

## **Football Pathway to Germany Opens a World of Opportunity for Local Youth Players**

Over the past five years, more than ten of Football Development Australia's youth academy graduates have transferred to Berlin for a life changing experience. The football is more intense. The city is full of energy and history. Bone cold training nights in sub zero temperatures replace the sweltering Sydney summer heat. The players absolutely love it!

Head Coach Cormac Begley explains – "It's so much more than a football journey. It's about embracing and integrating into a totally different culture. You form new friendships with teammates from all over the world and you also have to be resourceful to find work, a place to live and to survive."

Students make the move post HSC and they are in mini groups when they travel to Berlin. They trial with semi-professional clubs who are part of the Football Development Australia club network in Germany, and get to stay on if selected to be in the club's first team squad for the subsequent football season.

Aidan Quigley who spent two years with the SV Empor Club in the Berlin Liga reflected: "I felt like I could take on the world when I came back to Sydney. Learning the language, forming new friendships, exploring an exciting new city and playing at a really high level with incredible players and great coaches was the dream!"

Hitting your teens in Sydney, generally signals the end of the road for football aspirations, as opportunities are very limited. This alternate pathway offers players, who are good enough and brave enough to make the move, an entirely different perspective on life as a youth footballer in Europe.

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### Football Development Australia – About us

Football Development Australia is a Sydney based youth academy training program that has been in operation since 2008. We specialise in player and team development, based on European youth football training concepts. We have been traveling to Germany to form relationships with football clubs, languages schools and universities since 2011. The objective of our visits and tours is to provide our players and graduates with the opportunity to study, work and play football at the highest possible level in Europe. In 2025, the Football Development Australia u17 team won the German Football Festival Youth tournament in Dresden, which marked our progress and assimilation as individuals and as a team in this high-level football environment.

### Notes

Interviews with players currently based in Germany and who are now back in Sydney are available on request