

# FIFA 2026 WORLD CUP

BOSTON COVERAGE NOTES & INFORMATION



# MATCH SCHEDULE

6/13/26	<b>GROUP STAGE</b>	6/26/26	<b>GROUP STAGE</b>
6/16/26	<b>GROUP STAGE</b>	6/29/26	<b>ROUND OF 32</b>
6/19/26	<b>GROUP STAGE</b>	7/09/26	<b>QUARTERFINAL</b>
6/23/26	<b>GROUP STAGE</b>		

## GROUP C

<p><b>BRAZIL (FIFA RANK: 5)</b></p>  	<p><b>MOROCCO (FIFA RANK: 11)</b></p>  
<p><b>SCOTLAND (FIFA RANK: 36)</b></p>  	<p><b>HAITI (FIFA RANK: 84)</b></p>  

**Match 5:** June 13, 2026

Haiti vs. Scotland (9:00 p.m. ET)

*All-Time Series: First Meeting*

**Match 30:** June 19, 2026

Morocco vs. Scotland (6:00 p.m. ET)

*All-Time Series: First Meeting*

### GROUP C NOTES

- **Morocco** became the first African team to reach the World Cup semifinal in 2022, finishing fourth in tournament play.
  - **Morocco** has not lost a competitive fixture since a 2-0 defeat to South Africa in the AFCON in January 2024, currently riding an 18-match winning streak. They host the 2025 AFCON in late December.
- **Scotland** returns to the World Cup for the first time since 1998, ending a 28 year drought.
  - **Scotland** is 4-12-7 all-time in World Cup play, having never advanced past the Group Stage.
- **Haiti** is snapping a 52-year World Cup drought, making their first World Cup appearance since 1974.
  - **Haiti** seeks its first-ever World Cup victory, going winless in its debut appearance in 1974 (0-3-0).
- **Brazil** is the only nation to have qualified for every World Cup and is the most successful team in tournament history with five World Cup titles.

# TEAM INFORMATION

## CONMEBOL

BRAZIL		
 	FIFA Code	BRA
	World Cup Appearances	23 (ALL)
	Best Finish	WINNERS (Record 5x – 2002, 1994, 1970, 1962, 1958)
	How Qualified	5 <sup>th</sup> in CONMEBOL Qualifying
	FIFA Ranking	5
	Head Coach	Carlo Ancelotti ( <i>an-chah-LOT-tee</i> )
	Captain	D Marquinhos (Paris-Saint Germain – FRA) ( <i>mar-KEEN-yose</i> )
	Top Players	F Vinicius Jr. (Real Madrid – ESP) F Raphinha (Barcelona – ESP) GK Allison (Liverpool – ENG)
	Revs Connections	Sporting Director <b>Curt Onalfo</b> born in Sao Paolo, Brazil Homegrown M <b>Cristiano Oliveira</b> is a Brazilian-American.

- *Seleção* is the **most successful team in tournament history**, Brazil has **won 5 titles**.
  - Back-to-back champions in 1958 and 1962, **one of two teams ever** to accomplish the feat and the only team in the last 85 years (Italy – 1934 and 1938).
- Brazil was dominant in the 1970s behind legendary player **Pele** (*pay-lay*), winning the 1970 World Cup and reaching the semifinals in 1974 and 1978.
- Brazil is a **top-five favorite to win in 2026**, but has not made it past the Quarter-final Round since winning their 5<sup>th</sup> title in 2002.
- Brazil's attack is led by **Real Madrid's Vinicius Jr.** (*vin-NIS-see-us*) and **Barcelona's Raphinha** (*HAH-feen-yah*), who led the team with five goals during qualifying.

## CONFEDERATION OF AFRICAN FOOTBALL

MOROCCO		
 	FIFA Code	MAR
	World Cup Appearances	7 (last, 2022)
	Best Finish	4 <sup>th</sup> Place (2022)
	How Qualified	CAF Group E Winner
	FIFA Ranking	11
	Head Coach	Walid Regragui ( <i>wah-LEED reh-gra-GEE</i> )
	Captain	D Achraf Hakimi (Paris-Saint Germain – FRA)
	Top Players	F Youssef En-Nesyri (Fenerbahçe – TUR) M Sofyan Amrabat (Real Betis – ESP) ( <i>so-FEE-ahn AHM-rah-baht</i> )
	MLS Connections	N/A

- *The Atlas Lions* qualified as CAF Group E winners, going 8-0-0 in qualifying with two goals allowed.
- Making seventh World Cup appearance after a run to the semifinals in 2022 to mark the best finish by an African nation at a World Cup ever.
  - Donated their entire 2022 World Cup earnings to charities within Morocco that help with poverty that affects children and families in the country.
- Captain and PSG defender **Achraf Hakimi** (*ahch-RAHF hah-KEE-mee*) along with forward **Youssef En-Nesyri** (*YOO-suff en-ness-SEE-ree*) will once again feature after providing heroics in 2022. Forward **Ayoub El Kaabi** (*EYE-yoob el-KAH-bee*), who plays for Greek club Olympiacos, led the team with four goals in qualifying. The striker owns 17 goals for his country in 47 caps.

## TEAM INFORMATION

### CONCACAF

HAITI		
 	FIFA Code	HAI
	World Cup Appearances	2 (last, 1974)
	Best Finish	Group Stage (1974)
	How Qualified	Winner of Qualifying Group C
	FIFA Ranking	84
	Head Coach	Sébastien Migné ( <i>say-BASS-chee-en min-YAY</i> )
	Captain	GK Johny Placide (SC Bastia – FRA)
	Top Players	GK Johny Placide (SC Bastia – FRA) M Danley Jean Jacques (Philadelphia Union – USA) F Duckens Nazon (Esteghal – IRN) ( <i>nay-ZAHN</i> )
	MLS Connections	Danley Jean Jacques (PHI); Loucius Don Deedson (DAL)

- *Les Grenadiers* makes the World Cup for only the second time ever, their first since 1974.
- Won their qualifying group as an upset, beating out Honduras, Costa Rica and Nicaragua.
  - They'll be looking for their first World Cup win – with 3 losses their first attempt.
- Their assist leader in qualifying was an MLS player, Philadelphia's **Danley Jean-Jacques** (3).
- FC Dallas' **Loucius Don Deedson** (*loo-EE-see-us*) scored 4 goals in qualifying, second most on the team.
- One of their leaders is experienced goalkeeper and captain **Johny Placide** (*plah-SEE-day*), who plays his club soccer in France.

### UEFA

SCOTLAND		
 	FIFA Code	SCO
	World Cup Appearances	10 (last, 1998)
	Best Finish	Group Stage (8x – last, 1998)
	How Qualified	UEFA Group C Winner
	FIFA Ranking	36
	Head Coach	Steve Clarke
	Captain	D Andy Robertson (Liverpool – ENG)
	Top Players	D Andy Robertson (Liverpool – ENG) M Scott McTominay (Napoli – ITA)
	MLS Connections	Lewis Morgan (RBNY), Ryan Gauld (VAN), Ryan Porteous (LAFC)

- The *Tartan Army* qualified by finishing first in UEFA Group C.
- **Ché Adams**, **Ryan Christie**, and **Scott McTominay** finished tied for the team lead with two goals each in World Cup Qualifying.
- Scotland makes its 10<sup>th</sup> World Cup appearance, its first since 1998.
- One of the oldest national soccer teams in the world, Scotland has a long-standing rivalry with England dating back to the world's first international match in 1872.
- Alongside **Scott McTominay**, Aston Villa's **John McGinn** and Bournemouth's **Ryan Christie** will comprise the Scottish midfield.
- Up top, forward **Ché Adams** will be the target man, and currently owns three goals and two assists for Italian club Torino this season.

## GROUP I

<p><b>FRANCE (FIFA RANK: 3)</b></p>   <p>FFF</p>	<p><b>SENEGAL (FIFA RANK: 19)</b></p>  
<p><b>NORWAY (FIFA RANK: 29)</b></p>  	<p><b>IC PLAYOFF PATH B WINNER</b></p> <p>Pathway 2 (Monterrey)</p> <p>Semifinal 2: Bolivia (CONMEBOL) vs. Suriname (Concacaf)</p> <p>Final: Semifinal 2 Winner vs. Iraq (AFC)</p>

**Match 18:** June 16, 2026

IC Path 2 Winner (IRQ / BOL / SUR) vs. Norway (6:00 p.m. ET)

All-Time Series: N/A

**Match 61:** June 26, 2026

Norway vs. France (3:00 p.m. ET)

All-Time Series: France leads, 7-4-4

### GROUP I NOTES

- **France** has reached the World Cup Final in consecutive tournaments, winning in 2018 over Croatia and falling in 2022 to Argentina.
  - **France** owns two World Cup titles (1998 & 2018).
- **Norway** are ending their 28-year World Cup drought with their first tournament berth since 1998.
  - **Norway** scored the most goals of any European team in World Cup qualifying, with 37 goals for and only 5 goal conceded.
- The final spot in Group I will go to the winner Inter-Confederation Playoff Path 2. The semifinal features **Bolivia** and **Suriname**, with the winner facing **Iraq** for a spot in the World Cup.
  - **Bolivia** has reached the World Cup three previous times, the last in 1994 in the United States.
  - **Iraq** seeks its second World Cup appearance, having qualified in 1986.
  - **Suriname** has never qualified for a World Cup.
- **Senegal** reached the World Cup quarterfinals in 2002, their first tournament appearance.

## TEAM INFORMATION

### UEFA

#### NORWAY

 	FIFA Code	NOR
	World Cup Appearances	5 (last, 2022)
	Best Finish	Round of 16 (2x – 1998, 1938)
	How Qualified	UEFA Group I Winner
	FIFA Ranking	29
	Head Coach	Ståle Solbakken ( <i>STAW-luh sole-BAH-ken</i> )
	Captain	M Martin Ødegaard (Arsenal – ENG)
	Top Players	M Martin Ødegaard (Arsenal – ENG) F Erling Haaland (Manchester City – ENG)
	MLS Connections	Stian Gregersen (ATL), Kristoffer Velde (POR), Edvard Tagseth (NSH), Amahl Pellegrino (SD)

- *Landslaget* qualified as winner of UEFA Group I.
  - Has appeared in the World Cup four times before 2026, reaching the Round of 16 twice.
- MLS fans will recognize **Atlanta United D Stian Gregersen** and **Nashville SC M Edvard Tagseth**.
- **F Erling Haaland** (*HAH-lund*), considered one of the best players worldwide, is the leading scorer for Norway with 55 goals and is joined up top by Atletico Madrid striker **Alexander Sørloth** (*sur-LOTH*).
- **M Martin Ødegaard** (*oo-duh-GARD*) has been in the spotlight since signing with Real Madrid as a 15-year-old in 2015 and is currently Arsenal's captain.

### UEFA



#### FRANCE

 	FIFA Code	FRA
	World Cup Appearances	17 (last, 2022)
	Best Finish	WINNERS (2x – 2018, 1998)
	How Qualified	UEFA Group D Winner
	FIFA Ranking	3
	Head Coach	Didier Deschamps ( <i>did-dee-AY day-SHAHMPS</i> )
	Captain	F Kylian Mbappé (Real Madrid – ESP) ( <i>KILL-lee-in em-BAH-pay</i> )
	Top Players	F Kylian Mbappé (Real Madrid – ESP) F Ousmane Dembele (Paris Saint-Germain – FRA) M Michael Olise (Bayern Munich – GER)
	MLS Connections	GK Hugo Lloris (LAFC) ( <i>hoo-GO lore-REES</i> ) retired from international duty in 2022, but was France's long-time captain and remains the record cap holder (145)

- Captained by **Kylian Mbappé**, *Les Blues* qualified as the winner of UEFA Group D.
- A two-time World Cup Champion (2018, 1998) and two-time runners-up, France has also won two UEFA European Championships, and one UEFA Nations League title.
  - In 2022, France reached a second consecutive World Cup final but fell 4-2 in penalties to Lionel Messi's Argentina.
- After winning the 2021 Nations League, France became the first and only European national team to have won every senior FIFA and UEFA competition.
- Current Ballon d'Or holder and PSG winger **Ousmane Dembele** (*oos-MAHN dem-BAY-lay*) has played in 11 career World Cup matches and partners with Mbappé in the attack.

## TEAM INFORMATION

### CONFEDERATION OF AFRICAN FOOTBALL

SENEGAL		
  	FIFA Code	SEN
	World Cup Appearances	4 (last, 2022)
	Best Finish	Quarterfinals (2002)
	How Qualified	CAF Group B Winner
	FIFA Ranking	19
	Head Coach	Pape Thiaw ( <i>pah-PAY thee-AWE</i> )
	Captain	D Kalidou Koulibaly (Al-Hilal – KSA) ( <i>kah-LEE-doo koo-lee-BAH-lee</i> )
	Top Players	F Sadio Mané (Al-Nassr – KSA) F Ismaïla Sarr (Crystal Palace FC – ENG)
	MLS Connections	N/A

- *Lions de la Téranga* qualified as CAF Group B winners, going 7-0-3 in qualifying.
- Forward **Sadio Mané** (*sah-dee-OH mah-NAY*), who plays with Cristiano Ronaldo for Al-Nassr in Saudi Arabia, scored five goals in qualifying. He owns 50 goals in 117 appearances for Senegal.
- Several English Premier League players including Everton's **Idrissa Gueye** (*ee-drees-AH gay*), Tottenham's **Pape Matar Sarr** (*pa-PAY mah-TAR SARR*), and Crystal Palace's **Ismaïla Sarr** (*is-MY-ee-lah SARR*) are all expected to play major roles.
- Striker **Nicolas Jackson**, who plays for German club Bayern Munich, could be one of the young players to watch at the World Cup.
- Competing in the upcoming 2025 Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco.

### INTER-CONFEDERATION PLAYOFF PATH 2 WINNER

INTER-CONFEDERATION PLAYOFFS (2)	
Path 1 (Guadalajara) Semifinal 1: New Caledonia (OFC) vs. Jamaica (Concacaf) Final: Semifinal 1 Winner vs. D.R. Congo (CAF)	Path 2 (Monterrey) Semifinal 2: Bolivia (CONMEBOL) vs. Suriname (Concacaf) Final: Semifinal 2 Winner vs. Iraq (AFC)

The play-off tournament will be held this March in Mexico and will act as a preparatory event for the World Cup. The play-offs will feature six teams, split into two brackets of three teams, with both bracket winners qualifying for the World Cup. The teams were seeded into brackets based on the FIFA Men's World Ranking. Each bracket features two unseeded teams facing each other in a semi-final, with the winner advancing to the play-off final against a seeded team.

BOLIVIA (FIFA RANK: 76)	SURINAME (FIFA RANK: 123)	IRAQ (FIFA RANK: 58)
 	 	 

## GROUP L

<p><b>ENGLAND (FIFA RANK: 4)</b></p>  	<p><b>CROATIA (FIFA RANK: 10)</b></p>  
<p><b>PANAMA (FIFA RANK: 30)</b></p>  	<p><b>GHANA (FIFA RANK: 72)</b></p>  

**Match 45:** June 23, 2026

England vs. Ghana


*All-Time Series: Tied, 0-0-1*

### GROUP L NOTES

- **England**, who won their lone World Cup in 1966, did not qualify for the 1994 World Cup in the U.S., having played in every tournament since.
  - **England** will face **Croatia** in a rematch of the 2018 World Cup semifinal, won by Croatia in extra time, 2-1.
  - **England** finished fourth in the 2018 World Cup, and holds a 32-20-22 all-time record in tournament play.
- **Ghana** is making fourth World Cup appearance, returning to World Cup for first time since 2018 when they went winless in group play with two goals from Mohamed Salah.
  - **Ghana** reached the World Cup quarterfinals in 2010, losing to Uruguay on penalties.
- **Croatia**, which today has a population of under four million people, has competed in six World Cups since gaining independence from Yugoslavia and has finished in the top three in half of them.
- **Panama** makes their second World Cup appearance, their first since 2018.
  - **Panama** were runners-up in the 2023 Concacaf Gold Cup and 2024-25 Concacaf Nations League.



## TEAM INFORMATION

### CONFEDERATION OF AFRICAN FOOTBALL

GHANA		
  	FIFA Code	GHA
	World Cup Appearances	5 (last, 2022)
	Best Finish	Quarterfinals (2010)
	How Qualified	CAF Group I Winner
	FIFA Ranking	72
	Head Coach	Otto Addo
	Captain	F Jordan Ayew (Leicester City – ENG)
	Top Players	M Mohammed Kudus (Tottenham Hotspur – ENG) M Thomas Partey (Villareal – ESP) ( <i>par-TAY</i> )
	MLS Connections	Osman Bakari (ATX); Joseph Paintsil (LA); Prince Owusu (MTL)

- *The Black Stars* qualified as CAF Group I winners, going 8-1-1 in qualifying.
- Making fourth World Cup appearance, returning to World Cup for first time since 2018 when they went winless in group play with two goals from Mohamed Salah.
- Captain and Leicester City F **Jordan Ayew** (*EYE-yoo*) scored a team-high seven goals in qualifying
- Tottenham M **Mohammed Kudus** (*KOO-dus*) will be a center point of the Ghanaian squad, with 13 goals in 46 international caps.
- Four-time Africa Cup of Nations champion did not qualify for the upcoming 2025 Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco.

### UEFA

ENGLAND		
  	FIFA Code	ENG
	World Cup Appearances	17 (last, 2022)
	Best Finish	WINNERS (1966)
	How Qualified	UEFA Group K Winner
	FIFA Ranking	4
	Head Coach	Thomas Tuchel ( <i>TOO-kull</i> )
	Captain	F Harry Kane (Bayern Munich – GER)
	Top Players	F Harry Kane (Bayern Munich – GER) M Jude Bellingham (Real Madrid – ESP)
	MLS Connections	N/A

- *The Three Lions* qualified as winner of UEFA Group K, securing an undefeated 8-0-0 record in qualifying.
- **F Harry Kane** finished with a team-leading eight goals in qualifying.
- England owns 17 FIFA World Cup appearances, including 2026.
  - Won the 1966 FIFA World Cup on home soil; Finished fourth place in 1990 and 2018.
- Two-time runners-up at the UEFA European Championship in 2020 and 2024.
- England is the joint oldest national football team, alongside Scotland.
- Midfielders **Jude Bellingham** (Real Madrid) and **Declan Rice** (Arsenal) are key players in England's possession-heavy approach.

# TEAM INFORMATION

## UEFA



### CROATIA

 	FIFA Code	CRO
	World Cup Appearances	7 (last, 2022)
	Best Finish	Runners-up (2018)
	How Qualified	UEFA Group L Winner
	FIFA Ranking	10
	Head Coach	Zlatko Dalić ( <i>ZLAHT-koh DAH-litch</i> )
	Captain	M Luka Modrić (AC Milan – ITA)
	Top Players	F Ivan Perišić (PSV Eindhoven – NED) D Joško Gvardiol (Manchester City – ENG) ( <i>YOSS-koh gvahr-DEE-ohl</i> )
	MLS Connections	Petar Musa (DAL), Marco Pasalic (ORL)

- *The Vatreni* or “The Blazers” clinched first place in UEFA Group L, with a 7-0-1 qualifying record.
- Finished as runners-up at the 2018 FIFA World Cup.
  - Secured third place in the 2022 and 1998 World Cups.
- Most recently, Croatia claimed second place in the UEFA Nations League in 2023.
- **M Luka Modrić** (*moh-DRITCH*) (194) and **F Ivan Perišić** (*peh-riss-SITCH*) (150) are the two most capped players in Croatia’s history.
  - Modrić owns 28 goals and 31 assists at the international level.

## CONCACAF

### PANAMA

 	FIFA Code	PAN
	World Cup Appearances	2 (last, 2018)
	Best Finish	Group Stage (2018)
	How Qualified	Winner of Qualifying Group A
	FIFA Ranking	30
	Head Coach	Thomas Christiansen
	Captain	M Anibal Godoy (San Diego FC – USA)
	Top Players	M Anibal Godoy (San Diego FC – USA) M Adalberto Carrasquilla (Pumas UNAM – MEX)
	Revs / MLS Connections	Revolution II GK JD Gunn Anibal Godoy (SD); Carlos Harvey (MIN)

- *Los Canaleros* were runners-up in the 2023 Concacaf Gold Cup and 2024-25 Concacaf Nations League.
- Captained by **MLS player Anibal Godoy** (*ah-nee-BAHL go-DOY*) who was with expansion club San Diego FC (1<sup>st</sup> place in Western Conference).
- **Revolution II Goalkeeper JD Gunn** earned several call-ups to Panama during World Cup Qualifying.
- Manager **Thomas Christiansen** previously managed Leeds United (2017-18) and Belgian club Union SG (2019-2020).
- In World Cup debut in 2018, Panama failed to register a point and finished last in their group, which included Belgium, England, and Tunisia.

## GROUP E

<p><b>GERMANY (FIFA RANK: 9)</b></p>  	<p><b>ECUADOR (FIFA RANK: 23)</b></p>  
<p><b>COTE D'IVOIRE (FIFA RANK: 42)</b></p>  	<p><b>CURACAO (FIFA RANK: 82)</b></p>  

**Round of 32:** June 29, 2026

Winner Group E vs. 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Group A/B/C/D/F (4:30 p.m. ET)

**Quarterfinals:** July 9, 2026

Winner Match 89 vs. Winner Match 90 (4:00 p.m. ET)

**Possible Teams (including, but not limited to):** Germany, France, Norway, Mexico, South Korea, Canada, Netherlands, Morocco, etc.



### GROUP E NOTES

- **Germany** is the favorite of the group, currently ranked #9 in the world. The Germans have won four World Cups, most recently in 2014.
  - **Germany** has failed to advance past the Group Stage in each of the last two World Cups.
- **Ecuador** features New England Revolution forward **Leo Campana**. *La Tri* have only advanced out of the Group Stage once, reaching the Round of 16 in 2006.
- **Cote d'Ivoire** makes its return to the World Cup for the first time since 2014. In their previous three tournament appearances, they have failed to advance out of the Group Stage.
- **Curacao** will make their World Cup debut as the smallest nation by both population (~170,000 people) and land area (444 km<sup>2</sup>) to reach the World Cup, surpassing Iceland (350,000).
  - As a point of comparison, the World Cup final next summer will be played at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, which has a capacity of 82,500 – more than half of **Curacao's** population.

# TEAM INFORMATION

## UEFA

### GERMANY

  	FIFA Code	GER
	World Cup Appearances	22 (last, 2022)
	Best Finish	WINNERS 4x – (2014, 1990, 1974, 1954)
	How Qualified	UEFA Group A Winner
	FIFA Ranking	9
	Head Coach	Julian Nagelsmann ( <i>you-LEE-in NAY-gulls-mahn</i> )
	Captain	D Joshua Kimmich (Bayern Munich – GER)
	Top Players	D Joshua Kimmich (Bayern Munich – GER) F Florian Wirtz (Liverpool – ENG) F Jamal Musiala (Bayern Munich – GER)
	MLS Connections	Thomas Müller (VAN) retired from international football in 2024, after playing in the 2014 World Cup and winning the 2010 World Cup Golden Boot and Best Young Player award.

- *Die Mannschaft* qualified as winner of UEFA Group A.
- Four-time FIFA World Cup champion (2014, 1990, 1974, 1954).
  - Tied with Italy for the second-most World Cup titles (4), one behind Brazil (5).
- Germany was the first nation, and remains only one of two along with Spain, to have won both the FIFA World Cup and the FIFA Women's World Cup.
- Germany is a strong defensive side, anchored by center back **Antonio Rudiger** (*roo-DIG-err*) and right back **Joshua Kimmich** (*yo-SHOO-ah kim-MICK*).
- Midfielders **Jamal Musiala** (*moo-see-AH-lah*) and **Florian Wirtz** (*verts*) headline Germany's attack.

## CONMEBOL

### ECUADOR

  	FIFA Code	ECU
	World Cup Appearances	5 (last, 2022)
	Best Finish	Round of 16 (2006)
	How Qualified	2 <sup>nd</sup> in CONMEBOL Qualifying
	FIFA Ranking	23
	Head Coach	Sebastian Beccacece ( <i>beh-KAH-seh-say</i> )
	Captain	F Enner Valencia (Pachuca – MEX)
	Top Players	F Enner Valencia (Pachuca – MEX) M Moises Caicedo (Chelsea FC – ENG)
	Revs / MLS Connections	<b>Leo Campana (NE)</b>

- *La Tri* finished **2<sup>nd</sup> in a strong qualifying campaign**, with only 2 losses in 18 games.
  - Allowed only 5 goals in 18 qualifying games, fewest of any South American country this cycle, and but only scored 14 goals.
- 2026 will be Ecuador's 5<sup>th</sup> World Cup appearance – best result was Round of 16 in 2006.
  - Eliminated in the group stage in last two appearances (2022 and 2014).
- Revolution forward **Leonardo Campana** was a regular in Ecuador's World Cup Qualifying squad
- 36-year-old striker **Enner Valencia** continues to produce for Ecuador. He has 48 goals in over 100 career games for his country, including a team-high six goals in qualifying.

## CONFEDERATION OF AFRICAN FOOTBALL

COTE D'IVOIRE		
 	FIFA Code	CIV
	World Cup Appearances	4 (last, 2014)
	Best Finish	Group Stage (3x, last 2014)
	How Qualified	CAF Group F Winner
	FIFA Ranking	42
	Head Coach	Emerse Faé ( <i>em-AIRS fah-AY</i> )
	Captain	M Franck Kessié (Al-Ahli – KSA) ( <i>kess-see-AY</i> )
	Top Players	F Sébastien Haller (FC Utrecht – NED) ( <i>hah-LARE</i> ) M Ibrahim Sangaré (Nottingham Forest – ENG) ( <i>sang-are-AY</i> )
	MLS Connections	Emmanuel Latte Lath (ATL)

- *Les Éléphants* qualified directly CAF Group F winners, going 8-0-2 in qualifying with no goals allowed.
- **Nine different players** scored multiple goals in qualifying, led by **Seko Fofana** (*say-KOH fof-FAH-nah*) with three.
- Making fourth World Cup appearance, returning to World Cup for first time since 2014.
  - Defeated Japan (2-1) before losses to Colombia and Greece to close group play.
- Head Coach **Emerse Faé** represented Cote d'Ivoire at the 2006 World Cup, the country's first.
- Competing in the upcoming 2025 Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco.
- Reigning AFCON champions after winning third title as host in 2023.

## CONCACAF

CURACAO		
 	FIFA Code	CUW
	World Cup Appearances	1 (First in 2026)
	Best Finish	N/A
	How Qualified	Winner of Qualifying Group B
	FIFA Ranking	82
	Head Coach	Dick Advocaat
	Captain	M Leandro Bacuna (Bandırmaspor – TUR) ( <i>bah-COON-yah</i> )
	Top Players	M Leandro Bacuna (Bandırmaspor – TUR) F Gervane Kastaneer (Persis Solo – IDN) GK Eloy Room (Cercle Brugge – BEL)
	MLS Connections	N/A

- Dubbed *The Blue Wave*, Curacao is the smallest country by population and area **ever to qualify** for the FIFA World Cup.
- Undefeated 3 wins and 3 draws in qualifying – winning the group over fellow Caribbean nations Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.
- Manager, 78-year-old **Dick Advocaat**, could become the oldest manager to coach at a FIFA World Cup.