

EUROPEAN QUALIFIERS - 2016/18 SEASON MATCH PRESS KITS



Switzerland

Stade de Genève - Geneva

Saturday 25 March 2017
18.00CET (18.00 local time)

Group B - Matchday 5



Latvia

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EUROPEAN QUALIFIERS OFFICIAL SPONSORS



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Previous meetings

Head to Head

FIFA World Cup

Date	Stage reached	Match	Result	Venue	Goalscorers
09/09/2009	QR (GS)	Latvia - Switzerland	2-2	Riga	Cauņa 62, Vitālijs Astafjevs 75; A. Frei 43, Derdiyok 80
11/10/2008	QR (GS)	Switzerland - Latvia	2-1	St Gallen	A. Frei 63, Nkufo 72; Ivanovs 71

	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																		
Switzerland	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	-	-	-	-	3	2	1	0	5	3
Latvia	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	-	-	-	-	3	0	1	2	3	5

Squad list

Switzerland

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	Current season					
						Qual.		FT			
						Pld	Gls	Pld	Gls		
Goalkeepers											
-	Yann Sommer	17/12/1988	28	Mönchengladbach	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Roman Bürki	14/11/1990	26	Dortmund	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Marwin Hitz	18/09/1987	29	Augsburg	-	0	0	0	0		
Defenders											
-	Stephan Lichtsteiner	16/01/1984	33	Juventus	-	3	1	0	0		
-	Johan Djourou	18/01/1987	30	Hamburg	-	2	0	0	0		
-	Michael Lang	08/02/1991	26	Basel	*	1	0	0	0		
-	Léo Lacroix	27/02/1992	25	St-Étienne	-	0	0	0	0		
-	François Moubandje	21/06/1990	26	Toulouse	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Fabian Schär	20/12/1991	25	Hoffenheim	*	4	1	0	0		
-	Nico Elvedi	30/09/1996	20	Mönchengladbach	-	2	0	0	0		
Midfielders											
-	Blerim Džemali	12/04/1986	30	Bologna	*	3	0	0	0		
-	Gelson Fernandes	02/09/1986	30	Rennes	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Valentin Stocker	12/04/1989	27	Hertha	-	3	1	0	0		
-	Xherdan Shaqiri	10/10/1991	25	Stoke	-	2	0	0	0		
-	Steven Zuber	17/08/1991	25	Hoffenheim	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Granit Xhaka	27/09/1992	24	Arsenal	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Remo Freuler	15/04/1992	24	Atalanta	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Silvan Widmer	05/03/1993	24	Udinese	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Renato Steffen	03/11/1991	25	Basel	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Edimilson Fernandes	15/04/1996	20	West Ham	-	1	0	0	0		
Forwards											
-	Admir Mehmedi	16/03/1991	26	Leverkusen	*	4	2	0	0		
-	Haris Seferović	22/02/1992	25	Frankfurt	-	4	1	0	0		
-	Josip Drmic	08/08/1992	24	Mönchengladbach	-	0	0	0	0		
Coach											
-	Vladimir Petković	15/08/1963	53		-	4	0	0	0		

Latvia

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	Current season					
						Qual.		FT			
						Pld	Gls	Pld	Gls		
Goalkeepers											
-	Andris Vaņins	30/04/1980	36	Zürich	-	4	0	0	0		
-	Pāvels Šteinbors	21/09/1985	31	Arka	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Kaspars Ikstens	05/06/1988	28	Jelgava	-	0	0	0	0		
Defenders											
-	Kaspars Gorkšs	06/11/1981	35	Riga	*	4	0	0	0		
-	Vladislavs Gabovs	13/07/1987	29	Korona	*	4	0	0	0		
-	Aleksandrs Solovjovs	25/02/1988	29	Rīga	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Gints Freimanis	09/05/1985	31	Jelgava	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Mārcis Ošs	25/07/1991	25	Jelgava	-	0	0	0	0		
Midfielders											
-	Aleksejs Višņakovs	03/02/1984	33	Rīga	-	4	0	0	0		
-	Oļegs Laizāns	28/03/1987	29	Riga	*	4	0	0	0		
-	Artis Lazdiņš	03/05/1986	30	Jelgava	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Igors Tarasovs	16/10/1988	28	Giresunspor	-	2	0	0	0		
-	Vitālijs Jagodinskis	28/02/1992	25	Diósgyőr	*	4	0	0	0		
-	Jānis Ikaunieks	16/02/1995	22	Larissa	-	2	0	0	0		
-	Glebs Kļuškins	01/10/1992	24	Jelgava	*	3	0	0	0		
Forwards											
-	Ģirts Karlsons	07/06/1981	35	Ventspils	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Ivans Lukjanovs	24/01/1987	30	Fakel	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Deniss Rakels	20/08/1992	24	Reading	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Valērijs Šabala	12/10/1994	22	Riga	-	3	1	0	0		
-	Dāvis Ikaunieks	07/01/1994	23	Jihlava	*	4	0	0	0		
-	Vladislavs Gutkovskis	02/04/1995	21	Nieciecza	-	2	0	0	0		
Coach											
-	Marians Pahars	05/08/1976	40		-	2	0	0	0		

Head coach

Vladimir Petković

Date of birth: 15 August 1963

Nationality: Swiss

Playing career: FK Sarajevo (twice), FK Rudar Ljubija, FC Koper, FC Chur 97 (twice), FC Sion, FC Martigny-Sports, AC Bellinzona (twice), FC Locarno

Coaching career: AC Bellinzona (twice), FC Malcantone Agno, AC Lugano, BSC Young Boys, Samsunspor, FC Sion, SS Lazio, Switzerland

- Started his career in midfield with Sarajevo, losing in the 1983 Yugoslavian Cup final but featuring twice as his team took the 1984/85 league title, the only major honour of his playing days. Moved to Switzerland in 1987, playing for second-tier Chur and then ascending to the top flight with Sion in 1988/89; returned to the second division to represent Martigny, Bellinzona and Locarno.
- Petković hung up his boots in 1999, aged 36, following a season as player-coach at Bellinzona. Then led Malcantone Agno to promotion from the third division in 2002/03 before becoming the first coach of AC Lugano – successors to FC Lugano.
- Rejoined Bellinzona in October 2005, steering them to the 2007/08 Swiss Cup final, where they lost 4-1 to FC Basel 1893, but consolation came two weeks later as victory in a relegation/promotion play-off against FC St Gallen gave Bellinzona a Super League berth.
- Was appointed Young Boys coach in August 2008, guiding them to second-placed finishes in his first two campaigns in charge as well the 2008/09 Swiss Cup final. After short spells in charge of Turkey's Samsunspor and Sion back in Switzerland, was named Lazio coach in June 2012 and won the Coppa Italia in his first term in Italy, also helping the side to seventh position in the final standings.
- Left in January 2014 after being anointed Switzerland coach Ottmar Hitzfeld's successor, taking the reins after the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Promptly guided his charges to UEFA EURO 2016, where they lost to Poland in the last 16.

Marians Pahars

Date of birth: 5 August 1976

Nationality: Latvian

Playing career: FK Pārdaugava, Skonto Metall FC, Skonto FC (twice), Southampton FC, Anorthosis Famagusta FC, FC Jūrmala

Coaching career: Skonto FC, Latvia Under-21s, Latvia

- Born in the village of Chornobai in central Ukraine, he moved to Latvia – his parents' homeland – while young and undertook his football education in Riga before making his senior debut at Skonto in 1995. He won the league title in each of his first four seasons, and the double in three of them.
- Transferred to English Premier League outfit Southampton in 1999, where the diminutive forward became a firm fans' favourite. Known as the 'Latvian Owen' after England striker Michael Owen, he spent seven successful years with the Saints, despite a succession of injuries.
- After a year with Anorthosis, lifting the Cypriot Cup, Pahars returned to Latvia and Skonto, ending his career at Jūrmala in 2009. He accepted a role as assistant to Aleksandrs Starkovs at Skonto the following year.
- Skonto claimed the 2010 championship and Pahars replaced Starkovs at the helm the next year. His first term in the hot seat brought the Latvian Cup and a runners-up finish in the First Division, though Pahars soon left as Skonto were suffering off-the-pitch problems.
- Pahars was out of football for just two months before taking charge of Latvia's U21 side. His tenure lasted a solitary game as Starkovs' unexpected decision to step down as senior team boss in summer 2013 prompted the younger man's immediate promotion on a contract until 2018.

Match officials

Referee	Vladislav Bezborodov (RUS)
Assistant referees	Valeri Danchenko (RUS) , Maksim Gavrilin (RUS)
Fourth official	Aleksei Eskov (RUS)
FIFA Match Commissioner	Duncan Fraser (SCO)
Referee observer	Plarent Kotherja (ALB)

Referee

Name	Date of birth		UEFA matches
Vladislav Bezborodov	15/01/1973	2	54

Vladislav Bezborodov

Referee since: 2001

First division: 2007

FIFA badge: 2009

Tournaments: 2010 UEFA European Under-19 Championship, 2009 UEFA European Under-17 Championship

Finals

2009 UEFA European Under-17 Championship

FIFA World Cup matches involving teams from the two countries involved in this match

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
27/04/2007	RCUP	IR	Ticino	Belgrade	0-0	Baku
04/08/2010	UCL	3QR	FC Basel 1893	Debreceni VSC	3-1	Basel
07/10/2010	U21	PO	Switzerland	Sweden	4-1	Sion
08/08/2012	UCL	3QR	FC Basel 1893	Molde FK	1-1	Basel
06/11/2014	UEL	GS	FC Zürich	Villarreal CF	3-2	Zurich
20/08/2015	UEL	PO	BSC Young Boys	Qarabağ FK	0-1	Berne

Competition facts

The Week of Football concept enables fans around the world to enjoy the very best action from the European Qualifiers – which will determine UEFA's representatives at the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia.

Qualifying for the 2018 FIFA World Cup comprises nine groups of six teams, with matches played on a home-and-away basis.

Qualifying takes place under the 'Week of Football' concept, introduced ahead of the UEFA EURO 2016 qualifying campaign, in which games are spread out from Thursday to Tuesday, shining the spotlight on more teams on the road to the finals in Russia. Moreover, thanks to the Week of Football, at least 43% of matches will be played on weekends, giving fans a better chance to follow the action on television, in the stadiums and on UEFA.com.

Kick-off times will be set mainly at 18:00CET and 20:45CET on Saturdays and Sundays and at 20:45CET for Thursdays, Fridays, Mondays and Tuesdays. In double-header matchweeks, sides will play on Thursday/Sunday, Friday/Monday or Saturday/Tuesday. Each day of the Week of Football will feature eight to ten games.

The nine group winners will qualify directly for the final tournament. The eight best runners-up will contest play-offs to decide the last four qualifiers for the finals.

The 13 qualifiers then join hosts Russia in the finals to make it 14 UEFA member associations represented.

How qualification works

The other confederations have the following qualifying berths:

Africa: 5

Asia: 4.5

North and Central America and Caribbean: 3.5

Oceania: 0.5

South America: 4.5

Match-by-match lineups

Switzerland

FIFA World Cup - Qualifying round

Group B

Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Switzerland	4	4	0	0	9	3	12
Portugal	4	3	0	1	16	3	9
Hungary	4	2	1	1	8	3	7
Faroe Islands	4	1	1	2	2	8	4
Latvia	4	1	0	3	2	8	3
Andorra	4	0	0	4	1	13	0

Matchday 1 (06/09/2016)

Switzerland 2-0 Portugal

Goals: 1-0 Embolo 24, 2-0 Mehmedi 30

Switzerland: Sommer, Lichtsteiner (70 Widmer), Embolo, Seferović (78 Derdiyok), Xhaka, Behrami, Rodríguez, Džemali (89 Fernandes), Mehmedi, Djourou, Schär

Matchday 2 (07/10/2016)

Hungary 2-3 Switzerland

Goals: 0-1 Seferović 51, 1-1 Szalai 53, 1-2 Rodríguez 67, 2-2 Szalai 71, 2-3 Stocker 89

Switzerland: Sommer, Lichtsteiner, Elvedi, Embolo, Seferović (72 Derdiyok), Behrami, Rodríguez, Džemali, Mehmedi (88 Stocker), Schär, Shaqiri (81 Fernandes)

Matchday 3 (10/10/2016)

Andorra 1-2 Switzerland

Goals: 0-1 Schär 19 (P), 0-2 Mehmedi 77, 1-2 Martinez 90+1

Switzerland: Bürki, Klose (46 Elvedi), M. Lang, Embolo, Seferović, Xhaka, Rodríguez, Fernandes (66 Zakaria), Mehmedi, Schär, Shaqiri (80 Stocker)

Matchday 4 (13/11/2016)

Switzerland 2-0 Faroe Islands

Goals: 1-0 Derdiyok 27, 2-0 Lichtsteiner 83

Switzerland: Sommer, Lichtsteiner, Xhaka, Behrami, Rodríguez, Stocker (69 Fernandes), Džemali (80 Steffen), Mehmedi, Derdiyok (87 Seferović), Djourou, Schär

Matchday 5 (25/03/2017)

Switzerland-Latvia

Matchday 6 (09/06/2017)

Faroe Islands-Switzerland

Matchday 7 (31/08/2017)

Switzerland-Andorra

Matchday 8 (03/09/2017)

Latvia-Switzerland

Matchday 9 (07/10/2017)

Switzerland-Hungary

Matchday 10 (10/10/2017)

Portugal-Switzerland

Latvia

FIFA World Cup - Qualifying round

Matchday 1 (06/09/2016)

Andorra 0-1 Latvia

Goals: 0-1 Šabala 48

Latvia: Vaņins, Maksimenko, Gabovs, A. Višņakovs, Lazdiņš (46 Laizāns), Šabala, Gorkšs, Ikaunieks, D. Ikaunieks (63 Torres), Zjuzins (74 Karašausks), Jagodinskis

Matchday 2 (07/10/2016)

Latvia 0-2 Faroe Islands

Goals: 0-1 Nattestad 19, 0-2 Edmundsson 70

Latvia: Vaņins, Maksimenko, Laizāns, Gabovs, A. Višņakovs, Šabala, Gorkšs, Lukjanovs (76 D. Ikaunieks), Jagodinskis, Kļuškins (72 Zjuzins), Gutkovskis (64 Karlsons)

Matchday 3 (10/10/2016)

Latvia 0-2 Hungary

Goals: 0-1 Gyurcsó 10, 0-2 Szalai 77

Latvia: Vaņins, Maksimenko, Laizāns (77 Karašausks), Gabovs, A. Višņakovs (57 Zjuzins), D. Ikaunieks, Šabala, Gorkšs, Tarasovs, Jagodinskis, Kļuškins (68 Ikaunieks)

Matchday 4 (13/11/2016)

Portugal 4-1 Latvia

Goals: 1-0 Ronaldo 28 (P) , 1-1 Zjuzins 67, 2-1 William Carvalho 70, 3-1 Ronaldo 85, 4-1 Bruno Alves 90+2

Latvia: Vaņins, Maksimenko, Freimanis, Laizāns, Gabovs, D. Ikaunieks (59 Zjuzins), Gorkšs, Rudņevs (87 Gutkovskis), Tarasovs, Jagodinskis, Kļuškins (79 A. Višņakovs)

Matchday 5 (25/03/2017)

Switzerland-Latvia

Matchday 6 (09/06/2017)

Latvia-Portugal

Matchday 7 (31/08/2017)

Hungary-Latvia

Matchday 8 (03/09/2017)

Latvia-Switzerland

Matchday 9 (07/10/2017)

Faroe Islands-Latvia

Matchday 10 (10/10/2017)

Latvia-Andorra

Legend

Competitions

Club competitions

UCL: UEFA Champions League
ECCL: European Champion Clubs' Cup
UEL: UEFA Europa League
UCUP: UEFA Cup
UCWC: UEFA Cup Winners' Cup
SCUP: UEFA Super Cup
UIC: UEFA Intertoto Cup
ICF: Inter-Cities Fairs Cup

National team competitions

EURO: UEFA European Football Championship
WC: FIFA World Cup
CONFCUP: FIFA Confederations Cup
FRIE: Friendly internationals
U21FRIE: Under-21 friendly internationals
U21: UEFA European Under-21 Championship
U17: UEFA Under-17 Championship
U16: UEFA European Under-16 Championship
U19: UEFA Under-19 Championship
U18: UEFA European Under-18 Championship
WWC: FIFA Women's World Cup
WEURO: UEFA European Women's Championship

Other abbreviations

(aet): After extra time
No.: Number
ag: Match decided on away goals
agg: Aggregate
AP: Appearances
Comp.: Competition
D: Drawn
DoB: Date of birth
ET: Extra Time
GA: Goals against
GF: Goals for
gg: Match decided by golden goal
L: Lost
Nat.: Nationality

pens: Penalties
og: Own goal
P: Penalty
Pld: Matches played
Pos.: Position
Pts: Points
R: Sent off (straight red card)
Res.: Result
sg: Match decided by silver goal
t: Match decided by toss of a coin
W: Won
Y: Booked
Y/R: Sent off (two yellow cards)
N/A: Not applicable

Statistics

-: Denotes player substituted
*****: Denotes player sent off

+: Denotes player introduced
+/-: Denotes player introduced and substituted

Squad list

D: Disciplinary
*****: Misses next match if booked
S: Suspended

Overall: Total appearances in the UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament only

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