

FIFA®

**GUIDE TO THE BIDDING PROCESS
FOR THE 2026 FIFA WORLD CUP™**





Gianni Infantino
FIFA President

Foreword

FIFA's main purpose is – and must be – to promote football; no mean feat when working with a game that is already so universally loved. We are here to unleash football's full potential everywhere and at all levels, to increase participation. This is what the expansion of the FIFA World Cup is about.

Every day, there are more and more countries producing top talent and organising football at an increasingly high level. By 2026, there will be even more. With the chance of reaching football's greatest tournament now higher, we expect to see development surge around the globe. We must use the positive influence of our crown jewel to foster the growth of football from the very bottom of the pyramid. However, the reach and the power of the FIFA World Cup come with a serious responsibility, one that this administration has embraced from day one. The process to select the host – or hosts – of the first 48-team FIFA World Cup must not be open to even one iota of doubt. It is FIFA's responsibility towards the world of football to conduct these bidding and selection procedures in an ethical, transparent, objective and unbiased way.

By the time we announce who will host the 2026 FIFA World Cup, every football fan around the globe should be able to know why that choice has been made. For that, FIFA has reviewed and radically enhanced the mechanisms for selecting the venue of our showpiece event.

The process is as objective and transparent as it can get.

This starts with the assessment of each bid. For this purpose, FIFA will establish a 2026 Bid Evaluation Task Force formed by experts from within the administration and from its standing committees. Their appraisal of the candidacies will be guided by clear and objective criteria – with a score attributed to each specific component of the bid.

This evaluation process will generate reports, which will serve as the basis for a valuation by the FIFA Council. Our strategic body will study these reports and shortlist the bids that qualify to then be voted on by the FIFA Congress. And that is how the final decision on the host or hosts of the 2026 FIFA World Cup will be taken: in an open vote by our 211 member associations. Whoever ends up hosting the FIFA World Cup must prove that they know and have what it takes to deliver the tournament. Not only that, they must also formally commit to conducting their activities based on sustainable event management principles and to respecting international human rights and labour standards according to the United Nations' Guiding Principles. The FIFA World Cup is becoming more global. It will catch the eyes of the world like never before. Our duty is to ensure that these eyes look in the right direction; towards indisputably deserving hosts.

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Fatma Samoura
FIFA Secretary General

Content summary



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The bidding process

In 2026, the FIFA World Cup will be bigger than ever. More countries will participate – a total of 48 – and many, many more around the world will begin to dream of qualifying.

An upgraded tournament deserves an impeccable process to determine which country or countries will host it. FIFA embraced that commitment and improved the bidding process, with a focus on a few indispensable elements profiled in the pages that follow.

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Key principles of the reformed bidding process



Transparency

Every step of the bidding process is open to the public. The Bid Book content and the hosting requirements are all publicly available, as will be the evaluation reports for each candidature. Based on these reports, the FIFA Council will make a decision and shortlist the bids that qualify to be voted by the FIFA Congress. During this process, all individual votes will be disclosed.

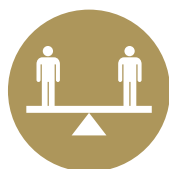
The final decision by FIFA's supreme legislative

body is the result of an open voting process. Moreover, the bidding process is governed by significantly extended rules of conduct and, for the first time, it will be scrutinised by an independent audit company appointed by FIFA. In other words, the football community knows what it takes to be chosen as the host of the FIFA World Cup, and why a choice has been made. Not a single decision is guarded away from public scrutiny.



Participation

The FIFA World Cup is global football's most coveted prize and, as such, the decision-making process to determine the host(s) of the tournament must be as broad and open as possible. For the first time, it will be the FIFA Congress – the organisation's supreme legislative body, comprising representatives of all 211 member associations – that has a final vote on the venue of the competition, as per article 69 of the [FIFA Statutes](#).



Commitment to human rights and sustainability

A commitment to respect human rights is enshrined in article 3 of the FIFA Statutes and specified in the organisation's [Human Rights Policy](#). FIFA is fully committed to conducting its activities in connection with hosting the FIFA World Cup based on sustainable event management principles – in line with ISO 20121 – and to respecting international human rights and labour standards in accordance with the United

Nations' Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Based on this, FIFA also requires the implementation of human rights and labour standards by the bidding member associations, the government and other entities involved in the organisation of the tournament, such as those responsible for the construction and renovation of stadiums, training sites, hotels and airports.



Objectivity

The evaluation of bids must be as precise and unbiased as possible. For this purpose, [FIFA has established a 2026 Bid Evaluation Task Force](#), whose assessment will be guided by clear and objective criteria (see "An enhanced evaluation process" below). This includes a process of quantifying and rating the infrastructural and commercial aspects of each bid – with failure to reach the minimum overall score, or even the minimum requirements in one of the key criteria, leading to exclusion.

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An enhanced evaluation process

FIFA has developed the process through which bids are evaluated, by significantly improving the assessment mechanisms and by introducing two new additional elements:

- **2026 Bid Evaluation Task Force**

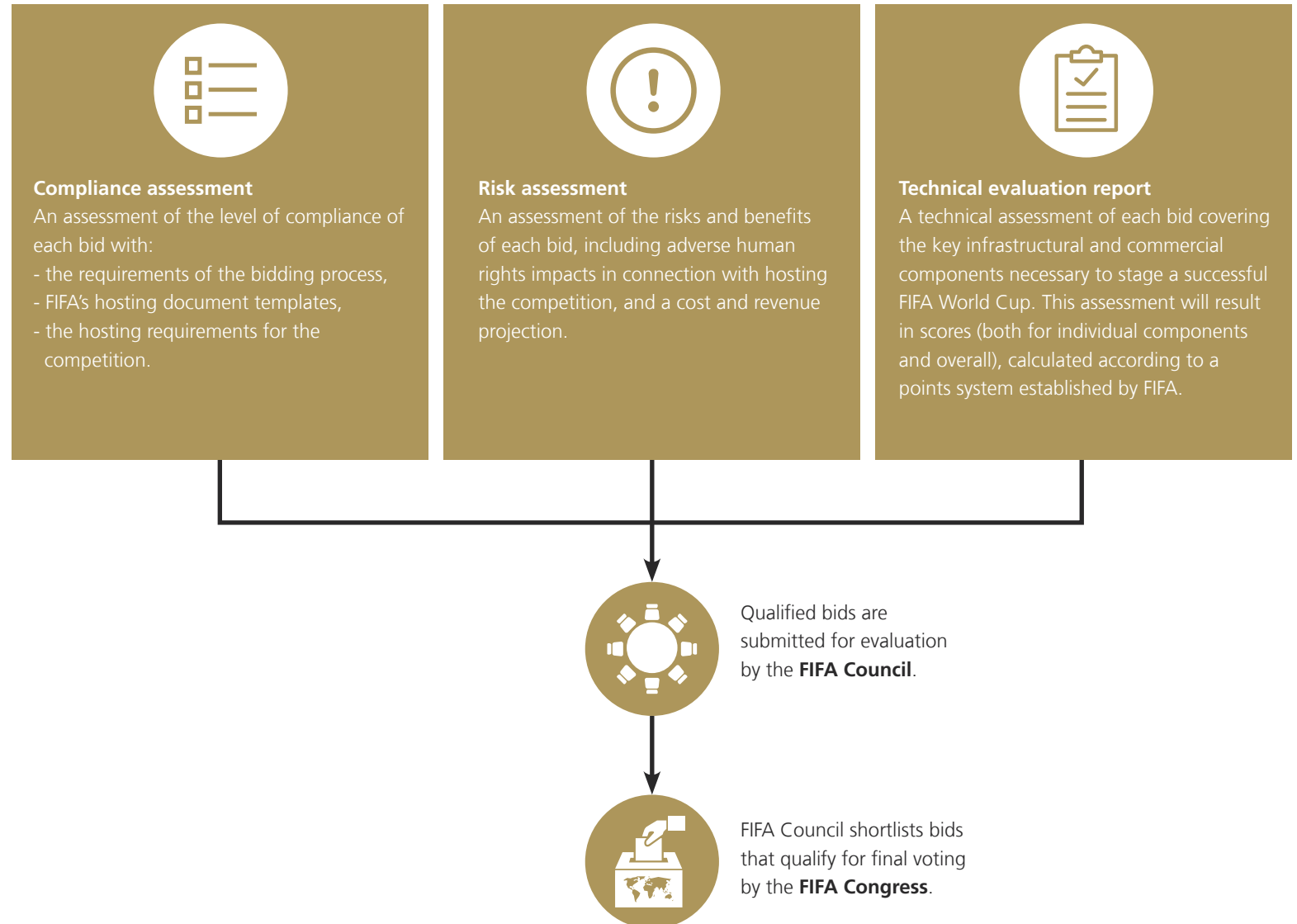
Analysing and assessing the different aspects of such a complex endeavour requires very specific knowledge in different areas, from the technical expertise to the legal and commercial implications involved. For the purpose of carrying out this evaluation, FIFA will establish a group to be composed of certain members of the FIFA administration with the relevant expertise, the chairman of FIFA's Audit and Compliance Committee, the chairman of FIFA's Governance Committee and a member of the Organising Committee for FIFA Competitions.

- **Independent audit company**

A representative of the appointed independent audit company will also act as an observer of the bid evaluation process and of the activities carried out by the 2026 Bid Evaluation Task Force.

Bid Evaluation Report

The 2026 Bid Evaluation Task Force will be responsible for preparing a bid evaluation report assessing each bid. This report will comprise three key components:

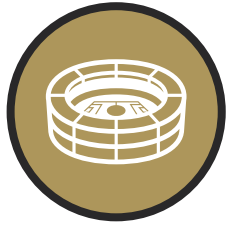


An enhanced evaluation process

The technical evaluation report

The key infrastructural and commercial components are:

• Infrastructure



Stadiums



Facilities for teams and referees



Accommodation



**Transport and mobility
(including airports)**



**IT&T and proposed location
of the International
Broadcasting Centre (IBC)**



**The proposed locations
for the staging of the
FIFA Fan Fest™**

• Commercial



**Predicted costs
of the competition**



**Estimated revenue from
the sale of tickets and
hospitality packages**



**Estimated revenue from
the sale of media and
marketing rights**

The scores have a bearing on whether or not a bid qualifies for the next stage of the bidding process, with bids shortlisted by the FIFA Council. In order to be considered for the shortlist, a bid will have to achieve:

1 a minimum overall score; and

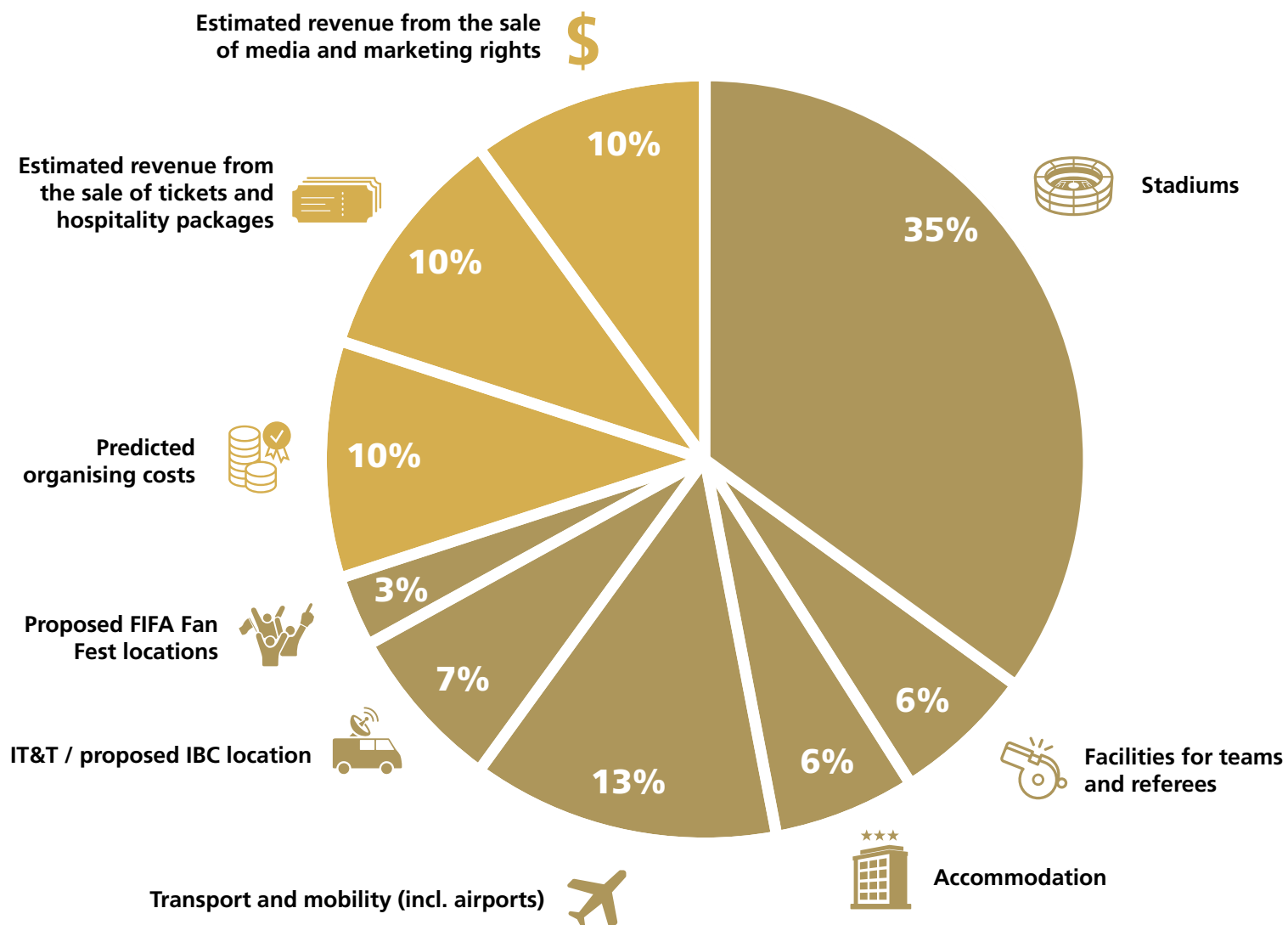
2 a minimum score in each of the following specific components:

- i. stadiums;
- ii. facilities for teams and referees;
- iii. accommodation and transport (due to the link between these two components, these will be assessed on a combined basis).

An enhanced evaluation process

The infrastructure and commercial criteria in the technical evaluation report will be assessed based on the following weighting percentages:

- Infrastructure**
(70% of overall score)
- Commercial elements**
(30% of overall score)



Protecting the integrity of the bidding process



A key element in FIFA's revision of the mechanisms to select the host of the FIFA World Cup is to safeguard the integrity of the process from start to finish.

For that, the relevant FIFA committees and external anti-corruption experts gave recommendations on how to improve this specific aspect of the bidding process. The result: besides committing to abide by the **FIFA Code of Ethics**, each of the stakeholders involved in this process is bound by a strict set of rules and measures of protection.

This includes the FIFA administration, the decision-making bodies and, especially, the bidding member associations, whose activities are governed by the rigorous **Bid Rules of Conduct**.

Among other measures, the **Bid Rules of Conduct** stipulate:

- the obligation to always apply core ethical principles;
- the prohibition of inappropriate gifts;
- the prohibition of any form of unethical collaboration or collusion between member associations as well as strict rules in relation to proposals for football development projects and the organisation of friendly matches.

! The Bid Rules of Conduct continue to apply during the hosting phase, and FIFA reserves the right to terminate the hosting agreement if any unethical behaviour is detected.

The Bidding Regulations lay out a number of other measures to ensure the ethical behaviour of the bidding member associations. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any individuals involved in the bidding process on behalf of the member associations – including employees, representatives and consultants – are required to provide FIFA with a declaration of compliance and acknowledgement that they are bound by the FIFA Code of Ethics
- All promotional activities, including any meeting with members of the decision-making bodies and the FIFA administration, as well as any lobbying activities, must be comprehensively reported;
- An independent compliance and ethics officer with the exclusive mandate to support the member associations in fully complying with the Bid Rules of Conduct and with generally recognised rules of good governance must be appointed;
- A member of the Ethics Committee must be appointed as the main liaison for the member associations to help facilitate the monitoring of ethical behaviour by all involved parties.



The timeline



There are two different possible scenarios in the process to select the host(s) of the 2026 FIFA World Cup. In 2017, member associations from CAF, CONCACAF, CONMEBOL and the OFC have been invited to express their interest and submit their bids to be evaluated by the 2026 Bid Evaluation Task Force.

By the 11 August deadline, FIFA received two expressions of interest: one submitted by the Moroccan Football Association and a joint expression of interest submitted by the Canadian Soccer Association, the Mexican Football Association and the United States Soccer Federation.

Following a thorough assessment by the 2026 Bid Evaluation Task Force, the qualified bids will be presented to the FIFA Council, which will then shortlist those to be voted by the FIFA Congress. In June 2018, the 68th FIFA Congress will decide whether to select one of the candidates.

2026 FIFA World Cup - Process for selection of host member associations*



*Dates are subject to change as required.

The timeline



And what if none of the candidates are awarded the right to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup by the 68th FIFA Congress? The 67th FIFA Congress has also approved the process to be followed in this scenario.

In the event that the 68th FIFA Congress decides not to choose any of the candidates, FIFA will then launch a new procedure by inviting further member

associations – including those of the AFC and UEFA and excluding those that had submitted a bid under the previous candidature procedure – to submit a bid to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Technically, there is also a possibility that the second phase would start even earlier. This would happen in the event that all of the candidates abandon their

bids during the first phase of the process. In this scenario, only the member associations that have submitted a bid would be considered ineligible for the second phase.

In either scenario, the second phase of the bidding procedure is expected to culminate with a final decision by the 70th FIFA Congress in 2020.

2026 FIFA World Cup - Process for selection of host member associations*





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The 2026 FIFA World Cup

The FIFA Council unanimously decided in favour of expanding the FIFA World Cup to a 48-team competition as of the 2026 edition: an exciting split in 16 groups of three teams, with an additional knockout round.



The first 48-team FIFA World Cup

Group stage: 16 groups of 3 teams
Top 2 teams advance

○●●

x 16



“It is a fantastic move. It will allow many more countries to start dreaming of taking part in this incredible tournament. Because of this, the technical level will not drop. On the contrary: there will be more football than ever.”

Diego Armando Maradona
captain of the Argentina team that won the 1986 FIFA World Cup

“It would be highly attractive. The third match in the group stage in the World Cup is often boring, since the big nations are usually already through. With this format, tension would be guaranteed from the beginning and we would swiftly move to the knockout stage.”

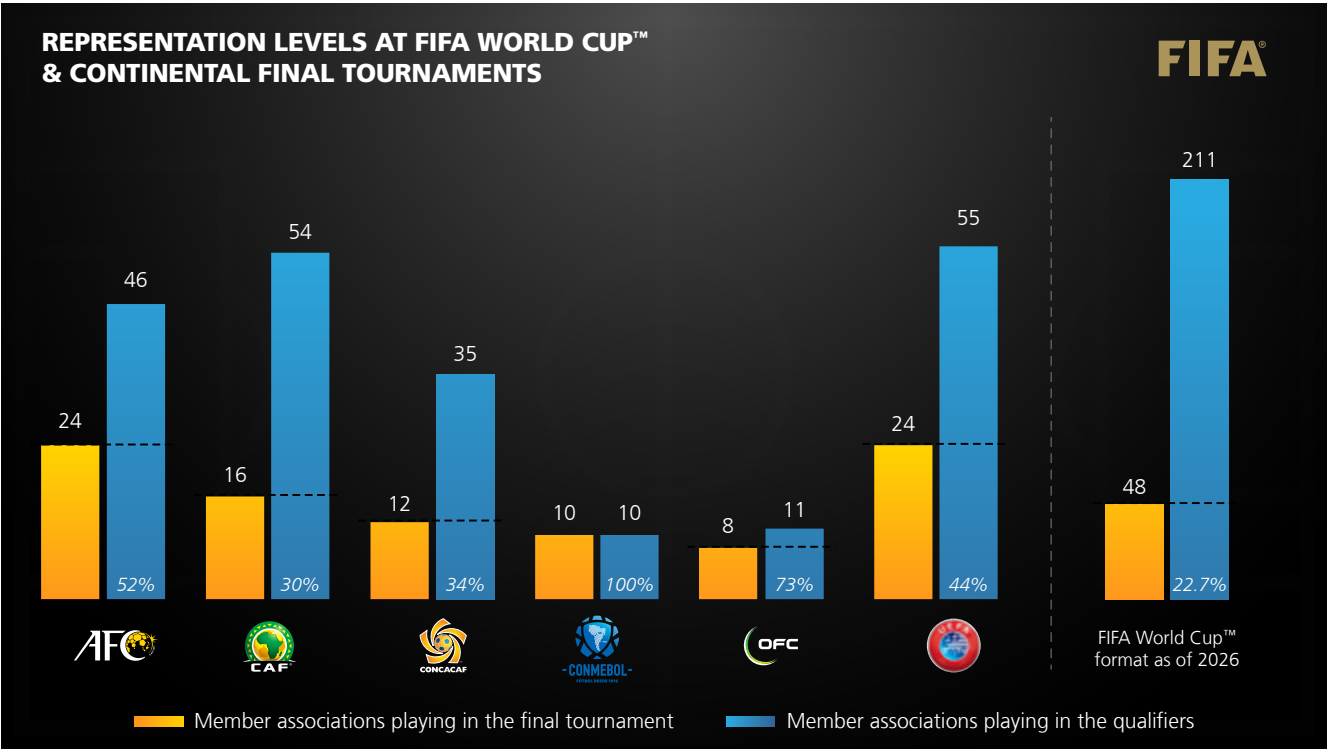
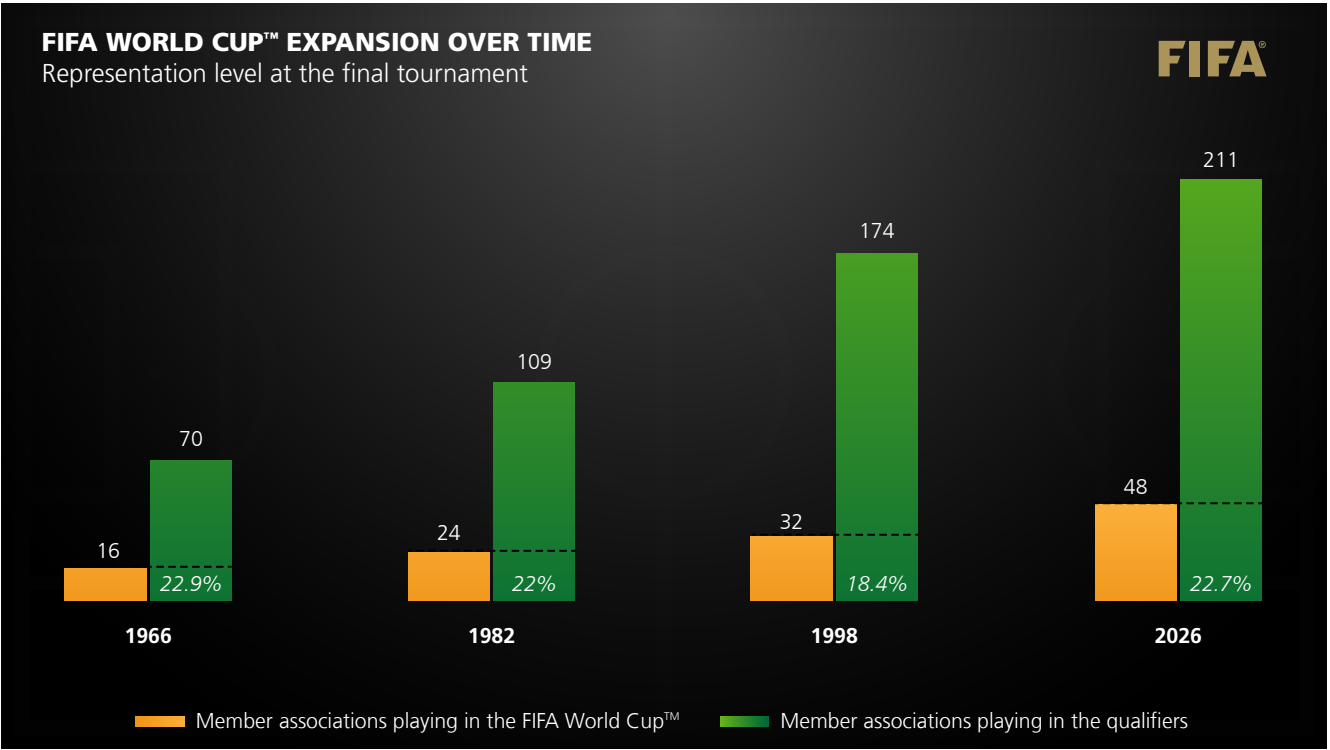
Ottmar Hitzfeld
winner of the UEFA Champions League coaching two different clubs. Coached Switzerland at the 2014 FIFA World Cup

The first 48-team FIFA World Cup

The decision to expand the format of the FIFA World Cup was taken based on a report that took into account such factors as sporting balance, competition quality, impact on football development, infrastructure, projections on financial position and the consequences for event delivery.

The number of participants is consistent with the evolution of football’s global showpiece – for which qualification will remain more selective than any of the continental tournaments.

It will mean more participation, more opportunities for footballers around the whole world and more excitement on the pitch.



“The expansion of the World Cup is an exciting piece of news. It is a big opportunity for smaller teams to be a part of the magic of the tournament.”

Lucas Radebe

captain of the South Africa national team at both the 1998 and the 2002 editions of the FIFA World Cup

“It means that the World Cup will be even more of an incredible social event. More countries, more investment in different countries in infrastructure, in youth football. More countries means more Africans, Asians, Americans together. The World Cup is a social event and football can't relinquish this opportunity to further reflect the passion of the fans.”

José Mourinho

FIFA World Coach of the Year in 2010

Slot allocation*



Direct slots

During its meeting on 9 May 2017, the FIFA Council agreed on the slot allocation for the FIFA World Cup as of the 2026 edition.

The distribution accounts for 46 direct slots, as set out in the diagram below, and an intercontinental play-off tournament to determine the two remaining slots (see next page).



* The host country would also automatically qualify for the FIFA World Cup, and its slot would be taken from the quota of its confederation.
In the event of co-hosting, the number of host countries to qualify automatically would be decided by the FIFA Council.

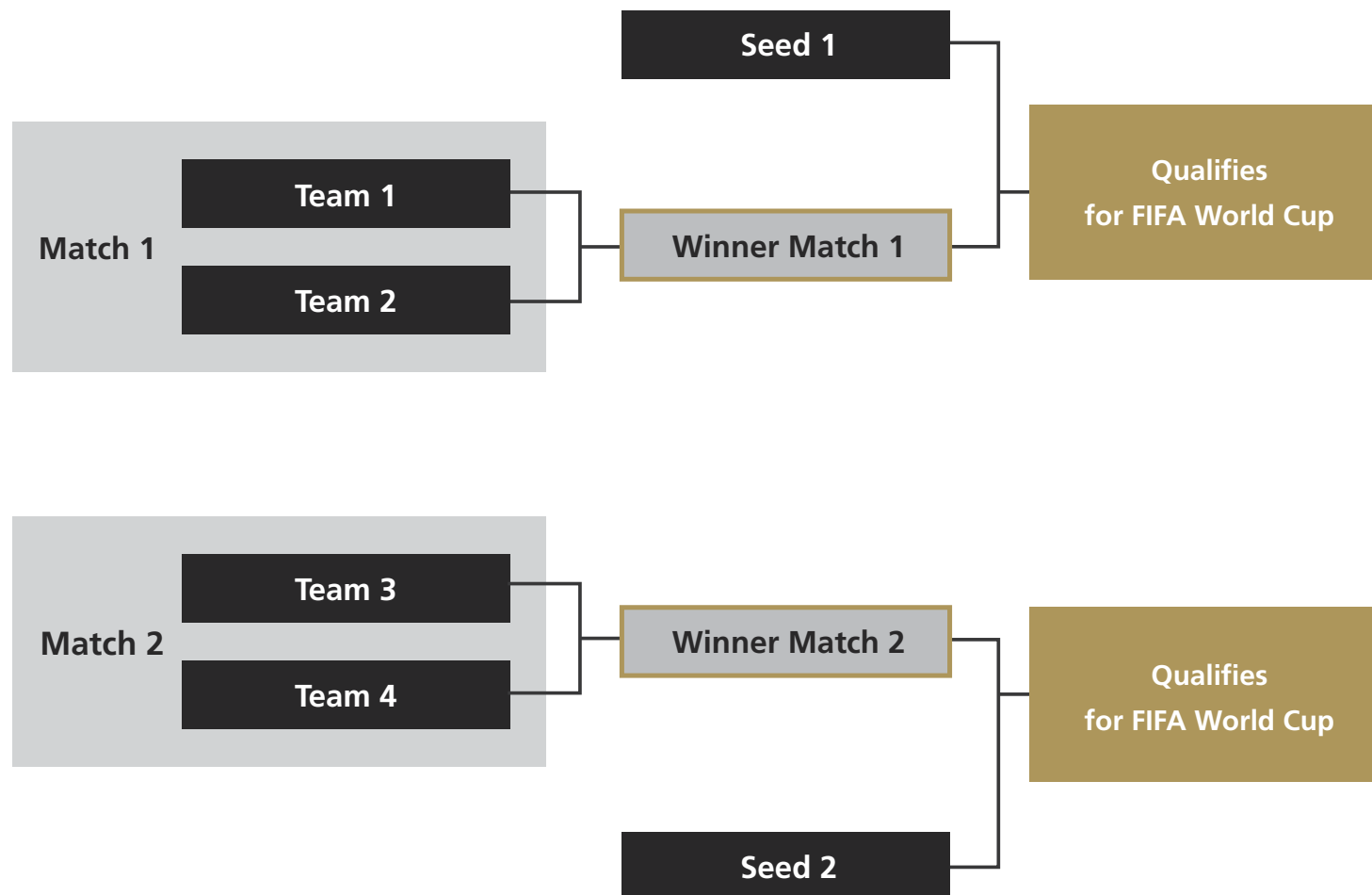
Play-off tournament for two remaining slots



Under the current FIFA World Cup slot allocation, four confederations – the AFC, CONCACAF, CONMEBOL and the OFC – are entitled to a so-called “half-slot”. This means that one team from each of these confederations takes part in an intercontinental play-off – played in a two-legged home-and-away format and the winners of which qualify for the FIFA World Cup.

This will change as of the 2026 edition, for which one single play-off tournament involving **six teams** will decide the **last two FIFA World Cup berths**:

- **One team per confederation** (with the exception of UEFA) + one additional team from the confederation of the host country;
- **Two teams to be seeded** based on the FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking. The seeded teams will play for a FIFA World Cup berth against the winners of the first two knockout games involving the **four unseeded teams**.



“There’s another positive aspect: the smaller teams will dare to play attacking football and to adopt bold tactical formations.”

Marcel Desailly
1998 FIFA World Cup
winner with France

“Quality teams are often left out of the World Cup, so it will be good for world football. On top of that, the group stage will be even more competitive with three teams: every match will count.”

Fernando Santos
UEFA EURO 2016-winning coach
with Portugal



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Requirements for hosting

On 9 May 2017, the FIFA Council approved an overview of the content to be requested from bidding member associations.



Requirements for hosting



The content covers a broad base of topics as illustrated in the following diagram and referred to in the **Structure, Content and Format of Bid** document.

Hosting vision & strategy	Host Country information	Technical matters	Other event-related matters	Sustainable event management, human rights and environmental protection
Integrated hosting vision & strategy	General information	Stadiums	Communication, PR and event promotion	Sustainable event management
Legacy	Political information	Team & referee facilities	FIFA Fan Fest	Human rights & labour standards
Political support in Host Country(ies)	Economic information	Accommodation & FIFA HQ	Host City services	Environmental protection
	Media & marketing information	Airports	Volunteers	
		Transport infrastructure & general mobility	Competition-related events	
		IT&T & IBC	Health & medical system	
		Safety & security	Expenditure budget & ticket revenues	

Requirements for hosting



For indicative purposes only, below is a snapshot of some of the requirements for some key areas in terms of inventory and capacities. The areas of stadiums and team and referee facilities have been selected for illustration as these are two of the central infrastructure components under the technical evaluation report.

It is important to bear in mind that this only represents part of the requirements for hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup and that the definitive hosting requirements for all operational areas will be set out in the hosting documents received by the bidding associations.

Component	Requirements	
Stadiums		
Stadiums: minimum net seating capacities	Opening Match	80,000
	Remaining Group Stage matches	40,000
	Round of 32	40,000
	Round of 16	40,000
	Quarter-finals	40,000
	Semi-finals	60,000
	Third place play-off	40,000
	Final	80,000
Team & referee facilities		
Team Base Camp Training Sites	48 (with 72 proposals)	
Team Base Camp Hotels	48 (with 72 proposals)	
Venue-Specific Training Sites	2-4 per stadium (with 4 proposals per stadium) ¹	
Venue-Specific Team Hotels	2-4 per stadium (with 4 proposals per stadium) ¹	
Referee Base Camp Training Sites	1 (with 2 proposed)	
Referee Base Camp Hotels	1 (with 2 proposed)	

¹ The final number selected depends upon a number of factors, including the match schedule and impact on team movements, etc.



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Government support

As a condition for their appointment to host and stage the competition, member associations are required to secure the full support of the governmental authorities at federal, state and municipal level in their respective countries. This covers, for example, the issuance of government guarantees and the provision of operational, fiscal and administrative support.



Government support



FIFA has published an [overview document](#) that provides a more detailed explanation of the government guarantees. The templates for the Government Declaration and Host City Declaration are also available in the Documents section at the end of this guide. Some of the important guarantees requested from governments are:

Visas, permits, immigration, check-in procedures

The government is requested to generally establish a visa-free environment or to facilitate existing visa procedures for individuals involved in the competition. In any case, any visa procedures must be applied in a non-discriminatory manner.

Safety and security

Each government is requested to assume full responsibility – at its own cost – for the safety and security of the competition. This includes developing a security strategy and concept, implementing the necessary security measures, taking into consideration international standards on security and human rights and assuming liability for safety and security incidents.

Work permits and labour law

The government is requested to guarantee the issuance of valid work permits unconditionally and without any restriction or discrimination of any kind. It is also requested to grant exemptions from labour law and other legislation for companies and personnel directly involved with the competition, provided that these exemptions do not undermine or compromise the government's commitment to respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights.

Protection and exploitation of commercial rights

The government must acknowledge FIFA's unrestricted and inclusive ownership of any commercial rights in relation to the competition. For example, FIFA needs full legal and administrative support in relation to the sale and use of match tickets in order to make available as many tickets as possible to football fans at affordable prices.

Tax exemptions and foreign exchange undertakings

The government is requested to provide a limited tax exemption to FIFA and to certain third parties involved in the hosting and staging of the competition. The legal effect of these tax exemptions is limited to certain periods where competition-related activities are envisaged. The only exception are payments relating to the FIFA World Cup legacy programme remaining in the host countries after the FIFA World Cup.

Anti-discrimination pledge

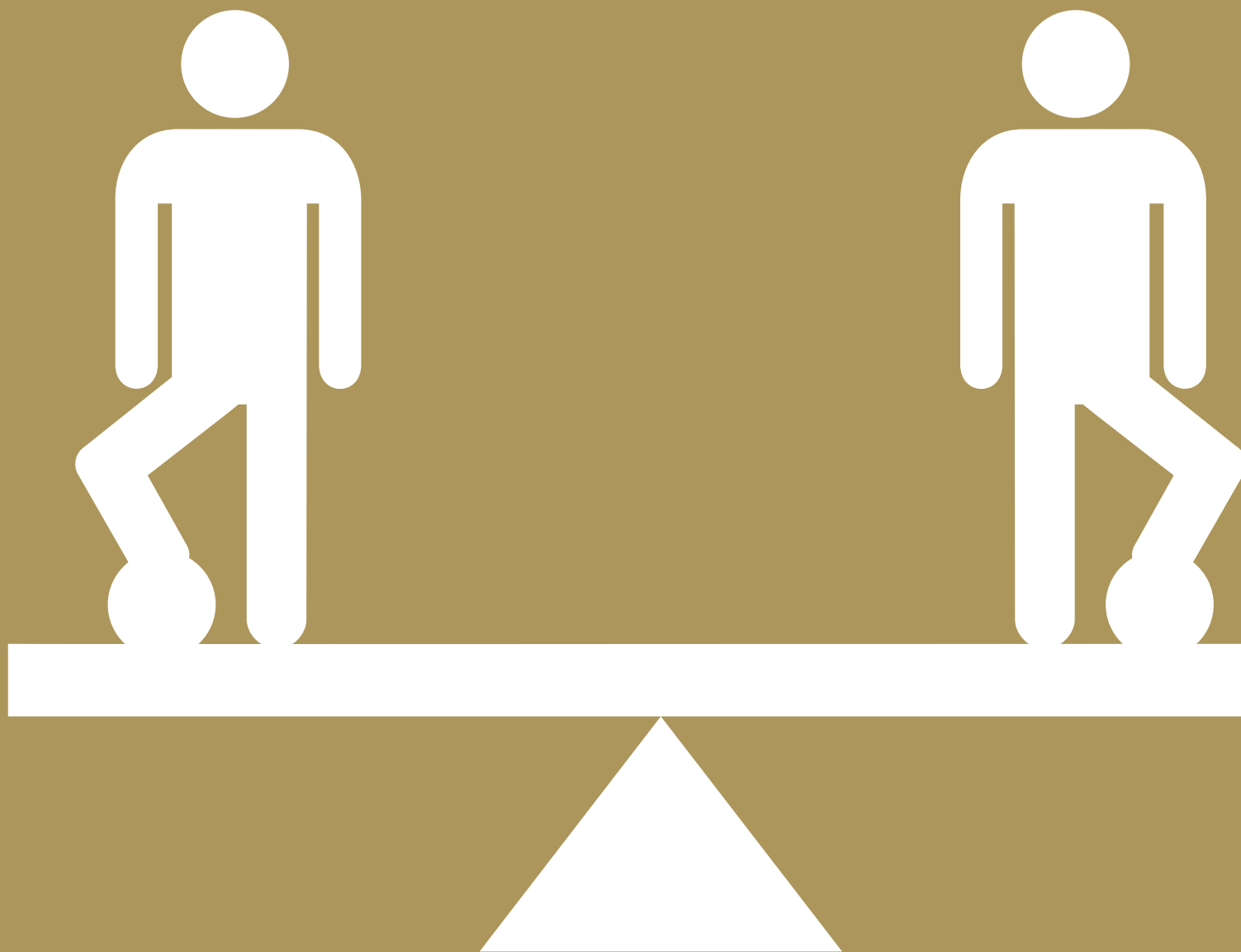
As part of the Government Declaration, each host country shall guarantee that:

- the national anthem of each competing team may be played before each match;
- the national flag of each competing team may be flown;
- there is no discrimination of any nature.

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Sustainability & human rights

FIFA expects all entities involved in hosting and staging the 2026 FIFA World Cup to follow the principles of sustainable event management and to respect internationally recognised human rights in line with the United Nations' Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.



Sustainability



With regard to **sustainable event management**, the bidding member associations must provide:

- an explicit public commitment to follow sustainable event management principles and promote sustainable development in the host country;
- a strategy for a sustainable-event-management system in line with applicable international standards (ISO 20121, AA1000SES, GRI) that includes:
 - provisions for sustainable procurement
 - provisions for sustainable procurement and supply-chain management;
 - safeguards against corruption;
 - mechanisms for conducting stakeholder engagement.

The sustainability strategy must, at the very least, address the following issues:

- respect for human rights (see below for more information);
- the promotion of diversity and zero tolerance for discrimination;
- the accessibility of the competition, including for disabled people;
- compliance with relevant domestic regulations and international agreements related to the environment;
- an environmental impact assessment;
- the sustainability of stadiums with regard to how they are designed, built and operated;
- the mitigation of our impact on climate change;
- the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste;
- the impact of transport, water usage and energy on the environment;
- ensuring a tobacco-free competition;
- the promotion of social development through football as well as local economic development in the host country.

Human rights



The member associations must also provide specific commitments and information on **human rights and labour standards**, including:

- an explicit public commitment to respect all internationally recognised human rights in line with the United Nations' Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;
- a proposal for a human rights strategy on how to identify and address the risks of adverse impacts on human rights and labour standards. The strategy must include:
 - a comprehensive report identifying and assessing any risks of adverse impacts on human rights and labour standards that is informed by a study by an independent expert institution assessing the respective country's human rights context;
 - mechanisms that will be put in place to address all of the identified human rights risks;
 - a concept outlining ways in which the member associations will provide for or cooperate in access to remedy in the event that adverse human rights impacts have occurred.
- guarantees of compliance with international human rights and labour standards from the government and host cities (see the Government Declaration and Host City Declaration templates in the Documents section below), as well as from the entities responsible for the construction and renovation of stadiums, training sites, hotels and airports.

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Documents



Bidding Regulations



Bidding Registration



Structure, Content and
Format of Bid



Overview of
Government Support
Documents



Template Government
Declaration (single bid)



Template Government
Declaration (joint bid)



Template Host City
Declaration (single bid)



Template Host City
Declaration (joint bid)



FIFA Statutes



FIFA Code of Ethics



FIFA Human Rights Policy

The image features a stylized, minimalist representation of a soccer field in a light olive-green color. The field is divided into a central rectangle and two side areas, with a vertical line running down the center. At the center of the field is a large circle, which serves as the background for the FIFA logo. The logo itself consists of the word "FIFA" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, followed by a registered trademark symbol (®). The overall design is clean and modern, with a focus on the central branding element.

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