

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE - 2018/19 SEASON MATCH PRESS KITS



Azerbaijan

Bakı Olimpiya Stadionu - Baku

Friday 7 September 2018

18.00CET (20.00 local time)

Group D3 - Matchday 1



Kosovo

Last updated 12/02/2019 19:39CET



Previous meetings	2
Squad list	3
Head coach	5
Match officials	6
Competition facts	7
Match-by-match lineups	10
Legend	11

Previous meetings

Head to Head

No UEFA competition matches have been played between these two teams

Squad list

Azerbaijan

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	League phase		Pld	Gls
Goalkeepers									
1	Kamran Agayev	09/02/1986	32	Keşla	-			0	0
12	Emil Balayev	17/04/1994	24	Sabail	-			0	0
23	Shakhrudin Magomedaliyev	12/06/1994	24	Qarabağ	-			0	0
Defenders									
3	Urfan Abbasov	14/10/1992	25	Gabala	-			0	0
4	Pavlo Pashayev	04/01/1988	30	Olexandriya	-			0	0
5	Maksim Medvedev	29/09/1989	28	Qarabağ	-			0	0
18	Magomed Mirzabekov	16/11/1990	27	Neftçi	-			0	0
19	Rahil Mammadov	24/11/1995	22	Qarabağ	-			0	0
21	Tamkin Khalilzade	06/08/1993	25	Gabala	-			0	0
22	Badavi Hüseynov	11/07/1991	27	Qarabağ	-			0	0
Midfielders									
2	Gara Garayev	12/10/1992	25	Qarabağ	-			0	0
6	Joshgun Diniyev	13/09/1995	22	Qarabağ	-			0	0
7	Mahir Madatov	01/07/1997	21	Qarabağ	-			0	0
8	Emin Makhmudov	27/04/1992	26	Neftçi	-			0	0
13	Dmitri Nazarov	04/04/1990	28	Erzgebirge	-			0	0
14	Rahid Amirguliyev	01/09/1989	29	Sabail	-			0	0
15	Javid Imamverdiyev	08/01/1990	28	Sabah	-			0	0
16	Javid Hüseynov	09/03/1988	30	Gabala	-			0	0
17	Rahman Hajiyev	25/07/1993	25	Neftçi	-			0	0
20	Richard Almeida	20/03/1989	29	Astana	-			0	0
Forwards									
9	Rauf Aliyev	12/02/1989	29	Gabala	-			0	0
10	Ruslan Gurbanov	12/09/1991	26	Sabail	-			0	0
11	Ramil Sheydaev	15/03/1996	22	Krylya Sovetov	-			0	0
Coach									
-	Gurban Gurbanov	13/04/1972	46		-			0	0

Kosovo

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	League phase		Pld	Gls		
Goalkeepers											
1	Samir Ujkani	05/07/1988	30	Rizespor	-			0	0		
12	Faton Maloku	14/06/1991	27	Kukës	-			0	0		
16	Visar Bekaj	24/05/1997	21	Prishtina	-			0	0		
Defenders											
2	Jetmir Krasniqi	01/01/1995	23	Lugano	-			0	0		
3	Fidan Aliti	03/10/1993	24	Skënderbeu	-			0	0		
4	Arbenit Xhemajli	23/04/1998	20	Xamax	-			0	0		
13	Amir Rrahmani	24/02/1994	24	Dinamo Zagreb	-			0	0		
15	Mergim Vojvoda	01/02/1995	23	Mouscron	-			0	0		
19	Leart Paqarada	08/10/1994	23	Sandhausen	-			0	0		
20	Kastriot Dermaku	15/01/1992	26	Cosenza	-			0	0		
Midfielders											
5	Herolind Shala	01/02/1992	26	Start	-			0	0		
6	Hekuran Kryeziu	12/02/1993	25	Zürich	-			0	0		
7	Milot Rashica	28/06/1996	22	Bremen	-			0	0		
9	Bersant Celina	09/09/1996	21	Swansea	-			0	0		
10	Arber Zeneli	25/02/1995	23	Heerenveen	-			0	0		
14	Idriz Voca	15/05/1997	21	Luzern	-			0	0		
17	Benjamin Kololli	15/05/1992	26	Zürich	-			0	0		
18	Vedat Muriqi	24/04/1994	24	Rizespor	-			0	0		
22	Edon Zhegrova	31/03/1999	19	Genk	-			0	0		
Forwards											
8	Donis Avdijaj	25/08/1996	22	Willem II	-			0	0		
11	Elbasan Rashani	09/05/1993	25	Odd	-			0	0		
21	Atdhe Nuhiu	29/07/1989	29	Sheff. Wednesday	-			0	0		
23	Bernard Berisha	24/10/1991	26	Akhmat	-			0	0		
Coach											
-	Bernard Challandes	26/07/1951	67		-			0	0		

Head coach

Gurban Gurbanov

Date of birth: 13 April 1972

Nationality: Azerbaijani

Playing career: Daşqın Zaqatala (twice), Mertskhali, Alazani, Turan Tovuz (twice), Kur Nur, Neftçi (three times), Dinamo Stavropol, Fakel Voronezh (three times), Baltika Kaliningrad, Volgar Astrakhan, İnter Bakı

Coaching career: Neftçi, Qarabağ, Azerbaijan

- Started his playing career in 1988 with local side Daşqın Zaqatala before a spell in Georgia. Having returned to Azerbaijan, striker Gurbanov spent two more years at Daşqın and won the league with Turan Tovuz in 1993/94.
- Claimed three more Azerbaijani titles with Baku-based Neftçi, ending up as the league's leading marksman in 1996/97 and adding the domestic cup in 2004.
- With 12 goals in 64 matches for Azerbaijan, Gurbanov remains the national team's top scorer; after 115 goals in 191 Azerbaijani league games, he finished playing in 2006.
- Kicked off his coaching career at Neftçi and came second in the league before taking charge of Qarabağ in 2008. Won the Azerbaijani Cup in his first season and went on to lift the trophy three more times.
- Landed five league championships in a row with Qarabağ, getting to the UEFA Europa League play-offs three times before eventually qualifying for the competition proper in 2014/15 and then for the next two seasons. In 2017/18, he guided Qarabağ to the UEFA Champions League group stage – the first club from Azerbaijan to achieve that feat – and in November 2017 was appointed as Azerbaijan coach in addition to his club role.

Bernard Challandes

Date of birth: 28 July 1951

Nationality: Swiss

Playing career: Le Locle (twice), Urania Genève Sport, Saint-Imier

Coaching career: Saint-Imier, Le Locle, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Yverdon-Sport, Young Boys (twice), Servette, Switzerland (youth), Switzerland Under-21, Zürich, Sion, Neuchâtel Xamax, Thun, Armenia, Kosovo

- Bernard Challandes has quietly carved out an impressive coaching CV since his career started in earnest when he took over at Yverdon in 1987. He stayed in the post for seven seasons, winning four lower-league titles, before moving to Young Boys.
- His stay in Berne proved nowhere near as lengthy or successful, however, Challandes departing in 1995 with the club finishing bottom of the first phase of the 12-team Swiss top flight after collecting just 17 points. A subsequent spell at Servette proved short-lived, and there followed a lengthy spell out of the limelight, during which he coached Switzerland's Under-17 and Under-18 teams.
- The Le Locle native took over the Switzerland Under-21 side in 2001. The highlight of his six years in charge came in 2002, when a team including Alexander Frei, Ludovic Magnin and Daniel Gyğax reached the UEFA European Under-21 Championship semi-finals on home soil.
- The lure of club football proved too strong for Challandes, however, and in 2007 he took charge of Zürich, leading them to the UEFA Cup round of 32 in his first season. The club's third league title in four years followed in 2009, the Swiss side securing UEFA Champions League group stage football for the first time at the start of 2009/10.
- After leaving FCZ in 2010, Challandes took charge of Sion – with whom he won the Swiss Cup in 2011 – Neuchâtel Xamax, Thun and Young Boys, committing to his first job outside Switzerland in February 2014, at the age of 62, when he was announced as the new coach of Armenia. Stepped down the following year midway through UEFA EURO 2016 qualifying, going on to work as a scout at Basel before returning to coaching with Kosovo in March 2018.

Match officials

Referee	Ola Hobber Nilsen (NOR)
Assistant referees	Tom Harald Grønevik (NOR) , Geir Isaksen (NOR)
Additional assistant referees	Espen Eskås (NOR) , Tom Harald Hagen (NOR)
Fourth official	Øystein Ytterland (NOR)
UEFA Delegate	Martin Sturkenboom (NED)
UEFA Referee observer	Lucilio Cardoso Cortez Batista (POR)

Referee

Name	Date of birth		UEFA matches
Ola Hobber Nilsen	20/02/1986	0	22

UEFA Nations League matches between the two teams

No such matches refereed

Other matches involving teams from either of the two countries involved in this match

Date	Competition	Stage reached	Home	Away	Result	Venue
25/07/2018	UCL	2QR	FK Kukësi	Qarabağ FK	0-0	Shkoder

Competition facts

What is the background to the UEFA Nations League?

The rejuvenation of national team football – and the UEFA Nations League – stems from the desire of UEFA and its 55 member associations to improve the quality and standing of national team football. UEFA and its associations wanted more sporting meaning in national team football, with associations, coaches, players and supporters increasingly of the opinion that friendly matches are not providing adequate competition for national teams.

Extensive consultation and discussions started as far back as the 2011 UEFA Strategy Meeting in Cyprus and continued at a series of Top Executive Programme (TEP) meetings over the following three years. The UEFA Nations League was unanimously adopted at the XXXVIII Ordinary UEFA Congress in Astana on 27 March 2014.

What is the basic format?

The format of the UEFA Nations League features promotion and relegation. The 55 European national teams have been divided into four leagues in accordance with UEFA's national association coefficient rankings on 11 October 2017.

League A includes the top-ranked sides and League D includes the lowest:

League A

Group A1: Germany, France, Netherlands

Group A2: Belgium, Switzerland, Iceland

Group A3: Portugal, Italy, Poland

Group A4: Spain, England, Croatia

Teams have been split into four groups of three, with the group winners then contesting the UEFA Nations League Finals (semi-finals, third-place match and final) in June 2019 to become the UEFA Nations League winners. One host country will be appointed in December 2018 from among the finalist teams.

The four teams that finish bottom of their groups will be relegated to League B for the 2020 edition.

The top four ranked teams that do not qualify for UEFA EURO 2020 will enter a play-off in March 2020, with one final place on offer.

League B

Group B1: Slovakia, Ukraine, Czech Republic

Group B2: Russia, Sweden, Turkey

Group B3: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Northern Ireland

Group B4: Wales, Republic of Ireland, Denmark

Teams have been split into four groups of three.

The four group winners are promoted to League A, with the four sides that finish bottom relegated to League C for the next competition to be played in 2020.

The top four ranked teams that do not qualify for UEFA EURO 2020 will enter a play-off in March 2020, with one final place on offer.

League C

Group C1: Scotland, Albania, Israel

Group C2: Hungary, Greece, Finland, Estonia

Group C3: Slovenia, Norway, Bulgaria, Cyprus

Group C4: Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, Lithuania

Teams have been split into one group of three (containing teams from Pots 1, 2 and 3 only) and three groups of four. Due to winter venue restrictions, a group could contain a maximum of two of these teams: Norway, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania.

The four group winners are promoted to League B, with the four sides that finish bottom relegated to League D for the 2020 edition.

The top four ranked teams that do not qualify for UEFA EURO 2020 will enter a play-off in March 2020, with one final place on offer.

League D

Group D1: Georgia, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Andorra

Group D2: Belarus, Luxembourg, Moldova, San Marino

Group D3: Azerbaijan, Faroe Islands, Malta, Kosovo

Group D4: FYR Macedonia, Armenia, Liechtenstein, Gibraltar

Teams have been split into four groups of four.

Due to excessive travel restrictions, any group could not contain a maximum of one of these pairs: Andorra & Kazakhstan, Faroe Islands & Kazakhstan, Gibraltar & Kazakhstan, Gibraltar & Azerbaijan

The four group winners are promoted to League C for the 2020 edition.

The top four ranked teams that do not qualify for UEFA EURO 2020 will enter a play-off in March 2020, with one final place on offer.

Leagues A and B consist of four groups of three teams

League C comprises one group of three teams and three groups of four sides

League D is formed by four groups of four teams

The League Phase Draw for the UEFA Nations League took place at the SwissTech Convention Centre in Lausanne on 24 January 2018.

In each league, four group winners are promoted (or play in the Finals, see below) and four teams are relegated for the next competition to be played in 2020.

The overall UEFA Nations League rankings will determine the composition of the draw pots for the subsequent European Qualifiers.

In addition, the UEFA Nations League will provide teams with another chance to qualify for the UEFA EURO final tournament, with four sides qualifying through play-off matches which take place in March 2020 (see below).

When will the UEFA Nations League take place?

The UEFA Nations League will take place as follows:

See the full fixture list.

The UEFA Nations League group games are being held over six matchdays, during the 'double-headers' in September, October and November 2018. The UEFA Nations League Finals competition for the teams that win the four groups within the top division is scheduled for June 2019.

For the UEFA Nations League Finals, the group winners of UEFA Nations League A will play in a knockout format (semi-finals, third-place match and final) in June 2019 to become the UEFA Nations League winners. One host country will be formally appointed by the UEFA Executive Committee in December 2018 from one of the nations competing in the final four. Italy, Poland and Portugal (all in Group A3) have expressed interest.

The play-off matches will be staged in March 2020 (see below).

Will qualifying for the UEFA EURO change?

The changes to UEFA EURO qualifying will make it more streamlined. The equation is now simple: ten groups with the top two teams in each group qualifying automatically, and the other four places being awarded to European Qualifiers play-off winners, in which the 16 group winners of the UEFA Nations League will be in contention.

The UEFA EURO 2020 qualifying draw will be made after the completion of the UEFA Nations League and allow for the four UEFA Nations League Finals participants to be drawn into groups of five teams.

But the key principle of the qualifiers remains: that every team can play every team.

The European Qualifiers for UEFA EURO 2020 commence in March 2019. There will be two matchdays in each of March, June, September, October and November 2019. In total, there will be five groups of five teams and five groups of six teams (ten groups in all) playing over ten matchdays (the same number as now). The winner and runner-up in each of the ten groups will qualify automatically for the UEFA EURO 2020 final tournament (June 2020).

The last four EURO places will be won through the European Qualifiers play-offs, which will take place in March 2020 and which will be contested by the 16 UEFA Nations League group winners.

If a group winner has already qualified via the European Qualifiers, then their spot will go to the next best-ranked team in their league. If a league does not have four teams to compete, the remaining slots are allocated to teams from another league, according to the overall UEFA Nations League ranking.

Each league will have a path of its own and each path will feature two single-leg semi-finals and one single-leg final. The winner of each path will win a ticket to UEFA EURO 2020.

How are the overall UEFA Nations League rankings calculated?

Within each league (A, B, C and D), the overall ranking will be calculated based on position in the group then points, goal difference, goals scored, away goals scored, wins, away wins, disciplinary points, coefficient ranking.

What are the advantages for national associations and teams?

National associations and coaches, in consultations with UEFA, revealed that they feel that friendly internationals are not providing adequate sporting competition. The UEFA Nations League creates more meaningful and competitive matches for teams and a dedicated calendar and structure for national team football.

Top teams can also aspire to take part in the UEFA Nations League Finals, a new top-level event.

For middle-ranking and smaller nations, the UEFA Nations League will offer an extra way to qualify for UEFA EURO final tournaments. Lower-tier countries – the bottom 16 in the rankings – are now guaranteed one of the 24 qualifying slots for UEFA EURO.

Lower-ranking teams who have struggled against sides ranked considerably higher than them will now get the chance to take part in balanced matches. Teams do not learn and progress by repeatedly losing; now some sides will start winning.

While the UEFA Nations League will replace most friendly internationals, there will still be space in the calendar for friendlies, especially for top teams who may want to face opposition from outside Europe as they will be in groups of three teams.

Associations and teams benefit from clarity of the fixture calendar, and there is now a clear buffer between the end of the UEFA EURO and FIFA World Cup, and vice versa, as well as stability of income.

What are the advantages for supporters?

Supporters more than most realise that most friendlies fail to deliver competitive and meaningful football. Now they will have the opportunity to see their teams play in more competitive matches, take part in a new competition and get a second chance to qualify for the major tournaments.

In every even year there are World Cup or UEFA EURO champions; now in every odd year there will be a UEFA Nations League winners. Football is about competition and now, just like in club football, there will be a national team champion at the close of every season.

Will this mean more demands on players and clubs?

No: the UEFA Nations League and European Qualifiers will adhere to the existing agreed international match calendar. UEFA is always keen to preserve the balance between club and international football. The new competition should, in fact, reduce demands on players and clubs with less travel envisaged for friendly games while national teams will be playing more consistently at their own level. With double-header matchweeks, players will even go back to their clubs earlier than is currently the case.

Is this just about generating more revenue?

No, finances are not a driver for the new competition. However, the competition will have the same centralised media rights as have recently been introduced for all European Qualifiers so associations will have even more stability in their income.

Will there be no more friendly internationals?

There will certainly be fewer friendly internationals and undoubtedly fewer meaningless friendlies. However, there will still be space in the calendar for friendly internationals – particularly warm-up matches for final tournaments. UEFA is also keen that European teams will still have the chance to play opponents from other confederations.

Match-by-match lineups

Azerbaijan

UEFA Nations League - Group stage – final tournament

Group D3

Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faroe Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kosovo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Matchday 1 (07/09/2018)

Azerbaijan-Kosovo

Matchday 2 (10/09/2018)

Malta-Azerbaijan

Matchday 3 (11/10/2018)

Faroe Islands-Azerbaijan

Matchday 4 (14/10/2018)

Azerbaijan-Malta

Matchday 5 (17/11/2018)

Azerbaijan-Faroe Islands

Matchday 6 (20/11/2018)

Kosovo-Azerbaijan

Kosovo

UEFA Nations League - Group stage – final tournament

Matchday 1 (07/09/2018)

Azerbaijan-Kosovo

Matchday 2 (10/09/2018)

Kosovo-Faroe Islands

Matchday 3 (11/10/2018)

Kosovo-Malta

Matchday 4 (14/10/2018)

Faroe Islands-Kosovo

Matchday 5 (17/11/2018)

Malta-Kosovo

Matchday 6 (20/11/2018)

Kosovo-Azerbaijan

Legend

Competitions

Disclaimer: Although UEFA has taken all reasonable care that the information contained within this document is accurate at the time of publication, no representation or guarantee (including liability towards third parties), expressed or implied, is made as to its accuracy, reliability or completeness. Therefore, UEFA assumes no liability for the use or interpretation of information contained herein. More information can be found in the competition regulations available on UEFA.com.