

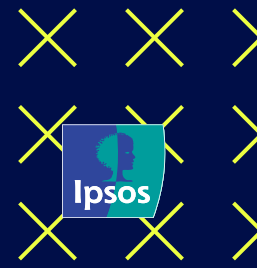
IPSOS 2026 WORLD CUP SURVEY

UAE Edition

June 2026



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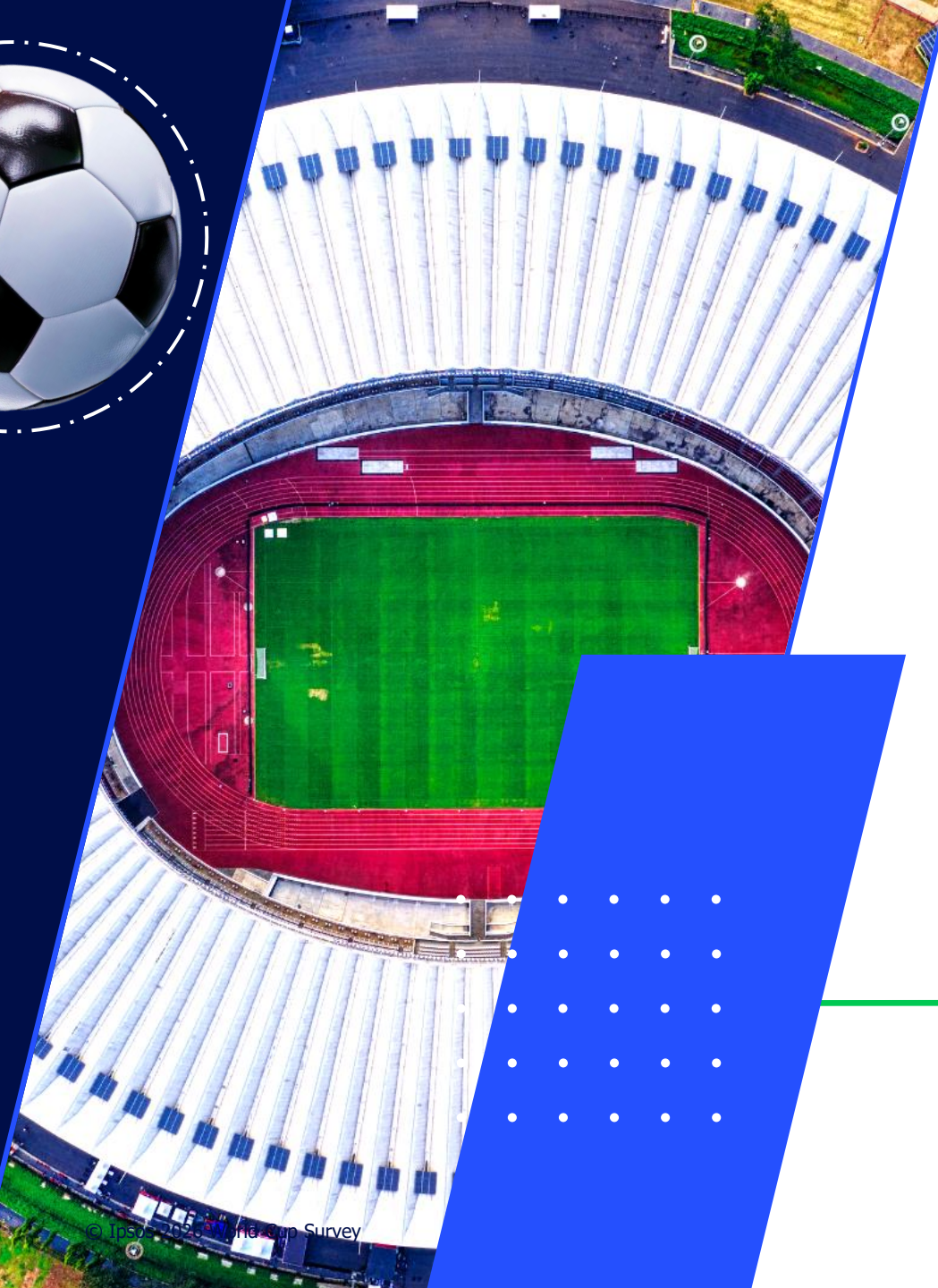




1

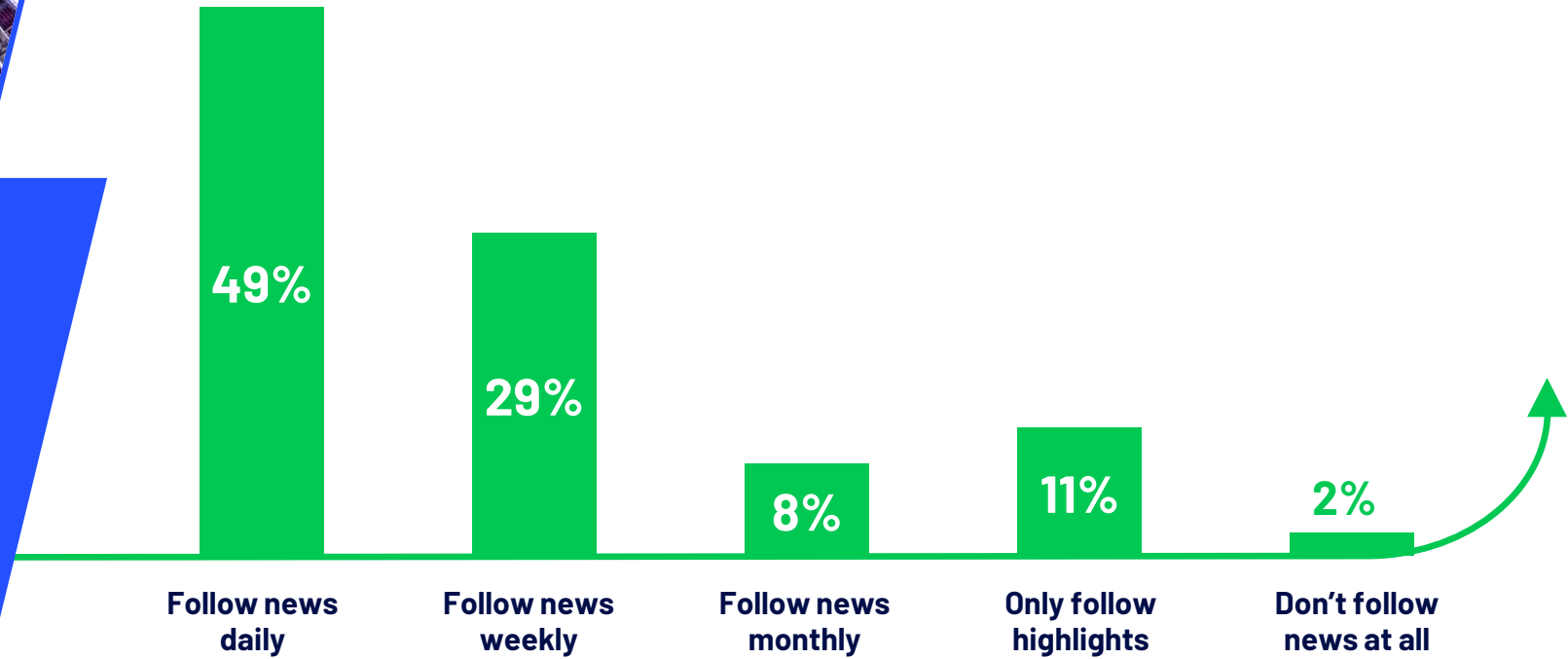
ANTICIPATION & VIEWING INTENT





Fans are tuned in ahead of kickoff, checking updates on a regular basis

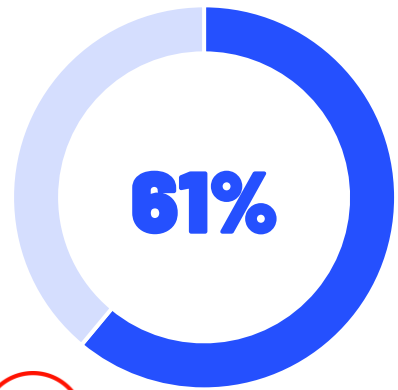
Frequency of following World Cup news so far



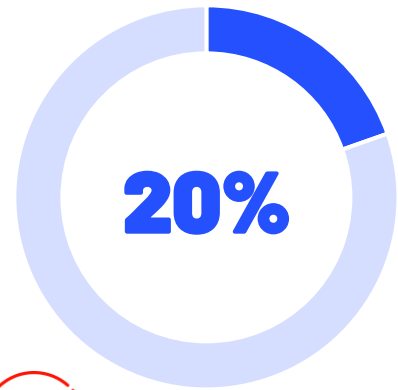


The 48-team expansion is well known, and fans are largely thrilled about it

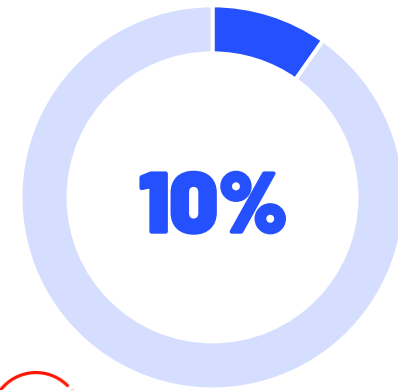
Awareness and sentiment toward the 48-team format



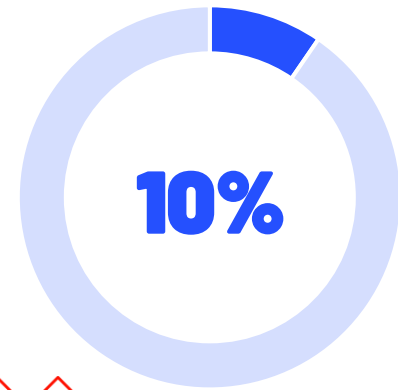
Are aware and excited about more inclusivity



Are aware and neutral about the change



Are aware and prefer the 32-team format

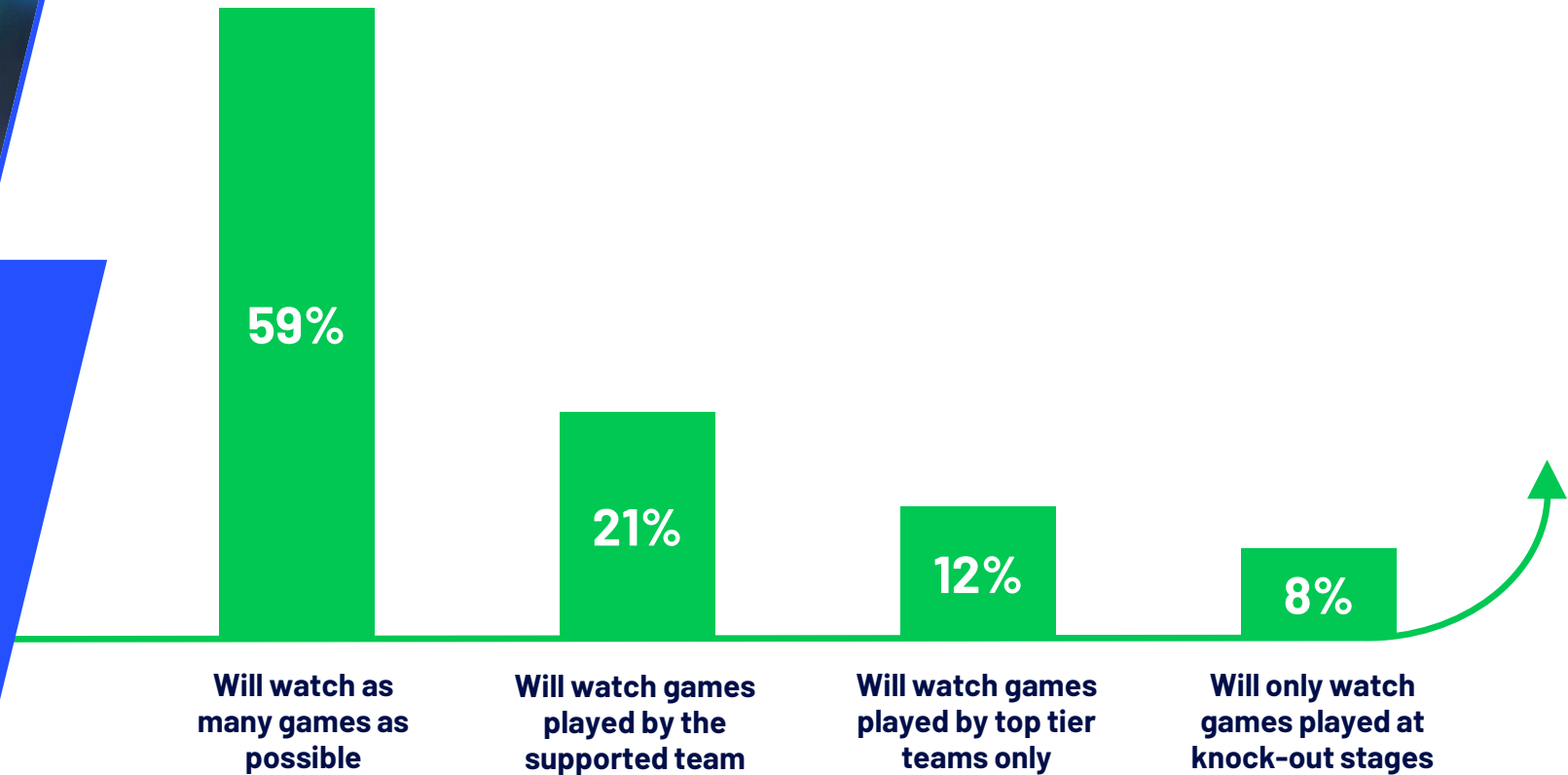


Are not aware of this change



Beyond following the news, the majority also plan to watch as many games as possible

Viewing intent for World Cup 2026





2

VIEWING BEHAVIOR

9 in 10 plan to watch the World Cup's opening ceremony

93%

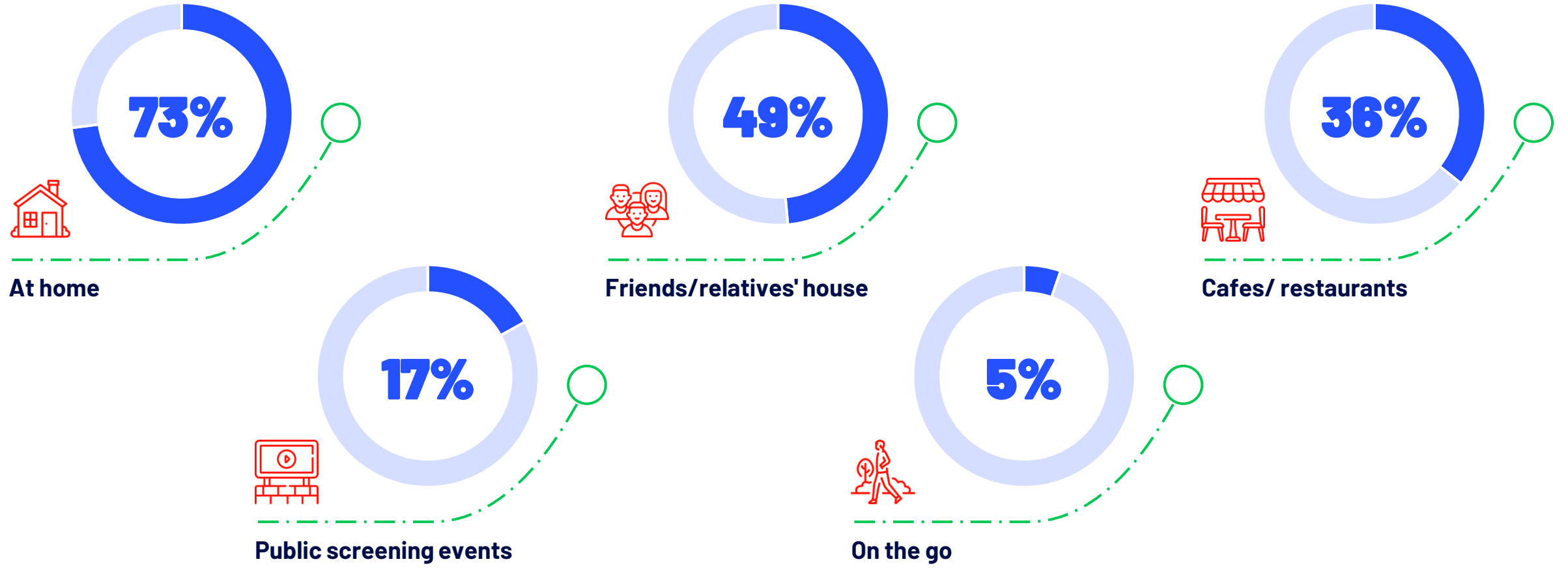
Will be Watching the Opening Ceremony





Homes emerge as the prime viewing destination followed by friends and relative's houses and cafes

Planned viewing locations



Most plan to watch on big screens via paid services, though Arabic and other language commentary share nearly equal appeal

Viewing setup & preferences

Will watch on paid channels/ subscriptions

60%



40%

Will watch on free platforms

Will watch in Arabic commentary

45%



55%

Will watch in English/ other language commentary

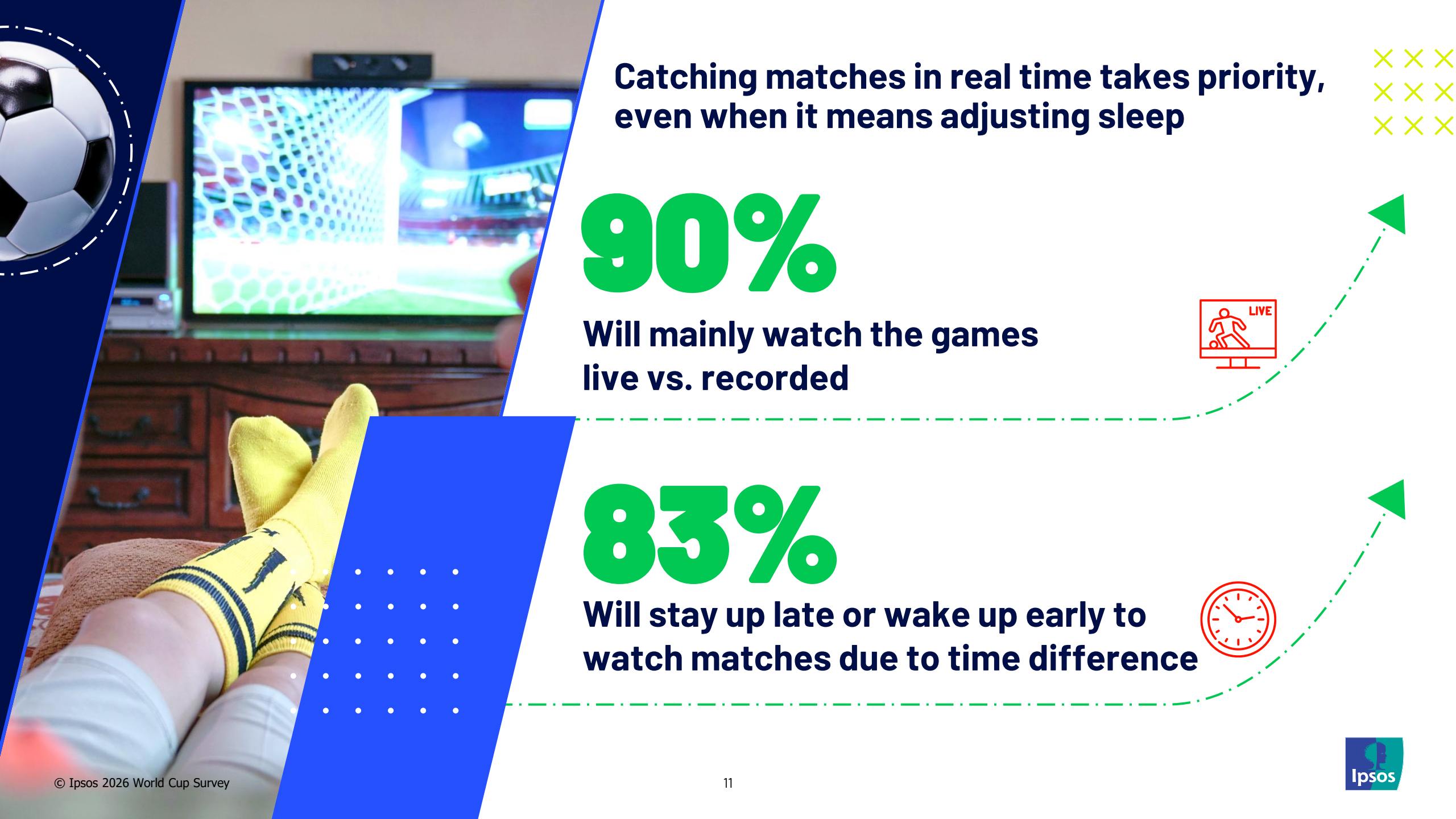
Will watch on a big screen

72%



28%

Will watch on a small screen



Catching matches in real time takes priority, even when it means adjusting sleep



90%

Will mainly watch the games live vs. recorded



83%

Will stay up late or wake up early to watch matches due to time difference





Fans are even planning to clear their calendars and put their responsibilities on the sideline to watch the games



58%

Will cancel important social events to watch the games



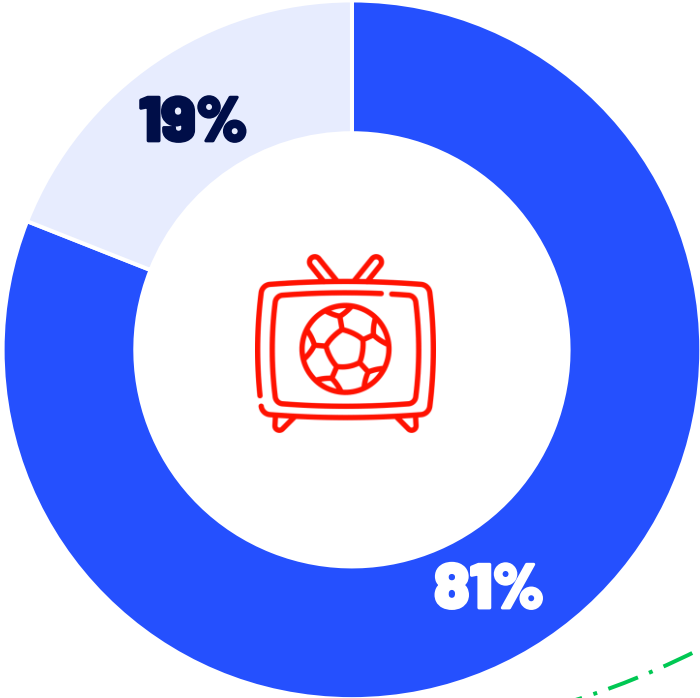
48%

Will miss work or school/ university to watch the games





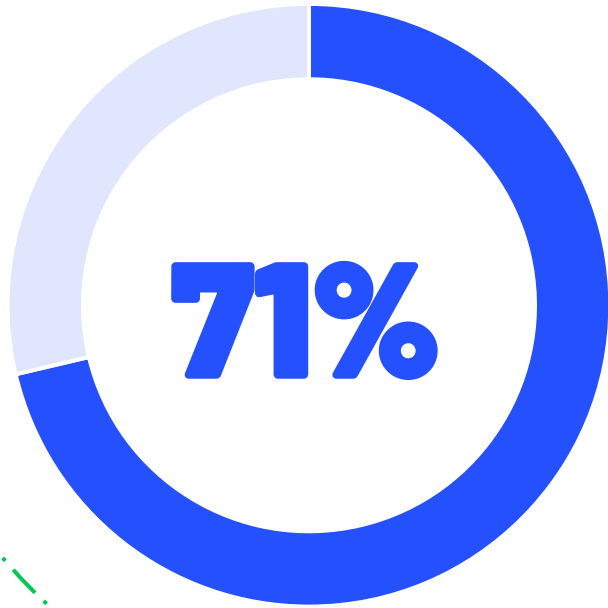
Company is the preference, with few choosing solitary viewing



- Will watch the games with others
- Will watch the games alone

▶ ○ ○ ○

Many are even planning to host or attend watch parties



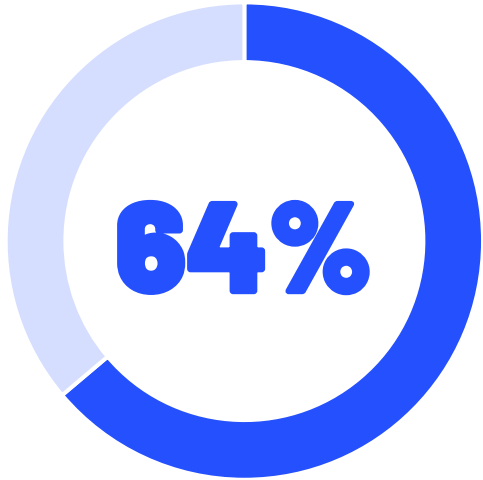
**Will host or attend
World Cup watch parties**



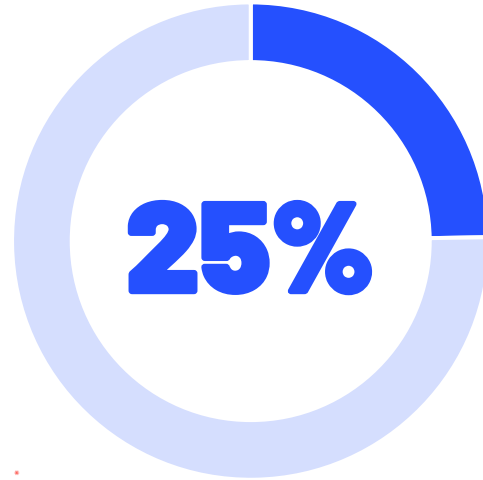


When tuning in, most fans prefer the energy of mixed crowds

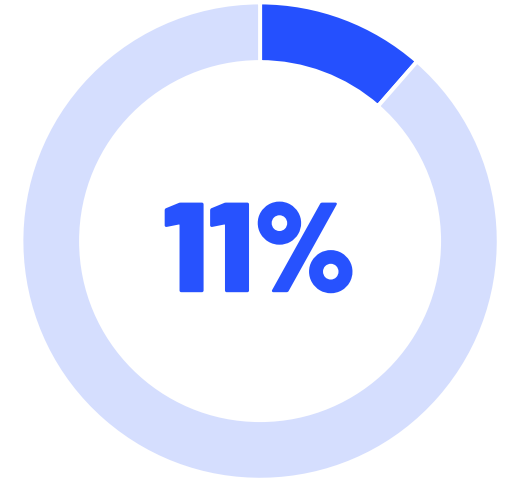
Viewing companions for favorite team's big games



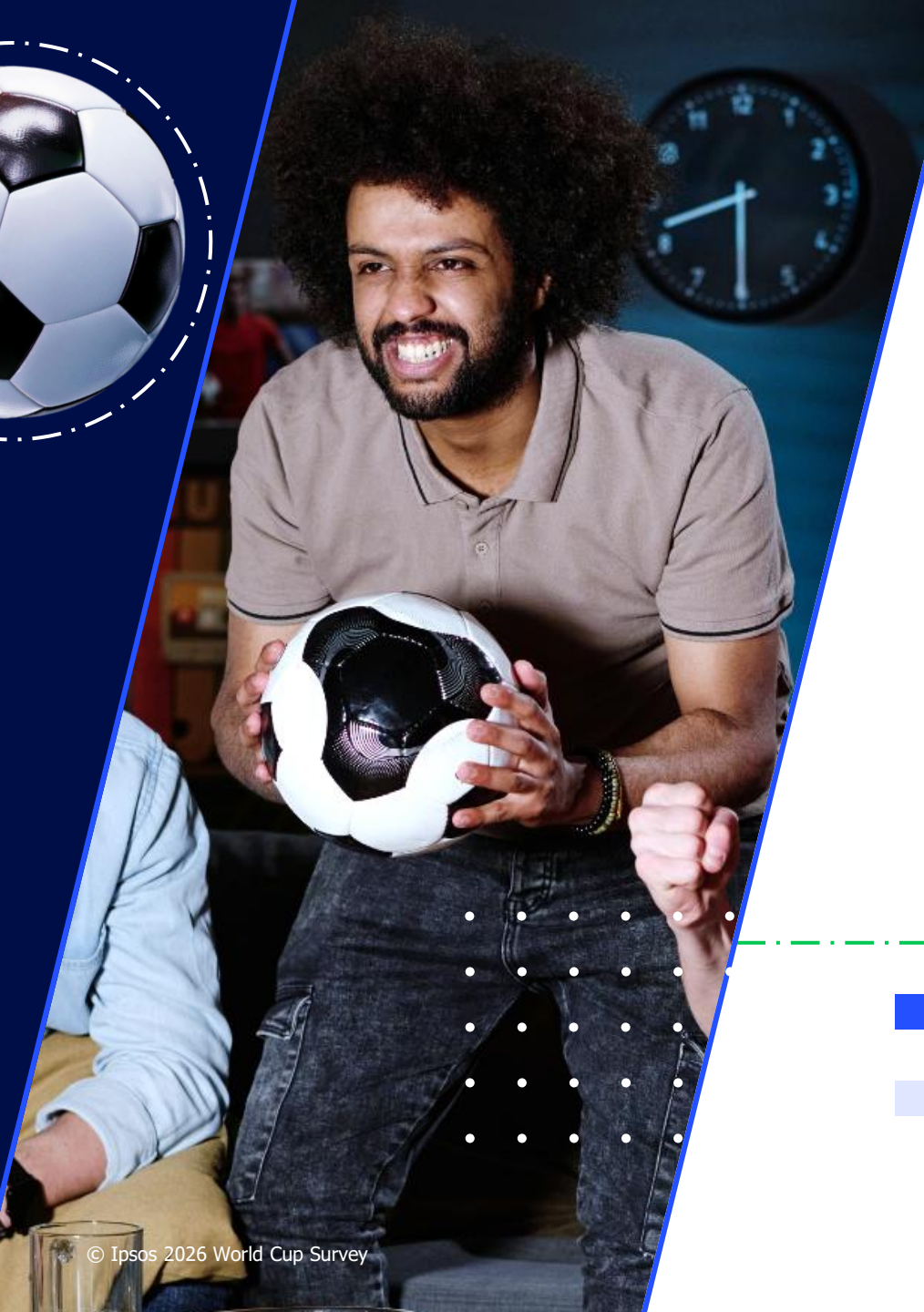
Plan to watch favorite team's big games with fans of opposing teams as it's more fun



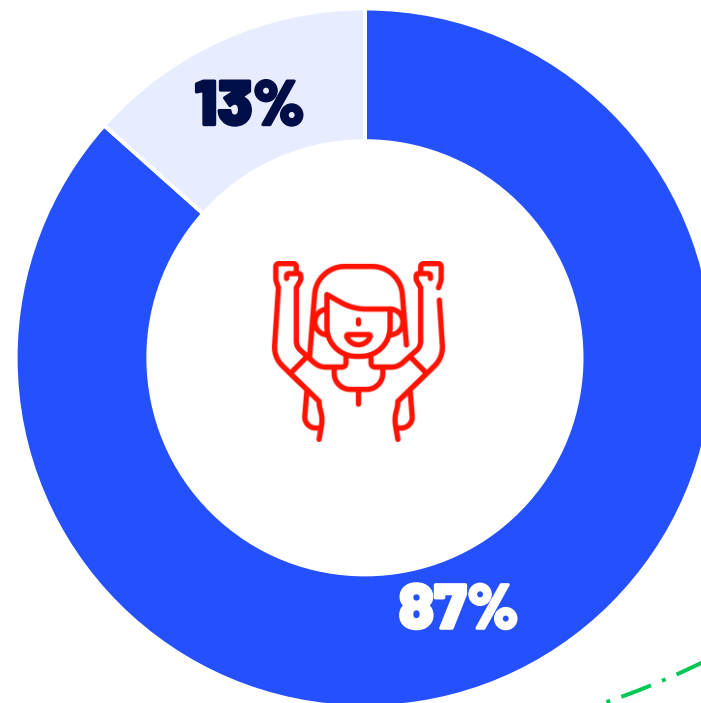
Plan to watch favorite team's big games only with fans supporting the same team



Plan to watch favorite team's big games alone



A loss is unlikely to ruin the mood for the majority, as good sporting spirit prevails



- Have a good sporting spirit and accept the loss
- Cannot accept the loss and it ruins their mood

Most are likely to watch with undivided attention while staying active online, though emotional commitment varies

Viewing engagement levels

Fully focused

75%

25%

While multitasking

Engaged online/ on social media while watching

70%

30%

Disconnected, just watching

Are serious, emotionally invested fans

53%

47%

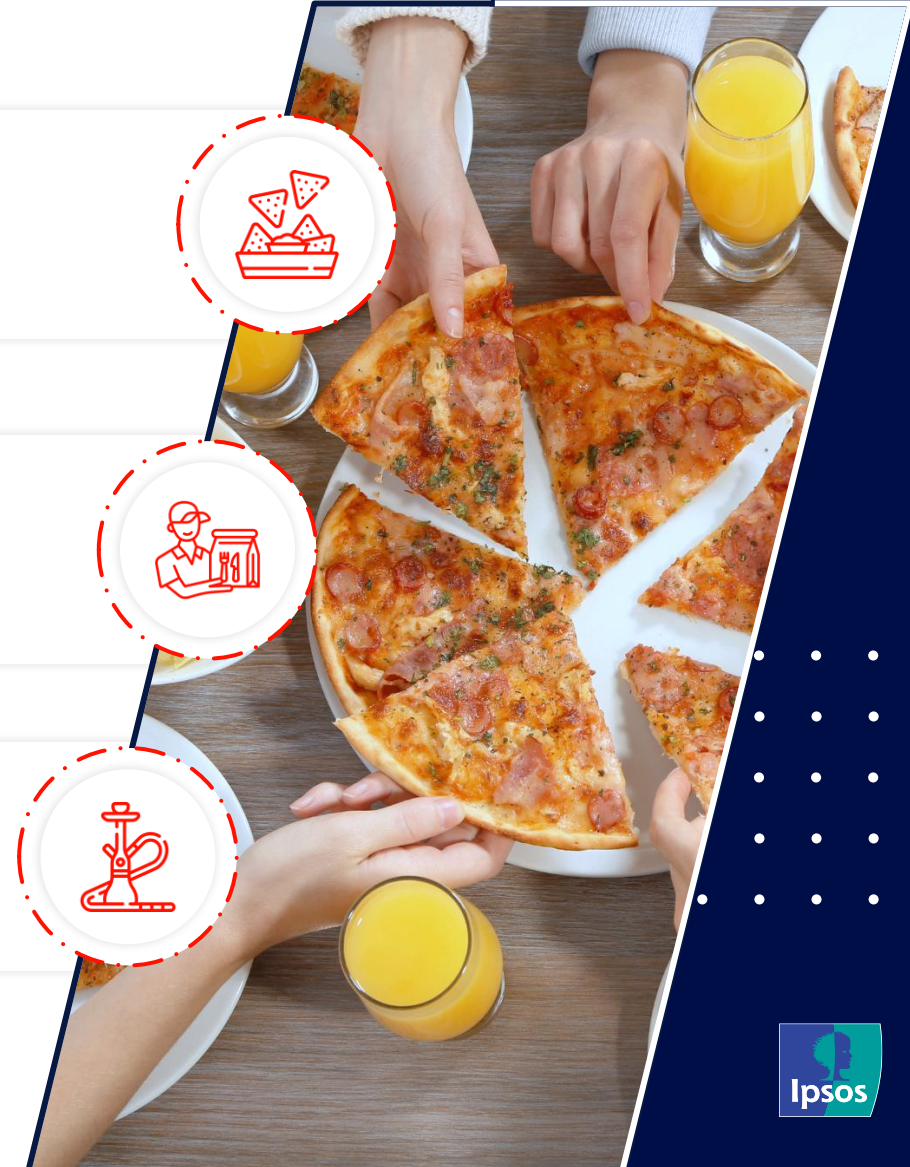
Are casual, relaxed viewers



▶ ○ ○ ○

Matches are expected to be accompanied by food, with shisha on the side for half of the fans

Planned consumption habits while watching



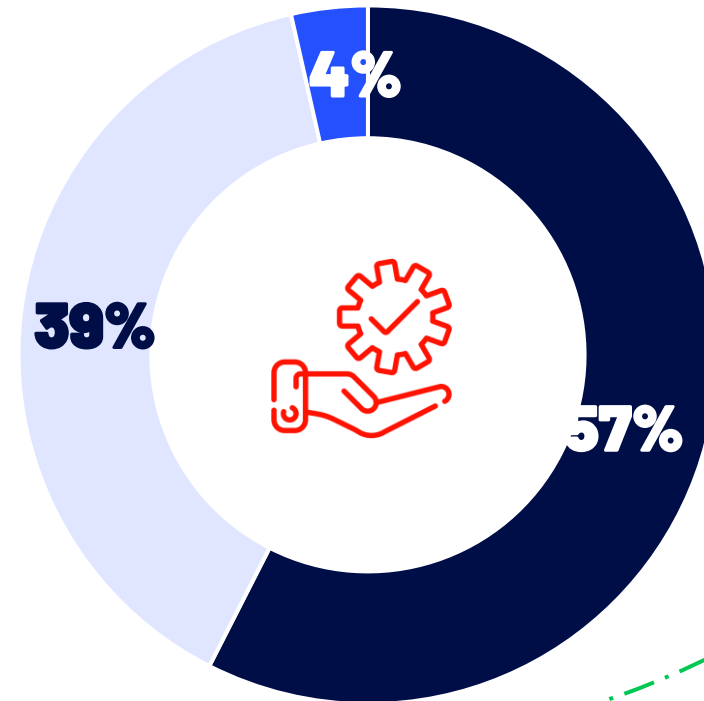


3

BEHAVIORAL IMPACT BEYOND THE SCREEN



Most believe they'll stay just as productive, if not more so, during the World Cup



- Expect their productivity to increase
- Expect no change
- Expect their productivity to decrease

▶ ○ ○ ○

The majority anticipate spending more, going out more often and purchasing World Cup merchandise

Spending and lifestyle changes during the World Cup

69%

Are likely to spend more money than usual



74%

Are likely to go out more frequently than usual to watch the games



70%

Are likely to buy World Cup-themed products





Half say they are planning to travel and attend matches live

48%

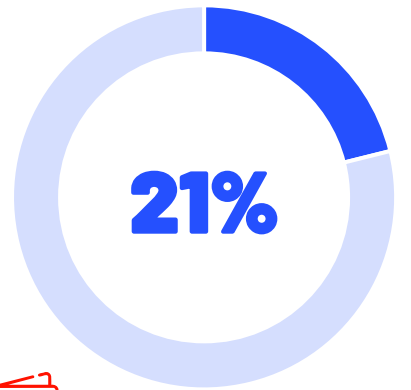
**Are planning to travel
to attend the matches
in person**



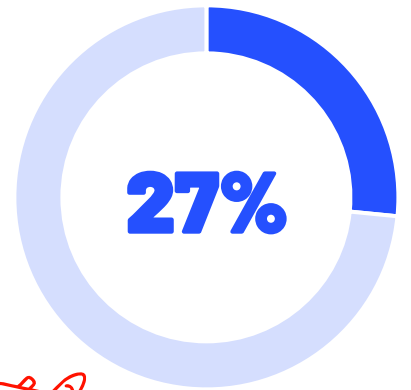


Although half say they plan to travel, how committed they are varies widely

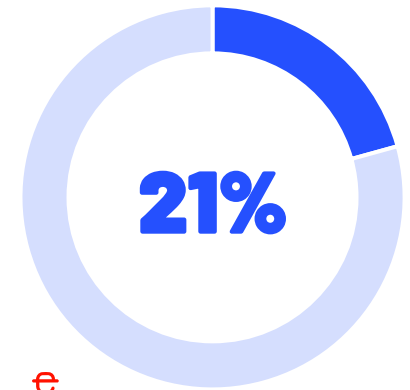
Travel intent to host countries



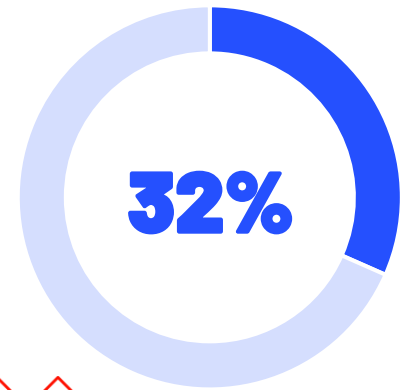
Already booked the tickets and secured travel arrangements



Are planning to travel but haven't booked yet



Do not have travel plans but might consider depending on circumstances



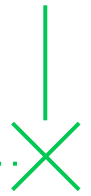
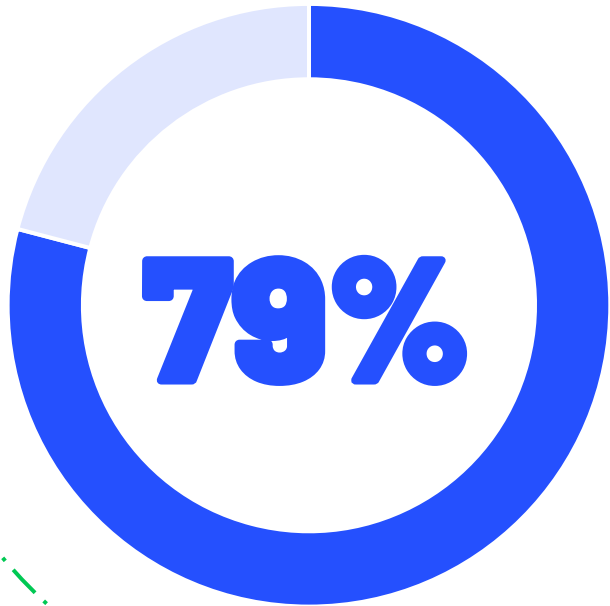
Are not planning to attend in person



4

MATCH PREDICTIONS

Score-guessing showdowns with close ones are expected to be a popular activity

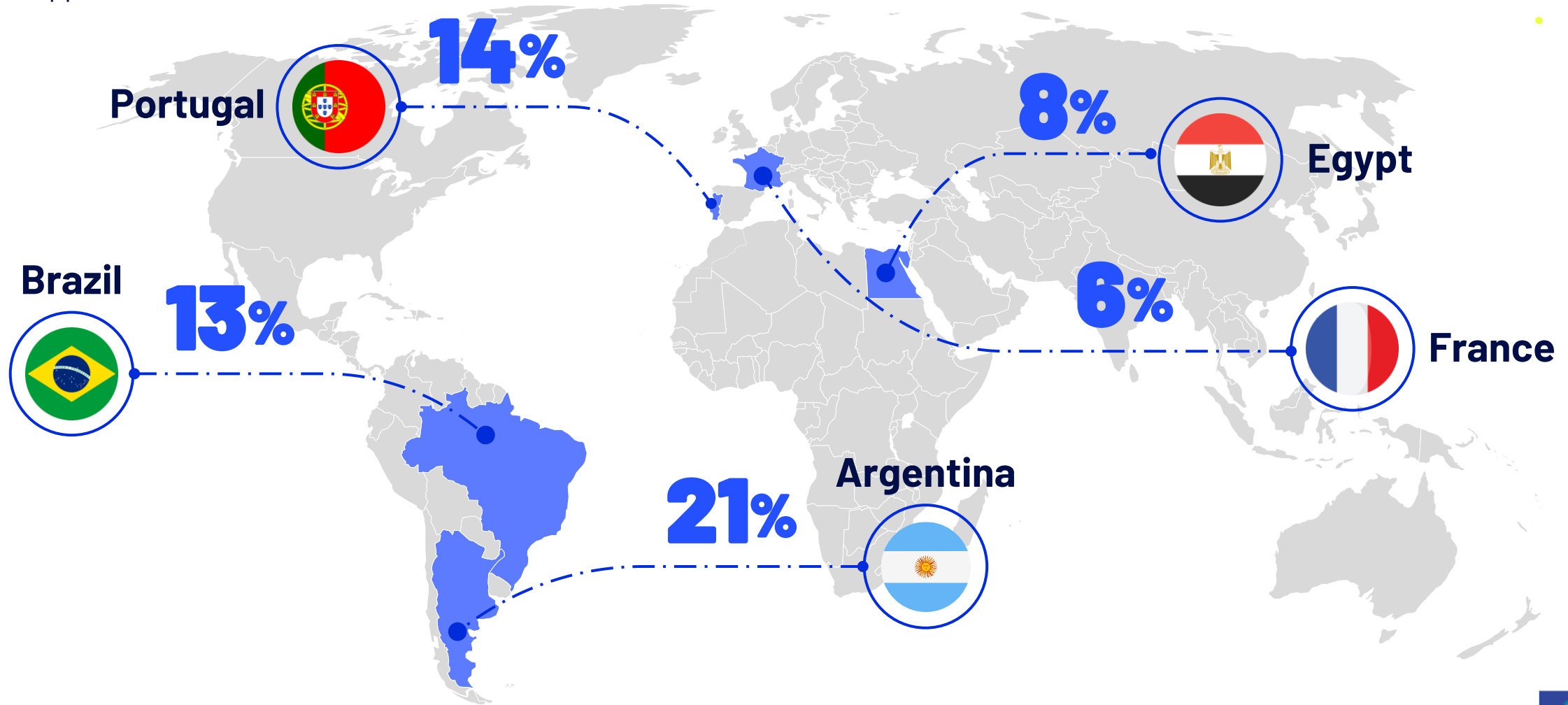


Will participate in match prediction competitions between family, friends and colleagues



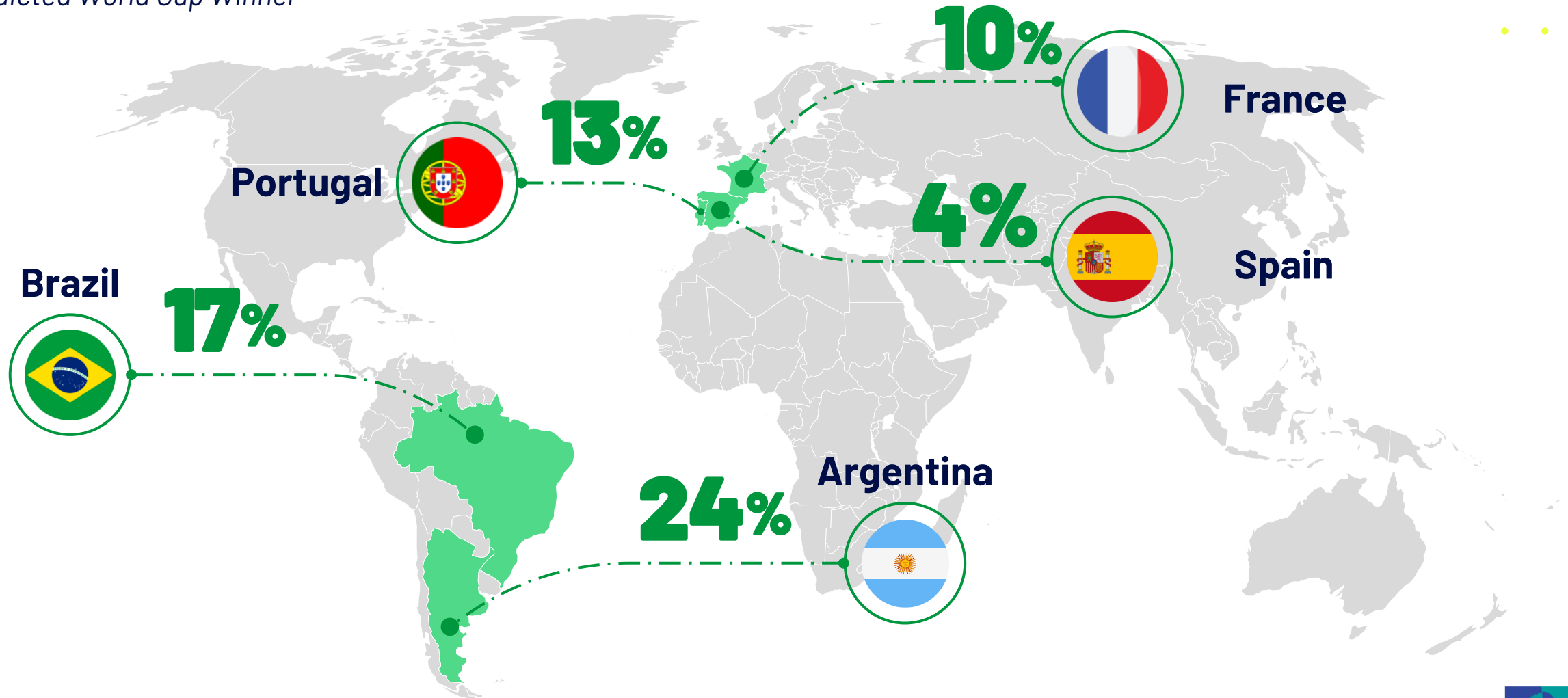
Argentina, Portugal and Brazil are the most supported teams

Most Supported Teams



When it comes to predicting the champion, Argentina tops the list

Predicted World Cup Winner



▶ ○ ○ ○

Ronaldo ranks first when it comes to people's predicted Golden Ball winner

Predicted Golden Ball Winner

24%



**Cristiano
Ronaldo**

14%



**Lionel
Messi**

9%



**Kylian
Mbappé**

8%



**Lamine
Yamal**

6%



**Achraf
Hakimi**



5

INFORMATION SOURCES & ENGAGEMENT

Checking in on scores every day is the plan for most fans

Planned frequency of checking scores

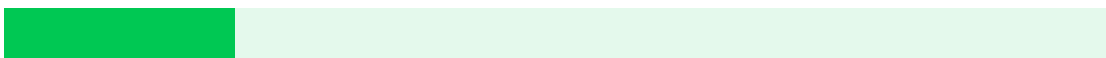
67%

Check scores daily



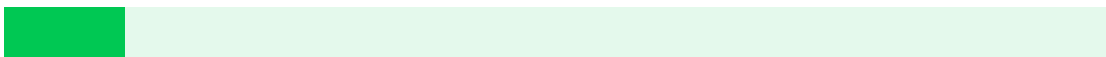
21%

Check scores weekly



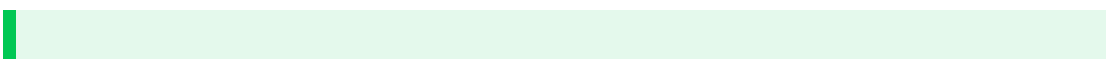
11%

Check scores for key matches only



1%

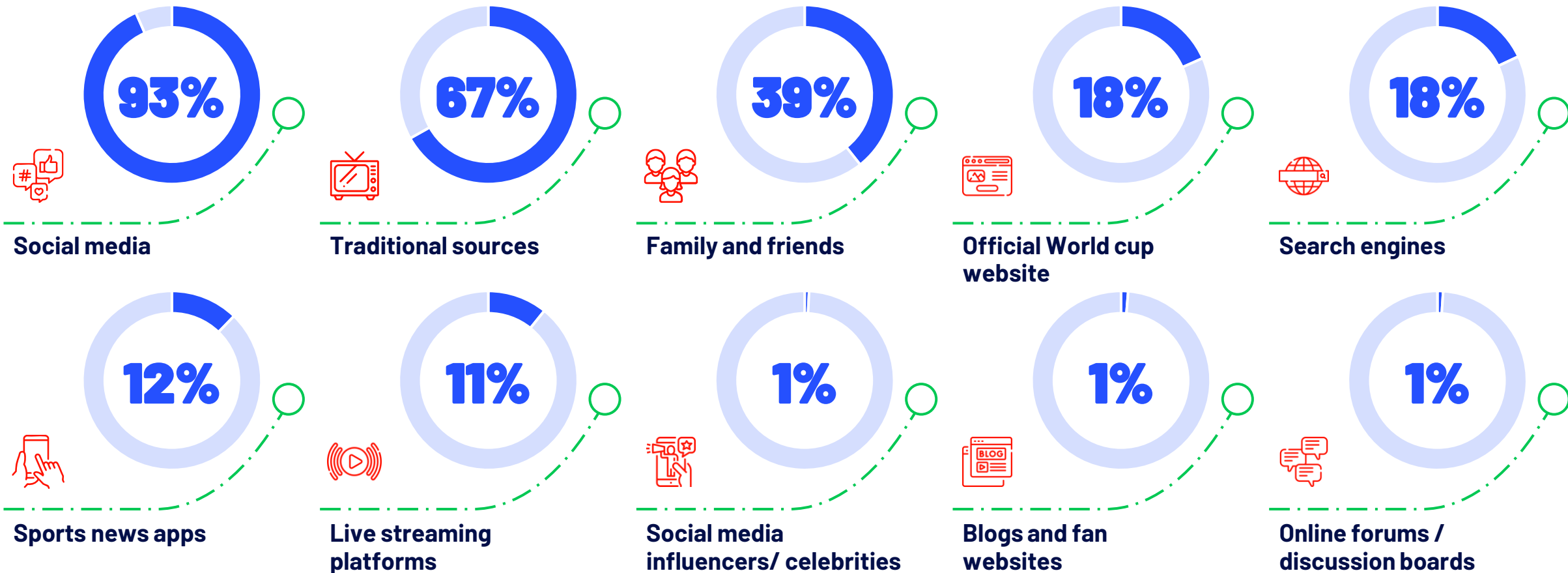
Will not check scores at all



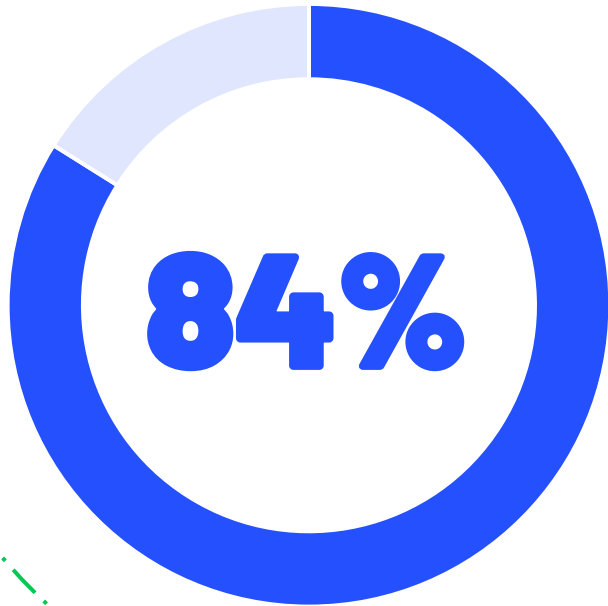


Digital platforms are likely to be the first stop for updates, though legacy media is expected to keep its relevance

Sources People Plan to Use for Scores & Information



With digital channels leading, engagement with World Cup content is also expected to rise



Are likely to engage more on social media around World Cup content





6

WORLD CUP SPONSORSHIPS



▶ ○ ○ ○

Awareness towards World Cup sponsors

% Aware each brand is sponsoring the 2026 World Cup - Top 8 brands



Coca-Cola

60%



59%

QATAR
AIRWAYS القطرية

45%

VISA

42%



29%

Hisense

24%



HYUNDAI

23%

Lenovo

18%



▶ ○ ○ ○

Brands Most Associated with the FIFA World Cup regardless of sponsorship

% Each brand is associated with the 2026 World Cup - Top 8 brands




25%


18%


10%


10%


6%


3%


2%

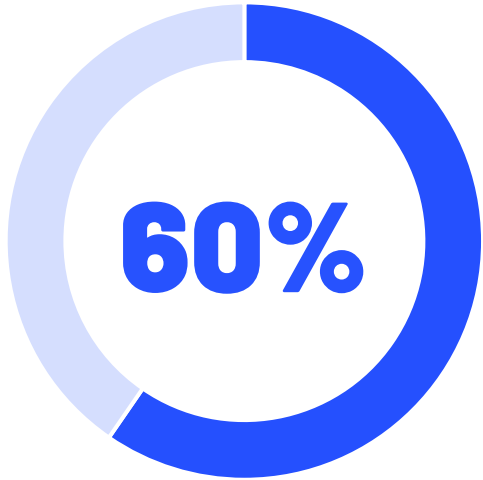

2%



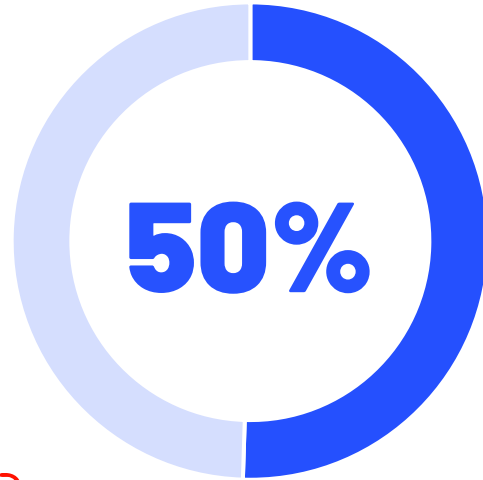


Many are likely to respond to World Cup sponsorships with better brand perception, stronger purchase intent and more engagement

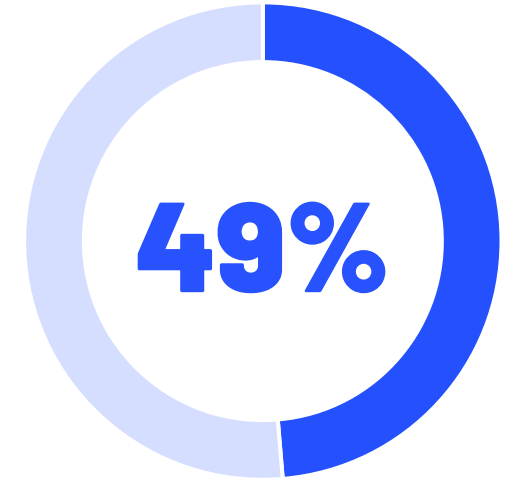
Attitudes Toward World Cup Sponsor Brands



Feel brands that sponsor the World Cup are more premium and high quality



Are more likely to interact with brands on social media when they sponsor major events like the World Cup



Are more likely to purchase or use brands that sponsor major sporting events like the World Cup



8

THE WORLD CUP PERSONAS



▶ ○ ○ ○

The diverse World Cup personas: Each with distinct attitudes and behaviors toward the tournament

32%

**The Casual
Observer**



19%

**The Opportunist
Supporter**



18%

**The Social
Viewer**



17%

**The Die-Hard
Fanatic**



14%

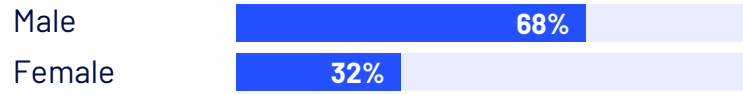
The Tactician



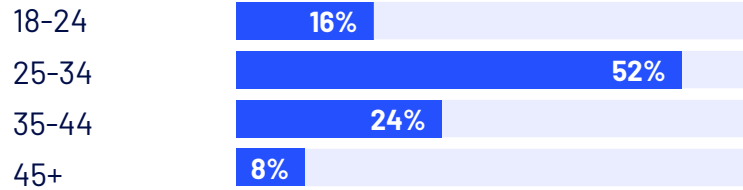
Who is The Casual Observer? (32%)

A person who engages with the World Cup mainly as a form of occasional entertainment, showing interest in the outcomes without feeling the need to closely follow the matches.

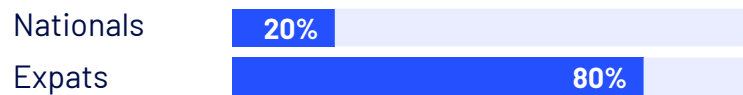
By Gender



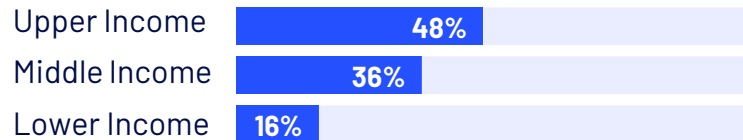
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



76%

Are satisfied knowing the final score without watching the match

62%

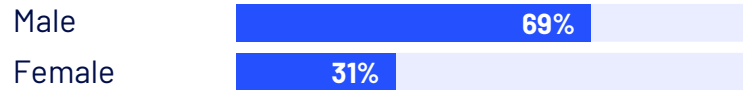
Watch the World Cup only when there is nothing else to do or when others are watching



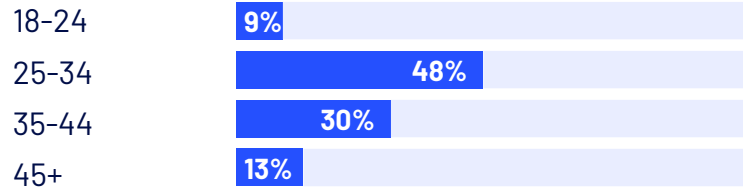
Who is The Opportunist Supporter? (19%)

A person who is drawn to successful and popular teams during the World Cup, often shifting support toward those generating excitement, momentum, and widespread attention.

By Gender



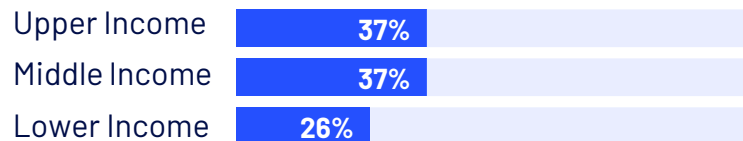
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



80%

Tend to support teams that are performing well or winning during the tournament

45%

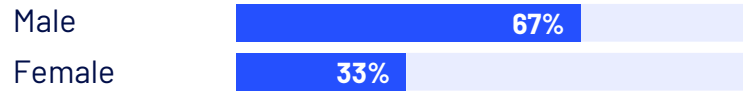
Enjoy supporting popular or trending teams, even when those teams are not their usual favorites



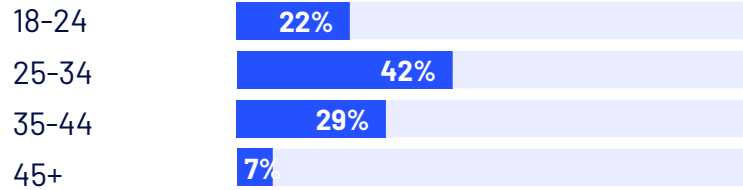
Who is The Social Viewer? (18%)

A person who sees the World Cup primarily as a social occasion, valuing the sense of connection, community, and shared experiences it creates more than the matches themselves.

By Gender



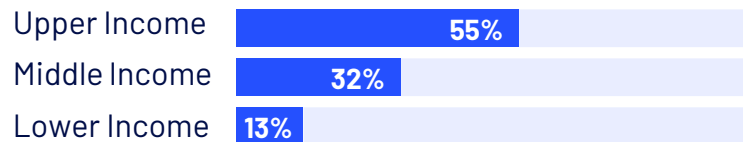
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



82%

Think that the social atmosphere of the World Cup matters more than the actual matches

70%

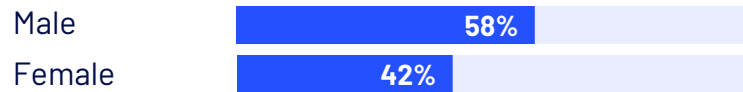
Enjoy the World Cup mainly because it brings people together



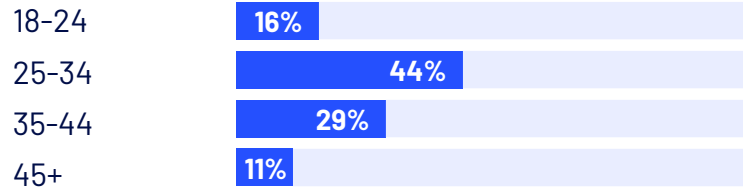
Who is The Die-Hard Fanatic? (17%)

A person whose emotions and daily focus are deeply tied to the World Cup, with their favorite team's performance shaping their overall tournament experience.

By Gender



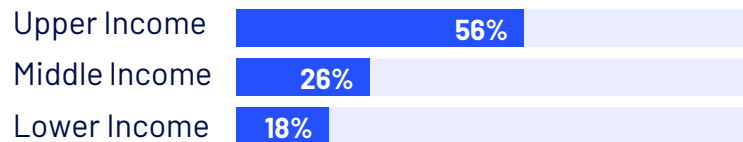
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



85%

Think that during the World Cup everything else takes a back seat to football

73%

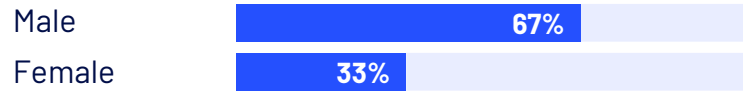
Have a mood that is influenced by the performance of their favorite team during the World Cup



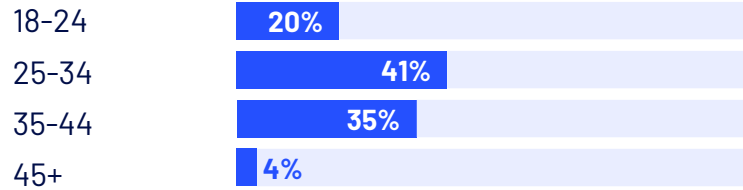
Who is The Tactician? (14%)

A person who approaches the World Cup with an interest in the technical and strategic aspects of football, following tactics, performance metrics, and expert insights.

By Gender



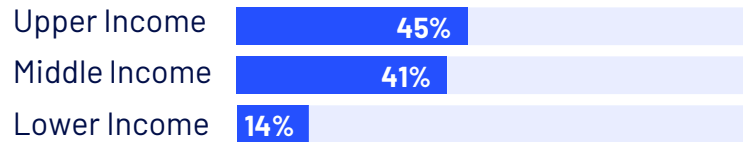
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level

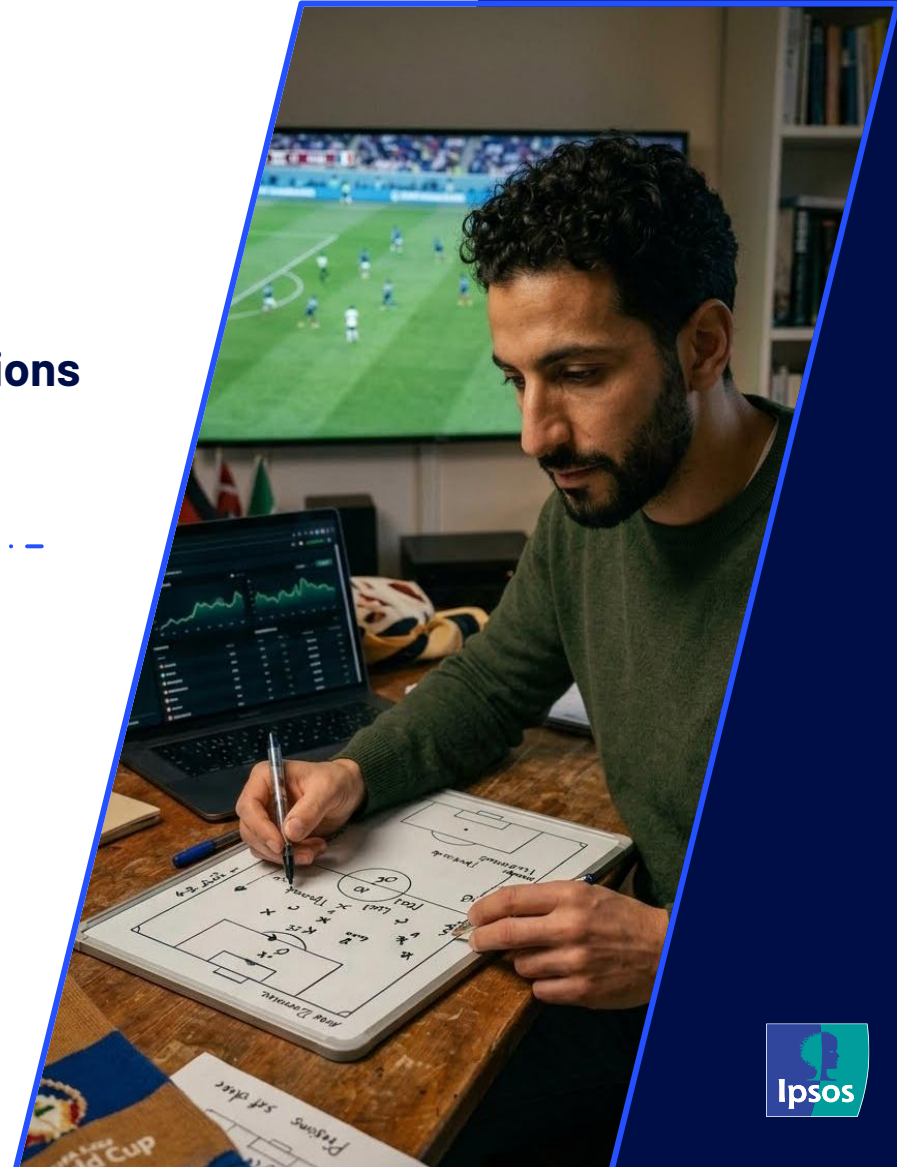


93%

Enjoy analyzing tactics, formations and player statistics during matches

43%

Follow football news and expert opinions year-round



Methodology

Sample size

— X
500 respondents

Sample criteria

— X
General public: representative of the population across gender, age (18+), nationality and region

Methodology

— X
The survey was conducted via Ipsos online panel

Geographical coverage

— X
Conducted in the UAE
with a nationwide coverage

X X X
X X X
X X X
X X X
X X X
X X X
X X



FOR MORE INFORMATION



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