

**Press release,  
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# **WU study: Spain will win 2010 World Cup**

**According to a recent study conducted by statisticians from WU and the University of Innsbruck, Spain will win the 2010 FIFA World Cup. A similar study successfully predicted the final match of the UEFA Euro 2008 (Germany vs. Spain).**

At odds of close to 18%, the current European champion Spain has the highest probability of winning the World Cup trophy, making it the favorite among all 32 participating teams. According to WU researchers Christoph Leitner and Kurt Hornik, in cooperation with Achim Zeilis from the University of Innsbruck, the chances of World Cup host South Africa winning the title are only 0.6%. The forecast is based on odds published by 26 international book-makers.

## **Basis of the study: International betting odds**

The study's co-author Christoph Leitner, from the institute for Statistics and Mathematics at WU, says their statistical forecast is not based on historical data (as in the case of FIFA ratings) but uses odds quoted by 26 international betting agencies, which will be paid out in the event of a championship victory. Based on these odds, the authors calculated the probabilities of winning the 2010 World Cup for all participating teams.

## **Results in detail**

According to WU's forecast, the most likely outcome will be a final match between Spain and Brazil. At a probability of only 5.8%, Italy's chances of defending their World Cup title look rather slim. Unlike the statisticians, FIFA and Elo ratings predict that Brazil will be the 2010 FIFA World Cup winner, says Leitner. In the current study, however, the five-time world champion has a slightly lower chance of winning the tournament, with a probability of 15.3%.

## **Italy: Luck of the draw**

In addition, the study clearly shows how group classifications affect the preliminaries. The four teams in group G (Brazil, Ivory Coast, Portugal and North Korea) are clearly disadvantaged, while Italy got the luck of the draw and managed to enter into a preliminary group which is "by far the easiest", says Leitner. As a result, Italy's chances of winning the title are significantly higher as compared to a different group assignment or a championship where every team played against every other team at least once.

**For a complete report on the study, please see:**

[http://epub.wu.ac.at/dyn/virlib/wp/showentry?ID=epub-wu-01\\_1043&from=NEW](http://epub.wu.ac.at/dyn/virlib/wp/showentry?ID=epub-wu-01_1043&from=NEW)

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