



Press Release

Zurich, 29 February 2008

Switzerland scores as friendly host country

(st) Exactly 99 days from today, at 6 p.m., the match between Switzerland and the Czech Republic will kick off at St. Jakob Park in Basel. Just three hours later, Turkey and Portugal will face off in Geneva, and UEFA EURO 2008™ will be underway. Preparations for the great football festival in June 2008 are in full swing. The people of Switzerland are getting ready to welcome their guests.

At the press conference in Istanbul, where many famous personalities from media, tourism and the world of football came together, the anticipation for the EURO 2008 as well as the preparation in Switzerland and necessary information were announced to the guests. "Football builds bridges across people, cultures and countries. We also want to use this third largest sports event in the world to strengthen ties and friendship with Turkey and the Turkish population", the Ambassador of Switzerland Walter B. Gyger emphasized in his welcome speech. He pointed out, that his country is very proud and honoured to host this important event. "I cannot hide from you that I was very excited when Switzerland and Turkey were drawn to the same group. My heart is beating for two teams: The Swiss team and the Turkish team, because I have enjoyed very close ties with this country for the last 40 years", said Ambassador Gyger.

"We look forward to welcoming the Turkish national football team because spectacular matches are guaranteed. We look forward to seeing many guests from Turkey, and together with thousands of people with Turkish roots in Switzerland, we look forward to a terrific football festival,". said Benedikt Weibel, Federal Council delegate for EURO 2008, while talking about Switzerland, host country of EURO 2008, during a press conference held today in Istanbul. The Turkish team will play one match of the qualifying round in Basel and two in Geneva. The four Swiss stadiums where EURO 2008 will be played accommodate up to 40,000 fans each.

"Switzerland is carefully preparing for a fantastic football festival. We want to be competent and gracious hosts", said Jürg Schmid, CEO of Switzerland Tourism. The country's enthusiasm to welcome its guests is shown on postcards, billboards and in advertising spots. An advertising campaign shows Swiss people from a variety of occupations dressed in the jersey of their favourite national team: a student, a pilot, a mountain climber and a hotel employee are all cheering for the Turkish team with the words: Türkiye' yi ağırlamaktan mutluluk duyuyoruz.

Give our best as hosts, EURO 2008 professionals and fan experts

Guests arriving from all over Europe will get to know the Swiss as pleasant, friendly and open-minded people – good and welcoming hosts. The finishing touches to prepare Switzerland for this exceptional event are provided by qualified instructors who will train over 50,000 hostesses and hosts before EURO 2008 kicks off, including 20,000 airport employees, 4000 bus and taxi drivers, 1800 customs officers, 5000 wait staff and hotel employees, 2500 train attendants, 2100 volunteers, 16,000 police officers and members of the armed forces, as well as football fan assistants – in short, anybody who will be in contact with guests during EURO 2008.

Cooperation with 14 partners

Location Marketing Switzerland has teamed up with 14 partners to form the National Host Team in charge of training staff who will welcome thousands of guests for EURO 2008: the Swiss Federal Railways (SBB), restaurants (GastroSuisse), the airports (SIAA), the host cities, hotels (hotelleriesuisse), the police force and the General Customs Directorate, to name a few.

The “host passport”

At the completion of the training, all participants (approximately 50,000) receive a “host passport”, including information on all aspects of the programme. This 64-page booklet is presented in the format of a Swiss passport. It includes the following comments about Turkey: Cheerleading chant: Tür-ky-e!; culinary specialties: Turkish honey, meze, kebabs; characteristics: hospitable, spirited.

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Up-to-date information:

The latest news about EURO 2008 and Switzerland is available at www.switzerland.com.

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