The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

8 Years Ago, Russia Hosted the World Cup

June 11, 2026

As millions of fans around the world prepare to watch the 2026 FIFA World Cup, co-hosted by the U.S., Canada and Mexico, The Moscow Times is looking back at the 2018 World Cup in Russia. The 2018 competition was held in the shadow of the simmering conflict in eastern Ukraine and marred by allegations of corruption in the bidding process and sportswashing concerns voiced by Western critics. Yet the event, held across 11 Russian cities, proved a major success. It remains a source of fond memories for many Russians, who took pride in the openness and hospitality that their country showed to foreign fans. Eight years later, life in Russia — and Russians' connections to the outside world — have been dramatically transformed since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.



Sergei Kiselev / Moskva News Agency

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/06/11/8-years-ago-russia-hosted-the-world-cup-a92969