

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE - 2018/19 SEASON MATCH PRESS KITS



Albania

Loro Boriçi Stadium - Shkoder

Saturday 17 November 2018
20.45CET (20.45 local time)

Group C1 - Matchday 5



Scotland

Last updated 17/11/2018 08:32CET



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Previous meetings

Head to Head

UEFA Nations League

Date	Stage reached	Match	Result	Venue	Goalscorers
10/09/2018	GS-FT	Scotland - Albania	2-0	Glasgow	Xhimshiti 47 (og), Naismith 68

	Qualifying								Final tournament				Total					
	Home				Away													
	Pld	W	D	L	Pld	W	D	L	Pld	W	D	L	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA
Total																		
Albania	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	2
Scotland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0

Squad list

Albania

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	League phase		Pld	Gls
Goalkeepers									
1	Etrit Berisha	10/03/1989	29	Atalanta	-			0	0
12	Elhan Kastrati	02/02/1997	21	Pescara	-			0	0
23	Thomas Strakosha	19/03/1995	23	Lazio	-			3	0
Defenders									
2	Andi Lila	12/02/1986	32	Giannina	-			0	0
4	Ardian Ismajli	30/09/1996	22	Hajduk Split	-			0	0
5	Frédéric Veseli	20/11/1992	25	Empoli	-			2	0
6	Berat Xhimshiti	19/02/1993	25	Atalanta	-			3	0
15	Mërgim Mavraj	09/06/1986	32	Aris	-			2	0
17	Egzon Binaku	17/08/1995	23	Malmö	-			3	0
18	Kastriot Dermaku	15/01/1992	26	Cosenza	-			0	0
Midfielders									
7	Eros Grezda	15/04/1995	23	Rangers	-			1	0
9	Ledian Memushaj	07/12/1986	31	Pescara	-			3	0
13	Sabien Lilaj	10/02/1989	29	Gabala	-			2	0
14	Taulant Xhaka	28/03/1991	27	Basel	-			3	1
16	Emanuele Ndoj	20/11/1996	21	Brescia	-			1	0
20	Ergys Kaçe	08/07/1993	25	Panathinaikos	-			0	0
21	Enis Gavazaj	21/03/1995	23	Yenisey	-			2	0
Forwards									
3	Egil Kaja	26/07/1997	21	Livingston	-			0	0
8	Albion Ademi	19/02/1999	19	Inter Turku	-			0	0
10	Rei Manaj	24/02/1997	21	Albacete	-			1	0
11	Giacomo Vrioni	15/10/1998	20	Venezia	-			1	0
19	Bekim Balaj	11/01/1991	27	Akhmat	-			3	0
22	Myrto Uzuni	31/05/1995	23	Laç	-			1	0
Coach									
-	Christian Panucci	12/04/1973	45		-			3	0

Scotland

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	League phase				
						Pld	Gls			
Goalkeepers										
-	Allan McGregor	31/01/1982	36	Rangers	-		2	0		
-	Jamie McDonald	17/04/1986	32	Kilmarnock	-		0	0		
-	Scott Bain	22/11/1991	26	Celtic	-		0	0		
Defenders										
-	Graeme Shinnie	04/08/1991	27	Aberdeen	-		0	0		
-	Callum Paterson	13/10/1994	24	Cardiff	-		0	0		
-	Andy Robertson	11/03/1994	24	Liverpool	*		2	0		
-	Scott McKenna	12/11/1996	22	Aberdeen	-		1	0		
-	David Bates	05/10/1996	22	Hamburg	-		0	0		
-	Jack Hendry	07/05/1995	23	Celtic	-		0	0		
Midfielders										
-	Gary Mackay-Steven	31/08/1990	28	Aberdeen	-		0	0		
-	James Forrest	07/07/1991	27	Celtic	-		1	0		
-	Callum McGregor	14/06/1993	25	Celtic	-		2	0		
-	Stuart Armstrong	30/03/1992	26	Southampton	-		1	0		
-	Matthew Phillips	13/03/1991	27	West Brom	-		0	0		
-	Scott McTominay	08/12/1996	21	Man. United	-		1	0		
Forwards										
-	Steven Fletcher	26/03/1987	31	Sheff. Wednesday	-		0	0		
-	Johnny Russell	08/04/1990	28	Sporting Kansas City	-		2	0		
-	Ryan Fraser	24/02/1994	24	Bournemouth	-		0	0		
-	Ryan Christie	22/02/1995	23	Celtic	-		0	0		
-	Oliver McBurnie	04/06/1996	22	Swansea	-		1	0		
Coach										
-	Alex Mcleish	21/01/1959	59		-		2	0		

Head coach

Christian Panucci

Date of birth: 12 April 1973

Nationality: Italian

Playing career: Genoa, AC Milan, Real Madrid, Internazionale Milano, Chelsea (loan), Monaco, Roma, Parma

Coaching career: Russia (assistant), Livorno, Ternana, Albania

- Having risen through the ranks at Genoa, Panucci spent two seasons in the first team before leaving for Milan in 1993, winning the Scudetto and UEFA Champions League in his first season with the Rossoneri.
- A right-back who could cover in central defence, he captured a second Serie A title with Milan followed in 1996. Panucci moved to Real Madrid midway through 1996/97, becoming first Italian to play for Spanish giants, winning another league title that season and the UEFA Champions League again in 1998.
- Short spells at Inter, Chelsea and Monaco preceded his 2001 move to Roma, for whom he would make more than 300 appearances over the next eight years, winning the Coppa Italia twice. He hung up his boots in 2010 after a year with Parma.
- Twice a UEFA European Under-21 Championship winner with Italy, Panucci won 57 caps in a senior career spanning 14 years. Made his major tournament bow at the 2002 FIFA World Cup and scored the added-time goal against Scotland that took Italy to UEFA EURO 2008.
- Worked as Fabio Capello's assistant coach with Russia before striking out on his own; had short spells in charge of Serie B sides Livorno and Ternana before being appointed to succeed fellow Italian Gianni De Biasi as Albania coach in July 2017.

Alex McLeish

Date of birth: 21 January 1959

Nationality: Scottish

Playing career: Aberdeen, Motherwell

Coaching career: Motherwell, Hibernian, Rangers, Scotland (twice), Birmingham, Aston Villa, Nottingham Forest, Genk, Zamalek

- McLeish made his name as a rock-solid central defender with Alex Ferguson's illustrious Old Firm-defying Aberdeen side of the 1980s; the Dons won the Scottish league title in 1980, 1984 and 1985, added four Scottish Cup victories in five years and, most famously, beat Real Madrid 2-1 in the 1983 UEFA Cup Winners' Cup final before also overcoming Hamburg in that year's UEFA Super Cup.
- During his 17 years at Pittodrie, 'Eck' earned 77 caps for Scotland, playing at the 1982, 1986 and 1990 FIFA World Cup finals. He joined Motherwell as player/manager in 1994 and proved an immediate success at Fir Park, guiding the unfancied side to a runners-up spot in the Scottish Premier League in his first season in charge.
- He moved on in 1998 to Hibernian, where he experienced a mixture of highs and lows. Mooted at one point as a candidate to become Ferguson's right-hand man at Manchester United, his next career move took him instead to Rangers, where he replaced Dick Advocaat as manager in December 2001. McLeish's four-and-a-half-year tenure brought two league titles, two Scottish Cups and three Scottish League Cups to Ibrox, but a difficult season in 2005/06 prompted his departure.
- In January 2007 McLeish was named as the new manager of Scotland, replacing Walter Smith. He would last less than a year, quitting in November to join English Premier League club Birmingham. He remained at St Andrew's for three and a half seasons, winning the League Cup in 2011 but also experiencing relegation at the end of the same campaign. In a surprise move he left to join city rivals Aston Villa but lasted only a season in charge.
- Brief stints at Nottingham Forest, Belgian club Genk (where he enjoyed a fruitful 2014/15 campaign) and Egyptian side Zamalek preceded his reappointment as Scotland manager on 16 February 2018, ending a spell of more than 18 months in the managerial wilderness.

Match officials

Referee	Vladislav Bezborodov (RUS)
Assistant referees	Valeri Danchenko (RUS) , Maksim Gavrilin (RUS)
Additional assistant referees	Aleksei Eskov (RUS) , Sergei Ivanov (RUS)
Fourth official	Aleksei Lunev (RUS)
UEFA Delegate	Charles Schaack (LUX)
UEFA Referee observer	Kaj Natri (FIN)

Referee

Name	Date of birth		UEFA matches
Vladislav Bezborodov	15/01/1973	1	66

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
16/07/2009	UEL	2QR	SK Rapid Wien	KF Vllaznia	5-0	Vienna
10/10/2009	U19	QR	Scotland	Romania	3-0	St. Veit an der Glan
15/10/2009	U19	QR	Scotland	Austria	0-1	St. Veit an der Glan
03/08/2011	UCL	3QR	Malmö FF	Rangers FC	1-1	Malmo
30/08/2012	UEL	PO	Liverpool FC	Heart of Midlothian FC	1-1	Liverpool
22/10/2015	UEL	GS	Molde FK	Celtic FC	3-1	Molde
14/08/2018	UCL	3QR	AEK Athens FC	Celtic FC	2-1	Athens

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

Albania

UEFA Nations League - Group stage – final tournament

Group C1

Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Israel	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Scotland	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Albania	3	1	0	2	1	4	3

Matchday 1 (07/09/2018)

Albania 1-0 Israel

Goals: 1-0 Xhaka 55

Albania: Strakosha, Binaku, Hysaj, Veseli (84 Mavraj), Xhimshiti, Basha, Memushaj , Xhaka, Guri (46 Balaj), Hyka, Gavazaj (71 Prenga)

Matchday 2 (10/09/2018)

Scotland 2-0 Albania

Goals: 1-0 Xhimshiti 47 (og) , 2-0 Naismith 68

Albania: Strakosha, Binaku, Hysaj, Veseli (91 Mihaj), Xhimshiti, Memushaj , Ndoj (66 Manaj), Lilaj, Xhaka, Balaj, Gavazaj (46 Prenga)

Matchday 4 (14/10/2018)

Israel 2-0 Albania

Goals: 1-0 Hemed 8, 2-0 Seba 83

Albania: Strakosha, Hysaj, Xhimshiti, Grezda, Basha (46 Lilaj), Memushaj , Xhaka, Mavraj, Binaku, Uzuni, Balaj (73 Vrioni)

Matchday 5 (17/11/2018)

Albania-Scotland

Scotland

UEFA Nations League - Group stage – final tournament

Matchday 2 (10/09/2018)

Scotland 2-0 Albania

Goals: 1-0 Xhimshiti 47 (og) , 2-0 Naismith 68

Scotland: A. McGregor, O'Donnell, Robertson, Souttar, Mulgrew, Tierney, McGinn, McDonald (46 Armstrong), Naismith, C. McGregor (79 McTominay), Russell (70 Griffiths)

Matchday 3 (11/10/2018)

Israel 2-1 Scotland

Goals: 0-1 Mulgrew 25 (P) , 1-1 D. Peretz 52, 2-1 Tierney 75 (og)

Scotland: A. McGregor, O'Donnell, Robertson, Souttar, Mulgrew (46 McKenna), Tierney, McGinn, McDonald, Naismith (76 McBurnie), Russell (67 Forrest), C. McGregor

Matchday 5 (17/11/2018)

Albania-Scotland

Matchday 6 (20/11/2018)

Scotland-Israel

Legend

Competitions

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