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TO UEFA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

For the attention of
the President and the General Secretary

Your reference	Your correspondence of	Our reference	Date
		PNTC/MAC/KLL	26 June 2020

2019-21 UEFA European Under-21 Championship – New competition format, final draw and declaration of interest to host a 2021 final tournament group

Dear Sir or Madam,

Due to the spread of COVID-19 across Europe and the UEFA decision to postpone EURO 2020 final tournament to June and July 2021, the UEFA Under-21 2019-21 competition had to be adjusted.

New competition format

On June 17th, the UEFA Executive Committee decided to change the calendar and format of the competition as follows:

Qualifying competition: the group stage is extended to November 2019 and the play-offs are cancelled. The nine group winners and the five best runners-up will qualify directly with the two hosts, Hungary and Slovenia, for the final tournament. Article 15.02 of the competition regulations applies to determine the five best runners-up.

Final tournament group stage: The group stage will be played as originally defined with four groups of four teams. Each group winner and runner-up qualify for the knockout stage. The matches will be played during the March 2021 international window between 24 and 31 March 2021. Hungary will host groups A and C, Slovenia group B. Group D will be hosted by Slovenia or by one of the four teams drawn into this group.

Final tournament knockout stage: This phase will take place in Hungary and Slovenia between 31 May and 6 June 2021, with two quarter-finals and one semi-final in each country. The final will be played in Slovenia (please see the enclosed graphical illustration).

Regulations updates

The following changes in the competition regulations have been adopted:

Article	Required changes
12.02.	The competition stages are as follows: a. Qualifying competition, composed of: – group stage; – play-offs.
13.03.	On completion of the qualifying group stage, final group standings are compiled based on the number of points obtained by each team in the group. The nine group winners and the five best runners-up qualify directly for the final tournament. The eight other runners-up contest play-offs to determine the four remaining finalists (see Article 15).
15.01.	The play-off ties are determined by means of a draw [...];
15.02.	To compare the rankings between the qualifying groups and to determine the five best runners-up , the results of group runners-up against the teams in sixth place are discarded. The following criteria are applied in the order given[...]:
19.01.	For play-off matches, if the two teams involved in a tie score the same number of goals over the two legs, the team which scores more away goals qualifies for the final tournament [...];
20.01.	All qualifying matches are played on the following dates, as listed in the 2018–24 FIFA International Match Calendar a. Qualifying group stage [...]: b. Play-offs – 9–17 November 2020
20.04.	The dates for the play-off matches must be agreed between the two associations concerned within seven days following the play-off draw. If no agreement can be reached the UEFA administration will take a decision which is final.
20.05.	UEFA compiles the match schedule for the final tournament, which takes place in March and June 2021. Each team must have at least two rest days between matches.
21.01.	Qualifying competition venues must be fixed and entered in the designated UEFA online system by the host associations at least 60 days before a match (and no more than seven days after the play-off draw).
21.04.	Kick-off times must be fixed and entered online by the host associations at least 30 days before the match (and no more than seven days after the play-off draw).
55.04.	b. additional contribution of €25,000 for each association in the play-offs, credited to its account with UEFA by 30 November 2020.

In addition, the deadlines and procedures defined in articles 22, 35, 42, 47, 51.02 and 56 will have to be adapted to the final tournament being split over two periods. The qualified teams will be informed at the finalists' workshop.

Final draw

The final draw will be organised at the conclusion of the qualifying competition, towards the end of November 2020. Further information will be provided in due course also on the finalists' workshop.

Declaration of interest to host a 2021 final tournament group

Due to the rescheduling, Slovenia might host only one group in March and therefore one of the four groups could be hosted by one of the participating associations.

As this will be known only by the end of the qualifying phase, all UEFA member associations still in the run to participate to the final tournament are invited to declare their interest in hosting their own group, if they qualify and if they are drawn into the group that might require an additional host.

All interested associations are invited to complete, sign and return the attached Declaration of Interest by **30 October 2020, 16:00 CET**. If applicable, the hosting can only be awarded after the final draw but the UEFA administration is keen to already hold discussions with potential hosts and to support the interested associations in defining their hosting concept.

The key organisational elements to define the hosting concept are the following:

- Participating teams: the host team and three travelling teams
- Number of matches: 6 (2 matches per MD)
- Match dates: 25, 28 and 31 March
- Number of stadia: 2
- Stadium characteristics:
 - UEFA category; at least one category 3 stadium for the host team matches, the second stadium can be a category 2
 - Ideally the two stadiums shall be located in the same host city, or up to 150km apart (or 90 minutes bus drive).
- Team hotels shall be 4-star hotels and located no more than one hour drive by bus from both stadiums. Each team should have its own hotel unless a hotel is large enough to accommodate more teams with segregated and dedicated areas for each of them.
- One training ground for each team, accessible from the hotel in no more than 20 minutes' drive by bus.

The financial conditions to organise this group will be discussed specifically with each interested association.

Qualifying competition

Concerning the qualifying competition, that will restart in September, the updated fixture list will be available on UEFA.com and FAME in due course. The venue announcement deadlines for the matches remain unchanged (60 days prior to the match).

UEFA COVID-19 Medical Protocol

The UEFA COVID-19 Medical Protocol is currently being finalised. This will set out the framework for sanitary and hygiene-related procedures as well as operational protocols that will be applied at UEFA competition matches. The document will be made available to all participating teams in due course and well in advance of their respective matches.

UEFA COVID-19 Dressing Room Requirements

When selecting match venues, please take into account that a key requirement of the Protocol will be to provide dressing room space for the teams and technical staff that will avoid congestion and optimise distancing and air circulation. Therefore, depending on the actual size of the dressing room, additional nearby rooms or spaces may also have to be used. This also applies to the referee dressing room.

In case of questions, please do not hesitate to contact Marcello Alleca (Head of National Team Competitions, marcello.alleca@uefa.ch) or David Balmer (National Team Competitions Coordinator, david.balmer@uefa.ch)

Yours faithfully,

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Theodore Theodoridis
General Secretary

Enclosures

- Graphical illustrations of new competition format and of final tournament dates in March and June 2021
- Declaration of interest to host a UEFA European Under-21 2021 final tournament group

cc (with enclosures)

- UEFA Executive Committee
- UEFA National Team Competitions Committee
- European members of the FIFA Council
- FIFA, Zurich