# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **FIFA World Cup Evaluation Report**  |
| **DATE**  | **11 July 2023**  |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething MS, Minister for Economy**  |

The FIFA World Cup in 2022 provided Wales with a unique opportunity to showcase our nation and create a lasting legacy.

The Welsh Government had four key objectives for the World Cup – promote Wales; project our values; ensure the safety of Welsh citizens and secure a positive legacy from Wales’ participation. Our activity to take Wales to the world included creating a focal point for the world’s media via a giant bucket hat on the corniche in Doha and an ambitious programme of events in the USA, Wales and London.

Today the [independent evaluation report of Welsh Government-funded World Cup activities](https://www.gov.wales/evaluation-welsh-government-funded-world-cup-activities) is published. It highlights the positive impact our campaign had.

The diversity, inclusivity and reach of the cultural and sporting activities funded through the World Cup Partner Support Fund was praised by stakeholders. More than 2,200 events were held, with more than 320,000 people taking part, including almost 250,000 young people. A total of 91,403 visitors attended two exhibitions funded through the Partner Support Fund.

Stakeholders had positive views about the scale, quality and reach of activities commissioned and delivered, the enhanced marketing campaign, Lleisiau Cymru activity and international events. They highlighted how it had been achieved in the short time between Wales’ qualification in June 2022 and the start of the finals in Qatar in November.

They reported the Tîm Cymru approach had brought organisations together with a strategic and coordinated focus. The approach of combining culture and sport was widely considered to have made Wales stand out in Qatar and in the USA.

The evaluation report concludes the activities around Wales’ World Cup campaign delivered positive outcomes for enhancing Wales’ profile. The enhanced marketing campaign activities delivered by Welsh Government under the Cymru Wales brand generated more than 150m opportunities to see content relating to Wales (49% above the target set) and more than 320,000 people participated or attended the 2,200-plus Partner Support Fund events and associated activities. These events and activities reached an audience of more than 5m.

Traffic to the [wales.com](https://www.wales.com/)website increased by 600% during November and December 2022 during the World Cup itself, compared with the same period in 2021, driven by Welsh Government’s ‘paid for’ routes and by ‘organic’ traffic. Stakeholders reported that international networks were strengthened in a range of fields including business, science and the arts and anticipated that new investment opportunities would arise from this activity. Some stakeholders provided examples of specific artists and musicians who had capitalised on their participation in Partner Support Fund activities and been successful in gaining new work or commissions as a result. In relation to tourism, the media partnership with an online travel agency generated a 49% increase year-on-year of total gross bookings.

Successful cooperation between the Welsh and UK governments contributed to meeting another key objective during the World Cup – ensuring the safety of Welsh citizens in Qatar, as well as promoting business opportunities, which we hope we can build on if our bid to jointly host the European Football Championship in 2028 is successful.

The evaluation report highlights that stakeholders believe a number of important lessons have been learned from the World Cup, including the importance of communicating in the language of host nations, engaging early with Welsh and UK government representatives, and the presence of Ministers being integral to ensuring engagement with key decision makers.

In terms of legacy, positive impacts have been delivered in Wales and internationally. These have included supporting the creation of new resources, sharing expertise and good practice, and networking. Findings show that some of the partnerships forged between culture and sports organisations, governing bodies and broadcasters are being sustained.

At a strategic level, activities in Qatar and the USA have supported diplomacy and building Wales’ profile, increasing the quality of relations developed at Ministerial and institutional level.

The evaluation report recommends repeating and further harnessing the approach taken during the World Cup by Welsh Government for future major sporting and cultural opportunities.

I would like to thank everyone who was part of Tîm Cymru for their talent, enthusiasm and close co-working to showcase Wales as an open, progressive nation and a great place to do business and visit during the World Cup. I look forward to working together again.