

2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™ Preliminary Competition Format & Draw Procedures



EUROPEAN ZONE

BASIC CONDITIONS	
Member Associations (MA's):	53
Participating Member Associations (PMAs):	52
Qualification Slots:	13 + 1*

* Including host Russia

MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albania • Andorra • Armenia • Austria • Azerbaijan • Belarus • Belgium • Bosnia and Herzegovina • Bulgaria • Croatia • Cyprus • Czech Republic • Denmark • England • Estonia • Faroe Islands • Finland • France 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FYR Macedonia • Georgia • Germany • Greece • Hungary • Iceland • Israel • Italy • Kazakhstan • Latvia • Liechtenstein • Lithuania • Luxembourg • Malta • Moldova • Montenegro • Netherlands • Northern Ireland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norway • Poland • Portugal • Republic of Ireland • Romania • Russia* • San Marino • Scotland • Serbia • Slovakia • Slovenia • Spain • Sweden • Switzerland • Turkey • Ukraine • Wales
<p>*NB: Host: Russia</p>		

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PRELIMINARY COMPETITION FORMAT & DRAW PROCEDURES

ROUND ONE:

- 52 PMAs will contest Round One.
- The round consists of seven round-robin, home-and-away groups of six teams each as well as two round-robin, home-and-away groups of five teams each.
- The matches are foreseen to be played in the period between 4 September 2016 and 10 October 2017.
- The eight best group runners-up will advance to Round Two.
- **The nine group winners will qualify for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™.**

ALLOCATION TO POTS:

- The 52 Round One teams will be allocated to five pots of nine teams and one pot of seven teams based on the FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking July 2015.
- The top nine ranked PMAs will be placed in Pot 1; the next nine best teams will be placed in Pot 2; and so on until Pot 6 which will contain the seven lowest-ranked teams.

Pot 1 <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Germany2. Belgium3. Netherlands4. Portugal5. Romania6. England7. Wales8. Spain9. Croatia	Pot 2 <ol style="list-style-type: none">10. Slovakia11. Austria12. Italy13. Switzerland14. Czech Republic15. France16. Iceland17. Denmark18. Bosnia Herzegovina	Pot 3 <ol style="list-style-type: none">19. Ukraine20. Scotland21. Poland22. Hungary23. Sweden24. Albania25. Northern Ireland26. Serbia27. Greece
Pot 4 <ol style="list-style-type: none">28. Turkey29. Slovenia30. Israel31. Republic of Ireland32. Norway33. Bulgaria34. Faroe Islands35. Montenegro36. Estonia	Pot 5 <ol style="list-style-type: none">37. Cyprus38. Latvia39. Armenia40. Finland41. Belarus42. FYR Macedonia43. Azerbaijan44. Lithuania45. Moldova	Pot 6 <ol style="list-style-type: none">46. Kazakhstan47. Luxembourg48. Liechtenstein49. Georgia50. Malta51. San Marino52. Andorra

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DRAW PROCEDURES:

- The 52 PMAs will be drawn into to seven groups of six teams and two groups of five teams.
- The teams in Pot 6 are placed in position 6 (of Groups A to G); the teams in Pot 5 in position 5; the teams in Pot 4 in position 4; the teams in Pot 3 in position 3; the teams from Pot 2 in position 2; and the teams from Pot 1 in position 1.
- The draw starts with Pot 6 and ends with Pot 1. Each pot is completely emptied before moving on to the next pot.
- Groups are filled starting with Group A and ending with Group I (Group G in the case of Pot 6).
- In consideration of the centralisation of rights, UEFA have requested that the teams of England, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands must be drawn into a group containing six teams.
- In consideration of the delicate political situation of the relationship between Armenia and Azerbaijan, UEFA have requested that FIFA maintain the current UEFA policy to not draw these teams into the same qualification group.

Group A
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Group B
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Group C
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Group D
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Group E
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Group F
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Group G
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Group H
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Group I
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

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ROUND TWO:

- The eight best group runners-up will contest Round Two.
- The eight teams will be paired into four home-and-away series.
- The matches are foreseen to be played in the period between 9 and 14 November 2017.

- **The four winners will qualify for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™.**

DRAW PROCEDURE:

- The draw date, location and procedure for Round Two will be confirmed by the end of Round One by the Organising Committee for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™.