

Luzhniki Stadium Renovation to Cost \$537 Million

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The stadium, which hosted the UEFA Champions League final in 2008, is being renovated to bring its capacity up from 78,000 seats to 81,000.

The reconstruction of Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium, the venue for the 2018 FIFA World Cup's opening ceremony and football final, will cost more than 19 billion rubles (\$540 million), the head of Moscow's city construction department told RIA Novosti.

The stadium, which hosted the UEFA Champions League final in 2008, is being renovated to bring its capacity up from 78,000 seats to 81,000, a process that should be completed by the second quarter of 2017.

The department's head Andrei Bochkaryov added that Luzhniki will be used afterwards as a multifunctional sports complex that can host more than 200 large cultural events annually, RIA Novosti reported last week.

Football's governing body, FIFA, last year agreed to excuse Luzhniki from meeting the standard requirement of 89,000 seats for a World Cup final venue so as to avoid the complete demolition of the beloved stadium.

Sport-loving Muscovites will soon get a chance to play a part in Luzhniki's reconstruction: Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said they could be called on to choose the color of the seating in the stadium's grandstands, RIA Novosti reported Friday.

Bochkaryov said that the choice was between maroon, gold or white. The construction of the grandstands should start in October 2014, he added.

Developers are also considering fitting the roof of the stadium with lighting that would act as a massive scoreboard, allowing people to see the score of the match from such high vantage points as the Vorobyovy Gory hills to the south of the stadium.

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