



SPÓRT ÉIREANN  
SPORT IRELAND

# IRISH SPORTS MONITOR Annual Report 2017

 Ipsos MRBI

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## APPENDICES



**Foreword &  
Executive Summary**

# FOREWORD

On behalf of Sport Ireland, I am pleased to welcome the publication of the 2017 Irish Sports Monitor (ISM) Report. It is 10 years since Sport Ireland<sup>1</sup> initiated the ISM to monitor and track adult participation in sport in Ireland. Seven annual reports have been produced during that decade, all of which have provided invaluable insights into the sporting habits of Irish adults. The findings have been instrumental in shaping the development of national and local, policies and plans around participation.

Ireland has experienced profound changes to its society in the last decade, some as a result of relatively short term factors while others were part of more long term secular changes. Whatever the origins, these changes have affected, and continue to affect, all aspects of life in the country. Unemployment rates varied from less than 5% to over 16% across the decade. Our population is ageing with more ethnic variation than ever before. The regional distribution of the population has changed, affecting our working and commuting patterns, our education systems and how we play. We have more people continuing into third level education and fewer individuals leaving school early. The way we engage with, and are influenced by, technology has altered dramatically. In 2007, 35% of Irish adults reported never using the Internet; the figure has declined to 15% in 2016. And so on.

Unsurprisingly, in the above context, we have seen considerable change in all aspects of adult participation in sport and physical activity also. The gravitation towards individual sporting activities, like exercise, running, swimming and cycling, seen in previous Sport Ireland research has continued driven by the flexibility of engagement which these health-enhancing sporting activities tend to offer. Related to this, much of the active participation now tends to be in settings which are relatively informal in nature, involving family and friends or sometimes even solo participation. Despite this trend towards the individualisation of sport, Irish adults continue to demonstrate their solidarity around the social aspects of sport with vast numbers being involved as club members, volunteers or attending sporting events.

“Time” has been a continuous theme running through ISM reports. People had more of it during the recession and converted that into greater levels of active participation and volunteering. With the more recent economic upturn we have seen reduced participation among certain groups most likely to be affected by having less time in these circumstances.

Overall, at a time when our sport and health policy systems are seeking to encourage more people to take more and more exercise it is gratifying to see that the longer term trends reported by the ISM are generally positive. Despite the significant volatility in the circumstances affecting our country over the last decade, the results shown in Appendix One are highly promising with all key measures showing noticeable improvements since 2007.

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<sup>1</sup> At that time Irish Sports Council

Of particular interest are the changes we have seen in the gender gap in participation. The first National Women's Strategy was coincidentally published in 2007 to create "An Ireland where all women enjoy equality with men and can achieve their full potential, while enjoying a safe and fulfilling life". As the results show at Appendix 1 we can take some heart in knowing that sport has made some significant strides in helping the country advance its ambitions here.

While it is pleasing to see this progress we must acknowledge that considerable challenges remain if we are to ensure that the wide ranging benefits of engagement in sport are shared equitably throughout our society. We have made some inroads into narrowing the gender gap but we need to do even more. Perhaps even more urgent is the need to address some of the other gradients in participation, apparent again in this report, around education, income, disability and age.

I thank Kieran O'Leary and his team in Ipsos MRBI for his work over the past number of years on the ISM and for developing this insightful 2017 report.

John Treacy  
Chief Executive  
Sport Ireland

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Participation in sport

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- 43% of the population regularly participate in sport. This is at the same level as in 2015 indicating that participation in sport is unchanged in an improving economic environment where people may have more time pressures
- While 8 out of the 10 most popular sports are those typically participated in on an individual basis, there has been an increase in the proportion participating in sport with other people in a casual social or organised basis
- Gender gap in sports participation (4.5%) is narrower now than at any point since the ISM was introduced in 2007 when it was 15.7%
- Increased participation among females aged 45 and older means that they are now more likely to participate in sport than males of the same age
- Those with a long term illness or disability are less likely than others to participate in sport, and those that do participate in sport are less likely to participate in a group/team setting
- Persistent social gradient remains, with lower levels of sports participation among those who are unemployed, those on lower incomes and those with no third level education

## Broader physical activity

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- Increase in the proportion that is highly active, with almost a third (32.6%) now achieving the minimum level of activity set by the National Physical Activity Guidelines. The proportion categorised as sedentary remains unchanged (13.0%)
- Notable increase since 2015 in the proportion aged 65 and older that is highly active (from 24.4% to 29.5%). This means that their activity levels in this respect are more closely aligned with the population as a whole
- Increase in the proportions that are walking for recreation (from 63.6% to 66.2%), and the proportion walking for transport (from 45.6% to 46.6%). Decline in the proportion cycling for transport (9.8%, a decline from 11.1%)
- Strongest increases in recreational walking among those aged 25 to 34, and for walking for transport among those aged under 35. Similarly, higher increase in walking for transport among those who are in employment
- Large differences in activity levels between those with a long-term illness or disability and those without, and similarly those living in rural and urban areas

## Social participation in sport

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- 45.2% are involved in a social form of sports participation (attending events, club membership or volunteering). This is at broadly the same level as in 2015, with each individual component unchanged since the previous survey
- A strong gradient exists in social participation, with those earning higher incomes and with higher education much more likely to participate socially. Additionally, those with a long-term illness or disability are less likely to participate in this way
- Decline in social participation among males aged under 35 – and in particular males aged 16 to 19. However, overall social participation among under-35s is unchanged due to a corresponding rise among females
- A decline in female involvement in volunteering means that males are more likely to volunteer than females (12.6% and 9.1% respectively). The decline among females is due primarily to fewer females aged 35 to 54 volunteering for sport (14.5%, a decline from 17.5%)
- The gender differential in volunteering roles remains consistent, with female involvement more likely to be in terms of providing transport. The decline in female involvement in volunteering means that fewer are providing transport than previously

## Investment in sport

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- Almost 9 out of 10 (86%) feel that there are more opportunities now to participate in sport than there were 10 years ago. However, those living in lower income households are less likely to perceive this than those in higher income households
- General public suggest that, in developing sport in Ireland, the government should place a greater focus on general participation rather than elite sports. Equally a greater focus should be placed on encouraging those who are inactive to become more active (rather than those already active to become more active), and a greater focus on facilities rather than initiatives to encourage more activity
- Across different groups in society, policies to increase activity levels should focus on children and young people. A greater responsibility for this lies with parents rather than schools
- Just under half (44%) feel that women have fewer opportunities than men to participate in sport. This is higher among women (49%), and older women (those aged 45 and older: 55%) in particular



## Coaching and training

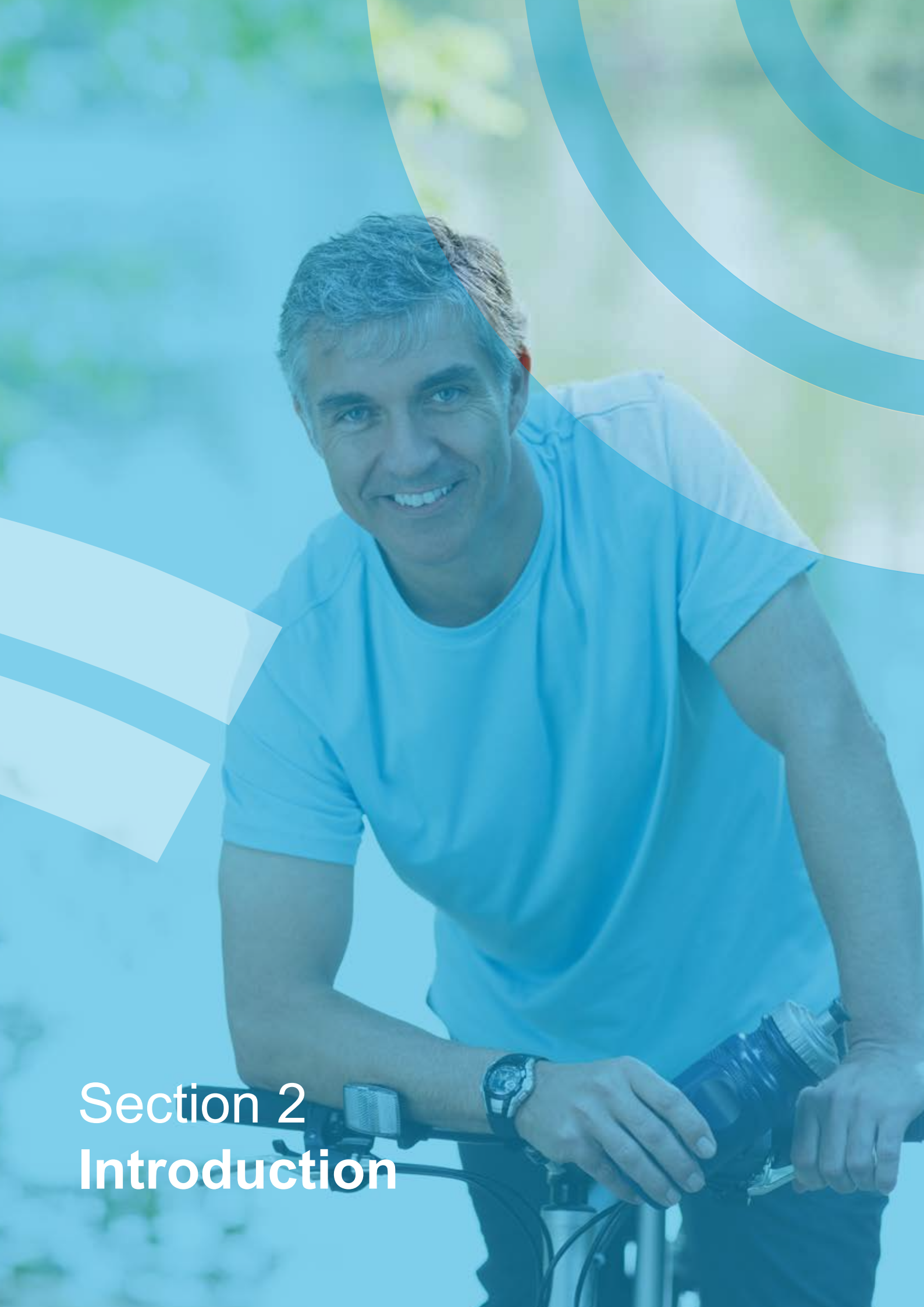
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- The majority (57%) of those participating in sport recently received coaching or training for the sport that they participate in
- Those participating in team events are more likely than those participating in individual events to receive coaching (71% and 54% respectively). Similarly, those who are members of a club are more likely than non-members to have received coaching (64% and 47% respectively)
- Most of those participating in coaching or training do so at a location convenient to where they are based, with 70% travelling less than 20 minutes to attend coaching/training
- A significant majority are satisfied with the quality of coaching received over the past six months (91%), with most (84%) saying that structured training is important to their continued participation in that sport
- A fifth (20%) have participated in a competitive event related to their sport in the past month

## Wearable technology

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- 28% currently use technology to measure the amount or nature of physical activity they undertake, with 43% having used one at some stage in the past
- More than one quarter (26%) of users claim that the technology has had a “major influence” on their activity
- Just under half of users are highly active, compared with 26% of non-users
- Those who have used more types of technology in the past are more likely to be current users of at least one of them
- The decision to stop using technology is more commonly due to boredom with it or not exercising sufficiently. These reasons are more prominent than problems with the technology itself or other factors
- This decision to stop using the technology is most likely to happen in the initial six months of usage. Across all of the technologies, between 57% and 72% of users who stopped using a device did so in this initial six months
- Between 14% and 17% of those who have never used technology say they are likely to start using one of the technologies in the next 12 months. The activity levels of potential users are broadly aligned with the population as a whole



# Section 2

## Introduction

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The Irish Sports Monitor (ISM) is a large population study undertaken biennially in order to provide trends in participation in sport and physical activity in Ireland. It sets a broad definition of sport and measures participation in both active and social contexts (i.e. includes club membership, volunteering and attendance at sports events). It also measures other forms of physical activity including recreational walking as well as walking and cycling for transport.

Sport plays a variety of important roles in Ireland today. Participation in sport not only provides considerable physical benefits, but also enhances mental wellbeing. This report finds that most sports – even those that can be participated alone – are played in group environments providing a social outlet and a support network for individuals. Social participation in sport is a key community bond. Sports clubs are at the heart of communities throughout Ireland and play a key role in bringing individuals together and forging community spirit.

Three out of every five people in Ireland regularly participate in sport – either actively or socially. Ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to participate in sport, and is encouraged to take this opportunity, is a key vision. Considerable investments are made by Sport Ireland and other stakeholders in order to achieve this.

### The Irish Sports Monitor

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Sport is defined in the Sport Ireland Act as including not only activities participated on a competitive basis, but also on a recreational basis.

*“All forms of physical activity which, through casual or regular participation aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being and at forming social relationships.”*

The definition of sport used in this study is similarly broad and includes not only popular competitive activities, but also others such as running, dancing and gym activities, all of which deliver physical and mental health benefits.

The survey asks respondents about their activity over the past seven days in terms of sport, recreational walking, and walking or cycling for transport. They are also asked about membership of clubs, attendance at sporting events and any volunteering roles that they may be involved in. Interviews are spread over the course of a 12-month period in order to account for seasonal variations in sports participation.

Previous studies were conducted annually between 2007 and 2009 as well as in 2011, 2013 and 2015. This 2017 study involved interviews with 8,482 respondents aged 16 and older.

The design of this wave of the ISM replicates that used in 2015. A change was introduced to the survey methodology for that study in order to enhance the coverage of the population.

Prior to 2015 the ISM was conducted by telephone using a random selection of landline telephone numbers and interviewing quotas to ensure a nationally representative sample of the Irish population. In 2015, the survey sample was expanded to include mobile telephone numbers in order to ensure that those in mobile-only households were adequately represented within the survey results.

This enhances the robustness of the data however it also means that data collected in 2015 may not be directly comparable with previous years of the survey which excluded those with no access to a landline telephone. On this basis, comparisons in this report are only made with 2015 survey results, although commentary is included throughout to provide an overview of longer term trends.

As in previous years, a number of flexible modules were also conducted at the end of the survey to examine current relevant issues in further depth. A number of topics relating to specific aspects of sport were included throughout the current wave, analysis of three of which are included in this report, namely:

- Investment in sport
- Coaching and structured training
- Wearable technology and physical activity



# Section 3

## Participation in Sport

## 3. PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

- 43% of the population regularly participate in sport. This is at the same level as in 2015 indicating that participation in sport is unchanged in an improving economic environment where people may have more time pressures
- While 8 out of the 10 most popular sports are those typically participated in on an individual basis, there has been an increase in the proportion participating in sport with other people in a casual social or organised basis
- Gender gap in sports participation (4.5%) is narrower now than at any point since the ISM was introduced in 2007 when it was 15.7%
- Increased participation among females aged 45 and older means that they are now more likely to participate in sport than males of the same age
- Those with a long term illness or disability are less likely than others to participate in sport, and those that do participate in sport are less likely to participate in a group/team setting
- Persistent social gradient remains, with lower levels of sports participation among those who are unemployed, those on lower incomes and those with no third level education

### 3.1 Introduction

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The ISM considers sport to be any physical activity undertaken “for exercise, recreation or sport” (excluding physical activity for work, transport, or domestic work). As such, it sets a wide definition and asks survey respondents to include all forms of sporting activity whether undertaken in an organised setting or casually with family or friends. In doing so, it seeks to achieve a measurement of sports participation in its broadest possible sense, and purposively does not set any thresholds in respect of level of exertion, minimum time spent participating or classification of specific activities in terms of whether or not they are a sport.

By taking an approach that sets a broad definition of sport, the study facilitates an understanding of sport in all its forms – activities conducted in a competitive setting and those conducted purely for exercise; activities conducted in a group/team and those conducted alone; and activities conducted at both higher and lower levels of physical intensity.

By maintaining this definition over multiple waves of the survey, the ISM can measure trends in sports participation – at overall and population sub-group levels, as well as across different forms of sports.

## 3.2 Overall participation

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This latest wave of the ISM finds that 43% of the Irish population (approximately 1.6 million people) participate in sport at least once a week. The previous wave of the survey in 2015 identified that 43.1% of the population were participating in sport, indicating that the level of participation is unchanged over the past two years.

**Figure 3.1 Participation in sport (%)**



In seeking to understand the levels of participation in sport, it is necessary to consider the decision to participate in sport – or not participate – against a variety of factors. While an increased focus on health and wellbeing is very important in this respect, other factors in the social, domestic and work lives of individuals can also have a bearing on the amount of time that can be allocated to sporting activities.

Previous reports speculated on the potential link between sporting and economic activity – specifically as economic situations worsen and people have more free time, they may be more likely to use this additional free time for sport. Conversely, the 2015 ISM report noted that the improving economic conditions might lead to people having less available free time, and suggested this as a key factor in the sharp decline in participation between 2013 and 2015 – a time when the economic circumstances were improving.



Since the 2015 survey, economic conditions have improved further. The unemployment rate is a key indicator in this respect, falling from 9.9% in the third quarter of 2015 to 6.9% in the third quarter of 2017. Just over 2.2 million people were in employment in Ireland in the third quarter of 2017, only slightly behind the peak of 2.24 million people recorded in 2007.

There have been notable declines in unemployment among specific population groups. For example, among young males (those aged 15 to 24 years) the unemployment rate has declined from 23.1% in Q3 2015 to 16.9% in Q3 2017. While the rate of unemployment remains higher in this group than in any other group, it is now more aligned with the unemployment rate among females of the same age, which has seen a more marginal decline over the same time period: from 16.4% to 15.3%.

In addition to these increases in numbers in employment, there are also increases in the numbers commuting as well as the lengths of commuter journeys. Census 2016 reports that almost 1.9 million workers indicated they travelled to work, an increase of over 10% on the 1.7 million in 2011. In turn this also surpasses the previous high of almost 1.8 million in 2006.

Given the sharp decline in participation between 2013 and 2015, and the increasing time pressures on individuals associated with the improved economic conditions since then, it could have been expected that sports participation would decline further in 2017. That it did not decline, and that the current report shows the same proportion participating in sport in 2017 as in 2015 is a welcome finding from this research.

However, as outlined below, the improved economic conditions and the associated time pressures may have a significant effect on the participation in sport among certain groups. This is notable among young males who were particularly impacted by the economic downturn and subsequent recovery.

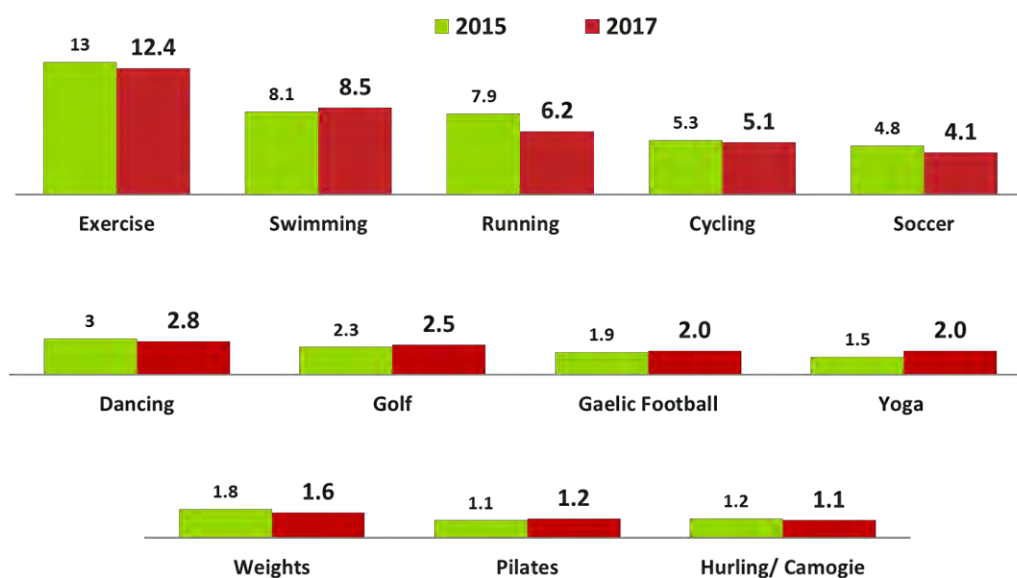
### 3.3 Most popular sports participated in

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Those participating in sports in the past seven days are asked which sports (up to a maximum of 3) they have participated in during that time. This provides an understanding of the most popular forms of sporting activity in Ireland, as well as the extent to which people participate in multiple sports.

In 2017, 30.3% participated in one sport and 12.7% participated in multiple sports. Most of those participating in multiple sports participated in two sports in total, with 3.1% in total participating in three sports. Notably, while the proportion participating in sport overall is unchanged since 2015, the proportion participating in multiple sports has declined from 13.8% to 12.7% during the same time period. As such, while the overall level of sports participation is unchanged, there are some declines across specific sports.

**Figure 3.2 Most popular forms of sport (%)**



The ten most popular sports in Ireland in 2017 are the same as in 2015, and with only one exception appear in the same order as they did in the previous study. As in all previous survey waves, personal exercise (primarily consisting of gym-type activities) is the most popular form of sporting activity, with 12.4% regularly participating in this sport. Swimming and running are the second and third most popular forms of sporting activity, with 8.5% and 6.2% respectively participating in these sports. With the exception of cycling (5.1%), all other sports have a regular participation rate of below 5%. The order of popularity of the top ten sports remains the same as in the previous study, with the exception of Gaelic Football which is now the eighth most popular sporting activity in terms of participation, having previously been the ninth most popular.

As in previous waves of this study, participation in sports typically played on an individual basis is much higher than in those participated in a team environment. Nine out of ten participants take part in individual sports, and of the ten most popular sports, only two (soccer and gaelic football) are team-based sports. However, as discussed later in this section, many of these individual sports can be participated in with others, and there is some evidence of increased participation in sport in group settings.

A comparison of the participation rates between 2017 and 2015 shows a decline in running while participation rates in other sports remain unchanged. This decline in running may seem contrary to appearances when participation in many organised running events is at historically high levels. However, it is important to consider that while organised events are a crucial part of sports participation, much of the participation occurs away from these events and among individuals who may attend infrequently or never attend such an event. This is explored in more detail later in this report.

Those participating in team sports are more likely than those participating in individual sports to regularly participate in multiple sports. Just over half (53.4%) of those participating in a team sport have also participated in another sport, compared with 31.4% of those participating in an individual sport. However, this has declined for both types of sport since the previous survey (61.2% and 33.5% respectively), and is responsible for some of the decline in running which may be used to supplement training in team-based activities.

### 3.4 Context for Participation

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While sports categorised as “individual” are more popular than team-based ones, it is important to note that most of the activity in “individual” sports is actually conducted with other people. Overall, just over two out of every five (40.2%) activities are undertaken alone, with a similar proportion being undertaken in an organised coaching, training or competitive setting. A quarter (24.6%) of activities are undertaken casually with friends or family. A comparison to the survey results in 2015 indicates that there has been a slight decline in the proportion participating in sports alone, and a slight increase in the proportion participating in sport in an organised setting.

**Figure 3.3 Context for sports participation (% - multiple answers possible)**

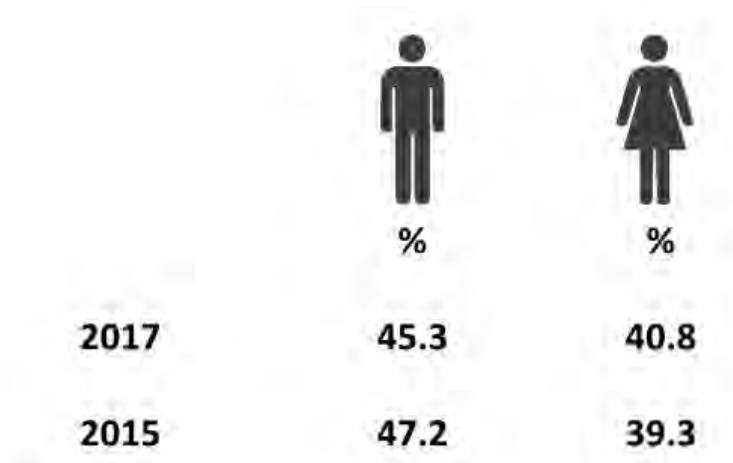


Further analysis of the data indicates that most of those that participate in activities categorised as “individual” are in fact participating in these activities with other people. Just under half (47.4%) of those participating in “individual” sports are participating in these activities alone. Over a quarter (27.8%) participate in these activities through organised training, and 22.6% do so casually with family or friends.

### 3.5 Age and gender differences in sports participation

Previous reports have noted the considerable differences that exist across different gender and age groups both in respect of the proportions participating in sport, and also the types of sports participated in. While these differences remain, there have been particular changes in sports participation among specific groups that are worthy of discussion.

**Figure 3.4 Participation in sport by gender (%)**



Firstly, while males remain more likely to participate in sport than females, there has been a decline in the proportion of males that participate, while participation levels among females have increased. The proportion of males participating in sport has declined from 47.2% in 2015 to 45.3% in 2017, while 40.8% of females regularly participate (2015: 39.3%). As a result, the gender gap in sports participation (4.5%) is narrower now than at any point since the ISM was introduced in 2007, when it was 15.7%.

Of particular note within this gender dynamic are the types of sports involved. Personal exercise is the most popular activity among both genders (males: 11.3%, females: 13.5%), however there has been a decline in the proportion of males participating in personal exercise (2015: 11.3%).

**Figure 3.5 Types of sports participated in (by gender) (%)**

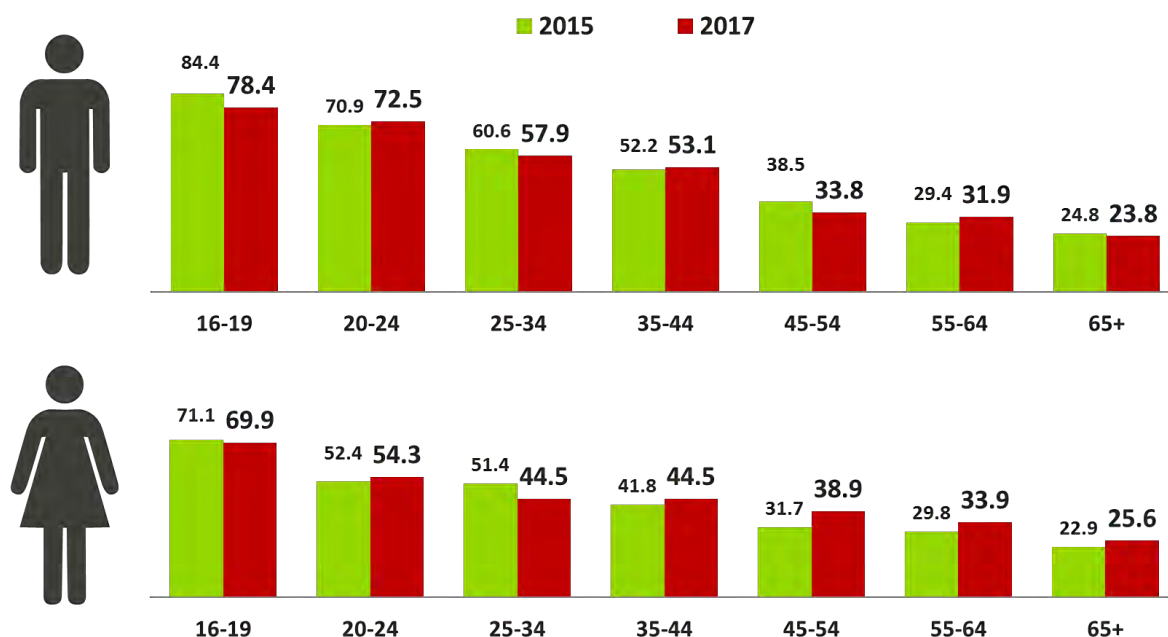
	All		Males		Females	
	2015	2017	2015	2017	2015	2017
Exercise	13.0	12.4	13.1	11.3	12.9	13.5
Swimming	8.1	8.5	7.6	7.1	8.6	9.8
Running	7.9	6.2	8.9	6.9	6.9	5.5
Cycling	5.3	5.1	7.4	7.3	3.3	3.0
Soccer	4.8	4.1	8.7	7.8	1.2	0.5
Dancing	3.0	2.8	1.1	1.4	4.2	4.3
Golf	2.3	2.5	3.8	3.8	0.9	1.2
Gaelic Football	1.9	2.0	3.2	2.9	0.8	1.2
Yoga	1.5	2.0	0.5	0.6	2.4	3.4
Weights	1.8	1.6	2.2	1.9	1.4	1.3
Pilates	1.1	1.2	0.2	0.2	1.9	2.2
Hurling/Camogie	1.2	1.1	1.9	1.6	0.5	0.6

There has been a decline in the proportions running among both genders, and males remain more likely than females to participate in this sport. Among males, 6.9% participate in running (a decline from 8.9% in 2015), compared with 5.5% of females (2015: 6.9%).

The decline among females in running is compensated for by small (but statistically insignificant) increases in participation in a number of sports, notably exercise, swimming and yoga. Among males the story is one of decline across almost all popular sports, even if in certain cases the decline is marginal.

Previous reports in this research series have reported a transition in female physical activity from recreational walking to running. With a decline in female participation in running, while overall female participation in sport remains the same, this could indicate a further transition from running into other forms of sporting activity.

**Figure 3.6 Participation in sport by gender and age (%)**



Analysis of participation by age finds that while the pattern of participation remains the same – younger age groups are more likely to play sport than those who are older – the changes in participation are not consistent across all age groups. Notably, there have been some declines in sports participation among younger age groups which have been offset by increases among older age groups.

However, changes in participation are not universal in terms of gender or types of sport played.

While young males aged 16 to 19 are still the most likely group to participate in sport, participation levels have fallen significantly between 2015 and 2017. The decline is most notable in soccer where participation levels fell from 30.7% in 2015 to 22.6% in 2017. Other sports that experienced a decline in participation levels, albeit to a lesser extent, are running, cycling and swimming.

The decline in sports participation among 25 to 34 year olds is more pronounced among females than it is among males. As such, males in this age group remain significantly more likely to play sport than females of the same age (57.9% and 44.5% respectively). The decline among females arises due to declines in the proportions running and dancing, although is somewhat compensated by an increase in the proportion participating in yoga.

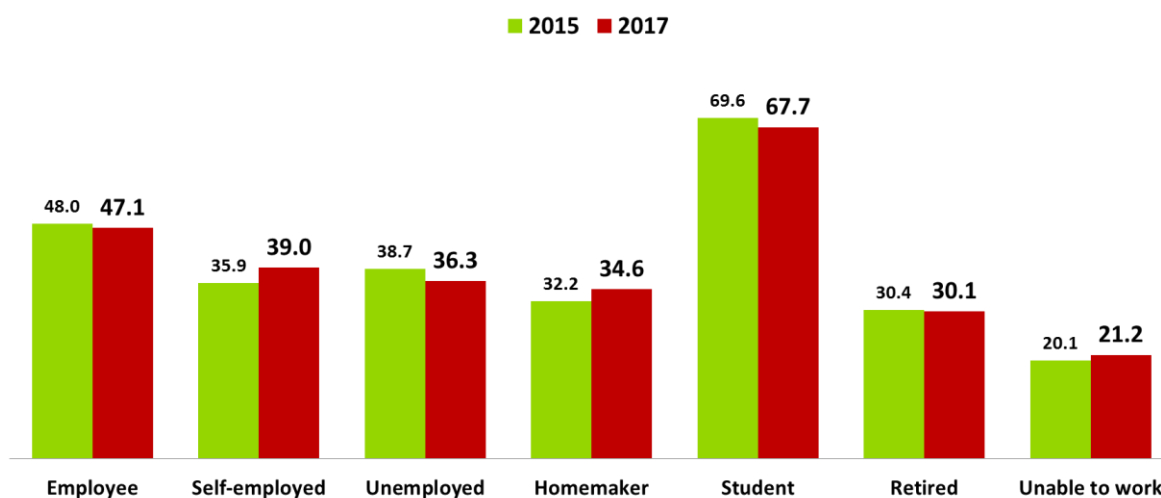
One of the very positive features of this wave of the ISM has been the notable increase in participation among females aged 35 and older from 32% in 2015 to 35.9% in 2017. This increase has been the primary driver in the narrowing gender gap reported earlier. Allied to the slightly declining levels in participation among males aged 45 and over, the above increases mean that for the first time since the ISM was instituted in 2007 females aged 45 and upwards are more likely than males of the same age to participate in sport.

The increase in sports participation among females aged 35 and over is primarily driven by increases in swimming, exercising and yoga, emphasising the importance of physical and mental health as a motivation for sports participation among this group.

### 3.6 Social differences in sports participation

In examining social differences in sports participation, the analysis considers this across three dimensions – working status, household income and educational attainment.

**Figure 3.7 Participation in sport by working status (%)**



As has been measured across the full series of ISM measurements those in employment are more likely to participate in sport than those who are unemployed, retired or who categorise themselves as homemakers. The only employment category with higher levels of sports participation is students, reflective of their younger age profile.

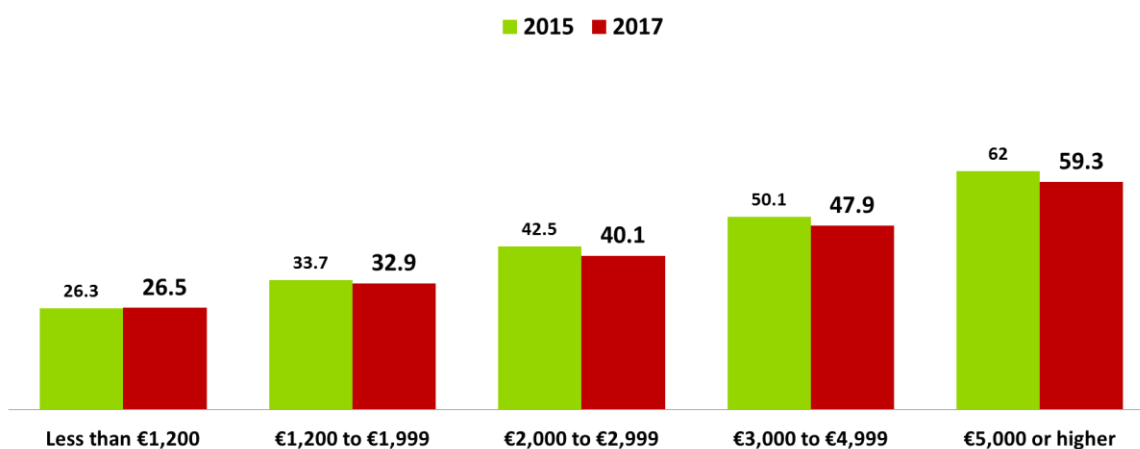
Just under half of those in employment (45.3%) participate in sport regularly, although the proportion of those that are self-employed participating in sport is lower than the proportion categorised as employees (39.0% and 47.1% respectively). However, while the proportion of employees participating in sport has declined from 48%, the proportion of those self-employed participating in sport has increased from 35.9%. This leads to a narrowing gap between these employment categories.

Differences across the key employment categories are consistent with the 2015 survey, with the proportions of the unemployed and homemaker categories participating in sport remaining lower than the proportion in employment. In both cases, the proportion is lower than that recorded in 2015, although the changes are not statistically significant.

Across specific types of sport, the most notable change across working status categories is the proportion of cyclists among those self-employed, which has increased from 3.9% to 6.7%. In contrast, the proportions of students that are playing soccer, hurling/camogie or running have all declined.

Related to this is the stark income gradient that exists in respect of sports participation. Those with higher levels of household income are much more likely than those in lower income households to participate in sport. This gradient has existed throughout all waves of the ISM. Just under 3 out of every 5 (59.3%) of those living in the highest income households (defined as those with a net monthly income of €5,000 or higher) regularly participate in sport. In contrast, among the lower income bracket (net monthly income of under €1,200), just over a quarter (26.5%) participate in sport.

**Figure 3.8 Participation in sport by net monthly household income (%)**

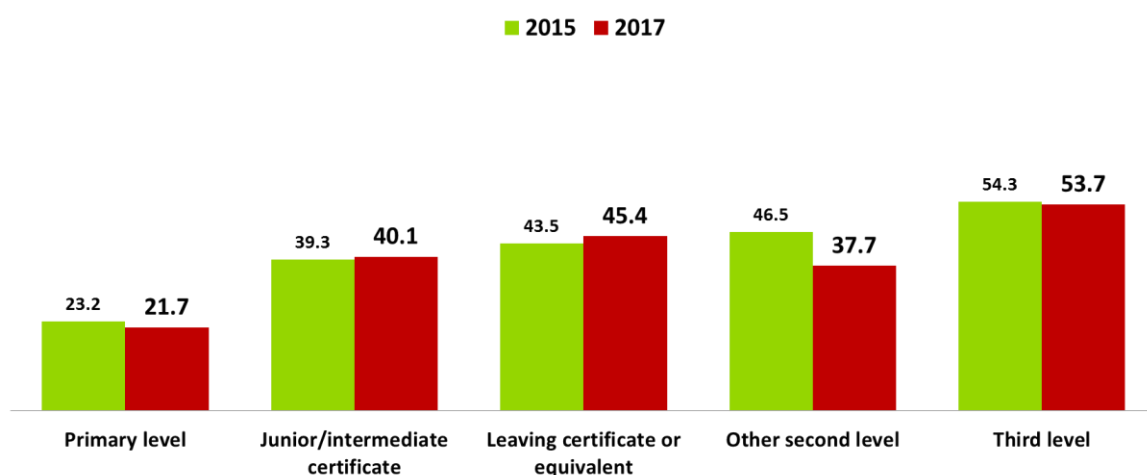




It follows that participation in each type of sport also differs by income, and this is the case across the most popular forms of sports participation, with the exception of dancing. However, the gradient is stronger for certain types of sport. Running is particularly noticeable in this respect, with less than 2% of those with a net monthly household income of under €1,600 participating in running, compared with 12.6% of those in the highest income bracket. This is somewhat contradictory to what may be assumed with running having minimal cost to participate.

The ISM series of research has found a persistent gradient in sports participation when level of educational attainment is considered. This has reflected itself in those with higher levels of education being more likely to play sport than those with lower levels of education. The 2017 survey identifies that this gradient persists such that individuals with a third level education are significantly more likely to participate than all other groups. The most notable change since 2015 has been the decline in the proportion of those participating in sport among those classified as having “other second level” education. Among this group, while declines have been seen across a number of sports, they have been particularly severe in the case of running (from 9.0% in 2015 to 4.7% in 2017).

**Figure 3.9 Participation in sport by educational attainment (%)**

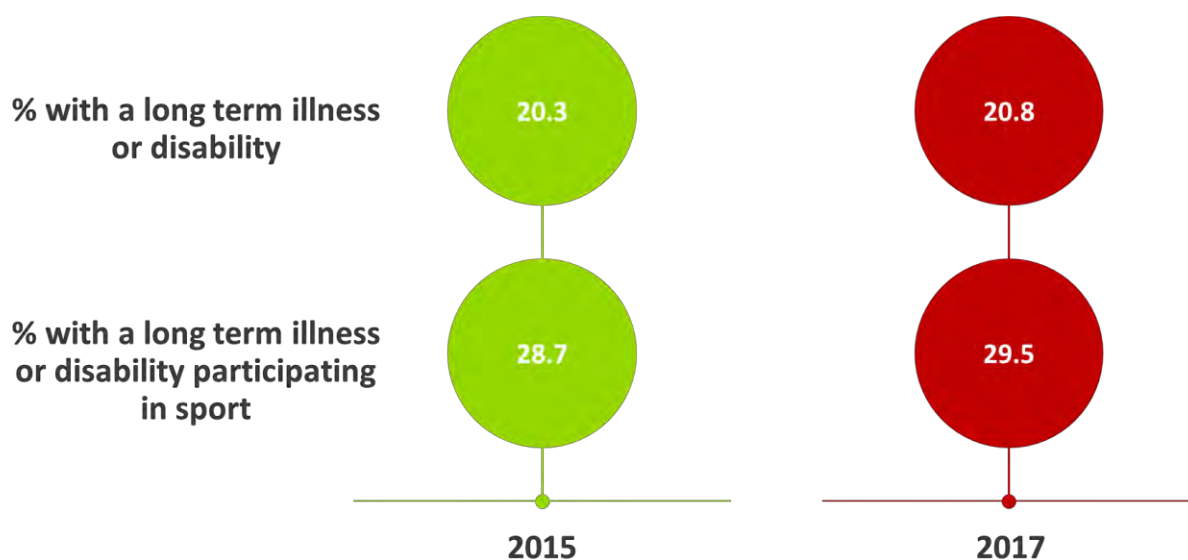


### 3.7 Sports participation among those with a long-term illness or disability

Sport provides flexibility to enable all to participate regardless of age, gender, fitness or skill-level. This flexibility is available through both the particular type of sport played as well as the nature of engagement with that sport (i.e. level of intensity and/or aligned with an individual’s skill level). It is also flexible in respect of meeting different physical needs for those with a long-term illness or disability, and can provide life-enhancing benefits for many with all types of health conditions and disabilities.

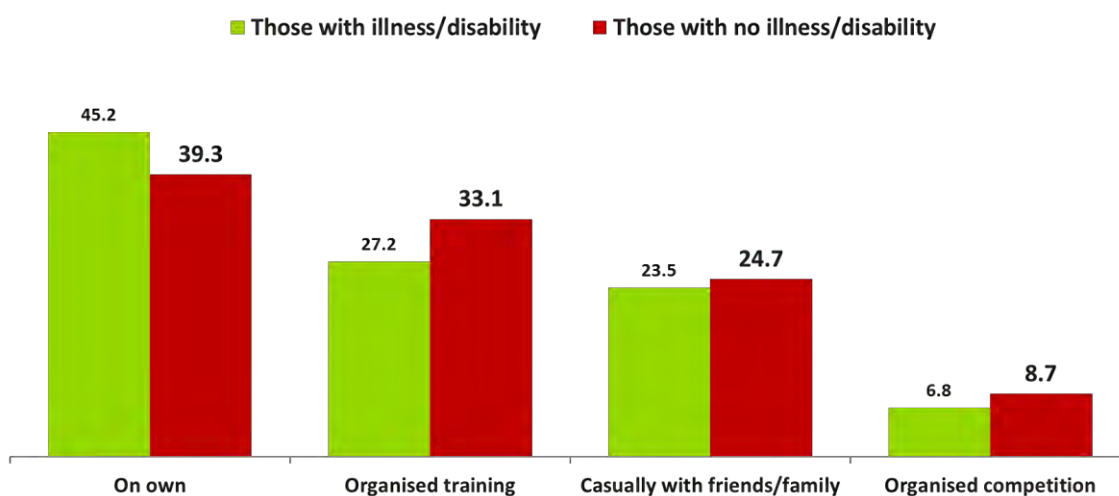
However, the ISM series has identified that those with a long-term illness or disability are less likely to take part in sport than others, and the results from the 2017 study demonstrate a continuation of this dynamic. On the 2017 study, 20.8% reported having a long-term illness or disability, and among this group 29.5% regularly take part in sport compared with 46.6% of those with no long-term illness or disability. This low level of participation among this group is a cause for concern and means that almost three-quarters of those with a long-term illness or disability are not gaining from the physical and mental benefits that sport brings.

**Figure 3.10 Participation in sport among those with a long term illness or disability (%)**



Not only does the extent of participation in sport differ between those with a long-term illness or disability, but the nature of this participation also differs. Those with a long-term illness or disability are less likely to participate in organised sport and more likely to participate in sport alone. Just over a third (33.9%) of sports participants with a long-term illness or disability participate in sport through organised training or competition, compared with 41.8% of other participants. In turn, those with an illness or disability are more likely to participate in sport on their own, with 45.2% participating in sport this way, compared with 39.3% of other sports participants.

**Figure 3.11 Context for sports participation – long-term illness and disability (%)**



This difference in nature of sports participation is explained by the types of sports participated in. While those with an illness or disability are less likely than others to participate in all forms of sport, the difference is more noticeable among certain sports. This includes many of those sports where organised training or competition is more prevalent (such as running, soccer, golf or gaelic football). Similarly, those with an illness or disability are less likely than others to participate in both individual and team sports, although the difference is particularly stark for team sports.

**Figure 3.12 Types of sport participated in by those with a long term illness or disability (%)**

	Those with an illness or disability	Those with no illness or disability
Individual	28.0	41.1
Team	3.6	9.5
Exercise	8.5	13.4
Swimming	7.8	8.7
Running	2.3	7.2
Cycling	2.9	5.7
Soccer	1.6	4.8
Dancing	3.2	2.8
Golf	1.4	2.7
Gaelic Football	0.6	2.4
Yoga	1.8	2.1
Weights	1.6	1.5
Pilates	0.8	1.3
Hurling/Camogie	0.6	1.2



# Section 4 Broader Physical Activity

## 4. BROADER PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Increase in the proportion that is highly active, with almost a third (32.6%) now achieving the minimum level of activity set by the National Physical Activity Guidelines. The proportion categorised as sedentary remains unchanged (13.0%)
- Notable increase since 2015 in the proportion aged 65 and older that is highly active (from 24.4% to 29.5%). This means that their activity levels in this respect are more closely aligned with the population as a whole
- Increase in the proportions that are walking for recreation (from 63.6% to 66.2%), and the proportion walking for transport (from 45.6% to 46.6%). Decline in the proportion cycling for transport (9.8%, a decline from 11.1%)
- Strongest increases in recreational walking among those aged 25 to 34, and for walking for transport among those aged under 35. Similarly, higher increase in walking for transport among those who are in employment
- Large differences in activity levels between those with a long-term illness or disability and those without, and similarly those living in rural and urban areas

### 4.1 Introduction

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In addition to providing a measure of participation levels in sport, the Irish Sports Monitor measures other forms of physical activity – recreational walking, walking for transport and cycling for transport. This provides a deeper understanding of physical activity outside of the sporting context, and provides an understanding of total levels of physical activity across all contexts combined.

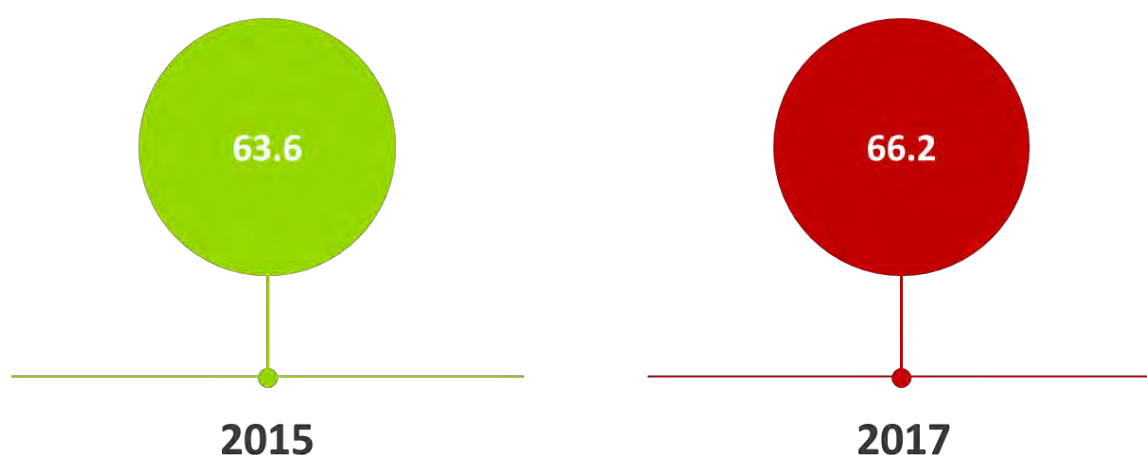
Having an understanding of these other forms of physical activity is important in terms of understanding sports participation. Previous reports have suggested that recreational walking may serve as a transitional activity into sport, as well as being a central component of physical activity for many in the population.

## 4.2 Recreational walking

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Almost two-thirds (66.2%) of the population walk for recreation on a weekly basis – an increase from 63.6% in the 2015 study. The increase since 2015 equates to almost 100,000 additional people going for regular walks and gaining from the physical, mental and social benefits that recreational walking can deliver. This increase comes following numerous initiatives to encourage more people to take regular walks, as well as promotion of walking as an ideal gateway activity for those looking to become active.

**Figure 4.1 Participation in recreational walking (%)**



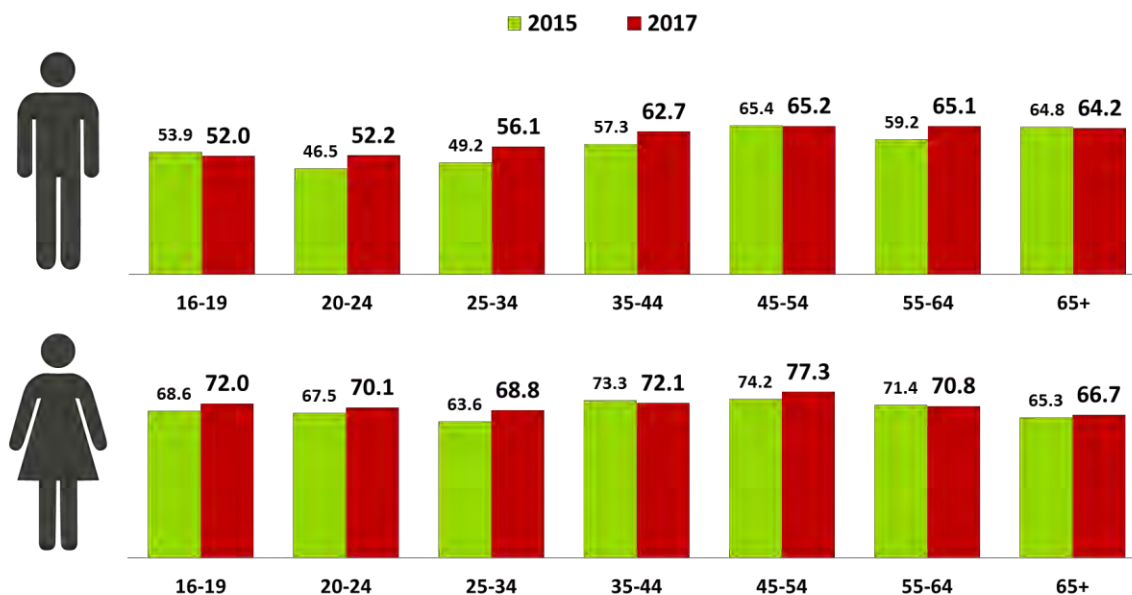
Recreational walking is the most popular form of physical activity measured by the ISM, and with almost 2.5 million people walking for recreation each week, means that many more are participating in this activity than in the most popular forms of sporting activity.

Females are more likely than males to take regular walks for recreation (71.1% and 61.2% respectively). Participation among both genders has increased since 2015, particularly among males (from 57.7% to 61.2%). So, as is the case with sport, the gender gap has narrowed and now stands at 9.9%, in this case in favour of females.

Somewhat related to this is the dynamic that exists in respect of relationship status. The gender gap in recreational walking is narrower for those who are married than for those who are single (8.3% and 13.9% respectively). This is due to married men being more likely to undertake walks for recreation than single men (65.2% and 56.7% respectively). This perhaps reflects the key role of females in encouraging males to go for walks.

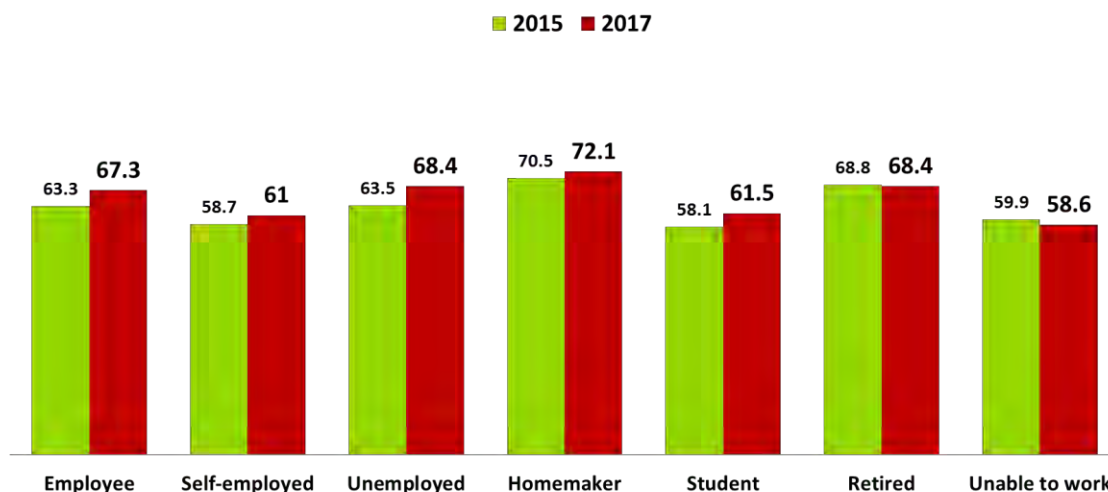
Further to this, and unlike sport – where participation rates are highest among the youngest age group and decline with age – the proportion walking for recreation rises across age groups, from 61.8% of 16 to 19 year olds to 71.3% of 45 to 54 year olds, before declining slightly to 65.5% of those aged 65 and older.

**Figure 4.2 Participation in recreational walking by gender and age (%)**



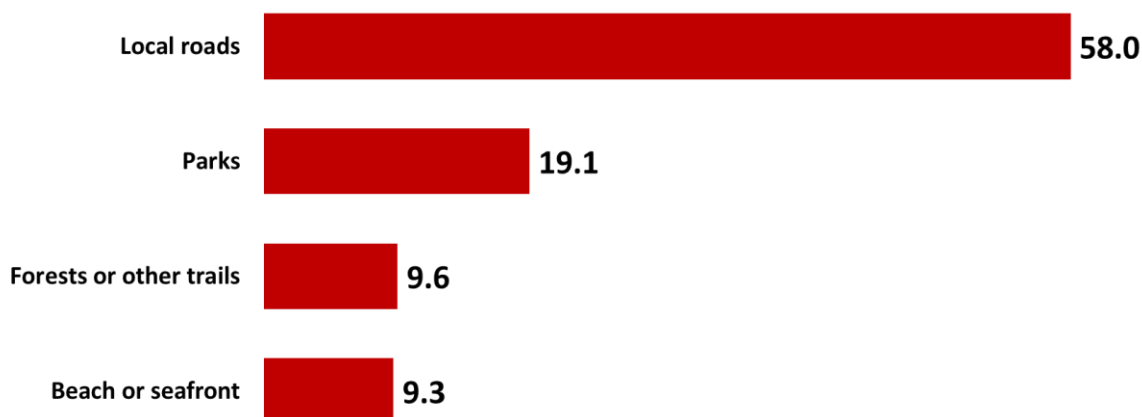
Differences by employment status are reflective of the differences that exist by gender and age. Homemakers are most likely to undertake recreational walks and students least likely – although the proportion in employment undertaking such walks has increased over the past two years. However, differences by level of education reflect the social gradient that is also evident in sports participation, with those with higher levels of education more likely to go for regular walks, than those with lower levels of education.

**Figure 4.3 Participation in recreational walking by employment status (%)**



The sharpest increases in recreational walking are among men aged 20 to 44 (from 52.2% to 58.5%) and those in paid employment (from 62.3% to 65.9%). This may be reflective of the flexible nature of recreational walking as an activity that can be accommodated within busy lifestyles. Evidence for the importance of convenient walking routes to accommodate people’s busy lives is provided by the fact the almost 80% of all regular walkers take part around local roads (58%) or in parks (19.1%). Forests / trails provide the next most popular site for recreational walking with 9.6% taking part here and 9.3% taking part at beaches or seafronts.

**Figure 4.4 Location where recreational walks usually undertaken (%)**





It is interesting to note that many of the declines in participation in sport among particular demographic subgroups are at least partially compensated for by increases in recreational walking. It is reassuring that individuals are still trying to incorporate some health enhancing physical activity into their daily lives, however, busy they become. The increases in recreational walking among men and those aged 25 to 34 are noteworthy in this regard. This provides a degree of comfort that many of those who may be dropping out of sport are remaining physically active through walking. Further evidence of this is provided through the increased proportion meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines, discussed later in this chapter.

Those participating in recreational walking took on average 4.6 walks over the previous 7 days. This is a slight increase on the 2015 average of 4.3 walks. Frequency of walking has increased or remained the same across both genders and most age groups with the largest increase among females and those aged in their late forties/early fifties.

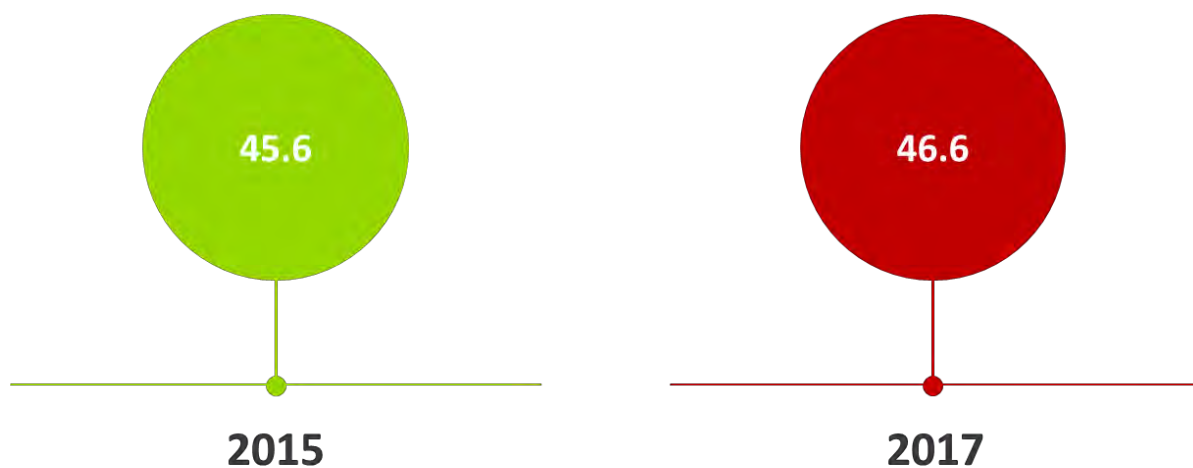
Overall, there has been an increase in both the proportion walking regularly and also the frequency of walking meaning that it is delivering more health benefits to a wider group of people. To further underscore this point, almost all walkers report walking at a steady pace or faster with almost half (46.3%) walking briskly or at a fast pace.

### 4.3 Walking for transport

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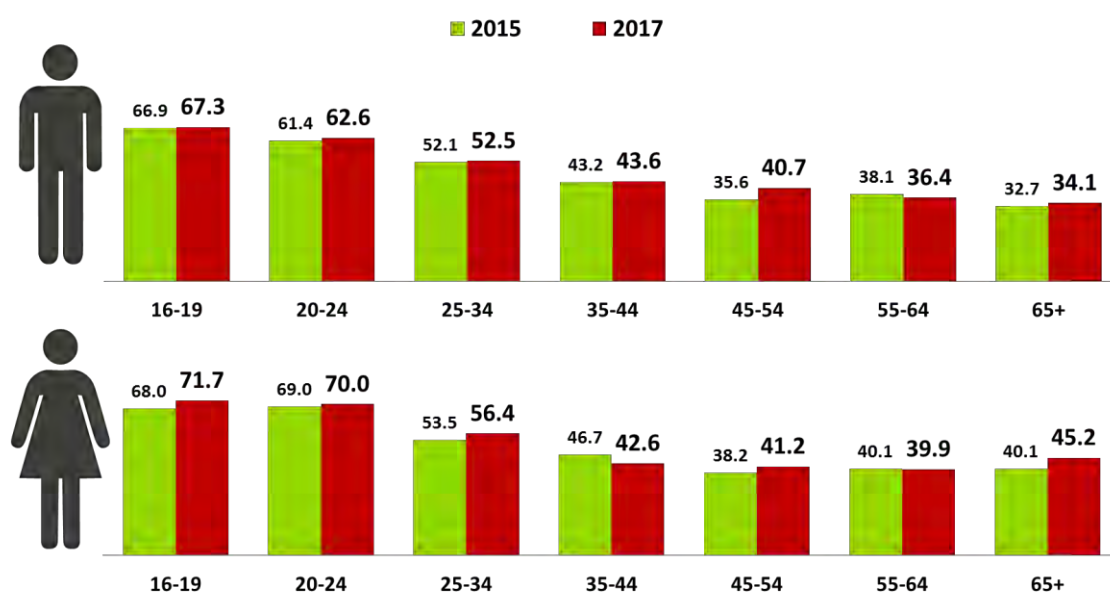
Previous waves of this study showed increases in the proportion walking for transport (defined as taking regular walks of over 15 minutes for transport) suggesting that greater numbers of Irish people are using this active form of travel. This latest wave finds that 46.6% overall regularly walk for transport, an increase from 45.6% in the previous wave.

**Figure 4.5 Walking for transport (%)**



Changes in the proportions walking for transport have been considered to be closely aligned to the numbers in employment. As the economic circumstances improve and economic activity increases, there is greater need for people to make more journeys (for example, to and from the workplace, shops etc.), thus providing a greater opportunity for walks for transport. This is likely supported further by an increased focus on active forms of travel, encouraging more to choose walking (or cycling) for transport rather than a less active form such as driving a car. Many may be viewing their day-to-day travel as opportunities to be active and to accommodate physical activity within their lifestyle.

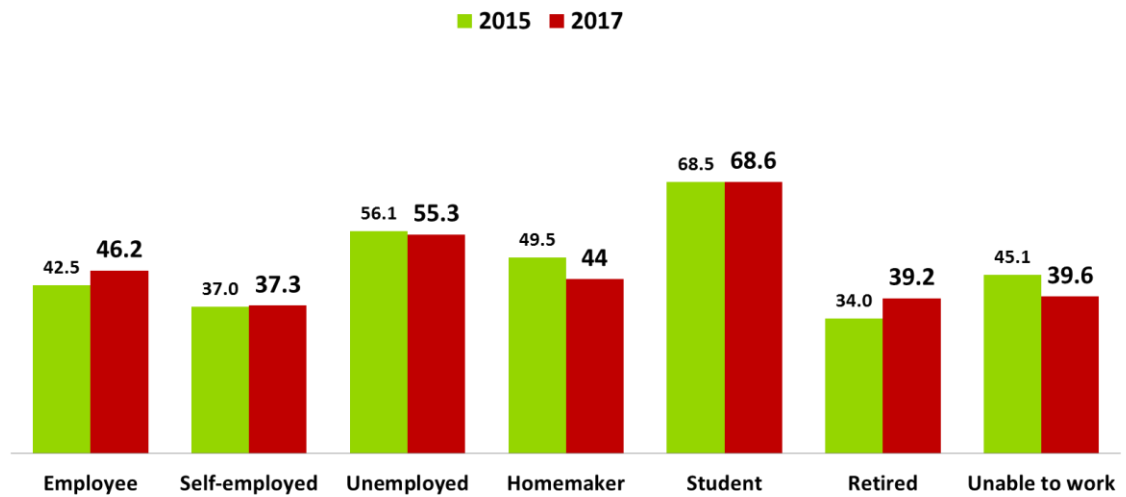
**Figure 4.6 Walking for transport by gender and age (%)**



Walking for transport is a popular activity regardless of other activities participated in, and has broadly similar participation levels among those active in sport and those who are not active, as well as for those who walk for recreation and those who do not. Additionally, the social gradient in walking for transport is less obvious than with sports participation and recreational walking. Analysis of walking for transport by level of education shows that the proportions of those with the lowest levels of education walking for transport are broadly similar to the proportions of those with higher levels of education.

Increases in walking for transport are evident across most socio-demographic groups. As with previous waves of this study, females and those who are younger are more likely than others to walk for transport. Additionally, students are more likely than those in employment and all other working groups to walk for transport, suggesting that groups more likely to have access to a car remain less likely to walk for transport.

**Figure 4.7 Walking for transport by employment status (%)**



#### 4.4 Cycling for transport

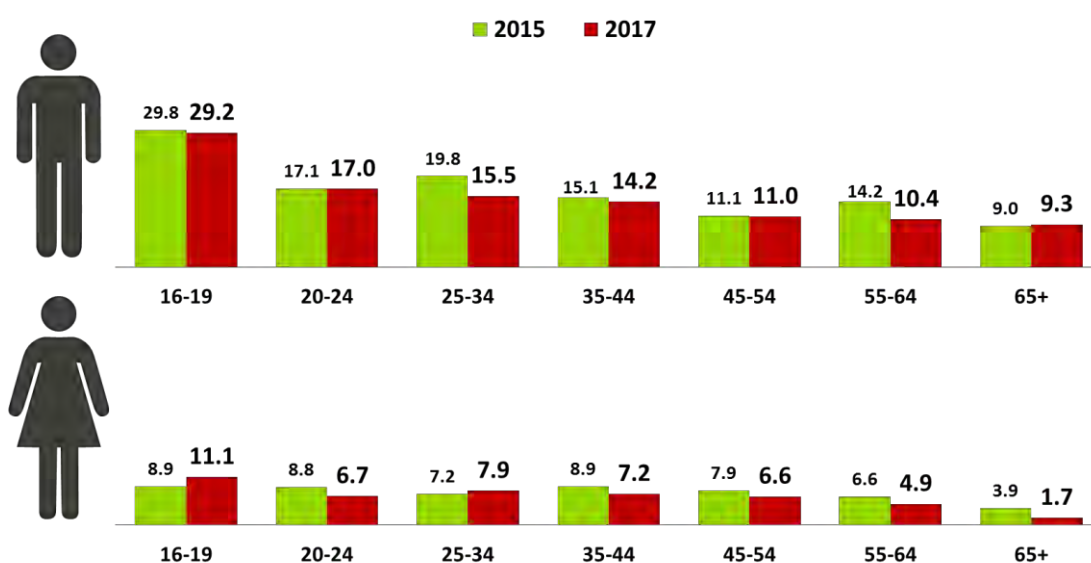
Almost one in every ten people (9.8%) cycle regularly for transport – this represents a decline (from 11.1%) since 2015. As in previous surveys, some groups are much more likely to cycle for transport than others, with men age 16 to 19 most likely to cycle regularly for transport (29.2%).

**Figure 4.8 Cycling for transport (%)**



Differences also exist by location and employment status. Those living in Dublin are more likely to cycle for transport than those living in other areas, and those living in a city or town are more likely to cycle for transport than those living in villages or isolated areas. Also, students are more likely to cycle for transport than all other employment groups, and those who are in paid employment are more likely to cycle than homemakers or those who are retired.

**Figure 4.9 Cycling for transport by gender and age (%)**



However, as with walking for transport, any social gradient is less noticeable in respect of level of educational attainment, with broadly similar levels cycling for transport among those with higher and lower levels of education.

As the survey measures cycling in different contexts, it is possible to explore the extent to which people cycle for both sport and transport or whether these are two distinct groups. Around 1 in 5 adults (21.0%) who regularly cycle for transport also cycle regularly for recreation or sport, and similarly 2 in 5 adults (40.3%) who cycle for recreation also cycle for transport. By combining the two groups we find that about one in eight adults (12.8%) cycle regularly, either for transport or sport, indicating the important contribution the activity makes to adult activity levels of the adult population.

## 4.5 Physical activity categories among the adult population

Through combining physical activity in different contexts it is possible to identify the proportion meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines through participation in sport, recreational walking and active travel (walking or cycling for transport). For the purposes of this study, respondents are assigned as being Highly Active, Fairly Active<sup>2</sup>, Just Active<sup>3</sup> or Sedentary based on the extent, duration and intensity of their physical activity in these domains.

Those who are categorised as Highly Active – participating in at least 30 minutes of moderate or greater intensity physical activity at least five times in the previous seven days through a combination of sport and recreational walking only – are considered to be meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines. At the other end of the activity spectrum, individuals who take part in no sport, recreational walking, walking for transport or cycling for transport are regarded as sedentary for the purposes of the ISM.

Given that the greatest health benefits have been shown to accrue to individuals who move from being inactive to taking part in any activity, this sedentary group is of particular interest to policy makers. These two groups, the Highly Active and the Sedentary, are the focus of this section of the report.

**Figure 4.10 Hierarchy of activity (%)**



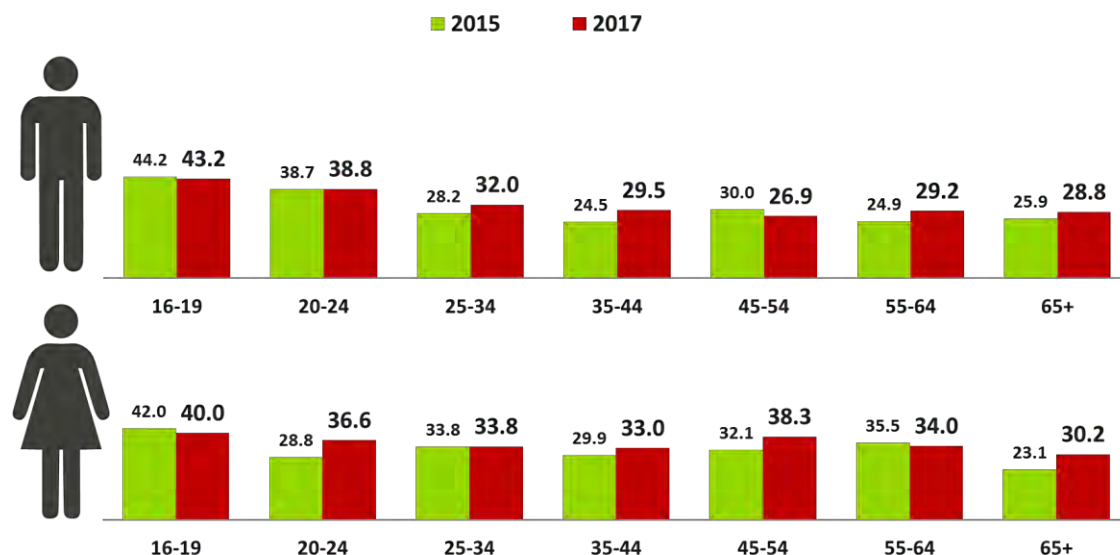
<sup>2</sup> Participated in 30 minutes of physical activity at least twice during the previous seven days

<sup>3</sup> Participated in a sporting activity or recreational walking for 20 minutes at least once during the previous seven days, or regularly walks or cycles for transport (at least once a week)

This wave of the survey identifies that one in three adults (32.6%) have undertaken a sufficient level of activity to be considered as meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines. This is a significant increase from the 30% in the previous survey in 2015. This indicates that the increases in the proportions walking for recreation are sufficient to result in increased levels of activity overall. At the other end of the spectrum, the proportion that is sedentary remains the same.

Previous waves of this study have found that while females are more likely to be highly active than males, this is not consistent throughout the life course. Younger males (up to the age of 24) were more likely to be highly active than females of the same age, however among all older age groups the reverse is the case.

**Figure 4.11 Highly active by gender and age (%)**



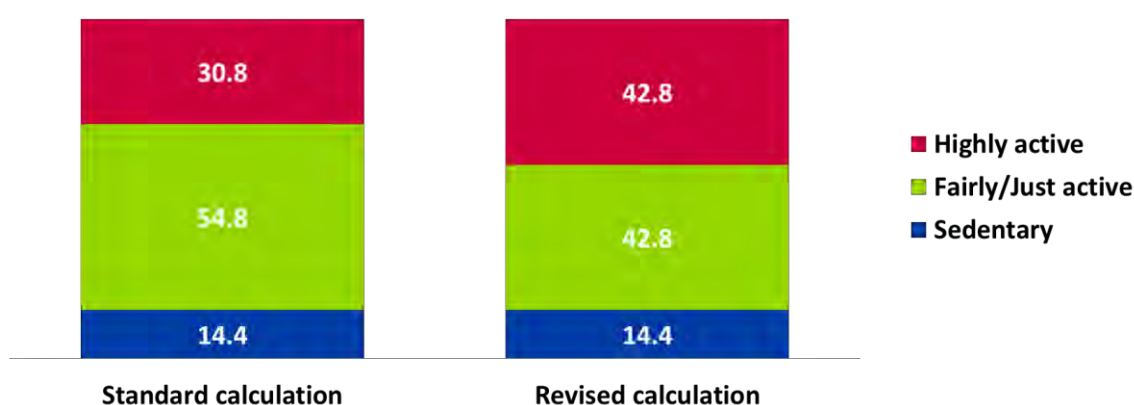
However, changes in physical activity – in particular the declines in sports participation among younger males, and the increases in recreational walking among males aged 25 to 34 and females aged 16 to 34 – means that differences between the genders at younger ages no longer exist. Across both genders just over 1 in 3 of those aged under 35 is highly active (36.2% of males and 35.8% of females).

At the older end of the age spectrum, there is also an encouraging increase in the proportion of those aged 65 and older that is considered highly active. This is the case for both genders.

As identified in previous waves of this study, roughly half of those that are participating in sport or recreational walking are not doing so at a sufficient frequency or intensity to be considered as highly active. Among those participating in sport, half (50.5%) are highly active, and among those participating in recreational walking 45.3% are highly active. Ensuring that more people achieve the minimum level of activity set by the National Physical Activity Guidelines can be delivered both by increasing the activity levels of those already active, as well as encouraging more individuals to become active.

Conventionally the ISM only includes a limited measurement of walking or cycling for transport, and does not identify frequency, journey length or intensity. As such it is not possible to include these forms of activity in the above calculation of highly active. To identify the impact that this “active commuting” has on overall levels of activity, a special module was included during the 2017 study.

**Figure 4.12 Hierarchy of activity with active travel included – November/December data only (%)**



As this measurement was only included for a portion of the year during which data was collected, the figures shown here are not directly comparable to the results presented earlier in this section. For example, seasonality and other effects could lead to reductions or increases in overall activity levels.

The inclusion of active travel within the calculation has the effect of increasing the proportion that is highly active from 30.8% to 42.8%. In population terms this is considerable as it equates to almost half a million additional individuals achieving the recommended minimum levels of activity. Increases in activity levels are evident across all demographic groups. For example, the inclusion of active travel within the calculations lead to the majority (59.6%) of those aged under 25 meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines.

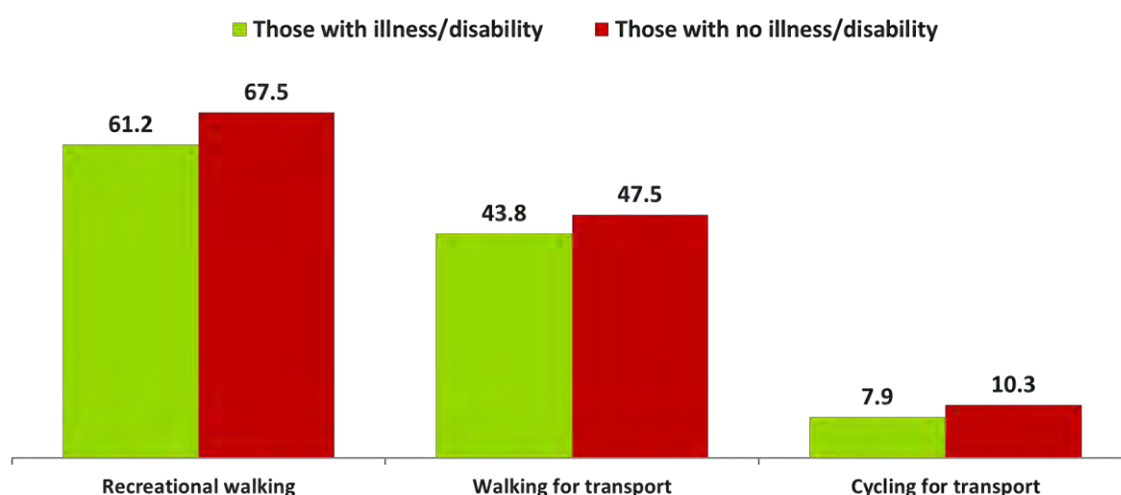
This clearly illustrates the role that active travel plays in respect of overall physical activity levels, and the importance of encouraging more individuals to adopt active forms of travel.

## 4.6 Broader physical activity among those with a long-term illness or disability

One of the key advantages of these broader forms of physical activity is that they are easily accessible to almost all regardless of fitness, and that no particular skills or facilities are required. As detailed earlier they play a key role in enabling individuals to achieve recommended minimum levels of physical activity.

However, as with sports participation, those with a long-term illness or disability are less likely than others to participate in recreational walking or to walk or cycle for transport. However, the gap between both groups is lower than it is for sports participation, perhaps indicative of the lower barriers to participation for many across each of these activities. It is important to note in this analysis that those with a long-term illness or disability have an older age profile, and this may be reflective of lower participation among older age groups rather than being due solely to their illness or disability specifically.

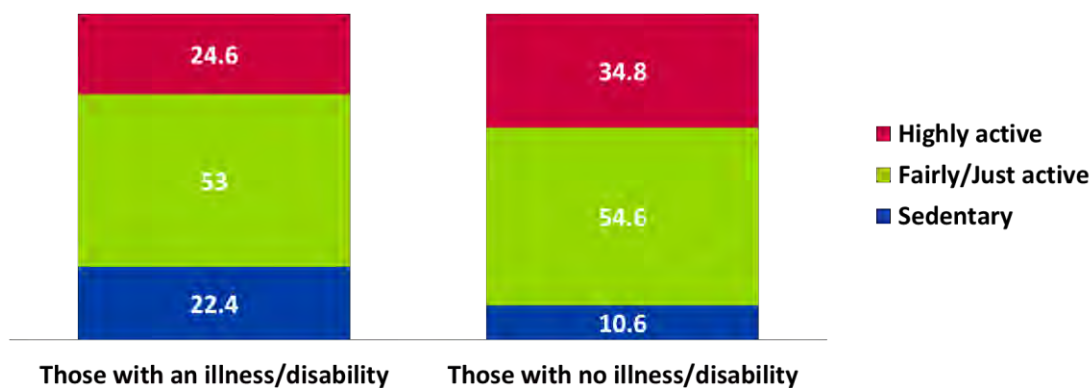
**Figure 4.13 Physical activity among those with a long-term illness or disability (%)**



Combining activity through sport and these broader types of activity, finds that those with a long-term illness or disability are much less likely to achieve the recommended minimum levels of physical activity. Just under a quarter (24.6%) of those with a long-term illness or disability are categorised as highly active, compared with 34.8% of those with no long-term illness or disability.



**Figure 4.14 Hierarchy of activity among those with a long-term illness or disability (%)**



Of particular concern is the proportion of those with a long-term illness or disability that is sedentary (22.4%), and as such are more than twice as likely to be sedentary as an individual with no long-term illness or disability (10.6%). These proportions are unchanged since the 2015 study and identify a particular challenge in terms of ensuring all sectors of society gain from the various benefits of physical activity.

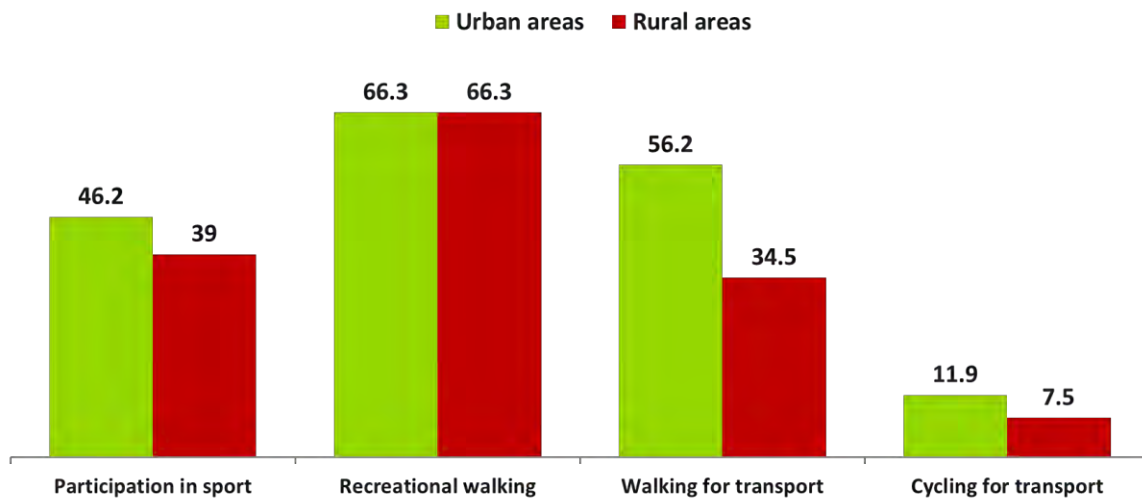
#### 4.7 Broader physical activity in urban and rural areas

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Where an individual lives plays an important role in determining levels of physical activity with lower levels of participation in sport, walking and cycling for transport among those living in rural areas, while participation in recreational walking is the same in both rural and urban areas.

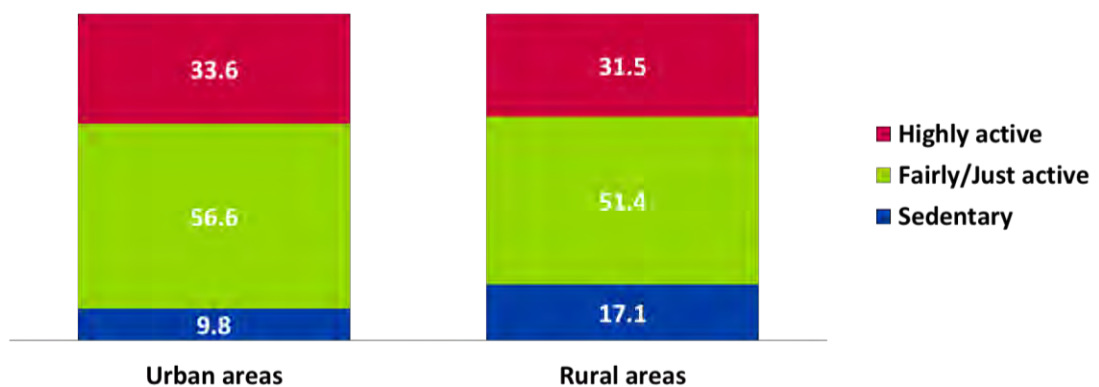
The differences between urban and rural areas in respect of walking and cycling for transport are particularly stark and are a result of a variety of reasons. Firstly, the distances being travelled in rural areas are more likely to be longer than those travelled in urban areas. However, there is also a consideration that the infrastructure available in rural areas is less suited to encouraging active forms of travel. It may be the case that those living in rural areas feel less safe walking on rural roads than those walking on urban footpaths, or are less likely to cycle in the absence of dedicated cycle lanes.

**Figure 4.15 Physical activity levels in urban and rural areas (%)**



However, the impact of these lower levels of activity is clearly demonstrated through the combined activity levels of those in rural areas. While the proportion of those living in rural areas that is highly active is only slightly lower than in urban areas, the proportion that is sedentary is considerably higher. Lower levels of participation in sport in rural areas (46.2%) is likely the key factor behind this.

**Figure 4.16 Hierarchy of activity in urban and rural areas (%)**





## Section 5

# Social Participation in Sport

## 5. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

- 45.2% are involved in a social form of sports participation (attending events, club membership or volunteering). This is at broadly the same level as in 2015, with each individual component unchanged since the previous survey
- A strong gradient exists in social participation, with those earning higher incomes and with higher education much more likely to participate socially. Additionally, those with a long-term illness or disability are less likely to participate in this way
- Decline in social participation among males aged under 35 – and in particular males aged 16 to 19. However, overall social participation among under-35s is unchanged due to a corresponding rise among females
- A decline in female involvement in volunteering means that males are more likely to volunteer than females (12.6% and 9.1% respectively). The decline among females is due primarily to fewer females aged 35 to 54 volunteering for sport (14.5%, a decline from 17.5%)
- The gender differential in volunteering roles remains consistent, with female involvement more likely to be in terms of providing transport. The decline in female involvement in volunteering means that fewer are providing transport than previously

### 5.1 Introduction

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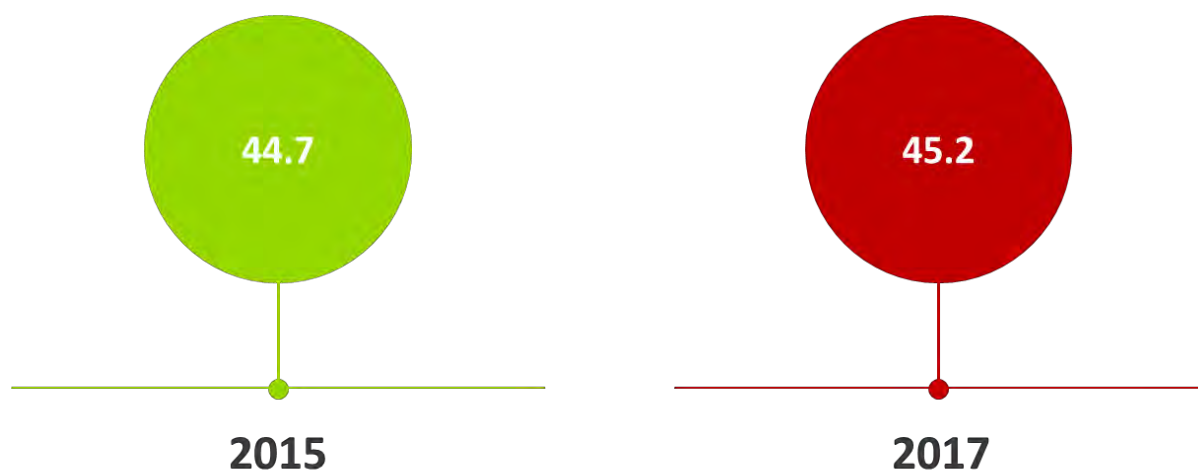
In order to measure participation in sport and physical activity in a broad sense, the ISM examines both active and social participation separately. It considers social participation in sport across three different contexts – volunteering, club membership and attendance at sports events – each of which plays a significant role in the development of sport in Ireland. Volunteers ensure that sporting infrastructure throughout Ireland is maintained, as well as being the coaches and enablers of both child and adult sport. Sports clubs are the bedrock of sport, providing an environment for sport to be played and developed. Attendance at sport events provides both social and financial capital to sport at local, national and international levels.

## 5.2 Overall social participation in sport

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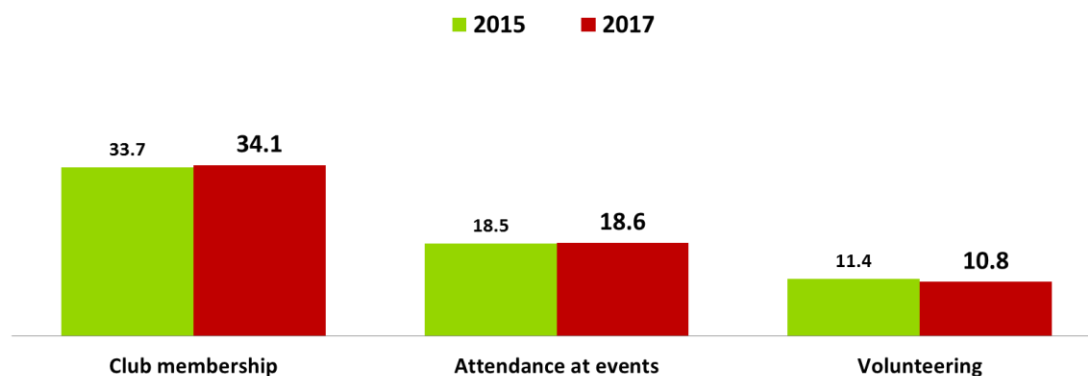
This wave of the survey finds that 45.2% of the overall population have a regular social involvement in sport. This is unchanged since the 2015 survey which identified that 44.7% were involved in sport in this way.

**Figure 5.1 Social participation in sport (%)**



Notably, many of those with a social involvement in sport are not regular sports participants - 40.1% of those who participated socially in sport in the past seven days did not actively participate in sport. This suggests that much of this crucial activity in the development and maintenance of sport is coming from people who do not actively play sports themselves. It also provides a further illustration of the role of sports in Irish life, with over 3 out of every 5 people in Ireland (61.1%) participating regularly in sport – either socially or actively.

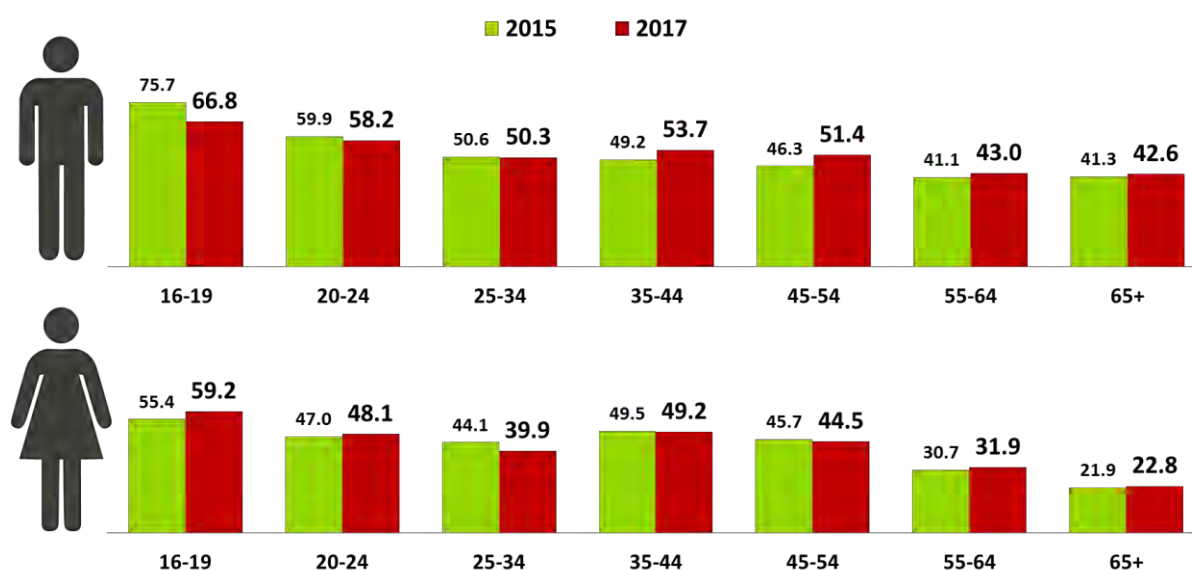
**Figure 5.2 Types of social participation in sport (%)**



The most common form of social involvement in sport is through club membership (34.1%), with 18.6% attending a sports event in the past week and 10.8% playing a voluntary role in sport during that time. Each of these is unchanged since the previous measurement in 2015.

Males are more likely than females to have a social involvement in sport (50.5% and 40.0% respectively). As with active participation in sport, the youngest age group (16 to 19 year olds) is more likely than any other group to have a form of social participation (63.1%), although unlike active participation there is no linear decline in social participation as people get older. Instead social participation declines until the 25 to 34 age group before rising again and subsequently declining among older age groups.

**Figure 5.3 Social participation in sport by gender and age (%)**

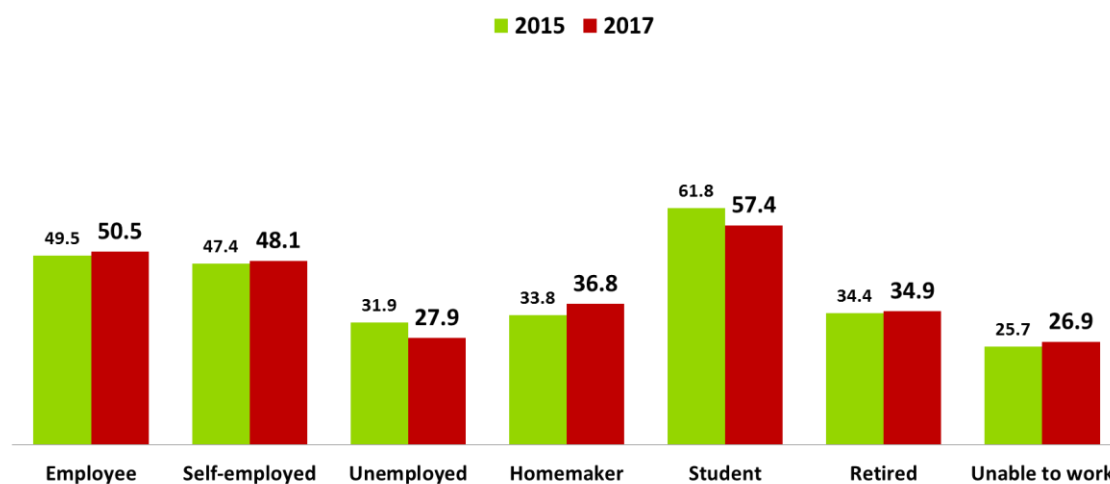


Life-stage is a key influencer of social participation, and those with children are more likely to have a social involvement in sport. The majority (53.5%) of those with a child aged under 18 participate in sport in this way, compared with 41.4% of those without children. The presence of children is a particularly strong factor for volunteering and attendance at events, with the likelihood that the activity is in relation to children’s sport.

While social participation remains unchanged at an overall level, there is evidence of changes among specific population groups. As with active sports participation there has been a decline in the proportion of young males (those aged under 25) participating in sport in a social context (from 66.7% in 2015 to 62.2% in 2017). Small increases in social participation among older men mean that social participation generally among males is unchanged since 2015. Similarly, a small increase in social participation among females aged under 25 means that social participation generally in the youngest age group remains unchanged.

The increased social participation among young females is particularly encouraging in the context of encouraging and developing female involvement in the management and administration of sport, and in turn creating new female leaders in sport.

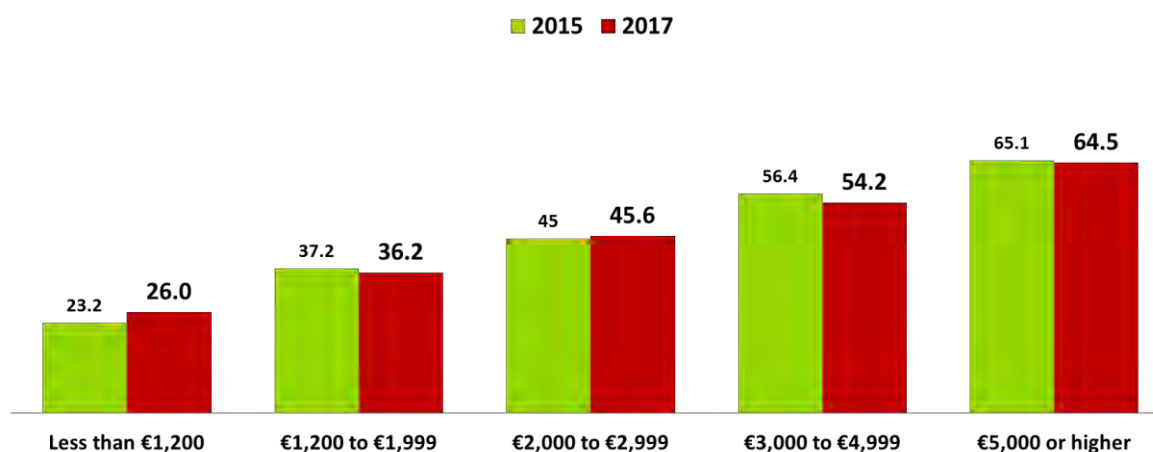
**Figure 5.4 Social participation in sport by employment status (%)**



Those in paid employment are more likely than other groups (with the exception of students) to be involved socially in sport. A decline in social participation among those who are unemployed (from 31.9% in 2015 to 27.9% in 2017) means that the gap between employed and unemployed people has widened in this respect. It is difficult to identify the exact nature of the decline among unemployed people, although the composition of this group has changed considerably in recent years as many return to employment as the economy recovers.

Analysis of social participation by income indicates a sharp gradient in respect of those on higher incomes being much more likely than lower earners to be involved socially in sport. This gradient is consistent over time, and is mirrored somewhat across related dimensions including education, with those with higher levels of education more likely to participate socially in sport than those with lower levels of education.

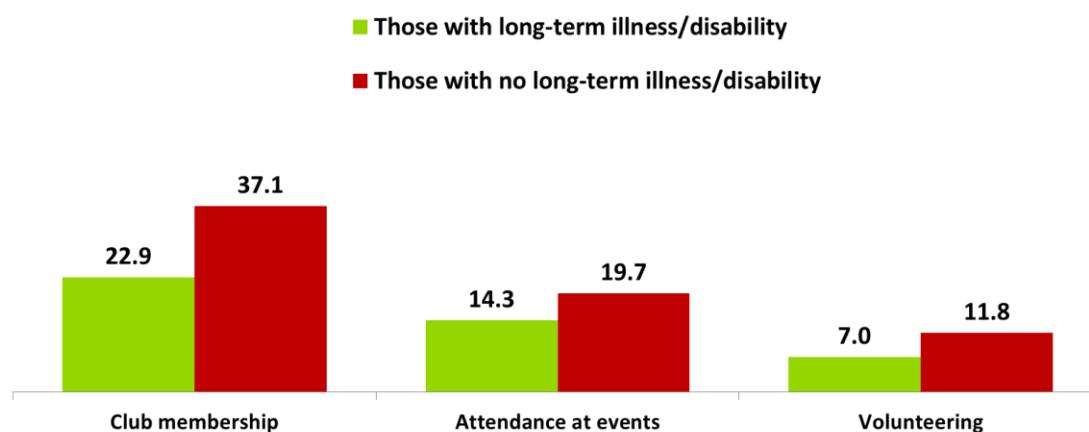
**Figure 5.5 Social participation by income (%)**



As with other forms of participation in sports and physical activity, those with a long term illness or disability are less likely to participate in sport socially. Just under a third (32.3%) of this group are involved in sport in this way, compared with almost half (48.6%) of other individuals. This difference is consistent across all types of social participation and further illustrates the challenges in ensuring full participation in sport for those with long term illnesses and disabilities.



**Figure 5.6 Social participation among those with a long-term illness or disability (%)**



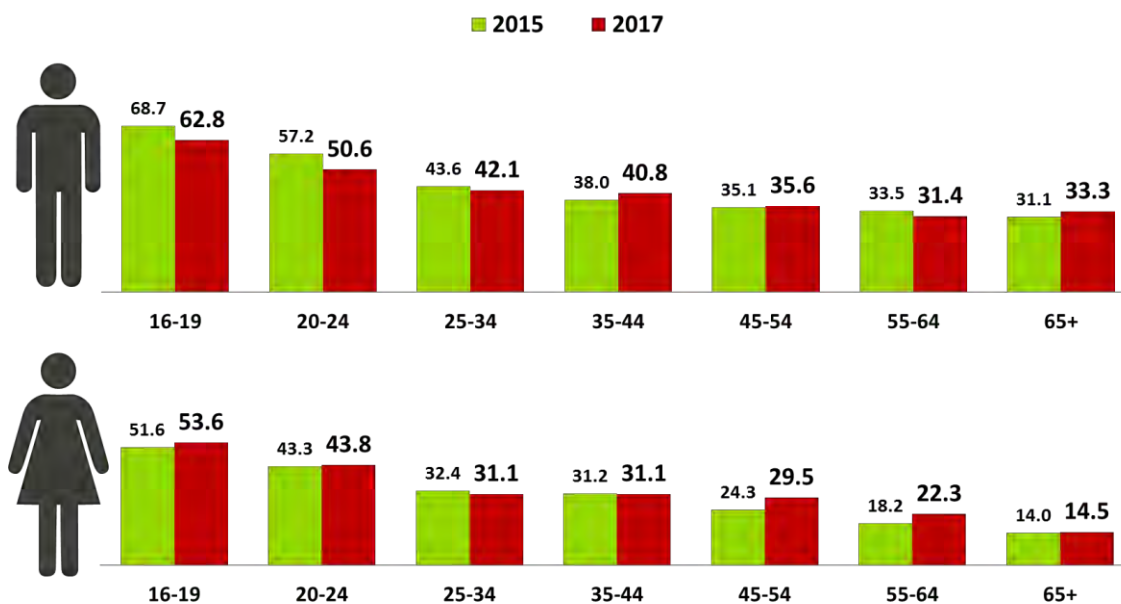
Various other differences exist across other social factors, although these are consistent with those measured in the previous survey wave. Of particular relevance to the role of sport in integrating communities, those who identify themselves as Irish are more likely than those identifying with another nationality to participate socially in sport (46.6% and 31.2% respectively).

### 5.3 Club membership

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Just over a third (34.1%) of adults in Ireland are members of a sports club. As would be expected, membership of a sports club is closely aligned with participation in sport, with just over two-thirds (67.0%) of club members participating in sport in the past week compared to less than one third (30.6%) of non-club members. However, a lower proportion (53.1%) of sports participants are club members, highlighting the extent of sports participation that happens outside of the club environment.

Figure 5.7 Club membership by gender and age (%)

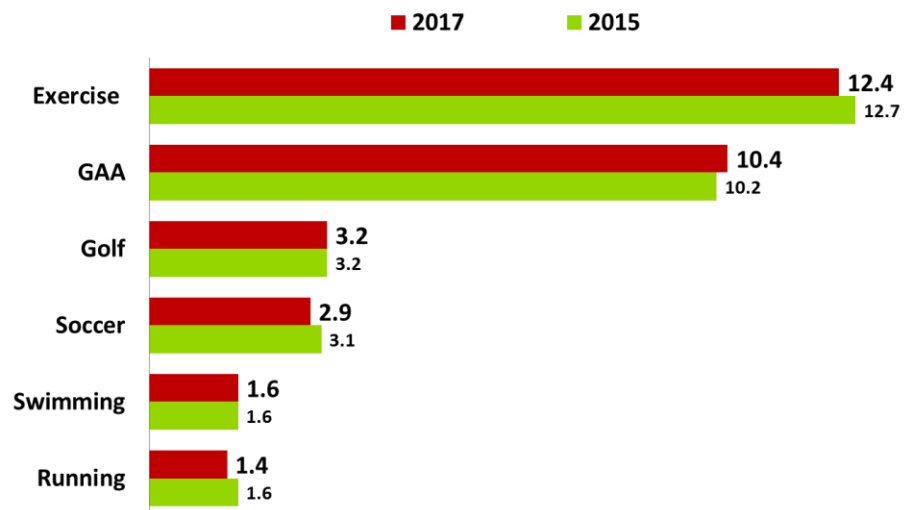


Males are more likely than females to be members of a sports club (39.6% and 28.8% respectively), and those who are younger are more likely to be club members than those who are older. As with active participation in sport, there has been a decline in club membership among younger men. Just over half (56.3%) of men aged 16 to 24 are currently members of a club – a decline from 62.1% in 2015. A slight increase in club membership among females, which is spread by the youngest and older age groups, has resulted in a narrowing of the gender gap in membership. In 2015, the gap was 12.6% whereas in 2017 it stands at 10.8%.

Three-quarters (74.8%) of club members are members of one club, with the remainder being members of multiple clubs. Those more likely to be members of a club – males and those who are younger – are also more likely to be members of multiple clubs.

A similar social gradient to social participation overall also exists in terms of club membership, with those in paid employment, those on higher incomes, and those with higher levels of education more likely to be members of a sports club.

Figure 5.8 Type of club membership (%)

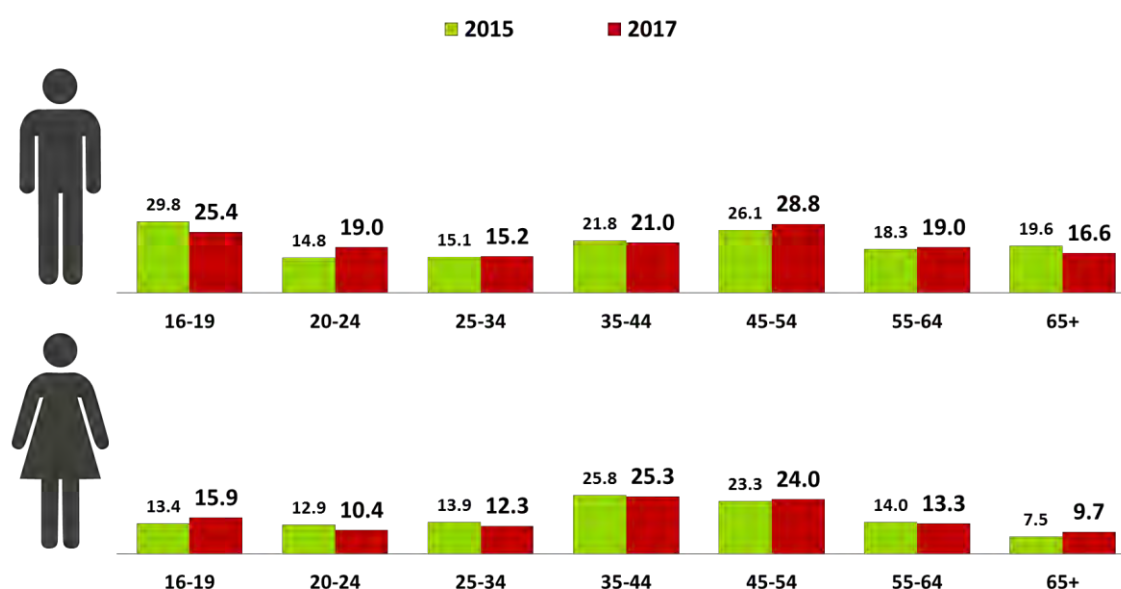


Club membership continues to be dominated by gyms and GAA which account for about two in every three club members among adults. Overall the picture is one of stability with all of the most popular membership sports retaining similar membership levels to those reported in 2015. A particular mention is made here of running which has seen significantly reduced numbers of active participants which is not reflected in club membership levels (the small change here is well within the margin of error). This suggests that the decline in running is driven by a drop among runners not associated with running clubs.

## 5.4 Attending a sports event

Just under a fifth (18.5%) of the population attended a sports event in the previous seven days. The definition used for sports events is deliberately broad, and will include both elite level and amateur sports, as well as both adult and children's sports.

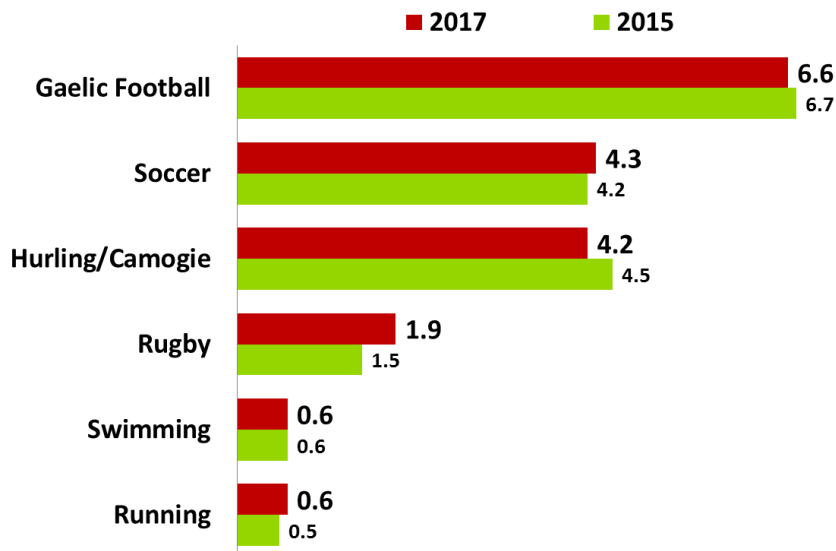
**Figure 5.9 Attendance at a sports event by gender and age (%)**



Males are more likely to attend sports events than females (20.5% and 16.7% respectively), and as with social participation generally the youngest age group (16 to 19 year olds) and those aged 35 to 54 are most likely to attend a sporting event. Females aged 35 to 54 are as likely to attend a sports event as males of the same age (24.7% and 24.6% respectively). While in some respects this may seem counterintuitive as females generally are less likely to attend sports events, however is likely due to mothers attending children's sporting events.

Analysis of the types of sports being attended finds higher attendance at events involving team sports (15.7%) than individual sports (3.7%). Gaelic football is the most popular form of sports event (6.6%), with soccer and hurling/camogie being attended by similar proportions (4.3% and 4.2% respectively).

Figure 5.10 Type of event attended (%)



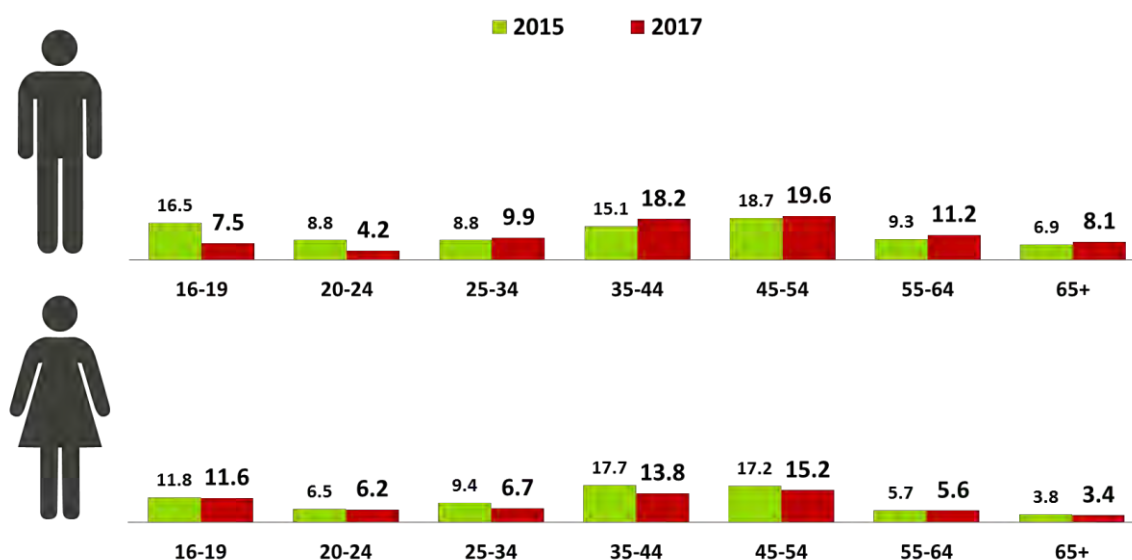
In addition to having high attendance of sports events generally, females aged 35 to 54 are also more likely to attend multiple events. Two-fifths (40.9%) of this group have attended multiple events in the past week, compared with 31.6% overall. Their attendance at team based sports events (19.8%) is higher than the population generally, with high levels of attendance at gaelic football and hurling/camogie events (8.5% and 6.4% respectively).

## 5.5 Volunteering for sport

The role of volunteers in sport is particularly important, and is vital to the basic running of sport and maintenance of sporting structures. Every sports club and event relies on volunteers, and the role of volunteers extends more widely in terms of providing transport and kit maintenance for children participating in sport.

The 2017 study identifies that 10.8% regularly volunteer for sport. This is broadly the same level as recorded on the 2015 study.

**Figure 5.11 Volunteering by gender and age (%)**



Males are more likely to volunteer for sports than females (12.6% and 9.1% respectively). Analysis by demographic subgroups finds a slight decline in volunteering among females (from 10.8%), which is centred on females aged 35 to 54. Females in this age group remain more likely than females in other age groups - as well as men in most age groups - to volunteer for sports. However, this decline may give cause for concern given their particular role in facilitating children's sports.

Males in the youngest age groups are also less likely to volunteer for sport than in 2015. There has been a decline from 12.1% to 5.8% in the proportion of males aged under 25 that are volunteering for sport. This decline is aligned with lower levels of involvement in sport generally – both in active and other social forms of participation. It is particularly concerning given that this group will provide many of the leaders in sports administration and management in the future and re-engaging this group will need to be a key priority.

Previous reports have highlighted the gender differential in terms of volunteer roles played – with females more likely to have roles that involve provision of transport or supervision, and males more likely to play coaching or administrative roles. While this remains the case, there has been a notable decline in the proportion of females whose role involves the provision of transport, perhaps indicating the reason for the decline in female volunteering is due to females being less likely to provide transport for sport. In contrast, some encouragement can be taken from the fact that women’s involvement in key influencing roles in clubs (coach and club official) has increased since 2015 – even if in the case of coaching there are still far fewer female than male coaches.

**Figure 5.12 Types of volunteering role – by gender (%)**

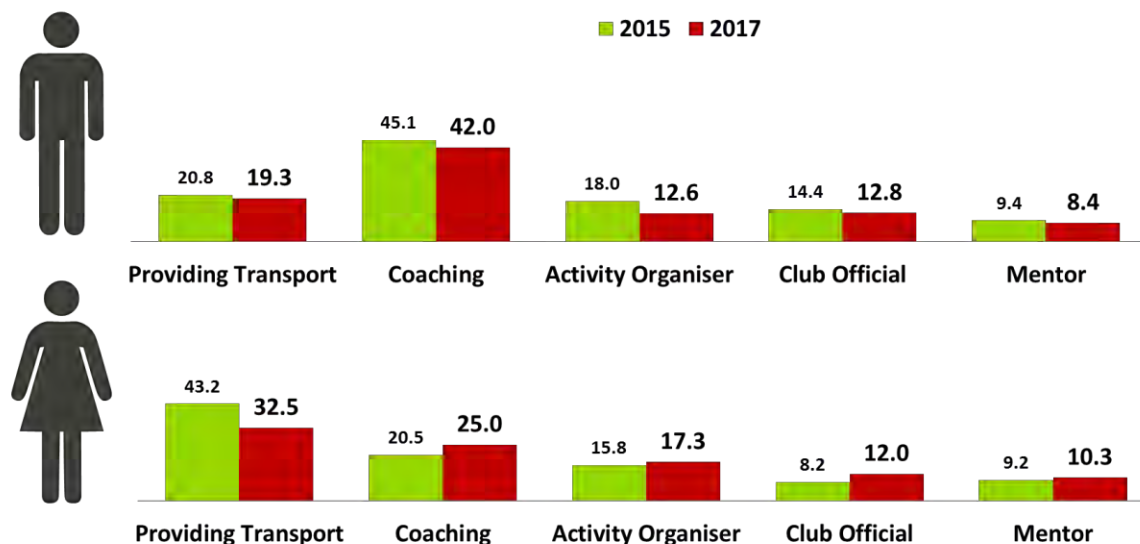
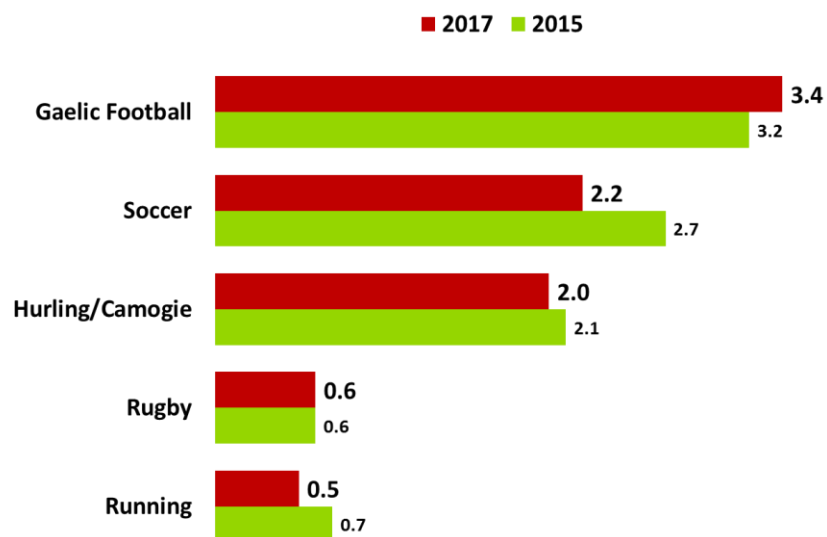
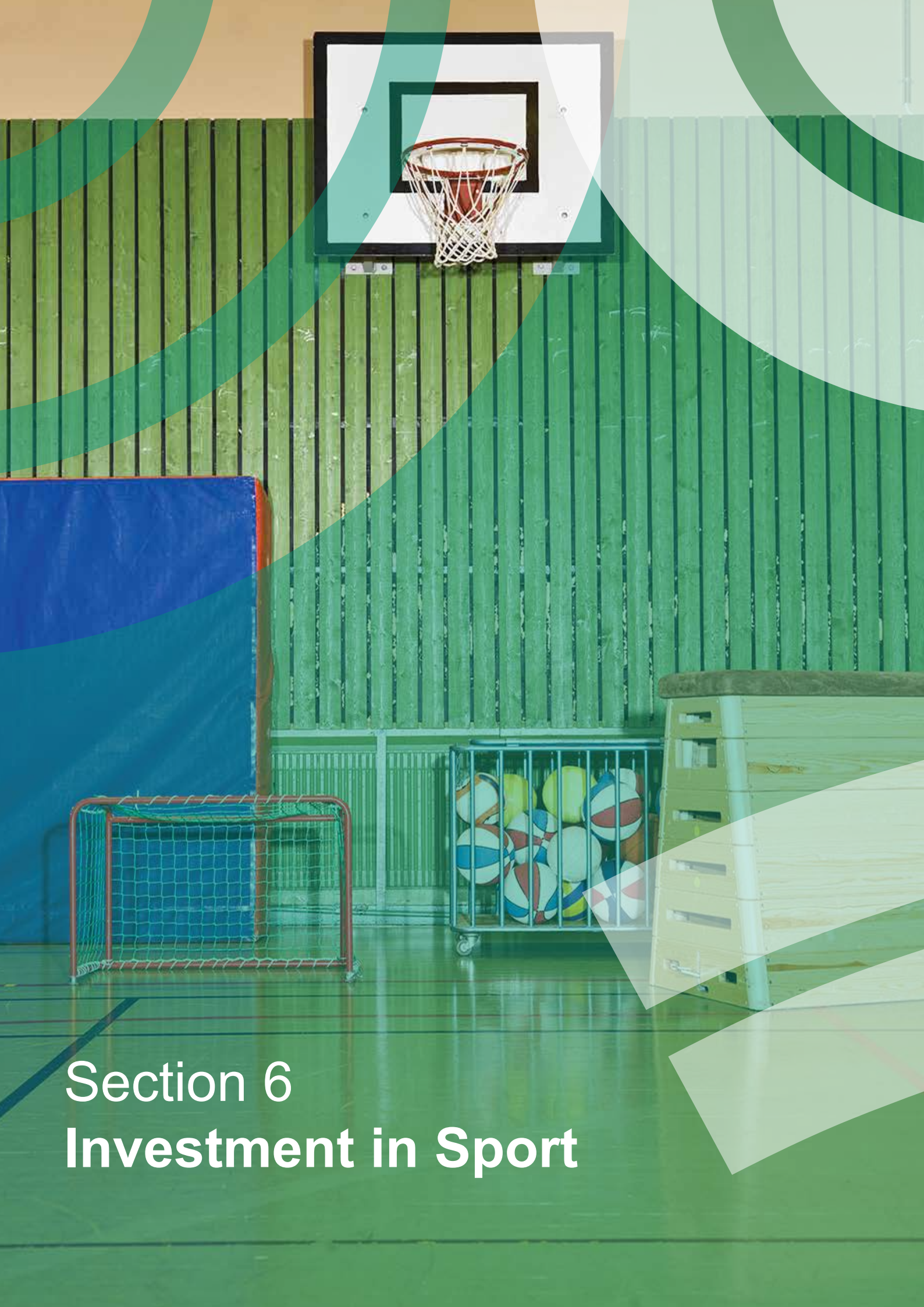


Figure 5.13 Types of sport volunteered for (%)



The types of sport that volunteers are involved in closely reflect the most popular sports being attended. A higher proportion volunteer for team sports (8.1%) than individual sports (3.4%), with gaelic football, soccer and hurling/camogie the three sports most commonly volunteered for.





# Section 6 Investment in Sport

## 6. INVESTMENT IN SPORT

- Almost 9 out of 10 (86%) feel that there are more opportunities now to participate in sport than there were 10 years ago. However, those living in lower income households are slightly less likely to perceive this than those in higher income households
- General public suggest that, in developing sport in Ireland, the government should place a greater focus on general participation rather than elite sports. Equally, a greater focus should be placed on encouraging those who are inactive to become more active (rather than those already active to become more active), and a greater focus on facilities rather than initiatives to encourage more activity
- Across different groups in society, policies to increase activity levels should focus on children and young people. A greater responsibility for this lies with parents rather than schools
- Just under half (44%) feel that women have fewer opportunities than men to participate in sport. This is higher among women (49%), and older women (those aged 45 and older: 55%) in particular
- Over two-thirds (68%) feel that women have fewer opportunities than men to be involved in the management and administration of sport

### 6.1 Introduction

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The past number of years has seen considerable investment in sport and physical activity in Ireland. This investment has seen the development of numerous sports facilities, as well as increased spending on sports programmes, both at grassroots and elite levels. Continued investment into the future is necessary in order to promote the benefits of sport to encourage wider participation, as well as to provide facilities and resources for those who wish to participate.

In this section a number of aspects relating to investment in sport are considered. This includes an understanding of public priorities for investment. It also focuses on the specific requirements of two particular groups – children, in terms of encouraging activity from an early age; and females, in respect of the gender gap that exists in physical and social participation in sport.

## 6.2 Attitudes towards investment in sport

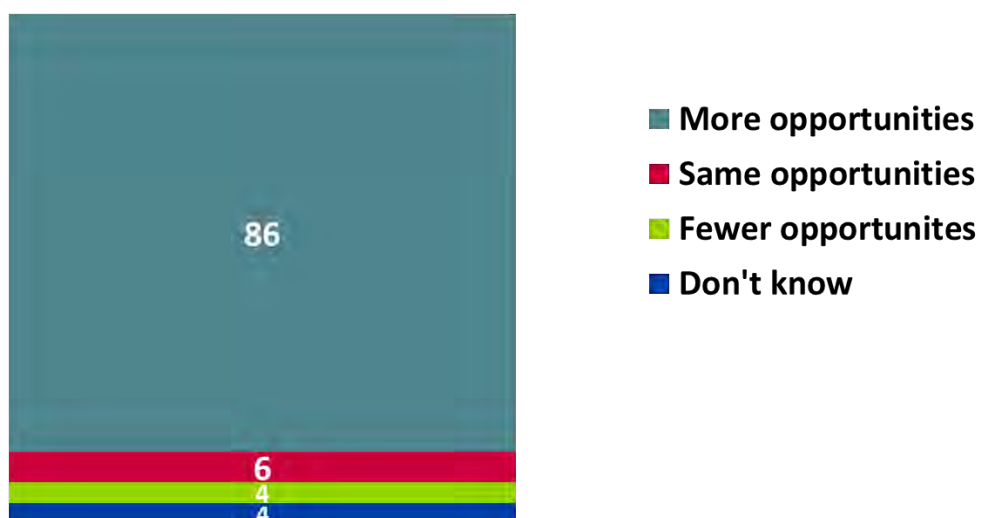
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Over one wave of the ISM (January 2017), a series of questions were asked in relation to investment in sport. It firstly looked at perceived opportunities to participate in sport, and subsequently asked about a series of investment priorities requesting respondents to identify which one of a pair of priorities the government should place greater focus on. While the binary measurement simplifies the investment choice, it provides an indication of where public preferences lie in terms of Government investment in sport.

The initial question identifies that a considerable majority feel that the opportunities to participate in sport have increased over the past 10 years. 86% identify that there are now more opportunities to participate in sport, with 4% suggesting there are fewer and 6% suggesting that the opportunities are the same as they were 10 years ago. These opportunities are a result of a variety of factors, including the significant investment in sport over this time.

In this respect it is noted that since 2007, over €1.3 billion (excluding funding under the Horse and Greyhound Fund) has been invested in sport through the Department of Sport for the development of sports facilities such as playing pitches, floodlights, sports halls, swimming pools and the National Sports Campus, along with funding for Sport Ireland (and previously Irish Sports Council) for its suite of programmes covering high performance, sports administration, participation and anti-doping.

**Figure 6.1 – Opportunities to participate in sport now compared to 10 years ago (%)**



Examining perceptions of changes in opportunities across different socio-demographic groups shows that there is a high level of consistency in this strongly positive view. Over 80% of all gender and age groups indicate that there are more opportunities to participate than there were 10 years ago, as do both those living in urban and rural areas. Equally there is no divergence in views between those who participate in sport and those who do not, as well as between those who are highly active and those who are sedentary.

However, some differences exist in respect of household income. Those living in lower income households (under €2,000 per month) are less likely than those in higher income households (€2,000 or greater per month) to consider that there are more opportunities to participate in sport than there were 10 years ago. While there is still a large majority of those in lower income households suggesting that there are more opportunities than previously, it may indicate that the lower income groups are less likely to be experiencing increased opportunity.

**Figure 6.2 – Opportunities to participate in sport now compared to 10 years ago (by net monthly household income) (%)**



In terms of current investment priorities, respondents' views were sought about a series of four pairs of priorities and which they felt the government should place a greater focus on. These pairs were: high performance versus participation among the general population, reducing inactivity or increasing activity, investing in facilities or initiatives; and investing in training and coaching or in sports management activities.

**Figure 6.3 – Where government should place focus to ensure continued development of sport (%)**



A clear message from this line of investigation is that there is a strong preference among the general population that sports funding and policies should place a particular focus on participation (rather than professional and high performance sport), and on encouraging those who are inactive to become active (rather than encouraging those who are already active to become more active). As to how this objective should be achieved there is marginal preference for investing in facilities over programmes/initiatives and a stronger preference for investing in training/coaching over sports management initiatives.

While there is widespread agreement with the focus on participation, some differences exist by education and income. For example, those who left school before completing their Leaving Certificate are less likely to prioritise a focus on general participation (79%) and encouraging those who are inactive to become active (72%). Given that lower levels of education and income are associated with lower levels of sports participation generally the findings here may be an indication of a lower importance placed on sport by these groups.

The preference of facilities to encourage people to participate more (55%) over initiatives to encourage people to participate more (39%) suggests that the public feel that both types of investment are important to encourage greater participation throughout the population. Across gender, most age groups, education and income groups similar preferences for facilities were expressed.

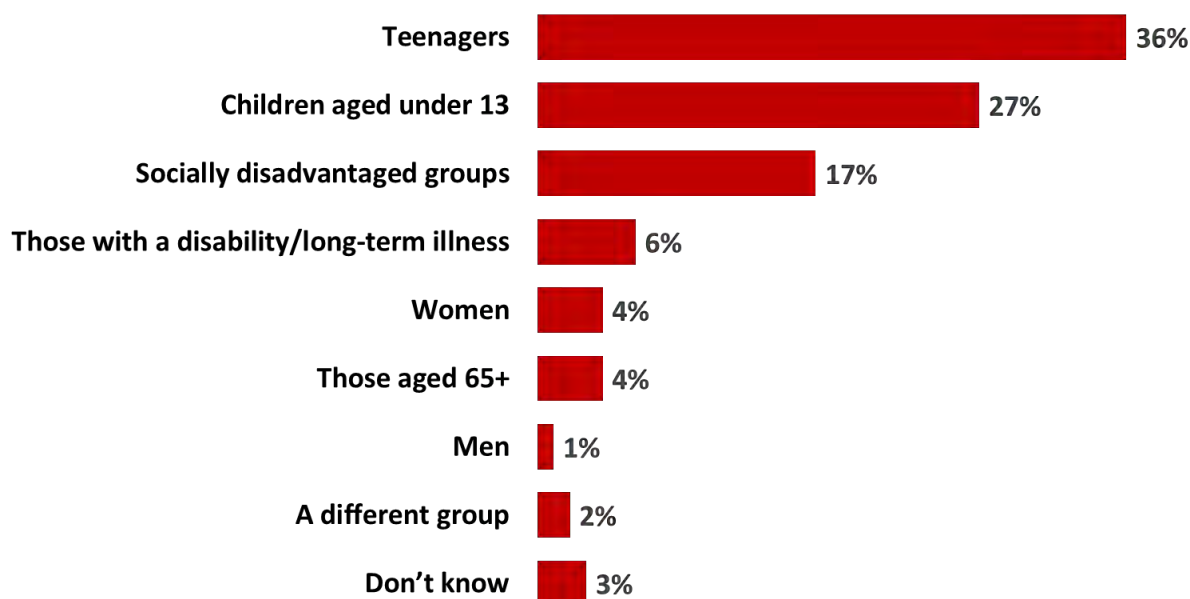
Previous waves of the ISM have identified the importance of facilities in developing sports participation across the population. The 2015 study found that just under a third (30%) of those taking up sport did so through a local sports facility, with approximately a quarter (26%) taking up the sport through a sports club or organisation. It is possible to participate in many sports away from facilities in clubs, so the important roles of facilities are notable in this respect.

However, it is important in this context to note that facilities, or a lack of, are not a barrier to participation among non-participants in sport. For example, research conducted by the Central Statistics Office in 2013 identified that injury/illness, a lack of time, a lack of motivation and age feature more strongly than a lack of facilities in terms of barriers preventing participation. In that study, less than 1% of non-participants identified a lack of facilities as being a barrier to participation. As such, increasing participation further may need to address other factors alongside investment in facilities.

### 6.3 Prioritising initiatives among different population groups

This survey module also asked survey participants which among a number of different groups in the population they believed the Government should prioritise in its efforts to increase participation levels in sport and physical activity.

**Figure 6.4 – Group that should be prioritised to increase participation levels in sport and physical activity (%)**



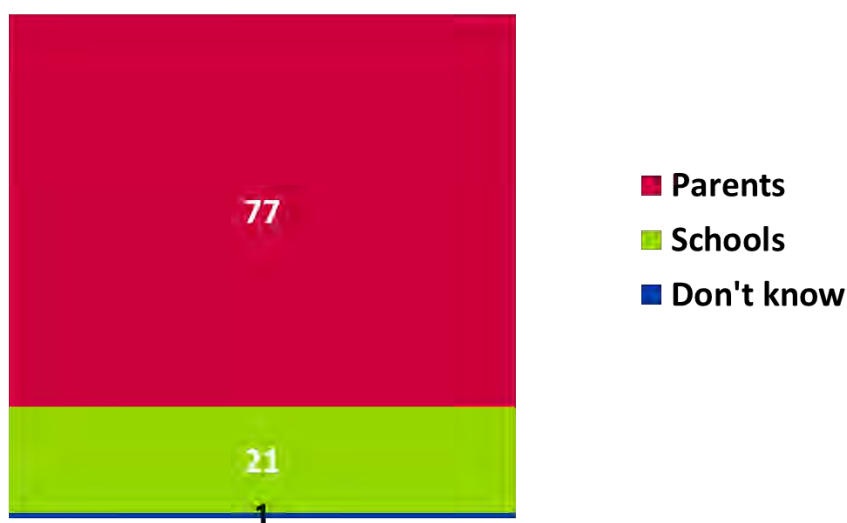
The majority (64%) identified that young people should be prioritised with 36% identifying teenagers and 27% identifying children aged under 13. The majority across all key population groups identified that the focus should be put on children, including those with and without children of their own (67% and 62% respectively).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, females, those aged over 65 and those with a long-term illness or disability were all more likely than others to prioritise their own group. However, in all cases these groups prioritised children over their own group.

Approximately 1 in 6 (17%) identified that a greater focus should be put on socially disadvantaged groups. No differences exist across the population in this respect, with similar proportions of higher and lower income groups prioritising socially disadvantaged groups.

When asked whether schools or parents have the greater responsibility for encouraging children to become more active, approximately three-quarters (77%) identified that parents have a greater responsibility. This view is held equally by parents and non-parents alike, with 79% and 76% respectively suggesting that parents have the greater responsibility.

**Figure 6.5 – Responsibility for encouraging children to become more active (%)**



Encouragingly, results from the 2015 study identified that a high proportion of parents participate in sport with their children. Almost three quarters (74%) do so at least once a week (in either organised or informal settings), and a further 13% doing so at least once a month. Additionally, just over 4 in 10 (42%) attend a sporting event at least once a week in which their child is participating. This suggests that parents are, in the main, taking responsibility for the role that the public expects of them in relation to encouraging their children to be active.

## 6.4 Women in sport

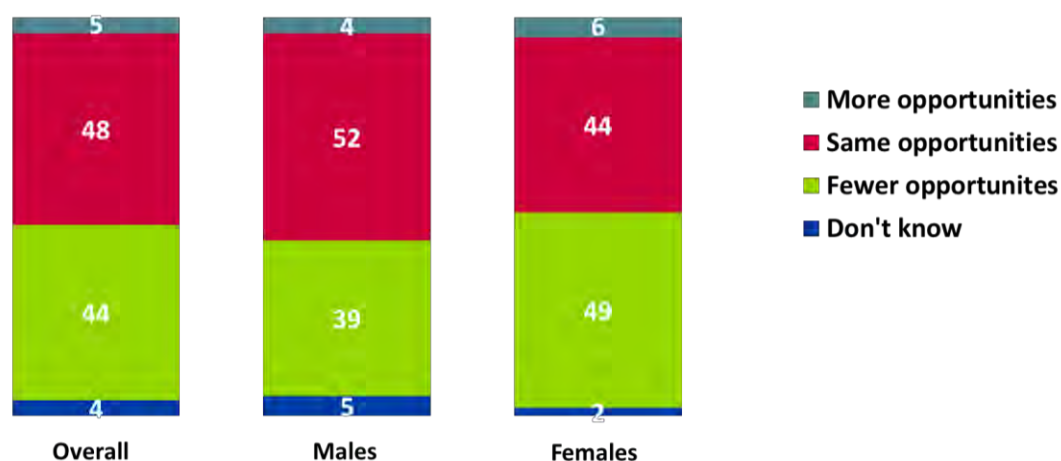
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As presented earlier in this report, female participation in sport – both active and social – is lower than participation among males. While the gender gap in active participation is the lowest it has been since the ISM was introduced, eliminating it remains a priority.

When asked about prioritisation of government initiatives to increase participation levels in sport, only 4% identify women as the one group that should be prioritised. While the proportion of females selecting this is higher than males it remains low (6% and 2% respectively). Both genders are more likely to prioritise children and those who are socially disadvantaged in this respect than they are to prioritise women.

However, there is a general recognition that women face challenges in terms of their active and social participation in sport. Just over 2 out of every 5 people (44%) indicate that women have fewer opportunities to participate in sport than men, while only 5% feel they have more opportunities. This means that nine times as many people think that women have fewer opportunities to participate in sport than men have.

**Figure 6.6 – Opportunities for women to participate in sport compared to men (%)**

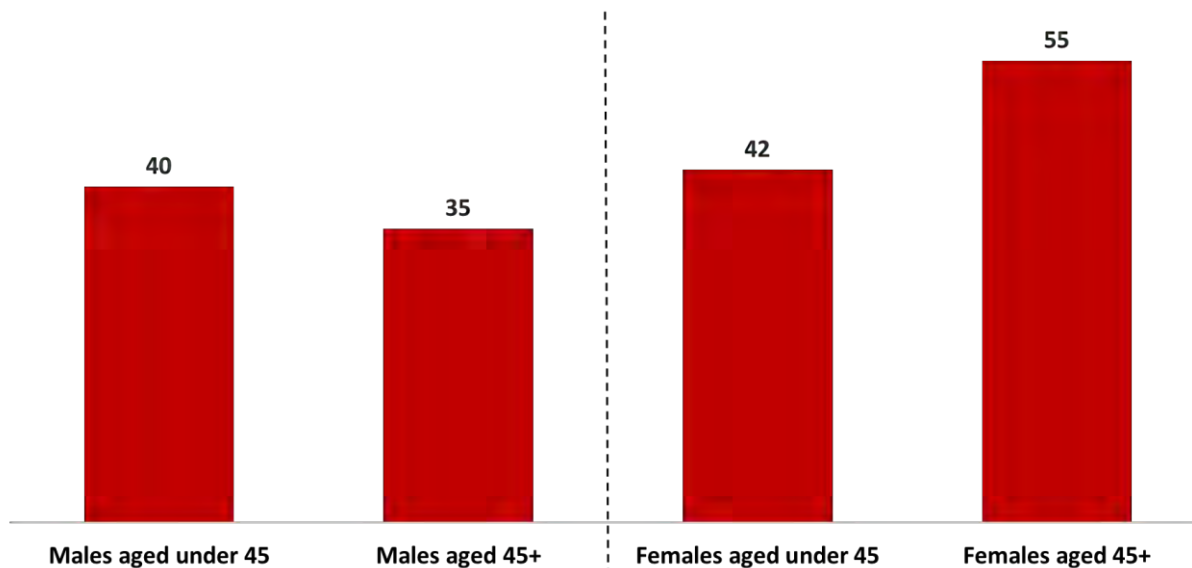


A notable difference exists between the genders in this respect with 49% of females suggesting that women have fewer opportunities, compared with 37% of men, with older females accounting for much of this difference. While a majority (55%) of women aged 45 and older believe that women have fewer opportunities than men, this declines to 42% of women younger than this. No similar difference exists among males, with similar proportions of both age groups (under 45: 40%; 45 and older: 35%) suggesting that women have fewer opportunities.

Related to this is that a slightly higher proportion of women than men (87% and 84% respectively) believe that there are more opportunities to participate in sport than there were 10 years ago. Considering the narrowing gender gap in participation suggests that while challenges remain, gender differences in sport are improving – both in terms of the perception and the reality.



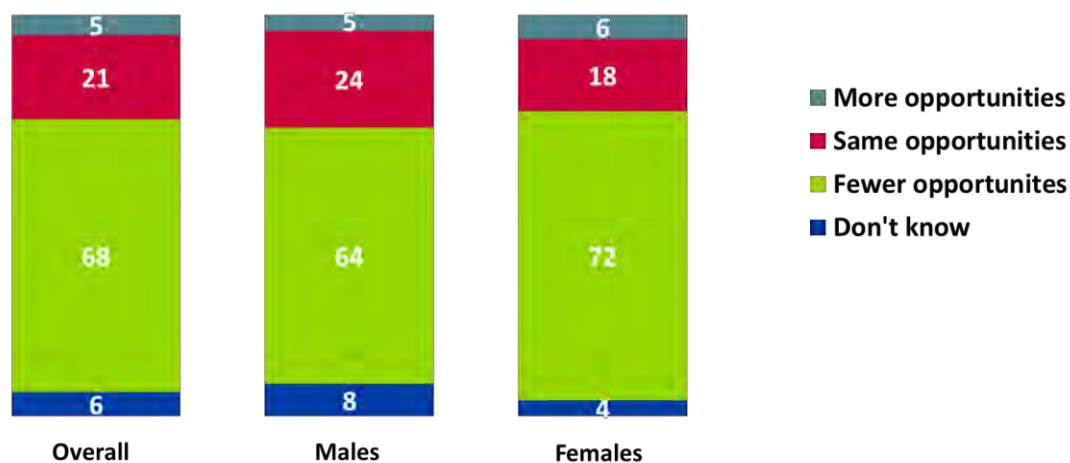
**Figure 6.7 – Percentage indicating women have fewer opportunities than men to participate in sport (%)**



It may be the case that the increased focus on female sport in recent times may be more noticeable among younger females, and similarly this group may be availing of greater diversity in opportunities to participate in sport. This is encouraging and may be an indication of progress – in particular in the context of a narrowing gender gap in sports participation.

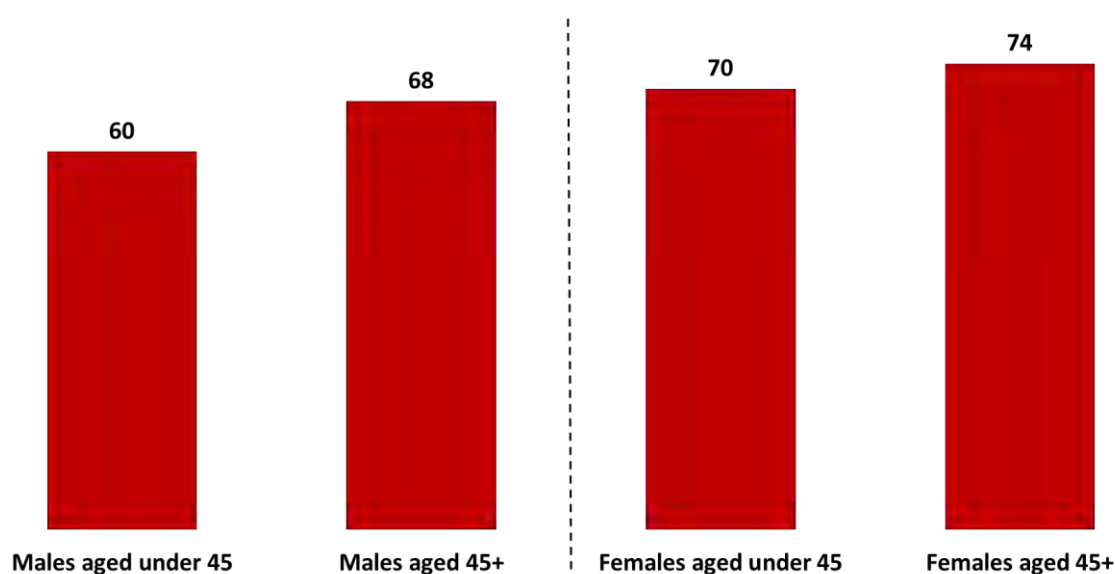
However, there remains a high proportion who do not feel that women have equal opportunity to participate in sport. Of particular note is the high proportion of older women who feel this to be the case, and may suggest that barriers (either real or perceived) exist to that particular group participating in sport.

**Figure 6.8 – Extent of opportunities for women to be involved in management and administration of sport compared to men (%)**

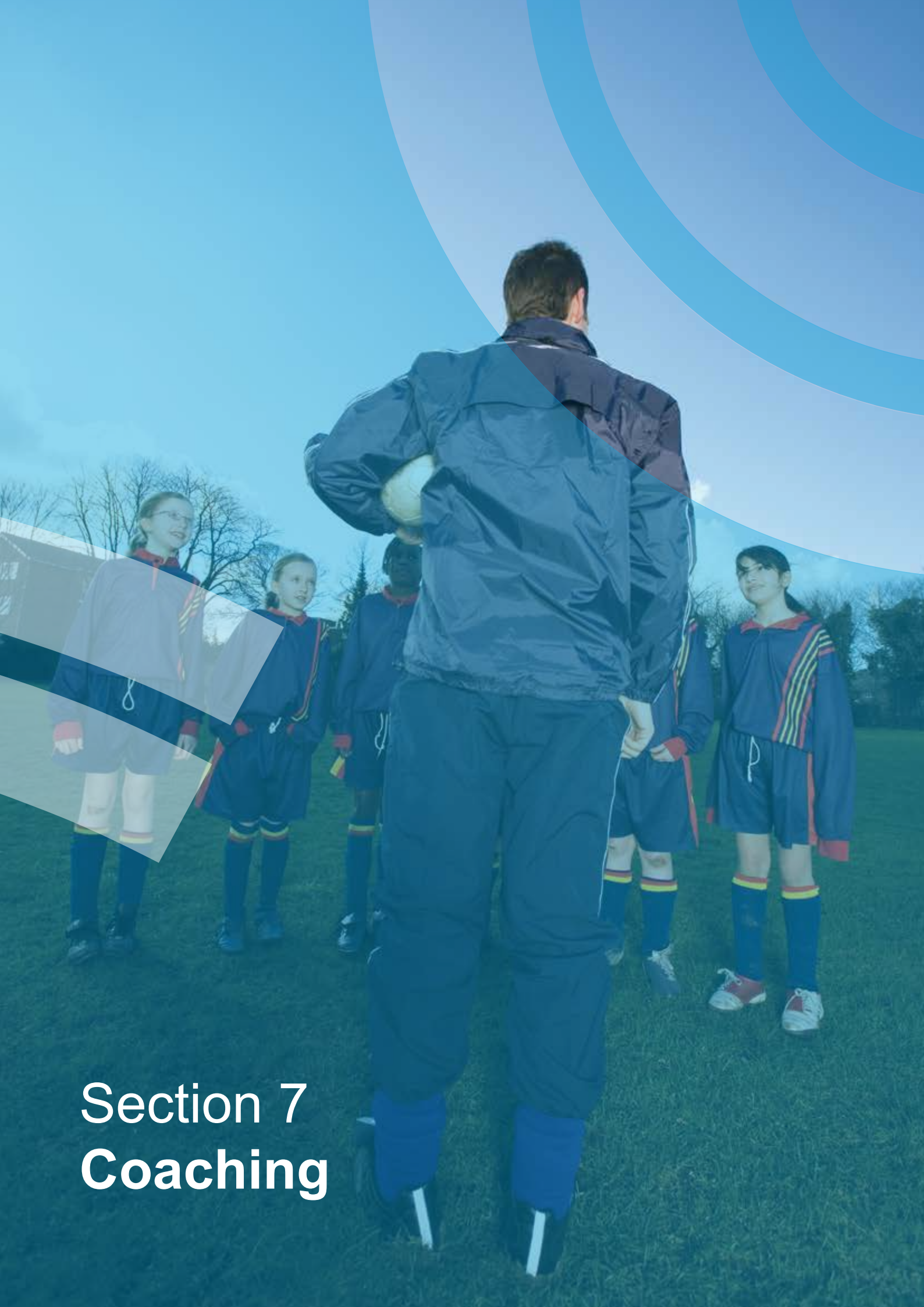


A similar question was asked about opportunities to be involved in the management and administration of sport. Here, over two-thirds (68%) overall perceive that women have fewer opportunities than men in this respect. The difference between the genders is not as strong as that for active participation in sport with 72% of females suggesting that women have fewer opportunities to participate, compared with 64% of males. Again, older females are more likely than younger females to suggest that women have fewer opportunities than men to be involved in the management and administration of sport (aged 45 and older: 76%, aged under 45: 69%).

**Figure 6.9 – Percentage indicating women have fewer opportunities than men to be involved in the management and administration of sport (%)**



This suggests that the public perception is that women have fewer opportunities to be involved in the management/administration of sport than they do to be involved in active participation. A further question was asked to respondents in respect of a proposal that was suggested at the time that a gender quota should be introduced so that at least 30% of positions on the boards of national sporting organisations would be filled by women. Respondents saw some merit to this proposal, with 60% indicating that it would have a positive influence on the administration of sport in Ireland, whereas only 5% indicated that it would have a negative influence. A higher proportion of women (63%) than men (55%) indicated that it would have a positive influence. This suggests that some appetite exists for proactive steps to be taken to redress the gender differential that exists.



# Section 7 Coaching

## 7. COACHING/TRAINING

- The majority (57%) of those participating in sport recently received coaching or training for the sport that they participate in
- Those participating in team events are more likely than those participating in individual events to receive coaching (71% and 54% respectively). Similarly, those who are members of a club are more likely than non-members to have received coaching (64% and 47% respectively)
- Most of those participating in coaching or training do so at a location convenient to where they are based, with 70% travelling less than 20 minutes to attend coaching/training
- A significant majority are satisfied with the quality of coaching received over the past six months (91%), with most (84%) saying that structured training is important to their continued participation in that sport
- A fifth (20%) have participated in a competitive event related to their sport in the past month

### 7.1 Introduction

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The reasons for participating in sport vary considerably, with participants having various motivations for becoming involved in sport and for staying involved. Coaching and structured training are a key aspect of sport in terms of developing skills, creating teams and improving the standard in sport.

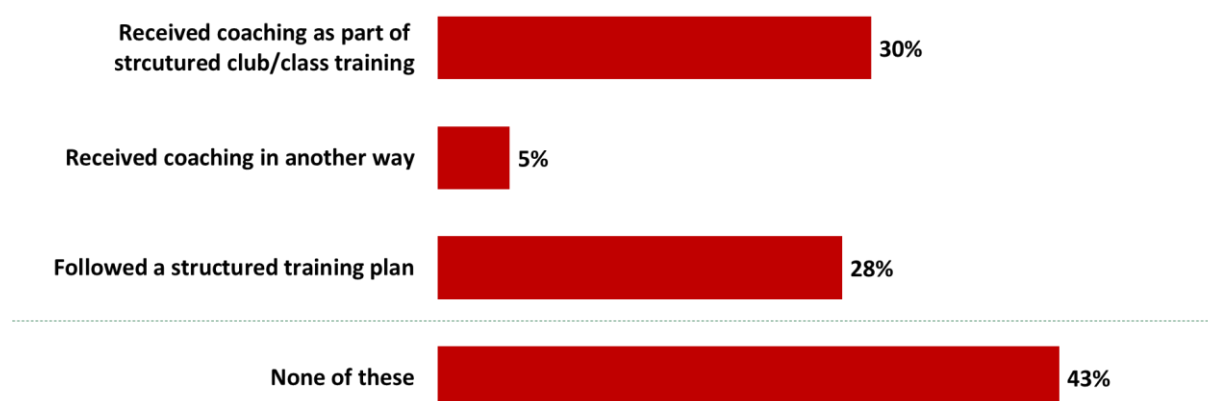
In order to understand the role of coaching/training, a survey module relating to various aspects of this was included for two survey waves during 2017. This module covered a variety of aspects relating to participation in coaching/training, motivations for participating/not participating in coaching/training, as well as the role of coaching and training in an individual's sports involvement. It also asked about participation in competitive events including any races, leagues or other forms of competition.

## 7.2 Participation in coaching/training

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The majority (57%) of those participating in sport received coaching or training over the past month. Just under a third (30%) received coaching as part of structured club or class training, with a similar proportion (28%) having followed a structured training plan. Five percent received coaching in another way.

**Figure 7.1 Participation in coaching/training (% - multiple answers possible)**



Those participating in team events are more likely to have participated in coaching or training (71%), with 54% of those participating in sports typically played on an individual basis having received coaching or training. Those participating in individual sports are as likely to have followed a structured training plan as they are to have participated in structured club or class training (29% and 26% respectively), while those participating in team sports are more likely to have participated in structured club or class training (59% versus 20% who followed a structured training plan). These differences are reflective of the nature of each type of sport, with many of those participating in individual sports doing so away from a structured group environment and instead following an individual training plan.

Differences in participation in coaching/training also exist by various other factors. Females are more likely than males to participate in coaching/training, with 63% having done so compared with 51% of males. Females are more likely than males to have received structured club or class training (38% and 23% respectively), while incidence of following a structured training plan is broadly the same among both genders (26% and 29% respectively). The difference may be reflective of the nature of the sports that are more likely to be participated in by females. For example, the majority of participants in personal exercise (including pilates

and yoga) are female, and these are the activities where incidence of coaching/training is highest.

Those who are younger are also more likely than those who are older to receive coaching or training. Almost three-quarters (72%) of those aged under 35 received coaching/training, compared with 47% of those older than this. Again, this may be reflective of the types of sports being participated in by younger people (including competitive team-based sports) and their motivations for participating in sport.

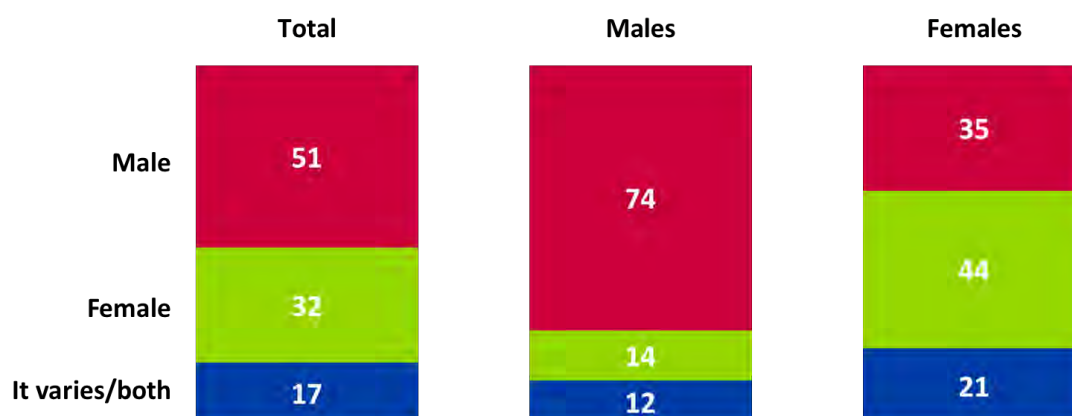
A further difference exists in terms of whether or not an individual is a member of a sports club. Almost two-thirds (64%) of club members participating in sports have received coaching or training recently. This compares to less than half (47%) of non-members. This is likely a function both in terms of motivation for joining a club, as well as having greater access to training and coaching through the club structure.

### 7.3 Delivery of coaching

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As indicated by the findings relating to volunteer roles in sport, coaching is more likely to be delivered by a male than a female. Just over half (51%) say that their coach is male, with 32% saying their coach is female, and the remainder (17%) saying that it varies and they have both male and female coaches. Males are more likely than females to have a coach that is male (74% and 35% respectively). Just under half (44%) of females have a coach that is also female. However, it may be likely that this is a function of the sport being participated in, with female coaches more common among sports typically played on an individual basis (41%).

**Figure 7.2 Gender of coach (%)**



Two other factors explored in the delivery of coaching is the distance travelled to coaching sessions and the usage of technology in the delivery of coaching. Just under a third (31%) indicated that their coach used technology when providing coaching, with usage of technology more common in individual sports than team sports (38% and 8% respectively). In terms of distance travelled to coaching, most (70%) are travelling for less than 20 minutes, with an average journey time of 15 minutes.

## 7.4 Motivations for participating in coaching

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Those participating in coaching or training suggest that the coaching they receive is an important part of their participation in sport. Over four out of every five (84%) participating in sport say that the structured training is important to their continued participation, with very few (3%) suggesting that it is not important.

**Figure 7.3 Motivations for participating in coaching (%)**



This is further highlighted in the reasons for participating in structured training, with the top three reasons being that the coach encourages them to do more or push harder (36%), wanting coaching in order to get better at the sport (28%), and coaching providing a group/team environment (27%). A fifth (21%) highlighted the role of a coach in motivating them to come back. Notably, the proportion identifying that the reason for participating in structured training is because the coach encourages them to come back is higher for those participating in individual sports (26%) than team sports (8%). It is also higher for females than males (28% and 11% respectively).

Those not participating in coaching identify a variety of reasons for not taking part in sport in this way, with 22% saying that they prefer to just participate on their own without others. Most of the main reasons for not participating in coaching relate to the individual's reasons for participating in sport rather than any particular barriers to accessing training, or any shortcomings in the training that is available. The reasons given for not participating in training are the same for both genders, suggesting that not participating in training is commonly a personal preference.

**Figure 7.4 Reasons for not participating in coaching (%)**



The vast majority (91%) are satisfied with the quality of coaching received over the past month, with 62% indicating that they are very satisfied. This further highlights the positive contribution of coaching to the sports experience.

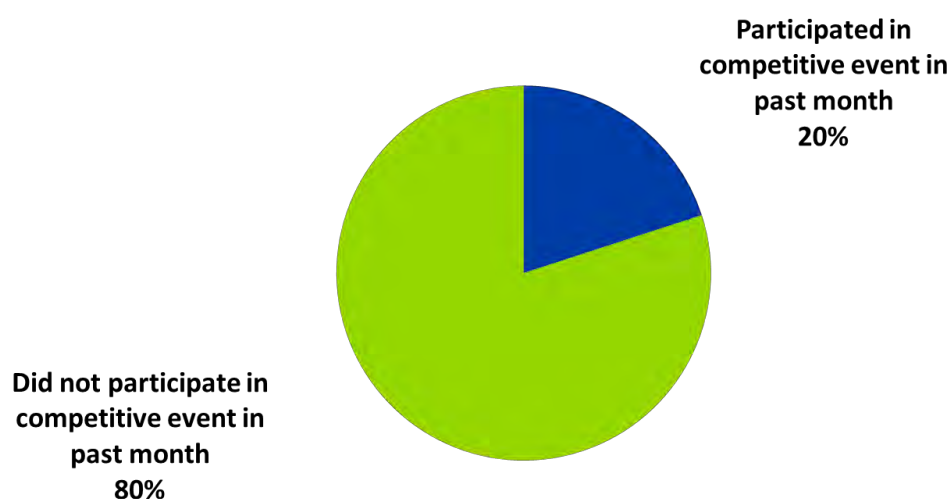


## 7.5 Participation in competitive events

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One in five (20%) regular sports participants have participated in a competitive event in the previous month. This accounts for 9% of the total adult population, or approximately 350,000 people. This incorporates a broad range of competitive events including any races, leagues or other forms of competition.

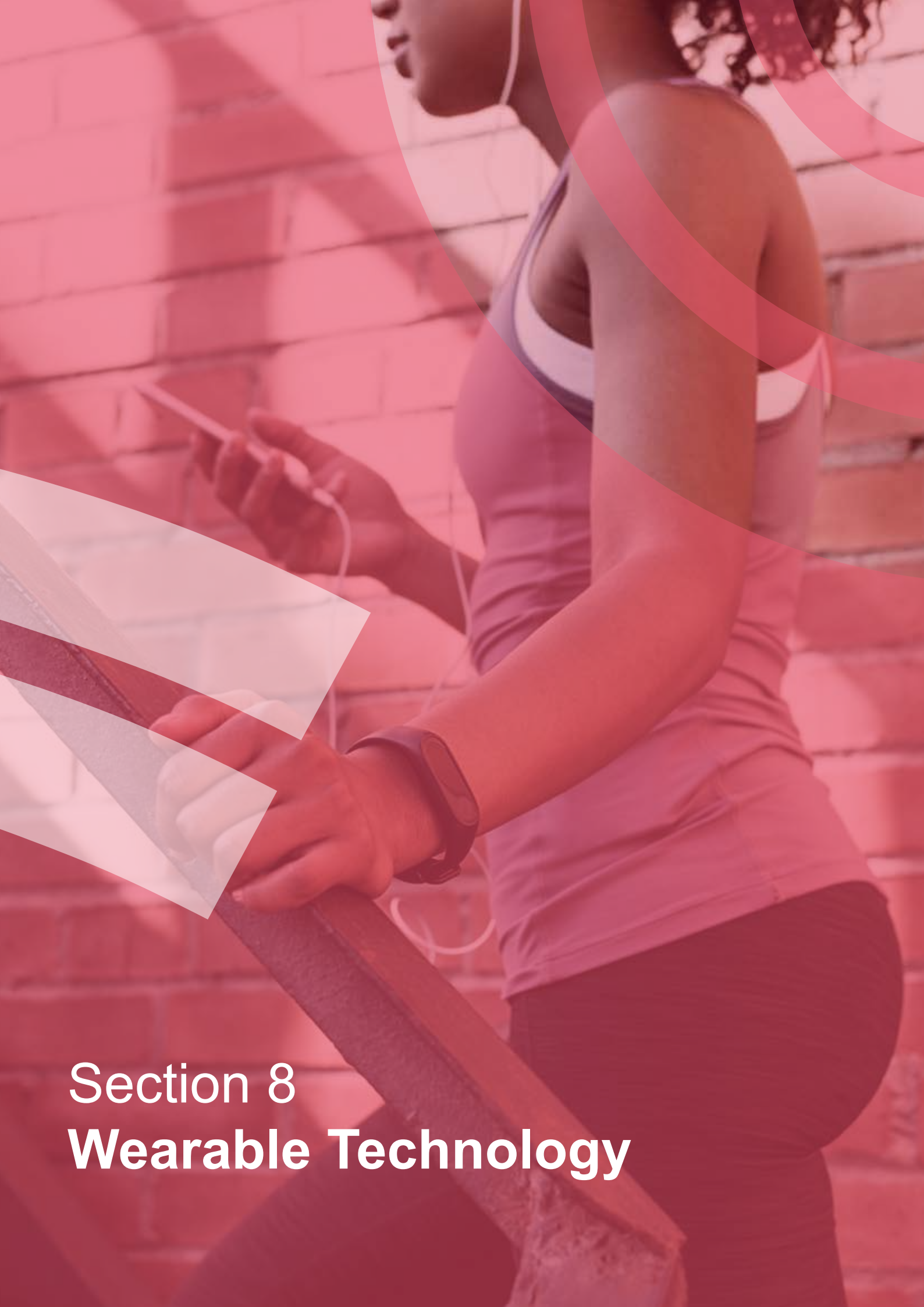
**Figure 7.5 Participation in competitive events (%)**



Participation in competitive events is more common among those participating in team sports (56%) than those participating in individual sports (14%). It is also more common among males than females (28% and 12% respectively), and among younger people than older people - 26% of sports participants aged under 35 have participated in a competitive event, compared with 17% of those older than this.

As may be expected those participating in competitive events are more likely than others to also participate in structured training (69% of those participating in competitive events also receive structured training/coaching, compared with 53% of those who do not participate in competitive events).

Sports participants who do not participate in competitive events were asked about their reasons for not doing so. As with the reasons for not participating in coaching/training, these primarily relate to individual choice not to participate in this way. Almost one in five (19%) of non-competitive participants indicate that it is because they are not sufficiently interested in the sport, with similar proportions saying that competition is not relevant to the sport (16%) or that they just participate in it for fitness or recreation (15%).



## Section 8 **Wearable Technology**

## 8. WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY

- 28% currently use technology to measure the amount or nature of physical activity they undertake, with 43% having used one at some stage in the past
- More than one quarter (26%) of users claim that the technology has had a “major influence” on their activity
- Just under half of users are highly active, compared with 26% of non-users
- Those who have used more types of technology in the past are more likely to be current users of at least one of them
- The decision to stop using technology is more commonly due to boredom with it or not exercising sufficiently. These reasons are more prominent than problems with the technology itself or other factors
- This decision to stop using the technology is most likely to happen in the initial six months of usage. Across all of the technologies, between 57% and 72% of users who stopped using a device did so in this initial six months
- Between 14% and 17% of those who have never used technology say they are likely to start using one of the technologies in the next 12 months. The activity levels of potential users are broadly aligned with the population as a whole

### 8.1 Introduction

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Understanding the many ways in which wearable technology is used in everyday life gives us an insight into new ways of understanding our physical activity. From the minutiae of every day walking and commutes, to measuring intense exercise, the recent trend of wearable sports technology has no doubt had an influence on the ways in which we engage in physical activity.

One of the modules included in this wave of the ISM asked a series of questions to understand what wearable technology people use, how they use it, and the influence it has had on their participation in sport and physical activity.

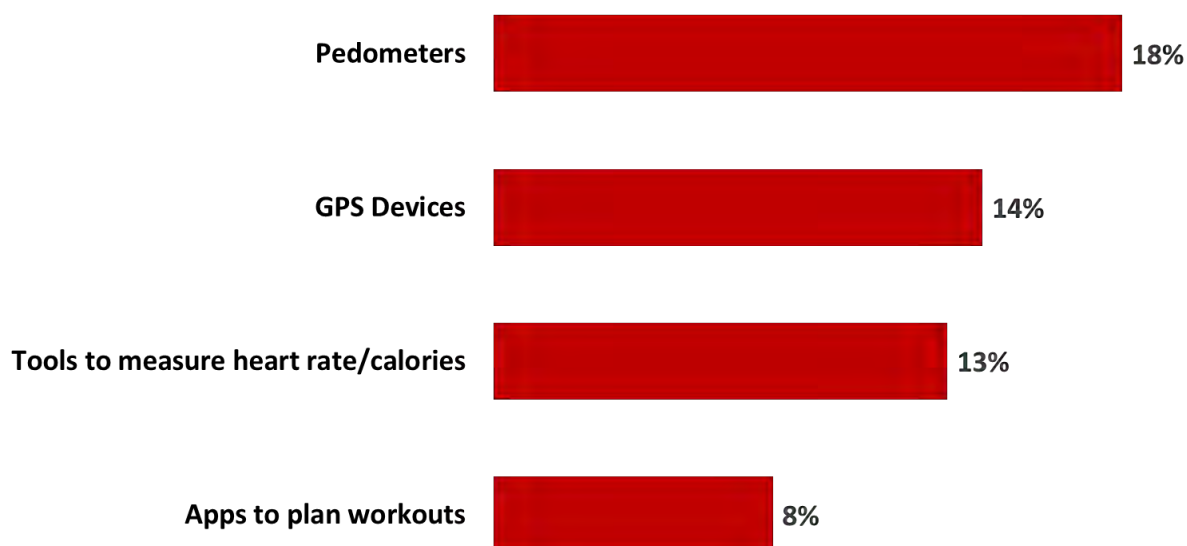
In total, 2,127 respondents participated in this module. This provides a robust understanding of wearable technology and the effects it has on participation in sport and physical activity.

## 8.2 Use of Wearable Technology

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Over a quarter (28%) of the population currently use one of the wearable technologies measured in this module. Pedometers are the most commonly used types of technology (18%), with GPS-type devices and tools for measuring heart rate or calories burned being used by 14% and 13% of adults respectively. Apps to plan workouts are less commonly used, with 8% currently using this type of technology. Roughly half of those using a technology (15% overall) use multiple types of technology, and 6% of current users use all four forms of technology.

**Figure 8.1 Current usage of wearable technology (%)**



Usage of these technologies is also widespread across most demographic groups. No difference exists between males and females in terms of overall usage levels, with 29% of males and 27% of females currently using at least one type of technology. Usage levels are the same among all age groups aged up to 45, with usage declining among older age groups. In total, 39% of those aged under 45 use at least one of these technologies, compared with 17% of those older than this.

As with overall usage levels, there is limited difference in the types of technology being used. Pedometers are used by equal proportions of males and females, and across all age groups up to age 45. However, some differences exist in respect of usage of GPS-type devices with males more likely to use these than females (17% and 12% respectively), and those aged 35 to 44 (23%) most likely to be currently using one of these tools.

Examining usage by socio-economic factors shows some differences in uptake. Much wider usage exists in higher income households than lower income ones. Among those living in households with a net monthly income of €3,000 or higher, 41% currently use a technology, compared with 19% of those in households with a lower monthly income. In the highest income group (€5,000 and above), a slight majority (54%) are using one of these technologies. Some of these differences are likely to be explained by affordability, but a more likely explanation is that lower income groups are less likely to participate in sport and physical activity and therefore have less need for purchasing one of these technologies.

**Figure 8.2 Current usage of technology by monthly income (%)**

Monthly Income	Overall	Pedometers	GPS Devices	Tools to Measure Heart Rate/ Calories Burned	Apps to Plan Workouts
Under €2000	14%	10%	7%	6%	4%
€2000 - €2999	30%	20%	13%	12%	7%
€3000 - €4999	33%	18%	19%	16%	8%
Over €4999	54%	39%	31%	29%	15%

Technology users are typically a mixture of recent adopters and those who have been using the technology for a longer period. Among those using pedometers, 20% started using these in the past three months, while 16% have used one for longer than two years. Users of GPS devices are slightly different in this respect, with almost a third (30%) using the technology for more than 2 years, while 11% have only started using it within the past three months.

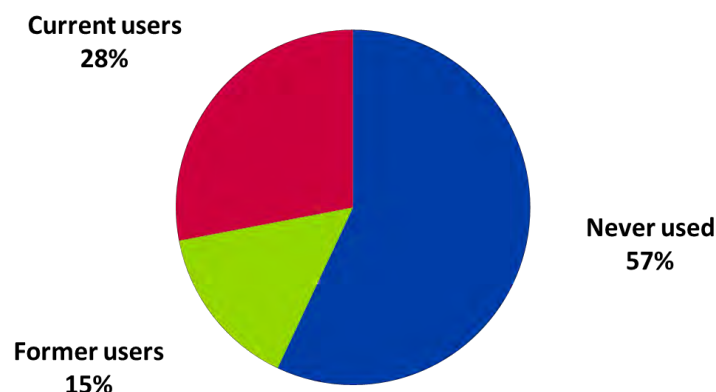
**Figure 8.3 Length of time since starting to use each type of technology (%)**

	Pedometers	GPS Devices	Tools to Measure Heart Rate/ Calories Burned	Apps to Plan your Workout Routine
Up to 3 months	20%	11%	16%	21%
More than 3, up to 6 months	18%	14%	17%	21%
More than 6 months, up to 1 year	17%	14%	13%	12%
More than 1 year, up to 2 years	29%	30%	27%	25%
More than 2 years	16%	30%	26%	19%

### 8.3 Past Usage of Technology

In addition to exploring current usage of these technologies, this module also measured past usage levels – among both current users and non-users, finding that under half (43%) have used one of these technologies at some stage. Just under two-thirds (64%) of that group are currently using at least one of the tools, with 36% no longer using any tools. As such, 57% of the population have never used one of these technologies, 28% are current users, and 15% are former users.

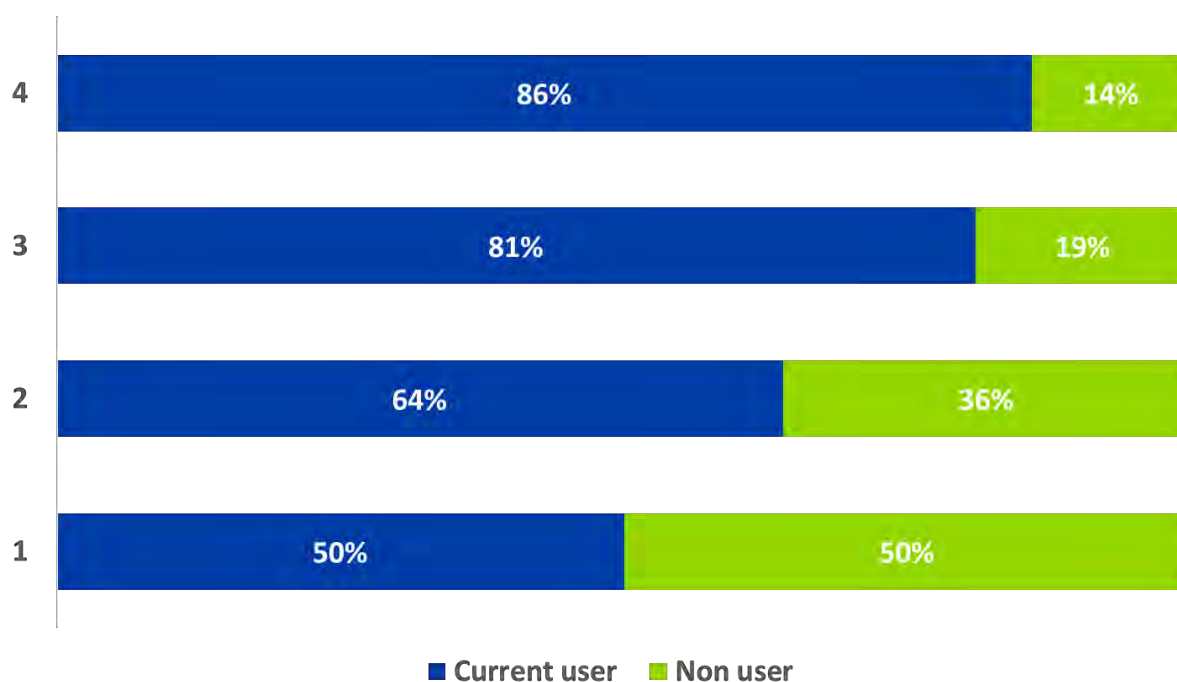
**Figure 8.4 Usage of technology (%)**



The profiles of current and former users are both broadly similar in respect of age and gender, suggesting that the decision to quit using a technology is based around personal preference rather than any demographic factors.

The extent to which individuals invest in technology is strongly related to continued usage of technology. Those who have used more tools in the past are more likely to continue using them into the future. Half of those who have ever used one tool are still current users of that tool, while 86% of those who have used all four tools remain users of at least one of these tools. This may be due to a variety of factors, such as an individual trialling a number of different tools to identify the correct one for their needs, or perhaps that those more predisposed to trying multiple technologies tend to have more long-lasting usage of them.

**Figure 8.5 Current usage by number of devices ever used (%)**



Those who previously used the technology, but no longer do so, were asked about their reasons for ceasing their usage. While the reasons differ depending on the specific tool, the common theme is a feeling of not getting sufficient use from it, either through changes in physical activity or boredom. It is noteworthy that the main reasons given are related to the individual rather than to the technology itself. For example, reasons due to breakages or perceived inaccuracy of the tools are ranked lower than reasons related to the individual.

**Figure 8.6 Reasons for stopping using technology (%)**

	Pedometers	GPS Devices	Tools to Measure Heart Rate/Calories Burned	Apps to Plan Your Workout
I got bored with it	17%	13%	9%	14%
Not exercising as much/too busy	9%	30%	16%	17%
Health reasons/not able to exercise/injury	8%	10%	10%	15%
I don't need it anymore	8%	13%	13%	21%
It broke and I didn't replace it	8%	3%	9%	1%
Too much hassle	7%	6%	5%	5%

The decision to stop using the technology generally happens relatively soon after starting to use it. Across all four tools, the majority of former users had stopped using the tool within six months of starting to use it. Relatively few former users (between 14% and 26%) used the tool for longer than a year before stopping.

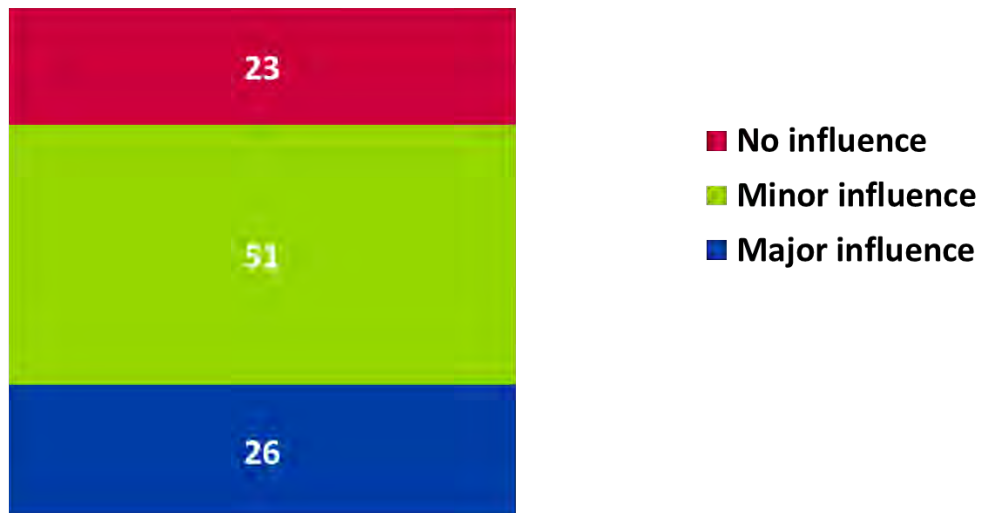
While there are almost twice as many current users of the technologies as former users, the barriers to continued usage are particularly important in the context of these tools being used to encourage higher activity levels among the population as a whole – particularly in the context of wider adoption among non-users. This is returned to later in this section.

## 8.4 Impact of technology on activity levels

Those who have used these types of technology were asked about the extent to which the technology has an influence on their activity levels. Over three-quarters (77%) claim that it has influenced their activity levels, suggesting a positive relationship between adopting these technologies and becoming more active. Furthermore, over a quarter (26%) claim that it has had a major influence on their activity.



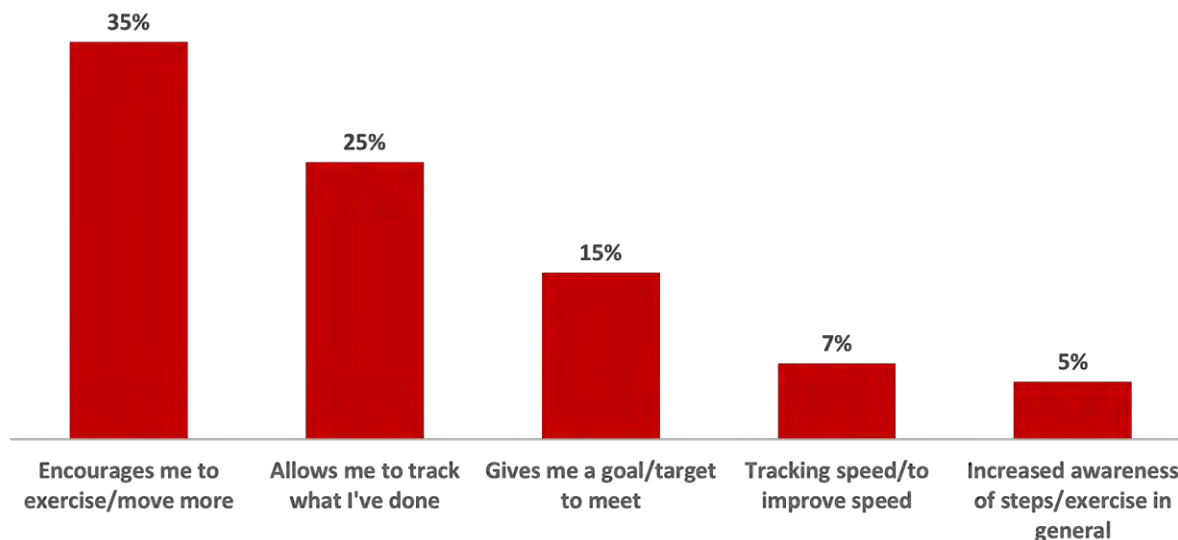
**Figure 8.7 Influence of technology on activity levels (%)**



While claimed influence is the same across both genders, those who are younger are more likely to say that it has had an influence on their activity. Among those aged under 35, 83% say that the technology they have used has influenced their activity, compared with 72% of those older than this.

For those who were influenced by the technology this influence typically arises in two ways – through motivation to do more activity or in facilitating the tracking of activity levels, with these being identified as motivating factors by 46% and 32% respectively. Some difference exists by gender, with females more likely to suggest that the tool encourages them to exercise more or be more active (females: 55%, males: 36%), and males more likely to suggest that the tool allows them to track their activity levels (males: 42%, females: 23%). Some of these differences may be due to the types of tools being used, with men more likely to use GPS-type devices, and perhaps using it within a structured training regime.

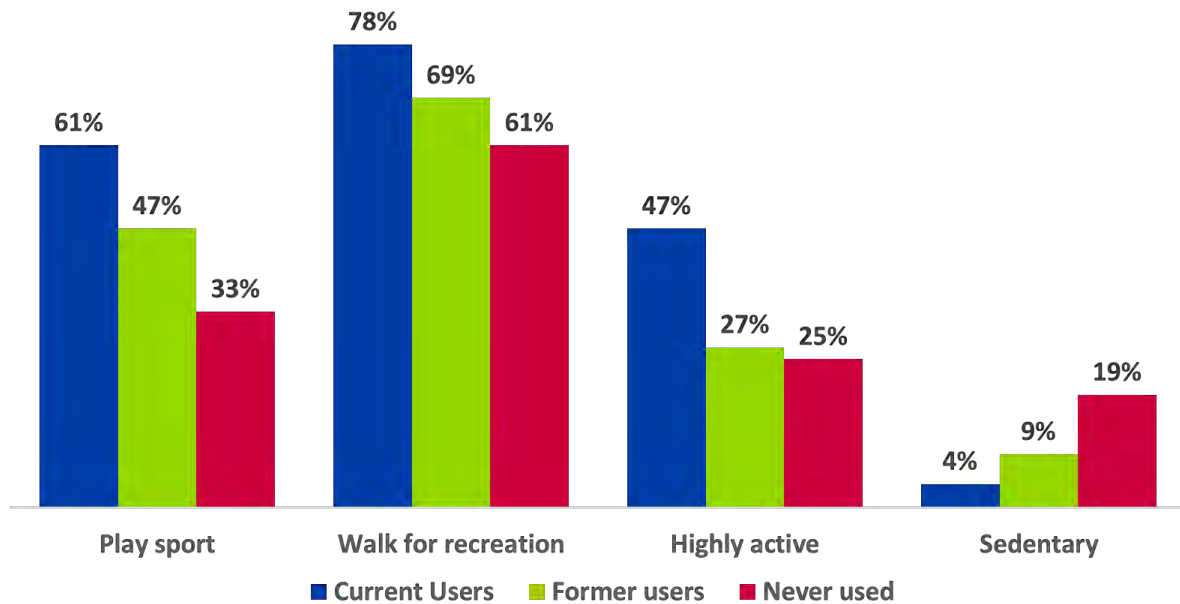
**Figure 8.8 Reasons for using technology (%)**



While the technology is perceived to influence the level of activity undertaken, other data suggests that this may be limited to increasing activity levels among those who are already active rather than encouraging those who are sedentary to become active. Four out of five (80%) users of technology say they were already active before they started to use tools. This is common across both genders and all ages. It suggests that while the impact of technology is positive, it is more positive for those that are active than those who are inactive.

Analysis of their participation in sport and physical activity indicates that those who use tools are more active than those who do not. Just under half (47%) of current technology users are categorised as “Highly Active”, compared with 27% of former users and 25% of those who have never used technology. Similarly, 61% of users are regular sports participants compared with 47% of former users and 33% of those who have never used technology. Furthermore, those participating in sport that use these technologies are more likely than those who do not use them to participate in more sports.

**Figure 8.9 Physical activity by technology users and non-users (%)**



## 8.5 Future usage of technology

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Those who have never used one of these tools were asked about likely future adoption of this type of technology. While there was some appetite for these tools, it is limited somewhat with between 14% and 17% identifying that they are likely to start using it in the next 12 months. As with current users, those who say they are likely to start using a tool are already active to some degree. For example, among those saying that they are likely to start using a pedometer in the next 12 months, 62% already undertake regular walks for recreation and 55% do so for transport. Furthermore, 28% are highly active and 13% are sedentary. Current activity levels for those considering using GPS devices are higher than for those considering using other forms of technology. This may be reflective of the higher cost of these devices.

**Figure 8.10 Current activity levels among potential users of technology (%)**

	Pedometers	GPS Devices	Tools to Measure Heart Rate/Calories Burned	Apps to Plan Your Workout
Play sport	38%	48%	36%	42%
Walk for recreation	62%	66%	63%	66%
Walk for transport	55%	57%	58%	58%
Cycle of transport	7%	11%	8%	8%
Highly active	28%	36%	30%	30%
Sedentary	13%	9%	11%	12%

However, while they may be already active there is potential to increase this activity further, and this is likely the key motivator to them considering using a technology. There is considerable potential for this, with 28% of those considering starting to use a pedometer in the next 12 months currently categorised as “highly active”, and 13% categorised as “sedentary”. Similar levels of activity are recorded for those considering starting to use other forms of technology.

This is positive in respect of increasing levels of activity generally, in particular considering the extent to which current users suggest that their activity levels are influenced by the technology that they use.

However, a challenge exists in maintaining longer term usage of the technologies among the one third of users who cease using the technology. As noted earlier, not getting sufficient use from the technology or becoming bored with it are key motivators for those ceasing to use it, with most former users likely to only use the technology for a short period before stopping. These are key challenges for the companies involved in developing these technologies.



Section 9  
**Policy Considerations**

## 9. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

### 9.1 Resilience of sports participation in a busier world

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In the report of the findings from a previous wave it was noted that a decline in sports participation since the previous study could be expected in an improving economic climate. It suggested that as lives became busier with increased levels of employment and longer working and commuting times, this led to more limited time for recreational activities such as sports. Similarly, earlier studies suggested that a silver lining in the cloud of an economic downturn was that increased free time led to higher levels of sports participation.

However, despite considerable improvements in the Irish economy since 2015, the proportion participating in sport is unchanged at 43% with approximately 1.6 million people benefitting from the many advantages that sport can bring. It is clearly very encouraging that despite increased time pressures those participating in sport have maintained their involvement.

This is likely an outcome of a multitude of factors, including initiatives in recent years to promote physical activity, heightened awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles in maintaining a healthy mind and body, increased availability of a diverse range of sports to suit differing interests and abilities, and ongoing investment in the provision of sport in communities throughout Ireland.

The challenge into the future is not only to maintain this level of involvement, but to increase it further. Of particular focus in this regard are those groups with lower levels of sports participation, such as those with lower levels of education and income, as well as females and those with a long-term illness or disability – both of which are discussed in further detail below.

## 9.2 Women in sport

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Each report in the ISM series has identified a gender gap in sports participation in all its forms. Men are more likely than women not only to play sport, but also to be members of a club, volunteer for sports and attend sporting events. Eliminating this gender gap has been a key focus in recent years, and a variety of initiatives by various organisations have supported and encouraged female involvement in sport – at individual, community and elite levels.

This latest wave of the ISM shows that the gender gap (4.5%) in active participation is narrower now than at any point since the ISM was introduced in 2007 when it was 15.7%. This is an important development in ensuring that both genders have equal access to sport and can benefit – both physically, mentally and socially – from regular participation. Particularly encouraging within this is that the increase in female participation is coming from those aged over 35, and is evident among all age cohorts including those aged 65 and older. In the context of encouraging continued involvement in sport throughout the life course, this is a welcome development.

However, while the gender gap in active participation in sport is narrowing, a persistent gap exists in social participation. Women are less likely to volunteer, attend sporting events and be a member of a sports club. Furthermore, the decline in volunteering levels among females is a significant challenge, as is the persistence of the gender roles in volunteering, which in many cases is limited to the provision of transport rather than a coaching role or similar.

This accompanies a perception that women have fewer opportunities than men to participate in sport – a perception that is commonly held by both women and men. That fewer young women than older women have this perception is encouraging, and may be indicative of advances in this area. However, more can be done. Some appetite exists for proactive steps in this respect, and the positive reaction received to the concept of gender quotas on the boards of sporting bodies is noteworthy in this respect.

The importance of encouraging more women to participate in sport – both actively and socially – is highlighted further when their role as mothers is considered. One of the findings from this wave of the ISM is the recognition of the important role that parents play in encouraging children to be more active. The role of mothers is very important in this respect in terms of encouraging and facilitating their sons and daughters to participate in sport. Maintaining their involvement in sport is a key part in encouraging and facilitating the next generation of sports participants.

### 9.3 Persistent social and disability gradients in sport

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While this study provides welcome evidence of significant advances in eliminating the gender gap in sports participation, the persistent social and disability gradient that exists remains a significant concern. This is consistent across all social factors (income, education, working status etc.) and between those who have a disability or long-term illness and those who do not. It is also consistent across active and social forms of sports participation.

The importance of everyone having suitable access to participating in sport is a key focus for Sport Ireland, and across various sporting organisations. The gradient that exists is not due to any single factor and is a complex interaction of a number of different factors. As such, the solution is equally complex and requires collaborative working by sporting organisations, policy makers in a variety of areas, communities and various stakeholder groups.

Identifying this solution is of paramount importance. Facilitating equal access to sport and encouraging many more to participate can help to solve the wider social and health problems that exists and are expected to worsen in coming years.

It is to be hoped that policy efforts under the current National Physical Activity Plan and the forthcoming National Sports Policy will place particular emphasis on addressing these issues.

### 9.4 Importance of organised structures in sport

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Since its inception, the ISM has measured a trend towards individual sports such as personal exercise, running and swimming which by their very nature do not automatically require the involvement of other people in order to participate and can instead be played alone. While sports of an individual nature remain more popular, there has been a more recent trend towards these sports being participated in a group environment. As such, a slight majority of those playing “individual” sports do not do so alone, but in fact in the company of others.

Additionally, the majority of those participating in sport receive coaching or training in their main activity – this includes a majority of those participating in “individual” sports. Furthermore, a significant majority claim that this is important to their continued participation in that sport. The important role of coaching and other structures for women is noteworthy in this respect, and is a key consideration in eliminating the gender gap that exists.



The role of organised structures is an important consideration in a number of respects. Firstly, it clearly demonstrates the importance of the social aspect of participating in sport – that people enjoy participating in sports with others and choose to do so even in sports that they could do alone. Secondly, it suggests that having structured facilities and resources available is important both in terms of encouraging people to take up and maintain their involvement in sport.

In encouraging those to take up sport, it is important that they are facilitated to do so in this way. This is important in terms of making investments that deliver sports facilities and resources through club and community structures and ensure that the availability of these are effectively communicated to those to whom they may appeal.

## 9.5 Important role of technology in sport and physical activity

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Over the past number of years, a variety of tools and devices have been developed that enable individuals to easily measure the amount of physical activity they undertake. These include devices that users may wear or apps loaded onto their smartphone that passively record their movement. Just over two out of five people have used one of these devices in the past, with over a quarter currently using one.

While users are very positive about the impact of the technology used on their activity levels, it is notable that many of them were already active before adopting that technology. While those using these technologies are more active than those who do not use the technologies, it is not possible from this research to identify the extent to which the technology has led to any increase in their activity levels. However, a challenge exists in respect of longevity of usage with many trialists not continuing with their usage beyond an initial couple of months.

These technologies are an important consideration for policymakers in encouraging increased levels of activity. They bring new dimensions for users in terms of understanding their activity, goal setting and gamification of activity through comparisons and with their peers. How these factors can be harnessed to increase activity levels are unclear, however a recognition of the important role of technology in physical activity is necessary.

## 9.6 Encouraging greater uptake of active forms of travel

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The role of active travel – walking and cycling for transport – in encouraging individuals to achieve the recommended levels of physical activity is demonstrated through this wave of the ISM. While the ISM has traditionally excluded these forms of activity in calculations used to measure overall activity levels, their inclusion increases the numbers of adults meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines by almost half a million people.

Encouraging more to choose active forms of travel is a key component of the National Physical Activity Plan, and this wave of the ISM shows some progress in this respect. The proportion walking for transport has increased slightly since 2015, however the proportion cycling for transport has declined over the same period. A variety of factors can explain these changes in travel, however what is notable is that increases in active forms of travel are focussed on those who are younger and in employment, as well as being higher in urban areas than rural ones.

While the suitability of active forms of travel will differ depending on an individual's specific circumstances, encouraging greater uptake in active forms of travel requires investment in initiatives to promote these as viable options to car travel, as well as investment in facilities including cycle lanes and other facilities necessary to ensure it is an easy option for those wishing to travel in this way.



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: ISM 2017 compared to ISM 2007

Figure: Key metrics – 2007 versus 2017 (%)

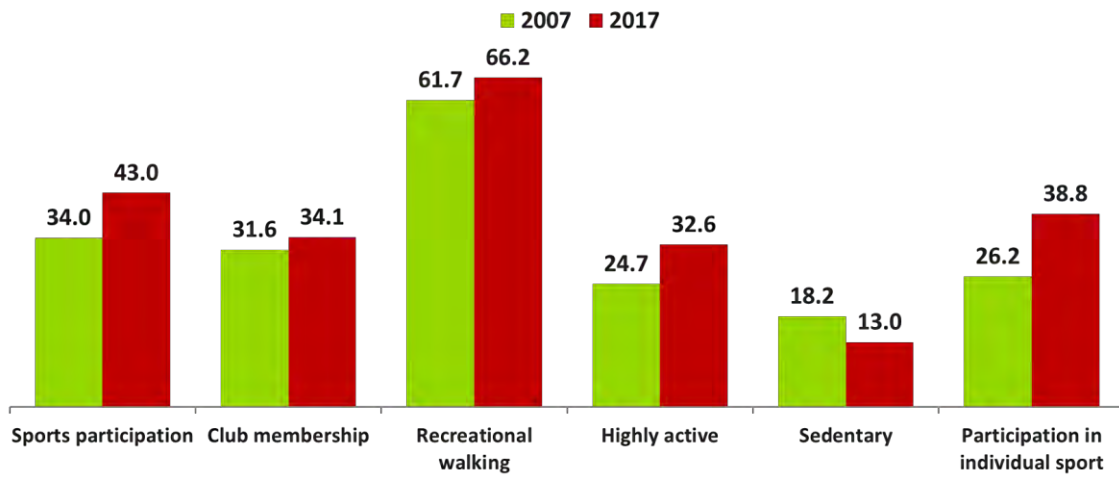
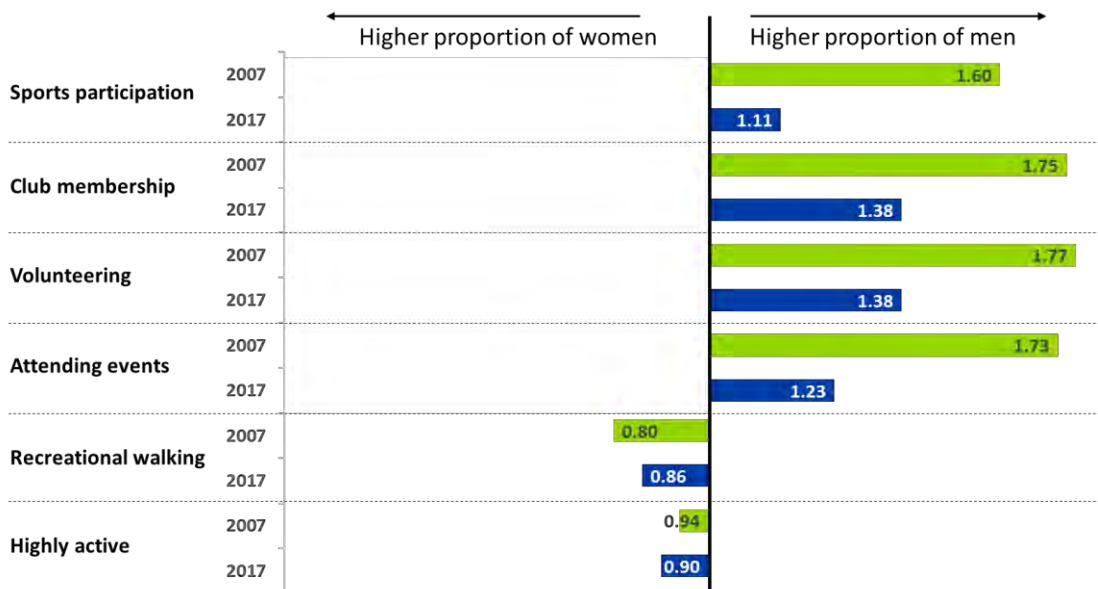


Figure: Odds ratio – participation in sport by gender



## Appendix 2: Questionnaire

### IRISH SPORTS MONITOR 2017 CORE QUESTIONNAIRE

#### SECTION 1 – INTRO AND SCREENING

Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling on behalf of Ipsos MRBI, Ireland's leading opinion polling and survey research company. We are carrying out an important lifestyle study and your opinions may help to shape local services in the future. Would you spare some time to answer some questions. It may take approximately 7-8 minutes depending on your answers.

Before we go to the first question I just need to reassure you that all of your answers are completely confidential and your rights under the Data Protection Act will be fully observed, including not answering and choosing to end the interview. For quality control and training purposes this interview may be monitored or recorded.

#### **GENDER**

RECORD SEX OF RESPONDENT

Male.....  
Female .....

#### **AGE**

To ensure we interview a wide cross section of the public, could I first ask what age group you fall into?

Under 16 .....  
16-19 .....  
20-24 .....  
25-34 .....  
35-44 .....  
45-54 .....  
55-64 .....  
65+ .....

#### **AGE 2**

And, may I ask what is your actual age?  
15 to 99

**WORK**

Which of these best describes your current employment situation? **READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

- Working as an employee.....
- Self-employed .....
- Unemployed/seeking work.....
- Retired.....
- Full-time home maker / looking after family .....
- Student.....
- Not working due long term sickness or disability .....

**SECTION 2 – SPORTS PARTICIPATION**

Now I would like to ask you a few questions on recreation, exercise and sport. These questions are being asked on behalf of Sport Ireland, but they relate to a broad range of physical activities as well as traditional sports, including walking, cycling, other outdoor pursuits, water sports, and non-competitive or recreational exercise.

**A1.** First, I would like to ask you about any recreational walking you did in the last 7 days. DO NOT include walks for transport, such as walking to work or to the shops, but DO include walks undertaken for exercise, recreation or leisure. In the last 7 days, did you take such a walk?

In the last 7 days, did you take such a walk?

Yes .....  No.....  → **GO TO A5**

**A2.** How many walks for exercise, recreation or leisure did you take?

**A3.** **If only one walk at A2**  
For how long did you walk? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**If more than one walk at A2**  
For how long did you usually walk? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**A4a.** How would you describe your usual walking pace during this(these) walk(s)? **TICK ONE ONLY**

- Slow.....
- Steady, average .....
- Fairly Brisk .....
- Fast .....
- Don't know .....

**A4b.** Where do you usually walk? **READ OUT. TICK ONE ONLY**

- Around local roads .....
- Parks .....
- Forests or other trails .....
- Beach or seafront.....
- Somewhere else (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) .....
- Don't know .....

**A5.** I would now like to ask you about any OTHER physical activities you undertook in the past 7 days for exercise, recreation or sport. Please DO NOT include physical activity for work, transport, or domestic work like gardening or DIY. Please DO include personal exercise, such as swimming, dancing or jogging, as well as all forms of sporting activity, indoor or outdoor, whether undertaken in an organised setting or casually with family or friends. So, in the past 7 days, did you participate in any such activities?

Yes .....

No.....

→ GO TO A22

**A6.** Please list up to 3 sports or activities, in the order in which you participated the most:

A6a.
A6b.
A6c.

I'd like to ask you a short series of questions about each activity, starting with the first...

**INT: PROMPT ACTIVITY A6A**

**A7.** On how many of the last 7 days did you take part? \_\_\_\_\_

**A8.** For how long did you take part?  
Consider a usual session if you took part more than once. \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**A9.** Was the effort enough to raise your breathing rate?

Yes .....   
No.....

**A10.** Was the effort enough for you to be out of breath or sweat?

Yes .....   
No.....

**A11a.** In what context did the activity take place?

Organised training/coaching/lesson .....   
Organised competition .....   
Casually with family or friends .....   
On own .....   
Other .....

**A11b.** Where did this activity take place?

Public place .....   
Sports club .....   
Community hall .....   
Gym/sports centre .....   
School/college/university .....   
At home .....   
Somewhere else (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) .....

I'd like to ask you the same series of questions about the second activity... **[PROMPT ACTIVITY A6B]**

**A12.** On how many of the last 7 days did you take part? \_\_\_\_\_

**A13.** For how long did you take part?  
Consider a usual session if you took part more than once. \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**A14.** Was the effort enough to raise your breathing rate?

Yes .....  
No.....

**A15.** Was the effort enough for you to be out of breath or sweat?

Yes .....  
No.....

**A16a.** In what context did the activity take place?

Organised training/coaching/lesson .....  
Organised competition .....  
Casually with family or friends .....  
On own .....  
Other .....

**A16b.** Where did this activity take place?

Public place .....   
Sports club .....   
Community hall .....   
Gym/sports centre.....   
School/college/university.....   
At home .....   
Somewhere else (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) .....

I'd like to ask you the same series of questions about the third activity... **[PROMPT ACTIVITY A6C]**

**A17.** On how many of the last 7 days did you take part? \_\_\_\_\_

**A18.** For how long did you take part?  
Consider a usual session if you took part more than once. \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**A19.** Was the effort enough to raise your breathing rate?

Yes .....  
No.....

**A20.** Was the effort enough for you to be out of breath or sweat?

Yes .....  
No.....



**A21a.** In what context did the activity take place?

- Organised training/coaching/lesson .....
- Organised competition .....
- Casually with family or friends .....
- On own .....
- Other .....

**A21b.** Where did this activity take place?

- Public place .....
- Sports club .....
- Community hall .....
- Gym/sports centre .....
- School/college/university.....
- At home .....
- Somewhere else (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) .....

**A22.** I would now like to ask you about any voluntary activity associated with sport and exercise activities that you undertook in the past 7 days. Voluntary activity means any role you may have fulfilled in support of sport or recreational physical activity, for adults or children. It includes helping to run events, providing or maintaining transport, food, equipment or kit, or acting in any kind of official capacity in relation to an event, team or organisation that provides opportunities to engage in physical activities for recreation, exercise or sport.

So, in the past 7 days, were you involved in any volunteering of this type?

Yes .....  No.....  → **GO TO**  
**A28**

**A23.** What were the sports or physical activities concerned (up to a maximum of 2 you were most involved in)?

A23a. \_\_\_\_\_

A23b. \_\_\_\_\_

**A24.** For sport ... [prompt activity A23a], what voluntary involvement did you have?  
**TICK ALL THAT APPLY**

- Providing Transport.....
- Coach .....
- Club Official .....
- Activity Organiser .....
- Kit Maintenance .....
- Selector .....
- Mentor .....
- Referee.....
- Other (please specify) .....

**A25.** How much time during the past 7 days did you devote to volunteering for this activity?

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

**A26.** For sport ... [prompt activity A23b], what voluntary involvement did you have?

**TICK ALL THAT APPLY**

- Providing Transport.....
- Coach .....
- Club Official .....
- Activity Organiser .....
- Kit Maintenance .....
- Selector .....
- Mentor .....
- Referee.....
- Other (please specify).....

**A27.** How much time during the past 7 days did you devote to volunteering for this activity?

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

**A28.** Are you a member of any kind of sports club? Include clubs for traditional sports, but also walking, cycling or swimming clubs, fitness centres, gyms or other organisations that provide opportunities to engage in physical activity for recreation, exercise or sport?

Yes .....

No.....

→ **GO TO**

**A31**

**A29.** How many are you a member of? \_\_\_\_\_

**A30.** What are the sports or physical activities concerned (up to a maximum of 3 you are most involved in)?

A30a. \_\_\_\_\_

A30b. \_\_\_\_\_

A30c. \_\_\_\_\_

**A31.** Given the broad definition of sporting activities we have been using, have you attended any fixtures or events in the past 7 days, either children's or adult events, as a spectator or supporter, rather than as an active participant?

Yes .....

No.....

→ **GO TO**

**A34**

**A32.** How many events did you attend? \_\_\_\_\_

**A33.** What were the sports or physical activities concerned (up to a maximum of 3 most recent events)?

A33a. \_\_\_\_\_

A33b. \_\_\_\_\_

A33c. \_\_\_\_\_

**A34.** Apart from during PE lessons, did you play regular sport at school?

Yes .....

No.....

**A35.** When you were at school, did your parents play any kind of sport regularly? **TICK ONE ONLY**

- Yes, both .....
- Yes, father only .....
- Yes, mother only .....
- No.....
- Don't Know .....

**A36.** Do you undertake any regular walks of over 15 minutes for transport, such as walking to work, walking children to school etc.? By regular I mean at least once-a-week.

- Yes .....
- No.....

**A37.** Do you cycle regularly as a form of transport? By regular I again mean once-a-week.

- Yes .....
- No.....

**SECTION 5 – DEMOGRAPHICS**

Finally, I would like to ask you a few more background questions.

**C1.** Do you have any long-term illness, health problem or disability that limits your daily activities or work?

Yes .....  
No..... GO TO C3.

**C2.** Does this prevent you from taking part in sport and exercise?

Yes .....  
No.....

**C3.** Do you have any children aged under 18?

Yes .....  
No.....

**C4.** How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

**C5.** What age is your youngest child? \_\_\_\_\_

**C5c.** Are you ....?

Married .....  
Living as married .....  
Single .....  
Widowed/Divorced/Separated .....

**C7.** Which of the following best describes where you live? **TICK ONE ONLY**

In a city .....  
In a town .....  
In a village .....  
Isolated location .....  
Don't know .....

**C8.** Which county do you live in? **PRECODE LIST OF COUNTIES**

**[IF DUBLIN]**

**C9.** Which of the following is your local authority?

- Dublin City .....
- Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown .....
- Fingal .....
- South Dublin.....

**C10.** What nationality are you? If joint nationality, please state both nationalities  
**PRECODE LIST OF NATIONALITIES**

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC QUESTIONS**

**C11.** What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Primary level or lower .....
- Group, Inter, Junior Certificate .....
- Leaving Certificate .....
- Other Second Level .....
- Third Level .....
- Don't know .....
- Refused.....

**C12.** Could I ask about the approximate level of net household income? This means the total income, after tax, PRSI and other statutory deductions, of all members of the household.

<b><i>Amount per week</i></b>	<b><i>Amount per month</i></b>	<b><i>Amount per year</i></b>
under €300	under €1200	under €15500
€300 - €399	€1200 - €1599	€15500 - €19999
€400 - €499	€1600 - €1999	€20000 - €25999
€500 - €749	€2000 - €2999	€26000 - €38999
€750 - €899	€3000 - €3599	€39000 - €46999
€900 - €1249	€3600 - €4999	€47000 - €64999
over €1249	over €4999	over €64999

**Irish Sports Monitor 2017  
Flexible Module 1**

Now moving on, I'd like to ask you a few questions about the development of sport in Ireland.

**ASK ALL**

**Q.1a** Which of the following organisations, if any, do you most associate with the development of sport in Ireland, both high performance sport as well as among the population as a whole?

**ROTATE. READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport .....                           | 1 |
| 2. Sport Ireland or Irish Sports Council .....                                | 2 |
| 3. National Governing bodies such as GAA, FAI, Athletics<br>Ireland etc. .... | 3 |
| 4. Olympic Council of Ireland .....   | 4 |
| 5. Federation of Irish Sport.....   | 5 |
| None of these .....   | 6 |
| Don't know.....   | 7 |

**ASK ALL CODED 1 TO 5 AT Q.1A**

**Q.1b** Which other body do you most associate with the development of sport in Ireland, both high performance sport as well as among the population as a whole?

**SHOW OPTIONS NOT SELECTED AT Q.1A. ROTATE. READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport .....                           | 1 |
| 2. Sport Ireland or Irish Sports Council .....                                | 2 |
| 3. National Governing bodies such as GAA, FAI, Athletics<br>Ireland etc. .... | 3 |
| 4. Olympic Council of Ireland .....   | 4 |
| 5. Federation of Irish Sport.....   | 5 |
| None of these .....   | 6 |
| Don't know.....   | 7 |

**ASK ALL**

**Q.2** Which of the following initiatives are you aware of to promote greater participation in sport and physical activity?

**ROTATE. READ OUT. MULTI CODE.**

**ANSWER YES OR NO TO EACH**

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| European Week of Sport.....           | 1 |
| Operation Transformation .....        | 2 |
| Local Sports Partnerships .....       | 3 |
| Healthy Ireland .....                 | 4 |
| National Physical Activity Plan ..... | 5 |
| National Fitness Day .....            | 6 |
| Get Ireland Active.....               | 7 |
| parkrun Ireland .....                 | 8 |

**Q.3** In general, would you say that there are the same opportunities, fewer opportunities or more opportunities than to participate in sport than was the case 10 years ago?

**SINGLE CODE**

- Same opportunities ..... 1
- Fewer opportunities ..... 2
- More opportunities ..... 3
- Don't know..... 4

**Q.4** In making investments in sport in Ireland, the government has a number of responsibilities to ensure the continued development of sport. I'm going to read out a few areas in which the government may decide to make an investment in and would like you to tell me which you think the government should place a greater focus on.

**ROTATE AND READ OUT PAIRS. SINGLE CODE.**

- Professional and high performance sport ..... 1
- Or General participation within the population ..... 2
- Don't know..... 3
  
- Encouraging those who are inactive to start participating in sport .... 1
- Or Encouraging those who are active to be more active ..... 2
- Don't know..... 3
  
- Facilities to encourage people to participate more ..... 1
- Or Initiatives to encourage people to participate more ..... 2
- Don't know..... 3
  
- Training and coaching initiatives ..... 1
- Or Sport management initiatives ..... 2
- Don't know..... 3

**Q.5** Which one of the following groups do you believe the Government should prioritise in its efforts to increase participations levels in sport and physical activity?

**ROTATE. READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

- Children aged up to 12..... 1
- Teenagers aged 13 to 18..... 2
- Women..... 3
- Men ..... 4
- Those aged over 65 ..... 5
- Those with a disability or long-term illness ..... 6
- Socially disadvantaged groups ..... 7
- A different group (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 8
- Don't know..... 9

**Q.6** A key priority for sport in Ireland is to encourage children to become more active. In your view, does the greater responsibility for this lie with schools or parents?

**SINGLE CODE**

- Schools..... 1
- Parents..... 2
- Don't know..... 3

**Q.7** While men and women may be interested in different types of sports, would you say that women in Ireland have the same opportunities, fewer opportunities or more opportunities than men to participate in sport?

**SINGLE CODE**

- Same opportunities ..... 1
- Fewer opportunities ..... 2
- More opportunities ..... 3



Don't know..... 4

**Q.8** And would you say that women have the same opportunities, fewer opportunities or more opportunities than men to be involved in the management and administration of sport in Ireland?

**SINGLE CODE**

Same opportunities ..... 1  
Fewer opportunities ..... 2  
More opportunities ..... 3  
Don't know..... 4

**Q.9** The Minister for Sport recently proposed that at least 30% of positions on the boards of national sporting organisations should be filled by women. In your opinion would this have a positive or negative influence on the administration of sport in Ireland, or would it make no difference?

**SINGLE CODE**

Positive..... 1  
Negative ..... 2  
Make no difference..... 3  
Don't know..... 4

**Irish Sports Monitor 2017  
Flexible Module 2**

Now moving on, I'd like to ask you a few questions about technology in sport and physical activity.

**ASK ALL**

**Q.1** There are a number of tools that can be used to measure the amount and nature of physical activity undertaken. Have you ever used any tools such as a Fitbit, Pedometer, an app on your mobile phone or a GPS watch to measure any of the following:

**READ OUT ANSWERS SELECTED AT Q.1. MULTI CODE.**

- The number of steps you take in a day ..... 1
- The distance or speed you travel while running or cycling ..... 2
- Your heart rate or calories burned ..... 3
- Apps on your phone that plan your workout routine such as Couch to 5k or Fitstar ..... 4
  
- None of these ..... 5
- Don't know..... 6

**ASK ALL SELECTED AT Q.1**

**Q.2** And do you currently use a tool to...?

**READ OUT ANSWERS SELECTED AT Q.1. MULTI CODE.**

- ...count the number of steps you take in a day ..... 1
- ...measure the distance or speed you travel while running or cycling ..... 2
- ...measure your heart rate or calories burned ..... 3
- ...plan your workout routine ..... 4
  
- None of these ..... 5
- Don't know..... 6

**ASK Q.3 AND Q.4 IN ROTATION FOR EACH TOOL SELECTED AT Q.2**

**Q.3** For how long have you used a tool to \_\_\_\_\_ ?

**SINGLE CODE**

- Up to 3 months ..... 1
- More than 3, up to 6 months ..... 2
- More than 6 months, up to 1 year ..... 3
- More than 1 year, up to 2 years ..... 4
- More than 2 years ..... 5
- Don't know..... 6

**ASK Q.5 TO Q.7 TO ALL USING A FITNESS TOOL**

**Q.5** Were you already active in sport and other physical activity before you started using this tool / these tools?

**SINGLE CODE**

- Yes ..... 1
- No ..... 2
- Don't know ..... 3

**Q.6a** In general, would you say that the tool(s) you use have a major influence, a minor influence or no influence at all on the physical activity that you do?

**SINGLE CODE**

- Major influence ..... 1
- Minor influence ..... 2
- No influence at all ..... 3
- Don't know ..... 4

**ASK Q.6B TO ALL CODED 1 OR 2 AT Q.6A**

**Q.6b** In what ways does it influence your physical activity?

**RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE**

**Q.7** Do you use your these tools/this tool to compare your activity levels to other people?

- Yes ..... 1
- No ..... 2
- Don't know ..... 3

**Q.8** Thinking now of a close friend or relative who wants to become more active, would you recommend or not recommend that they use technology to assist them in their efforts?

- Recommend ..... 1
- Not recomend ..... 2
- Don't know ..... 3

**ASK Q.9 AND Q.10 TO ALL WHO HAVE USED A TOOL AT Q.1 BUT HAVE NOT USED ANY TOOL AT Q.2**

**Q.9** You said that you used to use a \_\_\_\_\_. What was the main reason you stopped using it?

**PROBE TO PRECODE. SINGLE CODE.**

- Wasn't comfortable to wear ..... 1
- Too much hassle ..... 2
- Wasn't having a sufficiently positive impact on my activity levels .... 3
- Friends/contacts stopped using it ..... 4
- I got bored with it ..... 5
- It broke and I didn't replace it ..... 6
- It was inaccurate ..... 7
- Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 8
- Don't know ..... 9

**Q.10** For how long did you use it before you stopped using it?

**SINGLE CODE**

- Up to 3 months ..... 1
- More than 3, up to 6 months ..... 2
- More than 6 months, up to 1 year ..... 3
- More than 1 year, up to 2 years ..... 4
- More than 2 years ..... 5
- Don't know..... 6

**ASK ALL WHO HAVE NEVER USED A TOOL AT Q.1**

**Q.11** Over the next 12 months, would you say that you are likely or unlikely to start using a tool to do any of the following?

**ANSWER LIKELY, UNLIKELY OR DON'T KNOW FOR EACH**

- ...count the number of steps you take in a day ..... 1
- ...measure the distance or speed you travel while  
running or cycling ..... 2
- ...measure your heart rate or calories burned ..... 3
- ...plan your workout routine ..... 4
  
- None of these ..... 5
- Don't know ..... 6

**Irish Sports Monitor 2017  
Flexible Module 3**

Now moving on, I'd like to ask you a few questions about sport organisations in your local community.

**ASK ALL CLUB MEMBERS**

Earlier you said that you were a member of a <SPORT> club. I would like you to think about the money that you have spent with this club or donated to this club over the past year. This could include membership fees, club fundraising, spending in a bar or shop or anything else where you spent or gave money to the club.

**ASK Q.1 TO Q.4 IN ROTATION FOR EACH CLUB THAT INDIVIDUAL IS A MEMBER OF**

**Q.1a** Firstly, thinking about membership fees. Over the past 12 months, how much have you spent on membership fees or subscriptions. Please estimate this as accurately as you can.

€ \_\_\_\_\_

**ASK Q.1B IF Q.1A >0**

**Q.1b** And, how many people are covered by this membership fee?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Q.2** Next thinking about your spending in a club bar or shop. In a typical month, how much would you say you spend in the club bar or shop?

€ \_\_\_\_\_

**Q.3** Next thinking about club fundraising. This includes club lotteries and any events done to raise money for the club. In a typical month, how much would you say you spend on club fundraising?

€ \_\_\_\_\_

**Q.4a** Now thinking about any other types of expenditure not covered in the previous questions. Do you spend money with the club in any other way?

Yes 1

.....  
No 2

.....

**ASK Q.4B IF YES AT Q.4A**

**Q.4b** What does this spending relate to?

**Record each type of spending separately**

**Additional spending 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional spending 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional spending 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ASK Q.4C FOR EACH TYPE OF SPENDING IDENTIFIED AT Q.4B**

**Q.4c** Thinking about <ADDITIONAL SPENDING>, how much would you say you spend? You can answer for a typical week, a typical month or a typical year, whatever is easiest for you.

€ \_\_\_\_\_ per week

€ \_\_\_\_\_ per month

€ \_\_\_\_\_ per year

**ASK ALL RESPONDENTS**

I would like you to think about the money that you have spent with local sports clubs or donated to local sports club over the past year. This could include club fundraising, spending in a bar or shop, costs to use club facilities or anything else where you spent or gave money to a club in the past 12 months.

**Q.5a** Have you spent any money in these ways with any <SPORTS CLUB>?

- Yes 1  
.....
- No 2  
.....

ASK FOR FOLLOWING CLUBS (EXCLUDING THOSE ALREADY ASKED ABOUT AT Q.1 TO Q.4)

- GAA clubs
- Soccer clubs

**Q.5b** Have you spent any money in these ways with any other types of sport club?

- Yes 1  
.....
- No 2  
.....

**ASK Q.5c IF YES AT Q.5B**

**Q.5c** Which types of sports clubs are these?

SELECT FROM LIST OF CLUBS

**ASK Q.6 TO Q.9 IN ROTATION FOR EACH CLUB THAT INDIVIDUAL HAS SPENT MONEY WITH**

**Q.6** Firstly thinking about club fundraising. This includes club lotteries and any events done to raise money for the club. In a typical month, how much would you say you spend on club fundraising?

€ \_\_\_\_\_

**Q.7** Next thinking about your spending in a club bar or shop. In a typical month, how much would you say you spend in the club bar or shop?

€ \_\_\_\_\_

**Q.8** Next thinking about costs to use the club facilities. Over the past 12 months, how much have you spent on using the club facilities. Please estimate this as accurately as you can.

€ \_\_\_\_\_

**Q.9a** Now thinking about any other types of expenditure not covered in the previous questions. Do you spend money with the club in any other way?

- Yes 1  
.....
- No 2  
.....



**ASK Q.9B IF YES AT Q.9A**

**Q.9b** What does this spending relate to?

**Record each type of spending separately**

**Additional spending 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional spending 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional spending 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ASK Q.9C FOR EACH TYPE OF SPENDING IDENTIFIED AT Q.9B**

**Q.9c** Thinking about <ADDITIONAL SPENDING>, how much would you say you spend? You can answer for a typical week, a typical month or a typical year, whatever is easiest for you.

€ \_\_\_\_\_ per week

€ \_\_\_\_\_ per month

€ \_\_\_\_\_ per year



**Irish Sports Monitor 2017  
Flexible Module 4**

Now moving on, I'd like to ask you a few questions about sport more generally.

**ASK ALL**

**Q.1** I am going to read out a number of challenges facing sport in Ireland. For each of the following issues I'd like you to tell me whether it is a minor problem, a major problem or not a problem at all for sport in Ireland.

**ROTATE. READ OUT. INCLUDE DON'T KNOW OPTION.**

The use of performance enhancing drugs in sport.....	1
Fixing of sports results for gambling purposes.....	2
Corruption among those involved in the administration of sport ..	3
Racism in sport.....	4
Advertising of alcohol products in sport .....	5
Cheating in sport .....	6
Overtraining of children and young people in sport.....	7
Payments to amateur sportspeople .....	8
Access to sport for those with a disability .....	9

**ASK FOR EACH ITEM IDENTIFIED AS BEING A MAJOR PROBLEM OR MINOR PROBLEM WITH SPORT IN IRELAND**

**Q.2** And, in your opinion, are the problems associated with [ITEM] being dealt with effectively by those responsible for the administration of sport in Ireland?

**SHOW OPTIONS SELECTED AT Q.1.**

Yes .....	1
No.....	2
Don't know.....	3

**ASK FOR EACH ITEM IDENTIFIED AS BEING A MAJOR PROBLEM OR MINOR PROBLEM WITH SPORT IN IRELAND**

**Q.3** Which sports come to mind when you think of the problems associated with [ITEM] in Ireland?

**SHOW OPTIONS SELECTED AT Q.1.**

**SELECT RELEVANT SPORTS. MULTICODE.**

**Irish Sports Monitor 2017  
Flexible Module 5**

**ASK FOR FIRST SPORT IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENT**

Now moving on, I'd like to ask you a few questions about any coaching or training that you receive in relation to the sport you participate in.

**ASK Q.1 TO ALL PARTICIPATING IN MORE THAN ONE SPORT IN THE PAST SEVEN DAYS**

**Q.1** Earlier in the survey you mentioned that you participated in more than one sport in the past 7 days. Can you identify which of these you consider to be your main sport.  
**SINGLE CODE.**

List of sports participated in

**ASK Q.2 TO ALL PARTICIPATING IN SPORT**

**Q.2** Thinking of your involvement in <SPORT> over the past month. Which, if any, of the following applies to you?  
**READ OUT. MULTI CODE.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| You received coaching as part of structured club or class training .. | 1 |
| You received coaching in another way .....                            | 2 |
| You followed a structured training plan .....                         | 3 |
| None of these .....   | 4 |

**ASK Q.3 TO Q.8 TO ALL SELECTING CODES 1 OR 2 AT Q.2. OTHERS GO TO Q.9**

**Q.3** And is the person who mainly delivers the coaching male or female?  
**READ OUT. MULTI CODE.**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Male.....                              | 1 |
| Female .....                           | 2 |
| It varies/both/multiple trainers ..... | 3 |

**Q.4** And, how far do you travel to attend coaching sessions or classes?

\_\_\_\_\_ **MINUTES**

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| It varies depending on location ..... | 2 |
|---------------------------------------|---|

**Q.5** What is the main reason you receive coaching in this sport rather than doing so informally or independently?

**READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| I need a coach in order to participate in the sport.....         | 1 |
| The coach encourages me to do more/push harder .....             | 2 |
| I need coaching in order to get better at the sport .....        | 3 |
| The coach motivates me to come back .....                        | 4 |
| Coaching provides a group/team environment .....                 | 5 |
| I have specific needs that only the coach can help me with ..... | 6 |
| Other (specify: _____).....                                      | 7 |

**Q.6** On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of the coaching you have received over the past 6 months?

**READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

- Very dissatisfied ..... 1
- ..... 2
- ..... 3
- ..... 4
- Very satisfied ..... 5

**Q.7** Does the person who mainly delivers the training use any form of technology during the coaching sessions or classes?

**SINGLE CODE.**

- Yes ..... 1
- No ..... 2

**Q.8** On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important, how important to you is the structured training in your continued participation in <SPORT>?

**READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

- Not at all important ..... 1
- ..... 2
- ..... 3
- ..... 4
- Very important ..... 5

**ASK Q.9 TO ALL NOT SELECTING CODES 1, 2 OR 3 AT Q.2. OTHERS GO TO Q.10**

**Q.9** For what reasons have you not participated in structured <SPORT> training over the past 6 months?

- Not sufficiently interested in the sport ..... 1
- Training not relevant to the sport ..... 2
- Prefer to just participate on my own without others ..... 3
- Location of training not convenient to where I live ..... 4
- Time of training not convenient ..... 5
- Training too expensive ..... 6
- Not good enough at the sport ..... 7
- Poor previous experience of training ..... 8
- Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 9

**ASK Q.10 TO ALL PARTICIPATING IN SPORT**

**Q.10** And over the past month have you participated in any competitive <SPORT> events? This includes any races, leagues or any other forms of competition?

**SINGLE CODE.**

- Yes ..... 1
- No ..... 2

**ASK Q.11 TO ALL SELECTING CODE 2 AT Q.10**

**Q.11** For what reasons have you not participated in any competitive <SPORT> events in the past month?

- Not sufficiently interested in the sport ..... 1
- Competition not relevant to the sport ..... 2
- Not aware of any competitive events ..... 3
- Not good enough at the sport..... 4
- Events not convenient for me ..... 5
- Events are too expensive ..... 6
- Poor previous experience of competitive events ..... 7
- Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 8

**Irish Sports Monitor 2017  
Flexible Module 6**

**ASK FOR THOSE WALKING FOR TRANSPORT**

I would like to ask you a few questions about the walks that you undertake for transport.

**Q.1** Over the last 7 days, on how many days did you walk for transport, for example walking to work, walking children to school etc.?

\_\_\_\_\_ **DAYS**

**Q.2** And, on each day that you have walked for transport, on average how many times a day would you undertake this type of activity?

\_\_\_\_\_ **TIMES**

**Q.3** And thinking of your typical walk for transport, how long would it take you to complete this walk?

\_\_\_\_\_ **MINUTES**

**Q.4** How would you describe your usual walking pace during these walks?

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Slow.....            | 1 |
| Steady average ..... | 2 |
| Fairly Brisk.....    | 3 |
| Fast .....           | 4 |
| Don't know .....     | 5 |

**Q.5** What is the main reason you walk on this journey rather than driving or using public transport?

**READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Quicker to walk.....                                     | 1 |
| Too short a distance to drive/use public transport ..... | 2 |
| Difficulties with car parking.....                       | 3 |
| To get exercise for myself.....                          | 4 |
| To get exercise for others (e.g. children) .....         | 5 |
| No access to car / public transport.....                 | 6 |
| Other (specify: _____).....                              | 7 |

**ASK FOR THOSE CYCLING FOR TRANSPORT**

I would like to ask you a few questions about the cycles that you undertake for transport.

**Q.6** Over the last 7 days, on how many days did you cycle for transport, for example cycling to work, cycling children to school etc.?

\_\_\_\_\_ **DAYS**

**Q.7** And, on each day that you have cycled for transport, on average how many times a day would you undertake this type of activity?

\_\_\_\_\_ **TIMES**

**Q.8** And thinking of your typical cycle for transport, how long would it take you to complete this cycle?

\_\_\_\_\_ **MINUTES**

**Q.9** On these journeys, was the effort enough to raise your breathing rate?

Yes ..... 1  
No ..... 2

**Q.10** On these journeys, was the effort enough for you to be out of breath or sweat?

Yes ..... 1  
No ..... 2

**Q.11** What is the main reason you cycle on this journey rather than driving or using public transport?

**READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

Quicker to cycle ..... 1  
Too short a distance to drive/use public transport ..... 2  
Difficulties with car parking ..... 3  
To get exercise for myself ..... 4  
To get exercise for others (e.g. children) ..... 5  
No access to car / public transport ..... 6  
Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 7



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