



The Economics of Football Industry in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan “The Reality, Challenges, and Opportunities After Qualification”

Report

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The idea of launching the Jordan Economic Forum came as the first registered economic think tank under the umbrella of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, to serve as a supportive arm for businesses, working on reviewing and monitoring the various economic performance indicators of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, with the aim of providing feedback and practical solutions to decision makers.

The forum was registered on 08/08/2019 as a non-profit association bearing the national number 2019121117781.

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Table of Contents

Executive summary	04
1- Introduction	06
2- The state of sports sector in Jordan	08
3- Economics of Sport in Jordan	12
3.1 Jordanian National Team	13
3.2 Jordanian Pro League	17
3.3 Key challenges facing the development of Jordanian football	18
4- What does “economically qualified” mean?	29
5- International experiences: How have countries turned Football into Broader-Gains?	35
6- Recommendations	36



Executive summary

Jordanian football has witnessed a notable transformation in recent years at both the sporting and public engagement levels, highlighted in the historic achievement of the national team qualifying for the 2026 FIFA World Cup for the first time, in addition to reaching the AFC Asian Cup final and securing the runner-up position in the 2025 AFC Arab Cup. These achievements have renewed momentum in Jordan's sports landscape and increased both local and international interest in Jordanian football, extending beyond the sporting dimension toward broader economic and development impacts.

This paper examines the current state of sports in Jordan, with a focus on football as the most prominent and widely followed sport in Jordan, in addition to being one of the key components of the global sports economy. The paper indicates that the contribution of the sports and entertainment sector to the national economy remains limited, despite the growing societal interest in sports, reflecting the existence of untapped opportunities to enhance the economic returns associated with the sector.

The paper also addresses the current state of the Jordanian football ecosystem, including the national team, the domestic league, infrastructure, financing, and the legislative and regulatory environment. It further addresses challenges related to financial sustainability, limited sports investment, the need to develop stadiums and sports facilities, enhance technical and operational readiness, strengthen the institutional capacity of football clubs, and develop sports tourism and sports marketing as pathways capable of transforming the current sporting momentum into sustainable economic value.

The paper highlights that qualification for the FIFA World Cup represents not only a sporting achievement, but also a strategic opportunity that can enhance Jordan's international presence, increase media and tourism interest in the country, strengthen the marketing value of the national team and players, and stimulate economic sectors linked to sports, services and tourism. Furthermore, this achievement can contribute to promoting sports investment and increasing the attractiveness of Jordanian football to the private sector, particularly in light of the growing public and digital engagement with the national team over the recent period.



Executive summary

Given this, the paper emphasizes that maximizing the benefits of this achievement requires a comprehensive vision that views football as an economic and development sector capable of creating added value and new investment opportunities, rather than merely as a sporting activity. Within this framework, the Jordan Economic Forum presents a set of recommendations focused on developing sports infrastructure, strengthening partnerships with the private sector, improving the legislative and investment environment, empowering clubs, and developing sports tourism and sports marketing. These efforts would contribute to building a more sustainable football ecosystem with a greater capacity to generate economic and development impacts for Jordan.



The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan places great emphasis on the youth and sports sectors, reflected by the institutional structure and sports facilities spread across Jordan's various governorates, including sports cities, complexes, and youth centers established to serve young people and expand community participation. This is evident in the royal directives and the direct interest of His Royal Highness Prince Al-Hussein bin Abdullah II, Crown Prince, in the sports and youth sectors, through his ongoing support for athletes and national teams and his sponsorship of youth initiatives and its programs. In addition to the support of His Royal Highness Prince Ali bin Al Hussein, President of the Jordan Football Association, for the Jordanian national team's progress and the promotion of a competitive spirit.

This commitment is also aligned with the Economic Modernization Vision (2022–2033), which incorporated sports within the Future Services pillar and emphasized the importance of improving quality of life and enhancing the quality of services and activities provided to citizens. This reflects the understanding that economic development is not limited solely to growth and employment, but also includes creating a more vibrant and prosperous living environment that incorporates sports, entertainment, and modern services as essential components of comprehensive development.

At the heart of this landscape, football stands out as the most popular and widespread sport in the Kingdom, and the one most closely connected to the sentiments of Jordanians across all segments of society. This presence has grown significantly in recent years, driven by the national team's historic achievements and results, which have renewed momentum in the sports scene and fostered a strong sense of national unity and collective pride, alongside increased levels of fan and media engagement with local and regional matches and competitions.

The importance of Football extends beyond athletic achievement; it extends to its direct and indirect economic impacts, whether through stimulating spending, encouraging investment and sponsorship, increasing demand for services related to matches and events, or by enhancing Jordan's image abroad and leveraging sporting successes to create new development opportunities.



Therefore, the Jordan Economic Forum has prepared this paper to shed light on the economics of sports in Jordan in general, and football in particular, motivated by the Jordanian national team's historic qualification for the FIFA World Cup for the first time. The paper adopts an economic perspective that focuses on the current landscape, potential opportunities, key challenges, and ways to transform the existing sporting momentum into sustainable economic and development value.

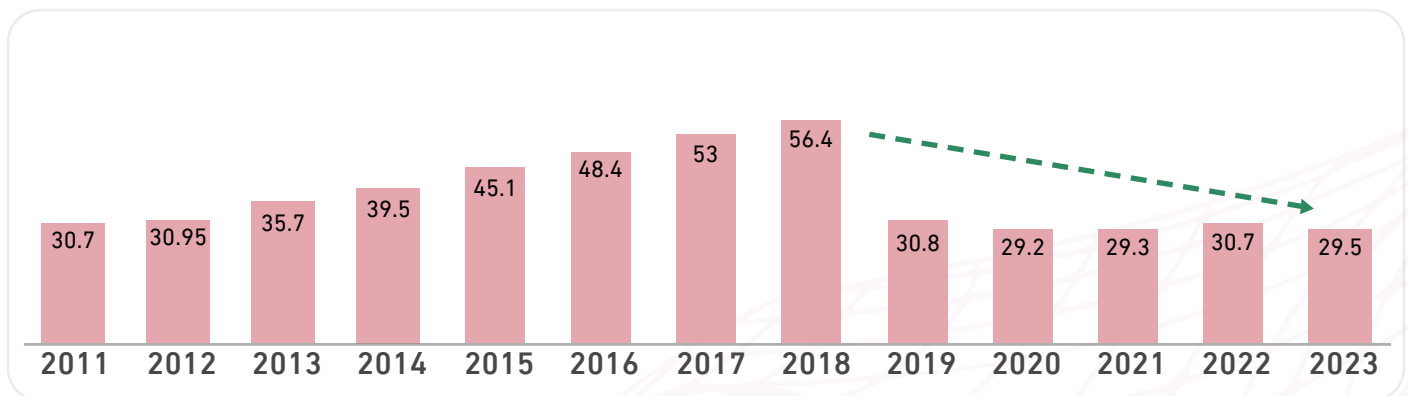


The state of sports sector in Jordan

The sports sector in Jordan is classified as part of the services sector, and the Department of Statistics (DOS) measures it through economic surveys covering various sectors, based on the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) and the concepts of the System of National Accounts (SNA). In this paper, the Jordan Economic Forum relied on these available data to provide an indicative economic assessment of the sector, while noting that specialized data related to sports economics remain limited. In this context, the key economic insights and observations related to the sector can be highlighted as follows:

The total output of sports, entertainment, and recreation activities in Jordan reached approximately **JOD 29.5 million in 2023** (latest available data), compared with higher levels exceeding **JOD 56 million** in the period prior to 2019. This reflects a clear decline in the scale of economic activity within the sector over recent years. Despite recording some improvement following the pandemic period, output levels remain below their previous peak.

Figure (1): Total output of sports, entertainment and recreation activities — JOD Million

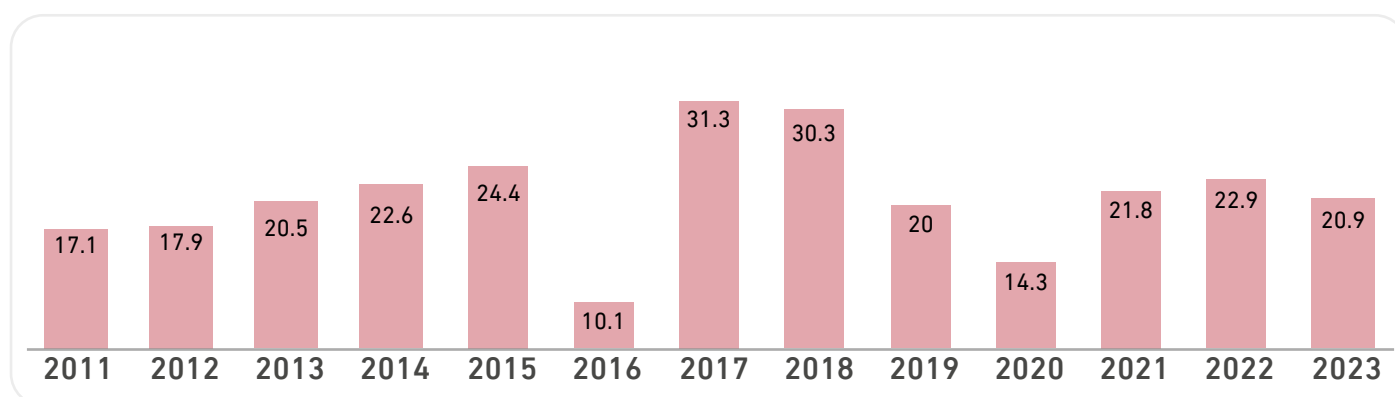


Source: Department of Statistics Jordan, Economic activities survey, Different years

On the other hand, the data indicate that the value added generated by sports, entertainment, and recreation activities reached approximately JOD 20.9 million in 2023. This represents the value actually added by the sector to the economy after deducting intermediate consumption and production inputs. This figure reflects the existence of genuine economic activity within the sector; however, its contribution remains limited compared with the level of societal interest in sports, indicating the existence of untapped opportunities to increase the economic returns generated by sports activities.



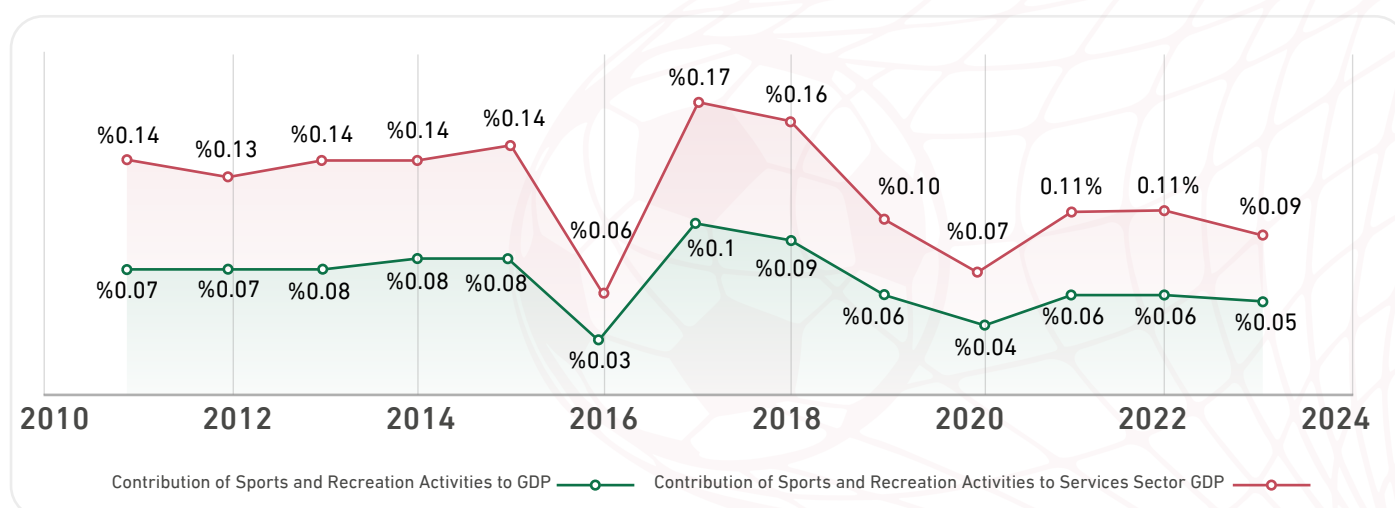
Figure (2): The added value of Sports and Entertainment activities — JOD Million



Source: Department of Statistics Jordan, Economic activities survey, Different years

As for the sector's weight within the national economy, the data show that the contribution of sports, entertainment, and recreation activities remains limited at the macroeconomic level, amounting to approximately 0.05% of GDP and 0.09% of the total services sector GDP, confirming that the widespread popularity of sports has not yet translated into a comparable economic contribution within the national economy. It is noted that Jordan Economic Forum has calculated the sector's contribution to the services sector GDP based on the national accounts methodologies adopted by the Department of Statistics (DOS).

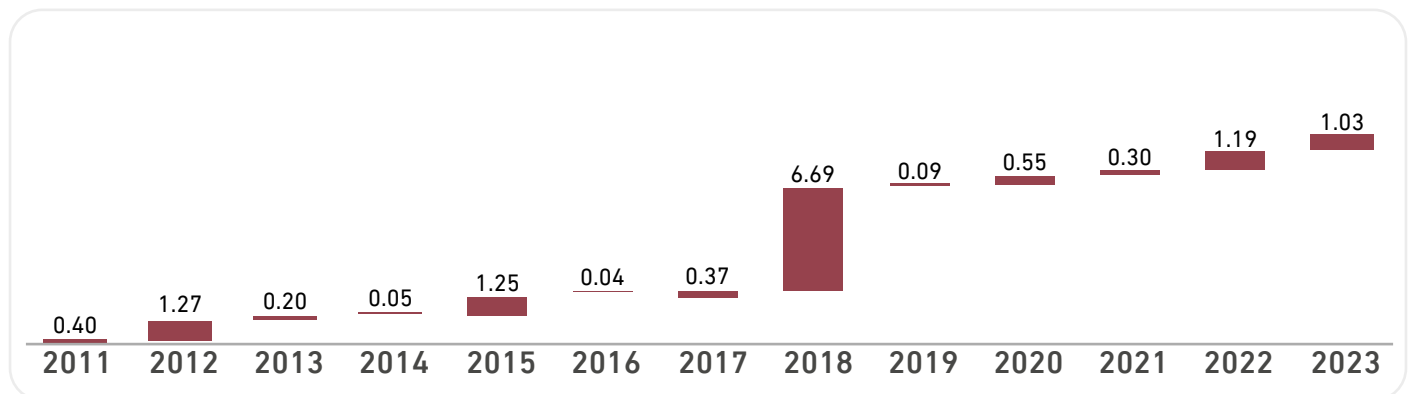
Figure (3): Contribution of the Sports and Entertainment Activities Sector to the Economy



Source: Department of Statistics Jordan, Economic activities survey, Different years

The limited contribution of the sports and entertainment sector to the national economy to the national economy can also be attributed to limited investment in long-term productive assets, such as sports facilities, infrastructure, equipment, and related amenities. Historical economic survey data indicate that the sector's average gross fixed capital formation remained around JOD 1 million annually, which represents a modest level that limits the sector's capacity for expansion and increasing its economic contribution.

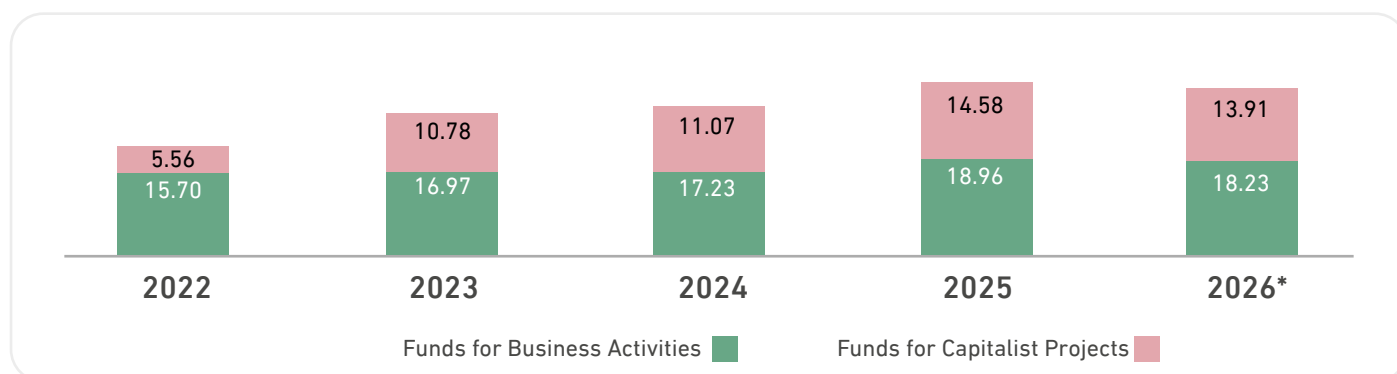
Figure (4): Gross Fixed Capital Formation in the Sports Activities Sector - JOD Million



Source: Department of Statistics Jordan, Economic activities survey, Different years

Developing the sports sector is not limited to investments in productive assets alone, but is also linked to the government's role in developing the broader sports ecosystem, led by the Jordanian Ministry of Youth. This includes both operational expenditures allocated for managing centers, facilities, and programs, as well as capital expenditures directed toward establishing, upgrading, and expanding sports facilities and cities. Accordingly, the level of expenditure allocated to the Ministry and the distribution of this spending between current and capital expenditures serves as a direct indicator of the priority given to the sports sector in Jordan.

Figure (5): Total Current and Capital Expenditure of the Ministry of Youth – JOD Million



Source: Ministry of Youth, Budget allocations, General Budget Department, different years

Capital expenditures by the Ministry of Youth accounted for an average of approximately 38% of total expenditures over the past five years, however, the impact of these allocations depends not only on their size but also on how efficiently they are directed toward productive capital projects that serve development objectives, contribute to the creation of sustainable assets, and enhance the efficiency of sports infrastructure.

The Sports Development Program is considered one of the main programs funded through the allocations of the Ministry of Youth. The program focuses on developing sports infrastructure and operating sports cities and supporting facilities that enable the practice of sporting activities.

Currently, there are approximately **400 sports clubs and five sports cities** distributed across different regions of the Kingdom within the scope of support and development, with targets to increase the number of sports cities to eight cities in the coming years.

With the growing societal interest in sports and the recent achievements, the success of these targets will remain dependent on the effectiveness of implementation, the efficient management of sports assets, and the ability of government programs to transform this momentum into sustainable economic and development value.

the Ministry's responsibilities and the increasing number of programs it oversees, the importance of securing additional resources, improving the efficiency of public spending, and enhancing the Ministry's ability to allocate its resources in a manner that achieves the greatest economic and social impact for the sports sector.

The beginnings of football in Jordan goes back to the late 1920s, when “Jordan Club” was established in 1928 as the first sports club in the Emirate of Transjordan, with activities limited to football. Meanwhile, Al-Faisaly Club, founded in 1932, is one of the oldest Jordanian clubs still active today, reflecting the early development of football in Jordan.

Football holds a special place within the sports sector, as it is the most widespread sport at both the local and global levels. It also possesses unique economic and organizational characteristics that extend beyond the traditional sporting dimension. In addition to its role as a widely practiced sport, football is connected to an integrated economic ecosystem that includes clubs, competitions, broadcasting rights, commercial sponsorships, player transfers, sports infrastructure, and related employment opportunities. This has made it one of the most important components of the sports economy in many countries around the world.

Today, the football ecosystem operates within an institutional framework led by the Jordan Football Association, under the leadership of His Royal Highness Prince Ali bin Al Hussein, president of the Jordan Football Association. It includes domestic competitions across various levels, national teams and age groups, women’s football, as well as a network of clubs and sports facilities across the Kingdom’s different governorates. This structure has contributed to sustaining football activities and expanding its presence both locally and internationally.

In recent years, Jordan Football Association has implemented a series of institutional and administrative reforms aimed at developing the Jordanian football system and enhancing its sustainability. These efforts led to the launch of the “Jordanian Football Strategy and Growth, (2025–2029), which is centered on four main pillars: technical advancement, empowerment and growth, infrastructure, and community engagement, with the aim of developing the various components of the football ecosystem and strengthening its long-term financial and administrative sustainability. The Federation also worked to update financial and accounting systems, improving competitions and national team management systems, and expanding the use of digital solutions and online platforms, thereby contributing to the enhancement of governance and institutional oversight and improving the efficiency of resource management.

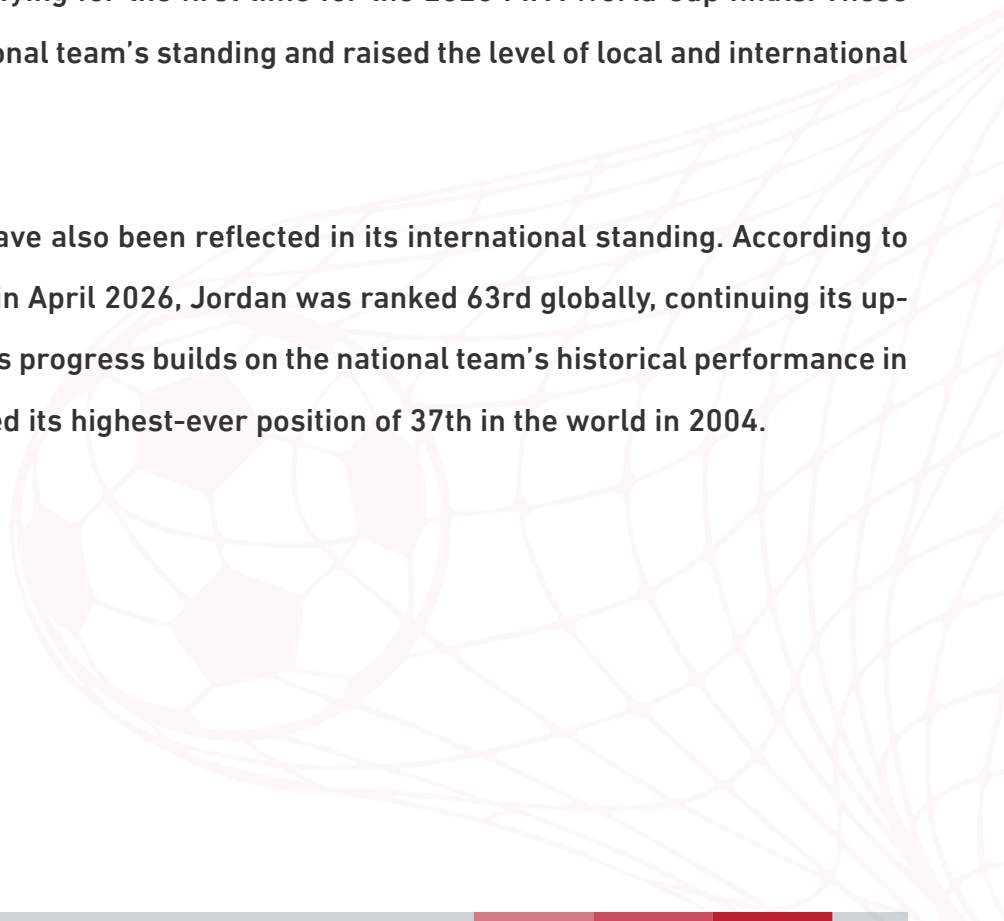


In terms of financial empowerment and the development of the football ecosystem, the Federation has worked on expanding partnerships with the private sector and diversifying sources of revenue, in addition to increasing support for clubs and the development of youth teams and women's football. The football ecosystem has also seen an expansion in digital presence and audience engagement across online platforms, alongside increased investment in national teams and technical development programs. These efforts have been reflected in the results achieved in recent years, including reaching the AFC Asian Cup final, finishing as runners-up in the 2025 AFC Arab Cup, and the historic qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup finals.

3.1 Jordanian National Team

The Jordanian national football team is the cornerstone of the domestic football system and the most prominent representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan at the regional and international levels. In recent years the national team has made remarkable progress, marked by reaching the final of the AFC Asian Cup and finishing as Runners-up in the 2025 AFC Arab Cup, alongside the most notable historic achievement of qualifying for the first time for the 2026 FIFA World Cup finals. These results have strengthened the national team's standing and raised the level of local and international interest in Jordanian football.

The team's recent achievements have also been reflected in its international standing. According to the FIFA World Rankings released in April 2026, Jordan was ranked 63rd globally, continuing its upward trajectory in recent years. This progress builds on the national team's historical performance in the global rankings, having achieved its highest-ever position of 37th in the world in 2004.



At the continental and global levels, the Jordanian national team has qualified for the AFC Asian Cup finals on five occasions, in 2004, 2011, 2015, 2019, and 2023. Its greatest achievement came in the 2023, held in 2024, where it reached the final and finished as runner-up for the first time in its history. The team has also maintained a long-standing presence in the AFC Arab Cup, having participated in ten editions (1963, 1964, 1966, 1985, 1988, 1992, 1998, 2002, 2012, and 2025). Its best performance was reaching the final and finishing as runner-up in the 2025 edition. In addition, Jordan hosted the fifth edition of the tournament in Amman in 1988.

Most significantly, qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup represents the greatest achievement in the history of the Jordanian national team, marking Jordan's first-ever appearance in football's biggest global tournament.



FIFA World Ranking for the Jordanian National Football Team



The Economics of Sport in Jordan

On the other hand, these achievements have contributed to a rapid increase in the market value of the Jordanian national team's players. According to data from Transfermarkt, one of the leading global platforms specializing in football market analysis, the estimated market value of the Jordanian national team increased from approximately Euro 7.5–8 million in 2022 to around Euro 10.28 million in 2024, before rising further to Euro 19.83 million most recently. This upward trend is expected to continue if the national team maintains its positive results and strengthens its presence in international markets and professional leagues.

Within the team's overall market valuation, several players stand out with the highest individual values, led by Mousa Al-Taamari, whose estimated market value is approximately EUR 10 million. This distribution reflects the presence of a core group of players capable of increasing the overall market value of the national team, while also highlighting the need to broaden the pool of high-value players in the coming years.



On the other hand, this increase in market value has been accompanied by the growing presence of Jordanian players in international professional football. A number of them are currently competing in European, Asian, and Gulf leagues, including those in France, Qatar, Malaysia, and several Gulf countries. The impact of this trend extends beyond technical development, contributing to greater competitive experience, enhanced physical and tactical readiness, and a stronger market reputation for Jordanian players. This, in turn, creates opportunities for higher-value transfer deals in the future and generates additional financial returns for clubs and the Jordanian football sector as a whole.

3.2 Jordanian Pro League

The Jordanian Pro League represents the cornerstone of domestic football, serving as the highest level of football competition in the country and the primary platform for developing players and supplying talent to the national teams. It also plays a vital role in stimulating the economic activity associated with football through fan engagement, sponsorship, advertising, broadcasting rights, stadium operations, and employment opportunities.

The league currently consists of 10 clubs, while the remaining clubs compete across other divisions, with 14 clubs in the First Division and 16 clubs in the Second Division. In addition, competitions are organized for youth age groups and women's football, reflecting the broad football base in the Kingdom and the diversity of its competitive pathways.

According to the latest estimates published by Transfermarkt, the Jordanian Pro League has an estimated total market value of approximately EUR 31.03 million. This indicates that the league possesses an established economic base, although it remains below its potential when compared with more developed regional leagues. A significant share of this market value is concentrated in a limited number of clubs. Al Hussein SC ranks first with an estimated market value of approximately EUR 6.63 million, followed by Al Faisaly SC at around EUR 5.80 million, and Al Wehdat SC at approximately EUR 4.23 million. This distribution reflects the concentration of both competitive and economic strength among a small number of clubs, alongside a clear disparity in the resources and capabilities available to the rest of the league's clubs.



In terms of broadcasting and commercial revenues, the Jordanian Sports Channel, operated by the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation (JRTV), holds the exclusive broadcasting rights to Jordanian Pro League matches providing an official and consistent platform for televising domestic competitions. Meanwhile, CFI Group serves as the league's principal and official sponsor, reflecting the growing interest of the private sector in the championship's commercial and marketing value. Nevertheless, this area still offers significant opportunities for further development through expanding the sponsorship base, adopting more diverse digital broadcasting models, and linking commercial revenues to audience viewership and fan engagement levels.

3.3 Key Challenges Facing the Development of Jordanian Football

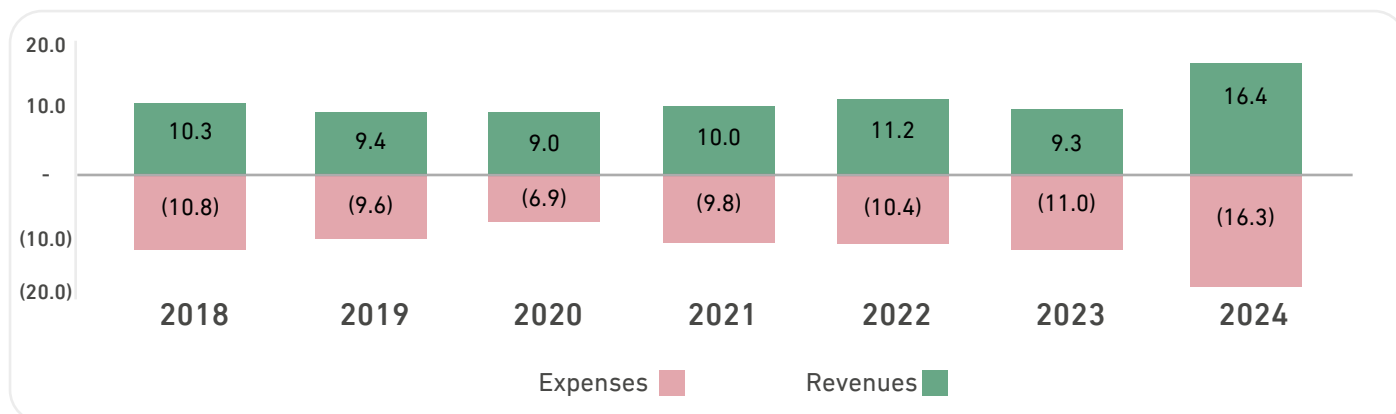
In light of the recent achievements and Jordan's wealth of human capital and emerging talent, football has become a sector that warrants greater attention—not only from a sporting perspective, but also as a sector of growing economic importance. Maximizing the benefits of this sector requires a clear understanding of the financial, regulatory, and technical challenges it faces, along with efforts to transform the current momentum into sustainable growth and greater economic returns.

Challenges of Financing and Financial Sustainability

According to the financial reports issued by the Jordan Football Association, the data indicate continued financial pressures. In 2024, the Association generated approximately JOD 16.4 million in revenue, while expenditures totaled nearly JOD 16.3 million. Although revenues increased compared with some previous years, they remain limited relative to the ambitions for advancing Jordanian football and meeting the demands of the next phase, which requires greater investment in national team preparation, competition development, coaching quality, sports infrastructure, and the expansion of talent identification and development programs.



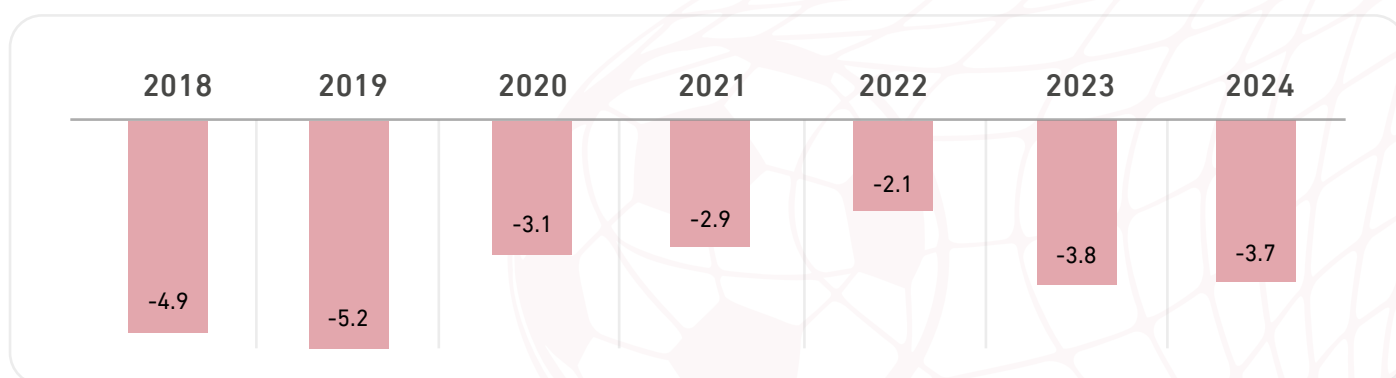
Figure (6): Comparison of the Jordan Football Association's revenue and financial expenditure trends – JOD Million



Source: Financial reports, Jordan Football Association, Different years

When tracking the path of the financial data in the figure above, it becomes clear that the Jordan Football Association is facing financial challenges, represented by the continued recording of financial deficits over a number of years, despite improved financial performance in some periods. This reflects a gap between available resources and the financial obligations required to manage competitions, develop national teams, and implement various programs and projects — highlighting the need to strengthen sustainable revenues and increase the Federation's financing capacity in the coming period.

Figure (7): Comparison of Accumulated Financial Deficit – JOD Million



Source: Financial reports, Jordan Football Association, Different years

Looking at the revenue structure for 2024, it is clear that the resources of the Jordan Football Association are concentrated in a limited number of sources, with local support accounting for 29%, most of which came from the support of the Ministry of Finance, amounting to approximately JOD 3 million. This is followed by revenues from marketing activities at 19%, amounting to approximately JOD 3.16 million. The Jordan Football Association also benefits from support programs provided by the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA), particularly through the FIFA Forward program dedicated to developing the game globally, under which each national association receives annual funding of approximately USD 1.25 million to cover operational expenses, in addition to up to USD 3 million to implement specific, well-studied football development projects during the program cycle (2023–2026). In the context of supporting the sports sector, the government announced raising the budget of the Jordan Football Association to approximately USD 8 million within the 2026 general budget, a step that reflects the growing official interest in developing Jordanian football and supporting its upcoming commitments.

On the other hand, ticket sales revenue reached approximately JOD 513,700 in 2024, which is higher than the levels recorded in the previous years; however, they remain limited compared to the popularity of Jordanian football, and revenue from matches remains below its potential, both in terms of attendance figures and the commercial value of the fan experience, as the average attendance for the first round of the 2024/2025 season was only about 500 spectators per match.

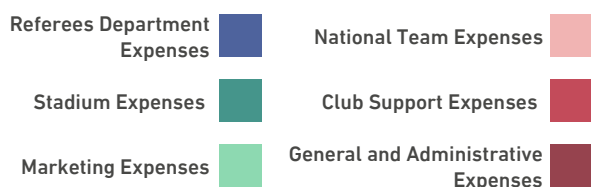
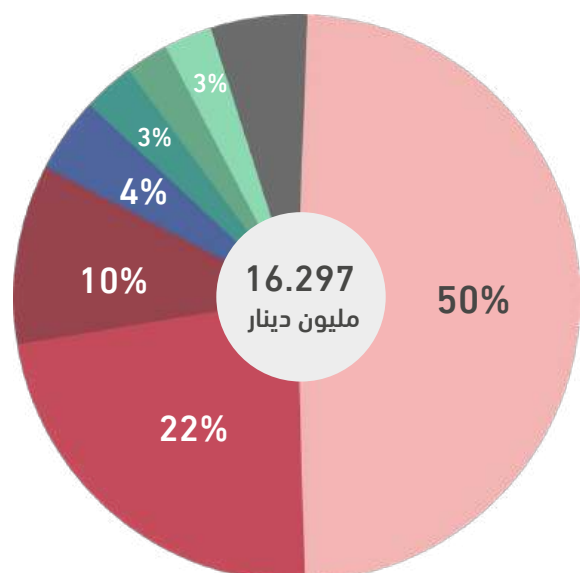
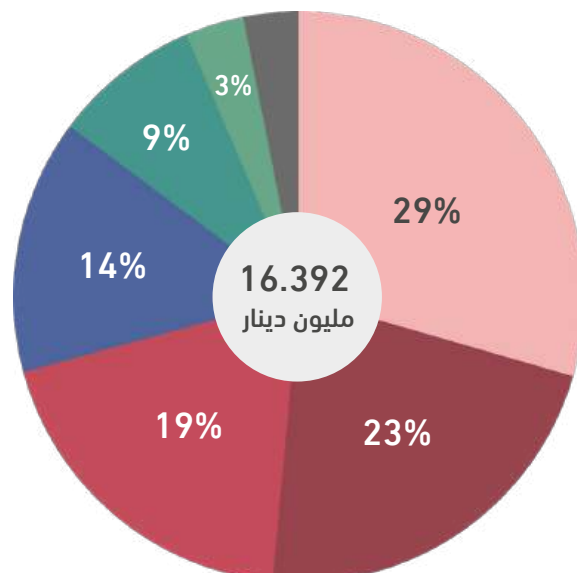
Taking into account revenue from prizes, competitions, and hosting tournaments—which accounted for approximately 23% of the federation’s total revenue in 2024— this revenue is expected to rise in 2025, driven by the national team’s recent positive results, including winning the 2025 AFC Arab Cup, which was accompanied by prize money estimated at approximately USD 4.25 million, victory in the AFC Asian Cup, for which it received USD 3 million, and the historic qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup finals, which guarantees the national team at least USD 10 million for participation based on FIFA’s guaranteed participation payment, and approximately USD 1.5 million allocated to cover preparation costs. However, these developments have also been accompanied by a rise in the operational and technical costs associated with financial obligations, in addition to the requirements for preparing the next phase, which include training camps, preparatory matches, technical and medical staff, and specialized preparation programs, reflecting the need for sustainable financial resources that keep pace with the growing competitive ambitions of Jordanian football.



This indicates that a significant portion of resources continues to rely on direct support, whether domestic or foreign, while commercial and marketing revenues, despite their importance, remain below full potential, which calls for the development of the marketing system.

On the expenditure side, the Jordan Football Association increased its total expenditures to approximately JOD 16.3 million in 2024, representing an increase of around JOD 5.26 million compared with 2023. This expansion reflects the Association's continued investment in supporting the national teams, football clubs, and youth categories, while allocating the resources necessary to advance the development of Jordanian football. National teams accounted for the largest share of total expenditure, representing 50% (approximately JOD 8.2 million), covering technical staff, training and preparation programs, and performance-related bonuses. Meanwhile, financial support to football clubs amounted to approximately 22% of total expenditures (JOD 3.63 million), recording a notable year-on-year increase. These trends reflect the growing financial commitments required to maintain competitiveness and further develop the football ecosystem, highlighting the need to continue strengthening sustainable financial resources to support its long-term growth.



Expenses structure of the Jordan Football Association - 2024

Revenue Structure of the Jordan Football Association - 2024


Source: Financial reports, Jordan Football Association, different years

The financial challenge is not limited to the Jordan Football Association; it also extends to football clubs, many of which face constrained budgets and weak self-generated revenues. This limits their ability to invest in youth development, attract qualified talent, and strengthen their administrative and technical capacities. Accordingly, there is a growing need for more sustainable financing models and a broader diversification of revenue sources to enhance the commercial performance and long-term financial sustainability of Jordan's football ecosystem.

The Jordan Economic Forum emphasizes the importance of strengthening the culture of sports investment within Jordan's football ecosystem by expanding institutional management models and partnerships with the private sector. This includes moving toward transforming clubs into professionally managed sports companies or enabling major corporations to contribute to their management and development through a long-term investment approach. Such an approach would contribute to building more sustainable revenue streams, encouraging investments in sports facilities, academies, marketing, sponsorships, and entertainment services, thereby enhancing financial stability and improving the competitiveness of clubs and the football sector as a whole.

Infrastructure and Technical readiness

Infrastructure and technical readiness are among the Key drivers of modern football development, as competition is no longer dependent solely on talent, but also on the quality of stadiums, training centers, technical facilities, and the ability to provide a comprehensive professional environment for players and technical staff. In the Jordanian context, despite the availability of a number of sports facilities that have hosted domestic, continental, and international competitions, the requirements of the next phase call for a more ambitious vision to develop football infrastructure and enhance their technical and operational readiness.

Jordan has a limited number of major international stadiums, led by venues such as the Amman International Stadium, with a capacity of approximately 17,600 spectators, and King Abdullah II Stadium, with a capacity of approximately 13,300 spectators, alongside Al-Hassan Stadium in Irbid and Prince Mohammed Stadium in Zarqa, in addition to a number of other stadiums that host local competitions in the governorates.

Although some of these stadiums exceed the capacity requirements of certain international stadium classifications, such as (Category 2 and Category 3) adopted in accordance with UEFA standards, which range from 1,500 spectators up to approximately 4,500 spectators, with the requirement for media facilities, broadcast equipment, and seating for VIPs, noting that (Category 4) represents the highest levels of technical and media readiness, with stadiums typically have a capacity of tens of thousands of spectators and are used to host major tournaments and matches with high economic returns.



However, modern readiness is no longer linked solely to capacity; it also encompasses the quality of supporting facilities, broadcasting technologies, hospitality and spectator services, and operational and safety systems—elements that have become essential for hosting high-revenue tournaments, and major sporting events with high economic returns. Accordingly, some sports facilities in Jordan still require further modernization and development to enhance their technical, media, and operational readiness in line with the requirements of modern football.

The development of football infrastructure also includes expanding the construction and upgrading of five-a-side and six-a-side football pitches, training grounds, and local sports facilities across all governorates. These investments play a vital role in broadening participation, identifying and nurturing talent, and increasing youth engagement in sports. Furthermore, a balanced geographical distribution of stadiums and sports facilities contributes to more equitable regional development, creates more vibrant sporting and community environments associated with sports and related services.

As part of efforts to develop sports infrastructure, the planned sports project in the Umrah area is one of the flagship initiatives for developing sports infrastructure in Jordan. It includes the construction of a modern sports city centered around the King Hussein II International Stadium, with a capacity of up to 50,000 spectators, alongside commercial and service facilities. The project also relies on modern technologies and advanced broadcasting systems, which enhances Jordan's readiness to host major tournaments and events.

With the historic achievement of qualifying for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the rising expectations for Jordanian football, there is a growing need to start thinking now about the requirements of the next phase, whether through upgrading existing stadiums to meet international standards, or modernizing training and rehabilitation centers, and improving the efficiency of existing facilities. Furthermore, investment in sports infrastructure generates benefits that extend well beyond the sports sector; its impact extends to revitalizing the local economy, creating job opportunities, and enhancing Jordan's ability to attract future sports tournaments and events.

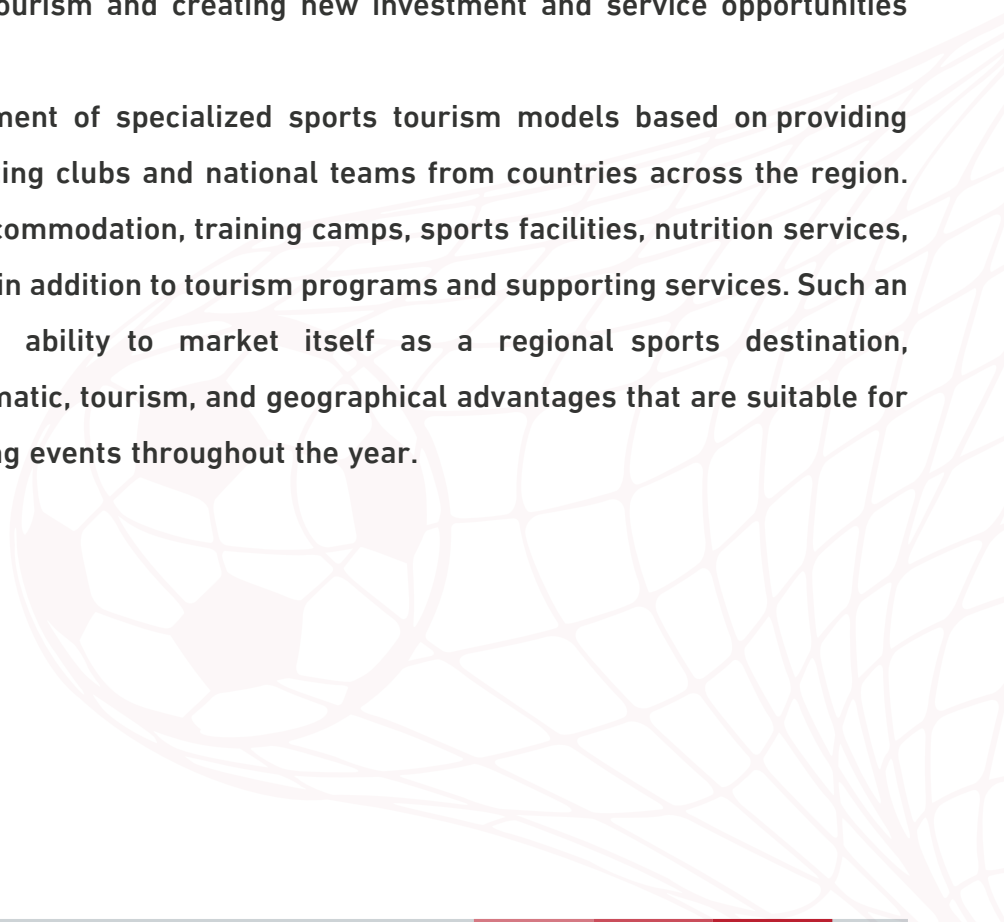


Limited development of sports tourism and marketing

The economic benefits generated by sports in Jordan remain largely concentrated in traditional areas related to competitions and tournaments, while the development of sports tourism and sports marketing activities remains limited, despite their potential as complementary economic sectors capable of creating new investment opportunities. In many countries, sports have become an integral part of a comprehensive tourism ecosystem that includes training camps, sports medicine and rehabilitation centers, academies, sporting events, and hospitality and catering services specifically designed for athletes and national teams.

Jordan possesses several potential advantages that can be leveraged to develop this type sector, including its moderate climate, geographical diversity, and tourism destinations capable of hosting training camps and specialized sports facilities, particularly in areas such as Aqaba, the Dead Sea, Ajloun, and other governorates. This could also include the development of specialized sports medicine and rehabilitation centers, as well as the establishment of integrated training facilities aimed at attracting clubs and national teams from countries across the region. Such initiatives would contribute to stimulating sports tourism and creating new investment and service opportunities linked to the football sector.

This would enable the development of specialized sports tourism models based on providing integrated sports programs targeting clubs and national teams from countries across the region. These programs would include accommodation, training camps, sports facilities, nutrition services, and sports rehabilitation services, in addition to tourism programs and supporting services. Such an approach would enhance Jordan's ability to market itself as a regional sports destination, particularly given its favorable climatic, tourism, and geographical advantages that are suitable for hosting training camps and sporting events throughout the year.

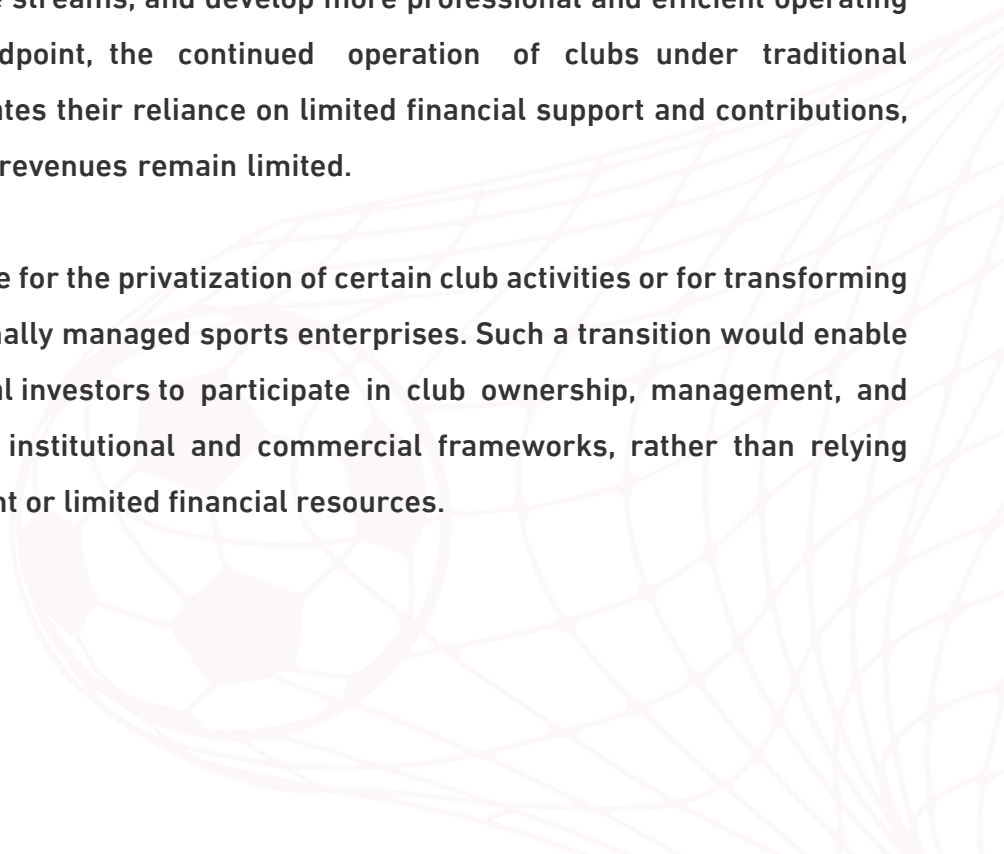


The Legal Environment and Club Empowerment

The legal and regulatory environment is one of the key determinants of the future of Jordanian football, as the development of football clubs and their financial sustainability depend not only on sporting performance but also on the effectiveness of the regulatory framework governing the sector. Football and sports clubs in Jordan operate within a legislative and regulatory framework overseen by several institutions, including the Ministry of Youth, the Jordan Olympic Committee, and the Jordan Football Association. Among the most prominent elements of this framework are the Regulation on the Licensing and Registration of Clubs and Youth Organizations No. 33 of 2005, the Jordanian Sports Federations Regulation No. 73 of 2021, the Statutes of the Jordan Football Association, and the regulations governing competitions, academies, and tournaments.

Despite the important role these regulations play in governing the sector, some of the existing frameworks were designed during an earlier period when football clubs were managed primarily as community-based organizations rather than as sports institutions with both commercial and investment dimensions. As a result, they now constrain clubs' ability to expand, attract private investment, diversify their revenue streams, and develop more professional and efficient operating models. From an economic standpoint, the continued operation of clubs under traditional organizational structures perpetuates their reliance on limited financial support and contributions, while commercial and investment revenues remain limited.

Accordingly, there is a growing case for the privatization of certain club activities or for transforming football clubs into more professionally managed sports enterprises. Such a transition would enable major corporations and institutional investors to participate in club ownership, management, and financing under more efficient institutional and commercial frameworks, rather than relying primarily on individual management or limited financial resources.

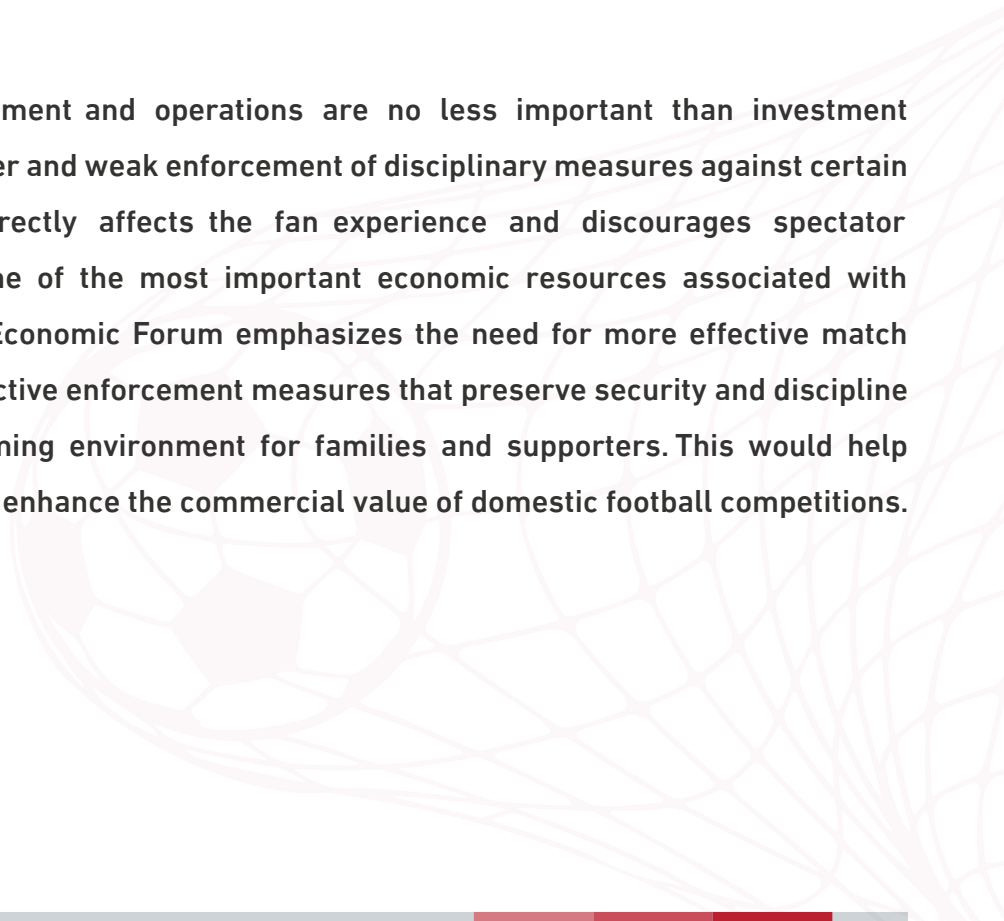


The Legal Environment and Club Empowerment

Several regional experiences demonstrated the potential of this approach, including in Egypt and Iraq, where some clubs have adopted governance and investment models that are more closely integrated with the private sector and corporate investors. Such reforms can contribute to building football clubs that are more financially sustainable, institutionally independent, and competitively stronger. However, their success depends on a comprehensive legislative and regulatory review that clearly defines the legal frameworks governing ownership, management, corporate governance, and regulatory oversight.

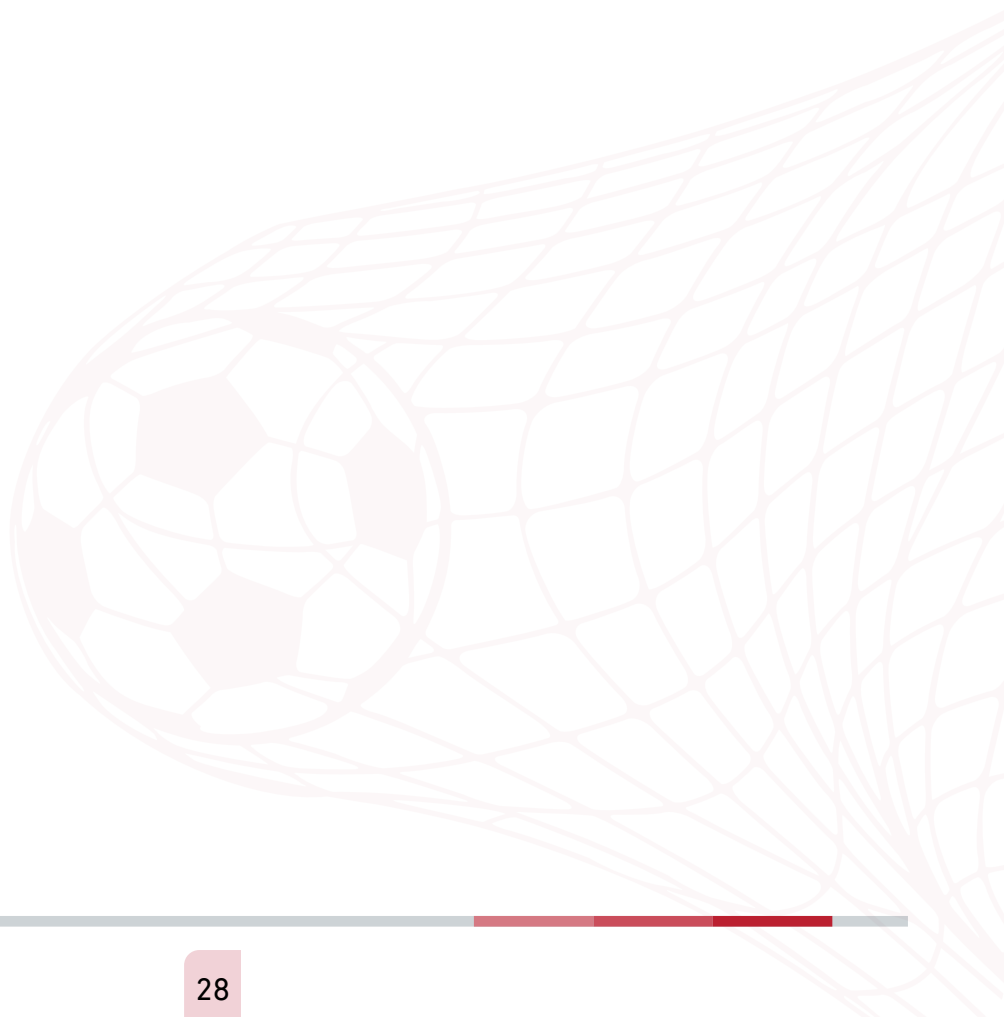
This also highlights the need to review the regulations governing club memberships and membership mechanisms in order to develop more flexible and sustainable membership models. Such reforms would encourage greater participation by individuals and the private sector in supporting football clubs while broadening their community base. They would also enable clubs to expand the development of facilities and member-oriented recreational, sporting, and commercial projects and services, thereby strengthening their self-generated revenues and enhancing their attractiveness to investors.

On the other hand, stadium management and operations are no less important than investment reforms, as the presence of disorder and weak enforcement of disciplinary measures against certain forms of inappropriate behavior directly affects the fan experience and discourages spectator attendance, thereby weakening one of the most important economic resources associated with football. Accordingly, the Jordan Economic Forum emphasizes the need for more effective match management systems and the effective enforcement measures that preserve security and discipline while providing a safe and welcoming environment for families and supporters. This would help increase spectator attendance and enhance the commercial value of domestic football competitions.



Limited data and analysis

Accurate data constitute one of the fundamental pillars for the development of modern football, as they underpin planning decisions, performance evaluation, and the measurement of the sector's economic contribution. In Jordan, however, specialized football-related data remain relatively limited, particularly in areas concerning commercial revenues, the player transfer market and player valuations, and the economic impact of football on the national economy and its related sectors. This shortcoming constrains the ability to formulate more informed and evidence-based policies, while also reducing opportunities to attract investors and sponsors, who rely on clear indicators to assess the feasibility of investments and their expected returns.



What does “economically qualified” mean?

International literature¹ emphasizes that sport can serve as an economic and developmental instrument capable of generating tangible benefits, particularly in middle- and low-income countries. When managed within a clear institutional framework, sport can contribute to stimulating tourism, enhancing a country’s international image, supporting local business activity, and creating new investment opportunities. However, these benefits do not materialize automatically. Rather, they depend on the existence of clear policies and legislation, as well as institutions capable of translating sporting momentum into sustainable outcomes and integrating sport into national development strategies.

A study published by the European Commission² on the contribution of sport to economic growth and employment indicates that, when both the direct and indirect activities associated with the sector are taken into account, the sports sector contributes approximately 2.98% of gross value added (GVA) and 3.51% of total employment in the European Union. This reflects the broad economic impact of sport and its linkages with other sectors of the economy.

Jordan’s qualification for the FIFA World Cup finals represents an opportunity that extends well beyond sporting competition. Such events provide countries with the opportunity to capitalize on global public and media attention to stimulate a wide range of economic sectors, enhance their international image, and create new investment opportunities. The significance of this lies in the fact that sport has become an integral part of the modern global economy and is no longer an activity isolated from sectors such as tourism, services, trade, media, and other related industries.



¹ (OECD, 2024; UNESCO: World Economic Forum, 2026

² European Commission. (2012). Study on the Contribution of Sport to Economic Growth and Employment in the EU. Brussels.

What does “economically qualified” mean?

In the Jordanian context, the impact of qualification can be examined through three main dimensions:



Long-term investment opportunities

within the sports sector itself. The momentum generated by qualification can redirect attention toward investment in sports academies, talent scouting, commercial sponsorship, broadcasting rights, event organization, and infrastructure development, areas that have come to represent a growing part of the global sports economy.



Image and Media Impact

this represents one of the most significant dimensions for Jordan. Participation in a tournament watched by a vast global audience provides Jordan with an exceptional platform to showcase itself to the world and increases opportunities to raise international awareness of Jordan beyond the traditional perceptions associated with its geography or politics. The soft power literature suggests that sport has become an effective instrument for enhancing a country's international reputation and strengthening its tourism and investment appeal.



Short-term economic impact

stimulating domestic demand over a defined period through increased consumer spending associated with national team matches, including higher demand for restaurants and cafés, sales of national team merchandise, advertising activities, and digital content creation. This sporting momentum can generate a wide range of economic and service-sector activities.

In this context, the Jordan Economic Forum attempted to estimate the indirect economic impact associated with the sports and entertainment sector and its spillover effects on other sectors, using the Input-Output Tables issued by the Department of Statistics (DOS). These tables are used to measure the economic linkages between different sectors within the national economy. However, the results indicate that the sector's current economic linkages remain limited compared with those of some other sectors, reflecting that the economic potential associated with sports and football in Jordan has yet to be fully realized, particularly given the currently limited size of the sports sector within the national economy.

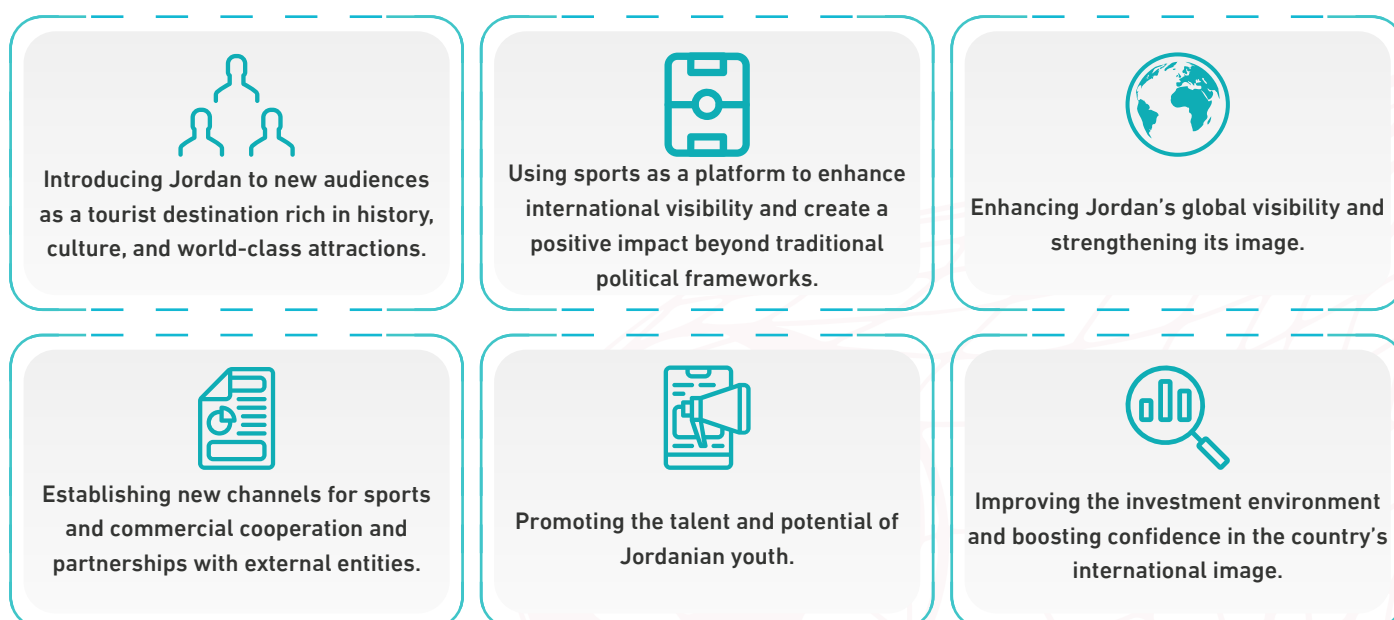
Nevertheless, these economic linkages are expected to strengthen in the coming period if interest in football increases, related spending and investment expand, and supporting commercial and service activities develop. This would enhance the sector's future economic impact on other sectors.



What does “economically qualified” mean?

On the other hand, Jordan's qualification for the FIFA World Cup finals opens an exceptional opportunity to strengthen the country's international presence. Participation is not limited to achieving a sporting accomplishment; rather, it represents an opportunity to present Jordan as a vibrant society with a young population, a competitive spirit, and the ability to achieve accomplishments that exceed traditional expectations. These elements contribute to shaping positive international perceptions that extend beyond the sporting dimension. The importance of this opportunity is further amplified by the volatile regional environment in which the region is currently operating, as perceptions of the region among many international audiences are often associated with conflict and instability. This makes Jordan's presence at a global event of this scale an opportunity to present a different model that reflects a stable country with effective institutions and an environment conducive to living, doing business, and investment.

The Impact of Qualification on Jordan's International Presence:



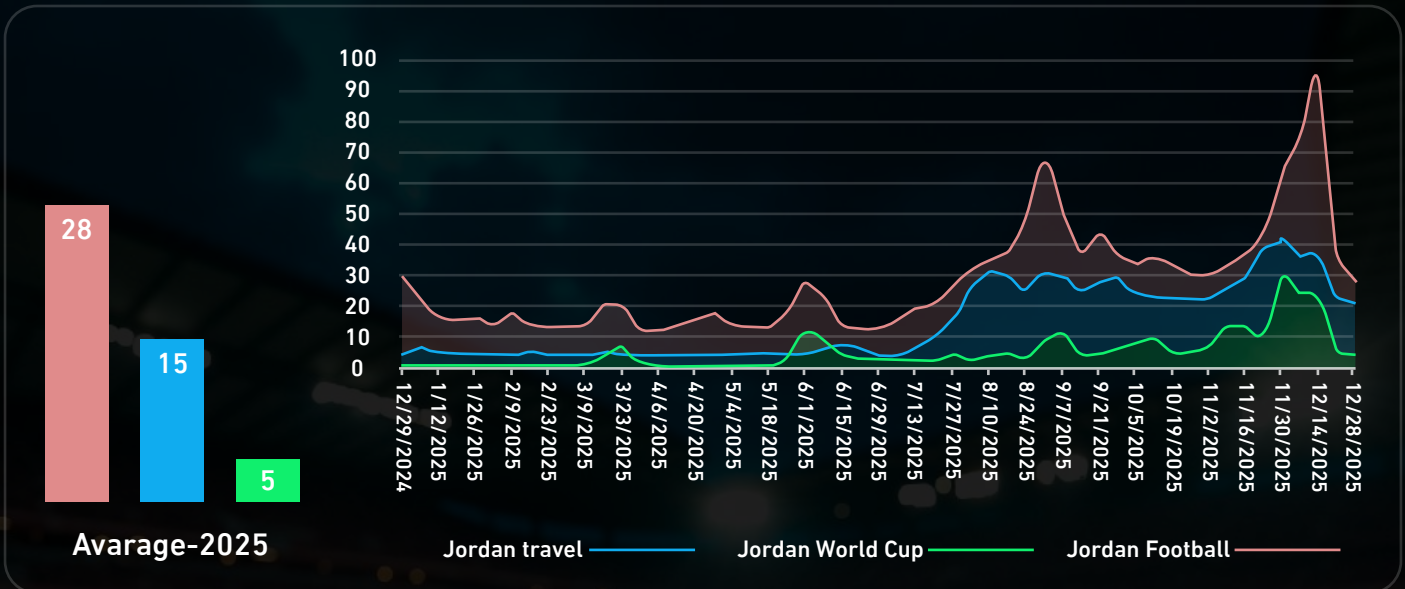
What does “economically qualified” mean?

The expansion of Jordan's international presence associated with qualification can be demonstrated through digital indicators, as the value of sporting events is increasingly linked to the level of global attention they generate across search engines, digital platforms, and social media platforms. This attention can translate into economic and marketing opportunities through promoting tourism, shaping perceptions, and attracting investment and media interest. According to Google Trends data, global interest in searches related to Jordan and football increased during 2025, reaching its highest levels in December, coinciding with the announcement of the FIFA World Cup 2026 draw and the subsequent media and public attention. The search interest index reached a peak of 100 points, reflecting growing international interest in Jordan toward global platforms, alongside the growth in digital content and engagement on social media platforms in new languages and markets beyond the traditional Arab sphere.

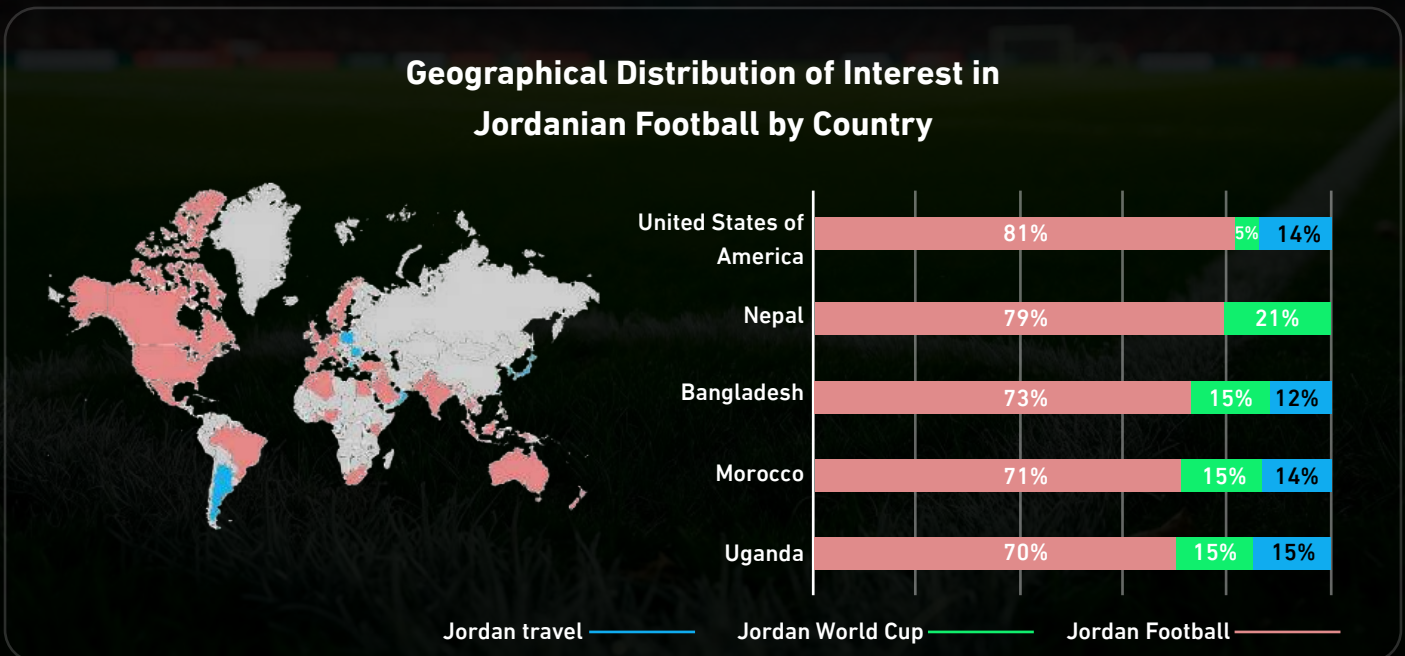


What does “economically qualified” mean?

Figure (8) : Digital Search Trends for football and Tourism in Jordan - 2025



Geographical Distribution of Interest in Jordanian Football by Country



Source: Google Trend, 2026

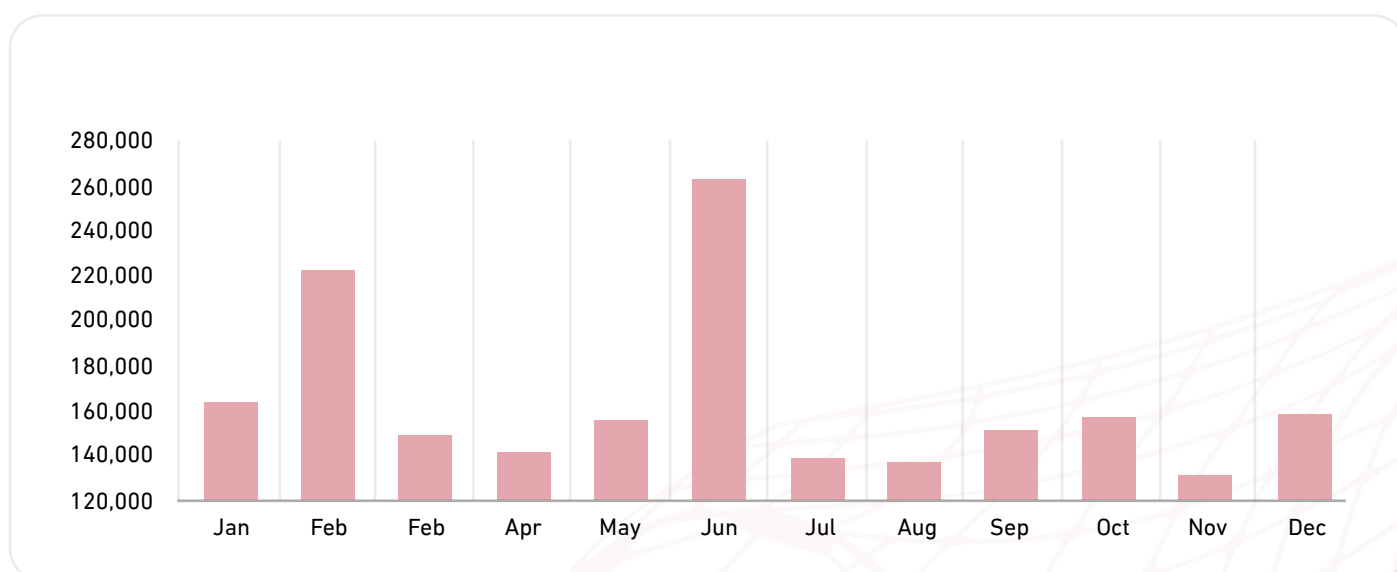
Note: The search Words (Jordan football, Jordan World Cup, Jordan travel) were selected as they represent some of the most commonly used and widely recognized terms globally when searching for Jordan within a sports and tourism context. These terms were used to capture patterns of international interest and measure the evolution of digital engagement with Jordan across these dimensions during the study period.

What does “economically qualified” mean?

From the perspective of international digital presence, data from Jordan’s Wikipedia page show more than 1.97 million views recorded during 2025, with notable increases during periods associated with major sporting events. Following Jordan’s qualification for the World Cup on 5 June 2025, visits to Jordan’s Wikipedia page increased to more than 262,000 views during that month, representing an approximate **69%** month-on-month increase. Additional increases were also observed during the period of the AFC Arab Cup and the final match in December.

This indicates that sporting achievements not only increase interest in football, but also encourage a broader audience to search for and learn more about Jordan. This type of interest is more valuable than short-term engagement alone, as it represents the first stage in shaping a new perception of the country.

Figure (9) Trends in Visits to the Jordan Wikipedia Page During 2025 – Monthly



Source: Wikipedia Pageviews Analysis, Jordan, 2026

Ultimately, the true economic value of qualification is not linked solely to participation in sports itself, but rather to the ability of various institutions to capitalize on this momentum and translate it into sustainable projects, policies, and initiatives.

International show that countries that have succeeded in maximizing the economic benefits of sports did not rely solely on results on the field, but on a comprehensive vision that links sports to tourism, investment, marketing, the digital economy, and international image-building.



International Experiences: How Have Countries Turned Football into Broader Gains?

The economic benefits derived from football do not take a single form, as they vary depending on the objectives and policies adopted. Some countries may view football as a tool for enhancing international presence and building national reputation, while others utilize it to stimulate the local economy and create employment opportunities, or to develop human capital and sporting skills capable of competing globally. In this context, the paper reviews a number of international experiences that reflect these different dimensions of benefiting from football as an integrated economic and developmental activity.



Qatar

Integrated football into a broader strategy of soft power and international reputation building. The hosting of the FIFA World Cup 2022 was linked to strengthening the country's global presence, supporting its national brand, and expanding its economic and tourism appeal. The literature on sports diplomacy³ indicates that sport has become an effective instrument for external influence and improving countries' international image. According to a report issued by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)⁴ in 2022, Qatar attracted approximately one million visitors, while the tournament contributed to generating tourism-related revenues and expenditures estimated between USD 2.3 billion and USD 4.1 billion, equivalent to around 0.7%–1% of its GDP, in addition to extensive infrastructure investments estimated between USD 200 billion and USD 300 billion.



Scotland

A recent study published by the Fraser of Allander Institute⁵ found that football in Scotland contributes more than GBP 820 million annually to the economy and supports more than 14,000 jobs, with its impact extending to sectors including food and beverages, transport, accommodation, and retail. This reflects the ability of football to generate both direct and indirect economic value when managed within a professional framework.



Morocco⁶

pursued a model focused on investment in sporting human capital through the development of academies, the qualification of coaches, and the enhancement of technical training quality. This approach has been reflected in the growing presence of Moroccan coaches in Arab and international leagues and national teams, including established experiences in Jordan, alongside the recent competitive successes of Moroccan football at the global level. Furthermore, the Moroccan national team's remarkable performance at the FIFA World Cup 2022 contributed to strengthening the country's international presence and renewed international interest in its tourism and cultural assets.

³ Middle East Institute. (2022). Qatar's soft power and sports diplomacy. <https://mei.edu/publication/qatars-soft-power-sports-diplomacy/>

⁴ International Monetary Fund. (2024). Qatar: Selected Issues Papers. IMF. <https://www.imf.org//media/files/publications/selected-issues-papers/2024/english/sipea2024011.pdf>

⁵ Williamson, J., Rooney, A., & Fraser of Allander Institute. (2026, January 19). The economic contribution of Scottish professional football. University of Strathclyde. <https://fraserofallander.org/publications/the-economic-contribution-of-scottish-professional-football/>

⁶ Al-Kindi Center for Research and Development. (2024). Football diplomacy and Morocco's international image. <https://al-kindipublisher.com/index.php/ijllt/article/download/11499/10231/31269>

In conclusion, and in an effort to maximize the benefits of the current momentum in sports and translate it into sustainable economic and developmental impact, Jordan Economic Forum has decided to present a set of practical recommendations that can serve as a foundation for the coming phase. These recommendations can be divided into two main categories:

First: Recommendations for Developing the Football Ecosystem and the Sport Sector Locally

- Develop a national strategy for the economics of football that links sports development with economic returns, while defining investment priorities, marketing, infrastructure development, and talent development.
- Diversify the revenue sources of the Football Association and clubs by expanding commercial sponsorships, digital products, broadcasting rights, and maximizing revenues associated with matches.
- Accelerate legislative reforms and strengthen the financial and institutional sustainability of clubs by reviewing existing regulations, establishing a legal framework that enables club privatization, and strengthening governance and financial sustainability.
- Improve the fan experience inside stadiums by enhancing the quality of organization and services, implementing effective regulatory measures, and providing a safe and attractive environment for families.
- Invest in youth development and academies, expand talent identification programs, and develop coaches and technical, administrative, and medical personnel to build a professional football ecosystem.
- Establish a professional system for marketing Jordanian players internationally, increasing the market value of Jordanian players, expanding professional opportunities, and generating greater financial returns for clubs.
- Increase the allocations of the Ministry of Youth directed toward the development of stadiums and sports facilities across different governorates, including international-standard stadiums, training grounds, five-a-side and six-a-side pitches, and modern training facilities. This would enhance infrastructure readiness in line with international standards, support football development, strengthen talent identification, expand participation, and contribute to local development.
- Develop football infrastructure and establish sports cities and facilities that meet with FIFA standards.
- Develop a national database for the sports economy to periodically measure the contribution of sports activities to GDP, employment, and investment, supporting decision-making and policy formulation.
- Strengthen and reactivate sports support funds and direct part of their programs toward supporting youth categories, clubs, and football infrastructure, contributing to reducing financial challenges and enhancing the sustainability of the football ecosystem in Jordan.

- Review regulations related to club memberships and membership mechanisms to enable the development of more flexible and sustainable membership models that enhance fan participation and engagement.

Second: Leveraging World Cup Qualification to Enhance Jordan's International Presence

- Accelerate the implementation of the World Cup marketing plan announced by the Tourism Promotion Authority, and transforming it into a clear action plan that precedes the tournament and capitalizes on the expected global momentum.
- Develop a global digital presence strategy for Jordan, to ensure that online searches for Jordan through search engines and digital platforms lead to modern and engaging content that reflects the country's tourism, investment opportunities, culture, and business potential.
- Target priority markets based on global search trends and interest data by utilizing Google Trends indicators and digital analytics to identify countries showing the highest interest in Jordan and direct marketing campaigns toward these markets.
- Expand Jordan's tourism promotional narrative beyond its traditional association with Petra tourism to include urban experiences, adventure, nature, culture, gastronomy, medical tourism, and religious tourism.
- Link the national team with Jordan's national identity through campaigns that portray Jordan as a young, stable, ambitious country capable of achieving and competing globally.
- Leverage the event to attract foreign investment by promoting Jordan as a suitable destination for business, logistics services, and regional investment, alongside the global media exposure generated by the tournament.
- Develop specialized sports tourism programs aimed at attracting clubs and national teams to host training camps and sporting events in Jordan through the establishment of integrated training and rehabilitation facilities, while connecting them with tourism, medical, and recreational services to strengthen Jordan's position as a regional sports destination.
- Benefit from draw on international best practices in integrating football into broader economic and development strategies, whether through enhancing the country's global presence, developing sports infrastructure, investing in academies and sports training, or stimulating sports tourism and football-related marketing activities.

