

2026 BRANDT REPORT

THE 2026 WORLD CUP AND THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL SPORTS

VOLUME VII



THE JEFFREY S. MOORAD
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CONTENTS

A MESSAGE FROM ANDREW BRANDT	1
INTRODUCTION	2
PART I: BACKGROUND	3
PART II: LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AFFECTING THE U.S.	9
PART III: MEDIA RIGHTS	20
PART IV: A COMPARISON OF THE HOST COUNTRIES	23
PART V: GLOBALIZATION EFFORTS	30
CONCLUSION	36
REFERENCES	37
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	38
ABOUT US	38
LEADERSHIP	39
INVOLVEMENT	40
COMPETITIONS	41

A MESSAGE FROM ANDREW BRANDT

Welcome to the seventh annual Brandt Report.

Seven years ago, we decided to take an annual deep dive into an important sports law topic and offer a "white paper" from our group to the general public. Our continuing goal is to inform, educate and guide a global audience of students (undergraduate, graduate, law, business, etc.), legal and business professionals, media and so many other sports industry professionals interested in the cutting-edge topic of the year.

The Report combines the efforts of our student leaders of the Jeffrey S. Moorad Center for the Study of Sports Law, produced by a select group of our Sports Law Concentration students. Previous Reports have focused on sports betting (2020), the COVID-19 effect on sports (2021), the beginning stage of name, image and likeness in college sports (2022), disciplinary action in professional sports (2023), the changing landscape of broadcasting and streaming in sports media (2024) and an analysis of the House settlement in college sports (2025).

This year's Report focuses on the world's largest sporting event coming very soon to the United States, as well as to Canada and Mexico. The 2026 FIFA World Cup is a massive undertaking, with planning over many years and challenges continuing up to and through the event. Beyond the matches, there are dozens of legal, business and systematic challenges to staging this iconic tournament; this Report will dive into all of those. It will cover all aspects of attracting, developing, and running this endeavor over multiple cities in three different countries. The Report is a resource for readers as we approach the World Cup on our soil.

We hope this Report does what we have tried to do since its inception: provide unique and differentiated content and education about the fascinating world of sports law and business. Settle in and enjoy this seventh edition of the Brandt Report, an in-depth look at the 2026 World Cup.

Andrew Brandt

Executive Director

Jeffrey S. Moorad Center for the Study of Sports Law

INTRODUCTION

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup is an international soccer tournament featuring the senior national teams of FIFA's member countries. Since its inception in 1930, it has grown into the world's most-watched sporting event, uniting billions of viewers every four years in a celebration of soccer, global culture, and national pride. Beyond its cultural significance, the World Cup generates significant economic revenue for host nations as a platform for international diplomacy.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup represents a pivotal moment in the relationship between global sporting events and domestic legal and economic systems. As the first tournament to be hosted under a tri-nation model spanning the United States (U.S.), Canada, and Mexico, the 2026 World Cup presents unique regulatory and governance challenges. By comparing how each host nation addresses these challenges, the 2026 World Cup will underscore the expanding role of international sports in shaping the modern legal and economic landscape.

Ultimately, the 2026 FIFA World Cup underscores the expanding role of international sports in shaping the modern legal and economic landscape.

Note: The views expressed in this report are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law.

PART I

BACKGROUND

PART 1: BACKGROUND

A Brief History of the World Cup

The Early Years (1930–1950)

- Nearly a century ago, in 1930, Uruguay hosted the inaugural FIFA World Cup. In addition to the host nation, 12 other countries competed, requiring a unique format to accommodate an odd number of teams. The inaugural World Cup featured three groups of three and one group of four. The four group winners then moved on to the semi-finals, ahead of the championship.
- In the years following, the World Cup underwent several organizational changes, including the number of participating teams and how the groups have been organized.
- The 1934 and 1938 World Cups were hosted in Italy and France, and both featured a single-knockout format, beginning with a round of 16. These two tournaments were the only World Cups played without a group stage.
- The World Cup took a 12-year hiatus due to World War II. In 1950, the tournament returned, hosted by Brazil, featuring the 13-team format and a four-team “final group.” The 1950 World Cup was the only World Cup not to have a specific championship match.



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16 Teams (1954–1978)

- The 1954 World Cup introduced a 16-team format with four groups of four nations. In this format, the top two teams from each group qualified for the quarterfinals.
- While the intricacies of which nations would play each other within and outside of their respective groups varied between tournaments, this 16-team format ultimately played a key role in developing the World Cup’s global popularity.

24 Teams (1982–1994)

- Due to rapid expansion of soccer across the globe, FIFA expanded the number of participating teams from 16 to 24 in the 1982 World Cup, hosted by Spain.
- In 1986, the group and playoff stages for the 24-team format were solidified, with the top two nations from each group qualifying for the round of 16 joined by four third-place teams with the best records. This format remained in place until the conclusion of the 1994 World Cup.

32 Teams (1998–2022)

- In 1998, FIFA once again expanded the number of participating World Cup teams to 32. The group format was adjusted slightly in 2006, with the top two teams from each of eight groups advancing to a round of 16. This format was used until 2022.

48 Teams (2026)

- In response to soccer’s exponential global growth in recent years, the 2026 World Cup will be the largest yet, featuring 48 teams. Set to last 39 days, the event will feature 40 more matches than the 2022 World Cup, which totaled 104 matches. With 40 additional matches, critics have voiced concern for player welfare, but FIFA maintains that the 48-team format will ensure sufficient rest periods between competing teams.



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- The tournament's 104 matches will be played across twelve groups of four teams. The top two teams from each group, as well as the eight best third-place teams, will advance to the knockout stages, beginning with a round of thirty-two. Each team is guaranteed to play a minimum of three matches in its respective group stage.

- While FIFA originally planned to have 16 groups of three teams, it opted for a different format due to concerns of collusion (including unofficial deals being struck between teams in final group stage matches), fan and team experience, and overall sporting integrity.

The 2026 World Cup Host Cities

- For the first time in history, the 2026 FIFA World Cup will be jointly hosted by three nations: the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Although spread across three countries, 11 of the 16 host cities are in the U.S.
- Each host city has a dedicated local committee focused on strengthening local businesses, highlighting regional culture, coordinating event logistics, and securing sponsorships to help ensure the tournament's success.

Hosting Countries and Cities

- The U.S. host cities include Atlanta, Boston, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, New York/New Jersey, Philadelphia, Seattle, San Francisco, and Dallas. Dallas is also set to be FIFA's central hub for operations during the tournament. Substantial federal funding is allocated to these host cities before the tournament begins, with the goal of ensuring the safest and most secure environment for players, fans, and the surrounding community. Reports indicate that cities are to receive a combined total of \$600M in such federal funds.
- Mexico's three host cities include Guadalajara, Mexico City, and Monterrey. Matches in Mexico City will be played at Estadio Azteca, one of the most historically significant venues in the sport and the only stadium to have previously hosted two World Cup Finals, in 1970 and 1986. Guadalajara's matches will take place at Estadio Akron, a modern venue symbolizing the city's central role in Mexican football, while Monterrey will host at Estadio BBVA, one of Latin America's newest large-capacity stadiums.



Photo by UKinUSA on Flickr.com

- Canada's host cities are Toronto and Vancouver. Games in Toronto will be held at BMO Field, which has undergone significant expansion to meet World Cup standards. Vancouver will utilize BC Place, a retractable-roof stadium designed to accommodate large international sporting events. Other Canadian cities were excluded primarily due to venue limitations rather than lack of interest or football presence, underscoring FIFA's emphasis on broadcast capability, seating thresholds, transportation access, and security infrastructure in host selection.

Host Country Selection Process

- FIFA's host city selection process for the World Cup is a modified bidding system based on four fundamental principles: transparency, participation, commitment to human rights and sustainability, and objectivity.
- The process includes formalized bids from eligible nations, evaluation of those bids in a formal report based on set criteria, and a vote from all 211 FIFA member nations to select the host country or countries.



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Bidding Process

- Bidding takes place approximately seven to ten years prior to the proposed World Cup.
- FIFA announced revised bidding criteria ahead of opening the 2026 World Cup bidding process. This new bidding structure, which focuses on integrity, came after FIFA experienced public criticism about alleged bribery and corruption in the bidding processes leading up to the 2018 and 2022 World Cups.
- World Cup bidding follows a “confederation rotation principle,” which aims to solicit broad host participation across eligible continents. To keep a steady rotation of host countries, FIFA members from continents who hosted one of the two preceding World Cups are not eligible to bid.
- For the 2026 World Cup, any member belonging to the European (UEFA) or the Asian (AFC) confederations were not eligible to bid, due to those continents hosting the 2018 and 2022 World Cups in Russia and Qatar, respectively.
- The bidding process generally takes place over one year. It is split into four phases:
 - Phase One consists of set-up procedures. During this phase, FIFA invites eligible member nations to express their interest in hosting the World Cup. Those nations who are interested in submitting a bid for hosting rights must submit a formal declaration of interest to FIFA by the end of Phase One.
 - Phase Two consists of bid preparation. During this phase, countries who submitted formal declarations of interest prepare formal bid proposals to submit to FIFA. This proposal must include a “bid book” detailing how the potential host country will meet FIFA’s criteria to host the World Cup. Throughout this phase, the FIFA general secretariat may organize workshops or meetings to assist bidding countries should they have any questions. The 2026 World Cup received a joint bid between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada (the United Bid); and a solo bid from Morocco.
 - Phase Three consists of a bid evaluation. Once the bidding nations formally submit their bid books, the FIFA general secretariat and the FIFA Bid Evaluation Task Force evaluate each bid. FIFA’s evaluation model consists of three parts: 1) risk assessment, 2) a technical evaluation of infrastructure and

commercial resources, and 3) a summary of key information with potential issues. These findings and relevant scores for each bid are published in a formal document called the Bid Evaluation Report. For the 2026 World Cup, each bid was given a score out of a potential 500. The United States Bid received a total score of 402.5, while the Morocco bid received a total score of 274.9.

- Phase Four consists of the final decision. If more than three formal bids are made, the FIFA Council first votes to move a maximum of three bids forward to potential selection by the full FIFA Congress. Once this vote is complete, or if there are three bids or less, the bids move to a vote from the full FIFA Congress. Nations who have submitted a bid are not permitted to vote. The United Bid won hosting rights for the 2026 World Cup by a vote of 134 to 65.

Selection Process

- According to FIFA’s Bidding Guideline, members of the FIFA Council and FIFA Congress consider specific criteria when evaluating a potential World Cup host. These criteria help members decide which bid is most feasible and has the highest potential for success. Members can consider:
 - a bid’s vision and key metrics, including overall strategy for the tournament, event timing, legacy, and other metrics;
 - a bid’s feasibility to support the tournament’s infrastructure, including available stadiums and seating, team and referee facilities, broadcast centers, fan festival sites, and other tournament-related event locations;
 - a bid’s availability to provide event services, such as accommodations, transportation, security, medical services, and information technology services;
 - a bid’s commercial potential by comparing the costs associated with a potential host country’s organization of the tournament alongside the projected revenues;
 - a bid’s legal and compliance risks associated with potential host country’s organization of the tournament; and
 - a bid’s likelihood to respect and follow sustainable event management protocols and internationally recognized standards for human rights and environmental protection.

Government Guarantees

- Because the World Cup is one of the largest global sports tournaments, potential host countries are required to provide government resources and support guarantees to FIFA at the federal, state, and local levels when submitting their bids. Host countries must:
 - provide visas, permits, and facilitated immigration and check-in procedures for all individuals associated with the World Cup;
 - provide work permits, labor law exemptions, and administrative assistance for all staff associated with the World Cup;
 - provide a full tax exemption to FIFA and a limited tax exemption for certain third parties involved in the hosting and staging of the competition;
 - ensure that any foreign exchange undertakings in connection with the tournament and tournament-related events are not subject to any restrictions;
 - provide safety and security resources for stadiums, training sites, team camps, hotel and accommodation sites, accreditation sites, media centers, transportation stations, airports, broadcast centers, and any other tournament-related locations;
 - acknowledge FIFA's unrestricted and inclusive ownership of all commercial rights associated with the tournament.
 - provide a special protection status protecting FIFA against any attack or exploitations of the tournament's commercial rights;
 - meet the highest international standards in providing telecommunication and information technology services throughout the preparation, hosting, staging, and broadcasting of the competition; and
 - provide indemnification to FIFA and any of its related subsidiaries of the World Cup, giving those parties security against any potential legal exposure or claims associated with the government guarantees.



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Economic Impact on the U.S.

Impact

- FIFA estimated that the 2026 World Cup will have an estimated global economic of \$40.9 billion, with a specific estimate of \$17.2 billion added economic value in the U.S.
- It's estimated that additional revenue from the labor required for the event will contribute approximately \$10 billion to the U.S. economy. Most of that will come from the hotel and hospitality industry, with travel following closely behind. This includes the creation of 184,000 full-time jobs.
- The U.S. is expected to receive \$3.4 billion in tax revenue with an additional \$6.4 billion in tourist spending, as hotels anticipate record occupancy rates and local businesses expect increased in-person shopping.
- The U.S. also anticipates social impacts, which reflect the long-term, often intangible benefits of hosting a global event. This includes tourism benefits, such as the legacy effect of tourists returning to the host cities, and sport benefits, such as reduced crime rates and savings in healthcare costs as people become more physically active after attending the sporting matches.
 - Social Return on Investment (SROI) is utilized to provide a broader concept of value allowing investors and developers to see the societal and economic benefit of a project. SROI translates economic, social, and environmental outcomes into a monetary figure, showing that every dollar invested reflects a certain dollar figure of societal benefit. The SROI in the U.S. for the World Cup is estimated at \$4.03, meaning for every dollar invested the U.S. during that time, the societal benefit is \$4.03.

- Philadelphia, which is hosting a Round of 16 match on the 4th of July, anticipates \$770 million in economic impact, including the creation of over 6,000 jobs and \$51 million in tax revenue.
- New York/New Jersey, hosting eight matches including the World Cup Final, is reporting an expected \$3.3 billion in economic impact to the area.
- Los Angeles is hosting eight matches, including two matches involving the U.S. Men's National Team (USMNT). The World Cup is expected to have greater economic impact on Los Angeles' economy than Super Bowl LVI, held in 2022, partly due to the longer duration of the event and the increase in international visitors who spend more, Super Bowl LVI's economic impact was \$477 million, while the World Cup is expected to have a \$594 million economic impact on Los Angeles County.
- Atlanta, which is hosting eight matches, anticipates \$503 million in economic impact in its first large-scale event since the city hosted the Olympics in 1996.
- Atlanta projects that the average out-of-state spectator will spend \$1,070 more than the typical Atlanta tourist, as they are more likely to spend more, as the World Cup is a once in a lifetime event.

PART II

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AFFECTING THE U.S.

PART II: LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AFFECTING THE U.S.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup presents a complex legal landscape, with regulations both international and domestic, driven by the unprecedented scale of this year's tournament.

Unlike previous single-nation hosts, regulatory authority is shared between federal, state, and municipal governments, each with its own legal obligations in security, taxation, infrastructure, labor, and immigration enforcement. While FIFA negotiates directly with individual cities for host contracts, the federal government still retains authority over border control, national security, and federal labor standards.

This framework underscores how global sporting events interact with domestic legal systems, requiring regulatory compliance, intergovernmental coordination, and localized legislative responses to meet FIFA's performance standards. This section will address the legal implications affecting the host nations, including federal vs local regulatory authority, taxation structures, human rights, immigration, and policy and statutory adaptations undertaken by host cities in accordance with governing standards.

Federal vs Local — Regulatory Constraints, Tax Implications, City Budgets

While coordination is in place across the various levels of government, regulatory authority is negotiated specifically between FIFA and individual host cities with no unilateral power from the federal government to change or cancel those agreements.

Regulatory Constraints

- Although the federal government lacks direct regulatory authority over the event itself, it exercises substantial indirect influence through its control of border and immigration policy, national security, and emergency response planning.
- The federal government cannot move or cancel matches where FIFA has a contractual agreement with the host city, although the current administration has suggested it should have such power should it choose to use it.



Photo by Tingey Injury Law Firm on Unsplash.com

State & Local Regulatory Obligations

- Responsibility at the state and local levels includes enforcing local safety laws and public health regulations, overseeing policing, and managing permit requirements for community venues at the events, such as fan zones.
- All agreements that address security, transportation support, office spaces for FIFA staff, and fan zone logistics are to be carried out at the local level in coordination with state government officials.
- To carry out these agreements with FIFA, many of which often conflict with traditional zoning and permitting laws, cities adopt temporary regulatory changes and special event permitting to satisfy the FIFA requirements in place.

Tax Implications

- The U.S. government does not exempt World Cup revenue from federal taxation; however, FIFA has negotiated significant exemptions at the state and local levels.
- State and local sales tax exemptions on tickets are significant revenue drivers for FIFA, and the states are expected to lose significant revenue. Florida projects to lose around \$7.4 million in state and local sales tax revenue for matches played at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, while Georgia projects to lose up to \$25 million for matches played in Atlanta.
 - The sales tax exemptions were negotiated as part of the FIFA hosting agreements and are consistent across host jurisdictions.
- The host cities project to incur between \$100 million to \$200 million in security, sanitation, transportation, and staffing costs. These costs are covered through a combination of general local funds, state funds, federal grants, and corporate sponsorship.

Federalism and FIFA: Individual Host Cities and State New Laws

The World Cup illustrates the role of American federalism in shaping global sporting events, as state and local legislators, rather than federal regulators, are amending and changing statutes and ordinances to comply with the FIFA requirements. Some of the examples discussed below, such as stadium name changes, may not be implemented through legislative action, but rather stem from unilateral decisions by team or stadium owners, or contractual obligations imposed by FIFA.

Here are some specific examples:

Kansas City, Missouri

- Missouri Statute § 311.2026 authorizes licensed establishments to extend their hours of operation and alcohol service during the 2026 FIFA World Cup Tournament, with the statute set to expire on July 20, 2026.
- The Kansas City Match Plan Small Business Toolkit provides Kansas City businesses with guidance on procurement opportunities, permitting, compliance requirements, and marketing strategies to help them prepare for and participate in economic activity related to the 2026 FIFA World Cup.
- Arrowhead Stadium will be temporarily named "Kansas City Stadium."

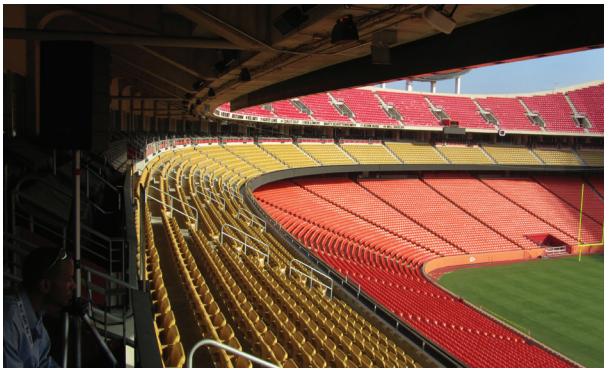


Photo by David Jones on Flickr.com

Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay Area, California

- California passed legislation organizing charter bus services to the World Cup matches with specific regulatory requirements.
- SoFi Stadium in Los Angeles and Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara will be temporarily renamed "Los Angeles Stadium" and "San Francisco Stadium," respectively

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- The Pennsylvania Senate passed legislation allowing international team doctors to treat their players in Pennsylvania.
- The Pennsylvania legislature passed amendments to the Liquor Code to prepare for the World Cup. One addition includes a permit that allows a public venue licensee to temporarily extend its licensed premises beyond the venue to include adjacent or nonadjacent areas, with owner permission, for activities connected to a special sporting event, regardless of distance or intervening public thoroughfares.



Photo by Chrishuan Byrom on Unsplash.com

Atlanta, Georgia

- Atlanta City Council has approved \$120 million in revenue bonds to improve transportation and downtown infrastructure improvements.
- Atlanta Executive Order 2025-01 temporarily restricts the acceptance of new permits for outdoor vending, filming, construction, street closures, and large gatherings within a designated downtown "FIFA Activation Zone" during the 2026 FIFA World Cup period (June 11-July 19, 2026).
- The Executive Order requires certain large event permits, citywide, to be submitted up to 150 days in advance to ensure public safety, manage limited city resources, and coordinate logistics for an anticipated influx of visitors, while preserving exceptions for emergencies, protected assemblies, and priority events.
- Showcase Atlanta, co-chaired by Mayor Andre Dickens, is an Atlanta-led initiative that connects major event organizers with local and diverse businesses to ensure large-scale events generate inclusive economic benefits for Atlanta residents. It provides planning support, a vendor directory,

and community engagement tools so local businesses can participate in and benefit from events like the FIFA World Cup and other major conventions.

- Atlanta also brings significant experience hosting major sporting events, including the Super Bowl in 2019, the 2024 Copa America Match, and the 2025 College Football Playoff. Following their previous preparation, the city has approved over \$100M in upgrades to transportation and infrastructure.

Boston, Massachusetts

- FIFA World Cup Boston 2026 Executive Steering Group was created to manage public safety and security for the 2026 World Cup.
- There are 14 designated public safety and security planning groups.
- The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) is expanding service and infrastructure (including at Foxboro station) to handle expected crowds traveling to matches, tying these changes directly to World Cup needs.
- Gillette Stadium will be temporarily renamed “Boston Stadium” during the tournament.



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New York/New Jersey

- New York and New Jersey jointly coordinate through the NY/NJ World Cup 2026 Host Committee, using executive agreements rather than single statutes to manage tax considerations, free or enhanced transit, security planning, and infrastructure improvements for the final at MetLife Stadium.

- MetLife Stadium will be temporarily renamed “New York New Jersey Stadium”.
- New Jersey expanded alcohol licensing laws to allow broader and more flexible alcohol service at major global sporting events, including World Cup matches at MetLife Stadium, to improve fan experience while maintaining public safety controls.
- New Jersey enacted human trafficking prevention legislation requiring risk assessments, public awareness campaigns, signage, and reporting by the state’s Commission on Human Trafficking, with dedicated funding and survivor-informed advisory input ahead of the World Cup.
- New Jersey advanced temporary licensing pathways for foreign-trained healthcare professionals, ensuring adequate medical staffing capacity during large-scale international events like the World Cup.
- Both states oversee local Fan Fests and public-space activations.

Seattle, Washington

- Second Substitute House Bill 1515 temporarily allows expanded outdoor and shared alcohol service in public spaces, civic campuses, and designated fan zones for the 2026 World Cup while imposing safety, staffing, security, and community-impact requirements overseen by the Liquor and Cannabis Board.
- Seattle requires all construction equipment, materials, and temporary coverings to be removed from public spaces by June 7, 2026. The “Construction Pause” continues until July 13, 2026.
- Lumen Field will be temporarily renamed “Seattle Stadium”.
- The Washington state legislature approved public funding for stadium upgrades and security preparations related to hosting World Cup matches.



Photo by Trac Vu on Unsplash.com

Dallas and Houston, Texas

- Dallas and Houston have coordinated with state and federal agencies to implement enhanced security, emergency preparedness, and crowd-management planning in advance of hosting matches.
- AT&T Stadium in Dallas and NRG Stadium in Houston will be temporarily renamed “Dallas Stadium” and Houston Stadium,” respectively, during the tournament.
- Local governments have approved public funding and municipal services, such as policing, transportation support, and permitting, to facilitate World Cup operations and fan events.
- Existing short-term rental, lodging, and tax regulations will remain in effect in both cities, with anticipated heightened enforcement due to increased tourism demand.

Miami, Florida

- Miami-Dade County and the City of Miami have approved significant public funding and in-kind contributions to support the World Cup, including millions of dollars for public safety, transportation, permitting, and event operations.
- Hard Rock Stadium will be temporarily renamed “Miami Stadium” during the tournament.
- Miami-Dade County has emphasized compliance with existing short-term rental and lodging regulations, anticipating increased enforcement during the World Cup due to heightened tourism demand.

Labor & Employment Implications of Hosting the 2026 World Cup

- The multi-nation format of the 2026 World Cup requires unprecedented temporary labor hirings and additions across stadium operations, security, hospitality, transportation, construction, media management, and event logistics.
- Labor standards and requirements will be governed primarily by domestic employment laws of the host city, rather than the centralized FIFA regulations, leading to fragmented labor obligations across multiple jurisdictions.
- Thus, labor law will operate as both a mechanism for compliance and a source of governance as the pressures of large-scale sports globalization intersect with domestic legal systems and international governing bodies.

Federal Labor Standards in the U.S.

- The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) establishes the federal baseline for minimum wage, overtime compensation, and documentation for non-exempt workers.
 - Covered workers include stadium staff, concession workers, security guards, custodial workers, and any other event operations staff involved with World Cup activities.
- Worker classification will present heightened risk due to the temporary nature of the World Cup and being hosted across three countries.
 - Employers must carefully distinguish between full-time employees and independent contractors to avoid any liability.
 - Even within a single nation, worker classification is governed by unique legal tests, that determine the scope of labor protections afforded to workers and the compliance obligations imposed on each host city.
- Concerns regarding overtime compensation are significant, given extended match days where employees must take on back-to-back shifts, mandatory security screenings, and post-event deconstruction. All these actions warrant overtime compensation per U.S. federal labor law, and host cities/stadiums must ensure they track this extensively.

- While FIFA is not the direct employer of most of these workers, liability may be attached to stadium owners, local organizing committees, staffing agencies, and contractors.
- FIFA, in connection with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), has incorporated labor rights standards within the host city selection process, assuring World Cup employees are provided fair wages, health and safety precautions, and prioritize local hiring to benefit host communities.
 - To ensure compliance, FIFA has established a private, nonprofit subsidiary in the U.S. to contract directly with local employers, labor organizations, and community groups.
- While labor advocates have urged FIFA to establish uniform labor protections across the entire tournament to promote labor stability, enforcement mechanisms and remedies for workers will ultimately be governed through a combination of federal, state, and municipal law.

State and Local Labor Law Variation

- State and municipal labor laws independently govern employment conditions in each host city. These laws frequently exceed federal standards, imposing higher minimum wages, stricter overtime rules, mandatory meals and rest periods, and wage theft protections.
- California, hosting matches at SoFi Stadium and Levi's Stadium, possesses some of the most stringent wage laws, demanding compliance with high overtime standards, break requirements, the nation's third-highest minimum wage, and uncompromising enforcement by the California Labor Commission
- Matches hosted at MetLife Stadium, which sits on the border of New York and New Jersey presents unique compliance challenges due to the differing state wage and employment laws with workers likely employed by companies on both sides of the state lines. Additionally, New York's Freelance Isn't Free Act enhances protections for independent contractors by requiring the right to a written contract, timely and full payment, protection from retaliation, and proper remedies when any of these are breached.



Photo by Frantzou Fleurine on Unsplash.com

- Seattle, hosting matches at Lumen Field, combines one of the highest minimum wage standards and local scheduling protections. SeattleFWC26, the MLK County Labor Council, and 17 labor unions reached a historic agreement regarding labor standards agreements for the FIFA World Cup matches in Seattle. This agreement is the first of its kind for workers at the World Cup, setting a new precedent for fair treatment and wages across international events

Occupational Safety and Health Regulation

- Workplace safety is governed by the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and corresponding state-administered OSHA programs. OSHA regulations will govern standards for temporary construction, crowd control operations, pyrotechnics, emergency response planning, and infrastructure upgrades for host cities and stadiums.
- Cities undertaking infrastructure upgrades, like Dallas and Kansas City, face heightened scrutiny due to compressed construction timelines, multi-site employment, and the need to comply with OSHA standards for stadium renovations, transportation improvements, and fan-zone development undertaken to meet FIFA standards.
- Throughout the bidding process, host cities relied on relationships with local labor unions and municipal ordinances to demonstrate capacity and commitment to remain compliant.
 - Philadelphia, which will host six matches, relied on commitments to establish project labor agreements with local labor unions to support tournament operations, guaranteeing living wages, safe working conditions, and expedited dispute resolution mechanisms.

- While contractors typically bear direct liability for OSHA violations, host cities and stadium authorities still may face reputational and contractual consequences in the event of workplace safety failures.
- FIFA and Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) have entered into a formal agreement, running through 2030, establishing a framework for joint labor inspections, training programs, and reporting standards to promote proper working conditions consistent with both domestic and international labor organization standards. While BWI and FIFA have cooperated for more than a decade to address working conditions related to the World Cup, this agreement now consolidates these experiences into a formal and lasting agreement between the organizations by creating mechanisms for confidential reporting, worker training, and proper legal remedies when violations occur.

Anti-Discrimination and Employment Protections

- In addition to labor requirements, all World Cup employers will be subject to federal and state anti-discrimination statutes. Applicable laws include Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and compliance standards enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
- The World Cup is set to draw workers, players, and spectators from dozens of countries around the world, bringing heightened employment risks related to religious accommodation, accessibility for international and temporary workers, disability accommodations, and potential spectator harassment. The tournament's temporary and accelerated nature underscores the importance of anti-retaliation protections from employers, particularly given the vulnerability of temporary and migrant workers.

Labor Rights and Union Protections

Labor Management Relations and Union Engagement

- Labor management relations across the U.S. are governed primarily by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), providing protections for union organizing, collective bargaining, and concerted employee actions. Regulations surrounding stadium operators, concession vendors, and staffing agencies fall squarely within this regulatory framework.

- Large-scale sporting events, particularly in times of political tensions within the U.S., have led to concerns for labor tension related to wages, scheduling, and working conditions, especially in cities with strong unions such as New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Philadelphia. To ease such tensions, host committees have emphasized a strong intention to collaborate with labor organizations to ensuring peace, conformity, and continuity of operations, as reflected by statements made by New York City's Central Labor Council President Vincent Alvarez.



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Player Unions and Collective Representation

- In anticipation of the World Cup, FIFA officials have engaged with player unions from across the world to address and negotiate regarding proper standards for player welfare and protections across all FIFA-sanctioned competitions. Discussions looked beyond match play to long-term labor agreements and governance disputes.
- In particular, the meetings between FIFA and player unions discussed:
 - Increased representation for players and player unions throughout FIFA committees and the FIFA football tribunal
 - Participation by player representatives during FIFA Council meetings to be aware of and contribute to conversations addressing player matters
 - Facilitation of a global FIFA player representatives panel
 - Reforms to the current international transfer system and regulations, pushing for training compensation and increased protections for young players

- Continuation of collective agreements between players and leagues, ensuring proper working conditions and timely payment of salaries
- Expansion of training and educational programs for youth programs
- Continued development and growth of women's soccer
- Development of more robust safeguards addressing equality, discrimination, and harassment of players and workers connected to all FIFA-sanctioned events
- Players remain employed by their professional clubs while competing for national teams. However, FIFA nonetheless exercises significant regulatory control over the international match calendar, player release structure, and competition requirements.
- Global player representation is led by the International Federation of Professional Footballers (FIFPRO). FIFPRO represents over 70,000 players across 70 national player unions. In the U.S., players are represented by the U.S. Soccer Players Association. Canadian players are represented by Professional Footballers' Association Canada and Mexican players are represented by the Association Mexicana de Futbolistas.
- Throughout the leadup to the tournament, player unions across the world have raised many concerns, specifically:
 - Calendar congestion and the continued growth of FIFA competitions
 - Mandatory player release requirements for international tournaments
 - Health risks facing players with the expanded 2026 World Cup schedule
 - Limited meaningful participation of independent player unions throughout negotiations between FIFA Officials and the need for more robust player unions and
 - FIFA's handling of the bargaining process addressing labor disputes across both international and domestic leagues

Human Rights Issues

- As a global sporting event, the FIFA World Cup and the underlying human rights considerations have become inseparable from tournament governance and host selection. Heightened in 2026 due to the multi-nation structure of the Cup, hosting the World Cup now requires extensive state involvement regarding security, infrastructure development, labor mobilization, and public order, placing host governments, nations, and FIFA at the center of potential human rights scrutiny.
- Previous World Cups indicated FIFA's priority of commercial success, rather than human rights concerns, leading to many controversies tied to host nations.
- In response to criticism from prior tournaments, FIFA embedded human rights and labor protection obligations directly into the 2026 bidding process. A key development was the adoption of Human Rights Action Plans, requiring host cities to outline enforceable compliance strategies which adequately address non-discriminatory practices, migrant worker protections, child labor prevention, and human trafficking risks.

Historic Human Rights Failures in World Cup Hosting Nations

Chile and Argentina, Circa 1970

- Despite widespread state-sponsored terrorism and political repression in Chile and Argentina throughout the 1970s, FIFA continued to host World Cup qualifiers in Chile in 1974 and the World Cup in Argentina in 1979.
- In Chile, a 1973 military coup saw the country's first democratically elected president forcefully overthrown, with thousands of individuals killed during the coup.
 - Chile's national stadium, which hosted many international matches, was used as a detention center where over 20,000 prisoners were held, tortured, and killed under the new regime.
 - In response, FIFA publicly disclaimed any responsibility for the political conditions in the host city, stating "[w]e are not concerned with politics or what regimes are ruling a country... If the Russians refuse to play Chile, then they are out of the World Cup."

- Argentina was home to the 1979 World Cup, following a military takeover in 1976.
 - Under the new regime, stringent restrictions were placed on political and personal freedoms for Argentinian citizens, and thousands of citizens were kidnapped and placed in concentration camps and detention centers.
 - Despite international attention and criticism, FIFA allowed the tournament to proceed, without the imposition of human rights conditions or safeguards.

Recent Human Rights Concerns Across FIFA World Cups

Russia 2018

- The 2018 World Cup in Russia raised significant human rights concerns, specifically relating to labor practices and civil liberties.
- North Korean slave labor was reportedly used throughout Russia's bid to host, as well as stadium construction projects.
 - Working conditions were extremely dangerous and lacked basic measures to ensure safe working conditions, resulting in at least 21 workers dying throughout the construction.
- Russia's extremely restrictive LGBTQ+ expression rights created additional human rights concerns throughout the tournament. Specifically, Russian laws prohibit advocacy and information portraying same sex relationships as equal to heterosexual relationships.
- Ultimately, FIFA chose not to conduct meaningful intervention or implement any form of human rights standards regarding LGBTQ+ protections.

Qatar 2022

- The 2022 World Cup in Qatar generated unprecedented scrutiny regarding human rights and labor conditions.
- Undertaking monumental construction totaling approximately \$300 Billion, Qatar relied heavily on migrant labor to complete its ambitious infrastructure projects for the Cup. Reports indicated that between Qatar's successful World Cup bid in 2010 and the culmination of the tournament in 2022, more than 6,500 migrant workers died during construction and that countless workers experienced unpaid wages,

confiscation of passports, and unsafe working conditions.

- Reports produced indicated the mistreatment of migrant workers continued beyond the construction sites, as over 200 migrant concession workers were reportedly left without access to food, water, or bathroom facilities for extended periods.
- Like Russia in 2018, Qatar faced criticism for its disturbing treatment of LGBTQ+ individuals and women. Between 2019 and 2022, Qatar had many reports of LGBTQ+ and women beaten while in police custody.

Immigration and Visa Concerns

The 2026 World Cup however, due to its tri-nation structure, is expected to generate unprecedented travel across borders as millions of international spectators and players will come to the U.S., Canada, and Mexico in anticipation of the tournament.

Where Canada and Mexico have pursued more streamlined entry frameworks for both World Cup athletes and fans, the U.S. has continually emphasized strict adherence to the current immigration system and national security measures throughout the World Cup process. Let's examine it.

How to Obtain a Travel Visa for Travel into the U.S.

- Individuals seeking entry into the U.S., must complete the required visa application process, including submitting the proper application and an interview at either the U.S. embassy or Consulate. Barring any explicit exceptions, interviews are routine for the application process, and applicants can expect varied wait times and availability depending on their country of origin.
- Applicants must prepare the following documentation prior to the interview:
 - A valid passport, that remains valid for at least six months beyond their stay in the U.S.
 - A completed visa application with the DS-160 Confirmation page
 - Application fee payment receipt
 - Photo identification

- Each traveler must complete their own individual application even when traveling as a party or family.
- During the interview portion of the application, a U.S. consular officer will evaluate whether the applicant meets all requirements for visa issuance under U.S. Federal Law. In the event the visa application is denied, the decision is not subject to judicial review. However, an applicant may reapply if they choose.
- Applicants approved for entry may be required to pay an additional visa issuance fee prior to any travel.

Current Travel Bans to the U.S.

- In December 2025, President Donald Trump issued an expanded travel ban, building upon his previous restrictions announced in June 2025.
- The December 2025 ban, effective January 1, 2026, restricts entry for nationals across 20 countries and individuals associated with the Palestinian Authority. Specifically, the policy prohibits nationals who meet these criteria from seeking immigration to the U.S., limiting their availability to obtain visas for temporary or permanent entry.
- While the original June 2025 ban did not apply to individuals attending the World Cup, the expanded ban implemented in December 2025 imposes broader restrictions. Seven countries are subject to complete restrictions on all immigrant and non-immigrant visas, and nineteen countries are barred from immigrant visas, as well as tourist, student, and exchange visitor visas, including B2 tourist visas.

Current Visa & FIFA World Cup Decisions

- The U.S. State Department has stated that they are doing everything to support a successful World Cup, with emphasis on upholding American law and national security standards in the visa process. Further, federal officials have indicated that visa applicants connected to the World Cup will face increased scrutiny, both with respect to eligibility and the traveler's reason for entry.
- The White House Task Force has projected between five to seven million expected international visitors, and economists project 1.24 million visitors. In anticipation of the increased travel, the State Department has hired close to 450 additional agents for the visa application process.

- Iran was placed on the travel ban in June 2025, thus resulting in members of the Iranian delegation being denied visas to attend the World Cup Draw in December 2025. While the ban did have exceptions, the parameters for "athletes or members of an athletic team" exceptions were ambiguous, contributing to the denial of applications.
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Agents will be present at World Cup matches, and President Trump has indicated that he would not exclude any action to keep American citizens safe.

For Athletes

Unlike Canada and Mexico who have created streamlined processes for athletes entering for the World Cup, the U.S. is adhering to their traditional system with categorical requirements.

- The two primary visa applications the U.S. will utilize for professional athletes in entering the U.S. for the World Cup are the P-1A Visa and the O-1A visa. The P-1A visa is standard for teams, while the O-1A visa is typically for players who are seen as superstars, either with extraordinary ability or sustaining national and international recognition.
- The P-1A Visa is a temporary visa for an individual coming to perform at a specific athletic competition. It applies to any member who is either an individual or part of a team "at an international recognized level of performance," a professional athlete, or an athlete or coach apart of a franchise in the U.S. and a member of a foreign league or association.¹ World Cup players typically qualify under this category as individuals performing as part of a nationally selected team.
- An O-1A Visa is reserved for individuals with "extraordinary ability" in science, education, business, or athletics.² To apply, the athlete must provide an opinion from a peer group or person with expertise in "ability." In this case, the athlete can provide an opinion from labor organizations, such as their national federation. Additional evidence may be required by these athletes in accordance with the regulations.

- The U.S. travel ban will not impact the athletes, direct support staff, or immediate family members of teams as they are exempt from the travel bans.

For Fans

- Fans seeking to attend the World Cup matches throughout the U.S. must obtain a valid visitor visa, either B1 or B2 visa, unless eligible for the Visa Waiver Program.
- Per the national federal and state law, applicants must schedule and attend a visa interview prior to travel. However, appointments may be difficult to obtain.
 - To address demand, the White House Task Force and FIFA established the FIFA Priority Appointment Scheduling System (PASS), which allows ticket holders to schedule prioritized visa appointments. The FIFA PASS system does not change the vetting process or provide a ticketholder with immediate approval, but it places them at the front of the line.
- With the U.S. travel ban, fans from Haiti, Iran, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire will not be able to attend the World Cup, unless they received a proper visa for U.S. travel prior to the enforcement date of the ban.

¹*P-1A Athlete*, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/temporary-workers/p-1a-athlete> (last visited Feb. 1, 2026).

² *O-1 Visa: Individuals with Extraordinary Ability or Achievement*, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/temporary-workers/o-1-visa-individuals-with-extraordinary-ability-or-achievement> (last visited Feb. 1, 2026).

PART III

MEDIA RIGHTS

PART III: MEDIA RIGHTS

Media rights represent the most significant revenue stream in sports, and the FIFA World Cup is no exception. For the 2026 FIFA World Cup, media rights negotiations reflected a complex intersection of business strategy, legal risk management, and long-term broadcasting partnerships. This section analyzes how FIFA's centralized control over media rights interacts with domestic advertising regulations, sponsor restrictions, and host-country legal frameworks to shape commercials and marketing during the tournament.

Bidding Process

The U.S./Canada Deal: FIFA's Media Rights Gift to Fox Sports, Telemundo, and Bell Media

The media rights for the 2026 FIFA World Cup were set in place for over a decade, long before the hosting countries for the 2026 World Cup were formally decided upon.

- In February 2015, FIFA announced that it was extending U.S. media rights agreements for the 2026 World Cup to Fox Sports (for English U.S. broadcast), NBC Universal's Telemundo (for Spanish U.S. broadcast) and Bell Media (for Canadian broadcast).
- In 2015, the New York Times reported that FIFA's decision to unilaterally extend these media rights deals — from 2022 to 2026 — was done out of fear of a lawsuit pertaining to FIFA's decision to shift the 2022 Cup from its traditional summer window to the late fall/winter window due to the Qatari summer heat.
- With Fox's bid operating on the basis that FIFA's World Cup matches are traditionally played in the summer, a late fall/winter schedule was going to cut into Fox's return-on-investment due to both internal and external conflicts with the major North American professional sports leagues' seasons and broadcasts (NFL, MLB playoffs, NBA opening, etc.)
- The viability of a Fox lawsuit was seen as limited, as FIFA's media rights contracts only specify the year



Photo by Dominik Hofbauer on Unsplash.com

in which the matches are to be played/broadcast, as opposed to exactly when in the year they would take place. The New York Times has reported, however, that the bidding processes for the 2018 and 2022 FIFA World Cups raised serious integrity concerns, concerns in which FIFA's leadership sought to avoid potentially being examined in the U.S. courts.

Bidding Process for the Rest of the World

- While the U.S. and Canada media rights were secured years ago, in 2025, FIFA began inviting bid offers for media rights in other countries around the world for the 2026 World Cup and the 2027 Women's World Cup.
- FIFA compiled a full final draw list of media rights partners around the world for the 2026 World Cup.

Media Rights Revenue

Revenue Generated from Media Rights for FIFA & the U.S. Broadcasters

- Fox is reported to be paying 10% more than such contracts for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, which were \$425 million. If the 10% increase is accurate, that would total roughly \$467.5 million.
- Bell Media is reported to be paying 10% more than their 2022 \$40 million number, meaning roughly \$44 million for the 2026 tournament.
- FIFA's total projected revenue for the 2026 World Cup from television and broadcasting rights is \$3.925 billion. This figure represents 44% of the total 2026 revenue forecast of \$8.9 billion.
- Around 80% of Fox's advertisement inventory had been sold with their negotiations opening as far back as Fall 2024. Many of these negotiations included bundles that assisted with other properties at the time.
- For the US-England group-stage match, Fox charged roughly \$300,000 for 30-second commercials in most matches and an estimated \$600,000. The Athletic reported that U.S. advertisers paid roughly \$1 million for a 30-second commercial during the 2022 World Cup Final. These figures are only expected to increase with the matches being held in North America as U.S. viewers will have access to time slots for every match.
- FIFA projects roughly \$11-13 billion in total revenues from the 2023-2026 commercial cycle.

Opportunity for Advertisers

- At the FIFA World Broadcaster Meeting, it was announced that the World Cup would implement mandatory three minute "hydration breaks" in all matches. Although declared a decision for player safety, it also creates commercial benefits.
- Referees will pause the matches at 22 minutes into each half regardless of venue or temperature. This provides fixed time media timeouts removing uncertainty that brands had bought advertisement spots months ahead of the World Cup and ultimately creates 208 mid-match advertising opportunities and more than 10 hours of potential advertising space.

- Live sports still command some of the most concentrated viewers' attention, but the growing fragmentation of media platforms has made it more complicated for audiences to determine where to watch games. While this does not diminish attention during the game itself, it creates barriers to access that can impact overall reach and consistency of viewership.
- Fox Sports is set to provide 340 hours of first run programming, a 100-hour increase from the 2022 World Cup.
- Fox will broadcast 70 matches; Fox Sports 1 (FS1) will broadcast 34 matches.
- Every match will be streamed live and on demand through Fox Sport's World Cup viewing experience on the Fox Sports app.
- 40 matches will air during primetime (21 matches on Fox and 19 matches on FS1). This accounts for more than 1/3 of the tournament.
- With FIFA predicting at least five million fans attending in person, activation will take up the remaining dollars for many brands looking to get involved.
- Marketing and sponsorships revenue is projected to be \$2.693 billion, some \$927 million more than the 2022 World Cup.



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PART IV

A COMPARISON OF THE HOST COUNTRIES

PART IV: A COMPARISON OF THE HOST COUNTRIES

The 2026 World Cup presents a unique comparative legal landscape, as the three host countries maintain distinct regulatory systems, legal traditions, and policy priorities. Hosting a single tournament across multiple jurisdictions requires coordination among overlapping legal regulatory bodies while accommodating FIFA's centralized governance structure.

This section analyzes advertising and marketing regulation, sports betting frameworks, infrastructure and transportation planning, and player-related legal considerations. It highlights the areas of regulatory convergence and points of significant divergence among the host countries.

Commercials and Marketing

The scale and global visibility of the 2026 FIFA World Cup make advertising and marketing activity a central legal and commercial issue for host nations and corporate sponsors alike. Advertisers must navigate a complex web of domestic consumer protection laws, product-specific advertising restrictions, and FIFA's own commercial regulations.

Regulated Advertisements

- All stadiums hosting World Cup matches, regardless of country, will be temporarily renamed to comply with FIFA branding restrictions during the tournament.
- In the U.S., companies may not advertise or market illegal products or services, per the Federal Trade Commission. 15 U.S.C. § 45 states that “unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce” are not permitted. Additionally, they cannot falsely advertise their products or services. Advertisements for certain products such as tobacco, alcohol, and betting are also limited and regulated. Both federal law and state law address advertisements and marketing.
- Canada regulates this area similar to the U.S. The cornerstone of the advertisement laws, specifically the Competition Act and certain provincial laws, state that misleading, false, and deceptive advertisements are not allowed. It also limits the advertisement of certain products, much like the U.S.



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- In Mexico, Ley Federal de Protección al Consumidor (Federal Consumer Protection Law, LFPC) Section 32 regulates advertisements, requiring them to be clear, truthful, verifiable, and not misleading. The Procuraduria Federal del Consumidor (Federal Agency of Consumer Affairs) is the foremost agency that enforces and monitors the LFPC. Similar to both the U.S. and Canada, Mexico heavily regulates the advertisement of specific products or services.

The Advertisement of Alcohol

- In the U.S., the Federal Alcohol Administration (FAA) Act establishes federal standards for alcohol advertising by requiring that advertisements be truthful, non-misleading, and transparent. The Act prohibits false statements about alcohol products, and it requires certain mandatory disclosures as implemented through The Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) regulations. Alcohol advertisements may also be regulated on a state-by-state basis. For example, California provides that alcohol advertisements may not be targeted to individuals under the legal drinking age.
- In Canada, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission's (CRTC) Code for Broadcast Advertising of Alcoholic Beverages sets forth federal rules for alcohol advertisements.

Advertisements must encourage responsible drinking and cannot encourage illegal activity (e.g., drinking and driving).

- British Columbia established standards for alcohol advertisements through the British Columbia Liquor Control and Licensing Branch. Alcohol advertisements cannot encourage viewers to drink alcohol, show individuals drinking alcohol, or encourage illegal activity like targeting individuals under the legal drinking age (19 years of age). It cannot encourage drinking alcohol, including exemplifying it as a “status symbol.”
- Ontario established standards for alcohol advertisements through the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO). These advertisements cannot encourage or target those under the legal drinking age. It also cannot encourage “excessive” drinking, promote illegal activities or suggest that alcohol assists with “personal success.”
- Ad Standards’ Clearance Services offer voluntary pre-approval of alcohol advertisements in British Columbia and Ontario to confirm compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
- In Mexico, the Comisión Federal para la Protección contra Riesgos Sanitarios (Federal Commission for Protection Against Sanitary Risks, COFEPRIS) regulates all alcohol advertisements in Mexico. Similarly to the U.S. and Canada, the advertisements cannot target individuals under the legal drinking age (18 years of age), encourage “excessive” drinking, be linked to religious activities, or suggest that alcohol assists with “social prestige.” Companies must obtain a COFEPRIS permit to publicly advertise alcohol, including on television.

Advertisement of Sports Betting

- In the U.S. there is no federal statute banning betting advertisements. Instead, advertisements are regulated on a state-by-state basis.

- State law varies widely. Many states have their own advertising requirements (e.g., age restrictions, responsible betting, messaging, truthfulness) or accept advertising only in states where the underlying betting is legal.

- In Canada, betting advertising is governed under the Criminal Code and provincial gaming laws. The Criminal Code generally prohibits promotion of betting that is unlawful or not provincially sanctioned but permits advertising for province-licensed betting products (lotteries, casinos, sports betting, etc.) subject to provincial rules.

- The AGCO regulates the marketing and advertising of internet gaming in Ontario. Advertising and marketing cannot target or include high-risk, underage, or self-excluded individuals. Additionally, it must be truthful, have sufficient disclosure, and it must not be misleading.

- The Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch of British Columbia regulates the marketing and advertisements of betting. The advertisements should promote responsible betting, accurately describe odds of winning, and protect individuals under the age of 19.

- In Mexico, there is no prohibition on betting advertising, but advertising for betting and betting must comply with permits and consumer protection laws.
- Under the Federal Law on Betting and Betting and related advertising rules:
 - Advertisements may only be broadcast if the operator has a valid permit from the Ministry of the Interior.
 - Advertisements must be clear and not misleading, using the advertiser’s permit number, stating that betting is prohibited for minors, and including responsible betting messaging.
- Legislative proposals have been introduced to limit the hours during which betting advertisements can air on broadcast media. However, these are not yet law.

- Mexico's general advertising framework (Federal Consumer Protection Law and Federal Telecommunications and Broadcasting Law) also governs broadcast standards, requiring truthful and non-misleading TV ads.
- FIFA has imposed a prohibition on betting advertising in officiating-related contexts for the 2026 World Cup. Advertising is banned on referee uniforms, inside the video operations room, and on the monitor stand in the referee review area. FIFA has not adopted a general ban on betting advertising at the tournament.
- Stadiums that already have betting sponsors will be required to temporarily suppress those sponsorships. FIFA exercises exclusive commercial and broadcast control during the tournament, which overrides pre-existing stadium sponsorship agreements for the duration of the event.
- As a result, betting branding on field-side signage, stadium interiors, media backdrops, and any locations visible to the international broadcast feed must be covered or replaced with neutral or FIFA-approved branding. Although the underlying sponsorship contracts remain valid, their visibility is suspended during World Cup matches and official events.
 - This creates contractual and financial tension for host stadiums, which may owe "make-goods" or compensation to betting sponsors for lost exposure during one of the most commercially valuable betting periods in global sport.

Sports Betting

The Current State of Betting in Each Host Country

Historically, the FIFA World Cup has consistently produced major surges in betting activity worldwide, with betting volumes often doubling or tripling during the tournament and peaking during knockout rounds and the final. The World Cup uniquely attracts a large number of casual and first-time bettors due to its global reach, national-team framing, and concentrated, high-intensity schedule. These increases occur not only in regulated markets but in illegal and gray markets as well, prompting heightened integrity monitoring. As a result, the World Cup has long functioned as a stress test for betting regulation. This risk is amplified for the 2026 World Cup, as the U.S., Canada, and Mexico each maintain distinct legal and regulatory frameworks for

sports betting, increasing the likelihood of regulatory conflict and enforcement challenges.

- Following the U.S. Supreme Court's 2018 decision in *Murphy v. Nat'l Collegiate Athletic Ass'n* (2018), which struck down the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA), the U.S. adopted a state-by-state approach to sports betting legalization and regulation. The legal age for sports betting in the U.S. is primarily 21 or older, though some states allow it at 18. As of 2025, sports betting is legal in 39 states and Washington, D.C., with 30 states and Washington, D.C. permitting online sports betting. However, not every state hosting 2026 World Cup matches allows sports betting. Georgia, Texas, and California prohibit sports betting entirely, while Missouri permits sports betting only in limited forms and does not allow online wagering.
- On August 27, 2021, the Canadian government legalized single-event sports betting through the Safe and Regulated Sports Betting Act (Bill C-218). Prior to this change, the Criminal Code of Canada permitted only parlay betting. Although single-event sports betting is legal at the federal level, it is regulated provincially. Each province has the authority to determine whether and how sports betting is offered, including the management and operation of betting platforms. As a result, while most provinces now permit single-event sports betting, the applicable rules and regulatory frameworks vary by jurisdiction.
 - In Ontario, sports betting is regulated by the AGCO. Operators seeking to offer sports and event betting must be conducted through the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) or, for online operators, through iGaming Ontario (iGO). Currently, sports betting is available through online platforms and mobile applications operated by iGO, OLG Proline+, OLG Proline, and licensed sportsbooks. Ontario law also requires that individuals be at least 19 years of age to participate in sports betting.
 - In British Columbia, sports betting is legal and is offered primarily through PlayNow, a provincially operated platform that maintains centralized government control over licensing and operations. Sports betting in British Columbia is administered by the British Columbia Lottery Corporation (BCLC) under the authority of the provincial Ministry of Finance. Individuals must be at least 19 years of age to participate in sports betting.

- Mexico does not have a modern framework for sports betting. Sports betting is currently regulated by the 1947 Federal Betting and Lotteries Law, which prohibits betting. Industry stakeholders have called for reform, made more urgent by the fact that Mexico will be hosting World Cup matches. Concerns surround missed growth opportunities for Mexico's gaming sector, and the compromise of consumer protection as they shift to offshore operators with unregulated practices.

- The Mexican Ministry of the Interior is attempting to modernize the country's federal betting law. In October 2025, Congressman Ricardo Mejía Berdeja filed a proposal for a new Federal Law on Matches with Betting and Lotteries to replace the 1947 statute and establish a modern regulatory framework.

- The bill prioritizes player safety, transparency, and responsible gaming. It proposes the creation of a National Institute of Matches and Lotteries to oversee licensing, regulation, inspection, and enforcement. The bill also introduces mechanisms to combat illegal betting, establishes a minimum betting age of 21, and requires operators to inform players of associated risks, promote responsible betting practices, and implement betting limits based on players' financial capacity.

The fragmented betting regulatory landscape across Canada, the U.S., and Mexico creates significant compliance and enforcement challenges for the 2026 World Cup. Fans traveling between host cities may cross jurisdictions where mobile betting is legal into others where the same app is blocked, while global sponsor campaigns that are lawful in one market may be prohibited in another. These inconsistencies also complicate integrity monitoring, as suspicious wagering patterns may span multiple provinces, states, or countries, and delays in cross-border data sharing can hinder timely regulatory responses. Finally, cross-border fan mobility raises consumer-protection concerns, as bettors may place wagers legally in one jurisdiction but later face disputes in another, creating uncertainty over which regulator has authority and which legal standards apply.

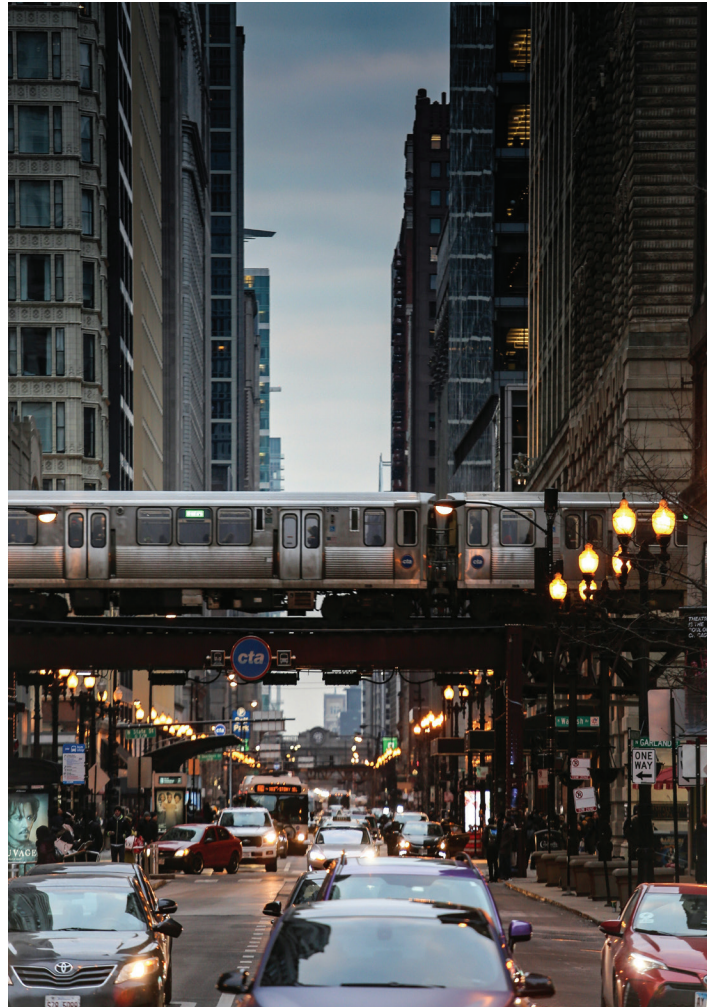


Photo by Antonia Janeski on Unsplash.com

Infrastructure/Transportation

To prepare for the anticipated influx of millions of soccer fans, each host country has undertaken significant investments in infrastructure and transportation aimed at improving mobility, accessibility, and overall efficiency for visitors.

Mexico

- The Mexican federal government has invested roughly \$494 million into the renovation of the Mexico City Airport. The project renovates two terminals and conducts road and operational infrastructure projects to reduce road congestion including a new parking garage, road reorganization, a pedestrian bridge, and a short-stay parking lot.

- Construction of a train line connecting Mexico City with Felipe Ángeles International Airport in Santa Lucía has been done to strengthen connectivity. It serves as part of broader efforts to integrate Felipe Ángeles International Airport into Mexico City's transportation network and ease congestion at Mexico City Airport.
- Azteca Stadium in Mexico City has undergone a complete modernization, aiming to balance cutting-edge technology with preservation of the stadium's historic identity. The renovation includes a new playing surface, upgraded seating and sightlines, expanded accessibility features, and major improvements to electrical, water, ventilation, and security systems. Architecturally, the stadium will feature a new metal-and-glass ring roof and extensive LED displays while surrounding infrastructure will be reworked to improve pedestrian flow.
- Azteca Stadium funds this through its first sponsor, financial institution Banorte. Banorte will become the stadium's main sponsor, lending \$105 million for the renovations. Azteca Stadium will become the first stadium in history to host three World Cup opening matches.
- World Cup preparation plans for Guadalajara center on mobility, tourism, and long-term legacy, as the city prepares to host six matches. Key initiatives include stadium upgrades at Estadio Guadalajara, major public transit expansions, highway and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, and widespread community sports investments.
- World Cup preparation plans for Monterrey include e34 major projects, with strong emphasis on mobility, security, sustainability, and long-term urban transformation. Central efforts include an expansion of the metro system, large-scale investments in sustainable buses and highways, airport and border upgrades, enhanced water resilience, and extensive security modernization. The plan also prioritizes public space improvements such as new parks, fan zones, pedestrian corridors, and reforestation.

Canada

- A \$146 million renovation project has been completed at Toronto's BMO Field, which will host six World Cup matches. It includes the installation of new video boards, enhanced sound and lighting systems, upgrades to hospitality suites, and the addition of a

new premium lounge. The project will also add 17,000 temporary seats, increasing the stadium's capacity to meet FIFA's minimum requirement of 45,000 seats.

- Improvements are also underway at BC Place in Vancouver, which will host seven World Cup matches. Planned upgrades include the installation of a new scoreboard, the addition of three elevators to enhance accessibility, and the temporary installation of a natural grass playing surface.
 - The stadium already has extensive experience hosting large-scale events including the 2010 Olympic Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup, and the final three dates of Taylor Swift's Eras Tour.
- Additionally, improvements are being made to Toronto Pearson International Airport and Vancouver International Airport.

U.S.

The U.S. is leaning heavily on existing stadiums/transport networks and prioritizing operations, screening capacity, and incident response rather than brand-new projects. Several federal agencies have taken steps to prepare for the transportation and security of the World Cup.

- The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has issued guidance to public transit agencies, private bus operators, and host cities to facilitate the movement of millions of spectators.
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection has released a FIFA 2026 travel and entry guide to assist international fans arriving in the country.
- The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has awarded a multi-million-dollar contract to Rohde & Schwarz to deploy advanced imaging scanners at passenger screening checkpoints in airports serving host cities. These AI-enabled millimeter-wave scanners are designed to enhance threat detection while improving screening speed, accessibility, and passenger experience as part of a broader airport-modernization effort ahead of the tournament.
- The Department of Homeland Security has announced a \$115 million investment in counter-drone technology to strengthen security around World Cup venues and related events.



Photo by Emilio Garcia on Unsplash.com

Player Contracts

Interaction Between Club Contracts and National Team Obligations

- FIFA regulations require clubs to release players for their national teams for the World Cup. Clubs have no power to override this release.
- Clubs are economically exposed to participating players' potential injuries. To assist the burden of that injury may place on clubs, FIFA has implemented the Club Protection Program, which generally provides capped compensation to clubs when players are injured on national team duty.
- Separately from injury protections, FIFA has instituted "club benefits" tied to player participation in FIFA tournaments which rewards clubs for the player participation.
 - FIFA is set to distribute a record \$355 million to clubs that release players for World Cup qualifier matches.

National Teams as a Separate Regulatory Framework

- National team participation is generally structured through the federation system where each region has a federation as its more direct governing body.

Labor Considerations in the U.S.

- Since player eligibility and club releases are governed by FIFA, U.S. labor law is not applicable to the World Cup. When disputes do arise, they are governed by FIFA's dispute mechanism and arbitration rather than national employment laws.
- Immigration and Visa Considerations
 - Athletes and team personnel are set to be handled under the "P" visa framework for travel into the U.S. for the World Cup. The "P" visa framework is designed for athletes, artists, and entertainers. The White House Task Force has put forward a framework that reflects federal coordination for planning and execution of said travel, specifically focusing on entry into the U.S. for players and staff creating a streamlined process.

PART V

GLOBALIZATION EFFORTS

PART V: GLOBALIZATION EFFORTS

As professional sports leagues increasingly pursue international expansion, the 2026 FIFA World Cup presents a useful comparative framework for evaluating how the professional sports leagues in the United States approach globalization. FIFA's decision to host the World Cup across the United States, Canada, and Mexico reflects the current shift within professional sports to expand outreach and provides a model of multinational governance, requiring coordination across legal systems, labor models, immigration rules, and commercial markets.

To illustrate the current globalization efforts of professional sports leagues, this section focuses on the National Football League's (NFL) expanding international presence and globalization game plan through overseas regular-season games, global marketing initiatives, and foreign partnerships.

NFL Current International Expansion Efforts

- The NFL has increasingly pursued globalization as a long-term growth strategy by expanding its presence outside of the United States. This includes hosting regular-season games abroad, developing international fan bases, and establishing commercial partnerships in foreign markets. These efforts aim to increase revenue streams, global brand recognition, and long-term market sustainability while introducing American football to new audiences.
- The NFL's pursuit of global expansion reflects a strategic effort to broaden its fan base, diversify revenue streams, and position the NFL as a viable competitor in an increasingly international sports marketplace.

International Games and Marketing Initiatives

- The NFL's Global Markets Program (GMP) provides clubs with international marketing rights, allowing franchises to promote their brands, engage local fan bases, and develop commercial opportunities across designated foreign markets. All 32 franchises currently participate in the program, reflecting league-wide commitment to international growth.



Photo by edelweiss.resort on Flickr.com

- The NFL continues to host an expanding slate of regular season games abroad, including multiple games in Europe and emerging markets such as Europe, Brazil, and Australia, demonstrating both increased international demand and league commitment to globalization.

International Series

- The NFL's first regular-season game held outside of the U.S. took place on October 2, 2005, when the Arizona Cardinals faced the San Francisco 49ers in Mexico City, drawing a crowd of over 100,000 fans.
- Building on the NFL's success in Mexico City, the league formally launched the International Series in 2007, establishing regularly scheduled games overseas.
- In the 2025-2026 season, the NFL featured seven regular season games across five countries and expanding the league's global reach. The NFL held regular season games in São Paulo, Brazil; London, England; Madrid, Spain; Dublin, Ireland; and Berlin, Germany. The NFL continues to expand its international schedule, with plans to hold its first-ever regular-season games in 2026 in both Paris, France and Melbourne, Australia.

- NFL commissioner Roger Goodell has expressed interest in further expansion of the NFL, including the possibility of competing in up to 16 international games per season.

International Pathway Program

- In 2017, the NFL launched the International Player Pathway Program to create a structured pathway for foreign-born athletes to enter the NFL.
- The selected athletes participate in a ten-week training program that combines on-field and off-field instruction regarding the fundamentals of American Football prior to team evaluation.
- Each NFL team is permitted an additional offseason roster spot for an International Player Pathway participant, with a corresponding practice squad spot during the season.

Since the program's inception, more than 70 international players from over 25 different countries have signed with NFL teams, with several holding active roster spots. One of the most successful players to participate in the International Pathway Program is Jordan Mailata, the left tackle for the Philadelphia Eagles.

Global Markets Program

- The NFL's Global Markets Program plays a central role in the league's international expansion strategy by granting individual franchises marketing rights in designated foreign markets.
- The foreign markets are determined by teams who apply for the market rights based on factors such as cultural alignment, fan interest, and commercial potential, allowing for targeted and localized engagement. Franchises are awarded the market rights for a five-year term.
- As of 2025, all 32 NFL franchises participate in the Global Markets Program across 21 international markets. The league's commitment highlights its prioritization of global growth and connecting with more fans.

- Several teams have leveraged these rights to establish new international sponsorships and commercial partnerships.

Media Rights and Global Access

- The NFL has substantially expanded its global media outreach through broadcast and streaming partnerships with platforms such as Amazon Prime and Netflix, increasing international accessibility to games.
- Additionally, the NFL Match Pass, which provides access to live and on-demand games, is available in more than 200 countries worldwide.
- To better engage international audiences, the NFL is adapting to different regions and tailoring its content through multilingual broadcasts, targeted highlights, and region-specific merchandise.

Gaming/Sports Betting

- Each city and country in which the NFL partners with for games outside of the U.S. maintains its own betting laws and regulatory framework, directly affecting how the NFL operates and structures sponsorship relationships abroad. This has required the NFL to navigate specific foreign gaming regulations.
- To prepare the specific regulations, the NFL has worked on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis to comply with local betting laws while maintaining its broader strategy. This approach has resulted in the league entering into multiple "Official Sports Betting Partner of the NFL" agreements with gaming operators in foreign countries such as "Bwin" in Spain, "Tabcorp" in Australia, "Flutter Entertainment's Paddy Power" in Ireland, and other betting operators in Germany, Austria, and the U.K.

NFL Collective Bargaining Agreement on International Work

- The NFL's Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the NFL and the National Football League Player Association (NFLPA) governs how international play is incorporated into players' terms and conditions of employment. Provisions addressing game locations, travel, and compensation illustrate how labor law and collective bargaining shape the league's efforts and ability to globalize American Football.
- Under the current CBA, according to Article 32, Section 5, the NFL is limited to ten international regular season games played per year. The CBA also includes specific compensation provisions for international travel, requiring additional stipends (\$5,000) when teams play more than one regular season game outside North America. The limitation of number of games played abroad and required stipend for multiple games demonstrates the NFL's negotiated constraints on the league's interest in globalization and the need for player approval through collective bargaining.

NFL's Collective Bargaining & National Labor Relations Act

- The NFL's labor framework is grounded in U.S. federal labor law and collective bargaining. Professional athletes' working conditions including travel, scheduling, and safety are subject to negotiation under their CBAs, which reflects mandatory bargaining subjects like wages, hours, and terms of employment under the NLRA.
- Since the NFLPA functions as the exclusive bargaining representative for NFL players, any substantial changes or expansion of international work obligations, including additional foreign games or schedule length, must be negotiated rather than imposed unilaterally by the league.

Safety & Work Conditions

- Player health and safety remain central labor concerns in the NFL's globalization strategy, as extended travel, time-zone changes, and condensed schedules raise concerns related to recovery time, injury risk, and overall player welfare. These matters frequently surface in union statements and bargaining discussions, emphasizing that globalization cannot proceed without accounting for work conditions.

Authorization, Visas, and Immigration

- Beyond labor law considerations, international expansion requires compliance with immigration and work authorization requirements for players, coaches, and staff. Even temporary international games trigger legal obligations under both U.S. and foreign immigration policies.
- Foreign athletes working in the U.S. must obtain appropriate visa authorization before performing or receiving compensation. Visa classifications such as the P-1A permit internationally recognized athletes or teams to work temporarily in U.S. professional leagues but require the sponsoring franchise to file petitions demonstrating eligibility before any performance or compensation occur. Failure to secure proper authorization can delay or prevent an athlete's ability to participate, highlighting the importance of legal and immigration compliance.
- Similarly, when U.S. based athletes, coaches, or league personnel travel abroad for games or commercial activities, they must comply with the host country's visa or work permit requirements. These requirements vary by jurisdiction and frequently implicate both immigration law compliance and local labor law considerations.

Expansion into London and Stadium Relations

- The NFL's interest in international expansion has evolved from isolated international contests to a long-term strategic initiative, indicating a structural shift toward sustained foreign market integration and a commitment to the globalization of the NFL.
- The NFL formalized this shift towards globalization through their Global Markets Program. Assigning international commercial and branding rights to individual franchises while maintaining centralized league governance, illustrating an intentional strategy towards globalization.
- The NFL's deliberate globalization efforts mirror FIFA's global governance framework, where centralized rules operate across multiple domestic legal systems, placing pressure on national labor laws, tax regimes, and regulatory structures.
- London has emerged as one of the NFL's primary testing grounds for potential global integration, driven by the NFL's consistent regular season games sustained fan engagement, and willingness to explore long-term infrastructure commitments within the United Kingdom (U.K.).
- Central to this commitment is the NFL's long-term partnership stadium agreement with Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, which has been deemed as the "Home of the NFL" in the U.K. as the NFL continues to increase its fanbase throughout Europe and the globe. The initial 10-year agreement between the NFL and Tottenham Hotspur was signed in July of 2015 and extended in September of 2023. The recently extended partnership agreement now runs through the 2029-2030 season.
- The stadium is the first purpose-built NFL stadium outside the U.S. and features dedicated NFL-level locker rooms, media capabilities, medical facilities, and a custom artificial turf field that is within the stadium's retractable grass pitch.
- Since 2019, more than 200,000 have attended an NFL game at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

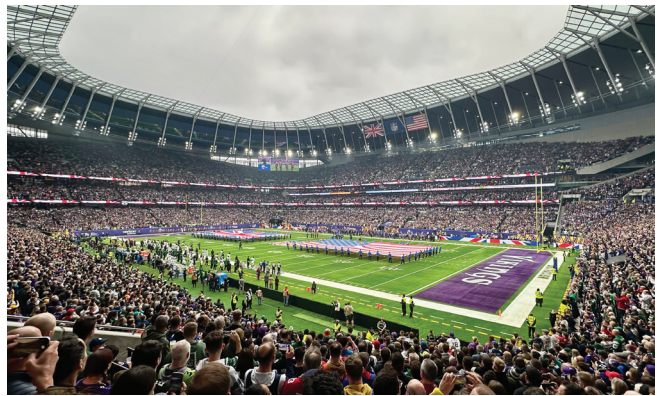


Photo by Marty Gowan on Flickr.com

- Commissioner Roger Goodell has repeatedly hinted at the possibility of London supporting a full-time franchise through league expansion or relocation. However, Commissioner Goodell has emphasized that the obstacles to a potential London franchise are legal and logistical rather than market based.
- Recent league discussions have even expanded beyond the potential for a single franchise to the potential formation of a European division, but that would be a long way off.

Legal

- Establishing a permanent London-based franchise would directly implicate the NFL's CBA, which is structured around U.S. based employment law and governs the NFL's travel, health, safety standards, compensation, and working conditions.
- The expansion of an NFL franchise and global employment would (likely) require the renegotiation of the CBA. Notably, the NFL's current CBA expires following the 2029-2030 season, which is when the current stadium agreement with Tottenham Hotspur Stadium expires.
- The labor challenges that would accompany an overseas NFL franchise mirrors those faced in FIFA and would transform current immigration compliance in the NFL from a temporary logistical process into a continuous regulatory obligation involving visas, work authorization, and cross-border mobility for players, coaches, and league personnel.

- In contrast to occasional international games, a full-time NFL franchise based in London would require predictable and institutionalized immigration pathways similar to those negotiated by FIFA for World Cup host nations, rather than event specific accommodations.
- This reliance on domestic immigration systems underscores how global sports leagues increasingly depend on national regulatory cooperation to facilitate international labor mobility.
- Taxation remains one of the most frequently cited legal barriers to a London-based NFL franchise, as players assigned abroad would be subject to U.K. income taxation, raising concerns related to double taxation, contract valuation, and disparities in net compensation across franchises.
- These tax challenges closely parallel FIFA World Cup Negotiations, in which host countries often modify or waive domestic tax rules to accommodate international sporting structures.

The NFL's exploration of a permanent London franchise illustrates how globalization pressures can compel domestic legal systems to adapt to private international sports governance structures.

Similar to the 2026 FIFA World Cup's tri-nation hosting model, the NFL's global expansion efforts challenge the ability of domestic sports leagues to reconcile labor law, immigration policy, and taxation with international sporting demands. The NFL's globalization strategy thus provides a useful comparative lens for understanding how international sports increasingly function as catalysts for domestic legal change, particularly within federal systems such as the U.S.

CONCLUSION

The 2026 FIFA World Cup demonstrates how global sporting events have evolved into complex legal and economic enterprises that extend well beyond the field of play. As the first World Cup hosted across three nations, this tournament highlights the regulatory tensions that arise when FIFA's global framework intersects with domestic legal systems. The analysis of host selection, economic impact, and key legal considerations illustrates the multifaceted challenges faced by host nations in accommodating an international governing body of FIFA's scale.

Taken together, the 2026 World Cup illustrates the growing influence of international sport on domestic law, policy, and finance, while testing the capacity of national institutions to adapt to global regulatory demands. As mega-events continue to expand in size and complexity, the legal lessons emerging from the 2026 tournament will shape not only future World Cups, but also the broader governance of international sport.

Thus, the 2026 FIFA World Cup serves as both a milestone and a blueprint for understanding the evolving relationship between global sports, law, and the modern economic landscape.

REFERENCES

FIFA is the worldwide governing body for association football, beach soccer, and futsal, founded in 1904 and headquartered in Zürich. It manages 211 national associations, organizes major tournaments like the World Cup, sets rules, and promotes global development of the sport.

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ABOUT US

The Jeffrey S. Moorad Center for the Study of Sports Law advances a new era of education for sports industry professionals as one of only a handful of institutes in the United States dedicated to the study of sports law. The Moorad Center students examine issues in sports law and business through rigorous academic study, innovative programs, internship and externship opportunities, scholarship and research. Under the leadership of respected and accomplished industry professionals, the Center strives to produce innovative and visionary leaders in sports law and beyond. The Center aims to be the best sports education program in the world by developing thought leaders in not only sports law but also in topical issues and the changing dynamics in sports news and media, sports business, sports policy and more.

LEADERSHIP



ANDREW BRANDT, Executive Director

Andrew Brandt is a nationally recognized accomplished sports executive and is professor of practice and executive director of the Jeffrey S. Moorad Center for the Study of Sports Law at Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law. Brandt is guiding the Moorad Center to be a destination for young lawyers interested in a career in sports through curricula including sports law courses and nationally recognized events and lectures. Brandt has been involved with sports at a variety of levels, as an agent, as vice president of the Green Bay Packers from 1999-2008, and as a consultant for the Philadelphia Eagles. He has become a trusted advisor and asset to the Villanova Athletics Department and writes weekly columns on legal and business issues in sports for *The Athletic* and *Sports Illustrated*. Brandt served as the legal and business analyst for ESPN from 2011-2017, analyzing business, legal and policy sports issues on programs such as “Outside the Lines” and “SportsCenter”, as well as multiple appearances on ESPN radio programs every week.



JEFFREY S. MOORAD, Founder and Chairman

Jeffrey S. Moorad '81 committed \$5 million for the creation of the Jeffrey S. Moorad Center for the Study of Sports Law. Moorad is one of the most recognizable names in professional sport and has been a leader in the sports industry for more than 25 years. The founder of Moorad Sports Management, he began specializing in athlete representation in 1983, focusing mainly on Major League Baseball. Two years later, Moorad joined forces with Leigh Steinberg to form one of the most dynamic partnerships in the history of sports representation, covering both Major League Baseball and the National Football League. In 2004, Moorad was named a member of the executive team of the Arizona Diamondbacks. Moorad has also served as vice chairman and chief executive officer of the San Diego Padres.

INVOLVEMENT

THE JEFFREY S. MOORAD CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SPORTS LAW

SPORTS LAW CONCENTRATION provides selected students with unique value-add towards careers in amateur and professional sports. It complements existing programs through the Moorad Center, including rigorous academic study, a tailored curriculum, the highest level of speakers and symposia, innovative fellowship and internship opportunities, mentorship and research.

ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM addresses current issues in the world of sports law each year. In conjunction with the *Jeffrey S. Moorad Sports Law Journal*, the Sports Law Concentration students and faculty work to develop a respected group of panelists to provide insight into hot topics in sports. Past symposia have discussed issues related to sports betting, the changing landscape of sports media, and name, image and likeness in college athletics.

SPORTS LAW SOCIETY provides all Villanova Law students the opportunity to engage with sports law on a foundational level. The Society frequently hosts events surrounding topics in sports law while also providing networking opportunities, career resources, and a space for students to share their love for sports.

NOVASPORTSLAW BLOG is a student-run blog that publishes student articles about current topics in sports law and business. The blog currently features the work of 12 staff writers and seven contributing editors.

SPEAKER SERIES provides interactive, behind-the-scenes looks at the sports industry as various speakers from a variety of positions in sports share insightful knowledge, professional experiences, and career advice.

NEGOTIATION TEAMS provide students with real-world simulations of contract negotiation whether it be for a player contract, endorsement agreement, or sponsorship deal. Each year, after extensive research and preparation, negotiation teams participate in various competitions throughout North America for baseball, football, basketball, soccer, and hockey. Beginning in Fall 2022, negotiation team members now earn academic credit for their participation.

COMPETITIONS

The Jeffrey S. Moorad Center for the Study of Sports Law allows students to attend a variety of sports-related competitions around the country. Our teams have had great success at these competitions.

Gameday Sports Competition

Annual competition hosted by Villanova Law and UCLA Anderson School of Management

1st place: 2023

New York Law School NIL and College Sports Negotiation Competition

Semifinalists: 2026

New York Law School Soccer Dispute Competition

1st Place: 2025

Finalist: 2024

Tulane Professional Football Negotiation Competition

1st place: 2025, 2022, 2020, 2019, 2017

Finalist: 2026, 2023, 2018 Semifinalists: 2021

Tulane Professional Basketball Negotiation Competition

1st place: 2021

Finalist: 2020

Quarterfinals: 2025, 2024, 2022

Tulane International Fútbol Negotiation Competition

1st place: 2022

Tulane International Baseball Arbitration Competition

1st place: 2026, 2025, 2024

Semifinalists: 2023, 2021

Quarterfinalists: 2022, 2020

Oral Advocacy Award: 2024

Best Written Brief: 2023



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