Global Economic Insight

FIFA World Cup 2026™: Eight key data takeaways from the halfway mark

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Where the FIFA 2026 World Cup™ is happening is most closely associated with its host countries, but given its digital reach to all corners of the world its footprint spans much more. Over a billion fans tuned in on televisions, mobile devices and streaming platforms, with many even adjusting their routines to follow the action. Their energy nearly matched the players on the pitch as they embraced their teams, shifted their schedules to make time for matches, and gathered with friends and family.

Many stories have covered the matches themselves. Our Visa spend data tells a different story: of how fans participated from afar, from their homes, workplaces and favorite gathering spots. Using aggregated transaction data from more than 80 countries (excluding the host countries), **Visa Business and Economic Insights** looked at how fans dipped, tapped, swiped and clicked from the early mornings through late nights to gauge at the mid-way point the impact of these games on consumers—a period when momentum was building but not yet peaked in the finals. What emerges is a familiar story in some cases: friends and family gathering at local pubs, restaurants and bars to share the joy and heartbreak with each goal. It is also a story of how electronic payments helped consumers enjoy the matches where it was most convenient for them. Here's the first of eight key insights we gleaned from the data.

Insight I: 1.5 times more of a boost in consumer purchases during weekday vs. weekend matches[1]

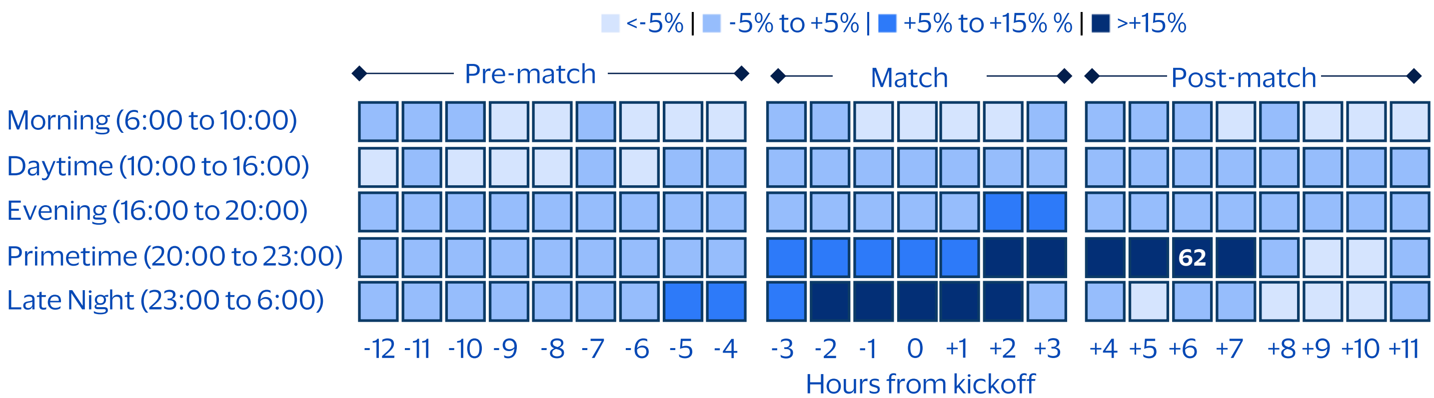
What may come as a surprise is that weekday (as opposed to weekend) matches triggered a greater lift in spending relative to a typical day. (We define a match as the three hours before and after kickoff), This attests to the power of the matches to shift spending that would have occurred on the weekends—when consumers typically have the time to spend—to the weekdays, which are saved for more routine predictable spend. It's not just daily spend that shifts, but also when spending occurs across categories.

FIFA / Getty Images

Insight II: 62 percent gain in spending at restaurants, bars and coffee shops for fans closing out their bills after watching the matches live in primetime

How fans experienced the matches was integrally linked to when the matches were broadcast live in their countries. When matches coincided with times fans usually relax, such as primetime or late night, they were more likely to gather outside their homes to catch the match together. The reverse was true for early-morning matches. To better capture these nuances, we centered our analysis around the time of kickoff for each market and then grouped them based on when the matches were broadcast locally, with primetime being when the matches were watched between 20:00 and 23:00. Here, spending tended to be weaker as fans likely delayed the start of their day and stayed home longer to catch the matches before heading to work (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: The maximum surge in spending at restaurants, bars and coffee shops occurred six hours after the match started for fans that were watching during primetime hours
Purchase transactions on match days vs. typical day (percent difference)

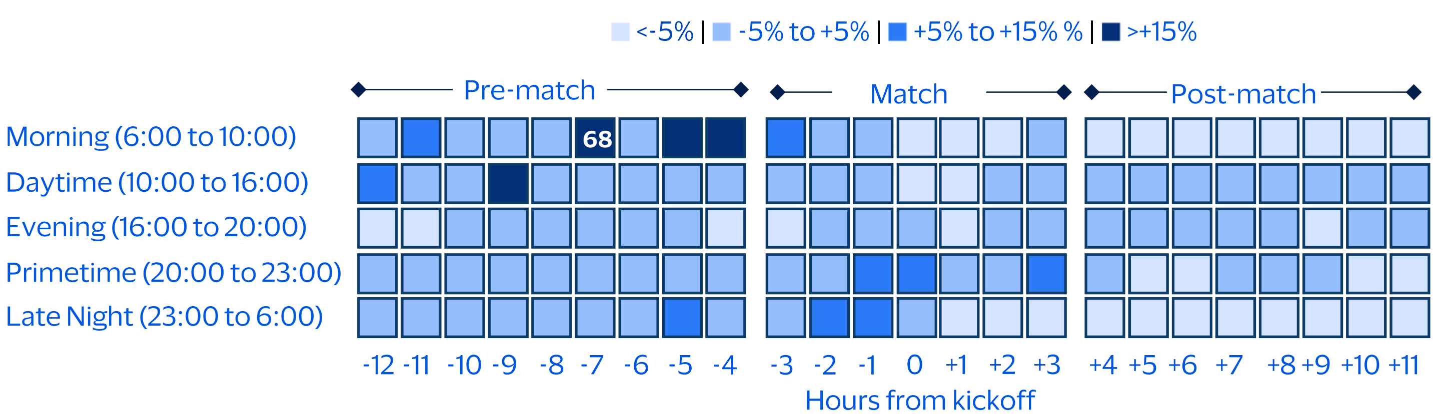


Source: Visa Business and Economic Insights analysis of VisaNet data.

Insight III: 68 percent gain in food delivery and grocery online purchases as fans planned ahead for the early-morning matches

While fans watching early morning games may seem lackluster based on their in-person spending at restaurants (Fig. 1), how they experie-ce the games is much different. When it comes to ordering ahead for the early-morning matches, they excelled. They leveraged online apps, delivery services and payments to keep their homes well supplied into the wee hours ahead of the matches (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: Seven hours before the morning matches started, online delivery orders spiked for food and groceries
Purchase transactions on match days vs. typical day (percent difference)

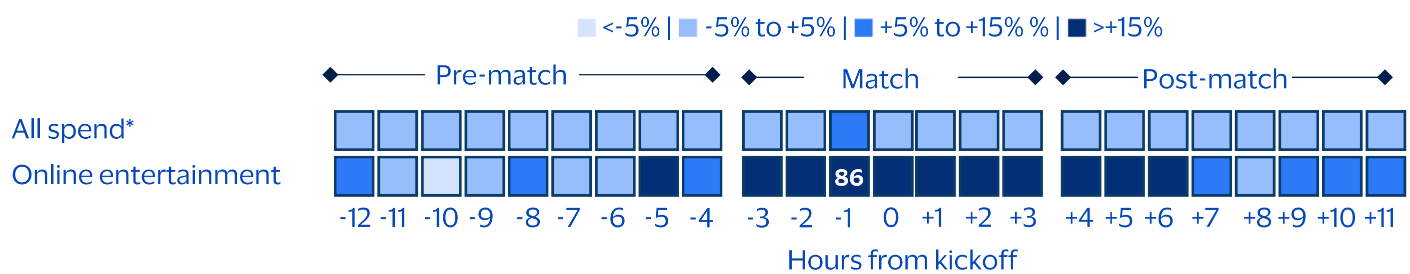


Source: Visa Business and Economic Insights analysis of VisaNet data.

Insight IV: 86 percent gain in online entertainment purchases immediately prior to daytime matches

Spending shifted the least in daytime markets. For those unlucky fans watching during the regular 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. workday, avoiding spoilers while doing their jobs was part of the experience. Even on weekends, time spent watching the matches came at the expense of routines such as the weekly trip to stock up on groceries and other household chores. But even for this segment where work competes with leisure, we did see some significant shifts (Fig. 3) when it came to online spending on entertainment as fans purchased one-time passes, activated streaming subscriptions and upgraded internet access.

Fig. 3: One hour before match start, fans in daytime markets loaded up on online entertainment buys
Purchase transactions on match days vs. typical day (percent difference)

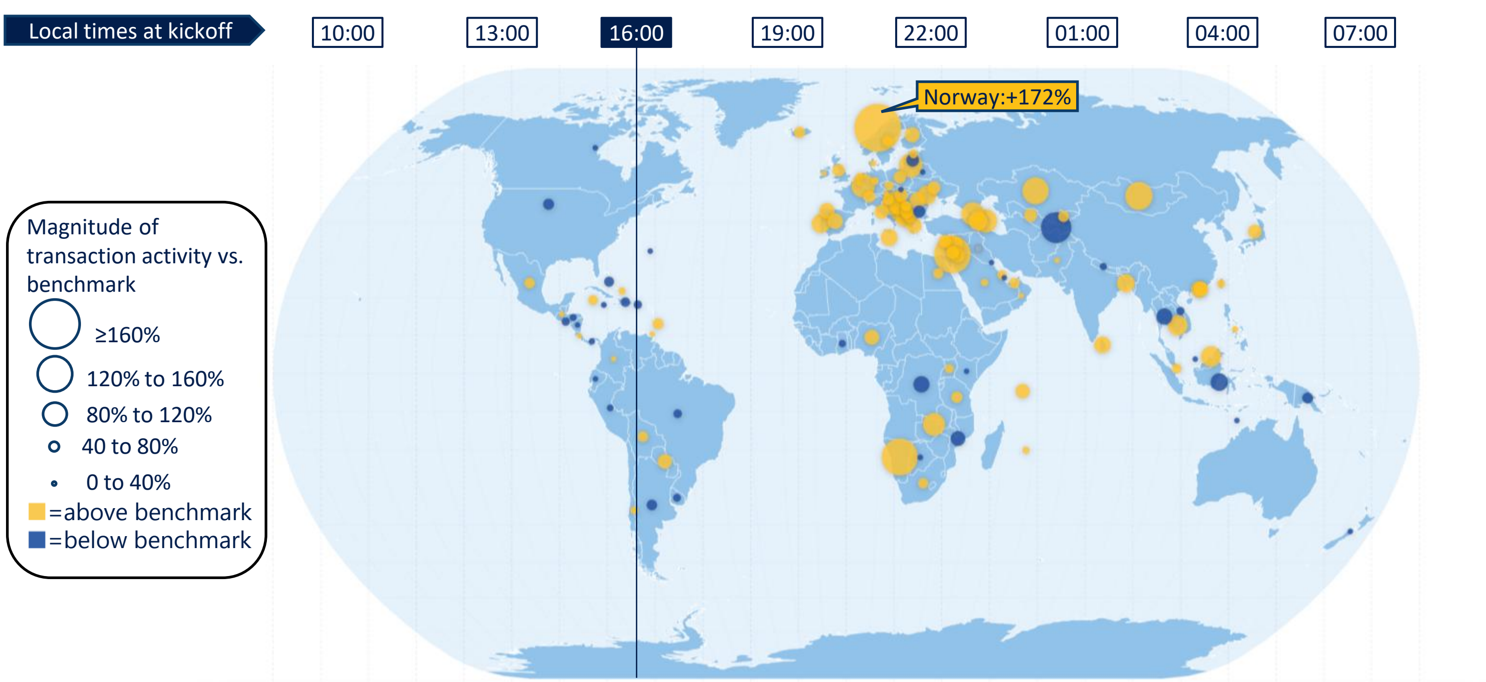


* Including spending at restaurants, quick-service restaurants, specialty food and groceries, retail goods and entertainment. Source: Visa Business and Economic Insights analysis of VisaNet data.

Insight V: Seven out of 10 countries saw spending rise during the Norway vs. Brazil match

Among the Round of 16 matches, Norway vs. Brazil had the broadest reach when it came to bringing fans together through food spending during the match (Fig. 4). No matter whether they watched at home or elsewhere, fans came out in force from Oslo to Almaty. More than 70 percent of countries experienced a lift in spending on food and food services during the match. Among countries where the match aired on primetime, 96 percent saw an increase in spending.

Fig. 4: The match that brought the world together: Norway vs. Brazil
Percent change in purchase transactions compared to a typical day (percent difference)

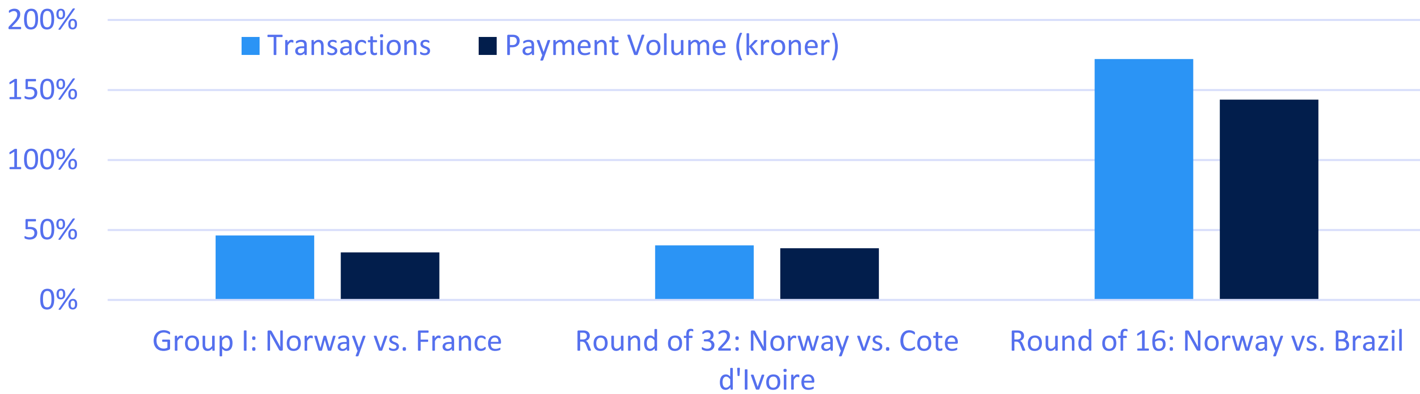


Source: Visa Business and Economic Insights analysis of VisaNet data

Insight VI: +143 percent more kroner spent domestically when Norway played Brazil

The stars were aligned for the Norway vs. Brazil match to command the world's attention. It was a qualifying match for the quarterfinals, with Brazil, a global football heavyweight that has played in every FIFA World Cup™ on one side and Norway, seeking its first chance to enter the quarterfinals since 1998, on the other. Social media attention around the Norwegian team's supporters and their endearing "Viking Row"—amplified by the buzz around Erling Haaland—helped build enthusiasm, which showed up in the progressive increase in Norwegian spending as the team advanced (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5: Surge in Norwegian spending reached new highs as the team made it to each successive round
Domestic purchases during matches vs. typical time period (percent difference)

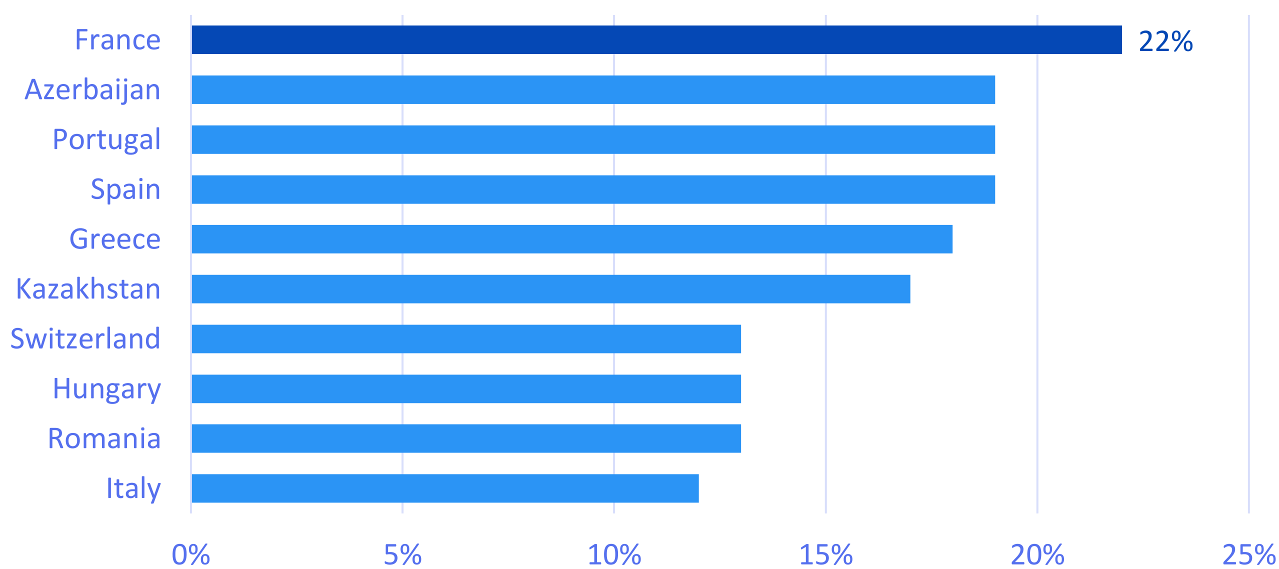


Source: Visa Business and Economic Insights analysis of VisaNet data.

Insight VII: +22 percent median lift in spending on food and food services by French fans through the Round of 16 matches

The fan base that was most engaged, as measured by the intensity and consistency of their spending increases across the Round of 16, was the French (Fig. 6). When France became the first team to secure a spot in the quarterfinals, fans turned their attention to who the team might face if it reached the semifinals. The Portugal vs. Spain and USA vs. Belgium matches both saw the largest lift in French spending. Azerbaijan was a close second to France when it came to how engaged its fans were as measured by their spending. That country's spending especially stood apart from the rest when it came to the Morocco vs. Canada match.

Fig. 6: Fans in France led other markets in matching their enthusiasm for football with their spending
Median lift in domestic food and food services purchases during matches vs. typical time period across Round of 16 matches (percent difference)



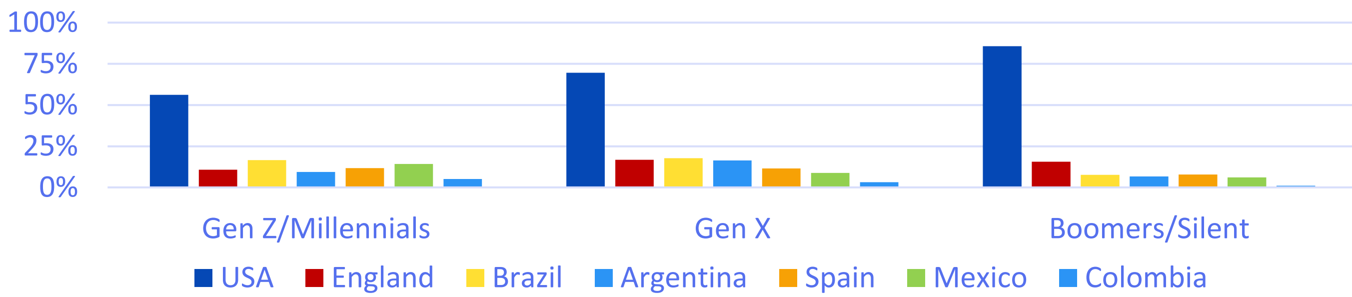
Source: Visa Business and Economic Insights analysis of VisaNet data.

Insight VIII: 10- to 20-basis-point boost to annual U.S. personal consumption expenditure growth in June (excluding gasoline)

While the preceding insights focused on fans outside of the host countries, our final insight turns to the U.S. and our estimate of the possible economic impact of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™ in June. Conventional wisdom holds that the U.S. is not a "soccer" country, so it might seem odd to suggest that the matches could have boosted consumer spending growth by 10 to 20 basis points.

Our research suggests that view may be outdated. A proprietary survey Visa fielded this past April found that the FIFA World Cup™ was less likely to draw older generations, with only 29 percent of boomers and seniors saying they were planning on watching it. But the reverse was true for younger generations: over half of Gen Z and millennial respondents planned to tune in. Unsurprisingly, most respondents across generations identified as fans of the U.S. team, but a good match is a good match—many were also likely to support teams from other countries, especially younger fans (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7: Global following for teams at the FIFA World Cup™ is greater among younger generations in the U.S.
Which teams are you a fan of (Check all that apply)



Source: Visa Business and Economic Insights Quarterly Consumer Survey, April 2026

Some of this loyalty to other teams could be driven by star players, but heritage may also play a role. If a FIFA World Cup™ -induced spending boost was the goal, pride in home countries among immigrants in the U.S. provided a decisive assist. This pride showed up in the latest **Visa Spending Momentum Index (SMI)** readings for June: counties with a large share of foreign-born immigrants from participating countries saw a stronger month-on-month rise (Fig. 8). After controlling for underlying state-level spending conditions and gasoline-related spending trends, regression analysis implies that the FIFA World Cup™-linked foreign-born population in the U.S. boosted the SMI by 0.2 to 0.4 points during the qualifying stage of the tournament. That is consistent with a modest but statistically significant FIFA World Cup™-related boost to local consumer spending, a roughly 0.1- to 0.2-ppt lift to year-on-year PCE growth (Fig. 9).

Fig. 8: U.S. foreign-born soccer fans opened their wallets and boosted spending in June
Visa U.S. Spending Momentum Index

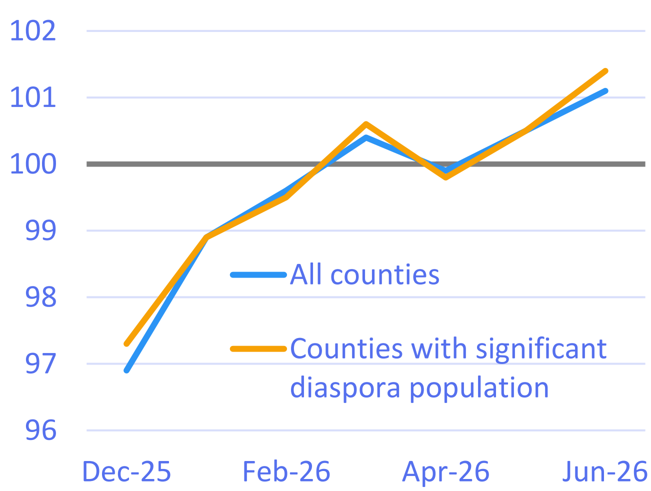
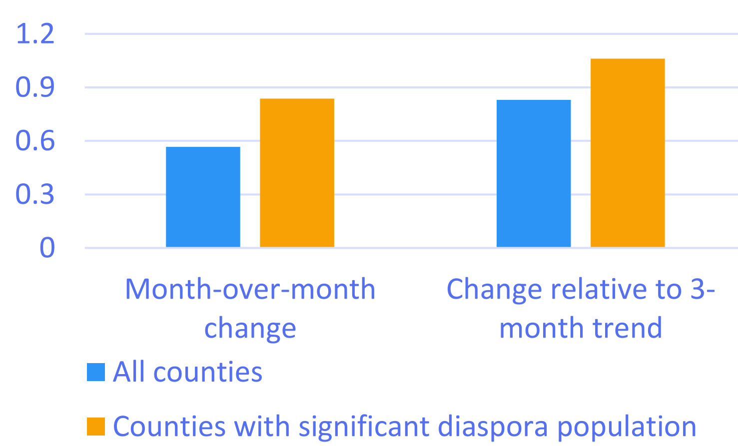


Fig. 9: After accounting for state-level differences in gas spending, the boost is clearer
Month-on-month changes in the Visa U.S. Spending Momentum Index in June



Source: Visa Business and Economic Insights analysis of Visa SMI and VisaNet data

Footnotes

1. The analysis in the report was based on aggregated domestic spending data on the number of transactions at entertainment providers, retail goods merchants, specialty food and grocers, quick-service restaurants, full-service restaurants, bars and cafes. The lift is calculated by taking the volume of transactions that occurred during a 12-hour period before and after a match started and comparing it against a comparable typical day of the week and time of day for each country included in the analysis in late May and early June before the FIFA World Cup™ started.

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Accessibility notes

Fig. 1: This heatmap shows purchase transactions at restaurants, bars and coffee shops on match days compared with a typical day, expressed as percent difference by hour from kickoff. The rows group matches by local broadcast time, including morning, daytime, evening, primetime and late night, and the columns run from 12 hours before kickoff through 11 hours after kickoff, divided into pre-match, match and post-match periods. Shading indicates four percent-difference ranges: less than negative 5 percent, negative 5 percent to positive 5 percent, positive 5 percent to positive 15 percent and greater than positive 15 percent. The largest value shown is 62 percent, occurring six hours after kickoff for matches watched during primetime hours.

Fig. 2: This heatmap shows purchase transactions for online food delivery and grocery purchases on match days compared with a typical day, expressed as percent difference by hour from kickoff. The rows group matches by local broadcast time, including morning, daytime, evening, primetime and late night, and the columns run from 12 hours before kickoff through 11 hours after kickoff, divided into pre-match, match and post-match periods. Shading indicates four percent-difference ranges: less than negative 5 percent, negative 5 percent to positive 5 percent, positive 5 percent to positive 15 percent and greater than positive 15 percent. The largest value shown is 68 percent, occurring seven hours before kickoff for morning matches.

Fig. 3: This heatmap compares purchase transactions on match days with a typical day, expressed as percent difference by hour from kickoff, for two spending categories: all spend and online entertainment. The horizontal axis runs from 12 hours before kickoff through 11 hours after kickoff, divided into pre-match, match and post-match periods. Shading indicates four percent-difference ranges: less than negative 5 percent, negative 5 percent to positive 5 percent, positive 5 percent to positive 15 percent and greater than positive 15 percent. The largest value shown is 86 percent for online entertainment one hour before match start.

Fig. 4: This world map shows the percent change in purchase transactions during the Norway versus Brazil match compared with a typical day. Countries or areas are marked with colored circles that indicate the magnitude of transaction activity versus the benchmark, with ranges shown as 0 to 40 percent, 40 to 80 percent, 80 to 120 percent, 120 percent to 160 percent and 160 percent or higher. The legend also distinguishes activity above benchmark and below benchmark. Local kickoff times are shown across the top from 01:00 through 22:00, and Norway is labeled at positive 172 percent.

Fig. 5: This clustered column chart shows domestic purchases during Norway's matches compared with a typical time period, expressed as percent difference. It compares two measures, transactions and payment volume in kroner, across three matches: Group I Norway versus France, Round of 32 Norway versus Cote d'Ivoire and Round of 16 Norway versus Brazil. Transactions are 46 percent for Norway versus France, 39 percent for Norway versus Cote d'Ivoire and 172 percent for Norway versus Brazil. Payment volume is 34 percent for Norway versus France, 37 percent for Norway versus Cote d'Ivoire and 143 percent for Norway versus Brazil.

Fig. 6: This horizontal bar chart shows the median lift in domestic food and food services purchases during matches compared with a typical time period across Round of 16 matches, expressed as percent difference. The countries shown from highest to lowest are France at 22 percent; Azerbaijan, Portugal and Spain at 19 percent each; Greece at 18 percent; Kazakhstan at 17 percent; Switzerland, Hungary and Romania at 13 percent each; and Italy at 12 percent.

Fig. 7: This grouped bar chart shows the share of U.S. survey respondents who said they are fans of selected FIFA World Cup teams, grouped by generation. For Gen Z and millennials, the shares are USA at 56.1 percent, England at 10.7 percent, Brazil at 16.6 percent, Argentina at 9.4 percent, Spain at 11.6 percent, Mexico at 14.2 percent and Colombia at 5.1 percent. For Gen X, the shares are USA at 69.6 percent, England at 16.8 percent, Brazil at 17.8 percent, Argentina at 16.3 percent, Spain at 11.5 percent, Mexico at 8.8 percent and Colombia at 3.2 percent. For boomers and the Silent generation, the shares are USA at 85.7 percent, England at 15.6 percent, Brazil at 7.7 percent, Argentina at 6.6 percent, Spain at 7.9 percent, Mexico at 6.1 percent and Colombia at 1.1 percent.

Fig. 8: This line chart shows the Visa U.S. Spending Momentum Index for all counties and for counties with significant diaspora population from December 2025 through June 2026. The all-counties line starts at 96.9 in December 2025, rises to 98.9 in January 2026, 99.6 in February, 100.4 in March, dips to 99.9 in April, rises to 100.5 in May and ends at 101.1 in June. The counties-with-significant-diaspora-population line starts at 97.3 in December 2025, rises to 98.9 in January 2026, dips to 99.5 in February, rises to 100.6 in March, dips to 99.8 in April, rises to 100.5 in May and ends at 101.4 in June.

Fig. 9: This clustered column chart shows month-on-month changes in the Visa U.S. Spending Momentum Index in June for all counties and for counties with significant diaspora population. For all counties, the month-over-month change is 0.57, and the change relative to the three-month trend is 0.83. For counties with significant diaspora population, the month-over-month change is 0.84, and the change relative to the three-month trend is 1.06.