

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



**Northern Ireland**

**Windsor Park - Belfast**  
Saturday 8 September 2018  
15.00CET (14.00 local time)  
Group B3 - Matchday 1



**Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Last updated 08/09/2018 00:55CET



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

## Previous meetings

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### Head to Head

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No UEFA competition matches have been played between these two teams

# Squad list

## Northern Ireland

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	Current season					
						Qual.		FT			
						Pld	Gls	Pld	Gls		
<b>Goalkeepers</b>											
1	Bailey Peacock-Farrell	29/10/1996	21	Leeds	-	0	0	0	0		
12	Trevor Carson	05/03/1988	30	Motherwell	-	0	0	0	0		
23	Michael McGovern	12/07/1984	34	Norwich	-	0	0	0	0		
<b>Defenders</b>											
2	Conor McLaughlin	26/07/1991	27	Millwall	-	0	0	0	0		
4	Michael Smith	04/09/1988	30	Hearts	-	0	0	0	0		
5	Jonny Evans	03/01/1988	30	Leicester	-	0	0	0	0		
17	Paddy McNair	27/04/1995	23	Middlesbrough	-	0	0	0	0		
20	Craig Cathcart	06/02/1989	29	Watford	-	0	0	0	0		
<b>Midfielders</b>											
3	Jamal Lewis	25/01/1998	20	Norwich	-	0	0	0	0		
6	George Saville	01/06/1993	25	Millwall	-	0	0	0	0		
8	Steven Davis	01/01/1985	33	Southampton	-	0	0	0	0		
11	Shane Ferguson	12/07/1991	27	Millwall	-	0	0	0	0		
13	Corry Evans	30/07/1990	28	Blackburn	-	0	0	0	0		
14	Stuart Dallas	19/04/1991	27	Leeds	-	0	0	0	0		
15	Jordan Jones	24/10/1994	23	Kilmarnock	-	0	0	0	0		
16	Oliver Norwood	12/04/1991	27	Sheff. United	-	0	0	0	0		
19	Jamie Ward	12/05/1986	32	Nottm Forest	-	0	0	0	0		
<b>Forwards</b>											
7	Niall McGinn	20/07/1987	31	Aberdeen	-	0	0	0	0		
9	Conor Washington	18/05/1992	26	QPR	-	0	0	0	0		
10	Kyle Lafferty	16/09/1987	30	Rangers	-	0	0	0	0		
18	Liam Boyce	08/04/1991	27	Burton	-	0	0	0	0		
21	Gavin Whyte	31/01/1996	22	Oxford	-	0	0	0	0		
22	Will Grigg	03/07/1991	27	Wigan	-	0	0	0	0		
<b>Coach</b>											
-	Michael O'Neill	05/07/1969	49		-	0	0	0	0		

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	Current season					
						Qual.		FT			
						Pld	Gls	Pld	Gls		
<b>Goalkeepers</b>											
1	Vedran <b>Kjosevski</b>	22/05/1995	23	Željezničar	-	0	0	0	0		
12	Ibrahim <b>Šehić</b>	02/09/1988	30	Büyükşehir Belediye ErzurumSpor	-	0	0	0	0		
22	Kenan <b>Pirić</b>	07/07/1994	24	Maribor	-	0	0	0	0		
<b>Defenders</b>											
2	Eldar <b>Čivić</b>	28/05/1996	22	Sparta Praha	-	0	0	0	0		
5	Bojan <b>Nastić</b>	06/07/1994	24	Genk	-	0	0	0	0		
15	Toni <b>Šunjić</b>	15/12/1988	29	Dinamo Moskva	-	0	0	0	0		
17	Ervin <b>Zukanovic</b>	11/02/1987	31	Genoa	-	0	0	0	0		
<b>Midfielders</b>											
7	Muhamed <b>Bešić</b>	10/09/1992	25	Middlesbrough	-	0	0	0	0		
8	Edin <b>Višća</b>	17/02/1990	28	İstanbul Başakşehir	-	0	0	0	0		
9	Haris <b>Duljević</b>	16/11/1993	24	Dresden	-	0	0	0	0		
10	Miralem <b>Pjanić</b>	02/04/1990	28	Juventus	-	0	0	0	0		
13	Gojko <b>Cimirot</b>	19/12/1992	25	Standard Liège	-	0	0	0	0		
14	Sanjin <b>Prcić</b>	20/11/1993	24	Levante	-	0	0	0	0		
19	Rade <b>Krunić</b>	07/10/1993	24	Empoli	-	0	0	0	0		
21	Elvis <b>Sarić</b>	21/07/1990	28	Sarajevo	-	0	0	0	0		
23	Deni <b>Milošević</b>	09/03/1995	23	Konyaspor	-	0	0	0	0		
<b>Forwards</b>											
11	Edin <b>Džeko</b>	17/03/1986	32	Roma	-	0	0	0	0		
16	Riad <b>Bajić</b>	06/05/1994	24	İstanbul Başakşehir	-	0	0	0	0		
18	Kenan <b>Kodro-Maksumić</b>	19/08/1993	25	København	-	0	0	0	0		
20	Goran <b>Zakarić</b>	07/11/1992	25	Partizan	-	0	0	0	0		
<b>Coach</b>											
-	Robert Prosinečki	12/01/1969	49		-	0	0	0	0		

## Head coach

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### Michael O'Neill

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**Date of birth:** 5 July 1969

**Nationality:** Northern Irish

**Playing career:** Coleraine, Newcastle, Dundee United, Hibernian, Coventry, Aberdeen (loan), Reading (loan), Wigan, Saint Johnstone, Portland Timbers, Clydebank, Glentoran, Ayr United

**Coaching career:** Brechin City, Shamrock Rovers, Northern Ireland

- A midfielder and forward during a 20-year playing career, O'Neill spent the bulk of his time in Scotland, most notably with Dundee United and Hibernian. Enjoyed late success when winning a Northern Irish league and League Cup double with Glentoran in 2002/03.
- Made 31 appearances for his country, scoring four goals, two of which came in a memorable 5-3 victory against Austria during EURO '96 qualifying.
- Moved into coaching as assistant manager of Scottish club Cowdenbeath in 2005 before taking the reins at Brechin in March 2006. Was named coach of Shamrock Rovers in the Republic of Ireland in December 2008, guiding the Hoops to a second-place finish in his debut season before clinching their first title since 1994 in 2010.
- Made history as Rovers became the first Irish side to qualify for the group stage of a European competition, beating Partizan in the 2011/12 UEFA Europa League play-offs. Also led the Hoops to a second successive domestic championship in 2011.
- Appointed coach of his country in December 2011 and helped Northern Ireland record several notable results in 2014 FIFA World Cup qualifying, including a 1-1 draw in Portugal and a home win against Russia. Even better was to come as O'Neill steered his charges to UEFA EURO 2016, their first UEFA European Championship appearance, taking Northern Ireland to the last 16 at the finals in France, and agreed a new contract despite losing out to Switzerland in the 2018 World Cup play-offs.

### Robert Prosinečki

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**Date of birth:** 12 January 1969

**Nationality:** Croatian

**Playing career:** Dinamo Zagreb (twice), Crvena zvezda, Real Madrid, Real Oviedo, Barcelona, Sevilla, Hrvatski Dragovoljac, Standard Liège, Portsmouth, Olimpija Ljubljana, Zagreb

**Coaching career:** Croatia (assistant), Crvena zvezda, Kayserispor, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Born in Germany, Prosinečki moved back to Croatia with his family in 1979, and developed as a midfielder with stunning technique at Dinamo Zagreb.
- He moved on to Crvena zvezda and, after starring in Yugoslavia's 1987 World Youth Championship (now FIFA U-20 World Cup) triumph in Chile, he helped helped the Belgrade side to win the 1990/91 European Champion Clubs' Cup, scoring the opening penalty in their shoot-out success in the final victory against Marseille. He also won three Yugoslav league titles with the club.
- After a high-profile transfer, injuries hampered his time at Real Madrid, though he was to stay in Spain for some time, representing Oviedo, Barcelona and Sevilla before further adventures in Belgium, England and Slovenia.
- Capped 15 times by Yugoslavia and 49 times by Croatia, his goals in the 1990 and 1998 tournaments made him the only player to score in FIFA World Cup final tournaments for two different nations.
- Having assisted former Croatia team-mate Slaven Bilić with the national team, Prosinečki coached Crvena zvezda to Serbian Cup success in 2011/12 and led Turkish side Kayserispor from 2012 to 2013. Hired as Azerbaijan coach in December 2014, he stepped down three years later and was appointed by Bosnia and Herzegovina on 4 January 2018.

## Match officials

<b>Referee</b>	Pavel Královec (CZE)
<b>Assistant referees</b>	Ivo Nadvornik (CZE) , Kamil Hajek (CZE)
<b>Additional assistant referees</b>	Miroslav Zelinka (CZE) , Karel Hrubes (CZE)
<b>Fourth official</b>	Jakub Hrabovsky (CZE)
<b>UEFA Delegate</b>	Roland Tis (BEL)
<b>UEFA Referee observer</b>	Manuel Diaz Vega (ESP)

## Referee

Name	Date of birth		UEFA matches
Pavel Královec	16/08/1977	0	98

## 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
20/05/2006	U19	ELITE	England	Northern Ireland	2-1	Tubize
16/06/2016	EURO	GS-FT	Ukraine	Northern Ireland	0-2	Lyon

## 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 finals 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 finals 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 finals 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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### Northern Ireland

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

##### Group B3

Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Austria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

##### Matchday 1 (08/09/2018)

Northern Ireland-Bosnia and Herzegovina

##### Matchday 3 (12/10/2018)

Austria-Northern Ireland

##### Matchday 4 (15/10/2018)

Bosnia and Herzegovina-Northern Ireland

##### Matchday 6 (18/11/2018)

Northern Ireland-Austria

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

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

##### Matchday 1 (08/09/2018)

Northern Ireland-Bosnia and Herzegovina

##### Matchday 2 (11/09/2018)

Bosnia and Herzegovina-Austria

##### Matchday 4 (15/10/2018)

Bosnia and Herzegovina-Northern Ireland

##### Matchday 5 (15/11/2018)

Austria-Bosnia and Herzegovina

## Legend

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## Competitions

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