



SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

IRISH SPORTS MONITOR

SUMMARY REPORT 2021



1. Progress Towards Targets

2. Sports Participation During the Covid-19 Pandemic

3. Most popular sports during the pandemic

4. Social Participation

5. Social Gradients in Sports Participation

6. Proportion meeting National Physical Activity Guidelines

7. Wearable Technology

8. Diversity and Inclusion

9. Olympic and Paralympic Games

Introduction

This report provides an overview of key findings from the Irish Sports Monitor 2021.

The Irish Sports Monitor (ISM) is a large population study undertaken to provide trends in participation in sport and physical activity in Ireland.

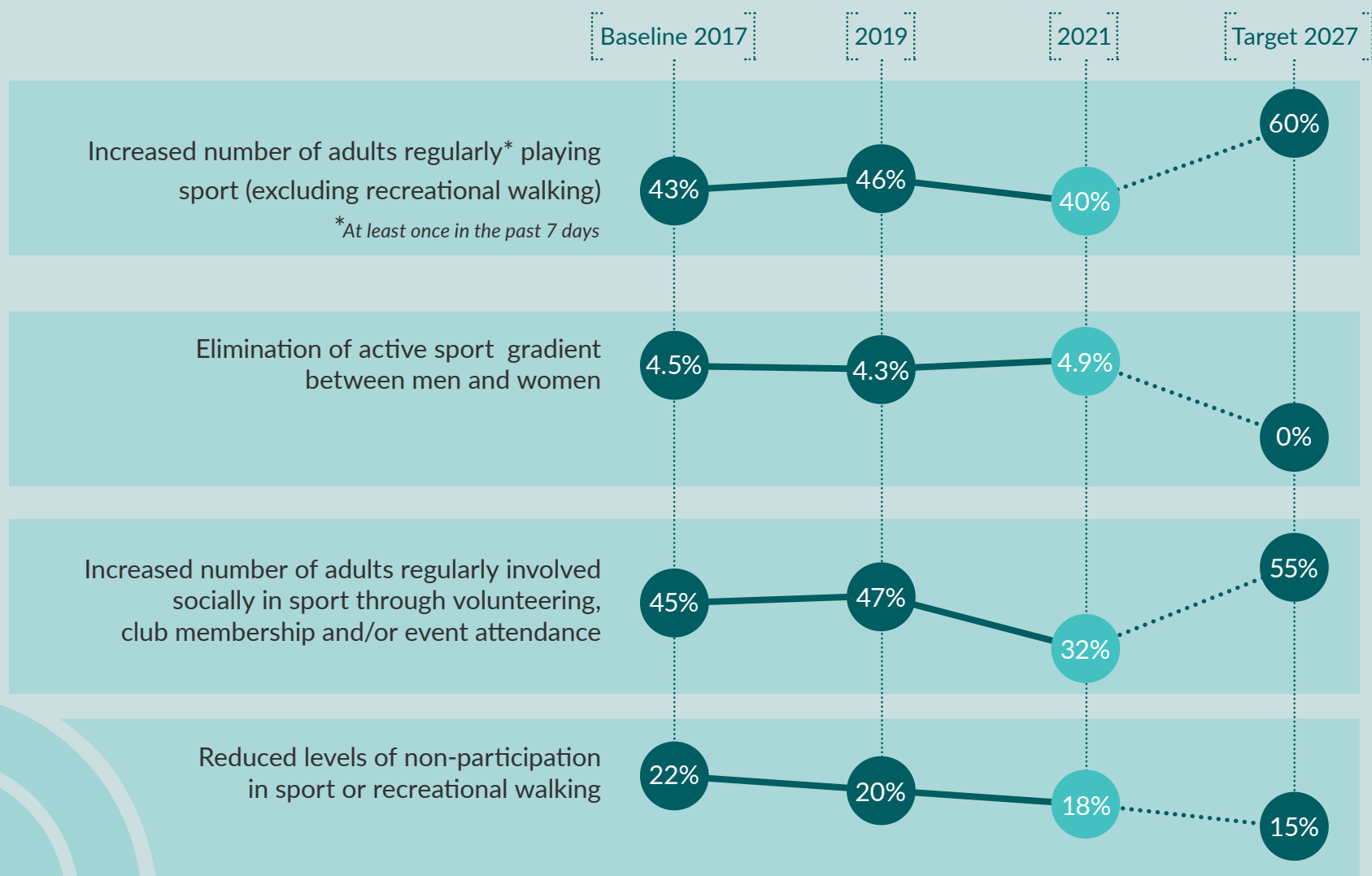
It sets a broad definition of sport and measures participation in sport as well as club membership, volunteering and attendance at sports events. It also measures other forms of physical activity including recreational walking as well as walking and cycling for transport.

Fieldwork was undertaken between March and September 2020 and between January and December 2021 and involved interviews with 7,432 and 8,508 respondents aged 16 and older, respectively.



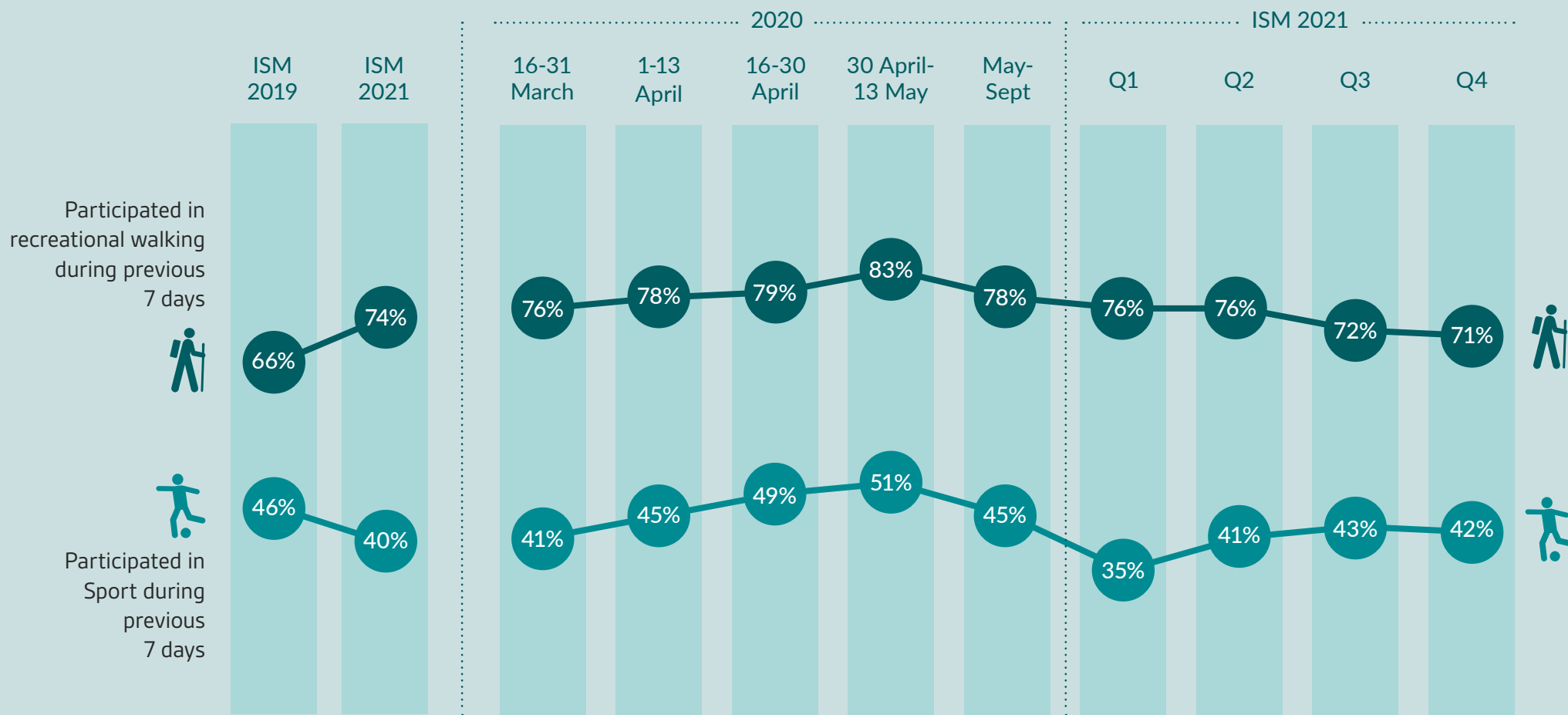
1. Progress Towards Targets

Despite increases in sports engagement in the latter half of 2021, the overall impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on sport has hampered progress towards the National Sports Policy targets.



1. Sports Participation During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Participation in sport and recreational walking fluctuated in response to the prevailing Covid-19 restrictions. Sport participation rates increased throughout 2021 as COVID 19 restrictions were lifted.



2. Most popular sports during the pandemic

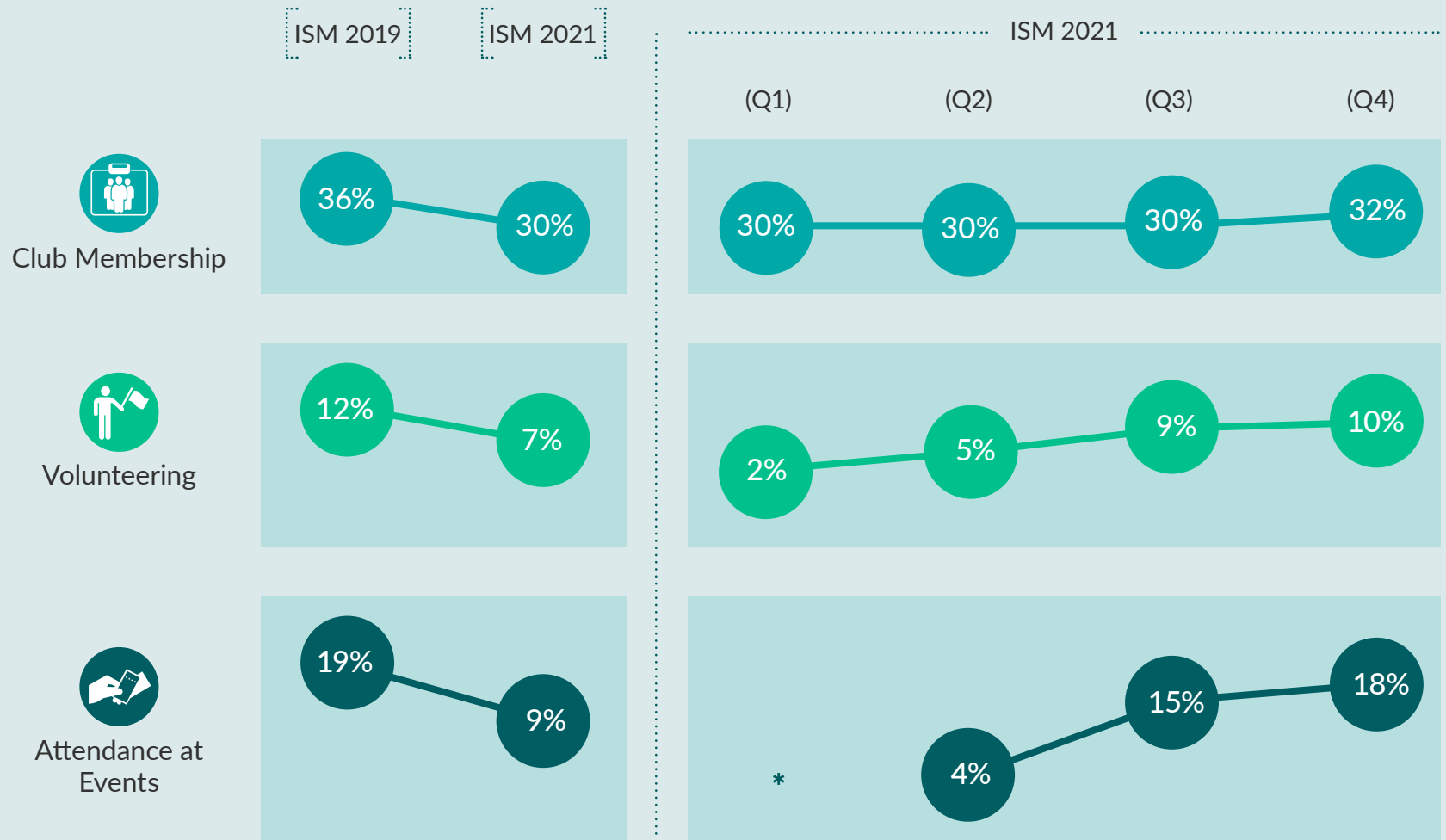
The COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions triggered unprecedented changes in the types of activities people took part in. However, by the end of 2021 people were beginning to return to activities that had been restricted during the pandemic.

Types of sports participated in during previous 7 days



3. Social Participation

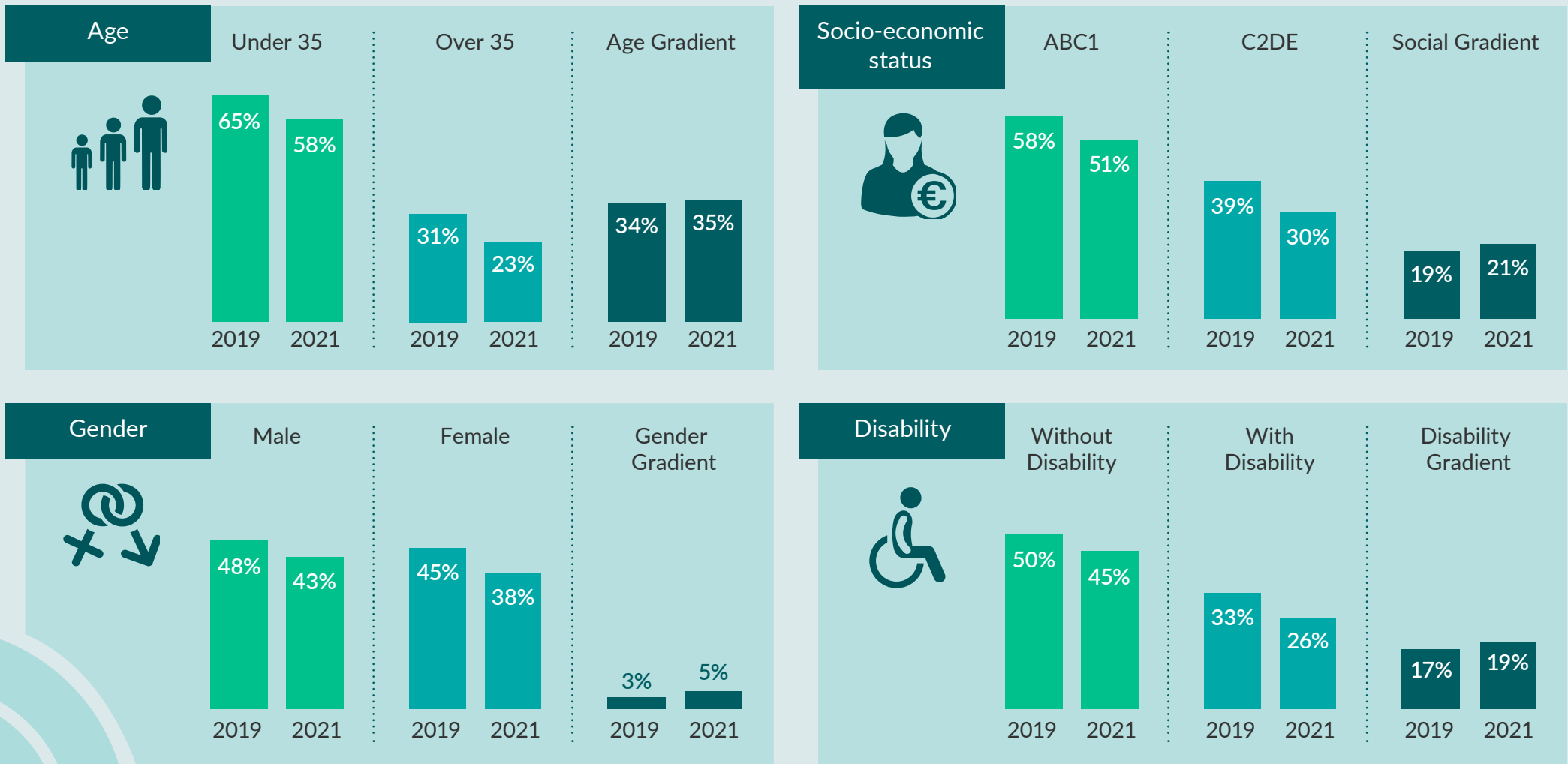
Notable declines in social participation since 2019, although levels of attendance at events and volunteering were increasing again by the end of 2021.



*The restrictions in place during Q1 2021 meant that there was very limited access to sports events

4. Social Gradients in Sports Participation

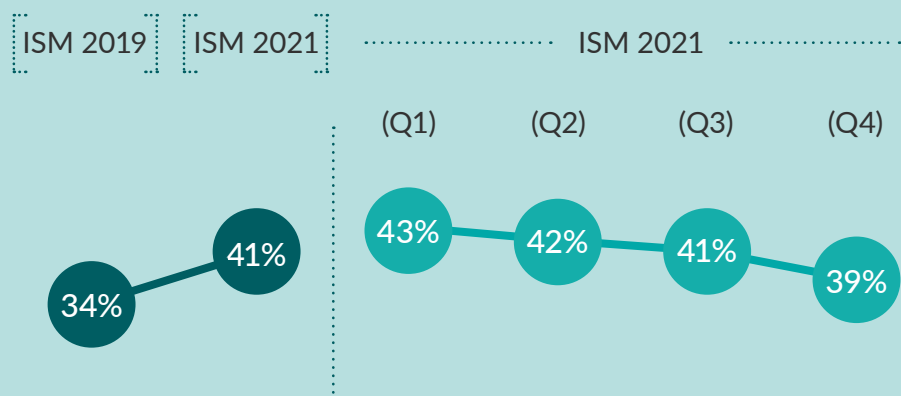
Persistent age, gender, social and disability gradients in sports participation.



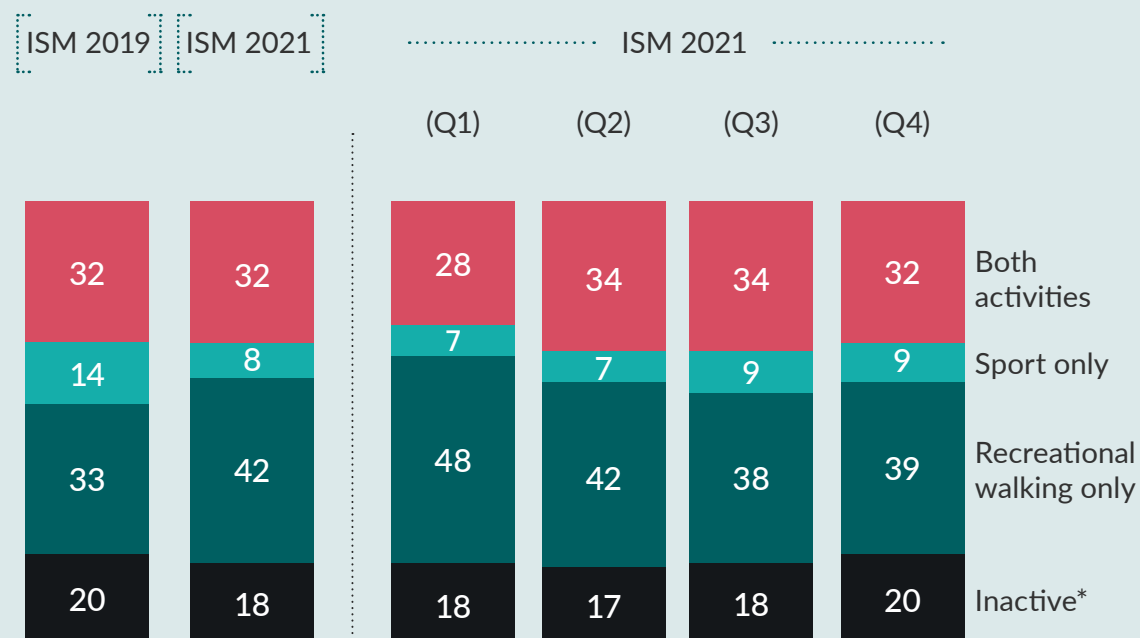
5. Proportion meeting National Physical Activity Guidelines

While the proportion achieving the National Physical Activity Guidelines has declined over the course of 2021, it remains ahead of 2019.

Meeting national physical activity guidelines through sport and walking



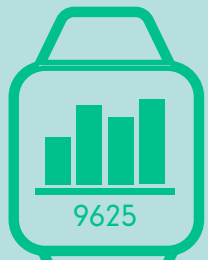
Types of activity participated in over the past seven days (%)



*Inactive means taking part in no sport or recreational walking. It has the same meaning as sedentary in the National Sports Policy.

6. Wearable Technology

More than half of the population currently use technology to measure the amount or nature of physical activity they undertake, almost twice as many as in 2017 when last measured.



54%

(2017: 28%)

Use wearable technology to measure activity

79%

(2017: 77%)

Report that the tool has a positive influence on their activity level



Pedometer **56%**

(2017: 18%)

GPS Device **33%**

(2017: 14%)

Heart rate/
Calorie measure **30%**

(2017: 13%)

Tools to find location
of sports facility* **17%**

**Use of this tool was not measured in 2017*

Tools to plan
workouts **10%**

(2017: 8%)



7. Diversity in Sports Clubs

Despite similar levels of sports participation, those in some minority groups are under-represented among sports club members.

More active, rather than passive, engagement with minority groups may help improve representativeness of club membership.

	Participate in sport	Member of a sports club
Heterosexual	41%	32%
LGBTI+	41%	21%
Irish	39%	32%
Non-Irish	44%	20%
White	40%	32%
Non-white	49%	23%

85%

Of club members agree that
*“Everyone knows that they are
welcome in the club”*

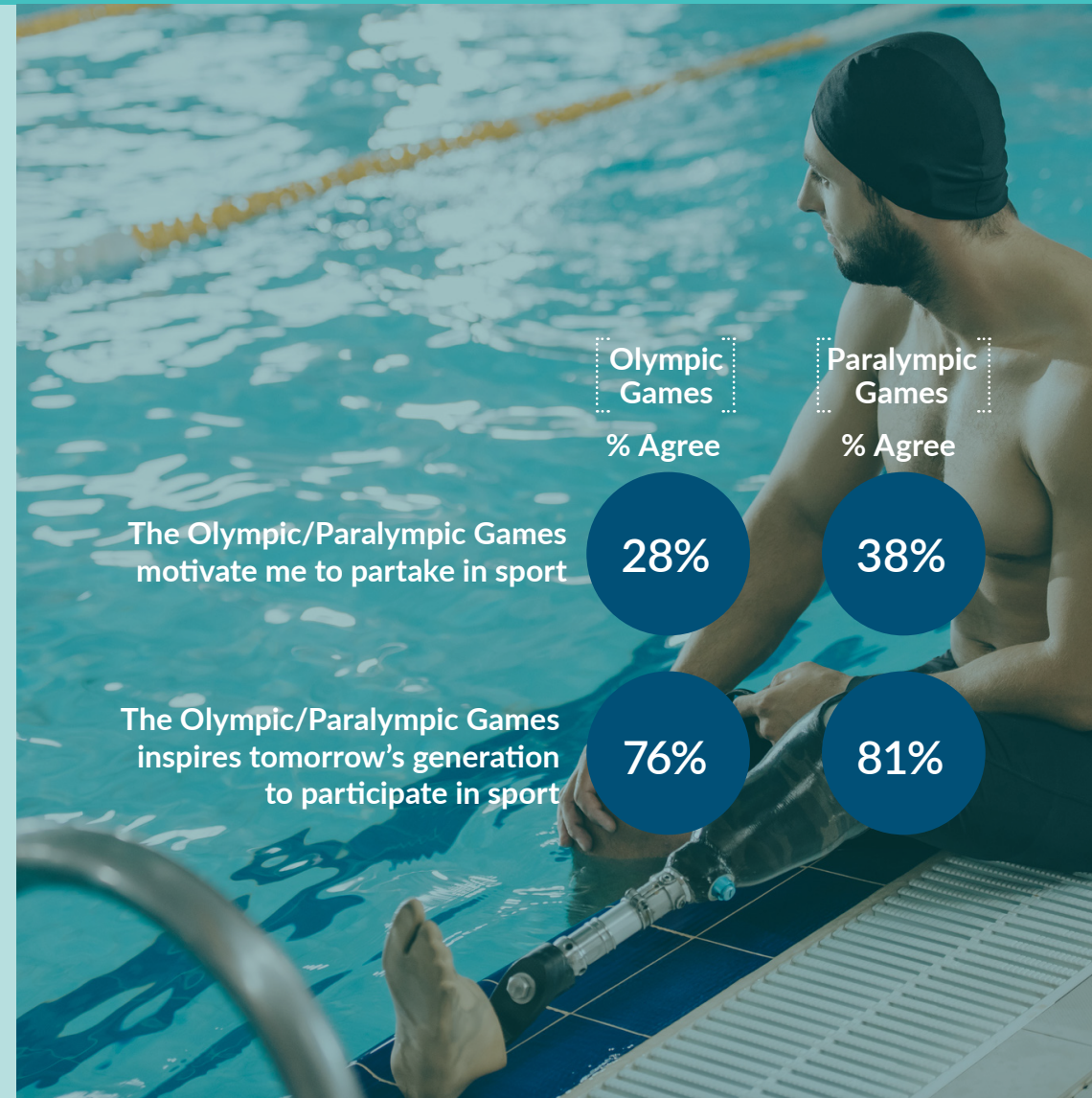
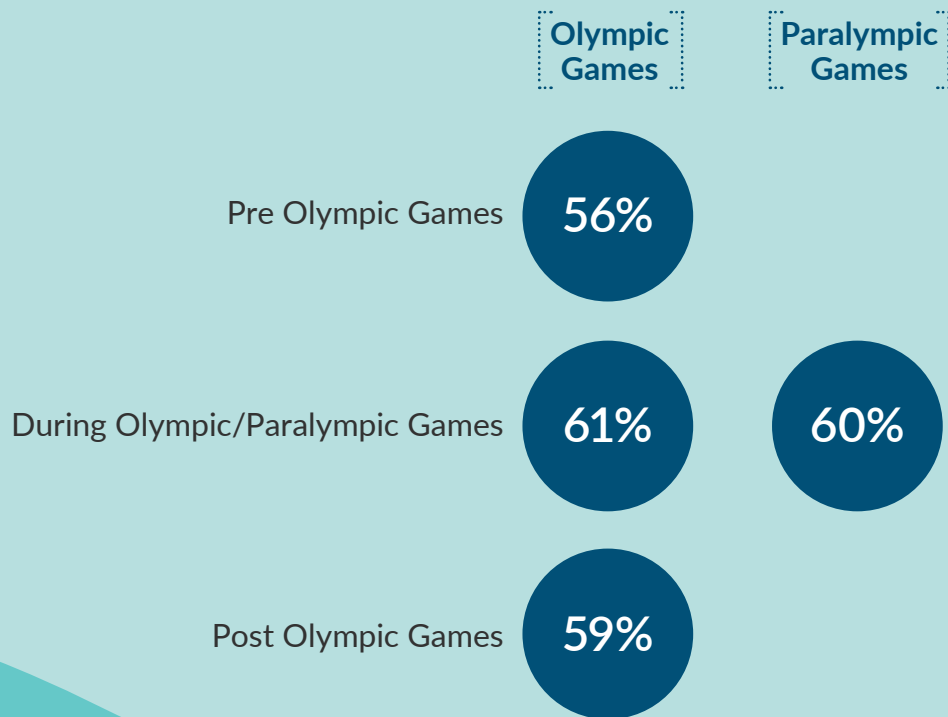
34%

Of club members agree with the
statement
*“The club tries to reach out to people
from minority groups”*

8. Olympics/Paralympics

High levels of interest in the Olympic Games that are sustained during the event. Although it is limited in the extent to which it motivates activity in adults, it may motivate children.

% Very/somewhat interested in the Olympic/Paralympic Games





Sport Ireland,
The Courtyard,
Sport Ireland Campus,
Snugborough Road,
Blanchardstown,
Dublin 15,
D15 PN0N

Tel: +353 1 8608800

www.sportireland.ie



Ipsos
Block 3,
Blackrock Business Park,
Blackrock,
Co. Dublin,
Ireland.
A94 D5D7

Tel: +353 1 4389000

www.ipsos.com/en-ie