



LEADING
SPORTSBOOK
PLATFORM

WORLD CUP 2026



How Bettors Really Bet

08.2026

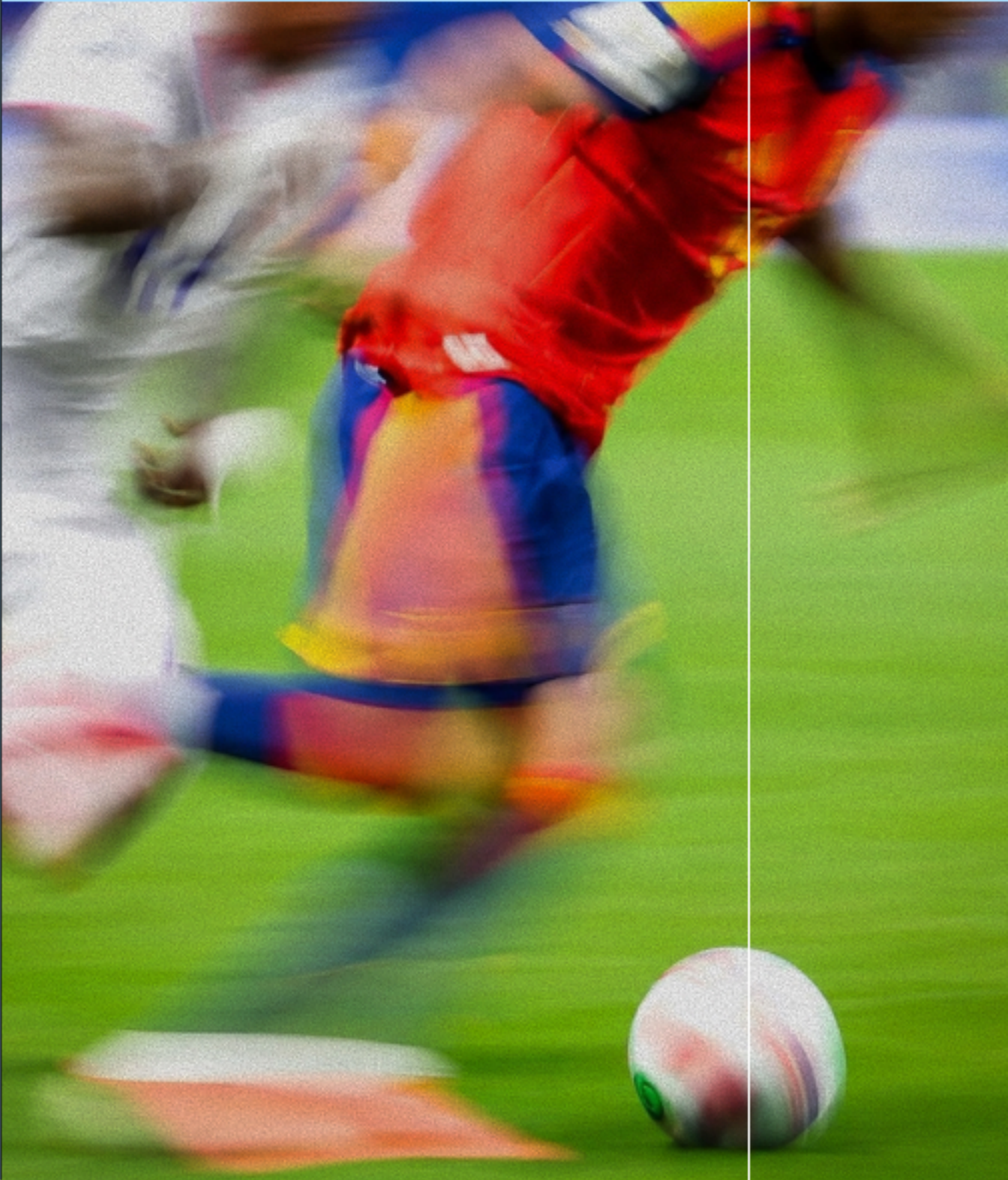


The FIFA World Cup 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The popularity of Bet Builders continues to grow and is now a vital part of a modern sportsbook offering, accounting for nearly 40% of all singles bets.
- When more is at stake on the pitch, betting stakes increase. Turnover was concentrated around the decisive games, with 30 of the 104 matches producing half of the turnover. Stakes increased once the knockout stage began - the average stake in the final was about 2.4× the tournament average.
- Spain's success welcomed by operators. France were the most popular pick with bettors but were beaten in the semi-finals by Spain, who were only ranked third for bets placed in the outright market.
- The biggest names drive sportsbook traffic. This was a World Cup when many of the star names lived up to the hype, helping to highlight the importance of player props.

was the biggest sports betting event in history, with 48 teams, 104 matches and a truly global audience. Analysis of Altenar's sportsbook data provides valuable insight for operators regarding the behaviours and trends that can drive future growth.



KEY METRICS AT A GLANCE

Metric	Value
Average Stake	€11.93
Stake per User	€255.44
Singles Share	68.75%
Multiples Share	31.25%
Bet Builder Share	39.6% of singles bets

BET TYPE MIX

Bet Type	Share of turnover
Singles	68.75%
Multiples	31.25%

BET BUILDERS SURGE IN POPULARITY

Bet Builders are an essential part of a modern sportsbook and their popularity at the World Cup highlighted their importance. Around two in every five singles bets (39.6%) were placed as a Bet Builder, which is a huge increase compared to 20.28% at the European Championship just two years earlier.

This type of betting allows bettors to combine multiple selections to produce higher odds, and add predictions around player performances to more traditional markets such as result and total goals.

Top matches for Bet Builders

France vs Iraq
Paraguay vs France
France vs Spain
France vs Morocco
Colombia vs Ghana
England vs Ghana
England vs Argentina
Spain vs Belgium
Colombia vs DR Congo
Brazil vs Haiti

Share of bets made as Bet Builders

42%
41%
38%
38%
37%
36%
36%
35%
35%
35%

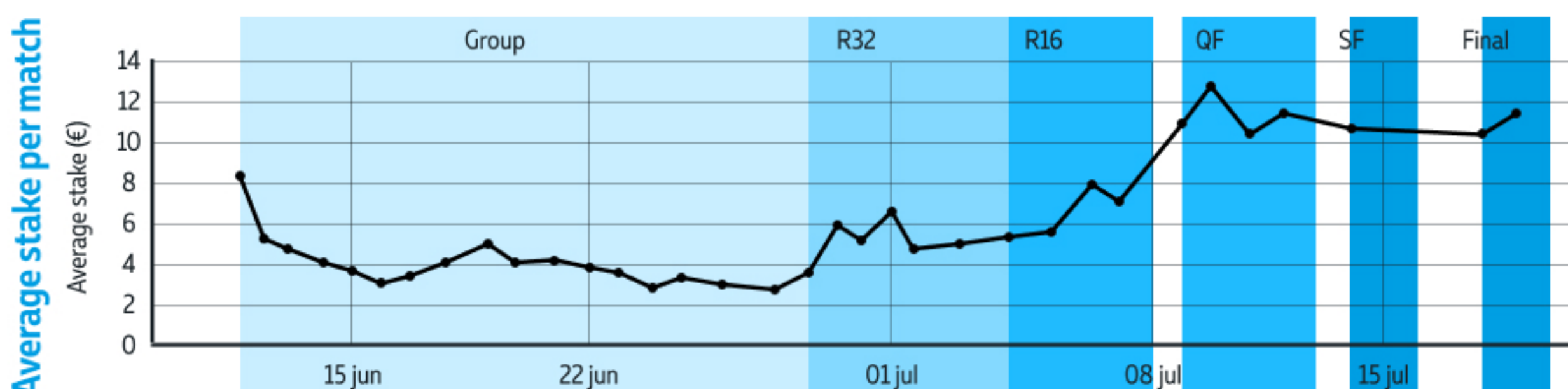
HOW BETTING SHIFTED OVER THE TOURNAMENT

Betting did not stay still. As teams advanced and fell, both stake sizes and the names bettors backed moved sharply - a reminder that outright markets are dynamic and need to be constantly re-priced.

AVERAGE STAKE INCREASED TOWARDS THE KNOCKOUT STAGE

The average stake per match remained at around €3–5 during the group stage. It reached its lowest point between 24 and 27 June, at approximately €2.9, before rising sharply once the knockout stage began. It reached €10–13 during the quarter-finals, semi-finals and final.

The decisive matches attracted larger individual stakes, not just a higher number of bets.





THE FAVOURITE THE MARKET CHASED

The outright winner market tracked form round by round. Portugal, the most-backed team by turnover before the tournament (30.8%), bled market share at every stage; France climbed to be the most popular choice (24% to 31.7%); Argentina and Norway also surged in popularity as they advanced, while Brazil faded. Bettors chased whoever looked strongest that round.

Team (% of outright turnover)	11 Jun	27 Jun	3 Jul	7 Jul	12 Jul	Final
France	24.1	21.7	23.9	24.5	27.8	31.7
Portugal	30.8	28.4	26.0	25.0	21.6	15.4
Spain 🏆	14.7	14.0	12.3	12.0	11.4	13.5
Argentina	4.0	6.4	9.0	8.9	9.8	12.7
Brazil	7.0	6.3	6.1	6.0	5.2	3.7
England	3.2	3.8	3.5	3.9	4.4	6.5
Norway	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.7	3.6	4.3

GLOBAL STARS DOMINATE GOALSCORER BETTING

The goalscorer market shifted just as fast and was consolidated around the tournament's biggest stars, then tracked team progress: Lionel Messi's share nearly quadrupled (4.7% to 16.5%) as Argentina reached the final, while Harry Kane and Cristiano Ronaldo faded. Pre-tournament favourite Kylian Mbappé remained the most popular selection on his way to Golden Boot glory.

Player (% of goalscorer turnover)	27 Jun	3 Jul	7 Jul	12 Jul	15 Jul	Final
Mbappé	18.7	17.8	20.1	20.7	23.5	24.3
Messi	4.7	10.6	12.4	14.4	16.2	16.5
Haaland	8.6	7.9	7.8	12.1	13.4	12.7
Kane	13.8	11.8	10.2	9.7	9.2	8.7
Ronaldo	10.7	9.2	8.2	6.7	5.1	4.8

WHAT BETTORS ARE BETTING ON

Two markets continue to dominate singles betting on football, with 1x2 (29.99%) and total goals (14.9%) together contributing almost 45% of turnover (excluding Bet Builders). But turnover hides how differently markets behave. Grouped by role:

Role	Example markets	Trend
Core volume	1x2, Total goals, Handicap	Very popular, generating around half of total revenue
Higher frequency	Double chance, Both teams to score	Valuable alternatives to the most popular markets
Engagement	Goalscorer, Player Shots, Player Specials	Player Special market turnover reached approximately 400% of its Euro 2024 level

Each role needs a different approach: core markets for reach, higher-frequency markets for volume, and engagement markets for retention.

A LIGHTER SIDE: NOVELTY MARKETS

Altenar's World Cup offer stretched well beyond the traditional markets. A run of novelty markets - many tied to the opening ceremony - gave operators the flexibility to offer light-touch engagement hooks alongside the core book.

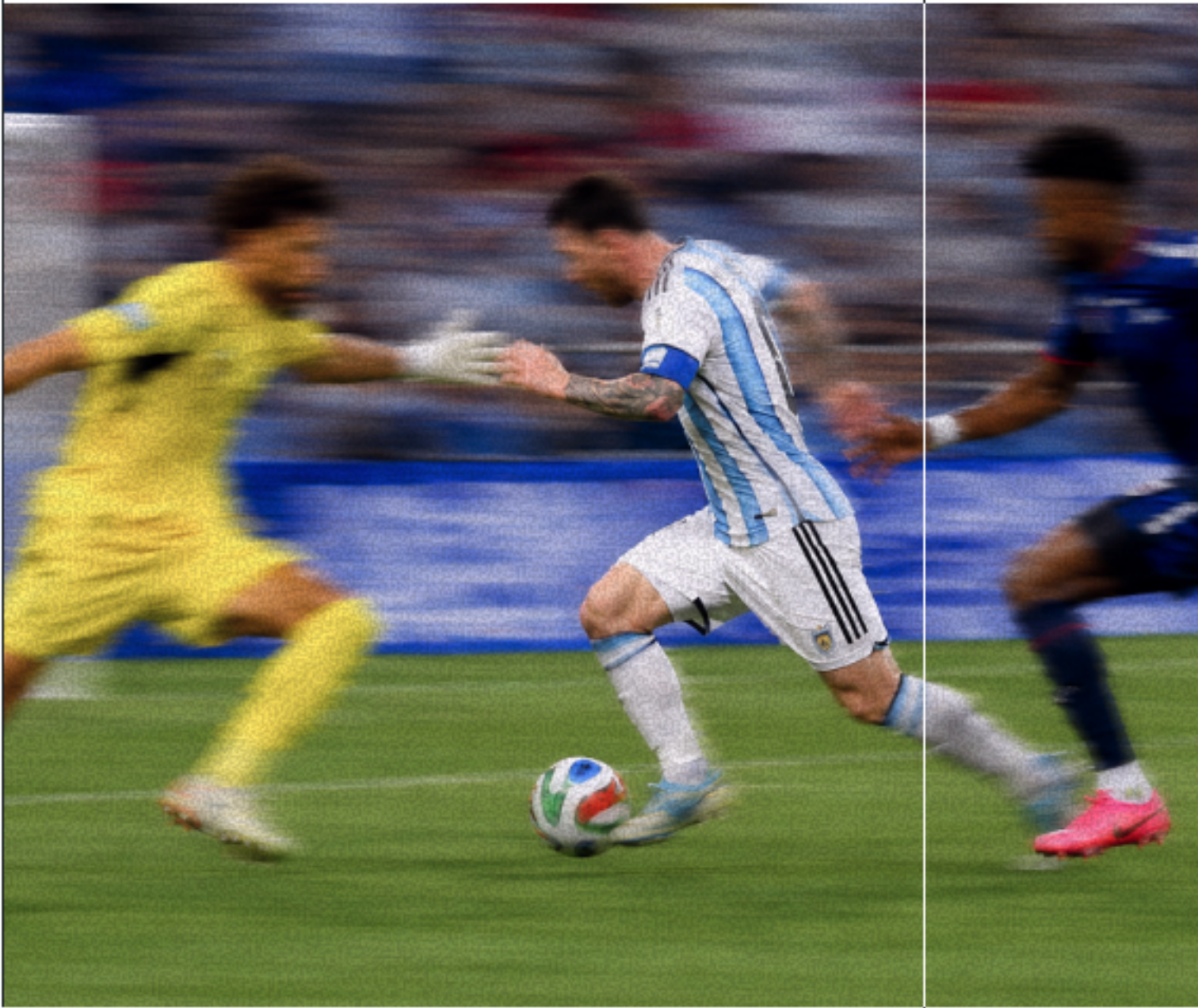
Here is a flavour of the more unusual World Cup bets available:

- What colour top would Belinda wear at the opening ceremony?
- Would any player score a hat-trick in the semi-finals?
- Would Tim Payne pass 7 million Instagram followers by kick-off?

Markets like these create strong engagement opportunities, helping to drive social sharing and acquisition around the tournament's biggest moments.

TOP MATCHES

The tournament's biggest matches by money were not its busiest by volume. Turnover concentrated in the knockout rounds, led by the final and quarter-finals, while the single most-bet match of the whole tournament was a group game - Argentina vs Cape Verde - which sat outside the turnover top five. Put simply: the matches that made the money were not always the matches that made the noise. Active users tracked turnover closely, while Bet Builder skewed hardest of all towards the knockouts.



BY TURNOVER SHARE

Ranked by share of total turnover, the final alone drew 3.25%, and the top 30 matches produced roughly half of all turnover. The third-place play-off (France vs England) ranked only 16th at 1.41% - less than half of the final's turnover. Knockout matches also drew bigger stakes: the final's turnover share was about 2.4× its bet-count share, versus 2.1× for Norway vs England and 1.9× for Mexico vs England - confirming that stake size, not only volume, rose in the decisive games.

Match	Date	Turnover share
 Spain vs  Argentina (Final)	19 Jul 2026	3.25%
 Norway vs  England (QF)	11 Jul 2026	2.77%
 Argentina vs  Switzerland (QF)	12 Jul 2026	2.77%
 Mexico vs  England (R16)	6 Jul 2026	2.73%
 France vs  Morocco (QF)	9 Jul 2026	2.52%

BY BET COUNT SHARE

Bet count told a different story to turnover. The most-bet match of the tournament was a group game - Argentina vs Cape Verde - which did not make the top five in terms of turnover. Volume of bets clustered in early-round matches with large fan-bases, not the high-stakes knockouts.

Match	Date	Bet count share
 Argentina vs  Cape Verde	3 Jul 2026	1.54%
 Mexico vs  England	6 Jul 2026	1.45%
 Argentina vs  Algeria	16 Jun 2026	1.42%
 Portugal vs  DR Congo	17 Jun 2026	1.41%
 Spain vs  Argentina	19 Jul 2026	1.36%

HOW FAN SENTIMENT SHAPED BETTING

Bettors followed fame, form and national emotion - not eventual performance. Three patterns stand out.

Money versus volume. France drew the largest outright stakes - 31.71% of outright turnover from just 16.72% of bets, a stake index of about 1.9x, while Brazil attracted a high volume of small, emotional bets (9.38% of bets but only 3.71% of turnover, about 0.4x). The average bet on France was roughly 4-5x the size of the average bet on Brazil.

Team	Turnover share	Team	Bet count share
 France	31.71%	 France	16.72%
 Portugal	15.44%	 Portugal	13.46%
 Spain	13.45%	 Argentina	11.51%
 Argentina	12.65%	 Spain	11.23%
 England	6.52%	 Brazil	9.38%
 Netherlands	4.63%	 Netherlands	8.00%
 Norway	4.30%	 Mexico	5.72%
 Brazil	3.71%	 Norway	5.66%
 Mexico	2.31%	 England	5.50%
 Germany	1.55%	 Germany	2.20%

Sentiment versus outcome. The outright market proved a successful one for operators. Bettors were quick to get behind France, who were the most heavily-backed team during the tournament, while Portugal attracted the most bets before the tournament began. Both teams failed to reach the final.

Champions Spain were widely predicted to be eliminated by France and were ranked only third by outright backing. The gap between who the crowd backs and who wins is one of the most commercially significant patterns in outright markets.

	Team	Share
Most backed at start (11 Jun)	 Portugal	30.76% turnover
Most backed at end (19 Jul)	 France	31.71% turnover
Final contested by	 Spain vs  Argentina	13.45% / 12.65%
Actual tournament winner	 Spain	13.45% (3rd by outright turnover)

Stars, right and wrong. Goalscorer betting concentrated on a few names, and at the top the market was the eventual Golden Boot winner. Kylian Mbappé led betting interest and claimed the Golden Boot (10 goals), with Lionel Messi (8) and Erling Haaland (7) also among the most backed and highest scoring. But there were some outsiders too: Jude Bellingham (7 goals) and Ousmane Dembélé (6) were among the top scorers but with minimal betting interest, while heavily-backed Cristiano Ronaldo could only manage three goals.

Player	Turnover share	Player	Bet count share
 Kylian Mbappé	24.29%	 Kylian Mbappé	19.20%
 Lionel Messi	16.53%	 Lionel Messi	13.65%
 Erling Haaland	12.67%	 Erling Haaland	11.19%
 Harry Kane	8.74%	 Harry Kane	8.67%
 Cristiano Ronaldo	4.84%	 Cristiano Ronaldo	5.52%
 Lamine Yamal	2.98%	 Vinícius Jr.	4.08%
 Vinícius Jr.	2.57%	 Lamine Yamal	3.48%
 Mikel Oyarzabal	2.44%	 Luis Díaz	2.62%
 Luis Díaz	1.61%	 Mikel Oyarzabal	2.57%

WHAT OPERATORS CAN LEARN

The value of these patterns is in what operators do next. Four priorities:

TRADING

Hold extra liability headroom for the important fixtures that drive the most turnover, and deepen live coverage where in-play appetite is highest.

CRM

Separate high-frequency, small-ticket players from high-stake users, and trigger campaigns around qualification and knockout progression, when stakes climb.

MARKETING

Use novelty markets selectively for social reach, and shift budget to fixtures where active users and stakes rise together.

BET BUILDER

Capitalise on the popularity of this bet type by offering a wide variety and depth of markets around star names and key tournament moments, creating more engaging Bet Builder combinations and helping attract new customers.

