

Russia to Spend \$50 Million Taking Roof Off Sochi Olympic Stadium

By [The Moscow Times](#)

January 20, 2015



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In preparation for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, the Krasnodar regional government will spend 3 billion rubles (\$46 million) removing the roof of a stadium built for the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, the TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

The Fisht Olympic Stadium, which hosted the Games' opening ceremony, cost about 17.5 billion rubles (\$270 million) to build and is already partially open to the air.

But FIFA, the international organization that organizes the football championship, strictly requires that all arenas used in the tournament be roofless, a spokesman for the Krasnodar government told TASS.

All roofing will be removed from the stadium, leaving just two white awnings over the eastern

and western bleachers. The reconstruction is to be completed by June 2016, the report said.

Sochi, the venue for last year's Winter Olympics, is one of 11 cities slated to host the FIFA World Cup. Projects connected to the championship are estimated to cost a total of 664 billion rubles (\$10 billion), according to news agency Reuters.

There are concerns that World Cup spending could plow through these estimates, however. The budget for the Sochi Olympics soared from an initial \$12 billion to more than 1.5 trillion rubles, or \$50 billion by exchange rates at that time, making it the most expensive Olympics in history.

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