

[HOME](#) > [\(/INSIDEUEFA/\)](#) [About UEFA \(/insideuefa/about-uefa/\)](#) [Return to Play \(/returntc](#) [MENU](#)

UEFA RANKING 2020

30



# Slovak Football Association

SVK

## Slovakia's sweet smell of success

[PRESENTATION](#) ∨[PRESIDENT](#) ∨[SECRETARY](#) ∨

Slovakian football has been creating its own modern history ever since Czechoslovakia split into Slovakia and the Czech Republic in 1993.



*Slovakia's sweet smell of success*

©AFP

Slovakian football has been creating its own modern history ever since Czechoslovakia split into Slovakia and the Czech Republic in 1993. Yet while Slovakia attempts to forge a new football identity, it should not be forgotten that the Slovak Football Association (Slovenský futbalový zväz – SFS) was formed as far back as 1938, nor that between 1939 and 1945 an independent Slovak league was played.

When the two countries were united, the Slovaks had many outstanding personalities who stamped their name on Czechoslovakia's football story and assisted the nation in achieving glory. These included Dr Ivan Chodák, after whom a Slovak fair play award is named, and Ladislav Kubala, one of the most prominent players in the annals of FC Barcelona.

Another Slovakian, Dr Josef Vengloš, helped Václav Ježek coach the Czechoslovakia national team that won the 1976 UEFA European Championship, before he assumed sole responsibility for the side and steered them to third place at the 1980 tournament. Dr Vengloš also worked at clubs in Portugal, England, Turkey, Scotland and Japan, as well as becoming a central figure in UEFA and FIFA technical programmes.

Ján Popluhár is considered the best Slovak player of the 20th century: the legendary ŠK Slovan Bratislava and 1. FC Brno libero topped a poll to decide the foremost footballer of the age. Other notable talents have included Lubomír Moravčík, who played with distinction at AS Saint-Etienne, SC Bastia and Celtic FC, and Peter Dubovský, formerly of Real Madrid CF and Real Oviedo, who died tragically in 2000.

In UEFA EURO and FIFA qualifying tournaments, Slovakia had been unfortunate to find stronger rivals barring their path to major finals. However, they eventually made the breakthrough by reaching South Africa 2010; coach Vladimír Weiss's team won their crucial last qualifier 1-0 in Poland to clinch pole position in a group also containing Slovenia and the Czech Republic. Their reward was a FIFA World Cup pool featuring Italy, Paraguay and New Zealand, from which they progressed to the round of 16 after a famous 3-2 win over the Azzurri, which eliminated the holders from the competition.

The second success came in 2015, when the team led by coach Ján Kozák qualified for UEFA EURO 2016, the first time that Slovakia had reached a EURO finals since independence. With key figures prominent such as Marek Hamšík, Juraj Kucka or Martin Škrtel, the Slovenskí sokoli (Slovak falcons) recovered from an opening 2-1 defeat against Wales to beat Russia 2-1 and achieve a battling goalless draw with England to book a place in the last 16, where they were defeated by Germany.

The seeds for this success had arguably been planted with the intensive youth development programme that yielded fourth place at the UEFA European Under-21 Championship of 2000 and a ticket to the Sydney Olympics. In 2017, Slovakia made it to another U21 final round, this time in Poland, after winning their qualifying group ahead of the Netherlands and Turkey.

Slovakia's World Cup feat in 2014 also made up for previous near misses. With Jozef Adamec in charge of players such as Peter Babnič, Vladimír Janočko, Jozef Valachovič, Juraj Buček, Vladimír Labant and Vratislav Greško, the national side had been edged into third spot by Sweden and Turkey in their 2002 bid. England and Turkey then pipped them to the post in UEFA EURO 2004 qualification. Coach Dušan Galis fared better en route to the 2006 World Cup in Germany, as Slovakia came second in their section behind Portugal, only to lose heavily to Spain in a play-off. Finally, though, Weiss struck gold, having replaced Ján Kocian after an unhappy UEFA EURO 2008 attempt.

On the club scene, 2009 Slovak champions Slovan Bratislava – who lifted the 1969 European Cup Winners' Cup after defeating Barcelona 3-2 in Basel – FC Spartak Trnava, MŠK Žilina and the now defunct AŠK Inter Bratislava have been regular participants in European competition. The goal for these sides must surely be to reach new heights.

## President

Ján Kováčik



*Ján Kováčik*  
©UEFA.com

**Nationality:** Slovakian

**Date of Birth:** 4 December 1962

**Association president since:** 2010

- Ján Kováčik proved his business acumen in the construction industry, and moved on into the entertainment world, co-founding one of Slovakia's largest production companies.
- Took his skills into the world of football as owner of his hometown club FK Dukla Banská Bystrica, helping them to compete among the top teams in Slovakia and qualify for the UEFA club competitions.
- Elected as Slovak Football Association (SFZ) president in September 2010, he said: "I want to be a strong but fair and proper president. My priority is to build a new national stadium, set new standards in communication between the SFZ and the media and, for sure, raise the standard of football in Slovakia." He was re-elected for a second term of four years in February 2014, and oversaw the national team's qualification for UEFA EURO 2016. Stadium infrastructure improvements and amateur football development are among his major objectives in this term of office.

## General secretary

Peter Palenčík



*Peter Palenčík*  
©SFZ

**Nationality:** Slovakian

**Date of birth:** 8 August 1975

**Association general secretary since:** 2020

- Born in Vranov nad Topľou in eastern Slovakia, Peter Palenčík studied at the faculty of education at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. He has worked for the Slovak Football Association (SFZ) since 2004.
- Palenčík started as a youth section coordinator before becoming director of the SFZ's international and organisation sectors.
- He became SFZ general secretary on 1 January 2020, and is the seventh general secretary since independence.

---

© 1998-2021 UEFA. All rights reserved. Last updated: Tuesday 18 February 2020

## ALSO VISIT

---

[UEFA Foundation \(http://www.uefafoundation.org/\)](http://www.uefafoundation.org/)

[UEFA Academy \(https://uefaacademy.com/\)](https://uefaacademy.com/)

[Store \(https://store.uefa.com/\)](https://store.uefa.com/)

[Domestic European competitions \(/memberassociations/leaguesandcups/\)](/memberassociations/leaguesandcups/)

## CHANNELS

---

[News Centre \(/insideuefa/news/\)](/insideuefa/news/)

[Video \(/insideuefa/video/\)](/insideuefa/video/)

## MY UEFA.COM

---

[Newsletters \(/newsletters/\)](/newsletters/)

## CHANGE LANGUAGE

---

[English \(//www.uefa.com/\)](//www.uefa.com/)

[Français \(//fr.uefa.com/\)](//fr.uefa.com/)

[Deutsch \(//de.uefa.com/\)](//de.uefa.com/)

[Русский \(//ru.uefa.com/\)](//ru.uefa.com/)

[Español \(//es.uefa.com/\)](//es.uefa.com/)

[Italiano \(//it.uefa.com/\)](//it.uefa.com/)

[Português \(//pt.uefa.com/\)](//pt.uefa.com/)

---

[Privacy \(/privacy/\)](/privacy/)   [Terms and conditions \(/termsconditions/\)](/termsconditions/)

[Cookie policy \(/cookiepolicy/\)](/cookiepolicy/)   [Cookie Settings](#)

---

Follow us on



[\(https://twitter.com/uefa?lang=en-gb\)](https://twitter.com/uefa?lang=en-gb)



[\(https://www.facebook.com/uefa/?fref=ts\)](https://www.facebook.com/uefa/?fref=ts)



[\(https://www.instagram.com/uefa\\_official/?hl=en\)](https://www.instagram.com/uefa_official/?hl=en)



[\(https://www.linkedin.com/company/uefa\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/uefa)



[\(https://uefa.newsmarket.com/\)](https://uefa.newsmarket.com/)



[\(https://www.youtube.com/user/UEFA\)](https://www.youtube.com/user/UEFA)

