

Abstract

This thesis examines the impact of international sporting events on regional integration. The main aim of the thesis is to provide a new perspective on how top sporting events such as the World Cup affect international relations and cooperation between different countries and regions. The thesis focuses on the analysis of two specific cases: the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa and the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. These two countries present unique settings in terms of political, economic and social aspects, allowing for a comparison of impacts in different regional and geopolitical settings. The paper summarizes findings from relevant literature on mega-event theory and regional integration and, through a comparative analysis of two selected cases, shows whether and how international sporting events contribute to improved relations and integration at the regional level.