

# UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE - 2018/19 SEASON MATCH PRESS KITS



**Malta**

**National Stadium - Ta' Qali**

Monday 10 September 2018  
20.45CET (20.45 local time)

Group D3 - Matchday 2



**Azerbaijan**

Last updated 12/02/2019 19:40CET



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## Previous meetings

### Head to Head

#### 2016 UEFA European Championship

Date	Stage reached	Match	Result	Venue	Goalscorers
06/09/2015	QR (GS)	Malta - Azerbaijan	2-2	Ta' Qali	Mifsud 55, Effiong 71; Amirguliyev 36, 80
28/03/2015	QR (GS)	Azerbaijan - Malta	2-0	Baku	J. Hüseynov 4, Nazarov 90+2

	Qualifying								Final tournament				Total					
	Home				Away													
	Pld	W	D	L	Pld	W	D	L	Pld	W	D	L	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA
<b>Total</b>																		
Malta	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	-	-	-	-	6	3	1	2	11	7
Azerbaijan	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	-	-	-	-	6	2	1	3	7	11

## Squad list

### Malta

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	League phase		Pld	Gls
<b>Goalkeepers</b>									
1	Andrew Hogg	02/03/1985	33	Hibernians	-			1	0
12	Henry Bonello	13/10/1988	29	Valletta	-			0	0
23	Steve Sultana	07/09/1990	28	Balzan	-			0	0
<b>Defenders</b>									
2	Michael Johnson	11/05/1994	24	Balzan	-			0	0
3	Joseph Zerafa	31/05/1988	30	Valletta	*			1	0
4	Steve Borg	15/05/1988	30	Valletta	*			1	0
5	Andrei Agius	12/08/1986	32	Hibernians	-			1	0
16	Ferdinando Apap	29/07/1992	26	Victoria	-			0	0
17	Ryan Camilleri	22/05/1988	30	Valletta	-			0	0
<b>Midfielders</b>									
6	Ryan Fenech	20/04/1986	32	Sliema	-			0	0
8	Paul Fenech	20/12/1986	31	Birkirkara	-			1	0
11	Rowen Muscat	05/06/1991	27	Valletta	-			1	0
18	Johan Bezzina	30/05/1994	24	Hibernians	-			0	0
21	Roderick Briffa	24/08/1981	37	Gżira	-			0	0
22	Zach Muscat	22/08/1993	25	Pistoiese	*			1	0
<b>Forwards</b>									
7	Stephen Pisani	07/08/1992	26	Floriana	-			1	0
9	Michael Mifsud	17/04/1981	37	Birkirkara	-			1	1
10	André Schembri	27/05/1986	32	Apollon	-			1	0
13	Joseph Mbong	15/07/1997	21	Hibernians	-			1	0
14	Jean Paul Farrugia	21/03/1992	26	Sliema	-			1	0
15	Juan Corbolan	03/01/1997	21	Gżira	-			0	0
19	Alfred Effiong	29/11/1984	33	Balzan	*			1	0
20	Andrew Cohen	13/05/1981	37	Gżira	*			1	0
<b>Coach</b>									
-	Raymond Farrugia	01/10/1955	62		-			1	0

## Azerbaijan

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

## Head coach

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### Ray Farrugia

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**Date of birth:** 1 October, 1955

**Nationality:** Maltese

**Playing career:** Floriana, Melita Eagles, Naxxar Lions

**Coaching career:** Naxxar Lions, Malta Under-21 (twice), Pietà Hotspurs, Marxsaxlokk, Sliema Wanderers, Malta (assistant), Malta

- A combative midfielder, 'Zazu' made his debut for the senior team of local club Floriana at 16 and remained there for four seasons, winning two league titles and the FA Trophy and also claiming the first of four senior caps for Malta.
- He left for Australia aged just 21, joining top-flight outfit Melita Eagles, where he would spend the next 12 years, winning four State League championships and three Grand Finals and scoring 123 goals in 318 matches. He returned to his homeland in 1990, joining Naxxar Lions, and eventually hung up his boots at the age of 42.
- Started coaching while still playing at Naxxar before moving on to take charge of the Malta Under-21 side from 1998 to 2002. He later returned to club football on the island, serving Pietà Hotspurs, Marsaxlokk and Sliema Wanderers as head coach.
- In 2011 Farrugia was re-appointed as Malta U-21 head coach, remaining in charge until 2014, when he was promoted to the senior side as assistant to Pietro Ghedin.
- On 2 May 2018 he was appointed as Malta's head coach, replacing Tom Saintfiet who had been dismissed after just six months at the helm.

### Gurban Gurbanov

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**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.

## Match officials

<b>Referee</b>	Nikola Dabanović (MNE)
<b>Assistant referees</b>	Milovan Djukić (MNE) , Jovica Tatar (MNE)
<b>Additional assistant referees</b>	Milovan Milacic (MNE) , Miloš Bošković (MNE)
<b>Fourth official</b>	Aleksandar Djikanović (MNE)
<b>UEFA Delegate</b>	Graham Hover (ENG)
<b>UEFA Referee observer</b>	Luc Wilmes (LUX)

## Referee

Name	Date of birth		UEFA matches
Nikola Dabanović	18/12/1981	0	51

## 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
26/03/2015	U19	ELITE	France	Azerbaijan	2-0	Saint-Lo
04/09/2017	WC	QR	Azerbaijan	San Marino	5-1	Baku

## Competition facts

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### What is the background to the UEFA Nations League?

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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?

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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?**

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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?**

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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?**

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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?**

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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?**

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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?**

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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?**

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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?**

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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

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### Malta

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#### UEFA Nations League - Group stage – final tournament

##### Group D3

Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Faroe Islands	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Kosovo	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Malta</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

##### Matchday 1 (07/09/2018)

###### Faroe Islands 3-1 Malta

**Goals:** 1-0 Edmundsson 31, 2-0 R. Joensen 38, 2-1 Mifsud 42, 3-1 Hansson 52

**Malta:** Hogg, J. Zerafa, S. Borg, Agius, P. Fenech, Mifsud, Schembri, R. Muscat (60 S. Pisani), Mbong, Effiong (84 Cohen), Z. Muscat (73 J.P. Farrugia)

##### Matchday 2 (10/09/2018)

Malta-Azerbaijan

##### Matchday 3 (11/10/2018)

Kosovo-Malta

##### Matchday 4 (14/10/2018)

Azerbaijan-Malta

##### Matchday 5 (17/11/2018)

Malta-Kosovo

##### Matchday 6 (20/11/2018)

Malta-Faroe Islands

### Azerbaijan

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#### UEFA Nations League - Group stage – final tournament

##### Matchday 1 (07/09/2018)

###### Azerbaijan 0-0 Kosovo

**Azerbaijan:** K. Agayev, Garayev, Abbasov, Pashayev, Medvedev, Madatov, Makhmudov (66 Nazarov), R. Gurbanov (61 Khalilzade), Sheydaev (74 R. Aliyev), Richard Almeida, Hüseyinov

##### 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

# Legend

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## Competitions

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