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St. Petersburg to Host 3 More Euro 2020 Games

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St. Petersburg was initially scheduled to host three group stage matches and one quarter-final. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

Europe's football governing body UEFA said Thursday that the Russian city of St. Petersburg will host three additional Euro 2020 group games after the original hosts of the 12-city tournament could not guarantee fan admittance due to the coronavirus.

St. Petersburg was initially scheduled to host three group stage matches and one quarter-final when UEFA's Euro 2020 kicks off this June. But UEFA relocated three games to Russia's second city after authorities in the Spanish city of Bilbao and the Irish capital of Dublin could not give guarantees of welcoming enough fans into stadiums.

"The three Group E matches initially scheduled for Dublin, will be reallocated to the St. Petersburg Stadium," UEFA said.

The organization also moved four matches from Bilbao to Seville.

UEFA's decision follows unconfirmed media reports last November said that it was considering giving Russia all hosting duties for the Euro 2020 championship as the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic ravaged Europe.

The second wave caught up with Russia later in December and January, with the country currently among the world leaders in Covid-19 deaths and total cases.

UEFA president Alexander Ceferin has said the organization is exploring several scenarios for holding the Euro 2020 finals in 2021, including slimming down the tournament from 12 host venues.

Russia's three group-stage games against Belgium, Finland and Denmark will take place in St. Petersburg and Copenhagen this June.

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