

**Press release**

**New Report: Qatar’s Hosting of the FIFA Men’s World Cup  
The Issues and Challenges Ahead**

**Paris, November 15, 2022.** Ahead of the FIFA Men’s World Cup in Qatar, SKEMA PUBLIKA think tank publishes [a report on the issues and challenges](#) to expect during this sport mega-event.

The report, written by **Simon Chadwick**, Professor of Sport and Geopolitical Economy at SKEMA Business School, examines the background to Qatar’s hosting of the men’s World, the country’s preparedness to host the tournament, the event’s management, and the legacies. To conclude, the report highlights areas in which there could be issues for Qatari and FIFA World Cup organisers to contend with, at perhaps one of the biggest, but certainly one of the most controversial, sport mega-events ever staged.

*‘It has been 14 years since Qatar began working on its World Cup bid, and 12 years since it won hosting rights. During that time, the country has become embroiled in numerous controversies though the Qataris have still had to plan, organise, and stage one of the world’s biggest sport mega-events. All of this means that the 2022 World Cup will be a tournament like no other: a nation building project underpinned by a grand vision, which has nevertheless faced a complex network of moral, ideological, and operational challenges. The upcoming tournament will reveal how successful Qatar has been as a mega-event host, but at the same time will highlight some hugely important lessons about the state of our world today, how sport has been impacted by a series of giga-changes, and what the future holds for both mega-event hosting and sport in general.’ – Simon Chadwick, Professor of Sport & Geopolitical Economy at SKEMA Business School.*

**The report points to 10 areas to closely watch during the tournament:**

1. **Overt, provocative displays of activism from players, fans and others** who may be seeking to communicate messages challenging Qatar and its organisation of the tournament;
2. **Threat of attacks, which may be physical, though are more likely to be digital** and could include hacking (perhaps of ticketing systems) and coordinated campaigns against Qatar on social media;
3. **Ambush marketing being employed by brands that are rivals to those officially associated with the tournament**, with the use of Arab and Middle Eastern stereotypes being used as part of any such activities;
4. With concessions having been made towards both FIFA’s alcohol sponsor and those demanding a conventional tournament experience, **the outcomes of drinking and drunkenness (such as hooliganism)** may pose challenges;
5. Given the likely demands on critical infrastructure – as well as on food, water and other imported goods – **the resilience of provision and supply, allied to contingency measures**, could be tested;
6. Bold claims have been made by both FIFA and the Qatari organisers about the tournament’s **environmental credentials**, though with significant numbers of people ‘commuting’ to Doha by plane, doubts exist about the voracity of these claims;
7. As the Qataris have deployed the World Cup as a policy instrument for effecting positive sociocultural changes, how **this impacts upon worker rights and labour markets, changes in the health and well-being of its population, and improves social cohesion and the sense of national identity**, should be assessed;
8. Qatar’s World Cup staging has supposedly been an exercise in **nation building, nation branding, soft power projection and the promotion of positive international relations**, how and to what extent these have been achieved (or not) should be assessed;

9. **The role that social and digital media will play during the tournament** will be significant, given the ascent of TikTok since the last World Cup in 2018, the emergence of the metaverse, and the way in which social networks engage with the tournament, all pose interesting questions for observers;
10. Though there is some evidence that Qatar intends to continue staging sport mega-events, it needs to be asked: a) **What have been the returns on investment for Qatar of staging the World Cup?** And b) **Strategically, especially within the sphere of sport, what happens next for Qatar?**



Download report on SKEMA Publika's website:

<https://publika.skema.edu/qatar-hosting-fifa-men-world-cup-issues-and-challenges-ahead>

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