



UEFA

SUSTAINABILITY

GLOSSARY

A COMMON
LANGUAGE FOR
SUSTAINABILITY
IN FOOTBALL

INTRODUCTION



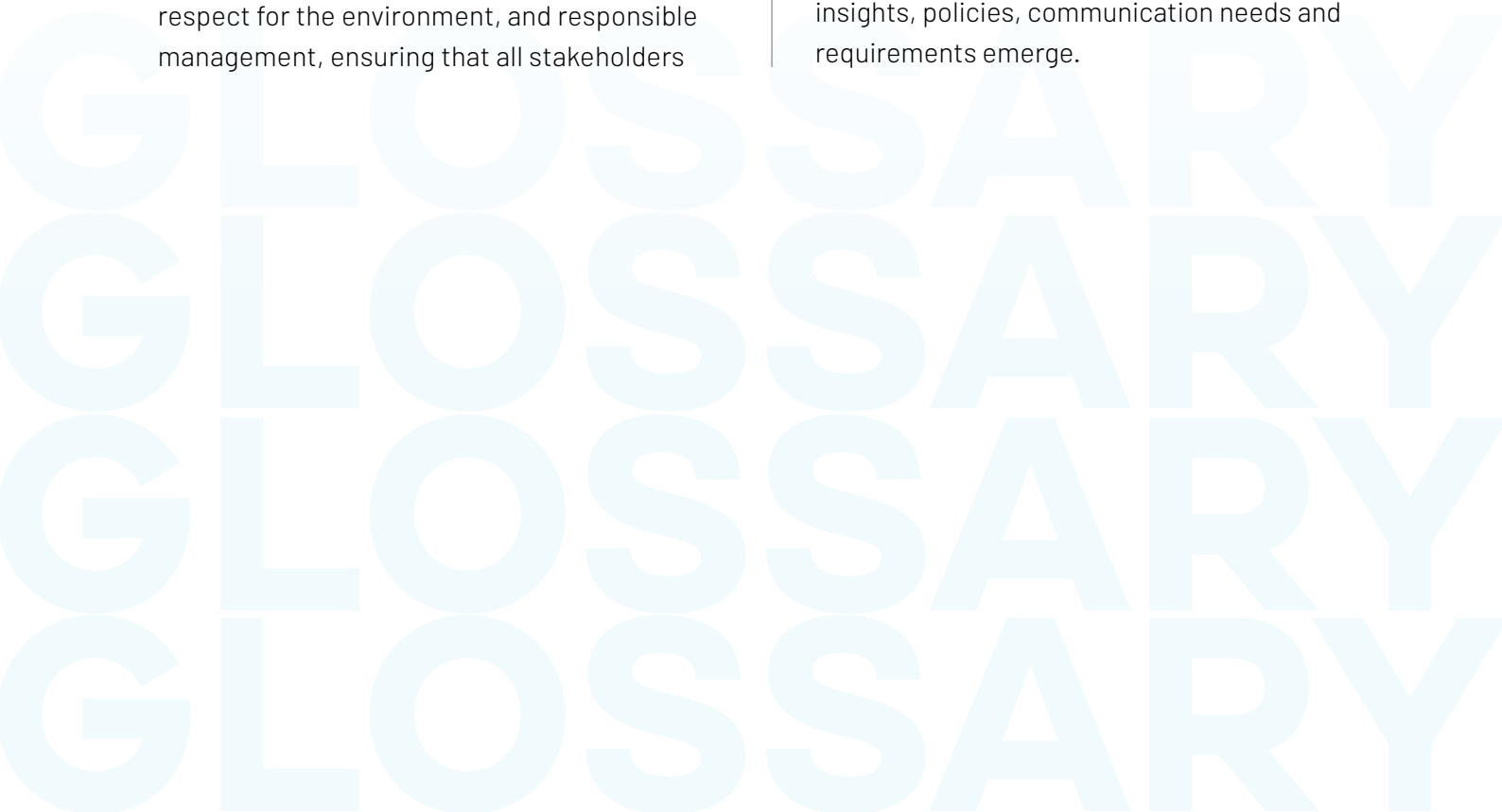
THE UEFA SUSTAINABILITY GLOSSARY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED TO PROVIDE A CLEAR AND COMMON LANGUAGE FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTING UEFA'S APPROACH TO SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN EUROPEAN FOOTBALL.

As sustainability grows in scope and complexity, the terms we use must be consistent, accurate, and aligned with UEFA's strategic ambitions and event requirements. A shared vocabulary is essential not only for effective action, but also for clear, credible, and transparent communication. This glossary gathers the key concepts, definitions, and frameworks used across UEFA's work pursuing social impact, respect for the environment, and responsible management, ensuring that all stakeholders

– UEFA, National Associations, clubs, partners and other parties share the same understanding and communicate consistently.

Whether addressing human rights, inclusion, equality, climate action, circularity, sustainable event operations, or infrastructural standards, every term in this document supports clearer planning, decision making, reporting and engagement with diverse audiences. By harmonising terminology, our aim is to strengthen collaboration, reduce ambiguity, and ensure that all activities—across tournaments, organisations, and programmes—reflect UEFA's strategic approach to sustainability.

This glossary is a practical tool, not an academic reference, and will evolve over time as new insights, policies, communication needs and requirements emerge.





01

SOCIAL IMPACT

SOCIAL IMPACT

A

ACCESSIBLE

Provision of a barrier-free environment and related changes in policies, procedures or the built environment itself to ensure that all individuals can benefit from, and participate in, all activities and events.

ACCESSIBLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

A built or physical environment created or modified so that all people can get to, from and around it.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

Requirements and guidelines ensuring venues, services and information are accessible to all, including disabled supporters.

ANTI-RACISM

Proactive actions and behaviours that challenge and prevent racism in all its forms, personal and structural.

ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

Attitudes, fears, prejudices and assumptions that discriminate against and prevent disabled people from participating in society.

B

BIAS

Inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair.

C

CHILD & YOUTH PROTECTION

Safeguarding framework and tools that protect minors in football, covering welfare, online safety and reporting mechanisms.

CULTURE

The ideas, customs and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

D

DISCRIMINATION

The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

DIVERSITY

The state of being diverse; variety; the presence of differences in characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, and other identity factors; differences between individuals on any attribute that may lead to the perception that another person is different from the self.

E

EQUALITY

The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities (Equal – having the same status, rights, or opportunities).

SOCIAL IMPACT

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EQUITY

The quality of being fair and just, especially in a way that takes account of and seeks to address existing inequalities.

ETHNICITY

The quality or fact of belonging to a population group or subgroup made up of people who share a common descent or cultural background.

F

FOOTBALL FOR ALL ABILITIES

Making football accessible to persons with disabilities (adapted formats for disabled players, supporter services, audio-descriptive commentary, accessible ticketing, inclusive facilities).

G

GENDER EXPRESSION

It refers to how a person presents their gender to the world such as through appearance, behaviour or clothing. This can vary widely and does not necessarily align with societal expectations.

GENDER IDENTITY

It describes a person's internal sense of their gender. Some people identify as women or men, while others identify as non-binary or use different terms such as agender.

GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

Independent channel for any stakeholder to report human rights issues confidentially during events, with expert handling and rapid response.

H

HARASSMENT

Aggressive pressure or intimidation.

HEALTH & WELL-BEING – TAKE CARE

UEFA initiative promoting mental and physical health (e.g., nutrition, digital habits, stigma reduction) for players, staff and fans.

HUMAN RIGHTS DUE DILIGENCE (HRDD)

Process to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for human rights risks linked to tournaments and operations (incl. stakeholder engagement and grievance mechanisms).

HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION (EVENT)

A formal commitment signed with hosts and cities to protect and promote rights at a tournament, including accessibility, inclusion and non-discrimination.

I

INCLUSION

The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised.



SOCIAL IMPACT

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INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Language that avoids bias, slang, or expressions that discriminate against groups of people based on race, gender, ability, etc.

INTERSECTIONALITY

The interconnected nature of social categorisations as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

L

LGBTQI+

An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning/queer, intersex and others whose identities fall outside of cisgender and heterosexual norms.

M

MICROAGGRESSION

Indirect, subtle or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalised group.

O

ONLINE ABUSE MONITORING

Event-time system to detect and address online harassment targeting players, officials and fans.

P

PREJUDICE

Dislike, hostility or unjust behaviour deriving from preconceived and unfounded opinion.

R

RACIALISED IDENTITY

How people are categorised or treated based on appearance or perceived ethnicity, rather than biological fact.

RACISM

Prejudice or discrimination directed at people based on racialised identity, skin colour or perceived ethnicity.

REFUGEE SUPPORT

Actions that use football to include and empower refugees, asylum-seekers and Internally Displaced Persons.

RELIGION

A system of faith that may include teachings, rituals, cultural traditions or ways of living. People practise their religion differently, even within the same faith.

RESPECT

Showing regard for the dignity, identity and rights of others through language, behaviour and action.

SOCIAL IMPACT

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S

SEX

It refers to biological characteristics and is often recorded in legal documents. While frequently described as male or female, some people are born with sex characteristics that do not fit typical definitions, for example, intersex people.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual orientation refers to who a person may be emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to.

STEREOTYPE

Oversimplified assumptions about individuals or groups that can lead to unfair treatment or expectations.

SOLIDARITY & RIGHTS

UEFA's commitment to uphold fundamental rights and support vulnerable groups across the football family.

NOTE:

For more terms related to Accessibility, please refer to the Glossary section of the [UEFA Accessibility Guidelines](#).

Inclusive language is complex, and across the topic, it is important to consider context as well as language specificities. For guidance on inclusive language concepts, and UEFA's defined English terms related to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), please refer to [UEFA's EDI Toolkit](#).

For more detailed questions, please contact sustainability@uefa.ch.



02

ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENT

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B

BIODEGRADABLE

When it can be naturally broken down by microorganisms (such as bacteria or fungi) into water, carbon dioxide, and other simple substances, without leaving harmful residues in the environment.

BIODIGESTER

System that uses microorganisms to break down organic waste (such as food scraps or agricultural residues) in an oxygen-free environment, producing biogas (a renewable energy source) and nutrient-rich fertilizer as by-products.

BIODIVERSITY

The different kinds of life in any given area, whether animals, plants or even microorganisms.

C

CARBON EMISSIONS COMPENSATION

The action of offsetting greenhouse gas emissions by supporting projects that reduce or remove an equivalent amount of carbon from the atmosphere, such as reforestation, renewable energy, or biodiversity conservation initiatives.

CARBON FOOTPRINT

Total GHG emissions associated with a tournament (incl. mobility, energy use in facilities, purchased goods and services,

logistics and fan travel); measured to guide reductions.

CARBON NEUTRALITY

Quantification, reduction and offsetting of greenhouse gas emissions as per PAS 2060 standard. The definition of a carbon-neutral footprint is a 'condition in which during a specified period there has been no net increase in the global emission of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere as a result of the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the subject during the same period'.

COMPOSTING

The natural process in which microorganisms break down organic waste—such as food scraps, leaves, and plant material—into a nutrient rich soil amendment called compost.

CLIMATE PROTECTION

Reducing event and organisational greenhouse gas emissions, prioritising avoidance and reduction over offsetting, and investing in climate solutions.

CLIMATE INVESTMENT FUNDS

Financial support to host associations and cities to implement energy, water, waste and mobility projects that reduce event impacts.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Designing out waste and keeping materials in use via reduce/reuse/repair/recycle; includes reusable cups, donation and second-life plans.

ENVIRONMENT

D

DIRECT EMISSIONS

Greenhouse gases released directly from sources owned or controlled by an organization, such as fuel combustion in company vehicles, boilers, or on-site industrial processes.

G

GREY WATER

Wastewater from household uses such as sinks, showers, and washing machines that is relatively clean and can often be reused for irrigation or other non potable purposes.

I

INDIRECT EMISSIONS

Greenhouse gases that are generated as a consequence of an organization's activities but occur from sources it does not own or directly control—such as purchased electricity, business travel, or supplier-related emissions.

L

LOCAL FOOD

Produced, harvested, and consumed within a short geographic distance—typically within the same region—reducing transport impacts and supporting local farmers and economies.

LOW EMISSIONS VEHICLES

Designed to produce significantly fewer greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions than conventional models—typically through electric, hybrid, or highly efficient engines that reduce their environmental impact.

LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENT (LCA)

A methodology used to quantify the environmental aspects of goods and services (products), defined in ISO 14040 as “compilation and evaluation of the inputs, outputs and the potential environmental impacts of a product system throughout its life cycle,” from raw material acquisition through production, use, end-of-life treatment and recycling to final disposal.

LINEAR ECONOMY

Society's current model, whereby we take materials from the Earth, make products from them, and eventually throw them away as waste.

M

MATERIALITY

The concept of identifying which environmental, social, or governance issues are significant enough to meaningfully influence an organization's decisions, performance, or stakeholder expectations. tournaments and operations (incl. stakeholder engagement and grievance mechanisms).



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N

NET ZERO

A more ambitious goal than carbon neutrality (see above) that applies to an entire organisation and its value chain. According to the Carbon Trust, it means achieving a scale of value-chain emission reductions consistent with the depth of abatement achieved in pathways that limit warming to 1.5°C, with no or limited overshoot, and neutralising the impact of any source of residual emissions that remains unfeasible to be eliminated by permanently removing an equivalent amount of atmospheric carbon dioxide.

O

ORGANIC WASTE

Any material that is biodegradable, that comes from either plant or animal sources and that breaks down into carbon dioxide, methane, or other organic molecules.

R

RECOVER

Capture the energy generated when incinerating material. More broadly, recovery refers to waste that is not recycled, but that is used as a source of energy or valuable biochemical compounds.

RECYCLE

Transform a product or component into its basic materials or substances and for reprocessing into new items.

REDUCE

Minimise the amount of waste generated by changing the design, manufacture, purchase or use of materials or products.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Energy generated from natural sources that replenish themselves continuously—such as sunlight, wind, water, or geothermal heat—providing power with minimal environmental impact.

REUSE

Use a product or component for its intended purpose repeatedly without significant modification.

S

SCOPE 1/2/3 EMISSIONS

Standard categories of GHG emissions: direct (1), purchased energy (2), and value-chain (3), with fan and team travel typically material for events.

SECOND LIFE

The extended use of a product or material after its initial purpose, by repurposing, refurbishing, or redeploying it so it continues to deliver value before reaching end of life or recycling.

SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Products made from plastic that are used for a short period of time and thrown away without being fed back into a circular economy.

ENVIRONMENT

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SMART MOBILITY

Measures that make low-carbon travel the easiest choice (e.g., free public transport, extra trains, active mobility, flight reduction).

U

UPCYCLING

The process of creatively transforming discarded materials or products into new items of higher value or quality, extending their life and reducing waste.

USE PHASE

The period from the moment a product is bought from a retailer to the moment the first user finishes with it and no longer wants to keep it. This term includes the retail process.

V

VALUE CHAIN

The full product life cycle and all stakeholders, from product conception and design through to disposal and end of life.

W

WASTE MANAGEMENT

The correct way to organise a strategy for the disposal, reduction, reuse, and waste prevention of any waste developed in the facility.

Z

ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL

Operational target to avoid landfill disposal through reduce, reuse, recycling and recovery pathways.

NOTE:

For additional terms on circular economy, please refer to the [UEFA Circular Economy Guidelines](#).

For additional terms on climate action, please refer to the [UEFA Carbon Footprint Calculator Methodology](#).



03

RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT

RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT

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A

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability refers to the obligation of individuals and organisations involved in event management to take responsibility for their decisions, actions, and impacts on society, the environment, and stakeholders.

AREAS OF ACTION & POLICIES

UEFA's system of five areas of action and 11 policies (7 social impact, 2 respect for the environment, 2 responsible management) guiding ambitions, targets and KPIs to 2030.

C

CLUB LICENSING – SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

Regulatory requirements for clubs to have strategies, officers and policies on equality, anti-racism, child protection, disability inclusion and environmental protection.

E

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The assessment of sustainability in relation to the planet, the human realm and financial viability.

ERGONOMICS

Science dedicated to designing and arranging things for human comfort, safety, and efficiency.

ESG (ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, GOVERNANCE)

Framework to organise sustainability actions, targets and reporting across football operations.

EVENT SUSTAINABILITY

Event sustainability is the practice of planning, delivering, and closing events in a way that minimises negative environmental and social impacts, enhances positive contributions, and follows principles of responsible resource use, inclusion, safety, and legacy.

G

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Good governance refers to the systems and processes that ensure ethical, accountable, transparent, and effective decision-making within event and organisational management.

I

INFRASTRUCTURE SUSTAINABILITY

Guidelines for stadiums and training centres to integrate energy efficiency, renewable power, water stewardship and circular design.

K

KPIs & TARGETS

Measurable objectives and indicators used to monitor progress across policies and areas of action.



RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT

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M

MATERIAL TOPICS (FOOTBALL)

Issues most relevant to football's impacts and stakeholders (e.g., non-discrimination, accessibility, fan travel emissions, circularity).

MULTIPURPOSE STADIUM

A modern stadium that can host many different sports and commercial operations.

R

RISK MANAGEMENT

Sustainability risk management is the systematic identification, assessment, and mitigation of environmental, social, and human-rights-related risks that could affect the success of an event or the organisation.

S

SMART BUILDING

One that features technical engineering systems that can regulate its environment and operations.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Consistent collaboration with associations, leagues, clubs, host cities, NGOs and fans to align goals and deliver impact.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Defined in the World Commission on Environment and Development's 1987 report, Our Common Future, as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." It seeks to reconcile

economic development with the protection of social and environmental balance.

SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS

Materials used that can be produced without depleting non-renewable resources, thereby maintaining the correct equilibrium of natural resources, and materials that can be recycled or reused to extend their life.

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

Including environmental and social criteria in sourcing, favouring local supply and responsible partners.

T

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is the practice of openly communicating relevant, accurate, and timely information about sustainability selected documentation, policies, decisions, performance, and impacts.

U

UEFA RESPECT REPORT

Annual public report tracking progress against the Football Sustainability Strategy 2030, including KPIs and event outcomes.

NOTE:

For additional terms related to infrastructure sustainability, please refer to the [UEFA Sustainable Infrastructure Guidelines](#).

