

Finance Ministry Bids to Limit World Cup Spending

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Zenit Arena in St. Petersburg, which is under construction, will be one of the stadiums to host the World Cup.

Faced with the need to fork out an additional 250 billion rubles (\$7.8 billion) for the 2018 World Cup, Finance Minister Anton Siluanov has asked Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev to legally set this sum as the final figure.

The current cost of the World Cup preparations amounts to more than 660 billion rubles with over half of the sum — 336 billion rubles — meant to come from the federal budget, Interfax reported.

So far, expenditures of only 86 billion rubles have been authorized by the government, while the provision of another 250 billion rubles is awaiting approval.

Initially, when Russia won the bid to host the World Cup in 2010, the costs were projected

at about \$10 billion.

The Sochi Winter Olympics preparations have also been troubled by spiraling outlays, as the original amount projected ended up being increased about 500 percent.

“The experience we have in other major events such as Sochi shows that there may be cost-increase issues for some events and proposals to add more items,” Siluanov said, Interfax reported.

“For this reason, we think it will be reasonable today to make the decision that the sum of additional spending — 250 billion rubles — is final,” he added.

He also said that instead of increasing spending, it would be feasible to create a reserve fund that could be allocated to ensure security and for other measures that are crucial for the progress of World Cup preparations.

Siluanov’s remarks were made on the same day that President Vladimir Putin made his budget policy presentation, during which he also urged the Cabinet to find additional sources of funding, even though the federal budget faces falling revenues.

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