

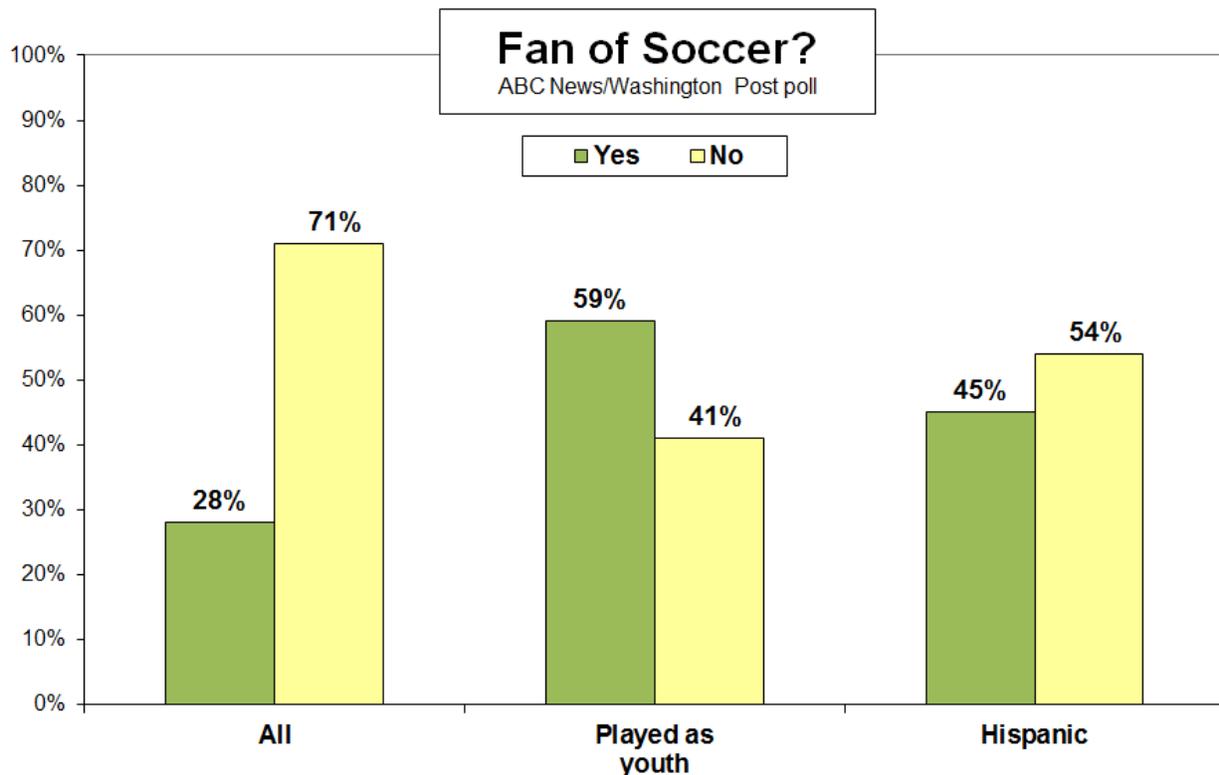
Will Hispanics Give U.S. Soccer a Kick?

The nation's growing Hispanic population may do more than change political and cultural equations in this country. It may give a kick to U.S. soccer, as well.

On the eve of the World Cup, 28 percent of Americans in this ABC News/Washington Post poll say they're fans of the sport – 10 percent, “big” fans. That trails interest in professional football, baseball and basketball, though it's similar to fan levels for professional hockey.

There's a huge ethnic divide in interest: Forty-five percent of Hispanics describe themselves as soccer fans, compared with a quarter of all other adults. With the Hispanic share of the U.S. population growing, the sport's success could follow.

Another factor could play a role as well – the prevalence of youth leagues. A fifth of Americans say they played soccer as a child (rising to 39 percent of Hispanics). Fandom in this group swells to 59 percent, compared with 20 percent of those who didn't play the sport as kids.



WATCHING? – As things stand, 28 percent overall (and 45 percent of Hispanics) plan to watch the World Cup, which begins next Thursday with host Brazil playing Croatia. The first game for

the United States is June 16 against Ghana, which has knocked the Americans out of the past two tournaments.

That's plenty enough for a robust audience, since 28 percent of the U.S. adult population translates to more than 65 million people. Intended viewership, however, is lower than it was 20 years ago, when the United States hosted the games. Then four in 10 planned to tune in.

Other results point both to opportunities and challenges for the game. On one hand, 46 percent expect soccer to become more popular in the next decade, while just 4 percent think it'll lose popularity. Yet half of Americans in this survey, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), call soccer dull or downright boring (21 and 28 percent, respectively). In 1994, many fewer (a combined 35 percent) reported those views.

GROUPS – As noted, the sharpest divisions are between those who did or didn't play soccer as kids. In addition to being three times more likely to be fans, those who played the game are 30 percentage points more likely to find soccer exciting and 35 points more apt to plan to watch the tournament.

Beyond Hispanics, groups most likely to have played soccer in their youth include adults under 40, those with postgraduate educations and men. Each of these, it follows, are more apt than their counterparts to be fans of the game and to plan to watch the World Cup.

In another group difference, people in rural areas are less likely than others to be fans of the sport, plan to watch the tournament or find soccer interesting, by 13- to 17-point margins.

	Fan of soccer	Plan to watch World Cup	Exciting or interesting
All	28%	28%	46%
18-39	34	34	51
40+	24	25	44
Whites	25	24	42
Blacks	24	25	43
Hispanics	45	45	63
College grads	31	36	57
Postgrads	37	43	64
Not coll. grad	26	24	41
Men	30	34	45
Women	26	23	48
Urban	35	33	53
Suburban	27	29	48
Rural	18	14	33

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone May 29-June 1, 2014, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,002 adults,

including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including design effect.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

Analysis by Christopher Weiss.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

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Full results follow.

* in data columns = less than 0.5 percent

1-7, 13-27, 33 previously released; 8-12 held for release.

28. On another subject, please tell me if you consider yourself to be a fan of professional soccer, or not? (GET ANSWER; IF RESPONDENT IS FAN, ASK:) Are you a big fan, or not so big?

	----- Fan -----			No opinion	
	NET	Big	Not so big	Not a fan	
6/1/14	28	10	18	71	1
7/14/94	23	9	14	75	2
6/26/94*	31	9	23	68	*

*Asked as part of a list of other professional sports.

29. Do you plan to watch the soccer World Cup games in Brazil this summer, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
6/1/14	28	71	1
6/24/94*	39	60	1

**Do you plan to watch any of the world cup soccer games, or not?"

30. Which of these four phrases best describes your view of soccer: Exciting, interesting, on the dull side or a big bore.

	--- Exciting/Interesting ---			- Dull/Big bore -			No opinion
	NET	Exciting	Interesting	NET	Dull	Bore	
6/1/14	46	19	28	49	21	28	4
7/14/94	57	22	35	35	16	19	8

31. Just your best guess, in the next 10 years do you think professional soccer will become more popular in the United States, less popular or stay about the same?

	More popular	Less popular	Stay about the same	No opinion
6/1/14	46	4	47	3

32. Did you play soccer on a regular basis growing up, or not?

Yes	No	No opinion
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6/1/14 21 79 1

*** END ***