

UEFA President visits Luxembourg

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UEFA President Michel Platini has visited Luxembourg for talks centring on the Grand Duchy's football development and UEFA's assistance to the Luxembourg Football Federation.

by **Matthieu Pécot** from Luxembourg



Michel Platini (right) and the Luxembourg Football Federation president Paul Phillip ©FLF

UEFA President Michel Platini has visited Luxembourg for talks which centred on football development in the Grand Duchy.

For Mr Platini, the visit was almost a 'home' fixture, with only 60km separating the Josy Barthel Stadium in Luxembourg, where the meeting took place, and the village of Joeuf in Lorraine, France, where the UEFA President was born.

"It is always a pleasure to return to not far from my home," said Mr Platini, who congratulated Luxembourg's national team on their recent results in a FIFA World Cup qualifying group which also features Russia and Portugal. "To take six points in such a lofty group is a very strong performance." The UEFA President also paid compliments to Luxembourg club FC Differdange 03, who came through two UEFA Europa League qualifying rounds this summer.

The president of the Luxembourg Football Federation (FLF), Paul Phillip, greeted Mr Platini. "It's an honour and pleasure to welcome the UEFA President," he said. "He loved football as a player, and he has continued to love football. He has not hesitated to tackle testing dossiers such as financial fair play and third-party ownership. I mix with the presidents of the other [member] associations often enough to say that we are proud to have him as a President."

The meeting was also attended by the Luxembourg sports minister Romain Schneider and the mayor of Luxembourg, Xavier Bettel. Key talking points were the future renovation of the Josy Barthel Stadium, as well as UEFA's assistance to Luxembourg as part of the European football body's HatTrick programme.

Mr Phillip spoke of the good relations between UEFA and the FLF. "UEFA plays its supervisory role to perfection, which enables us to strengthen our social duties," he said. "Thanks to the help of UEFA and its HatTrick programme, we have built 32 pitches across the country, which are available to all youngsters and for all sports.

"UEFA is not just the [UEFA] Champions League, it is also grassroots football," he added. "This season has seen a record number of registrations of youth teams – and this future stadium will not just be the national team's stadium, but also the stadium of the Luxembourg football family, and therefore of our youth teams."

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