



EUROPEAN  
QUALIFIERS



# MALTA SLOVENIA

FIFA WORLD CUP 2022  
EUROPEAN QUALIFIERS  
GROUP H

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**8 OCTOBER 2021**

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PROGRAMME

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INTERVIEW WITH MALTA COACH DEVIS MANGIA

# UPBEAT MANGIA HAPPY WITH MALTA PROGRESS BUT DEMANDS FURTHER IMPROVEMENT

Optimism is high within the Malta squad as last month's remarkable home victory over Cyprus and the bright performances away to Slovenia and Russia provided further confirmation of the team's steady progress over the past 18 months. National coach Devis Mangia has good reason to be pleased about the recent showings but for him the only way is onward and upward as he prepares the team for another two tough World Cup qualifying tests – at home to Slovenia on Friday and the away clash with Cyprus. **Kevin Azzopardi** spoke to **Devis Mangia**...

Buoyed by their strong performances in last month's 2022 World Cup qualifiers, Malta will be aiming to maintain the positive momentum in their upcoming commitments at home to Slovenia and away to Cyprus.

After taking one point from their opening three Group H qualifiers – a 2-2 draw away to Slovakia in March, Malta attained their first win in this World Cup campaign, overpowering Cyprus 3-0 at the National Stadium on 1st September to take their tally to four points. Cain Attard's brace and a Joseph Mbong header crowned a commanding display against Cyprus which was followed

by another two lively outings in narrow defeats away to Slovenia (0-1) and Russia (0-2).

Malta coach Devis Mangia is pleased with the team's showings in September but, typically, he expects his players to show the same desire and strive to raise the bar further, starting with the home test against Slovenia who only prevailed with a Sandi Lovric penalty in last month's encounter in Ljubljana.

"I am satisfied with the team's approach in the last three qualifying matches," Mangia said. "As I always stress, I prefer to concentrate on the team's

performance and, from this point-of-view, we can be satisfied with how we played, even in those matches that yielded no points for us, but we were certainly not happy about the result.

"In the last game away to Russia, the team showed great personality while the one against Slovenia was very balanced. We were analysing this match the other day and seeing how we played and the game episodes, especially that dubious penalty, was bittersweet as we deserved better but I'd rather look on the positive side. Our performances last month were good but we need to build on that."



**Joseph Mbong performs an overhead kick in the 3-0 victory over Cyprus.**  
PHOTOS: DOMENIC AQUILINA



**Goalkeeper Henry Bonello intercepts a Slovenia cross.**



**Malta striker Alexander Satariano drives forward in the away qualifier against Russia.**

**"As I always stress, I prefer to concentrate on the team's performance and, from this point-of-view, we can be satisfied with how we played, even in those matches that yielded no points for us"**

Mangia has largely kept faith with the players who were part of the squad for the September internationals but included two new faces in the provisional list, defender James Brown, who turns out for St Johnstone in Scotland, and Floriana midfielder Adam Magri Overend.

"James Brown is a young defender who can play in different positions at the back, so that can be useful for us," Mangia said. "I'm interested to have a closer look at him during this international window."

"The selection of Adam Magri Overend is another sign for all the young Maltese players that the doors of the national team are open for everyone. Adam is only 21, he is an interesting prospect who is proving himself in the domestic league and therefore deserves

the opportunity to be part of the squad for the upcoming World Cup games."

### PHYSICAL CONDITION

With the 2021-22 season gradually gaining momentum, Mangia noted that the physical condition of the players has improved. "Generally, the physical condition has improved compared to last month as the players have been involved in more games and subsequently their match fitness is better," Mangia said.

"There were a few players who looked slightly tired in the first training sessions but that is normal. The current format of the championship is also having a positive effect in my opinion as the games are balanced and competitive, factors that help to

raise the level of performance as the intensity is higher."

With six matches played, the current situation in Group H sees Croatia and Russia lead the pace with 13 points followed by Slovakia on nine. Slovenia, our next opponents, have gathered seven points, three more than Malta and Cyprus.

"Looking at the results so far, it's clear that the top two teams, Croatia and Russia, have established an advantage in the qualification race," Mangia said. "Overall, this has been a well-contested group with many close matches. As I said, I'm satisfied with our progress so far but I'm very curious to see how we will approach our next two commitments."

"What I expect from the team is to keep growing and improving, performance-wise."



**"We must take one game at a time but the team has certainly shown that we have the qualities to continue on this path. If we manage to keep up and possibly improve our performance levels, in the medium term we can achieve more positive results in terms of points"**

## HIGH HOPES

Malta's four-point tally coupled with their confident performances of late have raised expectations of getting more points on board and possibly setting a new record in a qualifying campaign for a major competition.

Mangia sounded an upbeat note but he is not getting ahead of himself. "We can't allow ourselves to be conditioned by such thoughts," the Italian coach said. "We must take one game at a time but the team has certainly shown that we have the qualities to continue on this path. If we manage to keep up and possibly improve our performance levels, in the medium term we can achieve more positive results in terms of points."

Although Mangia and his charges are fully focused on Friday's match against Slovenia,

the national coach is wary of the heightened expectations surrounding the away match against Cyprus in Larnaca in three days' time.

"The next game is always the most important and that will not change," Mangia said. "We are focusing all our attention and energies on the Slovenia match but everyone is conscious of the fact that the following assignment is the away clash with Cyprus.

"That will be the most difficult match of this campaign because after the result in Malta, Cyprus will be very determined to show that they are a different side compared to that game. We are aware of this and to cope with such scenario, we must perform to the maximum of our abilities, we have to be at our best in terms of attitude and focus because the Cyprus match will be the toughest." ↳

## MALTA SQUAD

### GOALKEEPERS

Henry Bonello (Hamrun Spartans); Jake Galea (Balzan); Matthew Grech (Pembroke Athleta).

### DEFENDERS

Samir Arab (Balzan); Steve Borg (Gżira United); James Brown (St Johnstone, Scotland); Karl Micallef (Hamrun Spartans); Zach Muscat (Casa Pia, Portugal); Enrico Pepe (Birkirkara); Kurt Shaw (Sliema Wanderers).

### MIDFIELDERS

Cain Attard (Birkirkara); Ryan Camenzuli (Floriana); Triston Caruana (Valletta); Adam Magri Overend (Floriana); Joseph Essien Mbong (Hamrun Spartans); Nikolai Muscat (Gżira United); Brandon Diego Paiber (Floriana); Steven Pisani (Gżira United); Nevin Portelli (Gżira United); Teddy Teuma (R.U. Saint-Gilloise, Belgium); Dunstan Vella (Hibernians); Dexter Xuereb (Santa Lucia).

### FORWARDS

Jurgen Degabriele (Hibernians); Shaun Dimech (Valletta); Luke Gamin (Hamrun Spartans); Jake Grech (Hibernians); Paul Mbong (Birkirkara); Luke Montebello (Birkirkara); Alexander Satariano (Frosinone Calcio, Italy).



# FIFA WORLD CUP 2022 EUROPEAN QUALIFIERS

## GROUP H FIXTURES AND STANDINGS

MATCHDAY 1 - 24/03/2021

**Malta 1-3 Russia**

**GOALS** 0-1 Artem Dzyuba 23, 0-2 Mario Fernandes 35, 1-2 Joseph Mbong 56, 1-3 Aleksandr Sobolev 90

**Cyprus 0-0 Slovakia****Slovenia 1-0 Croatia**

**GOAL** 1-0 Sandi Lovric 15

MATCHDAY 2 - 27/03/2021

**Russia 2-1 Slovenia**

**GOALS** 1-0 Artem Dzyuba 26, 2-0 Artem Dzyuba 35, 2-1 Josip Ilicic 36

**Croatia 1-0 Cyprus**

**GOAL** 1-0 Mario Pasalic 40

**Slovakia 2-2 Malta**

**GOALS** 0-1 Luke Gammie 16, 0-2 Alexander Satariano 20, 1-2 David Strelec 49, 2-2 Milan Skriniar 53

MATCHDAY 3 - 30/03/2021

**Cyprus 1-0 Slovenia**

**GOAL** 1-0 Ioannis Pittas 42

**Slovakia 2-1 Russia**

**GOALS** 1-0 Milan Skriniar 38, 1-1 Mario Fernandes 71, 2-1 Robert Mak 74

**Croatia 3-0 Malta**

**GOALS** 1-0 Ivan Perisic 62, 2-0 Luka Modric 76 (p), 3-0 Josip Brekalo 90

MATCHDAY 4 - 01/09/2021

**Malta 3-0 Cyprus**

**GOALS** 1-0 Cain Attard 44, 2-0 Joseph Mbong 46, 3-0 Cain Attard 54

**Slovenia 1-1 Slovakia**

**GOALS** 1-0 Róbert Boženík 32, 1-1 Petar Stojanović 42

**Russia 0-0 Croatia**

MATCHDAY 5 - 04/09/2021

**Cyprus 0-2 Russia**

**GOALS** 0-1 Aleksandr Erokhin 6, 0-2 Rifat Zhemaletdinov 55

**Slovenia 1-0 Malta**

**GOAL** 1-0 Sandi Lovrić 44 (p)

**Slovakia 0-1 Croatia**

**GOAL** 0-1 Marcelo Brozović 86

## CURRENT STANDINGS

	PLAYED	WON	DRAW	LOST	GOALS FOR	GOALS AGAINST	POINTS
Croatia	6	4	1	1	8	1	<b>13</b>
Russia	6	4	1	1	10	4	<b>13</b>
Slovakia	6	2	3	1	7	5	<b>9</b>
Slovenia	6	2	1	3	4	7	<b>7</b>
<b>Malta</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>
Cyprus	6	1	1	4	1	8	<b>4</b>

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■ MALTA SQUAD

# MALTA PLAYER PROFILES

## FOR WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS AGAINST SLOVENIA (H) & CYPRUS (A)



**HENRY BONELLO**

**GOALKEEPER**

**CLUB** Hamrun Spartans FC  
**DOB** 13 October 1988

**CAPS** 31

**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**29 February 2012**  
Malta 2 Liechtenstein 1  
(Friendly)



**JAKE GALEA**

**GOALKEEPER**

**CLUB** Balzan FC  
**DOB** 15 April 1996

**CAPS** 2

**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**27 October 2020**  
Malta 2 Gibraltar 0  
(Friendly)



**MATTHEW GRECH**

**GOALKEEPER**

**CLUB** Pembroke Athleta FC  
**DOB** 19 February 1996

**CAPS** 0



**SAMIR ARAB**

**DEFENDER**

**CLUB** Balzan FC  
**DOB** 25 March 1994

**CAPS** 1

**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**7 October 2020**  
Malta 2 Gibraltar 0  
(Friendly)



**STEVE BORG**

**DEFENDER**

**CLUB** Gżira United FC  
**DOB** 15 May 1988

**CAPS** 61 (3 goals)

**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**7 October 2011**  
Latvia 2 Malta 0  
(Euro Championship Qualifier)



**JAMES BROWN**

**DEFENDER**

**CLUB** St Johnstone (Scotland)  
**DOB** 12 January 1998

**CAPS** 0



**KARL MICALLEF**

**DEFENDER**

**CLUB** Hamrun Spartans FC  
**DOB** 8 September 1996

**CAPS** 4

**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**26 March 2019**  
Malta 0 Spain 2  
(Euro Championship Qualifier)



**ZACH MUSCAT**

**DEFENDER**

**CLUB** AC Casa Pia (Portugal)  
**DOB** 22 August 1993

**CAPS** 47 (1 goal)

**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**4 September 2014**  
Slovakia 1 Malta 0  
(Friendly)

## MALTA SQUAD

**ENRICO PEPE****DEFENDER**

**CLUB** Birkirkara FC  
**DOB** 12 November 1989  
**CAPS** 5  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
6 September 2020  
Malta 1 Latvia 1  
(UEFA Nations League)

**KURT SHAW****DEFENDER**

**CLUB** Sliema Wanderers FC  
**DOB** 1 April 1999  
**CAPS** 14  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
12 October 2019  
Malta 0 Sweden 4  
(Euro Championship Qualifier)

**CAIN ATTARD****MIDFIELDER**

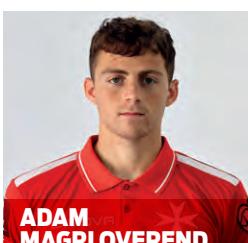
**CLUB** Birkirkara FC  
**DOB** 10 September 1994  
**CAPS** 10 (2 goals)  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
27 May 2016  
Czech Republic 6 Malta 0  
(Friendly)

**RYAN CAMENZULI****MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Floriana FC  
**DOB** 8 September 1994  
**CAPS** 19  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
25 March 2015  
Georgia 2 Malta 0  
(Friendly)

**TRISTON CARUANA****MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Valletta FC  
**DOB** 15 September 1991  
**CAPS** 8 (1 goal)  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
26 March 2018  
Finland 5 Malta 0  
(Friendly)

**ADAM MAGRI OVEREND****MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Floriana FC  
**DOB** 3 May 2000  
**CAPS** 0

**JOSEPH MBONG****MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Hamrun Spartans FC  
**DOB** 15 July 1997  
**CAPS** 32 (2 goals)  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
29 May 2018  
Armenia 1 Malta 1  
(Friendly)

**NIKOLAI MUSCAT****MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Gżira United FC  
**DOB** 13 July 1996  
**CAPS** 3  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
18 November 2019  
Malta 1 Norway 2  
(Euro Championship Qualifier)

**BRANDON PAIBER****MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Floriana FC  
**DOB** 5 June 1995  
**CAPS** 1  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
15 November 2019  
Spain 7 Malta 0  
(Euro Championship Qualifier)

**STEVE PISANI****MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Gżira United FC  
**DOB** 7 August 1992  
**CAPS** 31  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
28 March 2015  
Azerbaijan 2 Malta 0  
(Euro Championship Qualifier)

**NEVIN PORTELLI****MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Gżira United FC  
**DOB** 16 September 1999  
**CAPS** 0

**TEDDY TEUMA****MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Royale Union St Gilloise (Belgium)  
**DOB** 30 September 1993  
**CAPS** 14  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**  
3 September 2020  
Faroe Islands 3 Malta 2  
(UEFA Nations League)

## MALTA SQUAD



**DUNSTAN VELLA**

**MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Hibernians FC  
**DOB** 27 April 1996  
**CAPS** 8  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**1 June 2018**  
 Georgia 1 Malta 0  
 (Friendly)



**DEXTER XUEREB**

**MIDFIELDER**

**CLUB** Santa Lucia  
**DOB** 21 September 1997  
**CAPS** 1  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**30 May 2021**  
 Northern Ireland 3 Malta 0  
 (Friendly)



**JURGEN DEGABRIELE**

**FORWARD**

**CLUB** Hibernians FC  
**DOB** 10 October 1996  
**CAPS** 11 (2 goals)  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**29 May 2018**  
 Armenia 1 Malta 1  
 (Friendly)



**SHAUN DIMECH**

**FORWARD**

**CLUB** Valletta FC  
**DOB** 8 August 2001  
**CAPS** 9 (2 goals)  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**7 October 2020**  
 Malta 2 Gibraltar 0  
 (Friendly)



**LUKE GAMBIN**

**FORWARD**

**CLUB** Hamrun Spartans FC  
**DOB** 16 March 1993  
**CAPS** 31 (1 goal)  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**27 May 2016**  
 Czech Republic 6 Malta 0  
 (Friendly)



**JAKE GRECH**

**FORWARD**

**CLUB** Hibernians FC  
**DOB** 18 November 1997  
**CAPS** 18  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**29 May 2018**  
 Armenia 1 Malta 1  
 (Friendly)



**PAUL MBONG**

**FORWARD**

**CLUB** Birkirkara FC  
**DOB** 2 September 2001  
**CAPS** 9  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**3 September 2020**  
 Faroe Islands 3 Malta 2  
 (UEFA Nations League)



**DEVIS MANGIA**

HEAD COACH

**DAVIDE MAZZOTTA**

FIRST ASSISTANT COACH



**GUILLERMO GIACOMAZZI**

ASSISTANT COACH



**ALESSANDRO ZINNARI**

TECHNICAL CO-ORDINATOR



**LUKE MONTEBELLO**

**FORWARD**

**CLUB** Birkirkara FC  
**DOB** 13 August 1995  
**CAPS** 14  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**26 March 2017**  
 Malta 1 Slovakia 3  
 (World Cup Qualifier)



**ALEXANDER SATARIANO**

**FORWARD**

**CLUB** Frosinone Calcio (Italy)  
**DOB** 25 October 2001  
**CAPS** 11 (1 goal)  
**NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT**

**11 November 2020**  
 Malta 3 Liechtenstein 0  
 (Friendly)



**MARIO CAPECE**

GOALKEEPERS COACH

Keith FENECH – Team Manager  
 Luca PAGANI – Fitness Coach  
 Francesco ZANASI – Fitness Coach  
 Facundo STYK – Match Analyst  
 Pamela SCHEMBRI – Communications Director/National Team Media Officer  
 Daniel McKEAN – Team Doctor  
 Luke BUSUTTIL LEAVER – Physiotherapist  
 Julian RIZZO NAUDI – Physiotherapist  
 Simone DONATO – Physiotherapist  
 Aaron ANCILLERI – Masseur  
 Frankie CIANTAR – Kit Manager  
 Mark PISCOPO – Kit Manager

INFORMATION CORRECT AS OF 06/10/2021.

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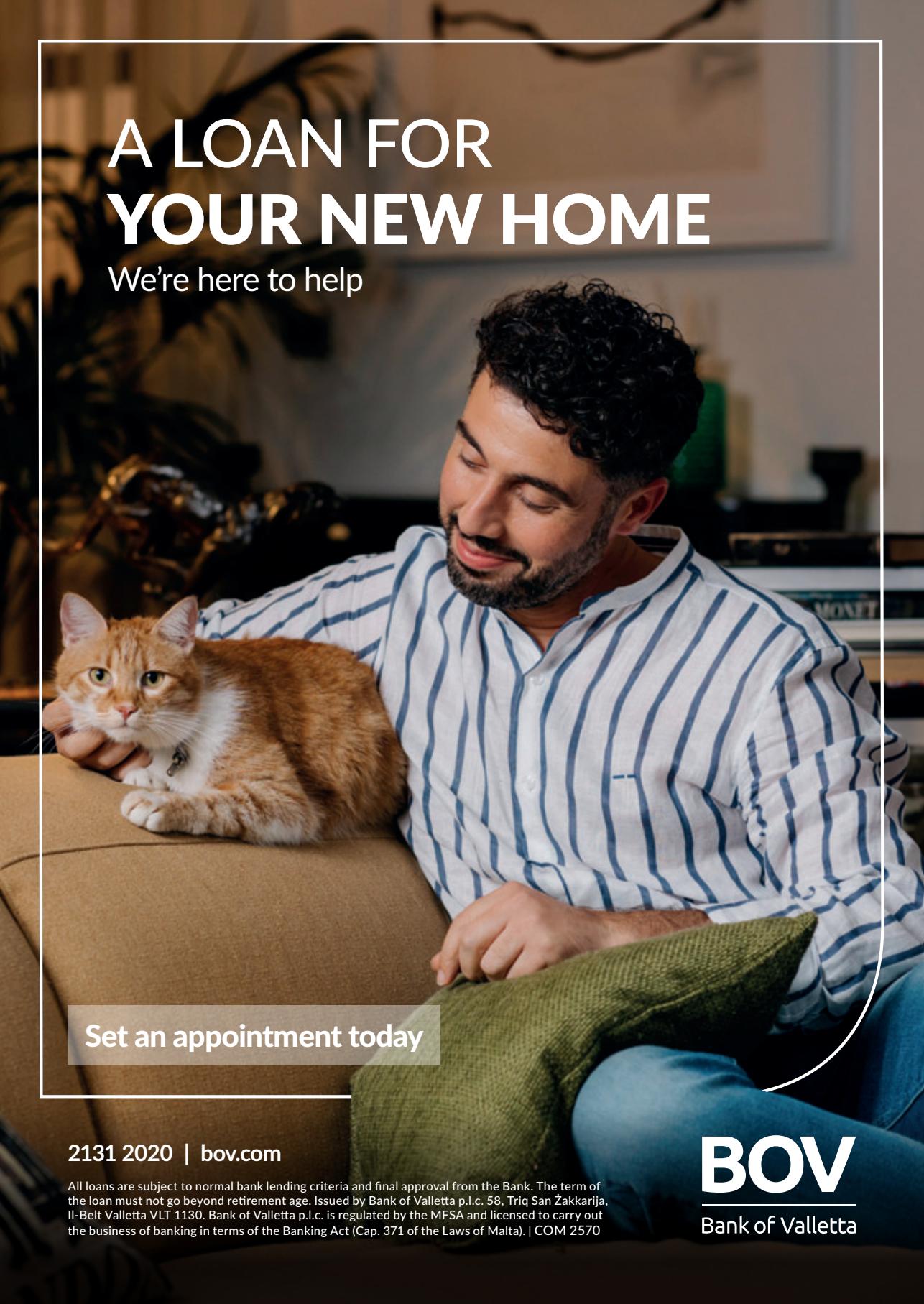
Malta turned on the style to beat Cyprus 3-0 in a 2022 World Cup Group H qualifier at the National Stadium on 1st September, 2021. It was a night to remember for Cain Attard who repaid coach Devis Mangia's faith with a well-taken brace either side of half-time with Joseph Mbong also putting his name on the scoresheet with a powerful header at the start of the second half. The electric performance delighted the Maltese fans who were allowed back into the stadium for a national team's match after a lapse of 18 months due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Malta's first victory in this World Cup qualifying campaign moved them on four points in Group H.

PHOTOS: DOMENIC AQUILINA



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#### PREVIOUS ENCOUNTERS

Malta goalkeeper David Cluett stops a Slovenia attack during the 1994 match at the National Stadium.

# MALTA LOOKING TO IMPROVE RECORD AGAINST SLOVENIA

The 2022 World Cup Group H qualifier at the National Stadium will be the eighth meeting between Malta and Slovenia. Malta's best result is a goalless draw in the 1996 International Tournament as Slovenia have won the other six matches. **LENNARD KELDER** looks back on these previous encounters...

**12/02/1994**

**MALTA 0-1 SLOVENIA**  
**(Malta International Tournament)**

The first time Malta met Slovenia was in 1994 when the Malta FA invited the Slovenian national team to take part in the International Tournament. Slovenia, who had gained independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, won the biennial tournament after beating Georgia

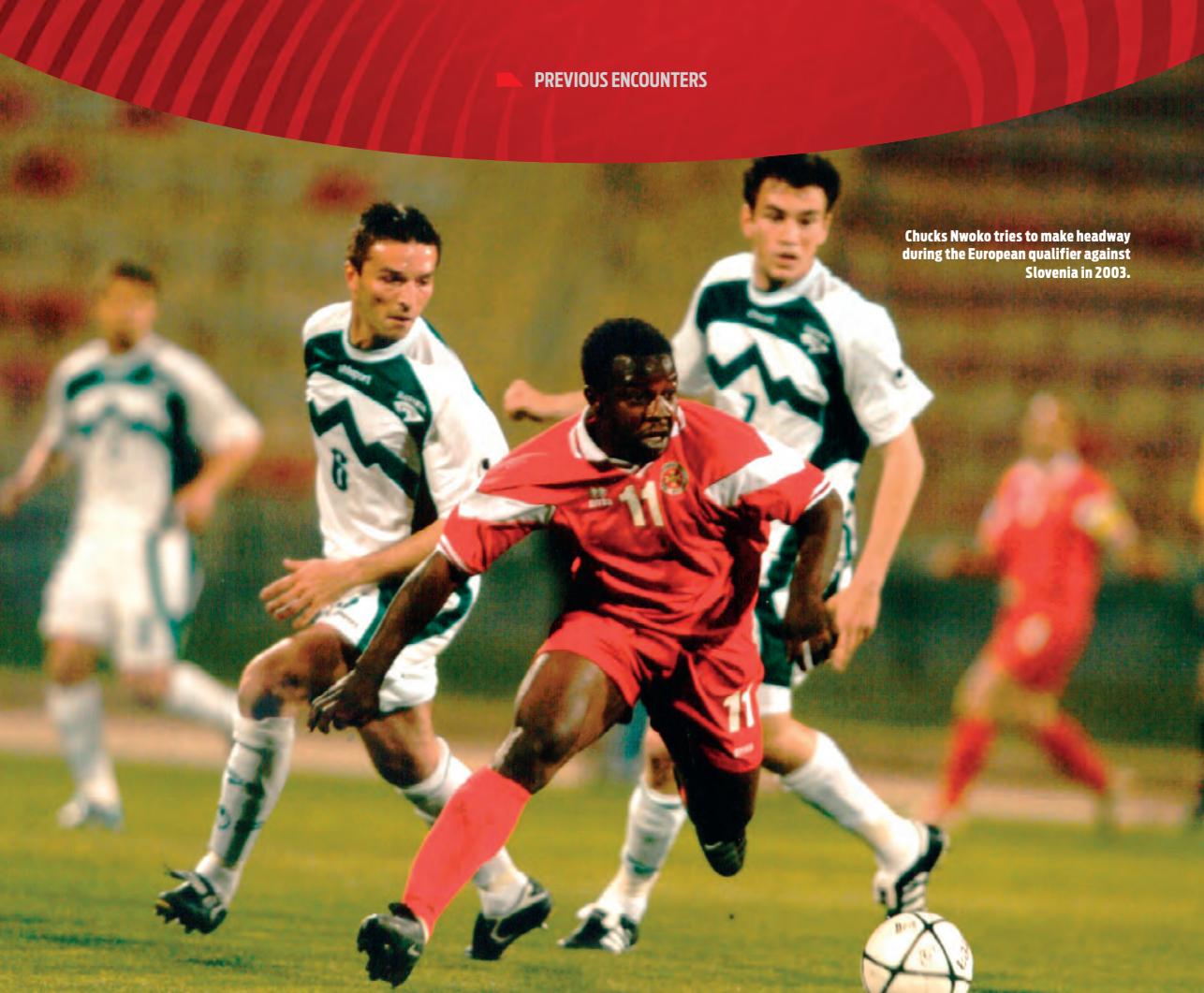
1-0, a 2-2 draw against Tunisia and a 1-0 victory over Malta. The winner was scored by Primoz Gliha in the 54th minute.

**MALTA** David Cluett, Joe Camilleri, John Buttigieg (Gilbert Agius 65), Joe Galea (Michael Spiteri 46), Silvio Vella, Kris Laferla, Joe Brincat, Nicky Saliba, Charles Xerri, Martin Gregory, Hubert Suda.

**COACH** Pietro Ghedin



Srecko Katanec with the International Tournament trophy won by Slovenia in 1994.



Chucks Nwoko tries to make headway during the European qualifier against Slovenia in 2003.

**09/02/1996**

**MALTA 0-0 SLOVENIA**

(Malta International Tournament)

Slovenia returned to defend their trophy in the 1996 tournament. They kicked off with a resounding 7-1 win over Iceland with Beveren forward Saso Udovic scoring five goals. However, in their match against Malta, Slovenia could not go beyond a goalless draw on day two of the tournament. On the last day, Russia defeated Slovenia 3-1 to win the tournament unbeaten.

**MALTA** Reggie Cini, John Buttigieg (Gilbert Agius 87), Jeffrey Chetcuti (David Carabott 48), Michael Woods (David Camilleri 67), Darren Debono, Silvio Vella, Richard

Buhagiar, Ivan Zammit, Noel Turner, Gilbert Agius, Hubert Suda (Nicky Saliba 85).

**COACH** Robert Gatt

**30/04/2003**

**MALTA 1-3 SLOVENIA**

(European Championship Qualification)

The third meeting on Maltese soil took place in 2003 as both nations were drawn in Group 1 of the Euro 2004 qualifying round. Playmaker Zlatko Zahovic opened the scoring in the 15th minute and Ermin Siljak hit a brace, on 36 and 57 minutes, to seal Slovenia's win. Michael Mifsud scored a late consolation goal on the stroke of time.

**MALTA** Mario Muscat, Brian Said,

Luke Dimech, Simon Vella, Ian Ciantar, Stefan Giglio (William Camenzuli 69), David Carabott, Noel Turner, George Mallia, Chucks Nwoko (Danijel Bogdanovic 63), Michael Mifsud.

**COACH** Sigfried Held

**11/11/2016**

**MALTA 0-1 SLOVENIA**

(World Cup Qualification)

A Benjamin Verbic goal two minutes after the break was enough to hand Slovenia their third victory against Malta at the National Stadium. Goalkeeper Andrew Hogg was prominent with several great saves in the first half. After Slovenia's

goal, Malta ventured forward in search of an equaliser but the visitors stood firm to preserve their advantage. Dover Athletic defender Sam Magri made his debut for Malta in this match.

**MALTA** Andrew Hogg, Sam Magri, Andrei Agius, Joseph Zerafa, Ryan Camilleri (Steve Borg 68), Zach Muscat, Gareth Sciberras, Rowen Muscat, Luke Gambin, André Schembri, Michael Mifsud (Jean-Paul Farrugia 44).

**COACH** Pietro Ghedin

## AWAY MATCHES

**07/09/2002**

**SLOVENIA 3-0 MALTA**  
(European Championship Qualification)

**MALTA** Mario Muscat, Brian Said, Luke Dimech, Darren Debono, Jeffrey Chetcuti, David Carabott, Stefan Giglio, George Mallia (Danijel Bogdanovic 71), Gilbert Agius, Chucks Nwoko, Michael Mifsud (Adrian Mifsud 88).

**COACH** Sigfried Held

**10/06/2017**

**SLOVENIA 2-0 MALTA**  
(World Cup Qualification)

**MALTA** Andrew Hogg, Alex Muscat, Andrei Agius, Steve Borg (Sam Magri 89), Clayton Failla, André Schembri (Michael Mifsud 62), Ryan Fenech, Zach Muscat, Bjorn Kristensen (Luke Gambin 46), Alfred Effiong, Steve Pisani.  
**COACH** Pietro Ghedin

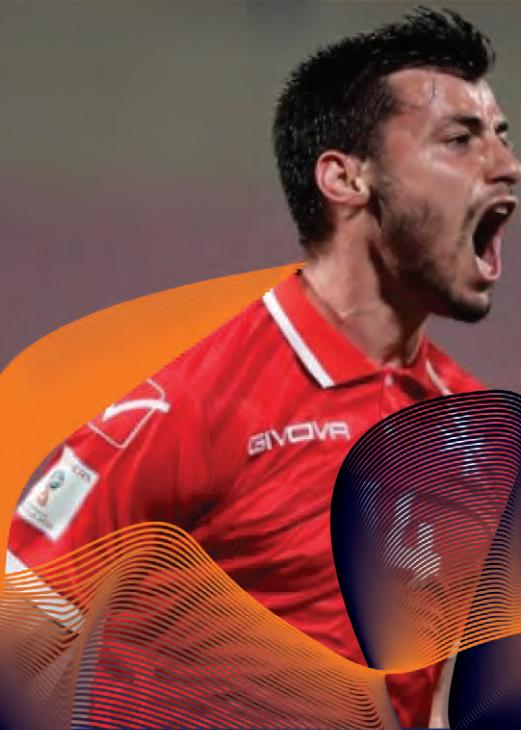
**04/09/2021**

**SLOVENIA 1-0 MALTA**  
(World Cup Qualification)

**MALTA** Henry Bonello, Enrico Pepe, Zach Muscat, Kurt Shaw, Cain Attard, Triston Caruana (Steve Pisani 79), Teddy Teuma, Juan Corbalan (Ryan Camenzuli 46), Joseph Mbong (Luke Gambin 73), Shaun Dimech (Paul Mbong 58), Alex Satariano (Luke Montebello 77).  
**COACH** Devis Mangia ↗



Malta midfielder Teddy Teuma makes a challenge during the 1-0 away defeat to Slovenia.



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# NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM



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## FACTS AND FIGURES

# 2

David Carabott, then on the books of Valletta, captained Malta twice in matches against Slovenia. The Citizens were also represented by Kris Laferla and Michael Mifsud. The other three captains were John Buttigieg (Floriana), André Schembri (Boavista) and Henry Bonello (Hamrun Spartans).



# 3

**Three players made their Malta debut against Slovenia:**

**David Camilleri (Hamrun Spartans)**

9th February, 1996 - Friendly Tournament (0-0)

**Noel Turner (Sliema Wanderers)**

9th February, 1996 - Friendly Tournament (0-0)

**Sam Magri (Dover Athletic)**

11th November, 2016 - World Cup (0-1)



# 22

The players who featured for Malta in matches against Slovenia represented 22 clubs, 13 of which were foreign. Valletta were the most represented with a total of 22 players followed by Hibernians (14), Birkirkara (13) and Sliema Wanderers (12).

# 4

Michael Mifsud has made the highest number of appearances (four) against Slovenia, followed by Gilbert Agius (Valletta), David Carabott (Hibernians 1, Valletta 2), Zach Muscat (Arezzo 2, Casa Pia AC 1) and Luke Gamin (Barnet FC, Luton Town, Hamrun Spartans) with three each. Mifsud represented two clubs (Kaiserslautern and Valletta).



# 7

Michael Mifsud (pictured above) scored Malta's only goal in the previous seven matches against Slovenia. It was his seventh goal in his 23rd appearance for the national team. Playing for German club Kaiserslautern at the time, Mifsud netted in the 3-1 defeat during a European Championship Qualifier, played on 30th April, 2003 at the National Stadium. He was 22 years and 13 days.

# 19

The youngest Malta player to face Slovenia is Alex Satariano (Frosinone Calcio) aged 19 years, 10 months and 10 days, on 4th September, 2021, during the 1-0 defeat in the 2022 World Cup qualifier at the Stozice Stadium, Ljubljana.

The oldest Malta player was Michael Mifsud (Valletta) at 36 years, one month and 24 days, on 10th June 2017, in the 2-0 defeat in the 2018 World Cup qualifier at the same stadium.

# 66

A total of 66 players have been selected by four different coaches (Pietro Ghedin, Robert Gatt, Sigfried Held and Devis Mangia).



MALTA'S NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM CHOSE



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# SLOVENIA SQUAD

## Goalkeepers

### Jan OBLAK

CLUB ATLETICO MADRID (Spain)  
DOB 07/01/93 CAPS 40

### Vid BELEC

CLUB US SALERNITANA (Italy)  
DOB 06/06/90 CAPS 18

### Igor VEKIC

CLUB FC PAÇOS DE FERREIRA (Portugal)  
DOB 06/05/98 CAPS 0

## Defenders

### Miha MEVLJA

CLUB ALANYASPOR (Turkey)  
DOB 12/06/90 CAPS 41 (1)

### Petar STOJANOVIC

CLUB EMPOLI (Italy)  
DOB 07/10/95 CAPS 30 (1)

### Jaka BIJOL

CLUB CSKA (Russia)  
DOB 05/02/99 CAPS 22

## Jure BALKOVEC

CLUB KARAGUMRUK (Turkey)  
DOB 09/09/94 CAPS 16

## Miha BLAŽIĆ

CLUB FERENCVAROŠ (Hungary)  
DOB 08/05/93 CAPS 15

## Žan ROGEJ

CLUB WSG TIROL (Austria)  
DOB 25/11/99 CAPS 1

## Žan KARNICNIK

CLUB NŠ MURA  
DOB 18/09/94 CAPS 0

## Žan KOLMANIC

CLUB AUSTIN FC (USA)  
DOB 03/03/00 CAPS 0

## Midfielders

### Jasmin KURTIC

CLUB PAOK (Greece)  
DOB 10/01/89 CAPS 71 (2)

### Domen CRNIGOJ

CLUB VENEZIA (Italy)  
DOB 18/11/95 CAPS 19 (3)

## Leo ŠTULAC

CLUB EMPOLI (Italy)  
DOB 26/09/94 CAPS 16

## Sandi LOVRIC

CLUB FC LUGANO (Switzerland)  
DOB 28/03/98 CAPS 14 (3)

## Jon Gorenc STANKOVIC

CLUB SK STURM GRAZ (Austria)  
DOB 14/01/96 CAPS 6 (1)

## Adam Gnezda CERIN

CLUB HNK RIJEKA (Croatia)  
DOB 16/07/99 CAPS 4

## Max Elšnik TIMI

CLUB NK OLIMPIJA LJUBLJANA  
DOB 29/04/98 CAPS 0

## Forwards

### Josip ILICIC

CLUB ATALANTA (Italy)  
DOB 29/01/88 CAPS 74 (13)

### Benjamin VERBIC

CLUB DINAMO KYEV (Ukraine)  
DOB 27/11/93 CAPS 34 (5)

## Andraž ŠPORAR

CLUB MIDDLESBROUGH (England)  
DOB 27/02/94 CAPS 31 (4)

## Luka ZAHOVIC

CLUB POGON SZCZECIN (Poland)  
DOB 15/11/95 CAPS 7

## Benjamin ŠEŠKO

CLUB RED BULL SALZBURG (Austria)  
DOB 31/05/03 CAPS 5

## David TIJANIC

CLUB GOztepe (Turkey)  
DOB 16/07/97 CAPS 1

## Head Coach

Matjaž KEK

INFORMATION CORRECT AS OF 06/10/2021.

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■ 2021-23 UEFA UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP

# AWAY DOUBLE-HEADER AWAITS MALTA UNDER-21 TEAM



## Rodney Vassallo

The Malta Under-21 team resume their UEFA European Under-21 Championship Group C qualifying campaign with an away double-header against Lithuania (8 October) and Slovakia (12 October).

Led by coach Gilbert Agius, the Maltese youngsters enjoyed a flying start to their group commitments, beating Northern Ireland 4-1 at the Centenary Stadium before going down to Russia (0-6) in their first away qualifier. Mattia Veselji scored a first-half brace in the victory over Northern Ireland with Jake Engerer and Ayrton Attard getting the other goals for the Maltese team who will be looking to emulate that performance in their upcoming

qualifiers and learn from the difficult outing against Russia.

These qualifying commitments in a group also containing Spain, who have won their opening two matches, are part of the learning curve for this young crop of players who will benefit from the experience, increasing their knowledge and familiarity with the unified playing philosophy as part of the long-term vision for the development of the national teams in all age-groups.

Agius has named a host of new players in his squad for the October matches with the Piètà Hotspurs duo of Samuel Okoh and Sheldon Mizzi, Larens Vella of Rabat Ajax, Balzan's Adam Bradshaw and Victor Degiorgio, who plays for Maryville University in the United States,

confirmed in the final 22-man list for this away double-header.

The Malta Under-21 contingent travelled to Lithuania on Wednesday 6th October, two days ahead of their third qualifier in this campaign at the SRC Alytus Stadium in Alytus. Lithuania are currently bottom of Group C after losing to Slovakia (1-3) and Spain (0-2) in their opening qualifiers.

From Lithuania, the Malta U-21 squad will head to Slovakia for their second match during this month's window – on 12th October at the FC Nitra Stadium. Slovakia also have three points after their opening 3-1 home victory over Lithuania was followed by a 1-0 defeat away to Northern Ireland.

## MALTA UNDER-21 SQUAD

**GOALKEEPERS** Rashed Al-Tumi (Nocerina), Cain Formosa (San Ĝwann), Amara Sylla (Birkirkara).

**DEFENDERS** Matthew Ellul (Hibernians), Christian Gauci (Valletta), Karl Mohnani (Melita), Samuel Okoh (Piètà Hotspurs), Carlo Zammit Lonardelli (Sirens).

**MIDFIELDERS** Ayrton Attard (Hibernians), Adam Bradshaw (Balzan), Aleandro Garzia (Floriana), Marcus Grima (Balzan), Liam McKay (Santa Lucia), Sheldon Mizzi (Piètà Hotspurs), Bradley Sciberras (Floriana), Andreas Vella (Santa Lucia).

**FORWARDS** Jamie Carbone (Santa Lucia), Victor Degiorgio (Maryville University, US), Jake Engerer (Sliema Wanderers), Jamie Sixsmith (St Andrews), Mattia Veselji (Floriana), Larens Vella (Rabat Ajax). ↗



Malta U-21 players celebrate one of their goals against Northern Ireland.  
PHOTO: STEPHEN GATT

## 2021-23 UEFA U-21 CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFYING ROUND MALTA'S GROUP C MATCH SCHEDULE

**3 SEPTEMBER, 2021**  
Malta 4-1 Northern Ireland

**7 SEPTEMBER, 2021**  
Russia 6-0 Malta

**8 OCTOBER, 2021**  
Lithuania vs Malta

**12 OCTOBER, 2021**  
Slovakia vs Malta

**12 NOVEMBER, 2021**  
Malta vs Spain

**16 NOVEMBER, 2021**  
Northern Ireland vs Malta

**25 MARCH, 2022**  
Malta vs Russia

**29 MARCH, 2022**  
Malta vs Lithuania

**3 JUNE, 2022**  
Malta vs Slovakia

**7 JUNE, 2022**  
Spain vs Malta

### CURRENT STANDINGS

	PLAYED	WON	DRAW	LOST	GOALS FOR	GOALS AGAINST	POINTS
Spain	2	2	0	0	6	1	<b>6</b>
Russia	2	1	0	1	7	4	<b>3</b>
Northern Ireland	2	1	0	1	2	4	<b>3</b>
<b>Malta</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>
Slovakia	2	1	0	1	3	2	<b>3</b>
Lithuania	2	0	0	2	1	5	<b>0</b>

INFORMATION CORRECT AS OF 06/10/2021.



Ayrton Attard picks his spot to score Malta's fourth and final goal in the victory over Northern Ireland.



Action from the away qualifier against Russia.



# RESPECT

