



What people think,
feel and do

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Opinium

Qatar 2022 World Cup



Key findings

15 November 2022

Project details

PROJECT NAME	QATAR 2022 WORLD CUP
CLIENT COMPANY NAME	Opinium
PROJECT MANAGER NAME	Mike Burgess
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SAMPLE	4,000 UK adults weighted to be nationally representative
FIELDWORK DATES	3 rd to 7 th November 2022

Attitudes to the Qatar World Cup

Four in ten football fans believe the upcoming World Cup will be worst ever

Two in five (41%) football fans are less excited about the 2022 World Cup in comparison to previous World Cups, with around the same number (40%) believing the 2022 World Cup will be the worst World Cup ever.

Similarly, three in four (74%) agree that Qatar should not have ever been awarded the competition. For some these attitudes spill over into viewing behaviour, as a third (34%) of fans planning to watch less of the 2022 World Cup given the issues raised.

Aside from the humanitarian issues fans, are also concerned about the actual tournament. Two thirds (65%) believe the atmosphere at the World Cup will suffer due to lack of travelling fans and half (50%) believe the quality of football at World Cup will suffer due to player fatigue.

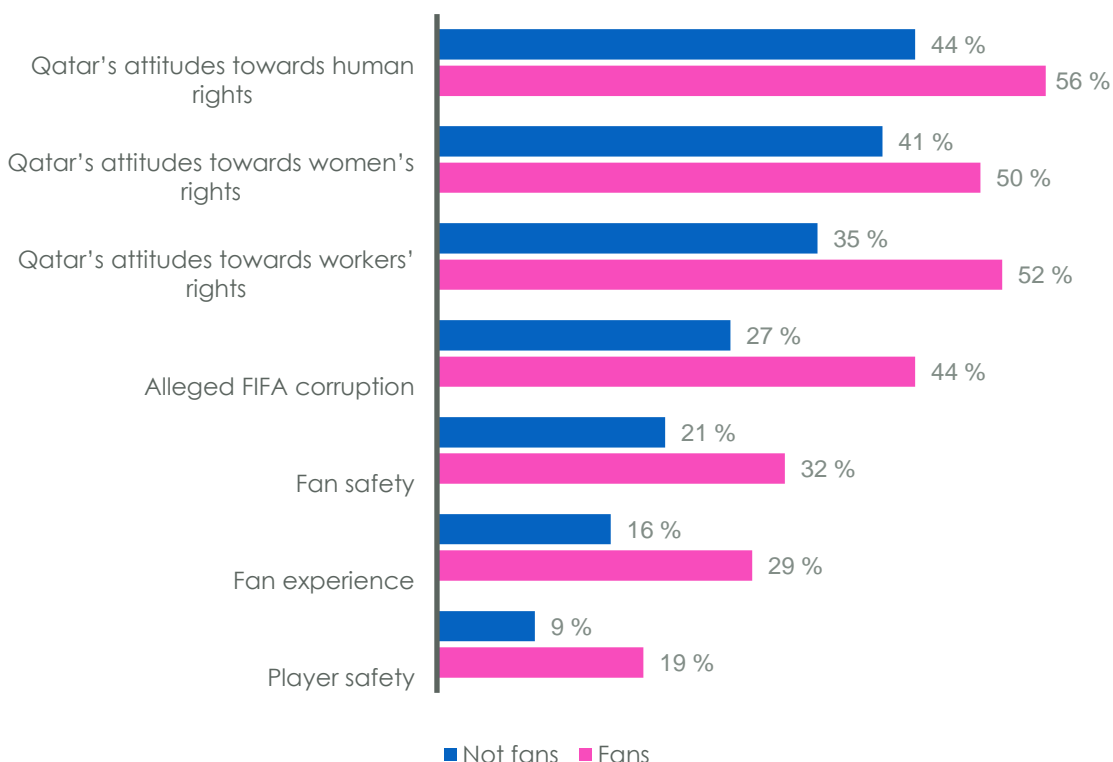
There is a strong awareness of concerns surrounding workers, women's and LGBTQ+ rights amongst fans

Nine in ten football fans are aware of various concerns surrounding the World Cup including Qatar's attitude towards LGBTQ+ rights (94%), women's rights (93%) and worker's rights (90%). Four in ten (40%) football fans say they know a lot about Qatar's attitude towards LGBTQ+ rights and a third (both 34%) know a lot about attitudes to women's and workers rights in Qatar.

Brits who don't count themselves football fans are less aware, with a third (33%) unaware of concerns surrounding Qatar's workers rights record and more than a fifth (22%) unaware of concerns surrounding Qatar's attitude towards LGBTQ+ rights.

Coverage of issues seen in the media

% of those who have seen each issue



Six in ten Brits (62%) have seen Qatar's attitudes towards LGBTQ+ rights raised in the media. Other noticeable humanitarian issues that have been noticed include Qatar's attitudes towards human (50%), women's (46%) and workers (44%) rights. However, a fifth (19%) have seen no issues raised in relation to Qatar in the media.

Despite high levels of both awareness and coverage a majority of football fans still want to hear more in the media about the concerns surrounding Qatar, including on humanitarian issues such as women's rights (57%), workers right's (55%) and LGBTQ+ rights (51%).

Fans believe everyone must play a part in raising awareness of the issues

Half of Brits believe the news media (51%) have a responsibility for raising awareness of issues in relation to the World Cup. Brits also believe international bodies (47%), journalists (46%) and the sports media (43%) are also responsible. However, only four in ten (40%) believe politicians have a responsibility to raise the issues.

Six in ten (59%) of England and Wales fans believe their team have a responsibility to raise awareness of issues in Qatar, while 16% disagree.

Half (50%) of those which believe that their team has a responsibility for raising these issues think it should be actively discussed in the media by their team. In addition, one in five (19%) would prefer to take more extreme measures by boycotting the tournament all together.

SUPPORT FOR OTHER WAYS TO RAISE AWARENESS

1. Team gesture e.g. taking the knee	43%
2. Wearing kits designed to raise awareness	42%
3. Wear rainbow laces/armband/training kit in support of the LGBTQ+ community	42%
4. Wearing shirts to raise awareness	40%
5. Donate their international fee to relevant charities	38%
4. A percentage of shirts sales should be donated to relevant charities	38%

In terms of what teams should be raising awareness of, concerns surrounding human (51%), LGBTQ+ (43%), women's (39%) and worker's (36%) rights top the list as the most important issues fans believe to be highlighted.

Fans show support for speaking out against Qatar

Some have already begun to voice their concerns surrounding the upcoming World Cup. Three in four (77%) football fans support the Australia team's recently released video in which players highlighted their concerns about the "suffering" of migrant workers and the inability of LGBTQ+ people in Qatar "to love the person that they choose".

A similar number (79%) support the Danish team's recently revealed third kit which is completely black to honour migrant workers who died during construction work for the tournament.

But less than two thirds (61%) would support England taking the knee to show that they stand against racism in football and society, though football fans (65%) are more supportive of the action compared to non-fans (56%).

There was also a stark difference across ages with three in four (75%) of Brits aged 18 to 34 supporting the taking of the knee compared to less than half of over 55's (48%). This reflects with the view held by nearly two in five Brits (38%) that footballers should stay out of politics.

Dismay at World Cup disruption for club but could lead to a boost for the lower leagues

Half (50%) of football fans are annoyed that club football has been interrupted by the World Cup. More than half (54%) agree that quality of football for the rest of the club season will suffer due to player fatigue, and, reflecting this, 47% say that the World Club are ruined the club season

But the impact of the world cup is not all bad news for local teams. League one and League two plan to continue playing throughout the World Cup and the World Cup could be a boost for teams still playing, with a fifth (21%) of football fans planning to attend a lower league match during the World Cup that they wouldn't attend otherwise.

Footballing fun

“All I want for Christmas...” is for Football to Come Home

It won't be just Mariah and the Pogue's on repeat this December. When the World Cup is in full swing England fans will be singing football home, as 'Three lions' (29%) tops the list of World Cup tunes that England fans will be blasting out to get them in the mood for matches. 'Sweet Caroline' (23%) and 'Come on England' (16%) round off the top 3.

Other classics on the list are 'Vindaloo' (13%), 'World in motion' (12%) and 'All together now' (11%), while 6% will be turning the clocks back to the early 00's with the Bell & Spurling hit 'Sven Sven Sven'

Fans will also take the opportunity to cross their Christmas traditions with their World cup fandom, one in ten (11%) say they'll be donning a football-themed Christmas jumper. A similar number (9%) will be using the opportunity of their outdoor Christmas lights display to show support for their team.

Winter World Cup could reduce boozy boost for pubs

For those planning to watch at least some of the World Cup, the majority (71%) plan to watch from home. Though this drops to 50% among those aged 18 to 34, which are the age group most likely (12%) to watch at the pub.

Six in ten (60%) football fans say they would normally the pub at least once during the World Cup, but this number drops to 44% for fans planning to visit the pub this year.

Overall, of those planning to watch the World cup this year, three in ten (29%) will spend less time at the pub watching this World Cup compared to in 2018.

Two in five (46%) of those watching less from the pub say this is due to the rise in living costs. More than a third (37%) will be watching less at the pub as they don't agree with the tournament being held in Qatar, while a similar number (34%) put it down to worse weather. One in twelve (8%) England supporters don't believe in the team's ability making them less likely to visit the pub.

With fans typically spending around £26 when they visit the pub during the World Cup, reduced visits during the world cup could hurt the industry when they most need a boost.

A fifth of workers will find a way to watch the World Cup at work despite not being allowed to watch it

Less than half (47%) of working fans will be allowed to watch the World Cup during working hours. One in five (20%) will be able to leave their home office or workplace to watch the football and more than a quarter (27%) say their workplace will show the matches.

Though 47% say they won't be able to watch the games during work, a fifth (19%) say they will find a way to watch anyway. For example, a third (32%) of working football fans would pretend to be ill to get a day off work to watch their nation's match at the World Cup, with a fifth (21%) admitting having done so previously.

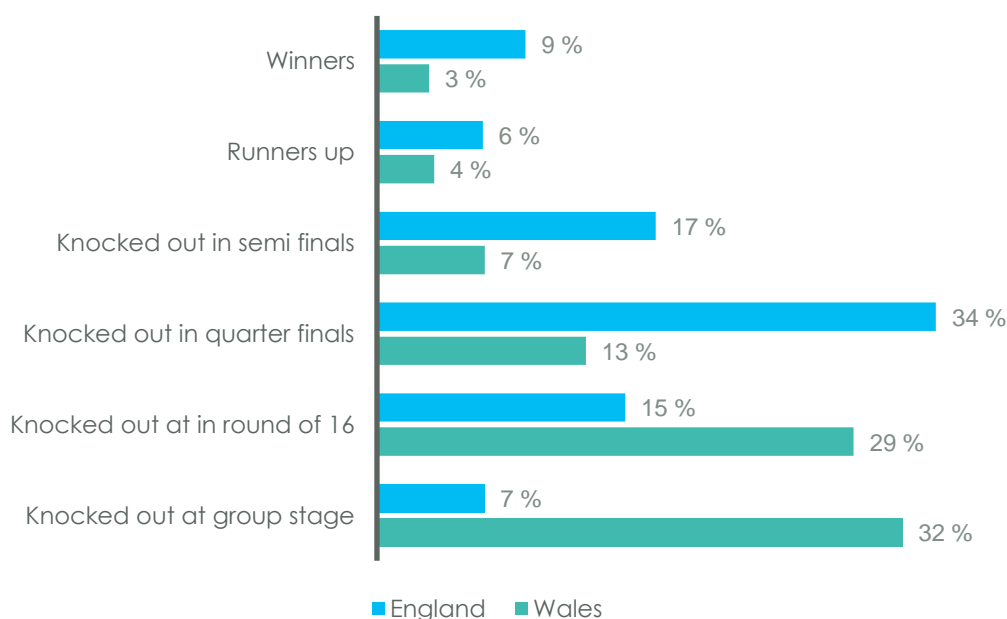
World Cup predictions

Fans would prefer a World Cup win over their Christmas wish list

Three in ten (29%) England fans would consider flying out to Qatar if the team managed to progress past the group stage, including one in twelve (8%) would consider heading out for the quarter finals, 9% for the semi's and one in ten (10%) for the final. In comparison, one in four (25%) Wales fans would do the same, with 6% willing to consider flying our if they progressed to the quarter finals, 4% the semi's, and 9% the final.

While less willing to travel to Qatar, Wales fans don't want victory any less. Three in four (76%) Wales fans would rather Wales win the World Cup than get everything on their Christmas wish list, compared to just 57% of England.

Predicted performance of England and Wales among British football fans



Nearly one in ten (9%) English football fans believe it could be the team's year. Should England end 56 years of hurt and bring football home, (49%) of England fans believe there should be a bank holiday to celebrate.

Brits back Brazil to bounce back

British football fans rate Brazil (19%) as tournament favourites, with England (13%), Germany (12%) and France (11%) all strong competitors. Mbappe (15%) is backed to finish as top goal scorer followed by Messi (12%), Kane (11%) and Ronaldo (10%).

When asked British football fans back themselves on the big stage too. More than half (55%) fancy themselves to score should they be put in place of Harry Kane for the tournament, with an eighth (12%) even believing they could rival Kane's Golden boot winning tally of 6 back in 2018 by scoring 5 or more goals.

British fans believe Croatia (10%) could be a surprise package this year having reached the final last time round. The USA (8%) and Uruguay (7%) are also fancied. Just 6% think Wales could be a dark horse, but this increases to 38% amongst Welsh fans who back their boys.

About Opinium

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