

## DATA AT A GLANCE

## Some Significant Ebbs and Flows in FIFA World Cups' Attendance

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This year's FIFA World Cup in Russia had concluded very successfully, and this early, football aficionados are already looking forward to visiting Qatar, the 2022 host. Based on Table 1 data, we determined if there had been significant increases or decreases in the average attendance across the 20 World Cup games played in 1930–2014, which took place mainly in Europe and Latin America.

Across 84 years and an array of host countries, data suggest that the World Cup games had an attendance of 20,872 to 68,991 persons on average. To determine the growth trends and rates (increase/positive or decrease/negative) in attendance, the number of World Cup attendance at the earlier year (e.g., A1934) was subtracted from the number of World Cup attendance at the next immediate year (i.e., A1938); and the result was divided by the number in the earlier year (e.g., A1934) and multiplied by 100.

Table 1 lists the increments (range: 2.6% to 127.6%) and decrements (range: -0.26% to -37.7%) in the Cup attendees, but only about half of these changes could be considered as significant ( $\geq 20\%$ ). The most notable increments are noted in the World Cup games in Brazil in 1950 (127.6%), England in 1966 (75.0%), and the USA in 1994 (42.5%); in contrast, the most significant decrements are observed in the World Cup games in Switzerland in 1954 (-37.7%), France in 1998 (-36.9%), and Italy in 1934 (-34.9%). Overall, significant changes in the World Cup attendance were host country-specific, and thus, were a normative characteristic only of some World Cup games rather than the entire games. The World Cup will be understood more if the explanations to these significant ebbs and flows in attendance are studied for research purposes as well as for promotion and marketing strategies.

**Table 1.** *FIFA's World Cup, 1930-2014, by Host Country, Attendance, and Growth Trend and Rate*

Year	Host Country	Average Attendance	Growth Trend	Growth Rate
1930	Uruguay	32808	Start	Start
1934	Italy	21352	decreased	-34.9
1938	France	20872	decreased	-2.24
1950	Brazil	47511	increased	127.6
1954	Switzerland	29561	decreased	-37.7
1958	Sweden	23423	decreased	-20.7
1962	Chile	27911	increased	19.1
1966	England	48847	increased	75.0
1970	Mexico	50124	increased	2.6
1974	Germany	49098	decreased	-2.0
1978	Argentina	40678	decreased	-17.1
1982	Spain	40571	decreased	-0.26
1986	Mexico	46039	increased	13.4
1990	Italy	48388	increased	5.1
1994	USA	68991	increased	42.5
1998	France	43517	decreased	-36.9
2002	Korea/Japan	42268	decreased	-2.8
2006	Germany	52491	increased	24.1
2010	South Africa	49669	decreased	-5.3
2014	Brazil	52918	increased	6.5

### Reference

FIFA. (2018). *FIFA world cup all time statistics*. Retrieved from <https://goo.gl/WMq9s8>