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UEFA presents award to Rinat Akhmetov for his contribution to the development of football



[Rinat Akhmetov](#), president of [FC Shakhtar Donetsk](#) and shareholder of System Capital Management (SCM), has met Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) President **Aleksander Čeferin** at UEFA Headquarters, where he received a commemorative award recognising his contribution to the development of football.

Why did UEFA present Rinat Akhmetov with an award?

Mr Čeferin presented a commemorative UEFA award recognising Rinat Akhmetov's contribution to the development of football, marking 30 years as president of the club and the 90th anniversary of FC Shakhtar Donetsk.

Rinat Akhmetov, president of FC Shakhtar Donetsk, said:

"First of all, it is a great pleasure to be here. I am here at the invitation of the UEFA President, for which I thank him very much. Aleksander and I had not seen each other for five years, and I have the warmest and best memories of that meeting. At that time, none of us could have imagined that in three months Russia would begin a full-scale, aggressive, unjust and cruel war against Ukraine. Against its peaceful neighbours. I am here not only to receive an award, although I will not hide that it is a great pleasure, because behind it stands the enormous work of our whole football family: all generations of players, coaches, club staff and, of course, the fans. I am also here to express my great thanks to the UEFA President for always being on the side of good, always on the side of justice."

What did UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin say about Rinat Akhmetov's contribution to Shakhtar?

UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin highlighted Rinat Akhmetov's long-standing commitment to FC Shakhtar Donetsk and his role in sustaining the club through more than a decade away from its home city.

"I don't think there is another club president in Europe who is as devoted to his club and has shown as much love for football and for his club. It is truly moving to see how he manages to make an utterly abnormal situation feel normal for Shakhtar's players. And, with all due respect to everyone else, I don't think this club would still exist today without Rinat Akhmetov," Mr Zheferin said.

What is the "Invest in Ukraine" message on Shakhtar's Champions League shirts?

The meeting comes in the same week that FC Shakhtar Donetsk begins its 2026/2027 UEFA Champions League campaign wearing shirts that carry the call to "[Invest in Ukraine](#)" alongside the SCM logo. The campaign is a global communications initiative by System Capital Management, Ukraine's largest private investor, calling on international business to invest in the country.

Shakhtar will play at least eight matches against leading European clubs, giving the message one of the highest-profile platforms in world sport.

Why does FC Shakhtar Donetsk play its home matches away from Donetsk?

FC Shakhtar Donetsk has been unable to play in Donetsk for more than a decade. Ukrainian league matches have been played in Kyiv and Lviv, while European home matches have been staged in seven different stadiums in Germany, Poland and England.

Where will Shakhtar play its European home matches in the 2026/27 season?

This season the club will host its European home matches at Stamford Bridge in London. No football club has faced such a long period away from its home city.