

IRISH SPORTS MONITOR  
SUMMARY REPORT 2022





1. Progress Towards Targets
2. Sports Participation
3. Most Popular Sports
4. Social Participation in Sport
5. Sports Participation across Demographic Groups
6. Proportion Meeting National Physical Activity Guidelines
7. Walking and Cycling for Transport
8. The Financial Cost of Sport
9. Safety in Sport
10. National Governing Bodies (NGB)
11. Taking Up a New sport

# Introduction



This report provides an overview of key findings from the Irish Sports Monitor 2022.

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

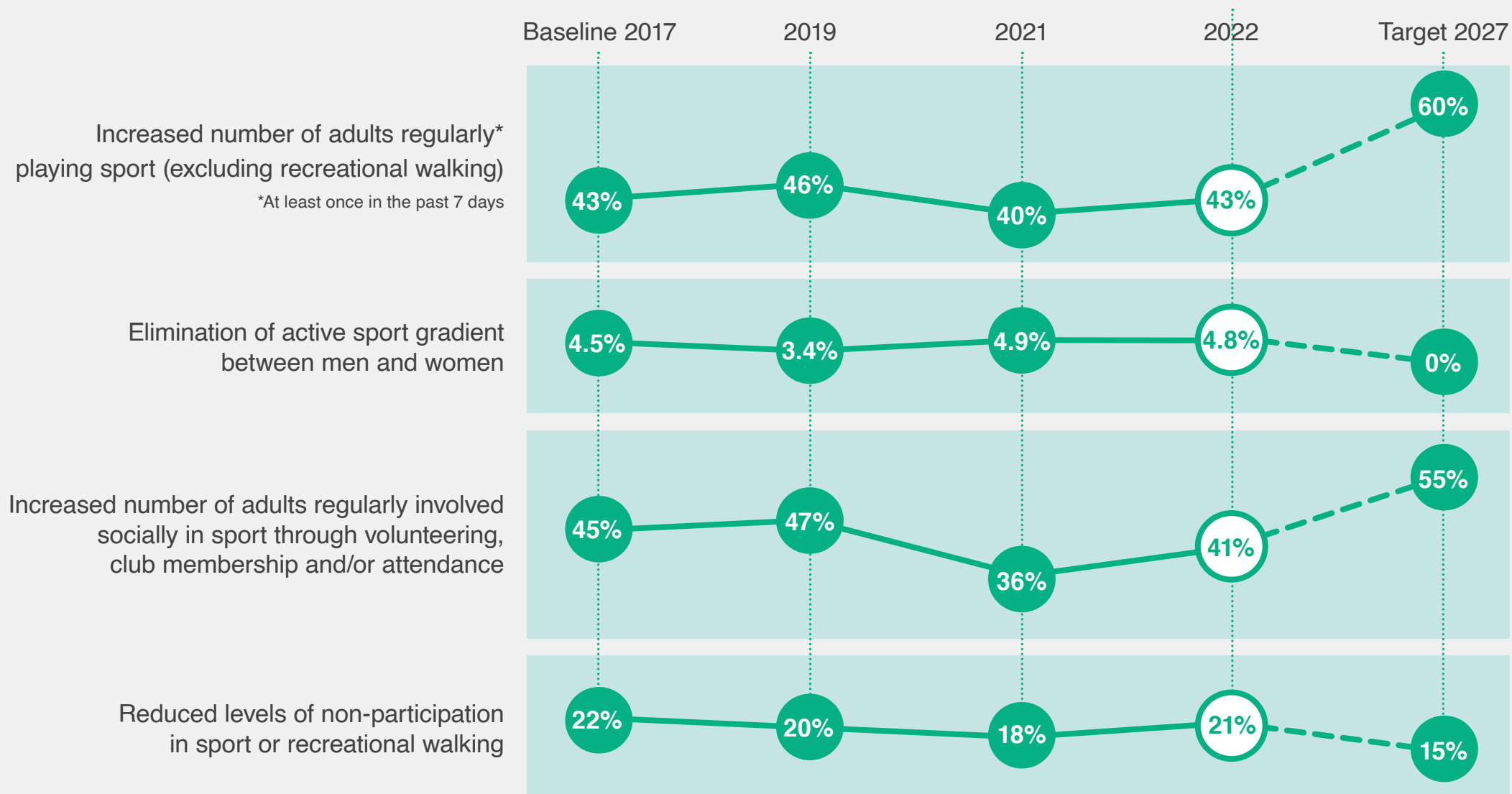
It sets a broad definition of sport and measures participation in sport as well as club membership, volunteering and attendance at sports events. It also measures other forms of physical activity including recreational walking as well as walking and cycling for transport.

Fieldwork was undertaken between January and December 2022 and involved interviews with 8,512 respondents aged 16 and over.



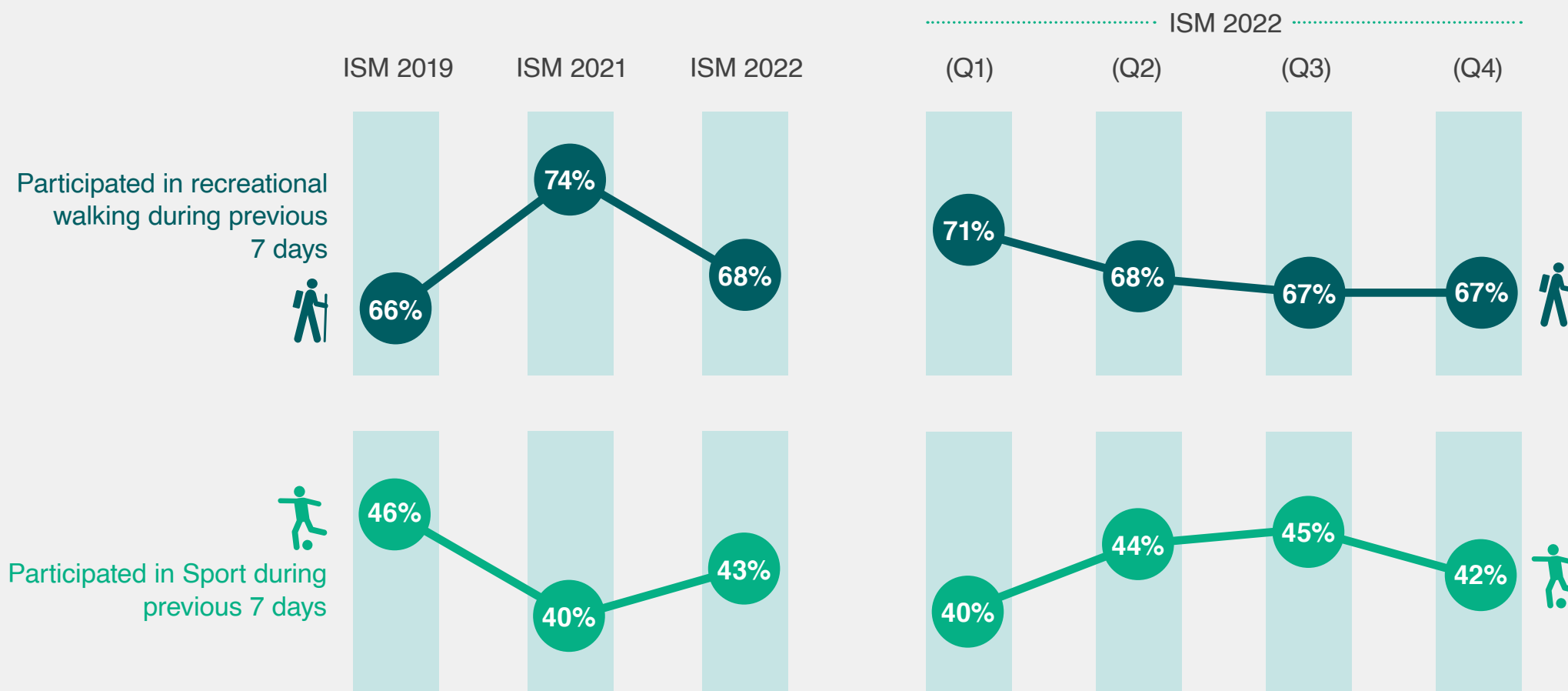
# 1. Progress Towards Targets

*Although sport participation and social participation increased in 2022, the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on progress toward the National Sports policy targets remains evident.*



## 2. Sports Participation

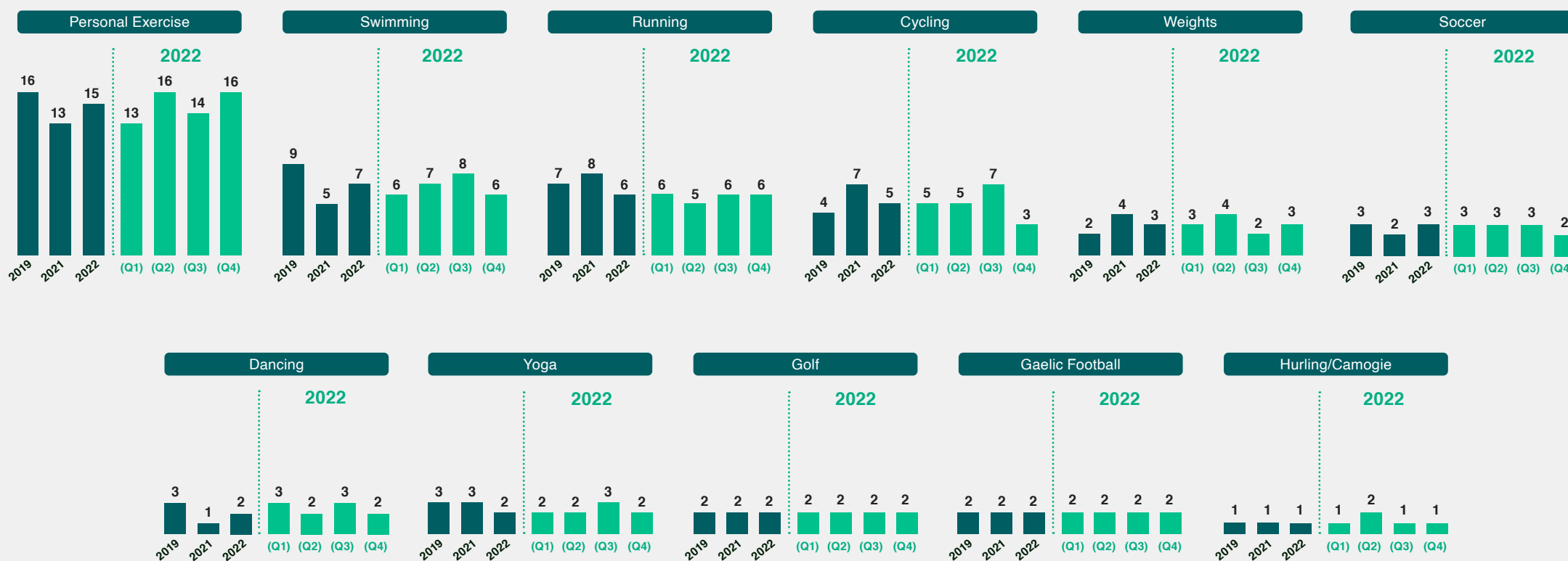
*Recreational walking declined throughout 2022. Sports participation rates increased since 2021, but remained behind 2019 levels.*



### 3. Most Popular Sports

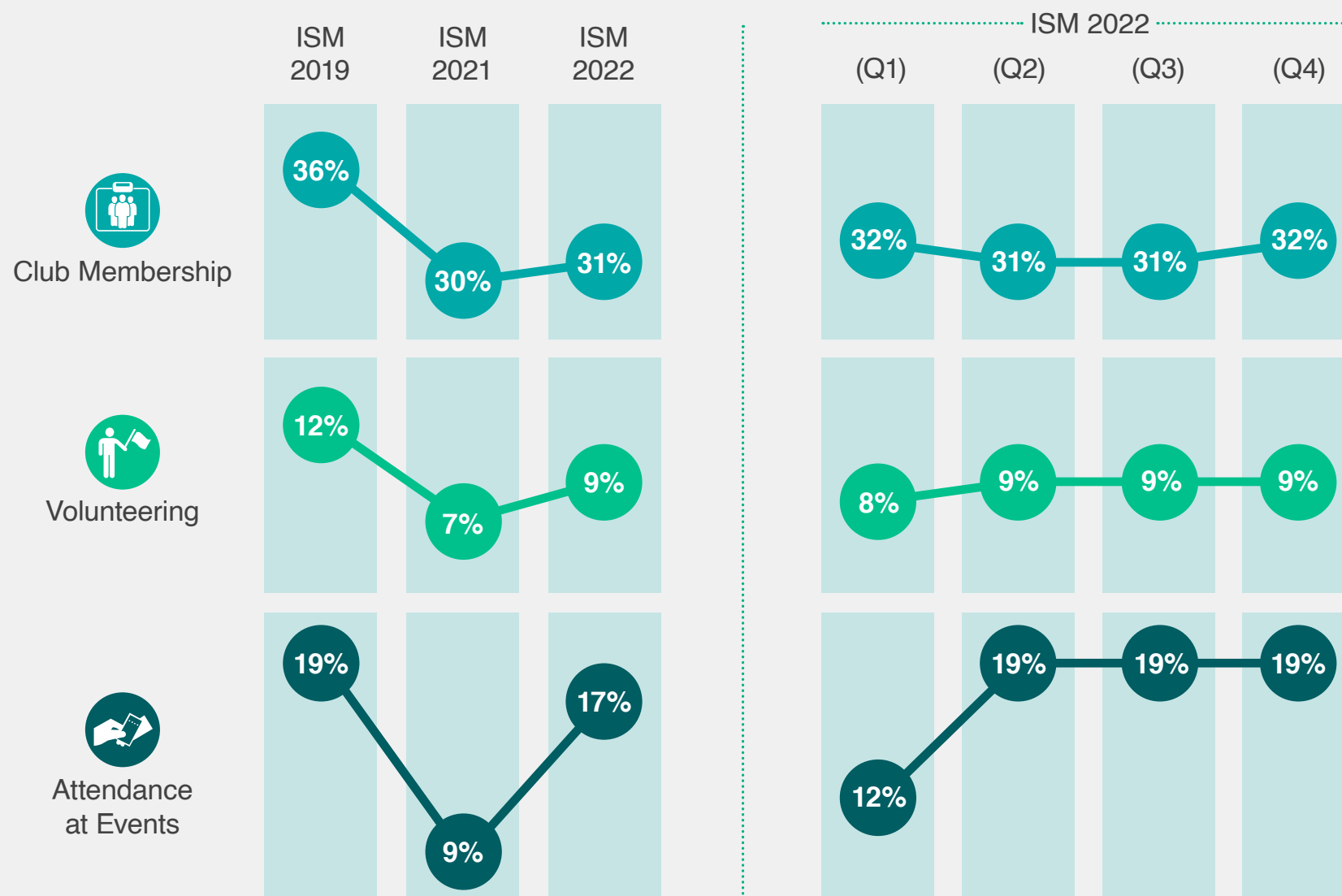
Readjustments were seen in the types of sports people took part in. Swimming regained participants in 2022, with a 2 point increase. In contrast, participation in individual sports like running and cycling decreased by 2 points, after peaking in 2021.

Types of sports participated in during previous 7 days



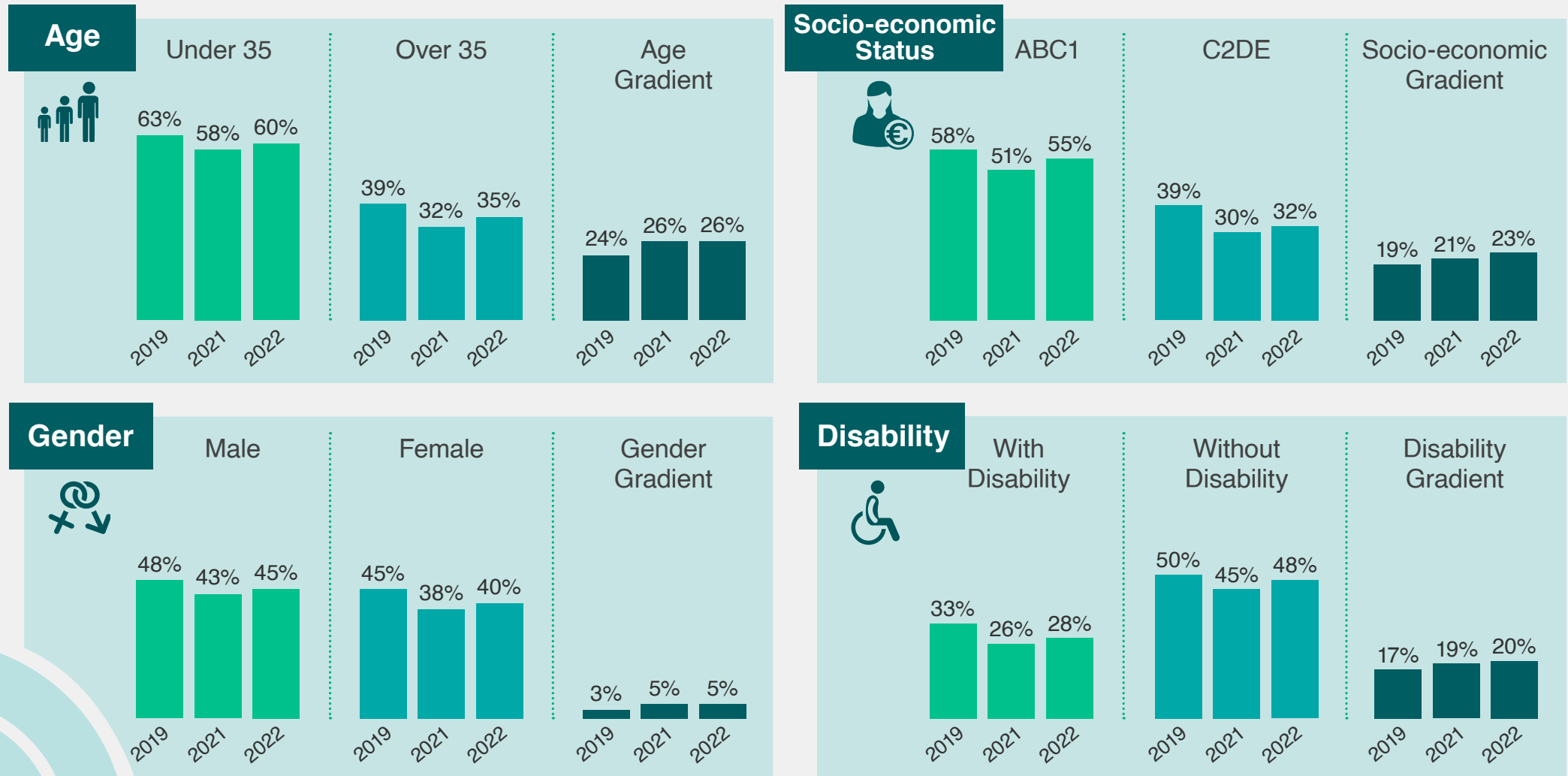
## 4. Social Participation in Sport

*Event attendance has largely returned to pre-pandemic levels. However, many club members and volunteers have not returned, with both rates remaining well below 2019 levels.*



## 5. Sports Participation across Demographic Groups

*The difference in sports participation rates between people of upper and lower socio-economic status and people with and without disabilities have increased since 2021 and are the widest on record*

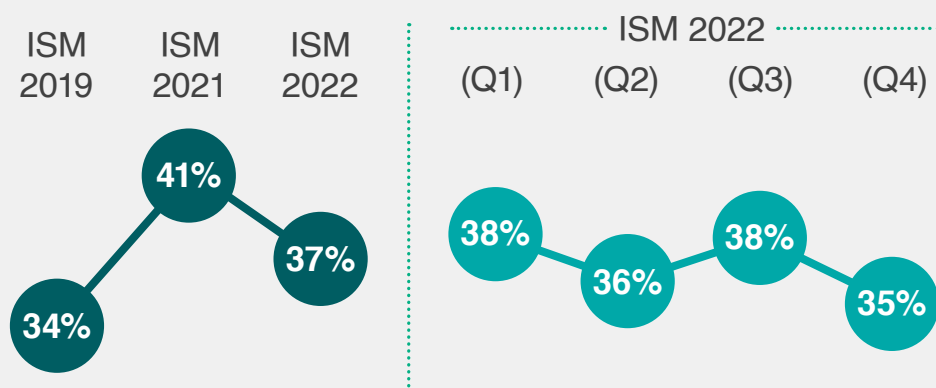




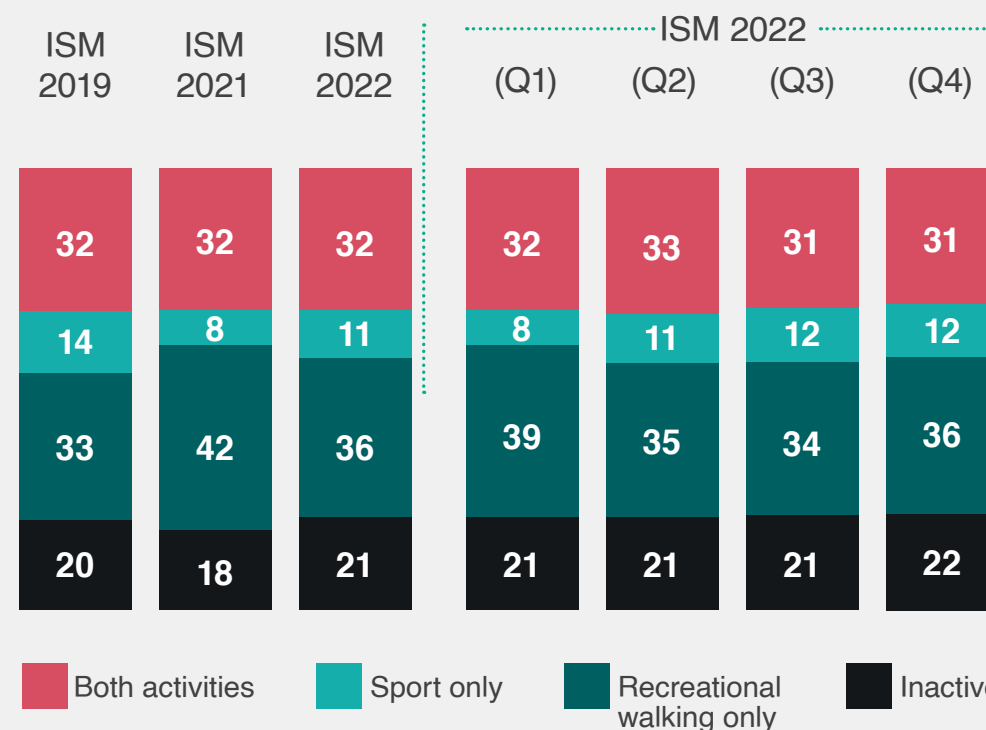
## 6. Proportion Meeting National Physical Activity Guidelines

*The proportion meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines declined since 2021, but remained higher than measured in 2019.*

Meeting national physical activity guidelines through sport and walking

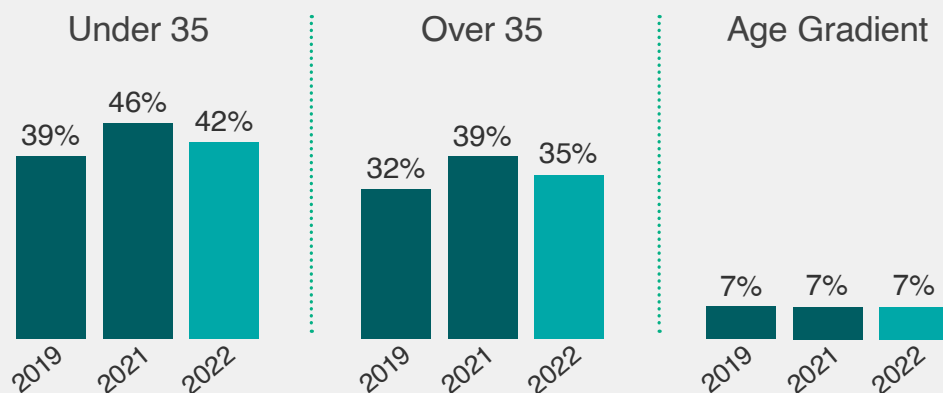


Types of activity participated in over the past seven days (%)



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

Age gradient among those meeting national physical activity guidelines through sport and walking



## 7. Walking and Cycling for Transport

*The numbers walking for transport reached a peak in 2022. The numbers cycling for transport has remained unchanged since 2021.*



## 8. The Financial Cost of Sport

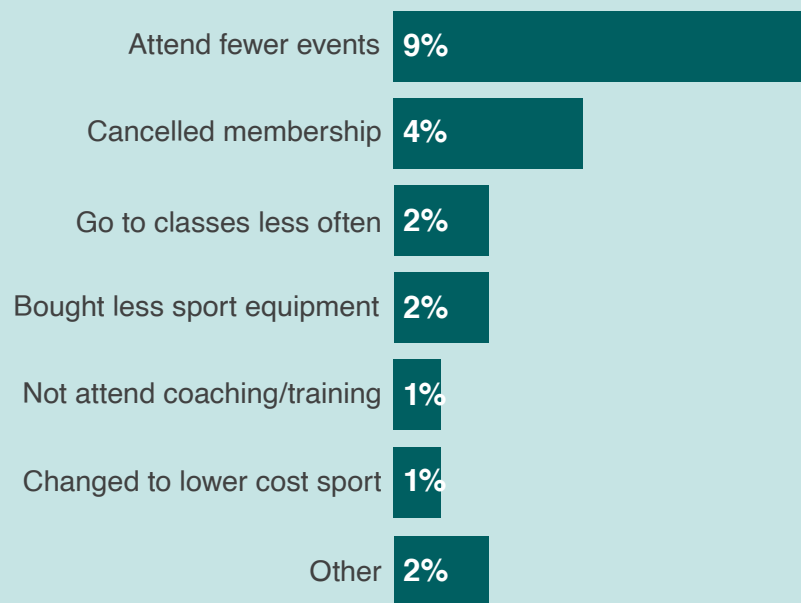
*One in five people expected to make cutbacks to their spending over the next six months.  
Almost one in ten people expected to attend fewer events.*



### Making Cutbacks



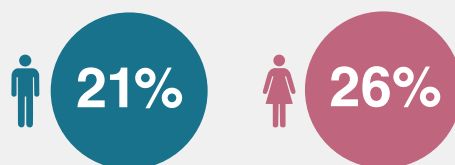
### The Types of Cutbacks Made to Spending on Sport



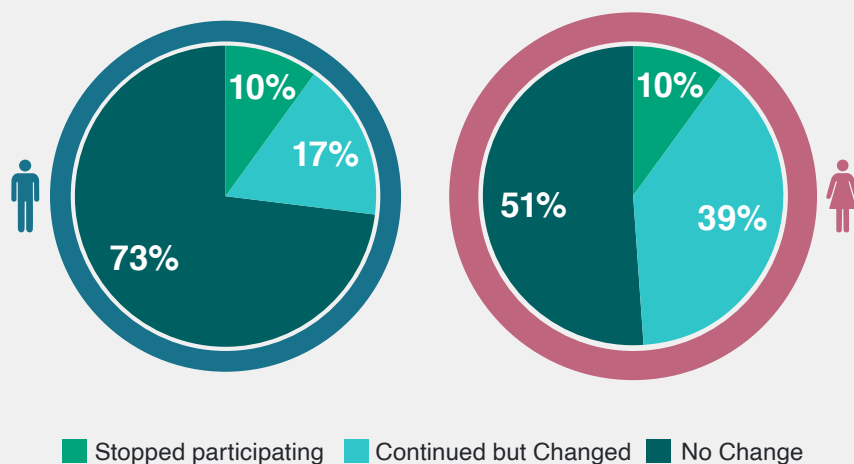
## 9. Safety in Sport

*One in ten women who experienced verbal or physical harassment stopped participating in sport, while 39% made changes such as when and where they participated.*

Proportion experiencing verbal or physical harassment while exercising



Action taken as a result of harassment



*Before going for a walk or jog I...*



## 10. National Governing Bodies (NGBs)

*The National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) recognised by Sport Ireland are at the centre of Irish sport. NGBs are key delivery agencies for Sport Ireland in the achievement of its strategic and operational goals.*



### NGB Membership Rates

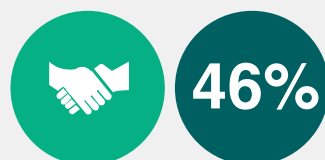
**15%**

**Current Members**

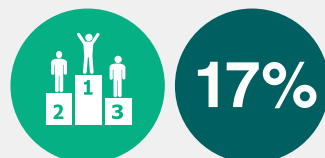
Additional  
**16%**

**Were Members in the Past**

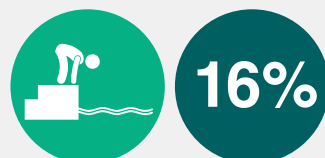
### Perceived NGB Membership Benefits



**Community**



**Access to Competition**



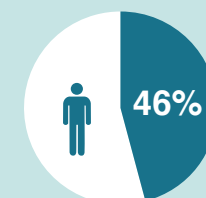
**Access to Facilities**

### Awareness of Local Sports Partnerships

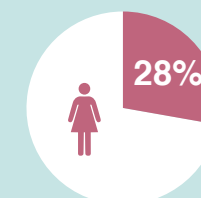


are aware of Local Sports Partnerships

### Competed as an Adult



of men...



of women...

...have competed in sport as an adult

## 11. Taking Up a New Sport

*Almost 1 in 3 would like to take up a new sports, with many interested in less commonly played sports.*

Desire to try a new sport never previously played

29%

would like to try a new sport

49%

of those who would like to try a new sport are not regular sports participants

Most popular sports that potential participants would like to try



11% Tennis



11% Rugby



9% Swimming



8% Golf



8% Basketball

Reason for wanting to try a new sport

24% Because it looks like fun

19% To Improve fitness

17% To have fun

14% To improve physical health

9% To spend time with friends/family

## Technical Details

- 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. Data collection is conducted by telephone among a representative sample of the population aged 16 and over.
- Fieldwork dates and sample sizes for this research are as follows:

Phase	Fieldwork dates	Sample size
ISM 2019	Jan - Dec 2019	8,504
ISM 2021	Jan - Dec 2021	8,508
ISM 2022 (Q1)	Jan - Mar 2022	2,129
ISM 2022 (Q2)	Apr - Jun 2022	2,126
ISM 2022 (Q3)	July - Sept 2022	2,126
ISM 2022 (Q4)	Oct - Dec 2022	2,131
ISM 2022	Jan - Dec 2022	8,512





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

Tel: +353 1 8608800

[www.sportireland.ie](http://www.sportireland.ie)



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

Tel: +353 1 4389000

[www.ipsos.com/en-ie](http://www.ipsos.com/en-ie)