



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Working conditions and Social Dialogue  
**Social dialogue**

**SECTOR SOCIAL DIALOGUE  
COMMITTEE  
PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL**

## **Minutes of the Meeting of the Plenary**

**13 December 2023**

*Chair: Luca Nicola (UEFA)*

### **1. Welcome and opening**

The meeting was chaired by UEFA welcoming all participants and explaining the format of the hybrid meeting and some good practices on how to take the floor.

The Chair and the Social partners welcomed the good number of participants and the possibility to meet again face to face, as well as confirmed commitment to social dialogue outcomes.

### **2. Approval of the agenda**

The agenda was approved.

### **3. Updates on workplan topics 2023**

#### **3.1. Pilot Programmes of Autonomous Agreement (AA)**

UEFA reported the progress achieved regarding the objective of this work stream, namely to assess national standard contracts and dispute resolution mechanisms & issue tailor-made recommendations and facilitate and monitor implementation in the following Pilot countries: Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Serbia.

EU social partners were able to conduct the following country visits:

Bucharest:	13-14 July 2022
Prague:	22-23 February 2023
Belgrade:	4-5 July 2023
Warsaw:	16-17 October 2023

Outcome documents with objectives and timelines have been agreed.

UEFA noted that the work on national dispute resolution (NDRCs) will be impacted by new FIFA regulatory framework (expected in December 2023)

National delegations (affiliates of employers, workers (players) and national football associations) took the floor to discuss in more detail the achievements in each country so far, and the remaining challenges.

Social partners confirm that implementation of the AA can lead to tangible results, and is the core business of the sector social dialogue (see also agenda point 5).

### **3.2. Working Group on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

In line with previous exchanges, UEFA proposed the **UEFA's Women in Football Leadership Programme (WFLP)** for this workstream where there is a possibility to include up to 2 participants of the social dialogue partners.

This will also strengthen cooperation between UEFA and Social partners.

EU Social partners (European Leagues, ECA, FIFPRO Europe) agreed to this configuration. They might have to do a modest financial contribution but sponsoring is also possible.

The new edition of the WFLP is expected to take place during the first half of the 2024/25 season (between July and December 2024).

### **3.3. Loan Restrictions at Domestic Level**

In line with previous exchanges, all parties agreed to terminate this workstream by end 2023.

There is no added value to pursue this further as FIFA rules are strict.

Nevertheless, it was decided to conclude this workstream by a detailed overview on the actual loan usage (see point 4 of agenda)

## **4. Presentation from expert: Latest picture on loan usage**

UEFA's Head of Intelligence Centre Analysis gave a detailed presentation on the latest picture on loan usage, drawing notably on the Inbound and outbound landscape of loan usage last completed season and summer 2023.

The presentation also covered new FIFA and UEFA regulations in this respect.

In summary, the following conclusions were drawn:

- Loan activity reverted to pre-pandemic levels;
- market analysis suggests clubs falling in-line with international loan rules;
- Accelerating trend for Multi Club Ownership / Multi Club Investments – potential for loan limit circumvention but too early to conclude
- 'loopholes' for UEFA sustainability circumvention closed in advance
- Numerous countries still to apply domestic loan regulation (also required by FIFA)

## **5. Proposed work plan for 2024**

**The proposed topics for the workplan 2024 are as follows:**

- (1) Autonomous Agreement (AA): continue to work on the implementation of the agreed measures in the four pilot countries;
- (2) Establish a permanent working group to facilitate social dialogue at domestic level, focused on AA implementation, NDRCs and other relevant matters
- (3) DEI: Explore the possibility to include stakeholders' participation in UEFA's Women in Football Leadership Programme as of the 2024/25 season

The main novelty is to extend the workstream on the AA beyond the four pilot countries.

The parties agreed to send the final adopted version to the European Commission.

**6. Proposed calendar of meetings in 2024**

**The calendar is agreed as follows:**

Proposed meetings:

Working Group 1: 15 FEBRUARY 2024 (ONLINE IN EN)

Working Group 2: 3 JUNE 2024 (ONLINE IN EN)

Annual Plenary: 25 NOVEMBER (HYBRID IN-PRESENCE/ ONLINE)

**7. Information from the European Commission**

The European Commission informed about new policy developments. DG EAC (Sports Unit) briefed participants on the implementation of the current Sports Work Programme 2021-2024, and on ongoing studies such as Athletes Rights.

EU Social partners were keen to see a stakeholder consultation regarding the forthcoming Sports Work Programme, and asked for a focus on professional sports. The Commission informed that the Council (Belgian Presidency) is in the lead for this.

DG EMPL updated participants on Commission Work Programme 2024 including the high level Social Partners' Summit (Val Duchesse) scheduled for January 2024.

As regards the implementation of the Social Dialogue Initiative adopted in 2023, DG EMPL informed specifically on the future meeting organisation in 2024 and 2025 for Sector Social Dialogue Committees.

**8. Any Other Business**