

# 1. Introduction

On the 2nd December 2010 in Zürich, Switzerland, when FIFA awarded Russia and Qatar hosting rights for the 2018 and 2022<sup>1</sup> World Cups respectively, it was also implicitly decided that over 20 new stadiums would be built.

Neither Russia nor Qatar have a satisfactory stadium infrastructure in place today and thus do not meet FIFA's requirements<sup>2</sup> for stadium capacity within a host country. However, both Russia and Qatar will, according to FIFA's evaluation of the 2018 and 2022 World Cup applications, invest massive sums in order to meet FIFA's requirements. Russia has an official stadium budget of \$3.8bn. for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, while Qatar has agreed to a tidy sum of \$3bn.<sup>3</sup>

But Russia and Qatar are not the only applicants willing to invest substantial amounts to host major international and continental sporting events. Many other countries and cities are looking to stage these events not only for sporting motives, but also in an attempt to promote their host city or country or reach other economic or political objectives.

Major sporting events mean major stadiums, and it is the stadiums only that this report will examine. While the construction of such stadiums may also reflect architectonic or political ambitions, the focus of this report is solely on the intended long-term use of the stadiums. What happens to the stadiums after the major events are over? Do they get utilised and to what extent? Is it possible to see any pattern in the investments and their after use? Do the stadiums as the most iconic buildings of most mega events contribute to the promised positive legacies of mega events – or should stadiums rather be considered the symbol of an arms race for big international sports events that has been allowed to spiral out of control?

The total construction cost of the venues included in the study is nearly \$14.5 bn. Significant investments are therefore required to host a major sporting event – investments that come with enormous expectations and promises. But are the promises fulfilled? Are the stadiums able to live up to the high expectations that were present prior to the event?

This is not a new issue. Brand new stadiums have always been built for major sporting events. Their design and shape often attract a lot of attention, so the stadiums therefore tend to be seen, beyond the sport itself, as the very symbol of a major sporting event.

But as it is evident that several of the stadiums that have been constructed for major events have not had a successful legacy in terms of attendance, this report examines whether such problems are relevant and what they might look like.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fifa.com/worldcup/russia2018/news/newsid=1344698/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> [http://transparencyinsport.org/The\\_documents\\_that\\_FIFA\\_does\\_not\\_want\\_fans\\_to\\_read/PDF-documents/%2815%29Stadium-Agreement.pdf](http://transparencyinsport.org/The_documents_that_FIFA_does_not_want_fans_to_read/PDF-documents/%2815%29Stadium-Agreement.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/tournament/competition/01/33/59/45/bidevaluationreport.pdf> p. 28 & 32

Basically, the aim of study is to examine whether stadiums built for major international or continental sporting events are utilised after these events and to what extent. How many people visit the stadium per season/year? What kinds of events are taking place in the stadiums?

As an operational and relatively simple measure this report is primarily based on the number of spectators visiting each stadium for events taking place at the pitch of the stadium in 2010. However, the study also considers qualitative data in the discussion of why some stadiums might succeed in attracting people, while others do not. Which of the stadiums has been most successful in terms of their number of spectators? Why have they been successful? Which of the stadiums have had difficulties attracting spectators after the event? And why have these venues faced problems?

### **The growth of major events**

The Olympic Summer Games and the men's football World Cup and European Championships have developed and grown substantially in recent years.

In terms of the number of participating countries, sports disciplines and athletes the Summer Olympics have had an increase from Atlanta 1996 to Beijing 2008<sup>4</sup>, and a similar trend can be discerned from the Winter Olympics from Lillehammer 1994 to Vancouver 2010.<sup>6 7</sup>

As football has become increasingly globalised, commercialised and professionalised, both FIFA and UEFA have chosen to expand their respective main events, FIFA World Cup and UEFA Euro, making it possible for more countries to participate in the final stage of the events. FIFA, for example, has expanded the number of participating countries in the World Cup finals from 24 to 32 since the tournament in France in 1998. The confederations that benefited most from this development were the Confederation of African Football (CAF) and the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). CAF received two additional places and now has five World Cup places, while the AFC's number of World Cup places doubled from two to four.

Another significant change reflecting this development in football is the decision to introduce a rotation system when it comes to the location of the FIFA World Cup. The policy arose after South Africa failed to be awarded FIFA World Cup in 2006 after a very tight bidding contest with Germany, which set forth the idea that the World Cup should rotate between the continents. On this ground it was decided that the World Cup 2010 would be awarded to an African country, while the 2014 World Cup should take place in South America.<sup>8</sup> However, FIFA's policy has undergone changes since its introduction, and now all

---

4

[http://web.archive.org/web/20080822100835/http://www.olympic.org/uk/games/past/index\\_uk.asp?OLGT=1&OLGY=1996](http://web.archive.org/web/20080822100835/http://www.olympic.org/uk/games/past/index_uk.asp?OLGT=1&OLGY=1996)

<sup>5</sup> <http://en.beijing2008.cn/news/official/preparation/n214496035.shtml>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.olympic.org/vancouver-2010-winter-olympics>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.olympic.org/lillehammer-1994-winter-olympics>

<sup>8</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/football/7067187.stm>

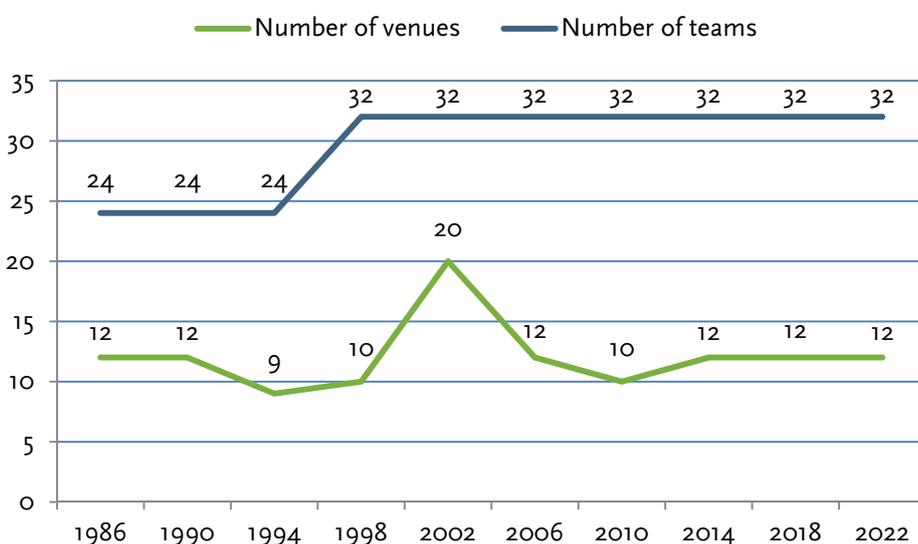
member countries of FIFA can apply for the World Cup, as long as a country from the same confederation has not arranged any of the last two World Cup finals.<sup>9</sup>

Just like FIFA, UEFA has also made some structural changes. The UEFA Euro finals expanded from eight teams in Sweden in 1992 to 16 teams in England in 1996, and for UEFA Euro 2016 in France the event will grow from 16 to 24 participating teams, nearly half of UEFA's 53 member countries. Unlike FIFA, UEFA does not have an explicit rotation system. All countries that are members of UEFA have the same opportunity to apply to host the finals. However, based on the host countries chosen for the event in recent years one can argue that UEFA has an underlying wish to spread the event around.

One could expect that the expansion of these events to include a greater number of participant countries would lead to more stadiums being used, but this is not entirely true. As figure 1.1 below shows, 12 stadiums were utilised for FIFA World Cup 1986 in Mexico and during the subsequent World Cup in Italy in 1990. Both tournaments took place before FIFA decided to expand the World Cup finals with an additional eight teams.

12 stadiums will also be used at the upcoming World Cup in Brazil in 2014 and the consecutive events in Russia and Qatar, where 32 teams will participate. This determines that expansion has not influenced the number of venues required to host the event. The exception is Korea/Japan in 2002, which was played in 20 venues, partly for political reasons. We will return to the FIFA World Cup and the 2002 FIFA World Cup stadiums in Korea/Japan later in this report.

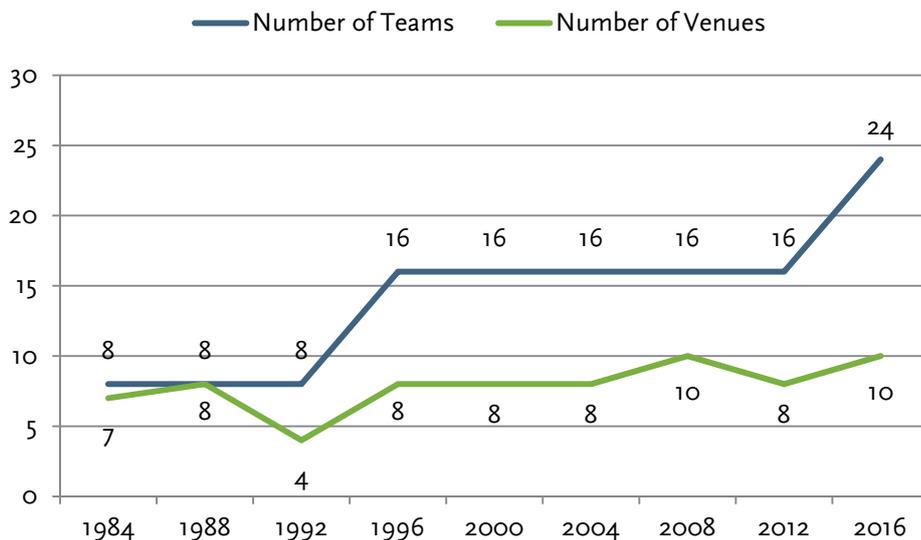
**Figure 1.1: Number of participating teams and utilised venues FIFA World Cup 1986-2022**



<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

The number of venues used for the European Football Championship has not changed in accordance with UEFA's gradual expansion of the tournament. The most notable exception to this relatively constant trend was in fact a decrease in the number of venues used for UEFA Euro 1992 in Sweden.

**Figure 1.2: Number of participating teams and utilised venues UEFA Euro 1984-2016**



Only four stadiums were utilised during the tournament in Sweden, which may be seen as comparatively low, but also as proof that it is possible to host a major event with only a few main stadiums. The main reason why so few stadiums were used is that Sweden had only four stadiums at that time that were suitable for hosting UEFA Euro matches and refused to construct any new stadiums up to the event.

As figure 1.2 above shows, UEFA Euro 1984 in France and the subsequent event in Germany were the events where most venues in relation to participating teams were utilised. Germany already had existing and sufficient stadium facilities before the 1988 event, while France had to build two new stadiums and make major renovations on several others before its event.

As stated above, it is not the expansion of teams in the World Cup and UEFA Euro that has resulted in more stadiums being built for the events. Instead, the answer lies in FIFA and UEFA's stadium specific requirements<sup>10 11</sup>. Stadium requirements set for the Olympic Games and other major sporting events have also resulted in many host countries needing to build new stadiums or make significant upgrades to older ones in order to host these events.

A more detailed review of FIFA and UEFA's stadium requirements will be given at the beginning of chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>10</sup> [http://transparencyinsport.org/The\\_documents\\_that\\_FIFA\\_does\\_not\\_want\\_fans\\_to\\_read/PDF-documents/%2815%29Stadium-Agreement.pdf](http://transparencyinsport.org/The_documents_that_FIFA_does_not_want_fans_to_read/PDF-documents/%2815%29Stadium-Agreement.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.uefa.com/MultimediaFiles/Download/Regulations/uefa/Others/84/03/26/840326\\_DOWNLOAD.pdf](http://www.uefa.com/MultimediaFiles/Download/Regulations/uefa/Others/84/03/26/840326_DOWNLOAD.pdf)