

AFFA reflects on a successful Euro 2020 in Baku

Elkhan Mammadov (Executive VP, AFFA) reflects on the tournament in Baku, amid UEFA recognition for playing an integral role in hosting Euro 2020 matches.

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN, July 9, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Following Denmark's 2-1 win over the Czech Republic in Baku's Olympic Stadium, The Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) reflects on its involvement and looks forward to welcoming elite-level football back to the country in the future.



After all this time working so closely together, you have become an integral part of the UEFA's extended European family."

*Martin Kallen, UEFA Events
CEO*

Baku has brought variety to this multi-country version of the Euros, as a jewel in the crown in the South Caucasus, flourishing as part of this unique 11 city pan-European venture. Whilst Covid-19 travel restrictions did mean that less fans were able to travel to Azerbaijan than would have

otherwise, AFFA has welcomed a multi-venue tournament format.

This unique tournament has the sole fact at its heart that football is a game for everyone. The Euros are intended to be available for the enjoyment of every citizen of UEFA members. Playing fixtures in Baku, Budapest and Bucharest has helped to make strides towards equality of representation and equality of opportunity within UEFA. Baku's status as a host has had a phenomenal impact within Azerbaijan, driving the country's love for football to new levels.

AFFA's contribution to hosting the tournament was [recognised on July 6th by UEFA](#), in a letter from UEFA Events CEO, Martin Kallen. He praised the atmosphere and professionalism at Baku Olympic Stadium, before asserting that Azerbaijan is a central and valued member of UEFA:

"After all this time working so closely together, you have become an integral part of the UEFA's extended European family."

On the obstacle of hosting the tournament during the pandemic, Kallen said the following:

"Even amid the uncertainty caused by COVID-19 over the last few months, your enthusiasm to deliver EURO 2020 matches was always visible. You should always remember and be proud of that – today and far beyond this summer's competition."

Since the opening fixture in Baku on June 12th, 2020, the average attendance figures exceeded more than 20,000 fans across the four matches. Further, Azerbaijan have built strong links with competing nations with the [Swiss FA](#) and [Welsh FA](#) in Baku during the tournament.

Crucially, Baku provided narratives which entertained fans across the continent. Aaron Ramsey's smart finish and Xherdan Shaqiri's double against Turkey were high points, whilst Joakim Mæhle's exquisite cross to set up Kasper Dolberg's goal on Saturday secured Denmark's 2-1 win over the Czech Republic.

Azerbaijan remains poised to continue hosting elite sporting competition, whether in a multi-city format or as the main host.

Elkhan Mammadov, Executive Vice President, AFFA, said the following upon the close of the tournament in Baku.

On Baku's contribution to Euro 2020:

"This tournament was unique by nature, hosted across 11 European cities, at one of the most inopportune moments in recent history. Whilst it is true that limits on stadium capacity and Covid-19 travel restrictions did make it harder to put on the spectacle we are equipped to deliver in Baku, we have room to look at the positives from the competition with optimism.

Following on from the UEFA Europa League Final in 2019, our country was once again cast in the spotlight of European football. The impact for local fans and the Azerbaijani population of bringing elite-level competition to our country cannot be understated. We have demonstrated that Azerbaijan has a seat at the table within football and we hope this will inspire generations of sportsmen and sportswomen in our country.

We are proud to be recognised by UEFA as an integral member. It is our hope that we can continue to collaborate with international sporting bodies to welcome fans back to Azerbaijan in the not-too-distant future."

On European representation and hosting fans:

"The Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) is absolutely delighted to have a pan-European palette of fixtures played in our country, hosting Denmark, Czech Republic, Turkey, Switzerland and Wales, bringing together teams to compete from every corner of the continent. International football fans from five countries traversing the streets of Baku to support their teams – it was an excellent festival of football throughout the tournament.

Principally, we have provided the stage for top-tier sporting competition. Great moments will live long in the memory of the fans here, such as Denmark's ferocious attacking display in the quarter final. These moments have galvanised our county's love of football and will play a significant role in advancing our Football Project to 2025."

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