

## **The country where football continues - 7 May, 2020**

The coronavirus crisis is very bad news for sport. Millions of sports fans around the world normally watch football, rugby, basketball and other sports live on TV but since early March, 2020, this has not been possible.

All major football leagues began postponing matches during the first two weeks of March. Some leagues even cancelled the entire season. The last match of the English Premier League was on Monday, 9 March, when Leicester City beat Aston Villa 4–0. In Spain, Eibar's game against Real Sociedad on Tuesday, 10 March was the last game fans were able to watch in the stadium or on TV. In Germany, Borussia Monchengladbach's 2–1 defeat of Cologne on Wednesday, 11 March was the last time football fans there saw a live game. With no live TV, football clubs around the world, and in Europe in particular, are already losing a lot of money, especially money from television deals.

But there is one country in Europe where professional football has continued. In Belarus, a small country of just 9.5 million people, football is normally played from spring to autumn because the weather in winter is too cold. The football season there actually began on Thursday, 19 March. There are 16 teams in the Belarussian top league, including four from the capital city, Minsk.

With football fans really missing live games on TV, the Belarussian league has signed television deals with several countries, including Russia, Ukraine and India. It is also possible for football fans to watch live games from Belarus on social media. At the moment, no one knows when, or if, the other European leagues will start again in 2020. So, for now, if you are a football fan, it's football from Belarus (and also from Tajikistan, Taiwan and Nicaragua).

Questions:

What is bad news for sport and why?

What sports do fans normally watch on TV?

When did the major leagues begin to postpone football matches?

When was the last football match in Germany and who won it?

Where is football still being played live?

When is the football season here and why?

How many teams are there in the league?

Which countries has the league signed TV deals with?

Where else can fans watch the games?

Where else in the world is football still being played?