with clear contracts or agreements?				
3. Do you offer opportunities for education, dual careers, or ongoing training?				
4. Do you have a mentoring system or structured professional development for staff and coaches?				
5. Are gender equality and inclusivity reflected in recruitment and leadership?				
6. Do you provide career-transition or exit support for players and staff leaving football?				

C6. Fan Engagement & Behaviour Change

Why It's Important

With the fans being the lifeblood of football, their behaviours, from how they travel to matches, to how they dispose of waste, to how they treat each other, directly influence the sport's sustainability performance. Due to their scale and passion, fans can also be powerful multipliers. That is, when they adopt sustainable behaviours in football, they are more likely to replicate them in their daily lives.



Harnessing that influence for positive change is one of football's most powerful sustainability tools. Campaigns and initiatives that encourage recycling, public transport, respectful behaviour, or inclusion can reach millions. Conversely, if mis- or unmanaged, fan culture can significantly reinforce negative social patterns.

Examples of good practices

- **Real Betis – “Forever Green”:** integrates fan challenges into match-day experiences, encouraging fan participation.



- **English Premier League “No Room for Racism” campaign** unites clubs and fans under a consistent anti-discrimination message visible across stadiums and broadcasts.

How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Understand your fan base: survey or hold focus groups to learn about attitudes, habits and motivators related to sustainability and inclusion.	Low	# surveys or focus groups; response rate.	Survey results; fan club feedback.
2	Integrate sustainability and respect messages into match-day communication (screens, PA, signage, social media).	Low	# communication touchpoints; campaign reach.	Media analytics; match-day observation.
3	Design engaging campaigns or challenges: create fan incentives (e.g. recycling competitions, green-travel rewards, inclusive fan pledges).	Medium	# participants; participation rate (% of attendance).	Campaign tracking; app/QR data.
4	Collaborate with supporter groups and fan clubs: co-create initiatives on sustainability, inclusion and responsible fandom.	Medium	# fan-group partnerships; # co-delivered activities.	Fan liaison reports; partnership records.
5	Empower volunteers or “fan ambassadors” to promote positive behaviour during matches.	Medium	# ambassadors trained; # matches supported.	Volunteer logs; ambassador feedback.
6	Monitor fan behaviour trends: track waste generation, public transport uptake, or reported incidents over time.	Medium	% change vs. baseline; # fan incidents.	Match-day environmental and security reports.
7	Evaluate and adapt: gather feedback, share outcomes with fans and adjust campaigns to stay relevant and motivating.	Medium	Evaluation completed (Y/N); fan satisfaction scores.	Post-campaign surveys; social analytics.

Tip: Fans respond best when they feel ownership! Co-create initiatives with them, not for them.



Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- **# fan engagement campaigns** or initiatives implemented per season.
- **# participants** or pledges recorded.
- **% of fans** reached through sustainability or inclusion messaging.
- **# supporter groups** actively collaborating with the club.
- **# trained fan ambassadors** or volunteers.
- **Annual fan satisfaction** or perception survey completed (Y/N).

Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Have you conducted any survey or consultation to understand your fans' attitudes toward sustainability and respect?				
2. Do you consistently communicate sustainability and inclusion messages during matches and online?				
3. Do you run campaigns or challenges that encourage fans to act (e.g. recycle, travel sustainably, show respect)?				
4. Do you collaborate with supporter groups to co-create these initiatives?				
5. Are there fan ambassadors or volunteers supporting positive behaviour in the stands or community?				
6. Do you monitor and evaluate fan behaviour and campaign effectiveness?				



C7. Event Safety & Security

Why It's Important

Ensuring safety & security during events is fundamental aspect of social sustainability in the context of football. Fans, players, officials and staff must feel safe and welcome at every match. Fostering a secure environment encourages attendance, builds trust and helps promote football as an inclusive community space.



Safety includes creating environments free from violence, harassment, or discrimination. When safety is mismanaged, consequences can range, from accidents and crowd disturbances to reputational and financial damage. Social sustainability in this area requires an integrated approach, combining safety & security, ensuring comfort, fairness and dignity for all participants. This reflects UEFA's integrated concept of safety (protection of people), security (prevention of disorder) and service (creating a welcoming environment).

UEFA, through its *Stadium and Security Regulations* and its *Football Sustainability Strategy 2030*, emphasises the creation of safe, secure and inclusive match-day environments for all participants and spectators. The EU's *White Paper on Sport* recognises safety and security as essential components of sport's social role and good governance, while the Council of Europe's *Saint-Denis Convention* establishes an integrated safety, security and service framework that supports modern, sustainable event management in football.

Examples of good practices

- **UEFA EURO 2020 Host Cities** : implemented a coordinated “Safety, Security and Service” model involving local authorities, stewards, medical teams and fan zone staff, emphasising prevention and positive fan engagement.
- **English FA and Premier League**: initiatives such as “*Play Safe*” and “*Love Football. Protect the Game*”, empower fans and participants to report safety, discrimination, or harassment incidents via text or online platforms.²²

²² [Premier League Annual Report 2024/25](#)



How to implement

Step	Action	Effort Level	Example KPI / Indicator	How to Monitor
1	Develop a Safety & Security Policy under the responsibility of a designated Safety & Security Officer, covering match-day operations, emergency response, safeguarding and coordination with authorities.	Low	Policy adopted (Y/N); responsible Safety & Security Officer appointed (Y/N).	Policy document; annual review records.
2	Conduct risk assessments for each match or event (crowd size, weather, transport, emergency access).	Medium	Risk assessment completed per event; # corrective actions implemented.	Pre-event checklists; incident logs.
3	Train stewards, staff and volunteers on crowd management, emergency procedures and respectful communication with fans.	Medium	# trained; % certified.	Training records; attendance logs.
4	Ensure accessibility and inclusivity in safety plans (evacuation routes, accessible signage, assistance for persons with disabilities).	Medium	Accessibility integrated (Y/N); # inclusive features; Accessible evacuation routes tested (Y/N).	Facility inspection reports; fan feedback.
5	Establish communication protocols: use PA, digital screens and apps for safety information, lost children, or emergency instructions.	Low	# communication channels used; fan feedback on clarity of safety messaging.	Match-day observation; post-event surveys.
6	Implement incident reporting and response systems (e.g. text hotlines, mobile apps, anonymous reporting).	Medium	# reports received/responded; response time.	System logs; steward reports.
7	Coordinate through a formal liaison structure with police, medical services, fire services and stadium management and ensure a clear command and communication structure on match-day.	Medium	# coordination meetings; joint exercises completed; Control room operational for matches (Y/N).	Meeting records; simulation reports.
8	Evaluate and adapt: conduct post-event debriefings, review incidents and update procedures accordingly.	Medium	Evaluation completed (Y/N); # improvements implemented.	Post-event reports; annual summary.



Monitoring tips

Here are some example indicators and monitoring tips to help you monitor your performance:

- Existence of **Safety & Security Policy** (Y/N).
- **# trained stewards/staff** and **% certification coverage**.
- **# risk assessments** completed and actions implemented.
- **Safety certificate** valid and up to date (Y/N)
- **# safety communications** delivered per event.
- **# incidents reported** and **resolved**; average response time.
- **# joint coordination meetings** or simulations with authorities.
- **Pre-event stadium inspection(s)** completed (Y/N)
- **Annual review** and policy update completed (Y/N).
- **% of accessibility features** integrated into safety design.

Mini Checklist: Reflect on Your Current Practice

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Notes / Actions Needed
1. Do you have a written Safety & Security Policy aligned with national and UEFA frameworks?				
2. Are risk assessments conducted before each match or large event?				
3. Are stewards and staff trained in safety, security and respectful communication?				
4. Does your safety plan include inclusive and accessible procedures for people with disabilities?				
5. Are there clear fan communication channels for safety announcements or incident reporting?				
6. Do you coordinate regularly with police, health and municipal authorities ?				
7. Do you evaluate and adapt your safety measures after each event?				



Section D: Monitoring

Monitoring is fundamental part of adopting and implementing an effective sustainability strategy! It is impossible to know whether actions are effective, where improvements are needed, or how to communicate impact to stakeholders. Monitoring provides:

- **Accountability** → show progress to stakeholders
- **Improvement** → identify gaps and opportunities for further action.
- **Recognition** → showcase achievements through data and evidence.



PATHWAY project integrates monitoring with the [Online Sustainability Checker](#), which allows organisations to evaluate their performance and directly link their results to solutions.

What to monitor

Each sustainability topic in this Toolkit (Sections B and C) is linked to some practical examples of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

How to monitor effectively

Set a baseline

- ➔ Collect data before implementing changes (e.g. current energy bills, waste volumes, transport modes).
- ➔ Use surveys, ticketing systems, or simple counts where official data isn't available.

Choose indicators that fit your level

- ➔ Grassroots clubs may focus on basic indicators (e.g. "number of volunteers trained" or "existence of a policy").
- ➔ Professional clubs and associations may track more advanced metrics (e.g. " $t\text{CO}_2\text{eq}$ emissions", "% modal shift in transport").

Collect data consistently

- ➔ Assign responsibility (e.g. sustainability officer, volunteer coordinator).
- ➔ Use simple templates (spreadsheets, surveys) for regular reporting.
- ➔ Integrate data collection into existing operations (ticketing, catering contracts, facility management).



Analyse and act

- ➔ Compare results season to season.
- ➔ Identify which measures are most effective.
- ➔ Adjust programmes where progress is slow.

Report and communicate

- ➔ Share achievements with fans, sponsors and local communities.
- ➔ Use visuals (infographics, dashboards) to make data engaging.
- ➔ Align reports with national/UEFA frameworks to gain recognition.

Tools and resources:

- [UEFA Carbon Footprint Calculator](#) for measuring energy and transport-related emissions.
- [UEFA Accessibility and Circular Economy Checklists](#) for structured audits of facilities and event operations.
- [PATHWAY Online Sustainability Checker](#) for integrated scoring and improvement guidance.

Section E: From Guidance into Action

Sections B and C outlined a wide range of solutions and pathways for environmental and social sustainability. For many clubs, academies, or associations, the challenge is usually where to start and how to prioritise actions. This section provides some guidance on how to move from ideas to implementation and how to use the *Online Sustainability Checker* as a support tool in the process.

Understand your starting point

- ➔ What are you already doing well and where are there obvious gaps?
 - ➔ Use the **Online Sustainability Checker** to obtain a structured snapshot of your current performance.
 - ➔ The results will highlight areas where you need improvement and give you targeted recommendations on how to act.

Identify relevance and influence

Not all solutions will be equally relevant or actionable for every organisation. Consider:

- ➔ **Relevance:** Is this issue significant in your local context?
- ➔ **Impact:** Would action here make a meaningful environmental or social difference?



- **Influence:** Is this something you can control directly, or does it depend on external actors (e.g. municipality, league rules)?

Choose actions that balance **high relevance, high impact and strong influence** for your context.

Set priorities

- Start with **quick wins**: visible, low-cost/effort actions that build momentum.
- Add **medium-term actions**: requiring more coordination or investment
- Work towards **long-term integration & strategy development**: embedding sustainability in governance, policies and reporting.

Use the PATHWAY Online Checker (or other available tools) for continuous improvement

- **Assess:** Use the Checker to evaluate your current practices.
- **Act:** Consult the Toolkit for guidance on how to improve weak areas.
- **Reassess:** Return to the Checker after a season or campaign to measure progress.
- **Communicate:** Share improvements with fans, sponsors and partners.

Section F: Lessons Learned - PATHWAY Pilots

Under T3.1, a set of pilot actions were implemented across professional and grassroots football settings by project partners, addressing both environmental and social sustainability themes. These pilots provided practical evidence on feasibility, acceptance and transferability and informed the guidance presented in as part of this Toolkit.

Some key, overarching lessons that emerged from the pilots and could be helpful towards adoption of improved sustainability practices in football, are summarised below.

Simplicity and clarity enable implementation

Pilot actions that were easy to understand and supported by visible infrastructure and clear guidance were implemented smoothly and without disrupting match-day operations. Simple design choices (e.g. clear signage, defined zones, structured roles) reduced friction for staff, volunteers and participants.

Behavioural engagement is as important as infrastructure

Across environmental and social pilots, the presence of staff or volunteers providing guidance, explanation or facilitation significantly improved



outcomes. Infrastructure alone was rarely sufficient; active engagement supported correct use, positive experience and willingness to repeat the practice.

Local context shapes outcomes and scalability

Pilot performance was strongly influenced by venue layout, event format, mobility conditions and available external infrastructure. Actions proved transferable across contexts when adapted to local realities, rather than applied as fixed templates.

Incremental approaches support sustainable progress

Several pilots demonstrated that sustainability improvements are often achieved in steps. Even modest interventions (e.g. organised transport for specific groups, targeted waste sorting, reduction of single-use plastics) can create foundations for more ambitious actions when embedded into regular operations.

Monitoring can be simple and effective

Meaningful insights were generated using straightforward KPIs, conservative assumptions and structured feedback tools. Clear documentation of assumptions and consistent application are often proved more important than complex measurement systems.



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APPENDIX A: KPI Log Template

This example table provides football organisations with a potential means of tracking, monitoring and reviewing progress on sustainability actions throughout the season.

It can be used for *internal monitoring, annual reporting, or to update results in the PATHWAY Online Sustainability Checker.*

Topic / Area	Action or Initiative	Indicator / KPI	Baseline (Date & Value)	Current Value	Target / Goal	Effort Level (Low / Med / High)	Evidence / Source	Responsible Person / Role	Status (Not Started / In Progress / Completed)	Next Review Date
Energy & Emissions	Upgrade to LED floodlights and install timers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total electricity use (kWh / season) % reduction vs baseline CO₂e emissions from electricity (tCO₂e) 	2024: 620 000 kWh	2025: 460 000 kWh	↓ 25 % by 2026	Medium	Utility bills; meter logs	Facilities Manager	In Progress	Mar-26
Transport	Promote public-transport and active-travel options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % fans arriving by public transport, bike or on foot tCO₂e emissions from fan travel (per match) 	2024: 22 %	2025: 35 %	40 % by 2026	Low	Fan survey; mobility study	Communications Lead	Ongoing	Jun-26
Waste & Circular Economy	Introduce reusable-cup system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # single-use cups avoided per match % reusable-cup return rate Waste diversion rate (%) 	2024: 0 cups / 0 %	2025: 12,000 / 92 % return	> 20,000 / 95 % return	Medium	Vendor records; waste audit	Stadium Ops Mgr	In Progress	May-26
Water	Install leak-detection and efficient fixtures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total water consumption (m³ / season) Water use per match (m³ / match) % change vs baseline 	2024: 3 800 m ³	2025: 3 100 m ³	↓ 20 % by 2026	Medium	Water bills; meter readings	Grounds Supervisor	In Progress	Annual
Accessibility	Provide audio-descriptive commentary and improve signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of ADC (Y/N) # accessible seats and % of total capacity Fan satisfaction score (%) 	2024: No ADC / 40 seats (1 %)	2025: ADC Yes / 80 seats (2 %)	Maintain > 2 % and ADC coverage all matches	Medium	Access audit; fan feedback	Accessibility Officer	Completed	Ongoing
Diversity & Inclusion	Deliver staff and coach training on EDI and anti-discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # staff trained % of workforce trained # reported incidents and resolution rate (%) 	2024: 15 (25 %)	2025: 45 (75 %)	100 % by 2026 and 0 unresolved cases	Medium	Attendance sheet; HR records	HR / D&I Officer	In Progress	Dec-25
Health & Wellbeing	Run annual mental-health workshop and wellbeing survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # sessions delivered % staff participating Wellbeing index score / survey response rate (%) 	2024: 0 sessions / 0 %	2025: 3 sessions / 68 %	≥ 4 sessions / 75 %	Low	Survey results; session log	Team Manager	Ongoing	Jun-26
Community Engagement	Host youth and volunteer festival with local NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # participants % from under-represented groups # local partners involved 	2024: 0 / - / -	2025: 220 / 40 % / 3	≥ 250 / > 40 % / ≥ 4	Medium	Event report; partner MoUs	Community Lead	Completed	Annual
Fan Engagement & Behaviour Change	Run "Green Matchday Challenge" (recycling + travel pledge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # fans participating % reduction in mixed waste Fan engagement rate (on-site or online %) 	2024: 0:00	2025: 1 200 participants / -10 % waste	2,000 / -20 %	Low	Campaign data; waste audit	Fan Liaison Officer	In Progress	End Season
Event Safety & Security	Conduct steward training and annual safety review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # stewards trained % certified # safety incidents per season 	2024: 80 / 60 % / 8	2025: 120 / 90 % / 4	Maintain ≥ 90 % certified and ≤ 4 incidents / season	Medium	Training logs; incident reports	Safety Officer	Completed	Annual

