

# Women's Euro 2017 football preview

## Women's Euro 2017 football preview – all you need to know

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UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin, right, and KNVB President Michael van Praag at the UEFA Women's EURO Final Tournament Draw. Rotterdam, Netherlands *Image courtesy of UEFA*

As the [ICC Women's Cricket World Cup](#) draws towards its conclusion, the summer of women's sport takes to the football pitch with the [UEFA Women's Euro 2017](#) competition getting underway on July 16.

It will be the 12th women's Euro tournament and is hosted by the Netherlands for the first time, who will launch proceedings with a match against Norway in Utrecht. A total of 47 UEFA nations took part in the qualifications for the tournament and this will be the first time the finals will involve 16 teams rather than 12.

In 2015, the FIFA Women's World Cup also upped its number of teams from 16 to 24, highlighting how women's football is growing in size and popularity. According to a recent [report by UEFA](#), there are 1.27m registered female players in Europe in 2016-17.

Media coverage of the sport in the UK is improving with [Channel 4 announcing](#) that it will be showing all of the games featuring England and Scotland. Other games [will be shown](#) on British Eurosport 2.

During the tournament, there will be a focus on increasing the number of women who play football through a campaign called [Together #WePlayStrong](#). It focuses on three key aspects that embody the game: skill, togetherness and positive attitude.

## The favourites

Germany, the holders and ranked first in 2017, have dominated the tournament since winning in 1989, lifting the trophy an impressive eight times. They also put an end to Brazil's [winning streak](#) on July 4 2017 in the lead-up to the Euros. They will meet one of their [biggest rivals](#), Sweden, on their opening game on July 17 – a team who are yet to beat them.

Dzsenifer Marozsán, who had a long football career as a junior, has appeared more than 60 times for Germany's senior team. She is a highly skilled technician with the football who, after being instrumental in winning the [Olympic Gold medal](#) in Rio 2016, is one to watch.

France are also strong contenders and have had a successful year so far. They face Iceland first who beat Scotland 4-0 in the qualifying round in June 2016.

## The Lionesses

England – known as The Lionesses – made history by finishing third for the first time in 2015, by beating Germany for an extremely well-deserved bronze medal at the FIFA Women's World Cup 2015. They are a [resilient](#) team and have become female role models to a younger generation.

Since 2015, the team have been building on their success and on July 1 beat [Denmark 2-0](#), with both goals scored by the captain for the game, Ellen White. She is known for scoring [one of the best goals](#) in the history of the FIFA World Cup in 2011, and is definitely another player to keep an eye on in this tournament.

The England squad has been [announced](#) – and there has been a bit of a shake up. There are some familiar stars from the 2015 world cup, including Fara Williams, Steph Houghton, Lucy Bronze, Laura Bassett and Fran Kirby – but also some new names. Demi Stokes (defender), Isobel Christiansen (midfielder), Nikita Parris (striker), and Millie Bright (midfielder) all make their debut for England.

The Lionesses's first game, versus Scotland, takes place on July 19 in Utrecht at 19.45 UK time. England are favourite to win their group.

## Debutantes to watch

Scotland make their [debut](#) in the Women's Euros this year. The team is ranked 11th but has made strong progress on [financial, commercial and equality issues](#) for women's football in Scotland in the lead up to the Euros. Despite a few injuries,

the team demonstrated their form on July 7 [beating Ireland 1-0](#). After they play England they're lined up to play Portugal, ranked 23rd, and then Spain who are ranked 6th.

Other teams making their debuts in the final this year include Belgium, Austria, Portugal, and Switzerland. Switzerland, in particular, shouldn't be underestimated.

## Key things you need to know

- First game starts: July 16. A full fixture list is available on the [UEFA website](#).
- The top two teams in each of the four groups will progress to the knockout phase.
  - The final is on August 6 in Enschede.

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