

**WHY
WE
WILL
BOYCOTT
THE WORLD CUP
2022**

#BoycottQatar2022



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Adidas says of its FIFA sponsorship: "We are following the developments around the World Cup very closely, especially in light of the fact that for adidas, respect for human rights is also a high priority for its suppliers and partners." Since the human rights situation in Qatar has been known for a long time, we wonder about so much blindness. Presumably the view is clouded by business sense.

SPONSORS DONATIONS

As we do without sponsors, we ask all those who support our cause and can afford it to make a donation on the non-profit donation platform www.betterplace.me/boycott-qatar-2022. We will use it exclusively for actions, events, panel discussions and more that will cost money. Thank you very much!



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KICK-OFF

Dear readers,

In the winter of 2022, Qatar is to host the World Cup tournament. We think: This is no occasion to celebrate a merry football festival. On the contrary. FIFA's decision in favour of Qatar as host country massively violates the precepts of humanity and sporting fairness. Their motive was not the protection of human rights or the development of a football culture that unites people. For FIFA, the decisive factor was that Qatar is a rich country with an authoritarian government that complies with all the demands of the world governing body and its sponsors. As fans who love football, we cannot accept this.

On the following pages we would like to show

- ◆ why Qatar is not a suitable host country,
- ◆ how FIFA came to choose this country anyway,
- ◆ why we founded our initiative,
- ◆ why #BoycottQatar2022 means more than just ignoring the tournament.

The football business has taken an unfortunate turn in recent decades. Money and the laws of the entertainment industry play an ever increasing role. The 2022 World Cup in Qatar is now a sad climax. Reason enough to say: That's enough for us. We are going into counter-pressing.

We, that is fan initiatives and individuals who are building an active network of protest in Germany. We invite you to support our campaign and our goals. The more we are, the more clearly we will be heard.

#BOYCOTT
**QATAR**
2022

BOYCOTT

What do we mean by #BoycottQatar2022?

First of all: We do not have the illusion that we can still prevent the World Cup tournament. Perhaps fan movements in individual countries will manage to persuade their federations to abandon the tournament. Such attempts are being made in some countries, and the DFB (German Football Federation) is also being asked to do so. It would be good if they listened. But the tournament would probably still take place.

The boycott we are talking about should take place primarily here in Germany and elsewhere, if possible united with the fan movements in other countries. It's not about simply turning off the TV and ignoring the World Cup. Rather, we want to clearly name all the points that we don't like about the 2022 World Cup: the indisputable human rights situation in Qatar; the slave-like living conditions for the migrant workers there; FIFA's greed for ever new sources of money; the corruption of its officials; the fatal development of professional football in Europe as well.

The boycott should be active

We want to be active against such abuses: in events, through social media campaigns, with mass protest letters to the World Cup sponsors or in alternative football tournaments organised by fans themselves – whenever a game in Qatar is played.

In this way, we want to counteract the glamorous staging that FIFA and the Qatar regime want to present to the world public. Their image should not be polished up, but damaged. In future, it should not be worthwhile for FIFA or autocratic rulers, and certainly not for sponsors, to exploit football in this way.



More success through dialogue?

Since the boycott has been discussed more intensively among fans, critics of this measure have also spoken out in the media. One argument is that an international tournament can help people in need in the host country because it draws attention there. Isn't it better to have a dialogue? Didn't Qatar promise labour reforms that probably wouldn't have come without the World Cup?

The fact is that FIFA has ignored the situation of migrant workers for years. It was only because human rights groups persisted in raising awareness that FIFA and the Qatari regime feared a loss of image and agreed to minor reforms. De facto, however, these reforms only apply to the World Cup construction sites. According to NGOs, hardly anything has changed for the vast majority of workers. And: The discrimination against women and homosexuals as well as the restriction of freedom of opinion remain – they were never an issue for FIFA anyway.

A question of “culture”?

Boycott advocates are also accused of a Eurocentric attitude. They would not take into account that other countries have different religious and cultural traditions. But does this argument justify relativising human rights? Wouldn't we then also have to forgive host countries like Russia and China for their human rights violations, because they do not have a democratic past? Wouldn't we then also have to excuse anti-Semitism in Germany with a centuries-old tradition? And abuse in the Catholic Church with the same argument?

Human rights are indivisible and their disregard is not the result of an ominous “culture”, but follows the interests of political and/or religious elites. That must not be our yardstick.

#Boycott Qatar2022 does not mean boycotting the people of Qatar. It is a spectacle to hide the human rights situation in the country.



NO BLOOD
FOR THE
SPECTACLE

No freedoms in Qatar

FIFA's Human Rights Declaration of May 2017 states: "FIFA strives to create an environment free of discrimination within the organisation and in all its activities." How is this claim compatible with the situation in the country hosting the 2022 World Cup?

Political rights?

The al-Thani dynasty has ruled Qatar since its foundation in 1971. There is no clear separation of powers; one third of the members of the "parliament" appoint the head of state himself. Public criticism of the Emir and the ruling house is forbidden. Anyone who violates this must expect heavy penalties. In 2011, for example, the literature student Mohammed al-Ajami was sentenced to 15 years in prison for writing a poem that, among other things, "insulted the Emir". After international protests, the Emir pardoned him in 2016.

Human rights?

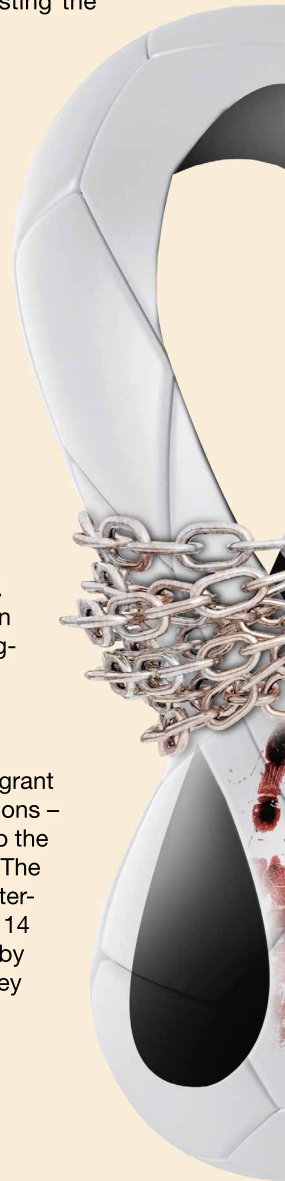
Qatar has multiple forms of male guardianship that massively discriminate against women in marriage, work, study and travel, Human Rights Watch said in a report published in March 2021. And for homosexuals, the Gulf state is one of the most dangerous countries in the world to travel to, according to the Gay Travel Index. Homosexuality is forbidden and punishable by up to five years in prison. Under the strict rules of Sharia law, there could even be floggings and executions.

Workers' rights?

In addition to the almost 300,000 Qataris, around 2.5 million migrant workers live in Qatar, who often have to work under slave-like conditions – despite reforms officially adopted in 2017. This does not only apply to the often cited workers on the World Cup and other construction sites. The army of domestic workers is also affected. 90 of the 105 women interviewed by Amnesty International in 2020 regularly work more than 14 hours a day, 87 said their passports had been taken away from them by their employers, 40 said they had been insulted, beaten or spat at. They can hardly defend themselves against this.

All this is certainly not a "discrimination-free environment".

QATAR



Small, but influential

The country hosting the 2022 World Cup is half the size of the German state of Hesse and has about as many citizens as a mid-size German town like Gelsenkirchen (Schalke 04). But at the same time, Qatar is one of the richest countries in the world (measured by GDP per capita) and politically influential.

Economic power

Qatar's wealth is based on immense oil and especially gas deposits. With the petrodollars, Qatari companies, sovereign wealth funds and foundations have made large-scale purchases abroad. Considerable stakes in VW, Hapag Lloyd, Deutsche Bank, Heathrow Airport, the London Stock Exchange, the world's largest commodities trader Glencore and the Russian state-owned oil company Rosneft, among others, have not only given the Qataris economic influence, but also political advocates such as the then German President Christian Wulff or France's former President Nicolas Sarkozy.

Sportswashing

In the last decade, the Qatari state has increasingly invested in sport. Around two billion euros have flowed into the top echelons of European football: as sponsor (FC Barcelona, FC Bayern), as owner (Paris Saint-Germain), as TV rights holder (Ligue 1).

At the same time, Qatar has been a host of major sporting events. With such investments, the Qataris want to polish up their image, which has been badly tarnished by harsh criticism of the undemocratic regime, the human rights situation in the country and support for religious fundamentalists.

Fundamentalism

The state religion in Qatar is the extremely conservative Wahhabi Islam. For years, there have been repeated media reports that fundamentalist Islamists receive generous financial donations from Qatar: Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood, jihadist terrorist groups in Syria or Libya, possibly also the Taliban and al-Qaida. This has brought Qatar alongside Iran and into conflict with Israel, but also with some of its neighbours in the Gulf region, first and foremost Saudi Arabia.

The logo of the 2022 World Cup, adapted to reality. A graphic by Nicolas Willimek.



At some point, the sky's the limit – FIFA

In the past 50 years, the two FIFA presidents João Havelange (1974-1998) and Joseph Blatter (1998-2015) have unscrupulously promoted the commercialisation of world football. They turned the football association into a kind of mafia – in the sense of a parallel society with hierarchical structures, its own jurisdiction and specific moral concepts. For decades, two dozen – increasingly corrupt – officials decided where one of the world's biggest and most attractive sporting events should take place every four years, the World Cup.

FIFA has become so powerful that it can demand tax exemption from each host for itself and its partners for the duration of the tournament, while the host country has to bear the huge costs for the infrastructure demanded by the football world association. This has sometimes fatal consequences: In 2010, for example, South Africa was left with a loss of around two billion euros, while FIFA collected more than the same amount as profit.

World Cups are paydays for FIFA. And to keep it that way, the mega-event must be staged without a hitch – almost at any price. Jérôme Valcke, the association's secretary general until 2016, explained with regard to the World Cup award to Russia that “sometimes less democracy in the planning of a World Cup is better”. Understandable in FIFA's logic, because authoritarian regimes can guarantee two things: political clout and high state investment. This means that countries like Russia and Qatar do not get the nod despite democratic deficits – but because of them. This will not change as long as FIFA is not reformed from the ground up. It is doubtful whether it can do this on its own.



How can I support BQ2022?

Good: Sign on our homepage www.boycottqatar2022.de. –
Better: Get a fan club in your area to support the initiative. –
Best: Become active yourself on site and tell us about it.
From stickers to events to choreos, everything is welcome.
We will support you as much as we can.

Against whom is the boycott directed?

The boycott actions are not aimed at Qatar or the Qataris. They are limited in time and are directed against FIFA's decision to hold a World Cup there. It is in the nature of things that criticism of the human rights situation in Qatar is also being voiced.

Why does Amnesty International not support the BQ2022 initiative?

The work of NGOs like Amnesty or Human Rights Watch entails negotiating with those in power. This is not possible if they endorse a boycott at the same time. But we are sure that such actions strengthen the NGOs' negotiating position.

Are you the only ones calling for a boycott?

No, fortunately not. And we are happy about all the others who do so for similar reasons as we do – and we are happy to network with them.

Why boycott only now and not earlier or in 2018 in Russia?

Sometimes it just takes time to realise that the previous criticism and forms of protest don't get you where you want to go.



#Boycott

From our call #BoycottQatar2022

Commercialisation, nepotism, corruption – these are the terms often associated with FIFA even before football.

With the decision to hold the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, it has its sights set on the markets of Islamic countries and finds in the emirate a partner that autocratically enforces its sponsor-friendly conditions. For this, according to serious press reports, the World Cup was sold for many millions of euros, and football merely serves as a colourful and attractive packaging.

Demonstrate resistance !

We football fans are not dreamers. We know that football has been subject to commercial tendencies and manipulation since its pioneering days. Their limits have been and are being extended, and to a certain extent football and we have to live with it.

At some point, however, there has to be an end to it! The much-cited “red line” has clearly been crossed with the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, and we will not put up with that. We will not leave it at critical comments, but set practical signs. We are also demonstrating our opposition to a World Cup tournament in Qatar ourselves, for example by

- sending protest mails and letters to FIFA en masse,
- not buying products with World Cup logos,
- not buying products from companies that are actively advertising the World Cup and thus sponsoring the tournament,
- not to travel to Qatar and not to participate in live open air screenings or similar at home.

Our aim is to disrupt the lucrative interplay between FIFA, sponsors and autocratic regimes. It must no longer be attractive for them to present the World Cup in this perverted way and further ruin football.



Qatar2022

Who joined #BoycottQatar2022 ?

The content of our work is based on an appeal, excerpts of which are printed on the adjacent page. It was formulated in autumn 2020 by some people who are active in the network “Never Again – Remembrance Day in German Football”. The first groups from Berlin, Mainz, Gelsenkirchen, Karlsruhe and Düsseldorf also came from this environment and expressed their active support and have since met and coordinated regularly.

In the meantime, the circle of supporters has grown considerably. They include various fan projects (from Hamburg, Lübeck, Kiel, Kassel ...), the AG Fananwälte (fan lawyers), the fan club spokesperson council as well as the FC St. Pauli fan shop (along with many other St. Pauli fan clubs), the BVB fan site schwatzgelb.de, the Karlsruhe Supporters, fan blogs such as Fortuna Brötchen and around 100 other initiatives from the fan and club scene. Among them are groups that have received several awards for their integrative and anti-racist commitment, such as Verein Gesellschaftsspiele e.V. Berlin, FC Internationale Berlin, FC Ente Bagdad, IVF Leipzig, Schalker Fan-Initiative e.V. and SC Aleviten Paderborn. A sub-group of Amnesty International is also part of it (Forty7Rights).

However, we do not see ourselves as another “fan umbrella organisation” like ProFans, BAFF or Unsere Kurve. Our initiative is limited in time with a view to the 2022 World Cup. Our most important concern is to bundle and support the protests against the tournament in Qatar.

We consider the active fan boycott to be the most effective form of protest: declaring that you will not watch the games, avoiding sponsors’ products, and instead setting your own accents. But we also seek cooperation with groups that do not want to rally under the boycott slogan but are similarly critical of the human rights situation in Qatar and FIFA’s policies.



Human rights know no borders

Protests and calls for a boycott

Resistance to the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar is growing everywhere. Football fans and their organisations worldwide are at the forefront.

Take **Denmark**, for example: supporters of the traditional Danish club Brøndby Copenhagen called on their national football association to boycott the event. “We are for football as we know it. We are against betrayal of football expressed by the World Cup in Qatar.”

Example **Norway**: Boycott demands from fans and several clubs. The club Tromsø IL had started the movement, six other of the 16 first division clubs around record champion Rosenborg Trondheim joined, several prominent players expressed their support for the boycott.

Example **UK**: The British-Irish Gay Football Supporter’s Network has called for a boycott of the World Cup.

Example **Netherlands**: The company Hendriks Graszoden, turf supplier for many World and European Championships, declined this time. “We have seen what is happening in Qatar. It was about a contract worth millions, but sometimes other things are more important than money.”

Examples from Germany:

The members of **Fortuna Düsseldorf** voted for a boycott of the tournament, and at **1. FC Köln** 84 per cent voted for the motion “Visible sign against Qatar World Cup”. At the regional league club **SV Babelsberg 03**, there has been a banner in the stadium since the beginning of the season reading “Qatar 2022 – Not our World Cup!”

Amnesty International demands that FIFA set up a compensation fund for the families of affected migrant workers in the amount of 440 million dollars – the amount of trophy money that will be distributed at the World Cup.

The **SPD Berlin**, the **DGB Hessen-Thüringen** and the **Evangelical Youth in the Rhineland and Bavaria** also voted for a boycott. The Federal Government Commissioner for Freedom of Religion or Belief, **Frank Schwabe**, who is also the human rights spokesperson for the SPD parliamentary group, is also in favour of “boycotting the World Cup in Qatar completely”.

Tumultuous scenes at the annual general meeting of **FC Bayern Munich**. Fans demanded that their club terminate all business relations with Qatar.

In March 2021, the independent alliance **ProFans**, a nationwide interest group for active fan and hard-core fan groups in Germany, called on the DFB to renounce the 2022 World Cup.

Various opinion research institutes in Germany have identified a **clear majority** in favour of a boycott of the World Cup in Qatar, even among football enthusiasts.

What we can do – action ideas

We want to express our anger and protest publicly in imaginative and diverse ways – with our own actions and by supporting fan initiatives, human rights groups and other organisations in their activities as best we can in the run-up to the World Cup tournament. Some ideas already exist.

- ◆ Football matches and tournaments: Before and during the World Cup tournament, fans can play the ball themselves (see the campaign of the Schalcker Fan Initiative below) or organise alternative tournaments like the ASAP Global Cup in Leipzig.
- ◆ Declarations by local football clubs (including lower-ranking ones) not to field national players for the World Cup. With a pinch of irony and a pinch of politics. This wonderful idea came from fans of KSV Hessen Kassel.
- ◆ Information and discussion events: If required, BQ2022 can establish contacts to competent speakers and, where possible, also to those affected.
- ◆ Choreos: In the run-up to the World Cup, choreographies in the kop ends against the FIFA decision in favour of Qatar would be a wonderful thing.
- ◆ Mail and postcard campaigns: FIFA, football federations and sponsors should know what we think of a World Cup in Qatar.
- ◆ Stickers/T-shirts/banners: We have printed materials with the #BQ2022 campaign logo. Make your position visible! See the back of the brochure for ordering options.

#Back2Bolzen (Back to Kick Around)

The Schalcker Fan-Initiative e.V. (Schalker against Racism) had a nice idea to express their rejection.

In the spirit of “Back to the roots of the game”, it wants to reach out to football fans all over the world with its #back2bolzen campaign started in the second half of 2021.

The goal: Instead of watching the broadcasts, as many people, organisations and clubs as possible should get active themselves on the match days of the FIFA World Cup 2022 between 21st November and 18th December 2022 – namely by playing football or supporting people who play, celebrating with them and enjoying the game. Just #back2bolzen. www.back2bolzen.de



Self-organised football tournaments like the one here in Mainz are a good way to demonstrate for human rights.

Fan campaigns on Qatar

Foto picture alliance/dpa, Oliver Berg



Action by the "naked national team": At a friendly match in Duisburg, they make an impressive plea for a boycott (4.9.2021).



In the cup match against FC Bayern Munich, Mönchen-Gladbach fans make it clear what they think of the World Cup in Qatar (27.11.2021).



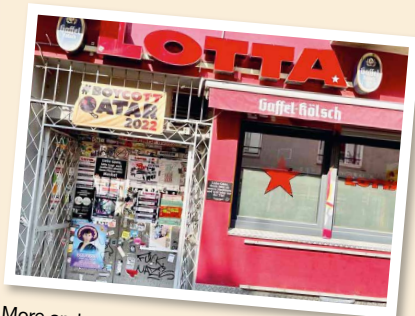
Exactly one year before the World Cup kick-off, Fortuna Brötchen displays our banner in front of the DFB Museum in Dortmund (21.11.2021).



At the Bundesliga match between VfL Bochum and BVB, fans on both sides vote for a boycott of the World Cup (11.12.2021).



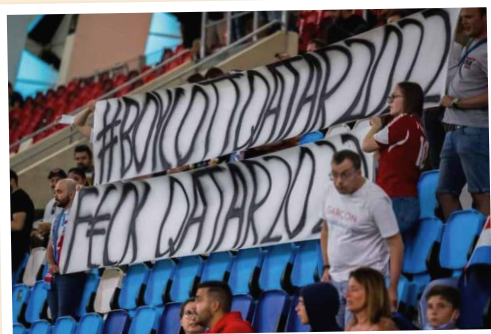
Art campaign in front of the FIFA headquarters in Zurich on 1st April 2022, the day of the World Cup group draw. The Osnabrück artist Volker-Johannes Trieb unloads thousands of footballs filled with sand, on which is printed: „Conscience of the world, you are a stain of shame“. He is drawing attention to the fate of migrant workers in Qatar.



More and more pubs want to boycott the broadcast of the World Cup tournament, including the "Lotta" in Cologne's south district.



Clear announcement at the international match in Wolfsburg against Liechtenstein (11.11.2021).



Curiously, the Qatar national team can play in a European qualifying group – including against Luxembourg, which fans there are protesting against (7.9.2021).



Bayern hard-core fans with a huge banner against the cooperation between FCB and Qatar (6.11.2021).

Most of these photos were sent to us, thank you very much. If you see or do similar campaigns, please send us a picture that we can put on our social media.

Useful things for the boycott

Everything about our initiative, detailed information material on FIFA and Qatar can be found on our homepage:

www.boycott-qatar2022.de und www.boycott-qatar.de

You can find up-to-date information on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram:

www.facebook.com/boycottqatar2022

www.twitter.com/boycottqatar22

www.instagram.com/boycott_qatar_2022

The appeal

... can be found at: www.boycott-qatar.de/english/call-for-action

... can be signed at: www.boycott-qatar.de/unterstuetzer

There you will also find a list of supporters.

Four films

by journalist Benjamin Best (for Sport inside, WDR) about the exploitation of Nepalese migrant workers on construction sites in Qatar:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXLzbVPSPjk

www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xb4GESmLdc

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLJOT-4Pa0M

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tznc9pf6SdA

The book

on the campaign provides concentrated information on FIFA's policies and the human rights situation in Qatar:

Beyer/Schulze-Marmeling: Boykottiert Qatar 2022! Why we must stop FIFA.

Published by Die Werkstatt. You can find more information here:

www.werkstatt-verlag.de/buecher/welt-und-europameisterschaften/boykottiert-katar-2022-warum-wir-die-fifa-stoppen-muessen

Stickers, T-shirts, banners

with the campaign logo are available at cost price.

View and order here:

www.boycott-qatar.de/materialien

Questions and contacts

info@boycott-qatar2022.de

