

QATAR 2022 WORLD CUP - A BIG CONTRIBUTOR TO THE TOURISM SECTOR



Soccer will boost Qatar's influence on the world tourism sector by showing off its modern and World Cup-driven infrastructure. The cost of traveling to the country is so high that it will leave an economic spillover that will further strengthen the country.

Not only language, transportation and accommodation are among the main concerns for fans of the Qatar 2022 World Cup.

"This is the most complicated World Cup in the modern era for logistics. Fans see prices going up and don't know when they will stop," says Ronan Evain, head of Football Supporters Europe.

As prices soar, round-trip air tickets from European capitals to Doha in November have already reached nearly three times the cost as in 2021. Many fans still don't know if they will be able to afford the tickets for the matches which are a third more expensive on average than those of the Russia 2018 World Cup, and they can't book accommodations on the official website without a seat number.

Qatar's challenge will be to receive a large influx of foreign tourists. According to official government estimates, the country is expected to receive more than 1.2 million visitors, 40% of its total population. Qatar has one of the highest income per capita in the world and is endowed with a tourism infrastructure that exceeds its usual demand.

"We anticipate that the contribution to the economy essentially would be around 20 billion," said Hassan Al Thawadi, secretary general of the Delivery and Legacy Committee, a group that is building the infrastructure for the 2022 World Cup. That amount is equivalent to about 11% of the country's gross domestic product in 2019.

However, the construction and tourism sector are expected to be the main beneficiaries. The analysis is the result of "a very high-level study and more detailed projections will not be known until after the event takes place in November and December 2022," Al Thawadi added.

Qatar's event-driven infrastructure build-out includes a metro system, airport expansion and the construction of a new city. Bloomberg Intelligence pegs the total value of all these construction plans at \$300 billion.

"The World Cup is meant to drive and accelerate many of the initiatives that the government has already committed to, whether in terms of urban development or economic diversification," explains Al Thawadi.

Qatar has faced a lot of criticism over its plan to host the world's top soccer tournament not only over accusations of human rights abuses, but also over concerns that fans will not have much fun as in Qatar's conservative Muslim culture alcohol is served only in luxury hotels.

"Visitors have to be always mindful of local cultures and norms. The decision to allow dress that

violates cultural codes such as tank tops and shorts in commercial places will be left to private business owners and alcohol will be available in designated areas such as fan zones," Al Thawadi said.

As the World Cup shows its ability to gain international prestige, Qatar's status as a gas supplier is solid and promises to make the small peninsula a bigger player.

Rising oil prices due to the war in Ukraine have boosted Middle Eastern oil producers such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait but the financial and geopolitical rewards for Qatar make it the standout winner. Qatar's energy exports reach 100 billion this year for the first time since 2014, according to Bloomberg estimates. That will allow the country to spend an even greater amount in global stock markets and in pursuit of its foreign policy goals. Meanwhile, the Qatari government expects a \$20 billion economic income from hosting the World Cup.

Date: 2022-05-09

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/qatar-tourism-sector-to-benefit-greatly-from-world-cup-2022-news12529>